



## Essex Rural Partnership

### ERP Full Partnership Meeting Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2009 10.00 am Essex Records Office, Chelmsford

#### Present:

JJ	John	Jowers	ECC Portfolio Holder	<i>Chair</i>
JB	John	Brown	CofE / RCCE / Rural Commission	<i>Vice-Chair</i>
CA	Chris	Allen	East of England Development Agency	
PB	Peter	Baggott	Essex Association of Local Councils	
KB	Kitty	Barrett	Braintree District Council- Locality Co-ordinator	
KeB	Keith	Blackburn	ECC Highways & Transport	
AnB	Andy	Bliss	Essex Police	<i>Speaker</i>
JaB	Jackie	Brown	RRAVS	
KB	Keith	Brown	Federation of Small Businesses	
JBu	John	Buchanan	Essex Association of Local Councils	
JC	John	Carr	Essex and Southend Links (W Esx Locality)	
KC	Keith	Cheesman	ECC Adults, Health & Community Wellbeing	<i>Speaker</i>
PC	Peter	Chillingworth	Essex Local Government Association	
SC	Sue	Cornwell	Colchester BC Warm Homes Project Officer	
KE	Ken	Edwards	Active Chelmsford / Chelmsford LSP	
IF	Ian	Flack	Essex & Southend LINK / CEMVO	<i>Speaker</i>
MG	Mike	Gogarty	NHS NE Essex	<i>Speaker</i>
EG	Ed	Gregory	ECC Policy, Community Plan'g & Regen	
MH	Mike	Hall	EEDA Assoc of Universities in East of England	
PH	Paul	Harris	Maldon District Community Transport	
SH	Suzanne	Harris	Rural Community Council of Essex	ERP co-ordinator
RH	Rebecca	Heaviside	ECC Policy, Community Plan'g & Regen	
KH	Keith	Hughes	Business Link	
SJ	Sheila	Jackman	Ongar TC	
GK	Geoffrey	King	Disability Essex	
MM	Mary	Maskell	Rural Commission	
JM	Jayne	Mason	South West Essex PCT	
DM	David	Matthews	Colchester BC	
SM	Sangita	Mittra	Essex Racial Equality Council	
LT	Louise	Tate	Probation Service	
LTu	Linda	Tubb	Essex Southend LINK (CEMVO)	
RM	Rosemary	Padfield	NFU (Essex chair)	
MP	Mick	Page	Essex Local Government Association	
RP	Rachael	Price	ECC Highways & Transport	
JR	Joanne	Richardson	ECC Life Raft Trust	<i>Speaker</i>
CR	Chris	Rust	Maldon DC	
JS	Joy	Sheppard	Essex Association of Local Councils	
NS	Nick	Shuttleworth	Rural Community Council of Essex	
DM	Darren	Smart	ECC Libraries	
JSw	Joyce	Sweeney	ECC Public Engagement	
CT	Caroline	Taylor	Essex Community Foundation	
LT	Linda	Tubbs	Essex and Southend LINK/ CEMVO	
MW	Mavis	Webster	RCCE	

IW	Iain	Wicks	Federation of Small Businesses
PW	Paul	Williams	ECC Adults, Health & Community Wellbeing
PW	Philip	Wilson	ECC Policy, Community Plan'g & Regen
GW	Gareth	Wilson	Essex Police
RW	Richard	Woolley	RCCE / East of England Rural Forum
TW	Tony	Wright	East of England Ambulance User Group

### In Attendance

KM Kirsty Monk- RCCE (Minutes)

### Apologies

RA	Rosemary	Alexander	Farm Crisis Network
JBe	Jo	Bellamy	Maldon District Council
SBr	Simon	Brice	Essex Rural Commission/NFU
ABz	Alex	Butler-Zagni	NFU
HC	Helen	Clothier	CPRE
JC	Judy	Cuddeford	BDVSA
MF	Mary	Ford	Brentwood CVS
DE	David	Eniffer	Volunteer Bureau Tendring
CG	Catherine	Gaywood	ECC
JH	John	Hall	EWT
SH	Simon	Harniess	ECC
WJ	Wendy	Jackson	ECC
LJ	Lorraine	Jarvis	Chelmsford CVS
AJ	Alison	Jennings	INTend
KL	Keith	Lawson	ECC
PM	Pauline	Mann	Tendring CT
PMu	Paul	Murphy	Maldon CVS
MR	Melanie	Rundle	CBC Warm Homes
PS	Phil	Smith	RSA
KT	Kelly	Tarling	VAEF
BT	Bridget	Tighe	Colchester BC
DW	David	Wood	Rural Action East
CM	Clive	Mardiner	Essex Racial Equality Council

### Welcome and Introductions

Action By

Chairman Cllr. John Jowers welcomed all to the meeting which would focus on the key issues of community well being, health and community policing in rural areas.

Apologies were taken as read. (Please see above for details).

### Minutes of the previous meeting 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009 & matters arising.

1 No matters of accuracy were raised

Those present agreed the minutes.

Matters Arising were dealt with in the main agenda items.

### 2 Rural Health - Discussion with Dr Mike Gogarty,

Director for Public Health - Essex County Council and North East Essex PCT

*(A full electronic copy of this presentation has been circulated with these minutes).*

MG explained that his presentation would look at the big health issues such as life expectancy and health inequalities, work on rural proofing, work by Essex County Council and National and County Initiatives. A holistic approach was needed and ECC had recognised that it was not only the responsibility of the NHS, but also about improving other services & issues, such as transport and access to services, educational attainment, economic regeneration and tackling social isolation.

### **Key points raised :Life Expectancy & Inequalities in Essex**

- Average Life Expectancy varies depending on where you live by 18.6 years across electoral wards in Essex. Major factors in determining life expectancy are: Where you live, Social Class, Education, Employment, Mental Health, Learning Difficulties, and Obesity.
- Life Expectancy differs by three years for women and five years for men between social classes.
- Educational Attainment drives social class and is also a major driver for health.
- Unemployment detrimental to all aspects individual and families' health.
- People with severe mental illness can die 15 years earlier than the general population.

MG felt that although rural areas tend overall to have longer life expectancy and are generally in keeping with statistical trends in respect of good overall health for the County as a whole, one needed to recognise that their needs are diverse, with pockets of high need and deprivation. Access to services may also be an issue, along with the impact of social isolation on longevity and health. Added to this is the detrimental effect on physical and mental health exacerbated by the recession in rural areas.

MG explained that rural communities often have diverse and specific needs at a micro level and it's important not to overlook the small rural pockets of deprivation when taking a broad group approach. There is also a need to maintain care group as well as geographical approach when tackling health issues. ECC were working to improve access to services, educational attainment and promote economic regeneration as well as projects such as the Village agents scheme, to tackle social isolation in line with national initiatives (please see attached presentation for details of county and national initiatives).

*Q: KE recognised that prioritisation for urban areas would be greater as their needs were bigger but was concerned that money would be taken from NHS budgets to put into other services such as education.*

*A: MG responded that the key message he was putting across was that Health was also about improving other issues such as education, employment and economic regeneration.*

*Q: JBU asked whether Parish Councils should be the ones to decide whether they should have a First Responder in their Parish.*

*A: MG felt that the allocation of First Responders would be best decided by the Ambulance Trust who had the necessary expert knowledge and clear overall picture of service coverage and ambulance response times.*

*Q: EG asked whether there was a danger that target setting in the NHS would be detrimental to rural areas as you get a higher yield of results for your money in urban areas.*

*A: MG felt that there was a danger but this was less about urban versus rural and more about the danger of funding the easy option which yields the most positive outcomes.*

*Q MM asked whether the CAB door to door advice scheme was available in other areas yet.*

*A: MG replied that this was currently only a CAB pilot scheme in selected locations at present.*

*SJ (North Essex Mental Health Foundation) advised that the recession was having a major impact, triggering a rise in the number of cases of mental illnesses within the County.*

### **3 Community Well Being /Village Agents- presentation by Keith Cheesman, Programme Manager, Community Wellbeing / Essex Later Life - Essex County Council**

*(A full electronic copy of this presentation has been circulated with these minutes).*

## **ECC Community Well Being and Later Life Strategy**

KC advised that according to the Government white paper "The Case For Change – Why England Needs a New Care System" (Department of Health, 2008) that due to an aging population we should expect over 1.7 million more people to have a need for care and support in 20 years' time. They predict that "The existing care and support system is not sustainable" and "In 20 years' time, the cost of disability benefits could increase by almost 50%" leading to a " £6 billion 'funding gap' in social care".

The Community Well Being strategy comprised of 3 elements: Community Wellbeing, Essex Later Life and Prevention. Common Goals / vision were to encourage and support individuals and groups to take responsibility and action to improve their health and wellbeing. ECC were working with up to 600 partners across all ECC Directorates, PCTs, District and Boroughs and Parish/ Town Councils, 3rd Sector to achieve these goals.

### **Village Agents**

KC reported on a new pilot project in Mid Essex, introducing 12 new Village Agents in Braintree, Chelmsford and Maldon from October 2009, 6 in Braintree, 3 in Chelmsford, 3 in Maldon.

Village Agents will be working in rural communities with hard to reach groups providing trusted information, help and advice to local residents, complimenting existing support services and statutory and voluntary organisations.

The project is run in Partnership, with Essex County Council (Community Wellbeing Programme), The Braintree Local Strategic Partnership and NHS Mid Essex, who have commissioned Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) as the pilot project delivery partner.

*JC felt that ECC may benefit from looking at examples of good practice from the local hospice movement.*

*KC advised that they were keen to learn best practice from key organisations.*

**Action:** KC to discuss hospice examples of best practice with JC

KC/JC

## **4 Rural Policing in Essex – Deputy Chief Constable Andy Bliss, Essex Police**

AnB advised that in reality rural areas experienced lower levels of all types of crime, experienced less serious crime and that in general crime figures were falling (down 6% in total) in Essex. However, the public perception of crime or "fear of crime" was disproportionately high when compared with the actual crime experienced.

The role of the Rural Police Officer has changed considerably in the last 50 years and the focus has changed to, Officers now deal with, road traffic accidents and deaths, artifice burglary, counter terrorism, protecting heritage, marine policing to name but a few areas of work.

Essex Police have been reviewing how to deliver the best service to rural areas and to train the police officers covering rural areas to do so. Currently there is a 20 minute response time and the target is to reduce this further. They are also working to reduce road accidents on rural roads. There is a move towards local policing or neighbourhood policing with a rise in staff on the ground and a strong emphasis on face to face control. It is hoped that Essex police will have 600 more officers by 2014.

Essex Police have also recognised a need to have longer opening hours in Police Stations and local officers are now contactable by mobile phone. Mobile police stations have also increased. Every area now has a NAPP - Neighbourhood Panel which involves and engages the local community and is a forum to learn and act on issues of concern.

Essex Police have also identified that Officers working with rural communities need to have more specialist training to understand their role and the rural communities they work with. To this end they have organised a seminar for rural Officers and PCOS in October 2009 and will be inviting rural organisations to attend and advise.

JBu reported that a particular rural parish in Basildon had been disillusioned with Policing in their Parish and had engaged a private security firm to “police” the area instead. The NAPPs had also excluded Parish Councillors from their meetings in some areas.

**Action:**

AnB was concerned to hear that a private security firm was being used and would like to talk to the Parish concerned. Regarding the NAPP there had initially been some lack of understanding by officers of the role of Parish councillors but this was now being addressed and it was he believed generally a positive experience of NAPPs in most Parishes.

AB/JBu

RP advised the partnership of a successful NAPP run by Epping farmers working together with the police to resolve local issues and hoped this could be widened out across the County

*Q: MW asked if Essex Police would reinstate Wildlife officers to protect the countryside.*

*A: AnB explained that they had moved away from a specific officer for wildlife but it was hoped that better training for rural officers would help them to understand the legislation and their role in implementing it.*

*Q: NS asked how people find out about how to get involved in NAPPs in their area and added that the ERP membership organisations could help in partnership working with Essex Police in aiding the training of Rural Officers.*

*A: AnB responded that the Essex Police website held details of all NAPPs meetings and welcomed assistance from the Essex Rural Partnership.*

**A short break for refreshments was held between 11.40 am and 12.05pm**

**5 Essex and Southend LINKs** - Presentation by Ian Flack, Essex and Southend LINK

JJ: explained that originally Peter Blackman, Chair of the Countywide Group, Essex and Southend LINK was due to speak but was unfortunately unwell. Ian Flack of the host organisation CEMVO had kindly agreed to give the presentation at short notice.

IF explained that LINK stands for Local Involvement Network – a network of individuals, groups and communities, who want to work together to improve local health and social care services. Essex & Southend LINK is a statutory body which has been created to cater for public involvement with all aspects of health and social care around the county and was the successor to the PPIF (Patient and Public Involvement Forums).

The LINK consists of the Countywide Group which steers the work of the LINK, 5 locality groups and theme groups/issue groups and has statutory powers to enter and view NHS and Social services provider’s premises. It works closely with the Overseeing and Scrutiny Committees and can affect change through identifying problems in its role as a critical friend to Health and Social Services providers in Essex.

**6 Report from the East of England Rural Forum (EERF) -Suzanne Roast (RCCE)**  
*(Please see attached EERF and Action Group report for full details)*

**EERF Annual Conference -4<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

SH reported that the Annual Conference theme was ‘Rural Communities helping the Region through the Economic Downturn’.

**Annual General Meeting - 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 – Topic Food Security**

At the AGM the following were elected as officers:

- *John Yates as Chair*
- *Pat Holtom as Vice Chair*
- *Suzanne Harris as Vice Chair*

JJ congratulated SH on her election as Vice Chair of the EERF and felt that this must be a very positive outcome for the partnership.

A full 24-page report of the EERF Annual Conference and the AGM presentations on food security can be downloaded from the EERF website: [www.eerf.org.uk/](http://www.eerf.org.uk/)

## 6 News

### **Schools Food and Farming Day**

PhW reported that there would be a Schools Food and Farming Day held on 18<sup>th</sup> June at Writtle College which is now oversubscribed (organised by CERA/Essex Agricultural Society/ NFU and ECC).

**Maldon Food Festival**– in September 2009 celebrating local produce is to be held.

### **Pub is the Hub**

PhW reported on this organisation which encourages breweries, pub owners, licensees and local communities to work together to help retain and enhance rural pubs. [Link: http://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/pithlive/](http://www.pubisthehub.org.uk/pithlive/)

### **Essex Rural Commission (ERC)**

PhW reported that the Draft ERC Report is planned for July 2009.

### **Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Essex Partnership**

NS reported that LAA is running to pretty much to plan with some queries raised regarding expediting the release of Performance Reward Grants to deliver LAA targets.

### **Life Raft Trust – Jo Richardson**

JR explained that Essex County Council will make available a £1million donation to the 'life raft trust' to keep open a range of **Essex** attractions during the economic downturn. Up to £50,000 is available for revenue expenses and complimentary business support available through Business Link Essex. Not available for national bodies, individuals or for capital grants. Trust will be launched on 7<sup>th</sup> July at Ingatestone Hall followed by several road shows around the county. A website will be available shortly but there are restrictions on publicity for the trust at the moment due to Purdah.

## 7 Reports from the Essex Rural Partnership Steering Group and Action Groups: Current Projects/ Actions for these groups are listed below.

### **Steering Group**

SH reported that the ERP Steering Group met after the full ERP meeting on 24 February. They have not met since this time, as key members have been involved in the Rural Strategy Working Group meeting/s.

(Please see the attached Action Group Report for full meeting updates)

### **Strategy Working Group**

SH advised that the Strategy Working Group met on 27<sup>th</sup> April. An outline structure for the new document was discussed and topics allocated to various members present. Support networks were identified in some cases. All leads will confer with relevant action groups in developing their sections.

### **Community Action Group – report by John Brown (Action Group Chair)**

JB reported that the CAG group had met in March and had looked at:

- Barriers to health Services in rural communities
- Migrant Worker Multi Agency Forum (Essex MAF)
- Areas lacking representation in ERP (flagged up health and mental health organisations)

### **Joint Community and Economic Action Group Meeting on Tourism**

They had also held a joint meeting with the Economic Action Group regarding Tourism in Essex on 8<sup>th</sup> May, Lisa Bones (ECC) had given a presentation showing the results of a survey revealing perceptions of Essex as a tourist destination within and outside of Essex. This had identified that a lot more work had to be done to improve the Essex image and to promote it as a real option for a tourist destination. Follow up work needs to be done with ECC to find out ways in which this can be achieved.

## **Economic Action Group – Report by Philip Wilson (Action Group Chair)**

PhW reported that the EcAG had looked at the following issues:

- Planning and Diversification Report by Keith Blackburn (ECC)
- Rural Crime
- Shortage of Rural Workers
- Dr Fieldsend's Research on Rural Jobs
- Improving Broadband connectivity in Rural Areas

PhW also reported the election of Economic Action Group members Dominic Petre (EET) and himself as representatives of the EcAG to the ERP Steering Group, following Terry Taber's retirement.

## **8 Soapbox Session**

### **Parish Magazines**

Mary Maskell (Essex Rural Commission) requested that ERP members use the Parish Magazine Network to push out all the useful information on rural issues to communities.

### **Essex Rural Fund**

Nick Shuttleworth (RCCE) reported that as part of RCCE's 80<sup>th</sup> Celebrations he was pleased to announce that RCCE has joined forces with the Essex Community Foundation to create the Essex Rural Fund. The Fund will be appealing for donations from individuals and companies to build up a regular source of funding to support charitable groups and projects in rural Essex for years to come.

It links directly with the Government's Grassroots Grants and Endowment Match Challenge which Essex Community Foundation is managing. Under Grassroots the Foundation can add 50% to any contributions from individuals or companies over the next two years. Gift Aid can also be claimed on donations from tax payers and by donating between now and March 2011 you can effectively double your donated money.

(Visit RCCE's website for further details [www.essexrcc.org.uk](http://www.essexrcc.org.uk)).

## **9 AOB**

### **Ashlyns (Organic) Training -Can Cook Will Cook Project**

SH announced an exciting new project funded by Big Lottery money, run in partnership with Ashlyns Training School and RCCE. The award will essentially fund courses enabling the Training School to recruit staff and offer free training courses to many that would otherwise not be able to afford them. Over £400,000 has been awarded for the project. Entitled **Can Cook Will Cook** the project will work with families who have poor basic skills or other social disadvantages. Workshops will develop skills in numeracy and literacy while sharing knowledge about cookery and nutrition. Trained chefs will lead cookery courses in the training kitchen, in schools and at community venues.

## **10 Dates of Future Meetings**

### **Village Agents Conference**

Wednesday 17 June 2009, Towerlands, Braintree, Essex, 13.00 – 17.00pm. Visit [www.essexrcc.org.uk](http://www.essexrcc.org.uk) for details.

### **Sustainable Rural Communities**

**Friday 26 June 2009, 10am - 4pm**, Braintree District Council, Braintree, Essex

## **11 Date of Next Essex Rural Full Partnership Meeting**

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009, **Time:** 9.30am Registration and Refreshments 10-00am – 1.15pm meeting followed by a buffet lunch and the Essex Rural Partnership Steering Group at 2.00pm, **Venue:** Saling Millennium Hall, Great Saling

**Meeting concluded 1.10 pm**