



**STEERING GROUP**  
**29<sup>th</sup> July 2010**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**Maldon Town Football Club 2 pm**

---

<b>Present</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Orgn</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Canon John Brown	Vice Chair	RCCE	(JB)
Cllr Peter Baggott	EnvAG	EALC	(PB)
Cllr John Buchanan	EERF	EALC	(JBU)
Fiona Bryant	EEDA	EEDA	(FB)
John Hall	EnvAG	EWT	(JH)
Suzanne Harris	CAG & EERF	RCCE	(SH)
Dominic Petre	EcAG	EET	(DP)
Joy Sheppard	CAG	EALC	(JS)
Nick Shuttleworth	Facilitator orgn	RCCE	(NS)
Philip Wilson	EcAG	ECC	(PhW)
<b>Attending</b>			
Linda Hadley	(minutes)	RCCE	(LH)
Joanne Newton	Intern accompanying PhW	ECC	
<b>Apologies</b>			
Ed Gregory	Facilitator orgn	ECC	(EG)
Cllr John Jowers	Chairman	ECC	(JJ)
Cllr Mick Page	EERF	ECC	(MP)
Richard Woolley	EERF	RCCE	(RW)

**1. Welcome and Introductions.**

**Action  
By**

In Chairman Cllr. John Jower's absence, Vice-Chairman Canon John Brown, welcomed all to the meeting.

**Apologies** (*please see above for details*).

**2. Minutes of the ERP Steering Group Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2010.**

**2.1 Accuracy.**

No matters of accuracy were raised and those present agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

## 2.2 Matters Arising.

2.2.1 JBu updated the meeting on the Rural Broadband Partnership survey – 92 residents responded, of which 62 said their broadband service was inadequate, only 17 said it was adequate and 11 said they didn't know. JS confirmed EALC would be chasing up responses from all parishes. JBu had recently spoken to Lloyd Felton of County Broadband who would prepare a bid for funding for parishes.

PhW updated on the Maldon pilot which went live on 1<sup>st</sup> June – 120 subscribers needed to break even and within 10 days 450 people signed up. Charges are comparable with other providers. JB asked if PhW could keep SH up-to-date on progress.

**Action:** PhW to keep SH up-to date on progress with Maldon pilot.

**JB/SH**

2.2.2 EEDA (East of England Development Agency) – funding has been reduced by 24% and not 15% as noted in previous meeting minutes. Final date for disbandment is March 2012 which gives an eighteen month transition period. However, some aspects of business which can be transferred will be done earlier. Still waiting for next year's budget figure.

## 3. Items to Report.

### 3.1 Updates from Action Groups.

#### Environmental Action Group (EnvAG)

PB reported there was a good turn out with representatives from the farming community and all agreed this should be encouraged. JS asked if it was known what impact there will be on the environment by the loss of County Council staff through funding cuts. It was agreed it is too soon to evaluate.

JH proposed the group discuss how to take the Woodland Strategy forward and it was agreed although the Environmental Action Group seemed the natural choice, this could fit in with the Economic Action Group (EcAG). It was agreed to look at the possibility of inviting EcAG members to join the EnvAG meeting scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> September, and to also encourage involvement from farmers. JS reminded the group to link in with Parish Councils when moving forward with the Woodland Strategy.

**Action:** SH to liaise with PhW on invitations to EcAG members.

**SH/PW**

### 3.2 East of England Rural Forum.

The June meeting included discussion on the contribution country estates make to the rural economy by way of holiday lets, business units and farming functions. In the East Midlands estates cover 23% of land.

It was agreed this is an interesting topic, possibly suitable for future discussion.

**Action:** Topic on country estates to be discussed further.

**SH/All**

#### 4. **Strategic Changes.**

4.1. The group discussed the impact of recent developments on rural issues and actions that the ERP should undertake. SH reminded the group this was continued from item 7 from previous meeting.

There was a general discussion on Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) in relation to their formation and future responsibilities. It was agreed ERP's primary task is to ensure that the interests of rural business are reflected in this process and not to let this be a missed opportunity to become involved.

It was agreed ERP Steering Group will write to Peter Martin, ECC, to express an interest in becoming involved and indicate preferences on where ECC should link in regards to an LEP, i.e. a Greater Essex Enterprise Partnership. The ERP already represents rural interests in the County.

An initial note to go Cllr John Jowers to up-date him on this decision.

A similar letter to districts in the south of Essex to open discussions and thereby keeping options open.

**Action:** SH to draft letters to ECC and districts and email Steering Group for comment. Note to Cllr John Jowers to update on decision asap.

**SH/All**

4.2 Question on ERP funding. SH confirmed funding in place until March 2011 – not possible to predict what will happen after this date.

#### 5. **Any other Business.**

##### 5.1 **Forthcoming Events.**

FB – Essex Chamber of Commerce will be developing a programme of meetings for EEDA this year to focus on rural topics.

##### 5.2 **Date of next Full ERP meeting.**

Provisional for beginning of November. Suggested 'Big Society', as more detail should be available by then, building in 'young people' topics. Venue suggestions – Reid Rooms, The Rodings, Great Saling,

**Action:** SH to look at dates and venues for Full ERP meeting and Steering Group.

**SH**

**The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm**