



STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th January 2008

2.00 pm, Reid Rooms, Margaret Roding

Present:

Chair - Cllr. John Jowers – ECC (JJ)	Suzanne Roast - RCCE (SR)
Vice Chair – John Brown (JB)	Pat Roberts –EALC (PR) Pfficer: ALEO)
Peter Chillingworth- (PC)	Nick Shuttleworth – RCCE (NS)
Cllr. Peter Baggott - EALC (PB) representing ERP EnvAG	Philip Wilson – ECC (PW)
Cllr. Mick Page – EERF (MP)	John Hall– EWT (JH)
Cllr. Wendy Scattergood – ELGA (WS)	Richard Woolley – RCCE (RW) EERF
Kirsty Monk (KM) (minutes)	

Apologies:

Chris Allen –EEDA (CA)	Dianne Hardy – Exdra (DH)
Sandy Cruickshank -Go East (SC)	Joy Sheppard- EALC (JS) (Officer: ALEO)
Ed Gregory- ECC (EG)	Terry Taber – FSB (TT)
Cllr. John Buchanan (Chair EALC) and Member of EERF	

The Chairman Cllr. John Jowers welcomed all to the meeting; following the Full ERP Partnership meeting of the morning. **Action By**

Apologies were read.

Minutes of the previous Steering Group meeting, 21st November 2007 & matters arising.

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No matters of accuracy were raised

Those present agreed the minutes.

The following were reported as updates/ matters arising from those minutes:

Outstanding action from those minutes regarding John Yates (Chairman East of England Rural Forum - EERF)

- To offer a formal invitation to John Yates, Chair of the East of England Rural Forum (EERF) to next/future ERP full partnership and Steering group Meeting. **KM SR**

The Steering Group discussed various relevant issues which could be raised with John Yates and proposed the following questions:

- Energy Efficiency
- EERF Interface and interaction between National, Regional and County Level.
- EERF Linkages with the Regional and County political structure
- Thoughts on the future of the Regional Assembly
- Hopes and fears regarding the future of the EERF

SR advised that further questions could be sent to her via email from the Steering Group as she was due to meet with John Yates shortly (18th January 2008).

EEDA –to facilitate the forging of better working relationship with EEDA

The Group felt that it was important to rebuild and improve a better working relationship with EEDA and to encourage their attendance at future ERP meetings.

Action

SR/JJ

- Formal invitation to EEDA representatives to attend next ERP meeting (Michael Large and Steve Castle EEDA/ExDRA representatives suggested by Group)

Barbara Follet MP – Minister for the East of England

The Group identified the need to make contact and invite Barbara Follet MP to Essex to help her get a true picture of the issues affecting communities in Essex; providing an overview of the diversity and complexity of the County and its relationship with the East of England region.

Action

SR/KM/

JJ/PW

- Make contact and invite Barbara Follet MP to Essex
- Arrange either a tour of Essex or a trip to an Essex event such as the Year of Food and Farming event on 1st May 2008

Further matters arising were covered in the main agenda items

2 RSCP (Rural Social and Community Programme Update

SR advised the meeting that the RSCP funding would definitely be ceasing with effective 31st March 2008 and that this would mean the end of the 7 current projects run by EALC and RCCE. Initial discussions were being held with ECC to look at alternative replacement funding for these projects.

PR Advised that the National Association of Local Councils would also be losing DEFRA monies and the DCLG was also withdrawing funding. Government felt that money raised from precept should be used instead for this type of project.

JJ reported that there was great pressure on County Council to adopt and take up mainstream projects when government funding ceased.

NS felt that the current £230,000 RSCP funding had been used effectively and it would be a great shame to lose these RSCP projects when they currently met action points of the Essex Rural Strategy Action Plan and LAA actions.

Action

- Update on future funding of seven currently RSCP funded projects (NS SR)
- PW and JJ to discuss RSCP Projects alternative funding streams and the use of tapering.

3 liC Business Plan Update

SR advised the Steering group that unfortunately due to extensive cuts to the liC budgets announced recently, it was predicted that a postponement or shelving of some liC funded projects would occur such as:

- Remote Rural Access point
- Market Towns Initiative
- Rural Retail Advisor.

Action

- Update at next meeting from SR and NS
- JJ /PW to discuss Rural Retail Advisor alternative funding streams (LAA)

4 Further Key Actions Determined by Steering group:

Steering Group review of joint working practices of the 3 ERP action Groups

- Facilitation of joint working on cross cutting elements of the ERP action plan (ERSAP) in order to progress actions- all
- Review of the Environmental membership and confirmation of chairmanship (SR /JJ /PW/ PB) SR/JJ
PW/PB
- **Steering Group Review of the Priorities of the ERSAP action Plan** (late 2008); All
after regional political structure has stabilised

Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) planning event for Members

- SR to liaise with Keith Blackburn re arranging a secondary event with the EPOA for members, Chairman and Vice chairs – if possible SR/KB

LAA2

ALL

- Discussion and review of the LAA2 draft at next SG meeting, ERP response if required
- **Rural Proofing**
- NS reported that RCCE will be carrying out a Rural Proofing Exercise for the new LAA. The aim of the exercise is to identify gaps and concerns visa vie rural areas and pick up environmental and social concerns.

5 Possible Topics for Future ERP Meetings

- Health - rural focus on health and provision of services in rural areas in Essex.
- Investigate this topic and make contact with new LINKs health forum (March 2008), PCTs, Voluntary Sector
- Planning Changes to Government policies regarding private sites – presentation
- LAA2

6 Post Offices

SR

SR had already outlined the current state of play in the earlier Full ERP Partnership meeting but would update the Steering group on any further developments at the next Steering Group meeting.

7 Date of Next Meeting

The next Steering Group Meeting is due to be held on 18th March 2008, 10.00am RCCE Offices, Feering.

The next 1 day event for the Full ERP Partnership and Steering Group is proposed for the Wed 18th June 2008 (9.30 am Registration, venue to be confirmed).

Meeting concluded 3.50 pm