

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MID ESSEX AREA FORUM HELD AT  
CHELMSFORD SPORTS AND ATHLETIC STADIUM, ON 12 NOVEMBER 2009  
AT 10:00**

**Membership**

\* *Present*

**Essex County Council (20)**

* J W Pike (Chairman)	N Hume
* J Aldridge	* M C M Lager
R L Bass	D J Louis
G Butland	* M Mackrory
R G Boyce (Vice-Chairman)	P J Martin
N Edey	P Channer
D M Finch	* Mrs M Miller
M Hutchon	* T C Smith-Hughes
* J Deakin	R Walters
Rt Hon Lord Hanningfield DL	J Baugh

**Partner Organisations**

**Braintree District Council (2)**

Cllr G Butland	- Leader
Chris Fleetham	-

**Chelmsford Borough Council (2)**

Councillor Whitehead	- Leader
Lucy Payne	- Strategic Property & Research Officer - LSP Lead Officer (Chief Executive's Nominee)

**Maldon District Council (2)**

Mrs A N Warr	- Leader's Nominee
Steven Watson	- Chief Executive

**Local Councils (3)**

* Tony Hayward	- E.A.L.C (Braintree)
Cllr Cole	- E.A.L.C (Chelmsford)
Mrs R M Pink	E.A.L.C (Maldon)

**Hospitals & Primary Care Trust (2)**

Sheila Bremner	- Mid Essex Primary Care Trust
Graham Ramsey	- Mid Essex Hospitals Services NHS Trust

**Essex Police (2)**

Chief Superintendent	- Central Division, Essex Police
Michelle Dunn	

**Essex Fire Service (1)**

John Moulson	- Chelmsford Community Command
--------------	--------------------------------

**Councils for Voluntary Service (3)**

Judy Cuddeford	- Braintree CVS
* Lorraine Jarvis	- Chelmsford CVS
Paul Murphy	- Maldon and District CVS

**Also Present**

*(in order of signing the attendance book – and as there described)*

Professor Lew Schnurr substitute for Mrs R Pink - E.A.L.C, P Wilson - ECC, Max Telling - Danbury Parish Council, Trevor Miller - Chelmsford Borough Council, Roger North - C.A.R.T, Margaret Otter - Public, Graham Bushby - Hatfield Peverel Parish Council, Ken Edwards - Public, Alistair Southgate - E.C.C, Tony Shrimpton - Maldon District and Town Council, Sharon Lowe - Braintree District Council, John Harrison - Heybridge resident, Averil Price - Chelmsford Borough Council, Janet Clokod - Maldon District 50+ forum, Stuart Jennings - Maldon District Council, Chris Siddall - Braintree District Council, Julie Martyn - E.C.C, Charlene Gordon - The LINK.

**Officers Attending in Support**

Samantha Awcock	-	Committee Assistant
Kate Fox	-	Committee Assistant
Antoinette Mortley	-	Committee Officer
David Moses	-	Head of Member Support and Governance
John Symonds	-	Mid Area Co-ordinator

**52. Welcome and Introduction of Members and Officers**

The Chairman welcomed Members to Mid Essex Area Forum.

**53. Apologies**

The Committee Officer noted that apologies had been received from County Councillors John Baugh, Graham Butland, Penny Channer, David Finch, Rt Hon Lord Hanningfield, Norman Hume, Margaret Hutchon, Colin Riley and Roger Walters.

Apologies were also received from Michelle Cheadle - Althorne Parish Council, Phil Davis - Althorne Parish Council, Superintendant Michelle Dunn, Andrew Luce, Claire Morris - Mid Essex PCT, John Moulson - Community Commander Essex Fire Service, Tilly Pink - E.A.L.C (substitute Prof Lew Schnurr), Cllr Mrs Warr - Maldon District Council, Jan Yates - Mid Essex PCT

**54. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

**55. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 11 September 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**56. Public Questions**

Ken Edwards Vice-Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Chelmsford asked how this Forum links with LSPs and Children's Trusts. John Symonds outlined the remit of the LSPs which formulate, develop and implement local

strategy and the Forums which facilitate local debate with the three districts and explained that there were no formal links between the two. The Forum was advised that LSPs are the senior partner board to the Children's Trusts and that the Trusts should inform them of their strategy and plans.

The Forum was asked if the announcement of a new nuclear power station at Bradwell-On-Sea altered the criteria for a relief road from the A12 to Langford. Graham Bushby of Hatfield Peveral Parish Council questioned the response to the B1019 road between Maldon and Hatfield Peveral received at the last meeting; Stuart Jennings of Maldon District Council advised the Forum that this was part of the Local Delivery Framework (LDF) and he agreed to look into this issue and report back at the next meeting.

Steven Savage of Maldon Town Council asked the Forum if Essex County Council could look in to the reduced service provided by First Buses to Althorne by the 31 and 31X services; Mr Savage highlighted the fact that Essex County Council fund part of this service and should be able to ensure a level of service is delivered within the contract. The Forum was advised that companies have the right to manage their business in line with what they deem to be commercially viable however it was noted that the officers would look into this issue.

## **57. Essex Rural Commission Report**

The Forum received an update on the Essex Rural Commission Report AFM/14/09, by Philip Wilson, Policy Analyst; the following key points were noted.

The Forum was informed that the Commissioners of the report have stepped down and that the report was presented to Cabinet on 20 October 2009 and the Economic Development and Environment Committee on 9 October 2009, the report contains 60 recommendations under 12 subject headings.

The County Council has so far embarked on four projects namely the Rural Broadband Pilot Scheme in Maldon which aims to be up and running in four to six weeks, the Pub to the Hub scheme which advises rural pubs on how to thrive in village locations, a Tree Nursery at Weald Park and training and employment programme for graziers.

The Forum was advised of the next steps to link in with Local Area Agreements (LAA) and the Essex Rural Partnership (ERP) which is to be launched 20 December 2009; a cohesion which will be managed by the Rural transformation Programme.

The Forum highlighted that transport was noted in the background section of the report but was not mentioned in the rest of the document; Philip advised that the report did consider arrangements for the flexibility of transport and agreed to look into this further. The Forum noted a 15 - 20 percent reduction in graze farming and asked if there was a need to train farmers in this area. Philip advised that woodland areas have increased over the past 30 years and the aim was to encourage grazing in these areas.

Councillor Aldridge commended the fact that the report brought the various threads of rural life together and called on Parish Councils to recommend how

best to implement these schemes to the best advantage for their communities. Councillor Macrory welcomed the report and asked if more emphasis could be placed on tourism to encourage movement within the county as well as those visiting from further afield, Philip agreed with this point and noted this would require little resource to facilitate; this could be linked with the LDF to identify and facilitate the need.

The Forum noted the issue of rural housing and the conflicting views of District and Parish Councils; furthermore the Forum considered the allocation of rural housing to persons outside and not linked with the area.

#### **58. Area Forum Health Scrutiny**

The Chairman updated the Forum and explained that recent legislation allowed the County to scrutinise health issues and cited the works of the South Area Forum on the prevalence of cancers in Canvey Island and the East Area Forum which undertook a study of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) take up rates.

The Forum highlighted the large rural make up of the Mid Essex area and considered possibilities for future health scrutiny topics. Councillor Tom Smith-Hughes highlighted issue of engagement across the three districts. Councillor Michael Lager highlighted the issue of access to services and the timescales for delivery especially in rural areas.

Charlene Gordon, Mid Essex Coordinator for the LINK advised the Forum that they were able to access funding for research issues and advised of their next meeting on 24 November 2009. Averil Price, Director of Stronger Communities - Chelmsford Borough Council advised of a recent partnership meeting where the PCT outlined £30 - £35 million in savings over the next three years which highlighted budgetary pressures for the Trust.

Councillor Chris Siddall of Braintree District Council noted that efforts seem to be aimed at treating the end result and not the cause of the problem and referred to the quality of cheap foods purchased by many in deprived communities; Cllr Siddall emphasised the need to enable farmers to produce better priced, quality products for these areas. Professor Lew Schnurr offered the issue of accessibility to primary care as a possibly scrutiny issue.

The Forum heard issues on the management and behaviour of the Primary Care Trusts (PCT); David Moses advised that he would speak with the PCT and District Councils to discuss arrangements for working together. The Chairman agreed to set a small meeting with those who raised issues at this Forum and representatives from the PCT to report back at the next meeting.

#### **59. Local Transport Review**

The Forum received a presentation on the Local Transport Plan from Alistair Southgate, Principal Transportation Planner; the following key points were noted.

The Forum was advised that Essex County Council spend more than £100 million a year on transport and that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) will include support for rural transport. The 5 year plan will be divided into two parts one will cover 3

years and the other will look at longer term issues. The LTP will link with other local policies such as the LAA.

The Forum was advised that the County had seen a 35 percent reduction in the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads over the past 2-3 years which is largely due to the efforts of the Road Safety and Casualty Reduction Partnership with the Police, Fire and Ambulance services, that the County spend £35 million of revenue support per year £20 million on concessionary fares and £15 million on non-commercial bus services and that road maintenance in the County was now better than the national average.

The LTP is currently out for consultation and Alistair has agreed to produce a summary of the results to a future meeting.

The Forum noted that the Essex LTP excluded the rail network and that this is pivotal in reducing the reliance on the car. Alistair noted that the County has no control over the rail network however did advise that the County are working with Network Rail and National Express East Anglia. The Forum highlighted that the LTP seemed geared towards the providers of service and not personal mobility; furthermore the Forum noted that this rigid framework excluded other forms of transport such as a foot. Alistair added that with less government control the LTP could be geared to the specific requirements of Essex County.

Councillor Trevor Miller of Chelmsford Borough Council asked for a review of the cycle way from Great Baddow to Chelmsford Town centre and asked if it would be possible to have a cycle path under the viaduct. Alistair noted that the LTP should flag issues of this nature and would look into the situation and report back.

The Forum asked if removing the Dartford tolls would help ease congestion in the County, Alistair highlighted the fact that this crossing is part of the central road network and not part of the County and therefore could not be considered as part of the LTP. The Forum heard that this information had not reached all partner organisations; Alistair advised that they were advertising on the County's website and EssexWorks.

## **60. Area Forum Budget**

The Chairman gave an overview of report AFM/15/09 and read a plea received today from the Chelmsford Elder Persons Project, which is not recommended to receive funding at this time.

The Forum noted that some of the projects applying to the Area Forum Fund could have applied for funding from sources such as the Community Initiatives fund (CIF). The Forum was advised that to adhere to budgetary constraints some applicants did not receive the specific amount requested. The Community Money Marketplace bid was not recommended this year as the funds are not required until autumn 2010.

The Forum was advised that bids for the Chelmsford areas had not received backing from the Borough Council and that funds for the North Farmbridge allotments would be paid direct to the Parish Council. The Forum considered the

allocation of funds on a proportional basis to the size of the districts, John Symonds noted that year on year this should balance out.

**Resolved:**

The Forum agreed the recommendations laid out in the report.

**61. Future Programme of Work**

The Forum noted report AFM/16/09 outlining the future programme of works.

**62. Date of Next Meeting**

The Forum was advised that the next meeting will be held on 11 January 2010 the time and venue are yet to be confirmed.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 11:58.

Chairman