



**ERP Full Partnership Meeting
Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th July 2010
Maldon Town Football Club**

Present: see final page of minutes

Action

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Chairman Cllr. John Jowers welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were taken as read. (Please see above for details).

2. Minutes.

2.1 Accuracy

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2010 were agreed.

2.2 Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

3. The Shoreline Management Plan.

The Chairman introduced Karen Thomas who gave a presentation on the Essex and Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the coast and estuaries between Bradwell and Southend-on-Sea (*available to download shortly via ERP website*). The SMP's aims are to inform and get responses from interested groups or individuals on the understanding of why and how coastal flooding and erosion might occur, their effects on people, their use of the land and the environment. The consultation (now closed) was to obtain views on the proposals for managing the Essex and South Suffolk shoreline over 100 years, looking at the short, medium and long term.

Karen explained this is a partnership plan with over 200 key stakeholders and the responses are currently being collated, finalised in September, going to elected County Members meetings in the autumn, with a final plan out after Christmas from which an Action Plan will be prepared with costs etc.

The Chairman invited questions, as follows:

Question 1 – Mike Hall, Association of Universities in East of England - How does the Plan link in with off-shore power production, i.e. wind farms?

Answer – The Environment Agency look at all such proposals and discussions are already underway on how these will feed into the SMP.

Question 2 – Dominic Petre, Essex Tourism Association – How will you ensure there is no duplicated work in terms of where and how you link in with other SMP's north and south?

Answer – We've looked at from various aspects, including flood storage zones,

Thames barrier, etc. and will take on board to make sure the plan develops to fit.

Question 3 – Graham Underwood, University of Essex – How will the SMP work alongside Marine Conservation and are you aware of the work being done by them?

Answer – We are aware of the huge range of work and we have taken on board representations and suggestions and will continue to do so.

Question 4 – George Courtauld, RCCE & Haven Gateway – working with Haven Gateway, there I am aware of projects being planned, we need defences which will last into the future, will the SMP take this into account?

Answer – We have a range of defences already in place, some of which were built in Roman Times, there are earth embankments etc. and a whole range of different defences. Following the 1953 floods, there has been significant investment. For the future, technical advances are being explored.

Question 5 – George Courtauld, RCCE & Haven Gateway – there has been discussion around building a huge ‘floating’ airport in the Thames estuary; will plans like these be taken into account?

Answer – Difficult to react to an idea under discussion, we can only look at when the plan is completed and submitted.

Question 6 – John Hall, Essex Wildlife Trust – there are biodiversity sites behind sea walls. How does the SMP cope with the fact that several of the sites are in an area for realignment?

Answer – We do recognise the importance of the sites and this will be a challenge. If we try to hold the line, at some time these will be compromised by over spilling. We will be trying to manage rather than holding the line for ever.

Question 7 – There has been talk about replacing sites, would they be in Essex?

Answer – We would put sites back as close as possible to where they were originally.

Question 8 – Paul Williams, Essex County Council – How does this plan tie in with plans we have for dealing with inland flooding.

Answer – Already working with others to bring data together and will continue over next few years.

Question 9 – John Carr, LINKs – Has provision of health facilities been factored into flood risk sites, i.e. hospitals?

Answer – (JJ) – We have emergency planning system and regularly undertake ‘exercises’.

After thanking Karen Thomas for her presentation and full responses to all questions, JJ concluded the item by noting that implications to Essex as a county from the plan are considerable.

4 **Essex Coastal Tourism.**

JJ introduced Sergi Jarques, Customer Insight Manager, East of England Tourism who gave a presentation on Essex Coastal Tourism. This covered:

- Economy (volume and value)
- Supply and distribution
- Understanding demand

- Opportunities for coastal tourism

Sergi reported that statistics show, tourism is worth in excess of £2.5 billion to the county, 60% of this value relates to coastal districts. To increase the income, East of England Tourism believe it is important to extend the seasonality by getting people to stay longer and travel inland more to the rural areas of the district. Sergi suggested there are opportunities/markets to achieve this aim by encouraging and promoting the following:

- Activity tourism (walking/cycling)
- Water sports (sea kayaking, windsurfing etc)
- Arts and heritage (including events and festivals)
- Meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions (unusual venues)
- Cruise industry (Harwich International UK's third busiest cruise port)

Sergi Jarques responded to the following questions:

Question 1 – George Courtauld, RCCE & Haven Gateway – Haven Gateway supports large numbers of cruise liners which bring in thousands of tourists en route to other parts of the UK. Tourists need information at the ports to encourage them to visit places of interest in Essex.

Answer - Information is available at ports, airports (Stansted) etc. Business visitors are also a source of income and can be tapped into with information available at hotels.

Question 2 – Alison Jennings, InTend – Tourist Information centres are closing down – how do we promote information if this continues?

Answer – Accessing data is crucial and other ways are being looked into, e.g. via ticket machines in car parks.

Question 3 – Dominic Petre – From the statistics you've provided, seaside occupancy is doing well, we need to let people know they can stay in the countryside and promote inland accommodation.

Answer – There is a need to encourage people to go inland by providing information on all places to stay.

Question 4 – John Carr, LINKs – This is a beautiful county with many places to visit. However, we need to improve public transport to reach the sites of interest as is done in other parts of the country e.g. Hadrians Wall.

Answer – JJ responded – we do provide transport by way of community transport. ECC, districts and boroughs would like to do more, however it is a question of balance.

Statement from the floor – It's about bringing good information on what is available and working more closely together. Also, many of the coastal towns 'close down' at 5.30, nothing happening in the evenings for visitors to do.

JJ Thanked Sergi Jarques for his presentation (*copy presentation in agenda pack*).

A 20 minute interval was taken for refreshments at 11.45 am.

5 **A Woodland Strategy for Essex.**

Matt Searle, introduced by JJ, gave a presentation on 'A Woodland Strategy for Essex'. He explained the purpose of the strategy is to provide leadership and direction on the future management of woodlands in Essex. It focuses the priorities identified in the national and regional tree and woodland strategies to a county level (*copy of the strategy distributed in agenda pack*).

The objectives and actions from the plan will be achieved by stakeholders adopting a clear strategy by working in partnership.

ECC will have a delivery plan for their own woodlands and it is hoped that individuals and organisations will follow suit.

The Draft Woodland Strategy for Essex will be going out to consultation to wider communities, results collated and possibly published by January 2011.

There followed discussion on how ERP could adopt this draft strategy and it was agreed the Steering Group would further discuss.

Steering
Group

Questions were taken as follows:

Question 1 – Ken Edwards - The woodlands you are referring to, are they all in rural areas?

Answer – Majority of woodland is rural, small pockets are not.

Question 2 – Rob Wise, Country Land and Business Association – There is a potential overlap with private woodland, it doesn't say this is a strategy for County Council owned woodlands. Are you trying to suggest this is a blue print for woodlands across the county, publically or privately owned?

Answer – The latter is correct, for all woodlands private or public.

JJ thanked Matt for attending and presenting the strategy.

6 **Report from East of England Rural Forum (EERF).**

SH reported on one meeting since June at Wimpole Hall, which included discussion on launch of Regional Rural White Paper, text drafted and agreed – provisional date 8th September, report from Wimpole Estate Manager and Regional Rural Forum Website.

Minutes of the meeting can be found at www.eerf.org.uk

7 **ERP Action Groups.**

7.1 Community Action Group – Report from Canon John Brown

Canon John Brown reported on 30th June meeting when Brenda Towle, Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services who supports and encourages youth organisations across the Council gave a presentation with topics on how can support be given on what is already going on and how can we link up with these schemes. Also discussed, the key role parish councils play in terms of rural youth and a presentation was given Joy Sheppard on encouraging the setting up of new parish councils.

7.2 Economic Action Group – Report from Philip Wilson

PW reported on 21st May meeting which included a presentation from Lloyd Felton, County Broadband on rural broadband provision including results from a recent survey. By the next meeting it is hoped more will be known of new Government's plans and future policies.

7.3 Environmental Action Group – Report from John Hall

JH reported the April re-launch meeting was well attended. Looked at key aims from overall strategy where a difference can be made. Focused on Shoreline Management Plan. Next meeting 3rd September 2010 looking at access to natural green spaces, living landscapes, local wildlife sites and taking forward ideas on Woodland Strategy.

7.4 Steering Group – Report from Suzanne Harris

SH reported 26th May meeting was post General Election and discussion on impact of new Government's legislative programme. (*Copies of minutes were available at the meeting*)

8 Soapbox.

8.1 Fiona Bryant, Director, Essex, Southend and Thurrock, East of England Development Agency (EEDA) updated the meeting on the future of EEDA and continued work, which includes delivering remaining funding and 70 meetings this year, 60% in Essex.

8.2 Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) – Rob Wise, Country Land and Business Association. There is an opportunity to express views and come forward with proposals for LEPs. Concerns expressed that rural issues are not always best dealt with at a county level. JJ responded by saying there are a vast number of proposals with some district groupings. Guidance given indicates 40 LEPs maximum in the country.

8.3 Phil Smith, Rural Shops Alliance reported Ed Davey new Minister has indicated the new Government did not want to preside over any mass post office closure. They be increasing social network payments from £150 million to £180 million and encouraging banks to use Post Offices.

There being no further business, the Chairman, thanked everyone for attending, closed the meeting at 1.15pm and invited attendees to have lunch.

Present:

	Rosemary	Alexander	Farm Crisis Network
	Lindsey	Allen	Forestry Commission
	Peter	Baggott	Essex Association of Local Councils
Revd Canon	John	Brown	Vice Chair of ERP
	Keith	Brown	Federation of Small Businesses
	Fiona	Bryant	East of England Development Agency
Cllr	John	Buchanan	Essex Association of Local Councils
	John	Carr	LINKs
	Peter	Chillingworth	Colchester Borough Council
	George	Courtauld	Rural Community Council of Essex
	Ken	Edwards	Chelmsford Sport / Chelmsford LSP
	David	Evans	Colchester CVS
	Peter	Garrett	Maldon District Council
Dr	Chris	Gibson	Natural England
	Linda	Hadley	Rural Community Council of Essex
	John	Hall	Essex Wildlife Trust
	Mike	Hall	Assoc of Universities in East of England
	Suzanne	Harris	Rural Community Council of Essex
	Paul	Harris	Maldon District Community Transport
	Sergi	Jarques	East of Engalnd Tourism
Cllr	John	Jowers	Chair of ERP / Essex County Council
	Geoffrey	King	Disability Essex
	Andrew	Lowing	Rochford District Council
	Pooneeta	Mahadeo	Essex County Council
	Tricia	Moxey	CPREssex
Revd Dr	Julie	Nelson	Church of England
	Joanne	Newton	Essex County Council
	Dominic	Petre	Essex Tourism Association
	Tracy	Rudling	Colchester CVS
	Matt	Searle	Essex County Council
	Joy	Sheppard	Essex Association of Local Councils
	Sue	Sheppard	Rural Community Council of Essex
	Nick	Shuttleworth	Rural Community Council of Essex
	Darren	Smart	Essex County Council
	Phil	Smith	Rural Shops Alliance
	Brian	Stacey	Essex County Council
	Karen	Thomas	Environment Agency
	Graham	Underwood	University of Essex
	Pennie	Wallace	Writtle College
	Paul	Williams	Essex County Council
	Philip	Wilson	Essex County Council
	Rob	Wise	Country Land and Business Association
	Tony	Wright	LINKs
	Wai	Yeung	LINKs
	John	Zammit	Essex County Council