

AGENDA

SWALE RURAL FORUM MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 25 August 2015

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Badlesmere Parish Hall, Ashford Road, Badlesmere Lees, Faversham, Kent, ME13 0NZ

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 (Chairman), David Simmons (Vice-Chairman), Ben Stokes, Mike Whiting and John Wright.

Other Organisations:

Kevin Attwood, Swale National Farmers Union
Peter Blandon, Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)
Alastair Brooks, Swale National Farmers Union
Mr Tom Gates, Kent County Council
Keith Harrison, Action with Communities in Rural Kent
Richard Palmer, Kent Association of Local Councils
Rollo Parsons, Swale National Farmers Union
Canon Caroline Pinchbeck, Diocese of Canterbury
Mrs Pamela Prescott, SEESwale
Amanda Saunders, Kent Association of Local Councils
Sara Tucker, Kent Association of Local Councils
Inspector Gavin Wade, Kent Rural Police Force

Quorum = 9

	Pages
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Minutes	
To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 May 2015 (Minute Nos. 29 - 37) as a correct record.	
3. 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

4. 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.

5. Update from Kent Police

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

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

6. Kent Environment Strategy

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Sarah Anderson, Sustainable Business and Communities, Kent County Council has been invited to present on the consultation to the Forum.

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

7. "Quiet Lanes" Campaign to Protect Rural England

Joyce Della Casa will present to the Forum on the potential of turning Munsgore Lane, Borden into a quiet lane.

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

8. Horse and Rider Awareness roadsigns

To receive information on a request for installation of Horse and Rider Awareness road signs on Staplestreet, Hernhill.

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

9. Rural Business Opportunities

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To consider the Rural Roundup.

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

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

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

Map to Venue

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There is a map to the venue on the final page of the agenda.

Issued on Thursday, 13 August 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

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

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CONSULTATION:
Kent Environment Strategy: A strategy for environment, health and economy
27th July – 25th September

As you are a key stakeholder and many of you have been involved in workshops and meetings to develop the strategy, I would like to draw your attention to the Kent Environment Strategy consultation draft, which is launched today at: www.kent.gov.uk/kesconsultation

This strategy has been developed in partnership, drawing on expertise from across organisations, sectors and specialisms. As such, the strategy cuts across services and organisations and we all have a role to play in its development, ensuring that we are delivering the right priorities for Kent. Please do circulate widely across your networks as we are keen to capture feedback from across organisations, residents, businesses and voluntary sectors.

The vision of the strategy is that *the county of Kent is benefitting from a competitive, innovative and resilient economy, with our natural and historic assets enhanced and protected for their unique value and positive impact on our society, economy, health and wellbeing.*

Based on your feedback we will develop the final strategy by **December 2015** with an aim to launch it in **March 2016**. Between August and November we will also be developing the Implementation Plan, which will provide the detail for delivery of the strategic priorities. We will therefore be in touch with many of you separately over the next few weeks to discuss actions for delivery.

If you need any of the documents in an alternative format please contact alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk

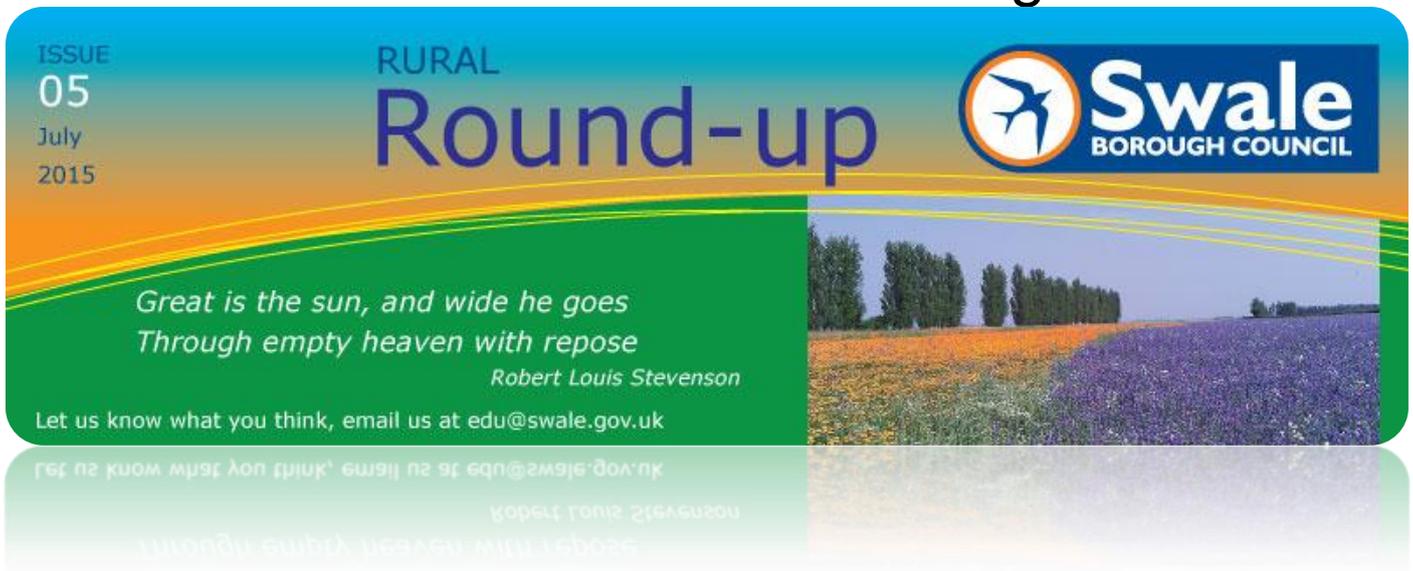
Thank you in advance and we look forward to hearing your thoughts; if you would like any further information on the development of the strategy and next steps please contact sarah.anderson@kent.gov.uk; Phone 03000 413316.

Kind regards

Carolyn McKenzie

Carolyn McKenzie: Head of Sustainable Business and Communities
Kent County Council: County Hall: Maidstone: Kent ME11 1XX
07740 185 287// 03000 413419

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Avoid the Agriculture aggro, keep your workers safe!

According to a recent report published by the HSE, agriculture, forestry and fishing is the riskiest industry sector in terms of fatal injuries. One in a hundred workers (employees and the self-employed) work in agriculture, but it accounts for one in five fatal injuries to workers.

Latest results show that 27 fatal injuries to workers in 2013/14p, the average over the previous five years was 33 - the worker fatality rate is higher than any other industry section and almost half (48%) of the workers who were fatally injured were farmers, while about one in seven were farm or forestry workers.

So what can be done about protecting the workforce in this apparently high-risk sector? Alex Ness of Savills UK Health & Safety says "Farming will never be risk free, but nobody wants to see their employees or anyone else getting hurt. At the end of the day, health & safety is about looking after people".

Perhaps as a result of the level of risk involved in agriculture, the sector is highly regulated and to fall foul of the rules could irrevocably damage your business. To make sure you are compliant, visit www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture.

App'y to help the farming industry

As the agriculture sector continues to embrace more and more tech to assist in the smooth operations of farms, there is clear opportunity for mobile app builders. Both 'Farmers Weekly' and 'Savills Rural' have taken time to review some of the most helpful smartphone apps

WaterAware aims to help farmers and advisers reduce the risk of key pesticides entering water by offering a field-based risk assessment, integrating soil type, weather and soil moisture deficit information to provide farmers with a simple yes-or-no guide to whether they should apply pellets or spray crops in terms of the potential risk to surface water.

FarmGraze Calculates the amount of grass in a field and allows the user to quickly monitor the performance of swards

Grainmate accesses the essential grain market information such as futures and ForEx prices. It also lets farmers sell their grain whilst on the move.

Bayer Pest Spotter Helps you to identify crop pests present in fields of growing crops and also provides information on how best to eradicate/tackle them.

Moo Monitor links the farms office computer to a mobile to send an alert to a herdsman when a cow is in heat or showing signs or symptoms of sickness.

Get Connected

Kent Businesses Go Superfast: Connection Vouchers

Kent County Council are administering a new grant scheme, funded by the Government, which will allow businesses in eligible towns in Kent & Medway to access funding to get better broadband.

Businesses can apply for grants of up to £3000 to cover the installation of the broadband. Companies will continue to pay any VAT charged and the monthly line rental to the service provider.

To find out if your business is eligible for the scheme and apply:

1. Simply visit: www.kent.gov.uk/ConnectionVouchers
2. Enter your postcode and see if you are eligible for up to £3000

Time however is short - 25,000 small businesses have already taken advantage of the scheme and the fund is finite – once it's gone, it's gone

Heard the buzz about the new 'Bee-keeping Apprenticeship'?

The Bee Farmers' Association has developed this unique apprenticeship scheme in partnership with Rowse Honey. The scheme is open to 16 to 24-year-olds and aims to equip young people with the skills and knowledge to make a successful career in the bee farming industry. Those successfully completing the three-year programme are awarded a Diploma Towards Excellence in Bee Farming by the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers.

Launched in 2014 to much interest, the first cohort of seven young people are placed with some of the most experienced bee farmers in the United Kingdom (UK).

Recruitment is on an annual basis, with programmes commencing each spring.

David Wainwright, chairman of the Bee farmers Associations says "There are beekeepers with a lot of knowledge that needs to be passed on to a younger generation before it's too late. There's a lot of talk about small-scale beekeeping, but nothing on the larger scale. We should be developing the bee industry as a whole."

If you are a farmer wanting to know more about contract pollination, want to know more about bee-keeping apprenticeships or if you are interested in the concept of large scale beekeeping as income diversification, there's more information on their website www.beefarmers.co.uk.

Need funding for your rural business? Take a look at LEADER...

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 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 and a degree of match funding is required from the applicant in most cases.

The priorities that LEADER will consider funding for 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

For more information contact **Huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk** .

...Or how about the Countryside Stewardship Scheme?

Countryside Stewardship provides incentives for land managers to look after their environment. The scheme is open to all eligible farmers, woodland owners, foresters and other land managers through a competitive application process.

Unlike previous rural development schemes, applications for most elements of Countryside Stewardship are competitive, which means that applications will be scored against criteria, and that not everyone who applies will be successful. Targeting and scoring will encourage applicants to choose options that help achieve the environmental priorities in their local area.

The main priority for Countryside Stewardship is to protect and enhance the natural environment, in particular the diversity of wildlife (biodiversity) and water quality. Other outcomes include:

- flood management
- genetic conservation
- the historic environment
- educational access
- landscape character

The scheme will be jointly run by Natural England, Forestry Commission England and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on behalf of Defra

Further info can be found at **www.gov.uk/countrysidestewardship**

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