

Kent Rural Board: Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose of the Kent Rural Board

The Kent Rural Board is the strategic rural partnership for Kent and Medway. Its primary role is to bring together the key organisations overseeing Kent's economic, social and environmental rural agendas to:

- Provide an expert voice by raising awareness of key rural issues and priorities at both a national and local level
- Rural proof key areas of mainstream policy and delivery
- Work collaboratively to develop and implement solutions to key issues, including leveraging in additional investment to support key actions.

2.0 The Role of the Kent Rural Board

The Kent Rural Board will be responsible for:

- Identifying and articulating the key economic, social and environmental strategic investment priorities for Kent's rural areas.
- Providing expert advice to the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership and other key Boards/Executives on key rural matters.
- Working collaboratively across the rural agenda – especially with key groups such as the Kent Local Nature partnerships, and Leader Local Action Groups - on key rural issues.
- Creating a strategic framework, and associated support to maximise partners ability to bring external funding/inward investment into Kent and Medway e.g. new Leader.
- Work as a 'network of networks' to fulfil the requirements of Defra's Rural and Farming Network criteria for the Kent Rural Network– by ensuring that all members consult with, and communicate the views of, the members that they are representing.

3.0 Composition of the Board

- 3.1 The Board will comprise Members from key rural delivery and stakeholders' organisations. Every effort will be made to ensure a balanced and sustainable representation of all relevant sectors that can make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Kent Rural Framework and Actions Plans arising from the framework without making the board too unwieldy to operation efficiently and ensure effective representation.
- 3.2 Membership is by Chairman's invitation, subject to Board approval, to a named individual of sufficient seniority to influence activity and make decisions within their organisation.

- 3.3 Membership may be in a permanent or temporary capacity as the need arises. Invitations to join the Board should clearly specify the appropriate arrangements.
- 3.4 Observers may also be invited to attend board meetings, subject to the same processes as 3.2 and 3.3 above.
- 3.5 At least 5 Board Members are required to form a quorum for a Board Meeting. Decisions shall be by majority vote. All board members have one vote. In the event of a split decision, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- 3.6 In order to ensure that meetings remain manageable, the membership of the Board (excluding officer support) shall not exceed 16.

4.0 Subgroups

- 4.1 In order to deliver against the objects of the Kent Rural Investment Plan, or provide specific rural expertise, the Board may decide to form a specific sub-group, or task and finish group. These will only be taken forward on an 'as needs' basis – and will be facilitated by or a Kent Rural Board member organisation.
- 4.2 In these cases, the terms of reference will be agreed by the Board and the lead organisation will be responsible for providing regular updates on the sub-group's activities/progress to the Board.

5.0 Role of the Board Chairman

- 5.1 The Chairman of the Board is the KCC Cabinet Member or, if delegated, the Deputy Cabinet Member holding the portfolio for Economic Development.
- 5.2 The Chairman will act as the independent leader of the meeting. If the Chairman is unable to attend a meeting, the Board will elect a temporary Chair for the meeting. The temporary Chair will take on the responsibilities of the elected Chairman.

6.0 Officer support to the Board

- 6.1 KCC will provide administrative support to the Board. This will comprise:
- meeting arrangements
 - preparation and distribution of agendas
 - distribution of agenda papers
 - taking and distribution of minutes
- 6.2 The Board will also be facilitated through the involvement of three thematic officer leads – for the economic, community and environmental aspects of Kent's rural agenda.

7.0 Review of terms of reference

7.1 These terms of reference will be reviewed by the Kent Rural Board on an annual basis.

8.0 Membership

8.1 As highlighted above the Kent Rural Board is essentially a network of networks, with each member representing an organisation(s) with a strategic role in Kent's economic, community and/or environmental rural agenda. A list of the current membership is detailed below:

Kent Rural Board Members (as December 2017)

Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Kent County Council

John Bennett, Trustee, Kent Wildlife Trust

Andrew Bowles, Kent Leaders, Swale Borough Council

Amanda Cottrell, Visit Kent

Stephanie Durling, Manager, Produced in Kent (Pink) Limited

Keith Harrison, Chief Executive, Action *with* Communities *in* Rural Kent

Liz Harrison, Economic Development Manager, Kent County Council

Sean Holden, Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Kent County Council

Rob Jarman, Planning Officer, Maidstone Borough Council

Huw Jarvis, Kent Downs & Marshes Leader Programme Manager, Kent County Council

Nick Johannsen, Kent Downs AONB

Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, Director of Finance & Resources, Hadlow College

Simon Maclachlan, Action with Communities in Rural Kent

Caroline Pinchbeck, Director of Communities & Partnerships Framework & Rural Life Adviser, Diocese of Canterbury

Chris Reynolds, Chair, Kent Downs AONB

Alan Rogers, Chair, Action *with* Communities *in* Rural Kent (ACRK)

Nick Sandford, Chairman Kent Country Land & Business Association

Catherine Smith, Development Policy & Engagement Manager, Medway Council

Cllr Paulina Stockell, Kent Association of Local Councils

Charles Tassell, Director KCAS, Previous NFU Chairman, representing Kent NFU, Why Farming Matters in Kent, Committee Member, Kent CLA

Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover