

# AGENDA

## SWALE RURAL FORUM MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 26 May 2015

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Warden Bay Village Hall, Warden Bay Road, Warden, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, ME12 4NB

### Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock, Bobbin, Monique Bonney, Tina Booth, Lloyd Bowen, Bowles, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, June Garrad, Nicholas Hampshire, Lesley Ingham, Ken Ingleton, Gerry Lewin, Padmini Nissanga, Prescott, David Simmons, Ben Stokes, Mike Whiting and John Wright.

### Other Organisations:

Kent County Council Representative – to be confirmed  
3 Members of Swale National Farmers Union - to be confirmed  
3 representatives of Kent Association of Local Councils - to be confirmed  
Peter Blandon, Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)  
Keith Harrison, Action with Communities in Rural Kent  
Canon Caroline Pinchbeck, Diocese of Canterbury  
Mrs Pamela Prescott, SEESwale  
Inspector Gavin Wade, Kent Rural Police Force

Quorum = 9

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	Pages
1. Election of Chairman	
To elect a Chairman for the Municipal Year 2015/2016.	
2. Election of Vice-Chairman	
To elect a Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2015/2016.	
3. Apologies for Absence	
4. Minutes	
To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 February 2015 (Minute Nos. 477 - 485) as a correct record.	
5. Declarations of Interest	
Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.	

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

**Advice to Members:** If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Corporate Services as Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

## **PART A REPORTS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET**

### 6. Public Session

During public session, members of the public living in the Borough of Swale may make a statement, submit a petition, or ask the Chairman any question on any matter on which the Council has powers or duties, in respect of rural matters.

Questions or statements shall be read at the meeting and shall not last more than three minutes. An answer from the Chairman may take the form of a direct oral answer or be in writing. Questions submitted to the Democratic Services section in writing (including email) at least three days before the meeting will be taken first.

### 7. Police Crime Commissioner - Invited to attend this meeting

Ann Barnes (Police Crime Commissioner) has been invited to attend to respond to questions raised in respect of crime in rural areas.

*Questions from the public are welcome.*

### 8. Update from Kent Police

To receive a verbal update on crime in rural areas from Kent Police.

### 9. Underground Electricity Cable in Swale

To receive a presentation from Tim Owen (Kent Downs AONB Unit) about underground electricity cable in the vicinity of the Lees court estate and Selling.

*Questions from members of the public welcome.*

10. Rural Business Opportunities

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To consider the Rural Roundup (attached).

*Questions from members of the public are welcome.*

11. Swale Rural Forum Meeting Dates and Venues for 2015/2016

Swale Rural Forum meeting dates and venues for 2015/2016 are as follows:

Tuesday 25 August 2015 – Badlesmere Parish Hall, Ashford Road,  
Badlesmere Lees, Faversham, Kent, ME13 0NZ

Tuesday 17 November 2015 – Rodmersham Village Hall, Rodmersham  
Green, Rodmersham, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 0PS

Tuesday 23 February 2016 – Leysdown Village Hall, Wing Road,  
Leysdown, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, ME12 4QR

**Issued on Thursday 21 May 2015**

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Swale Rural Forum, please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

Corporate Services Director, Swale Borough Council,  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

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## Combat Crime in Rural Swale

Following the continued spate of theft from farms throughout Kent, a booklet has been created by Kent Police advising rural landowners how to combat a potential crime from happening on their land.

With subject matter including Estate Security, Equipment Security, Wildlife Crime, Animal Crime and Counter Terrorism, the guide provides some useful hints and tips to help keep your property secure.

The Kent Police Rural and Environment Officers are also on Twitter keeping you up-to-date with recent crimes as well as letting you know what to look out for and how you can protect yourself and your property against crime. You can follow them at [www.twitter.com/kentpolicerural](https://www.twitter.com/kentpolicerural)

You can also access the latest edition of the Kent Police quarterly rural crime newsletter by visiting [www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)

**Are you looking to grow your business?** Perhaps you have a business idea but need help in getting it off the ground? Maybe we can support you.

Swale Borough Council is in its fourth year of offering support to local businesses and whilst figures are yet to be released at a local level, national statistics demonstrate that the SME sector has experienced circa 6% growth, more often within micro businesses (1-9 employees).

If you think that now is the time to push your business to the next level but are not sure where to start or if you have a great idea but are not sure what you need to focus on first, talk to us. We can help you to determine your strategy, define your resources and deliver your goals.

Our new business support website has lots of resources to help local business, from funding and business advice to commercial property available in Swale. Visit [www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk) or call our team on (01795) 417398.

The **Kent Business Portal** has been created as part of the government's initiative to implement e-procurement and is a great way for businesses throughout Kent to access public sector tender/quotation opportunities.

By registering on the portal you can:

- Make buyers aware of your presence
- Receive Pre-Qualification Questionnaires, Requests for Quotes and Invitations to Tender electronically
- Submit your quotations and tenders electronically almost instantly
- All you need is an internet connection and an email account
- Reduce your paper and associated printing costs
- Benefit from proven added security and knowledge that your submission has been delivered

**If you want to register your company on the system, register free now!**

**Visit [www.kentbusinessportal.org.uk](http://www.kentbusinessportal.org.uk)**

The **Kent County Show** will be held at Detling Showground on 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> July and promises to provide a great opportunity for local producers to showcase their wares.

The three day event brings together the very best of Kent with animals and food, fun and excitement and above all a sense of what 'The Garden of England' has to offer.

If you are a rural industry looking for an additional route to market, perhaps the County Show can help you boost your sales. With trade-stands, advertising opportunities and catering concessions, it could be a great chance to target some extra custom!

To find out more, take a look at [www.kentshowground.co.uk](http://www.kentshowground.co.uk)

### **Postcode Lottery Green Challenge – 1 June 2015**

This competition rewards inventions that successfully combine sustainability, entrepreneurship and creativity. The competition aims to foster the invention of new green products, to combat CO2 emissions, that could be placed on the market within two years. A first prize of £440,000 will be awarded for the best idea and business plan for its execution. A further £175,000 (€200,000) will be available to one or two runners up.

Would-be entrepreneurs aged 18 years or older are invited to apply. The deadline for entries is 1 June 2015.

## Woodland Capital Grants 2015

Countryside Stewardship will help rural businesses improve the countryside environment, and the Woodland Capital Grants in 2015 will prioritise support for activity this year to cover:

- Creating and maintaining new woodland for biodiversity and water benefits including flooding;
- Woodland management plans;
- Tree health The Forestry Commission is now open for applications for these Woodland capital grants.

The Countryside Productivity Scheme is also now available, providing funding for small scale forestry processing and wood harvesting and extraction.

To apply for any of the available 2015 grants you must first register on the new Rural Payments system via GOV.UK

## Leading rural Swale to productivity

LEADER is a well-established method of providing rural development funding at the local level and looks to support projects in their area that will help grow the rural economy.

The six national priorities for LEADER are;

- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
- Support for rural tourism
- Provision of rural services
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for increasing forestry productivity

Kent Downs and Marshes LEADER (KDML) have been awarded £1.886m with the East Kent LEADER awarded £1.586m (and West Kent LEADER £1.813m). There are three LEADER areas in Kent because the population limit for a LEADER area is 150,000 and this is the only way we can cover most of Kent's rural economy. The Swale hub towns of Faversham, Sheerness and Minster are eligible for Leader funding. The funds will be given to projects that will deliver jobs and growth (or contribute to delivering jobs and growth) and supporting the rural economy. Funding is available to farmers, foresters, other local businesses and rural communities. The funding is applied for through a rigorous application process which is assessed by the LAG Executive. A degree of match funding is required from the applicant in most cases.

Further details on the Programme are being finalised along with guidance, handbooks and application forms. The Leader areas should be in a position to accept formal applications for funding from the summer. For more information contact [Huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk) .

## Putting Swale on the Map

And don't forget, we are here to help promote Swale as a fantastic place to visit and as a place full of opportunity to do business!

We try to ensure we are aware of as many events as possible to promote on our websites [www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk) and [www.visit-swale.co.uk](http://www.visit-swale.co.uk) (as well as our social media channels) but realise that some don't make it onto our radar.

If you have any news or events that you would like to share, please get in touch with our team.

## And Finally....

Calling all budding photographers! We are looking for striking images of our beautiful, diverse borough that will help us to promote what we have to offer here in Swale on our website 'Swale Means Business'.

Of course, there's the stunning landscapes, scenery and wildlife but just as important are those shots that capture life in Swale – the architecture, the people, the commerce. Those elements of Swale that tell the story of who we are and what we are about.

If you would like to see your images used to 'Put Swale on the Map' then please get in touch. Full credits will be published alongside the images used.

*Enjoy springtime in Swale, we'll be back in the summer!*