

AGENDA

SWALE RURAL FORUM MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 23 February 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Leysdown Village Hall, Wing Road, Leysdown, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, ME12 4QR

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)
Mr Tom Gates, Kent County Council
Mr Ross Goatham, Swale National Farmers Union
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 17 November 2015
(Minute Nos. 338 - 345) 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

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

6. Provision of housing for elderly residents living in rural areas

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

7. Provision of bus services in rural areas

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

8. Issue of LED street/footway lighting

The following item has been included following a request from Graveney with Goodnestone Parish Council:

'The issue of LED street/footway lighting. We have had concerns expressed by residents about the change from sodium to LED lights, in particular with regard to health and sleep issues and damage to wildlife. Would it be possible to ask if there is any evidence of problems and what

feedback has been received by other PC's who have installed LEDs'.

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

9. The Future of the Swale Rural Forum

Questions from members of the public are welcome.

10. Rural Business Opportunities

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Questions from members of the public are welcome.

Issued on Monday, 15 February 2016

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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Welcome to the **February 2016** edition of Rural Round-up which features the latest news, events and business opportunities for companies based in the rural communities of Swale.

LEADER Funding Update

LEADER is a well-established method of providing rural development funding to local businesses and organisations to:

- Create jobs
- Develop rural businesses
- Support the local economy

The funding is available, via an application process, to farmers, growers, foresters, other local rural businesses and rural community organisations. Grants of up to £50,000 are available for commercial projects grants and will typically be limited to 40% of the project's total eligible costs, so a degree of match funding is required.

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
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for increasing forestry productivity

The LEADER Programme is now open and funding will be available until 2020. So if you have a project that needs funding and would like to discuss your options, please contact Huw Jarvis, Programme Manager for Kent Downs and Marshes LEADER on 03000 417 104 or email huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk.

The Forestry Innovation Fund

The Forestry Commission has launched the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) to support the preparation of plans for multi-purpose woodlands which have the potential to provide a significant productive component.

The grant particularly contributes toward the costs of gathering and analysing the information land owners must consider before progressing with their project. The

grant can assist in the assessment of the natural environment; planning for landscape and water management; managing the historic environment and engaging with stakeholders.

Applicants must meet the basic criteria for an application which includes the land being of at least 30 hectares and that it has the potential to benefit the forestry sector in the long-term by providing timber or other wood products.

For further information about the scheme visit the [Forestry Commission website](#).

Free support and advice for rural companies

Signs of growth in the countryside may be few and far between this month but it is a perfect time for company owners to consider how they can grow their business.

A business advisor has recently been procured by Swale Borough Council to help local companies grow. The advisor can provide free advice on matters as diverse as marketing, identifying and applying for funding, writing a business plan and keeping accounts.

To meet the advisor, simply contact the Swale Economic Development Team on 01795 417398 or email edu@swale.gov.uk and we will arrange an appointment for you when most convenient.

Shortcuts to starting a business

It can be difficult to take those first steps into the somewhat bewildering world of launching a business. There can be a sizeable gap between the initial idea and the next stages on the journey to running a successful company.

Swale Borough Council and the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce are running a season of workshops to help. Designed for those taking their first steps, the session covers how to set up a company, write a business plan, keep accounts and find customers.

The workshops take place at the start of each month, with the next meeting on **Thursday 3rd March 2016**. If this sounds like something you or someone you know might be interested in, contact the Economic Development Team on 01795 417398 or email edu@swale.gov.uk.

The England Coast Path Update – Iwade to Grain, Kent

Natural England is progressing plans for a long distance walking route along the coast of England – the England Coast Path. The organisation is working with Kent County Council, district councils, key agencies and interested parties in the areas of Kent which are affected by the proposals.

Preparation for the Iwade to Grain stretch is about to begin and Natural England is consulting with local organisations to gain a greater understanding of the local area, and agree a timescale for the work.

Launch of 2016 Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA)

Businesses across the county have the opportunity to shine in the 2016 Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA).

The award scheme was officially launched on Thursday 7 January at the Port Lympne Hotel.

Every year KEiBA showcases the strongest, most vibrant companies and business people from across Kent.

Now in their eighth year, the awards are staged and produced by Kent County Council and the KM Media Group.

Winning a KEiBA is a powerful and effective marketing tool for any company and winning helps organisations stand out from the crowd, send a positive message to customers and attract new business.

Businesses can enter up to four categories including Apprenticeship of the Year, Business Commitment to the Community Award, Employer of the Year, Start Up Business of the Year and Young Entrepreneur of the Year. To start your entry visit: www.keiba.co.uk. The deadline is **Friday 26 February 2016**.

Contact Us

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www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk



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