



## Minutes for the Rural Services Partnership AGM

Online via Zoom

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

2pm-3pm

### Present:

Tracy Baker (Trustee, National Federation of Women's Institutes) (TB)  
Dr Mark Betson (National Rural Officer, Church of England, Arthur Rank Centre) (MB)  
Graham Biggs MBE (Chief Executive, Rural Services Network & Company Secretary RSP) (GB)  
Hayden Bird (TED East Lindsey Learning and Evaluation Officer, YMCA Lincs) (HB)  
Kerry Booth (Assistant Chief Executive, Rural Services Network) (KB)  
Ruth Buckley-Salmon (Public Affairs Manager, NFSP) (RBS)  
Ian Cass (Managing Director, The Forum of Private Business) (IC)  
Martin Collett (Chief Executive, English Rural Housing Association & Director of RSP) (MC)  
Nora Corkery (CEO, Devon Communities Together) (NC)  
Anita Cornelius (Director – West ICA, CFT) (AC)  
Mark Cotton (Asst Director of Communications & Engagement, NE Ambulance Service) (MC)  
Jo Giles (Customer Safeguarding Senior Manager, Cadent Ltd) (JG)  
Nik Harwood (Chief Executive, Young Somerset & Director RSP) (NH)  
David Inman (Corporate Director of Rural Services Network & Director RSP) (DI)  
Gavin Iredale (Partnership Manager, Reed in Partnership) (GI)  
Beth Kennedy (Customer Services Partnership Manager, Anglian Water) (BK)  
Rev Richard Kirlew (Agricultural Chaplains Association) (RK)  
Malcolm Leeding MBE (President, Oxfordshire Assoc of Local Councils) (ML)  
John Longden (Chief Executive, Pub is The Hub) (JL)  
Julie Milburn (Sparsholt College Group) (JM)  
Alex Phillimore (Marketing & Communications Manager, Farming Community Network) (AP)  
Anna Price (Director of RSP and Director of Anna Price Strategic Marketing) (AP)  
Simon Thompson (Director of Development, Wrekin Housing Group) (ST)  
Nadine Trout (Member Development & Support Manager, Rural Services Network) (NT)  
Ian Whittle (Partnership Manager-South Coast, Reed in Partnership) (IW)

Bethan Aldridge (minute-taker) (BA)

### Apologies for Absence:

Amy Barker (Green Energy UK), John Birtwistle (Head of Policy, First Group & Director RSP), Stuart Emmerson, Director of Public Affairs & Communications, Hartpury College/Uni), Chris Hincliffe (CPRE), Jim Hume (Support in Mind Scotland), Dr Tom Lawrence (Public Policy Consultant, TRL Insight), Elizabeth Lodge (Head of Community Wellbeing Services, Care Plus), Cllr Cecilia Motley (Chair of RSN, Director of RSP & Councillor for Shropshire Council), Lydia Perris (Social Justice & Creation Care Officer, Diocese of Exeter), Martin Rich (Community Projects Advisor (Devon Communities Together), Nicola Simmons (Head of Supply Chain Development, Reed in Partnership), Chris Strickland (CFO, Cambs F&R Service), Matthew Warren (DCE, Cambs F&R Service)

The Chair, Nik Harwood, welcomed everyone to the meeting and formally handed the AGM procedures to GB, in his role as Company Secretary.

**1. To receive and consider the Minutes of Directors Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021**  
**([Attachment 1](#))**

Noted

**2. To receive and consider the Minutes of the AGM held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020**  
**([Attachment 2](#))**

Approved and agreed as a true record.

**3. To approve the Company Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021**  
**([Attachment 3](#))**

NH proposed that the accounts be approved as they were and MC seconded the motion.

**Action:** These were approved and adopted with no opposition.

**4. To consider re-appointing TaxAssist of Ludlow as the Company's Tax Accountants**

NH proposed that TaxAssist, Ludlow be re-appointed and MC seconded the motion.

**Action:** This was approved and adopted with no opposition.

**5. Appointment of Directors**

GB noted that he had not received any nominations. If anyone would like to stand as a Director, please contact GB for a further discussion.

**Action:** The remaining Directors were re-appointed without opposition.

**6. RSP Directors to appoint Chair**  
**(NB: Item discussed after the Partner Group meeting)**

MC nominated NH, AP seconded the motion and NH was re-appointed as Chair

**7. To receive and consider the Minutes of the Partner Group meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020** ([Attachment 4](#))

Approved and agreed as a true record.

**8. RSP Achievements for the year to date** (Link to the presentation [here](#))

Presentation by Nadine Trout, Member Development and Support Manager (RSN)

NT gave an overview of the achievements for RSP throughout the year and there are a number of links/videos within the presentation itself. Some of those achievements include launching the high profile Revitalising Rural campaign and its key policy asks of Government, the wide-ranging Seminar Programme which over 600 delegates attended and the National Rural Conference with over 425 delegates held over 5 days. Also, the RSP membership now stands at over 200 organisation and is part of a much wider network of over 500 plus. The Rural Lens Reviews of key Government documents helps to keep members informed in a simple, easy to digest format and to understand the potential impacts of these on rural communities/services/economies etc. The RSP has also been involved in bespoke, independent research and numerous Government Consultations on behalf of its members and provides the Secretariat support to the APPG for Rural Services.

## 9. RSP Plans for the year ahead (Link to the presentation [here](#))

Presentation by Chair of RSP – Nik Harwood

NH outlined plans for the coming year which included continuing with items that are seen as valued by the membership eg Funding digest, weekly news bulletin , quarterly Spotlight editions highlighting RSP members best practice etc. NH confirmed that the Rural Lens documents would continue as they provided a great translation of the high level policy issues and the Seminar programme and National Rural Conference. There will be discussion on how we may be able to blend virtual and physical seminars/Conference etc but the current format is working extremely well and has a great reach.

There are a number of key issues for the next twelve months and we will continue to pull together the correlation between different areas/regions of membership and provide that national voice to influence decision makers and encourage them to think about rural. It's very much about what is "bothering" people.

**Action:** NH asked the membership to let RSP know if there was something they would like considered that we are not covering currently or want to see less of.

**Action:** RSP needs qualitative data of people's lived experiences ie what is making them vulnerable, isolated etc. Please send your [case studies](#) through.

GB noted that we have a Net Zero Rural Lens due out ([please see link to this](#)) and that, in conjunction with Rural England CIC, there are two launches of the State of Rural Services 2021 Report and also a report funded by utility organisations on the Priority Services Register and client vulnerabilities. The [Revitalising Rural campaign](#) is updated in "real time" so reflects any policy changes etc and reiterated NH's call for Case Studies, and the APPG for Rural Services hopes to meet with the Care Minister, Gillian Keegan MP, in January to discuss the Social Care White paper

## 10. Future on-line meeting dates and seminars 2022

[Link to Events page on RSN Website](#)

## 11. Any Other Business

**Action:** BA to email the presentations and confirmation of RSP Chair to attendees immediately after the meeting today.

**Action:** GB reminded the meeting that there are vacancies for Directors of RSP. If anyone is interested, then please contact GB via [admin@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:admin@sparse.gov.uk)

**Action:** Please do share the Rural Lens documents.

Meeting closed at 2:43pm

**Date of Next meeting:**

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 2pm**