

Devon Rural Network Policy Steering Group Minutes

Wednesday 20th April 2008, 10 am to 12 pm, held at the Sticklepath Village Hall, Sticklepath

Present:

Dr Matt Lobley	University of Exeter	Phil Markham (for C France)	Dartmoor NPA
Jay Talbot	Community Council for Devon	Lynn Thornton	DCC Transport
Jen Brogan	DRN	Pete Tansey	Devon Renaissance
Paul Gompertz	Devon Wildlife Trust	Tony Skeel	Learning Skills Council
Martin Taylor	Conservation	Philip Wagstaff	Churches Together in Devon
Julia Page	Devon PCT	Charlie Plowden	East Devon DC
Sue Smith	Devon CC	Stephen Bashford	South West RDA

Apologies:

Prof Ian Mercer	South West Forest, DRN Chair	Michael Cozens	South Hams DC
Tom Langdon-Davis	Devon Towns Forum	David Incoll	Devon CEX's Group
Paul Sadler	Environment Agency	Leanne Crawford	DRN
Martyn Warren	Rural Futures Unit	Mary Ridgway	DSHG
Humphrey Temperley	Devon CC	Steve Pitcher	North Devon Council
Emma Woodhouse	NFU		

1 Election of new PSG Chair

JB started the meeting by announcing that there had been 2 nominations for Philip Wagstaff (from David Incoll and Mary Talbot-Rosevear). JB asked whether there were any more nominees, no response. PT proposed Philip Wagstaff, Sue Smith seconded, all were in agreement.

Phil Wagstaff will now be the DRN Chair for the next two years and wanted to record thanks to Ian Mercer for all he has done for the network and looks forward to continuing the good work.

2/3/4 Minutes/Matters arising/Matters brought forward at the chair's discretion

Minutes all agreed

Post offices – JB mentioned that DCC are hosting a meeting to discuss Post Office closures in May. Chris France, Pete Tansey and Michael Cozens will be attending the meeting and will update JB after the meeting.

SS mentioned a report that is being sent to DCC Executive on Post office closures. Happy to circulate to group

Action: SS to send JB post office closure report to send to group

5 Presentation on the PCT/DCC Strategic Framework – Julia Page, Devon PCT

Presentation attached.

Julia started by highlighting the importance of responding to the consultation, that the rural aspect should be critically viewed.

There are now statistics etc available that are stored on a database, figures go down to town level. Include all sorts e.g. condition specific information, obesity figures etc.

The consultation is open until 31st May.

Questions arising:

PT – is demographic change exponential? *There is a fairly straight increase in older people and that has a care implication*

PT – How are the PCT funded? On population levels or needs? *Funding predominantly comes from government and population and need are factors, the strategic framework will help to direct the funding/areas of work*

PG – it seems that there is a new emphasis in various organisations on health and welfare, Natural England have healthy environments, DWT, environmental orgs – do these organisations all link

together? DSP has a health and wellbeing partnership within its structure and that group has some LAA outcomes. Perhaps that partnership needs to be widened to include the environmental theme, Rural also needs to be included especially the rural proofing aspect.

LT – where is database available? On PCT website or DCC, any problems contact Julia.

LT – Transport and Access are still not featured heavily enough, not involved enough when it comes to planning. Transport and access needs to be better integrated in to partnership working.

SB – the emphasis in the document is on partnership working which is really positive, health is fundamental to demographic change and it demo change needs to be a higher priority.

JT – CCD have already responded to consultation and copy has been sent to JB, DRN really need to respond also (CRAG have planned to respond). Whilst supportive of the strategic partnership as mentioned above, what actually changes?

SS – presentation very clear, in terms of economy the health sector has high rate of employment and therefore there are labour and skills needs there. Productivity is very important. ICT needs joining up, DCC doing a lot of work on ICT and rural hubs. Also DCC looking at targeting those on lower incomes with regards to food and drink.

6 Presentation on Rural Community Buildings research – Jay Talbot, CCD

Link to <http://www.devonrcc.org.uk/page/research.php> where the research report is published.

Jay ran through the main findings of the report including the development of the Devon Association of Community Buildings which has been established over the last 12 months and is an independent charity with their own website www.dacb.org.uk and is entirely user led.

Questions:

PT – there are some strong models from around the country that can be replicated where time has been spent in supporting the development of ICT and using these community buildings as work hubs, BT is keen to support communities to do this.

CP – EDDC is looking at reducing its carbon footprint and looking to community buildings and how they are used and utilised is rising up the agenda. There needs to be the correct ICT in place and any support from CCD would be welcomed.

SS – highlighted the issue of competition between local halls, perhaps more collaboration would benefit the communities themselves and offer more. There maybe an opportunity of more clustering through the parish planning process

7 Feedback from AGM and Stakeholder Jury

JB briefly fed back about the AGM, not very well attended but a summary of progress was highlighted by Ian Mercer, Michael Winter especially thanked Phil Collins who has officially stood down from DRN, Phil was instrumental in the development of DRN.

Matt Lobley will be presenting on the report of the stakeholder jury at the next PSG meeting.

The event was a successful pilot and will be repeated in the future but there will be some minor changes to the organising and running of the day.

8 Action Group updates

SFFG

JB reported that the group had not met since Feb where a strategic review was carried out; the report has been produced and will be circulated shortly.

Some members of the SFFG are working in partnership with DCC and others around the county to develop a project development support for Axis 1 and 3.11 of the RDPE. This support will help the land based sector access money from these axis.

JB also noted that David Rodda of the Cornwall Agrifood Council is supporting all the counties to do

this work and David Incoll had suggested a presentation from David would be useful. All agreed

Action: JB to arrange a presentation from David Rodda at a future PSG meeting.

STAG

Charlie reported that the STAG last met in February where they had heard about the new Destination Devon set up and the role that South West Tourism and the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP's) will be taking in the future. The role of the STAG is being established and the group are meeting in May and an update will be available at the next PSG meeting

CRAG

Phil W reported that the group had met earlier in May to proof the LAA. Upcoming consultations include the PCT Strategic Framework, the post office closures and the RSS.

It was also noted that as Phil is now DRN chair that a new chair of CRAG would be needed, this will be discussed with the group at the next meeting which will take place at the end of May.

ED

Paul G reported that the group met at the end of March where the discussion was predominantly around how to take the group forward. PG has been tasked with writing a manifesto which will be presented to the ED group at the next meeting on 23rd May.

VCS

Jay T reported that the group meets twice a year and last met in November. The group are concentrating on a few aspects including accessibility and transport which Lynn Thornton is leading on. More updates in the future

Any issues raised at these groups can be added to the PSG agenda, please keep JB informed.

9 Dates of Next Meeting

JB asked the group whether there were better locations for the PSG to meet, all agreed around Exeter or Okehampton was preferable and fair to all. Tedburn St Mary, Belstone, Broadclyst and Tiverton were cited.

Dates for meetings are as follows:

Monday 21st July, 10am – 12pm Broadclyst Victory Hall, EX5 3EE
Wednesday 8th October, 10am – 12pm Belstone Village Hall
Monday 15th December, 10am – 12pm Tedburn St Mary Village Hall