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## Agenda

### SPARSE Rural and Rural Services Network Executive and Board of Directors of the Rural Services Partnership Ltd meeting

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Hosted: Online via Zoom & in person

Venue: English Rural Housing Association,

7A Strutton Ground, London, SW1P 2HY

[Click here to view location on Google Maps](#)

Entrance via Old Pye Street

Date: Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Time: 11:15am – 2:30pm

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1. **Attendance & Apologies.**
2. **[Notes from the previous RSN Executive meeting.](#)**  
Held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to consider any relevant updates and approve the minutes.
3. **Summary of Previous RSN Work and Meetings. ([Attachment 1](#))**  
Report from Kerry Booth, Deputy Chief Executive on attendance, key points, policy work since the last meeting.
4. **Update on Work with Local Councils.**  
Verbal report from David Inman, Corporate Director.
  - Rural/Market Town Group
  - RMTG Partnership with NALC
  - Rural Village Services Group
5. **RSN Website and Newsletter. ([Attachment 2](#))**  
Report from Kerry Booth, Assistant Chief Executive.
6. **Levelling Up and Devolution White Paper/UK Shared Prosperity Fund.**  
Update from Graham Biggs MBE, Chief Executive.
  - Confidential proposal to RSN from Pragmatix Advisory. ([Attachment 3\\*](#))
  - [RSN Rural Lens Reviews - Critique/Overview document and Future Actions for the RSN.](#)

\*Please be aware that Attachment 3 associated with this session is only available for [RSN Executive](#) members. If you are a [RSN Executive](#) member who would like this material, please email [admin@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:admin@sparse.gov.uk) and we will send these papers out to you.

7. **Budget Reports.**  
**Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers**

Rural Services Network

PO Box 101, Craven Arms, SY7 7AL

Tel: 01822 851370

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- Budget Report with Actuals to 5th March 2022. ([Attachment 4](#))
- Four Year Budget Review. ([Attachment 4A\\*](#))
- Notes on Budget Reports. ([Attachment 4B\\*](#))

\*Please be aware that Attachments 4A and 4B associated with this session are only available for [RSN Executive](#) members. If you are a [RSN Executive](#) member who would like this material, please email [admin@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:admin@sparse.gov.uk) and we will send these papers out to you.

**8. Any Other Business.**

The next RSN Executive meeting will take place online on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022.

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## RSN Work January 2022 – March 2022

Report to the RSN Executive (Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022)  
from Kerry Booth, Deputy Chief Executive

### Aim

To provide the Executive with an update on meetings hosted and supported by the RSN since the last Executive meeting along with key campaigns and work carried out.

### To Date from January 2022 to March 2022 We Have Hosted the Following Meetings

Event	Who can attend	Date	Attendees				TOTAL
			Govt	LA	RSP	RMTG	
Sparse Rural meeting (Fair Funding)	Sparse only	24.01.2022	N/A	31	N/A	N/A	31
Rural Economy Sub Group meeting	Sparse/Rural Assembly/RSP/RHCA	24.01.2022	N/A	48	22	N/A	70
RSN Seminar: Older People	Sparse/Rural Assembly/RSP/RHCA/RMTG	26.01.2022	3	35	26	11	75
RSN Seminar: Young People in Rural Areas	Sparse/Rural Assembly/RSP/RHCA/RMTG	02.03.2022	1	44	17	11	73
RMTG Clerks Advisory Panel meeting	RMTG Steering Group Clerks	18.03.2022	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2

*\*Not including RSN Staff or Speakers*

Event	Who can attend	Date	Attendees
			TOTAL
Parliamentary Launch of SORS 2021	MPs, Peers (Researchers), RE Directors, Stakeholders, Chair/Vice Chair, Task & Finish Group	12.01.2022	15 MP 5 Lords 6 Rural England
General Launch of SORS 2021	Stakeholders & Supporters plus - RSN Executive, (RSN/RSP members with an interest), Rural Coalition, Nik Harwood (RSP Chair)	12.01.2022	62
APPG for Rural Services meeting (AGM and Meeting with Care Minister)	APPG Members & MPs	28.02.2022	5 MPs
Rural Fair Share Group meeting (MPs)	MPs	02.03.2022	2

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## Key Points to Note

We have noted that representatives from Government Departments have started attending seminars provided by the RSN and these are included on the figures above. Attendance at the two cross cutting issues seminar at the start of 2022 have been consistently high.

## Wider Campaigns and Work

Published:

[Rural Lens Review of Shared Prosperity Fund Pre Launch Guidance](#)

Rural Lens Review of Levelling Up White Paper

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

(Due for publication 15.03.21)

The RSN supported the preparatory activities and attended the All Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Health and Care Inquiry Launch.

[More information is available at this link.](#)

## Consultations

Since our last report, the RSN has responded to the following consultations, after consulting with our member organisations:

- Phasing out fossil fuel heating in homes off the gas grid
- Phasing out the installation of fossil fuel heating systems in businesses and public buildings off the gas grid

## Networking and Influence

- Meetings have taken place with NALC to develop a closer working relationship in respect of RMTG meetings
- Kerry Booth took part in a Nat West and Tesco Access to Cash Forum talking about the impact of lack of access to cash in rural areas
- Graham Biggs discussed with Defra their future Research Priorities

## Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

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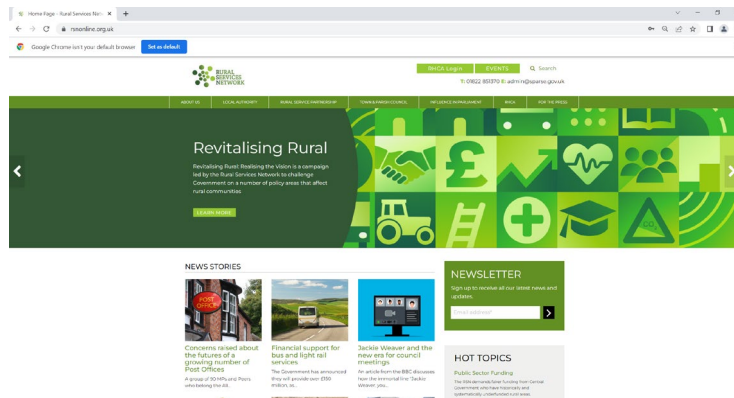
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## RSN Website and Newsletter

Report to the RSN Executive (Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022)  
from Kerry Booth, Deputy Chief Executive

### Aim

To provide the Executive with an update on the RSN Website and Newsletter performance during 2021.



### RSN Website

[www.rsonline.org.uk](http://www.rsonline.org.uk) is the website for the Rural Services Network and its use is twofold. Firstly, it promotes the work of the organisation to interested parties and those the RSN is aiming to influence, and secondly provides an information source for member organisations.

Exploring the figures for 2021 compared to 2020, RSNONLINE had a 3% drop in website users



- There has also been a 10% drop in website page views.
- The average time spent on a website page remained the same
- The number of unique page views increased marginally from 85.9% in 2020 to 86.4% in 2021.

### How do people access the site?

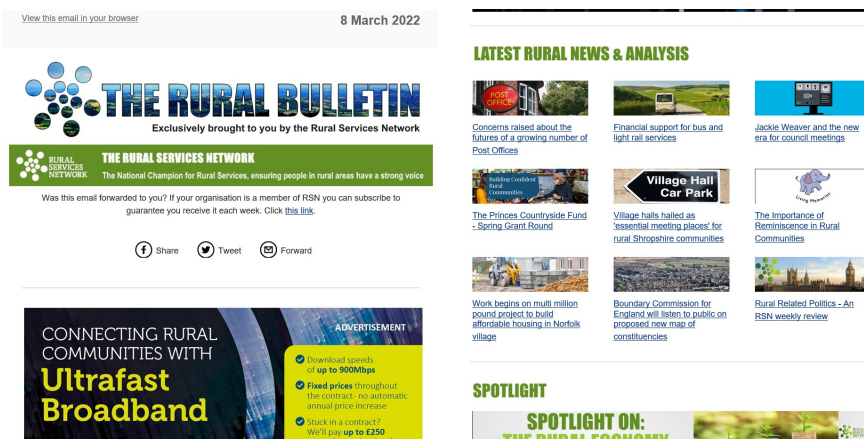
In 2021 54% of users came from direct referral (*visitors who come to the website without a traceable referral source such as newsletter links*). This has dropped from 55.9% in 2020. However, Organic search (such as Google) was 39.6% for 2021 compared to 36.6% in 2020.

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## Rural Bulletin

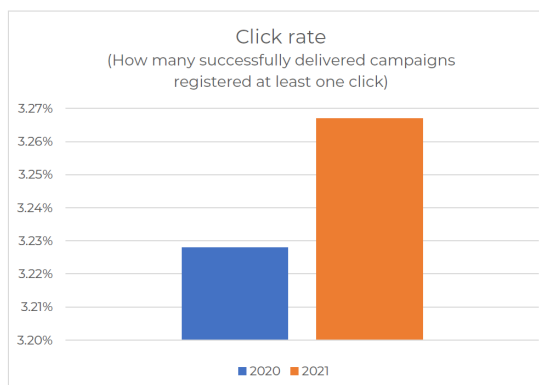
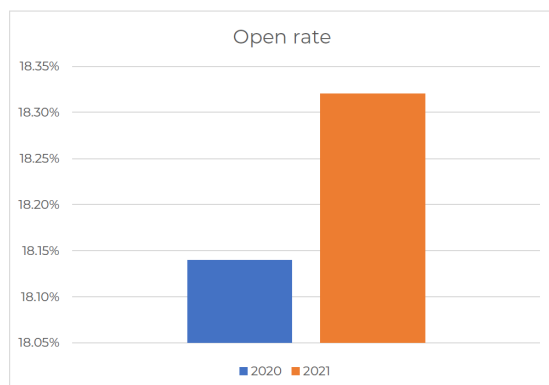


The Rural Bulletin has the following results:

	2020	2021
Successful Rural Bulletins Delivered	1,136,464	1,110,757
Unique Opens	206,219	203,502
Total Clicks	102,170	130,479

Whilst the number of Rural Bulletin delivered during 2021 has decreased, the number of total clicks of links within the Bulletin publication has increased.

The open rate, has increased slightly from 2020 to 2021 and the number of successful deliveries that registered at least one click has also increased.



### Actions for the year ahead

Our aim for the website [www.rsnonline.org.uk](http://www.rsnonline.org.uk) is that it continues to be a trusted source of reference for those organisations and individuals that we wish to influence, setting out the rural case clearly and succinctly.

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Other key tasks for the year include:

- Developing the way that information is held in Mailchimp to enable the personalisation of newsletters sent out by RSN to its wider membership.
- Reducing the volume of pages on the RSN website to ensure that information can be easily located and clearly sets out the rural case
- Continuing the approach of sending out targeted links to particular special interest groups such as Economic Development Officers when a relevant rural lens is published.
- Development of a members only area on the website for premium high value content

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1							
2						<b>Attachment 4</b>	
3							
4		<b>The Rural Services Partnership Limited</b>					
5		<b>BUDGET REPORT</b>					
6	<b>April 2020 - March 2021</b>						
7							
8		<b>ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22</b>	<b>ACTUAL AS AT 5TH MARCH CASH BASIS</b>	<b>REVISED BUDGET 2021 /22</b>	<b>VARIATION FROM ORIGINAL BUDGET</b>	<b>2022/23 ORIGINAL ESTIMATE</b>	
9	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
10	Miscellaneous Income						
11	Coastal communities contract income	5758.00	4,691.74	5758.00		5873.00	
12	National rural conference	5000.00	3650.00	3650.00	-1350.00	3800.00	
13	RHCA Membership	23743.00	11,443.59	34176.00	10433.00	23034.00	
14	RSP Membership	20642.00	20,305.81	21727.00	1085.00	25198.00	
15	Rural England Annual Re CHARGES	6835.00	2692.68	7115.00	280.00	6972.00	
16	Rural England project support	1800.00		2380.00	580.00	1000.00	
17	Rural fire and rescue	3995.00	3,989.00	3989.00	-6.00	4082.00	
18	Rural housing group subscriptions	7318.00	6,500.00	6500.00		5916.00	
19	Rural housing group website		1,350.00	1350.00	1350.00	2200.00	
20	Rural Strategy Income						
21	Rural Towns Group	11000.00	11,632.31	13038.00	2038.00	20000.00	



	A	B	C	D	E	F
22	SPARSE - Rural general grant	300463.00	287,459.00	308022.00	7559.00	299654.00
23	Miscellaneous Income Survey		200.00	200.00	200.00	
24	Strategic partnering arrangements	10000.00	10000.00	10000.00		10000.00
25	DEBTOR FROM 2020/21 VAT REFUND	3403.96		3403.96		
26	<b>SPONSORSHIP</b>					10000.00
27	Sundry Income @ CONTRA		12263.30			
28	Sundry Income Homelessness Research		1740.00	13208.06	13208.06	
29	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>399957.96</b>	<b>377917.43</b>	<b>434517.02</b>	<b>35377.06</b>	<b>417729.00</b>
30						
31	Cost of Sales					
32	GROSS SALARIES - PAYE	241421.00	156,861.29	170684.00	3069.00	176111.00
33	SUB-CONTRACTORS		61,787.73	70806.00	-3000.00	67918.00
34	Total Cost of Sales	<b>241421.00</b>	<b>218649.02</b>	<b>241490.00</b>		<b>244029.00</b>
35	<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>158536.96</b>		<b>193027.02</b>	<b>2500.00</b>	<b>173700.00</b>
36	<b>Expenses</b>					
37	Accountancy	1820.00	1,362.00	1362.00	-458.00	1416.00
38	Bank charges	105.00	99.10	105.00		107.00
39	Coastal communities contract	4000.00		4000.00		4080.00
40	Communications	36000.00	26,445.00	34000.00	-2000.00	18384.00
41						*Referring to Line 40* £7118 transferred to Rural Policy Expenses
42	Databases	6180.00	5,916.09	6180.00		6304.00
43	EMPLOYER Pension contributions	4944.12	4,598.70	5023.00	79.00	5196.00

	A	B	C	D	E	F
44	Employer's NI contributions	11417.72	9,078.30	10421.00	-997.00	14132.00
45	Fair Funding Work external support	18000.00	17,333.94	18000.00		20000.00
46	Insurance	780.00	806.70	806.70	26.70	865.00
47	IT Support	700.00	109.66	700.00		714.00
48	Legal and professional fees	13.00	88.00	103.00	90.00	13.00
49	Meeting Room Hire	500.00			-500.00	510.00
50	Nat Centre RHC	7784.00	12599.00	12559.00	4815.00	2939.00
51	National rural conference expenses	1500.00			-1500.00	
52	Office/General Admin Costs		290.00			
53	Printing, postage stationery & phone	3750.00	2,907.60	3750.00		4000.00
54	Professional subscriptions	550.00	182.00	550.00		561.00
55	Rent and service charge	9986.00	8,970.68	22986.00	13000.00	
56	RSN ONLINE - Website		887.50	887.50	887.50	5906.00
57	Rural England Service	7000.00	7,279.98	7280.00	280.00	7000.00
58	Rural housing group website expenses	175.00	160.61	175.00		
59	Rural Strategy/Rural Policy Expenses	18000.00	11,200.00	18000.00		17118.00
60	Rural Homeless Research Costs			5055.32	5055.32	9458.03
61	Travel and subsistence	5000.00	27.90	5000.00		5000.00
62	HOUSING	500.00			-500.00	500.00
63	Parliamentary	800.00			-800.00	800.00
64	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139504.84</b>	<b>110342.76</b>	<b>156943.52</b>	17478.52	<b>125003.03</b>
65	Corporation Tax	4500.00	8,207.43	8207.43	3707.00	5600.00
66	Uncategorised Expenditure @ CONTRA		11,613.16			

	A	B	C	D	E	F
67	Uncategorised Expense @ RHCA					
68	<b>TOTAL REVENUE COSTS</b>	<b>144004.84</b>	<b>130163.35</b>	<b>165150.95</b>	<b>21185.52</b>	<b>130603.03</b>
69	<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>14532.12</b>		<b>27876.07</b>		<b>43096.97</b>
70	CAPITAL ITEMS IT EQUIPMENT			3805.22	3805.22	
71	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>144004.84</b>	<b>130163.35</b>	<b>168956.17</b>	<b>24990.74</b>	<b>130603.03</b>
72						
73						
74						
75						
76						
77	<b>Net Income</b>	<b>14532.12</b>		<b>24070.85</b>		<b>43096.97</b>
78	<b>BALANCE B/FWD</b>	<b>68513.69</b>		<b>68513.69</b>		<b>92584.54</b>
79	<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>83045.81</b>		<b>92584.54</b>		<b>135681.51</b>
80						
81	<b>RURAL POLICY RESERVE ANALYSIS</b>					
82	2020/21 BUDGET PROVISION					
83	ADD INCOME IN YEAR					
84	LESS EXPENDITURE IN YEAR					
85						
86	<b>BALANCE C/FORWARD TO 2021/22</b>					
87						
88						

	A	B	C	D	E	F
89	<b>RE ANNUAL CHARGES INCOME BREAKDOWN</b>					
90						
91	Back Office	1485.00				
92	Staff Costs (Incl Vuln Panels)	3000.00				
93	Website	2350.00				
94						
95	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6835.00</b>				
96						
97	<b>RE PROJECT INCOME BREAKDOWN</b>					
98	Toolkit					
99	Utility Vulnerability Panel	800.00				
100	SORS	300.00				
101	Work for Anglia Water	1280.00				
102						
103	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2380.00</b>				