



STEERING GROUP
24th November 2010
Minutes of the Meeting
The Reid Rooms, Margaret Roding, 2:00 pm

Present	Representing	Orgn	Initials
Cllr John Jowers	Chairman	ECC	(JJ)
Canon John Brown	Vice Chair	RCCE	(JB)
Cllr Peter Baggott	EnvAG	EALC	(PB)
Fiona Bryant	EEDA	EEDA	(FB)
Peter Chillingworth	ELG rep	Colchester BC	(PC)
John Hall	EnvAG	EWT	(JH)
Suzanne Harris	CAG & EERF	RCCE	(SH)
Dominic Petre	EcAG	EET	(DP)
Joy Darby	CAG	EALC	(JD)
Nick Shuttleworth	Facilitor orgn	RCCE	(NS)
Philip Wilson	EcAG	ECC	(PhW)
Cllr Mick Page	EERF	ECC	(MP)
Richard Woolley	EERF	RCCE	(RW)
Attending			
Daisy Martlew	(minutes)	RCCE	(DM)
Apologies			
Cllr John Buchanan	EERF	EALC	(JBU)
Wendy Scattergood	ELG rep	Braintree DC	(WS)

1. Welcome and Introductions

**Action
By**

Chairman Cllr. John Jowers welcomed all to the meeting.

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

2. Minutes of the ERP Steering Group Meeting held on 29th July 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

No matters arising.

3. Items to Report

3.1 Updates from Action Groups

Agreed as reported sufficiently in the morning.

3.2 East of England Rural Forum

SH explained that three workshops, all to the same agenda, will be held. Two in February and one in March, all on a Friday so that MPs will be able to attend. Dates are likely to be 4th and 11th February, and 4th March. Council members, MPs, MEPs etc will be amongst those invited to attend. A Regional Rural Forum Action Plan will be agreed by members; however the detail still needs to be confirmed.

Action: SH to email confirmed workshop dates to all.

SH

4. Strategic Changes

4.1. PB reported that the Woodland Strategy final draft is ready, but needs formatting, pictures and possibly an equality impact assessment. FB highlighted the importance that it is not seen to be delivered by the Environmental Action Group alone; there are economic and social aspects involved too. It was noted that the Steering Group had previously agreed that the document could be published as an ERP document, subject to approval of the text. SH noted that there is no money in the ERP budget for printing such documents and that it is expected that this will be funded via ECC ESH budget.

SH is waiting for a response after giving printing information to Brian Stacey, Woodland Officer, ECC. Group may be asked to source photos. SH proposed two options to the group – wait until we receive expert feedback and then approve, or read ourselves and approve via email to SH.

Action: All agreed to respond to SH by email in one week. No responses would mean that everyone was happy to approve the document.

SH/ALL

JB expressed concern over the timescale of the Woodland Strategy. JJ echoed his concern that up to 2050 is a long period to go without a review, although the strategy's objectives are good. The recommendation of a review would be passed to Brian Stacey. PhW suggested adding the issue to the agenda for the next Economic Action Group, and possibly inviting Brian Stacey to give a presentation. All agreed this to be decided post-approval of the strategy.

SH

4.2 Local Economic Partnerships

Discussion took place in light of a recent announcement of a LEP to cover Essex, Kent and East Sussex. JJ stated that a greater Essex LEP would have been preferred. It was noted that the LEP covers a large area and it will not be practical for all Local Authorities to be represented. A subsidiary group for Essex, including the districts, may be set up, chaired by a member of the business community. It was agreed in principal that the ERP should format policies to slide in.

NS reported that Essex, Kent and East Sussex RCCs have put together a paper that reinforces the draft prospectus and rates rural concerns as a top 4 priority. There will be a meeting in December for all three RCCs and representatives of other rural partnerships. It is suggested that three or four members of the ERP attend. NS can

provide copies of the paper.

NS/ALL

JJ suggested that members of the group formulate their own perceptions on the LEP before the next meeting.

ALL

4.3. Policy Implications

4.3.1 FB expressed that a policy strategy for the LEP, with relevant rural issues written in, should be ensured. DP expressed concern that northern, more rural areas of Essex may be marginalised with the southern expansion of the LEP.

4.3.2 SH reported that Government Office closes in March, and that a change to the constitution of ERP Steering Group needs to be agreed. The group agreed that a proposal for its removal should be made to the full ERP at its next meeting in 2011.

SH

5. Any other Business

5.1 It was agreed there was a negative response to community organisers by members of the ERP in the morning. JJ suggested the ERP write a letter expressing concerns to Government.

JJ

5.2 Date of next Full ERP meeting

Provisional for the Steering Group in January, the full ERP in March.

Action: SH to circulate dates for a Steering Group meeting in mid to late January

SH

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm