

**EERF Steering Group**  
**9.30am 16 September 2009**  
**National Farmers Union Offices, Newmarket**  
**Minutes**

**Attendees**

Francis Bedding	John Mullen
Charles Taylor	Pat Holtom
Suzanne Harris	David Wood
Mags Lambert (notes)	

**Apologies**

John Yates (Chair)	Kate Belinis
Sally Williams	Martin Collison
Kirsten Bennett	Nicola Lloyd
Graham Hedger	Sarah Hughes

In John Yates' absence, Pat Holtom chaired the meeting.

**1. Welcome**

1.1 Pat Holtom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Regional Rural White Paper**

The draft Scoping Paper had been circulated to members of the Steering Group prior to the meeting and views on the document were asked for by the Chair. It was thought that in light of the hope of receiving EEDA funding to produce this White Paper that reference ought to be made to the document it is superseding, ie East of England Regional Rural Development Framework, and that this would make it known where the White Paper will fit into what currently exists.

David Wood estimated that the cost of producing the paper would be approximately £20,000 and that the existing EERF budget would not stretch to such an amount. It was hoped that funding would be received but that when recruiting consultants to carry out the work, the fact that funding was not actually in place would have to be given specific mention in case we did not get it and the project could not go ahead.

The Steering Group unanimously gave it its formal recommendation.

**ACTION:** David Wood to send the scoping document by Friday 18 September to Cindy Winn and Fiona Bryant at EEDA specifically mentioning that this document required some urgent attention and could supersede/compliment/update the EE Regional Rural Development Framework.

**2. EERF Planning – Next Meeting**

The meeting confirmed that the topic of the next meeting would be Recession and Rural Economy. David had circulated the Federation of Small Businesses papers and it was decided that the FSB should be asked to present at the next meeting giving an explanation of

how small rural businesses were coming out of the recession and what would help them to succeed. Pat suggested Robin Twigg, Regional Adviser of the FSB as a suitable presenter if available.

Suzanne mentioned that Essex County Rural Forum had been intending to make a presentation at a recent meeting but that the speaker, Jenny Lewsey, Economic Development Officer at Maldon had been unable to present as she was unwell. The presentation was prepared and ready to use if required at another meeting. Suzanne suggested that this presentation on the subject of the small market town of Maldon may be expanded to cover a regional viewpoint and be used at the next EERF meeting.

**ACTION:** Suzanne to ask for Jenny's presentation to be sent to David Wood for David to check whether it was suitable to be used.

It was also decided that an update on RDPE would be a useful agenda item but only if it was given a positive approach. Names suggested as possible presenters for this subject were Mike Carter, Landskills East's Mike Mack from Easton College or Mike Appleyard of Lantra.

The venue for the next meeting would be at a central regional location and Pat would ask EERF members for any suggestions to be given to Mags after the meeting today.

### **3. Any other matters not on agenda**

Suzanne had spoken with a representative of the Village Halls Adviser for Essex and they mentioned that there was no longer any dedicated funding for Community Buildings. They asked whether the EERF would be prepared to issue a letter of support and this matter should be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

**ACTION:** David to add item to next agenda.

### **4. Date of next meeting**

The next Steering Group meeting would be held at 2.30pm after the next East of England Rural Forum meeting on 9 December 2009.

### **Close of Meeting**