



**Minutes of the RMTG Clerks Advisory Panel meeting
Online via Zoom
Monday 30th November 2020
10:30am-12noon**

Present:

Sheila Atkinson (Newport Shropshire Town Council) (SA)
Will Austin (Bridport Town Council) (WA)
Tara Ball (Penistone Town Council) (TB)
Christin Barnes (Kirkby Stephen Town Council) (CB)
Ann Bean (New Alresford Town Council) (AB)
Graham Biggs MBE (Rural Services Network) (GB)
Rosemary Bridges (Belper Town Council) (RB)
Valerie Bright (Verwood Town Council) (VB)
Karen Chapman (Great Torrington Town Council) (KC)
Richard Cliffe (Penzance Council) (RC)
Claire Commons (Shaftsbury Town Council) (CC)
Tina Cunnell (Thetford Town Council) (TC)
Julie Debbage (Leominster Town Council) (JD)
Christopher Drake (Launceston Town Council) (CD)
Maureen Gibbins (Oxted Parish Council) (MG)
Holly Goring (Uckfield Town Council) (HG)
Sarah Greatorex (Halstead Town Council) (SG)
Carol Grey (Penrith Town Council) (CG)
Catherine Hibbert (Clare Town Council) (CH)
Paul Hodson (Buckingham Town Council) (PH)
Angela Howells (Westerham Town Council) (AH)
David Inman (Rural Services Network) (DI)
Ginette James (Lechlade-on-Thames Town Council) (GJ)
Tina Jeffery (Uttoxeter Town Council) (TJ)
Katie Jeffreys (Earby Town Council) (KJ)
Terry Jordan (Wisbech Town Council) (TJ)
Vanessa Lowe (Alcester Town Council) (VL)
Chris Maclean (Church Stretton Town Council) (CM)
David Martin (Corsham Town Council) (DM)
Jenny Morcom (Saxmundham Town Council) (JM)
Penny O'Hagan (Wern Town Council) (POH)
David Pooley (St Austell Town Council) (DP)
Karyn Reid (Harley Wintney Parish Council) (KR)
Gwilym Rippon (Bishop's Castle Town Council) (GR)

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

Rural Services Network

Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 0BZ

Tel: 01822 813693

www.rsnonline.org.uk email: events@sparse.gov.uk twitter: [@rsnonline](https://twitter.com/rsnonline)

Sam Shippen (Bicester Town Council) (SS)
Emma Smith (Belper Town Council) (ES)
Ellen Tims (Barkham Parish Council) (ET)
Lucy Waller (Market Rasen Town Council) (LW)

Bethan Aldridge (minute taker) (BA)

Apologies:

Deborah Barlow (Warsop Parish Council), Rosalind Barnett (Saxmundham Town Council), Carolyn Baynes (Arundel Town Council), Alison Benfield (St Ives Town Council, Cambs), Wendy Davies (Harworth & Bircotes Town Council), Steve Fletcher (Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council), Paula Heath (Clevedon Town Council), Julie Holden (East Grinstead Town Council), Helen Hunter (Cheadle Town Council), Liz Johnson-Idan (Chard Town Council), Tracey Mangold (Guisborough Town Council), Carol Mobbs (Lutterworth Town Council), Philippa Page (Rothwell Town Council), Louise Powell (Thornbury Town Council), Nicola Powell (Ampthill Town Council), Angela Price (Ledbury Town Council), Keith Shelley (Wendover Parish Council), Frances Simpson (New Alresford Town Council), Karen Tarburton (Harworth & Bircotes Town Council), Sue Templeman (Ackworth Parish Council), Sally Thurston (Faringdon Town Council), Viv Tunnadine (Penrith Town Council), Andrea Vincent (Olney Town Council), Lynda Walker (Keswick Town Council), Alison Webber (Lechlade on Thames Town Council), Nicola Young (Ledbury Town Council), Swineshead Parish Council

Graham Biggs MBE, Chief Executive and David Inman, Corporate Director of Rural Services Network welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Rural Market Town Group (RMTG) Clerks Advisory Panel.

GB and DI discussed the brief for the RMTG, the Revitalising Rural: Realising the Vision Campaign and the initial recruitment process for the group. There are currently nearly 150 members of this group.

Please see the links below for further information:

[Please click here to view the RMTG Good Practice Survey.](#)

[Click here to read the Revitalising Rural chapters](#)

Action: Regarding the proposed RMTG online meeting schedule, it was agreed that the Clerks Advisory Panel would meet once a year to raise/discuss issues and that this would define the agenda for the two subsequent RMTG meetings that year.

Covid-19 and its impact on the roles/work of the local councils was also discussed. It was agreed that if anyone was able to provide evidence to support the impact, financial or otherwise, then GB would look into this further and may be able to use this in discussions with other rural organisations and key policy makers and influencers.

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

Rural Services Network

Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 0BZ

Tel: 01822 813693

www.rsnonline.org.uk email: events@sparse.gov.uk twitter: [@rsnonline](https://twitter.com/rsnonline)

Action: DP raised his concerns re loss of income and will provide DI with itemised supporting evidence on this.

The group also discussed the type of local support they receive, and it showed quite a variance. Some showing quite a high level of support from their County/District down, and others receiving little or no extra support. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to have an informal support network to offer help/advice, project support etc from within the group.

Action: RMTG would look into setting up a Linked-in group (or equivalent) to support such an activity.

DI would welcome everyone's opinion on the RMTG Information page on the RSN website and any feedback/suggestions would be very welcome.

[Please click here to view the RMTG page](#)

DI and GB explained the structure of the Rural Services Network and how its membership enables it to raise rural issues, argue for rural proofing policies and the influence it has through its APPG on Rural Services, Rural Fair Share Group of MPs, Peers Panel on Rural Issues and its work through the Rural Coalition.

Under Any Other Business, TJ raised the issue of not being able to apply for Government COVID Support grants and WA raised the issue of climate emergency being endorsed by councils, but no funding allocated to deliver this.

DI asked the group if they could supply any supporting evidence on the issues already raised and any others as it helped Rural Services Network to argue that particular rural case.

DI and GB thanked everyone for attending today and that they would go through the meeting chat to pick up on any other themes. If anyone would like to contact them directly with any concerns/issues, then that would be very welcome.

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

Rural Services Network

Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 0BZ

Tel: 01822 813693

www.rsonline.org.uk email: events@sparse.gov.uk twitter: [@rsnonline](https://twitter.com/rsnonline)