

**East Sussex Rural Partnership
Monday 6 June 2011
Reid Hall, Wartling
2.00pm – 4.00pm
Minutes**

Members Present:	Don Cranfield Emma Drew Godfrey Fitzhugh Teresa Gittins Lucy Knott Susie Mullins Graham Peters Tom Stuart Katy Thomas Cllr Bob Tidy	Plumpton College Action in rural Sussex Federation of Small Businesses Action in rural Sussex Lewes District Council Lewes District Council WARR Partnership (Chair) Wealden District Council East Sussex County Council East Sussex County Council
Members Apologies:	Gill Cameron-Waller Anne Crone Paul Hoppen Charlie Lant Jason Lavender Jeremy Leggett Brenda Mason Gillian van der Meer Hamish Monro Sheila O'Sullivan Martin Searle Cllr Sylvia Tidy Chris Paterson	Wealden District Council WARR Partnership Lewes District Council Wealden District Council High Weald AONB Action in rural Sussex Rother District Council NFU CLA / WARR Partnership Hastings and Rother / East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT Federation of Small Businesses East Sussex County Council South Downs National Park Authority
Secretariat:	Simon Kiley	AirS

Minutes

		Actions
1	Introductions and Apologies as above	
2	Minutes of the last meeting of the 10 March 2011 and items for discussion under AOB The minutes were taken as an accurate record. All of the associated actions had been completed. Bob Tidy asked that representation at the Rural Forum South East by Councillor Sylvia Tidy be discussed under Any Other Business.	

	<p>Part 1: For Discussion</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Local Enterprise Partnership Report – Katy Thomas, Economic Development Manager, East Sussex County Council</p> <p>Katy Thomas gave a presentation which summarised the recent activity in relation to the Local Enterprise Partnership.</p> <p>The organisational board had recently been reduced in size from 43 representatives to an executive of 24. Representatives from East Sussex include councillors from Wealden, Eastbourne and ESCC along with Eastbourne Chambers of Commerce, BT and General Dynamics.</p> <p>The interim chair of the LEP is George Keiffer of the Haven Gateway Business Partnership (Essex). Essex CC is acting as the secretariat from the LEP for the first 6 months. Contact details for the LEP are LEP@essex.gov.uk (01245) 430664 www.essex.gov.uk/lep</p> <p>One of the initial priorities identified by the LEP executive is to unlock the potential of rural East Sussex, Greater Essex and Kent and Medway. A meeting on the 23 June will seek to discuss this more fully.</p> <p>Broadband Summit</p> <p>Katy Thomas provided a brief overview of the Broadband summit which had been held in East Sussex in May. Discussions had largely focused establishing and boosting business, particularly in rural areas through the provision of greater broadband coverage and speed. It was seeking to prevent a digital divide and isolation for the most vulnerable.</p> <p>East Sussex County Council was developing a Broadband Plan for the county which it would be submitting to BDUK later in the year. The county is seeking to procure a countywide PSN (Public Service Network) this year and use it to aid the delivery of connectivity. A capital investment of £2 million has been set aside by ESCC.</p> <p>Currently a mapping process is underway to determine the scale and location of the problem. In rural areas of East Sussex some 22,500 properties do not currently meet the government’s universal service commitment of 2 Mbps. A total of 44 out of 63 exchanges in the county are not unbundled.</p> <p>The vision is for the competitive provision of superfast broadband offering typical speeds of 100Mbps to everyone in East Sussex by 2017.</p> <p>Action: Make presentation slides available to members.</p> <p>Teresa Gittins asked whether the rural papers developed by the 3 Rural Partnerships in the LEP area had been discussed and if so, would a response forthcoming? Katy Thomas highlighted that there was no news on this as yet.</p> <p>Graham Peters asked which organisations had been represented at the Broadband Summit. Katy Thomas highlighted that it had been the County Council, the Federation of Small Businesses and SeaSpace.</p> <p>Bob Tidy highlighted that previous approaches towards broadband had used ‘champions’ as a means of promoting it and that this may be a useful mechanism this time around. Don Cranfield supported this, but highlighted the need to promote it and identify the eligible individuals.</p>	<p>AirS</p>

	<p>Teresa Gittins asked whether public access to the Public Service Network. Katy Thomas highlighted that procurement over this system was ongoing but that the intention was to tap into this.</p> <p>Action: Exploration of the potential value of community ‘broadband’ champions</p>	GP/TG
4	<p>Neighbourhood Plans and Localism Update – Susie Mullins, Senior Planning Officer, Lewes District Council</p> <p>Susie Mullins provided an overview of Neighbourhood Plans and the Localism Bill. This looked at the principles of Localism and how these were being translated into the Neighbourhood Planning Process.</p> <p>The Localism Bill is currently passing through parliament with a view to being given Royal Assent late in 2011 and secondary legislation in early 2012. One of the key changes it is introducing is in the policy element of the planning system with communities being able to develop the planning policies for their area through the development of Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plans will be community initiated, cover parished and non-parished areas although it will not necessarily have to cover the whole of this area. The plan will need to consider national policy and be in conformity with strategic policies.</p> <p>Lewes District Council, South Downs National Park Authority, DCLG and Ringmer Parish Council are all working on a Vanguard Scheme to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Ringmer. This Vanguard will inform secondary legislation and guidance.</p> <p>Initial meetings have been undertaken and all parties are working to develop a strategy for moving things forward. The next stage will be that the community will prepare the plan with assistance from Lewes DC and other stakeholders after extensive community engagement, it will then be independently examined and potentially go to referendum before being adopted by the local authority.</p> <p>Various questions were asked as to how these would be funded. Susie Mullins highlighted that certain issues surrounding the funding of various elements were still unclear, but that this would be explained in the near future.</p> <p>Action: Make presentation slides available to members.</p> <p>b) East Sussex Rural Forum – Localism Bill</p> <p>Teresa Gittins provided verbal feedback on the 2 Localism Bill events run in East Sussex which were attended by 112 people.</p> <p>These had identified 3 key facts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Localism was a positive move in that it promoted democracy, which if delivered effectively may lead to an improvement in local service delivery. 2. That more information was required as was practical support. 3. That people and organisations were concerned over the current lack of detail and were awaiting clarification on a number of elements. <p>Teresa also made clear that additional training and events in relation to Neighbourhood Planning run by AirS would occur in the autumn and that members would be informed of this.</p>	AirS

<p>5</p>	<p>Work Programme – focusing on delivery in rural East Sussex – Emma Drew, Marketing and Business Development Manager, Action in rural Sussex</p> <p>Emma Drew provided a verbal update on the current status of the Work Programme in East Sussex.</p> <p>The Welfare to Work Programme launched by the previous government had a limited rural focus and had led providers to focus on the ‘low hanging fruit’ in urban areas. The Work Programme sought to overcome these problems and provide a more holistic approach.</p> <p>The Work Programme is a 5 year programme (with a 2 year extension possibility). It will be operating in Sussex, Kent and Surrey through 2 main primary contractors which are Avanta and G4S with sub-contracts to AirS, other RCCs and others. The focus is two-fold, firstly to provide start-to-finish support to individuals to get them back into work and secondly as a knowledge-broker. The project goes live on 13 June.</p> <p>Emma highlighted that Action in rural Sussex were working with various partners on elements of the program, but additional opportunities may arise for involvement. Once the program is underway, updates will be provided as to how this may occur.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>DEFRA Rural Knowledge monitoring and information request – Simon Kiley, Research and Policy Officer, Action in rural Sussex</p> <p>Simon Kiley provided a presentation outlining the information which AirS was now contracted to report on by Defra as part of its role as the Rural Community Council in East Sussex. The organisation was being expected to capture grass roots information on various themes and feed these back to Defra.</p> <p>Four key themes are to be monitored on a quarterly basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Services and Transport • Fuel Poverty and Energy Generation • Broadband <p>Whilst AirS can report on its own activities in relation to these themes (both strategic and direct support) it is also being asked to feedback the activity driven by other organisations and bodies in the county.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Rural Partnership could perform a key function through which this information could be captured from members, be collated and then re-distributed back out. This would not only keep members informed of activity in relation to these key issues, but also ensure that Defra is kept informed of the work being undertaken in East Sussex or the particular problems which the county faces.</p> <p>This would occur on a quarterly basis on a timetable very similar to the Rural Partnership meeting cycle and would ensure that Partnership members shared their activity in relation to these themes. A template would be distributed to partners in advance of each meeting and the issue would also be raised as part of the agenda. The information would be captured after the meeting and then distributed with the papers in advance of the next Partnership meeting.</p> <p>Action: Make presentation slides available to members.</p> <p>Action: Distribute reporting template for capturing information from stakeholders in advance of next meeting.</p>	<p>AirS SK</p>

<p>7</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Bob Tidy commented that Cllr Sylvia Tidy was seeking clarification on whether the Rural Partnership would like her to continue to attend the Rural Forum South East on its behalf.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Rural Partnership would like Cllr Tidy to continue to attend the RFSE on its behalf. If the structure or format of the RFSE changed then this position would be re-examined.</p> <p>Action: Inform Cllr Tidy that the Rural Partnership wish her to continue in her role as its representative at the Rural Forum South East.</p>	<p>BT</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Date of next Rural Partnership meeting</p> <p>The next Rural Partnership meeting will be on Monday 5 September 2011 at the Reid Hall, Wartling starting at 2.00pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 4.15pm