

RURAL VOICES RURAL CHOICES

PARTNERSHIP MEETING NOTES

11 June 2003

Present:

Cllr Shirley James (Chair)	(SJ)
Nick Wiseman	(NW)
Cllr Sarah Osborne	(SO)
Ian Chisnall	(IC)
Dr Alex McGilveray	(AM)
Willie Edmonds	(WE)
Ch Insp Jim Taylor	(JT)
Sgt Alan Leslie	(AL)
PC Mark Cranley	(MC)
Tom Hawthorne	(TH)
Pauline Lewis	(PL)
Owen Clifford	(OC)

Apologies: **Jeremy Leggett, Roger Moore, Paul Rideout, Ali Cardosi, PC Bob Nye, Jessica Britton, Jemma Wray, Cllr Liz Lee**

1 Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes were approved and there were no matters arising.

2. Update on LSP and Community Strategy.

OC gave an update on the proposed agenda for the next LSP on the 30 June. The main topic would be the discussion of the developing area investment framework AIF. Some of those present had already attended information events related to the development of the AIF and were concerned about the lack of capacity of the rural sector to properly engage in the process in the district and the current lack of an identified delivery mechanism. A seminar for LSP members across East Sussex was being staged by the ESEP in July and attendees would be sought at the next LSP meeting. OC was asked to raise the concerns with LDC about how it will engage with the AIF. It was suggested AiRS should also complete an up to date partnership-mapping exercise to establish the role of the various partnerships that represent rural interests in the district.

3. Transport

TH explained that 2 successful “countrylinks” routes were operating in the northern rural area of the district but that he was looking for other options to develop to maximise potential grant availability. This may include working with other area partnerships where such priorities had been established. LDC had agreed publication of Countrylinks on their website, as they were a founding partner in the scheme. OC to check this had been actioned.

Rebecca Meitlis would be asked for an update on progress concerning speeding.

4. Youth Consultation

OC summarised the results of the recent youth consultation exercise including the top 10 issues identified by the young people. It was agreed to action the following items:

- **Transport** – TH to liaise with schools to promote “countrylinks” and explain current timetable and availability.
- **Youth Facilities** – East Chiltington has agreed to provide a converted store for youth community use. Young people will need to help with the conversion and decoration, this was a low cost sustainable option arising from the village action plan.

It was agreed that the outcome summary as presented should help inform the development of village action plans across the district JT suggested area partnerships’ and Parish Councils should utilise external funding opportunities like the Children’s Fund grant scheme to help realise local projects such as that undertaken by East Chiltington. SJ as Chair of the Local Network Fund assessment panel for East Sussex, fully supported this approach and agreed to circulate application forms for that. JT highlighted the work undertaken in Newhaven to provide a new skatepark and to use this to engage with young people on a range of social issues.

IC was keen that RVRC took the young peoples priorities seriously and made every effort to take it forward as a key plank of rural development. IC recognised churches had a role to play and could be encouraged to “Modernise” their approach. It would be useful if a list of church youth groups could be developed setting out their facilities and coverage. IC would be happy to co-ordinate a list if information could be passed to him.

5. Broadband

AM felt if the rural economy were to develop it was essential that access to Broadband be established. He had received some 25 responses from local communities that despite requests BY would not enable local exchanges to receive Broadband unless a minimum of 300 service take ups were pledged in advance. AM had recently discussed the issue with Sean Nolan (ESCC) and his colleague Sally Mitcham who were trying to negotiate with BT to form a “joint venture partnership” including alternative means of access e.g. wireless & satellite. Sally was invited to engage with LSP’s in the process to add support. If the LSP or area partnerships wanted to pursue the matter they were invited to contact Sally Mitcham direct: sally.mitcham@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

6. Election of Vice Chair

SJ explained that whilst she was happy to continue as Chair of RVRC there may be occasion whether planned or unplanned when she could not attend a meeting and was therefore keen to secure a vice-chair who would be able to deputise in her absence. No nominations were forthcoming and it was agreed to carry over to the next meeting.

7. Children’s Fund Partnership

(A representative from RVRC is needed to sit on the Children’s Fund Partnership. There was some confusion at the meeting between this and the Local Network Fund)

As had been mentioned earlier SJ was chair of the Local Network Fund assessment panel for East Sussex and is due to shortly be elected as vice-chair in West Sussex. SJ explained there was in the region of £1m of funding *available (not clear if this is for Children’s Fund or Local Network Fund)* across the whole of Sussex including Brighton & Hove as well. Up to £7k was available for each grant towards capital projects with a youth focus. It will fund new initiatives and must be seen as 100% funder (no match funded projects).

No representative from RVRC will be available to sit on the Children’s Fund Partnership.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of RVRC will be held on Tuesday 16th September 2003 in Ringmer (venue to be confirmed).

9. AOB

JT gave a presentation on behalf of the Lewes District Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). He explained how after a review of the work of the CDRP the decision had been taken to move away from a thematic approach to dealing with crime and disorder. There has been a move to integrate the work of the CDRP and for that matter Sussex Police with the 5 area partnerships established in the district. This would enable a community led approach to both identifying issues of local concern and working with the CDRP to find solutions. The Lewes District was diverse both geographically and with regard to the distinct communities from rural to market town to coastal ports.

JT suggested AL sit on RVRC and that a representative from RVRC sits upon the CDRP so as to complete the communication loop.

Jeremy Legett had previously suggested a bid be developed to the community fund for a development worker to assist RVRC to realise its priorities. It was agreed this would be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

It was suggested that future meeting dates and venues be agreed well in advance, say 12 months hence as most members of RVRC had many other commitments.

IC requested the Youth Priorities list is circulated with the minutes.