

YORKSHIRE Food, Farming & Rural Network

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee held at the
Yorkshire Agricultural Society, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate

On Tuesday 10th October 2017

Present:

Libby Bateman, LB (Country Land & Business Association)
Adam Bedford (NFU)
Graham Coultish, GC (Sheffield Rural Board)
Graham Finn, GF (McCain Foods)
James Hopwood (Future Farmers of Yorkshire and Yorkshire Federation of Young Farmers Club)
Madge Moore, MM (Chair)
Dave Melling (Bradford Metropolitan District Council)
Emma Smailes (Federation of Small Businesses)
Leah Swain, LS (Community First Yorkshire)
Helen Wright, HW (East Riding of Yorkshire Council)
Janet Thornton, JT (Vice Chair)
Andy Tordoff (Defra)

Apologies for absence:

Dean Cook (Innovate UK)
Kate Dale, KD (Yorkshire Rural Support Network)
Dorothy Fairburn (Country Land & Business Association)
Sophie Green (Future Farmers of Yorkshire Network)
Nigel Pulling, NP (Yorkshire Agricultural Society)
Gesa Reiss (YNYER Local Enterprise Partnership)
Standing guest
Suzanne Stirke (Farmer)

Secretariat:

Holly Jones, HJ, Yorkshire Agricultural Society

1. Welcome and Introduction / apologies

MM welcomed all to the meeting and ran through the apologies from Network members.

2. Minutes of last meeting

All agreed sign-off for the previous minutes.

MM covered the outstanding actions within the 'Actions Summary' paper.

3. Re-Appointment of Chair

GF explained that MM's term as Chair for the Yorkshire Food Farming and Rural Network had come to an end, however, MM had expressed a wish to continue should she be re-appointed. No other candidates had come forward. All agreed to re-appoint MM for a further two years.

4. Chair's Update

MM highlighted the good work of YFFRN members at the show and thanked the CLA, YAS and the NFU for the opportunity to meet with Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the second day of the show.

JT and GF had great success meeting Kevin Hollinrake, MP for Thirsk and Malton. Since this introduction, YFFRN has been successful in securing a further meeting in January of next year.

MM attended the YNYER LEP Conference and had the opportunity to meet with Robert Goodwill, MP for Scarborough and Whitby, and another link for the networks lobbying activities.

MM explained that the RFN Chairs had not met since GF attended in December 2016, however, there had been an email to acknowledge this and that further contact would follow.

AB suggested if we could host the RFN Chairs meeting in Yorkshire as part of a conference for 2018.

ES commented that it would be useful to highlight the launch of the industrial strategy in November.

GF explained that we need to take the opportunity to share the great things the region is doing.

AT suggested that the meeting could be held in the north in collaboration with the north east region farming and rural network. A meeting in York would work as the Defra Office would link well with the ministers if these were thought to be the target audience.

Actions:

- ***MM to make contact with Anthony Braithwaite to suggest a joint meeting between Yorkshire and the North East to host the RFN Chairs meeting and copy in AT.***
- ***Following the above, MM to contact Andrew Robinson for an update on the next RFN Chairs meeting and copy in AT.***

5. Communication with Government

5.1 Kevin Hollinrake MP Visit, 19th January 2018

All discussed the forthcoming visit with Kevin Hollinrake and the need to push for more involvement and support for the rural business economy.

AT commented that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have been tasked to lead on the future economic investment for England. They will be focussing on what will happen to ERDF and at the "totality of place" including a focus on the rural context. The LEPs will focus on prosperity funding and the industrial strategy. Facts about rural Yorkshire were therefore very important and it was good to see this on the agenda.

[ES explained that Kevin Hollinrake did a conference about broadband last year, this could be a hook into the broadband seminar at GYS.]

Actions:

- ***HJ to contact Kevin Hollinrake's office to discuss timings and venue.***
- ***MM and NP to agree format for the meeting with Kevin Hollinrake and agree who would give support from the Network.***

5.2 Latest position with regards to Brexit/CAP

NFU

AB explained that in his recent talks with farmers the NFU have tried to highlight the impact of politics and how this would impact the UK domestic agricultural policies. Politics are currently fluid with a day-to-day change from positive to negative views overnight. The politics will have to be sorted before domestic policy can be developed.

There seems to be a real concern for labour. 85% of employees in regional slaughter houses are not from the UK and there is great uncertainty for the employees and the business. Through debate, the NFU are bringing the topics of labour, regulation, trade and domestic policy alive.

CLA

LB explained that the CLA have published new 'how to' documents with opportunities and have put forward a case for a Stewardship Scheme/ Land management Contract. There are concerns whether resurrecting the old Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) would work second time around as the European and global landscape has changed.

All discussed the impact on other sectors and the links it has to the rural community.

ES commented that from a business perspective, there are three areas that are the same across the board; labour, trade and regulation. These are key issues of concern for the majority of small businesses in other sectors. The fourth area is business support.

DM explained that many of the business support programmes were match funded by European sources. There are concerns about how programmes will run in the future. There has been great changes in business support over the past decade including; one-to-one, online, off-line then passed to local authorities.

All discussed the concerns that healthcare staff are leaving local hospitals and not being replaced. Care requirements in Yorkshire are forecast to grow by 20% yet the rate of staff leaving hospitals is 25% a year putting the issue of migrant labour to the forefront. The rural crime teams in South Yorkshire are dealing with increased social matters such as dementia and mental health.

AB suggested that it would be useful for this group to talk to the unions, for example, EEF, and see what the landscape is like for the wider engineering industry. It would be useful to get a snapshot of the current feeling in Yorkshire.

Action: DF, LB and AB to keep the network up to date with their efforts on Brexit/CAP.

5.3 Pride and Provenance Campaign

AB explained that the Pride and Provenance Campaign was launched at the Great Yorkshire Show this year as the industry as a whole finds it tricky to get hold of tangible figures. Through this campaign, the NFU has been able to approach companies in Yorkshire to ask key facts about their business such as turnover, employees to begin to form a picture of the current landscape. The campaign will now reach out to the North East. This information could be the basis for gathering further data on the picture of Yorkshire food and rural businesses.

5.4 Update in YNYER LEP

To be tabled following the meeting.

5.5 Rural Proofing Checklist for LCR LEP

HJ explained that JT has been asked to rural proof the LCR Strategic Economic Plan and was seeking advice from the Network about her first draft checklist.

DM explained that the landscape is particularly difficult. There is the West Yorkshire Combined Local Authority and the Leeds City Region LEP both working as strategic bodies. The LEP was formed and headed up by key industrialists from large metropolitan urban areas. DM lobbied hard to ensure that rural remained important to the area where two thirds of west Yorkshire are deemed as such.

ES commented that her colleague Barney Mynott also sits on the LCR Business Comms group and would be likely be interested to support this exercise of rural proofing the LCR policy. At the time of the development of the city region LEPS it was very much core cities, but it is slowly taking into consideration the wider areas that it services. An example being Bradford which now always talks about its large rural hinterland.

Actions:

- ***ES to speak with Barney Mynott and invite him to join the Rural Proofing task and finish group.***
- ***HW, DM and JT to work with Barney Mynott to contribute to the rural proofing checklist for the LCR Strategic Economic Plan.***

5.6. Sheffield City Region Update

GC explained that since the last meeting there had been discussions that a rural group was not applicable to South Yorkshire. However, Sheffield City Region would require 10 rural businesses and representatives to form a board that can appraise European applications. So far GC has confirmed five covering food processing and infrastructure. However, GC lacks input from the tourism sector and would welcome any suggestions of businesses or individuals that could help from the network members.

Action: All to contact GC if they can think of any representatives that could join the board from the rural tourism sector within South Yorkshire, Derbyshire or East Midlands.

6. Broadband Update

DM explained that there are good news stories coming out of the roll out for broadband. Within 3 years broadband coverage will have reached 98% of the population in West Yorkshire. There is new investment to kick start development that may have previously stalled or was not up-graded 5-6 years ago. The issue the programme faces now is that the land needed to implement the programme is less publicly managed. The fibre needs to go on private land. Issues include:

- Not being able to locate the owner of the land (not all on the land registry)
- Lack of contacts to locate the land owner
- Solicitor costs related to negotiating with private owners rack up
- Change of use and implementation of BT Openreach can impact on what you can and can't do on the land

LB suggested that the CLA could run a campaign to get owners to register their land with the land registry. An article could be possible in the national CLA magazine highlighting the roll out and the blockages the programme now faces.

DM suggested an awareness campaign as a seminar at GYS to look at ownership and have all the different providers of broadband in one place. It would be useful for private land owners to understand the positives of giving access to the programme on their land, as it will benefit the local community and rural businesses. It would be useful to have a list of contacts for the parish councils who may be able to sign-post to the owners of the land. [Could land owners register at the show with land registry as a drop in?]

LS explained that North Yorkshire Superfast broadband phase 3 was delayed for procurement.

Actions:

- **HJ, LB and DM to work on putting together a seminar focusing on the next steps for broadband at GYS 2018. Work up copy for the CLA magazine and for the YAS/Farming Discussion Group newsletters and promote.**
- **AT and LB to email separately about the issues around the full fibre funding voucher scheme and the EFRID funding scheme.**
- **All to contact DM with other organisations that may be able to support the next steps for the broadband campaign.**

7. Proposal for YFFRN Business Conference

All discussed the concept of hosting an event that would showcase Yorkshire in a positive way highlighting successes and opportunities. HJ explained that NP has offered to support an event, however it would be useful for some co-sponsors to come on board with the initiative.

LB commented that the North East successfully hosted an event in June 2016 in which 100-200 people attended. This event was opened by a minister and was well received.

AB suggested that the Network could reach out to the other regional farming chairs across the UK to see if they would be interested in doing a collaborative event in York and invite a minister to be the keynote speaker. It would be good to host in York as this is where the Defra offices are based and could be an advantage in getting more civil servants, policy makers and opposition parties to attend.

ES commented that we need to look at the wider audience. Over 40% of businesses trade overseas, it would be useful to have an international business theme and talk of world leading businesses and not just Yorkshire.

AB suggested that this could be tied in with a pre-dinner and a farm visit.

Potential focus areas:

- 98% of broadband coverage to be achieved in the coming years. How has this been achieved, what is needed to help with that extra push?
- Good practice on rural housing
- Good practice on exports
- Case study examples and good news stories for each region in the UK

Potential conference date: June 2018

Action: MM, AT, GF, AB and DF (LS for affordable housing theme) to form a task and finish group to develop a business conference to showcase Yorkshire and collaborate with the other RFN Chairs for a national event. An early date needs to be put in the diaries to get the ball rolling

8. Data for Rural Yorkshire

Holly introduced the document that had been produced in Essex on rural issues. LS said this had been developed for a specific reason. It was clear that there had been funding available for this work as several surveys had been conducted with rural businesses.

GF explained that we need to be clear what data we require in order for it to have value as there were many points within the Essex work that would have little value in Yorkshire.

All discussed the importance of looking to other rural data such as decline in population, labour issues in regards to Brexit along with general data to support positive news about farming in the region.

ES commented that when the Olympics was taking place it was great to have the knowledge on which businesses had contributed to it and who had been involved, such as providing goods and services for the event etc.

As time was short there was not enough time to discuss this fully and it was agreed that a task and finish group be established (maybe in conjunction with the group pulling together a conference) to begin to pull together what statistics were needed and then to find out who has the data if any and to see how any gaps could be filled if needed.

Action: MM, JT, HJ, AB, to form a rural data task and finish group.

9. Logo Discussion

All agreed that the new logos using word was good but the '&' needed to be re-positioned and then the website can be updated.

Action: HJ to request an amendment to the logo and circulate to the Network.

10. AOB

Apprenticeships

AB highlighted that Mark Suthern, National Head of Agriculture at Barclays, has launched a new apprenticeship scheme for agriculture aimed at 21-17 year olds. It would be useful if this the Network could support this and link young people with the activity.

(<https://www.fginsight.com/news/news/barclays-launches-first-ever-agriculture-apprentice-programme-in-banking-25287>)

Action: HJ to ask AB for more information about the new Barclays Agriculture Apprenticeship Scheme and work with SG (Future Farmers) and YAS about what we can do to champion the scheme.

Lord Haskins information request

Action: Due to time constraints, HW will send a short summary of her recent request from Lord Haskins via email.

CHAP Farmers Day, Wednesday 25th October 2017, 12 until 5pm (including lunch)

Details of the event attached. If you would like to attend, please contact Charlotte Milligan:
charlotte.milligan@chap-solutions.co.uk

Action: All to continue to champion the CHAP Farmers Day to their connections.

Bovine TB Update

LB explained that the new Bovine TB Hub has now been launched: <http://www.tbhub.co.uk/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-bovine-tb-service-launched-for-farmers-in-england>

LB was concerned that there were many livestock farmers who were not aware of the issues regarding TB and that the recent outbreaks in the north were arising from cattle movements. All discussed the need for the TB service to be available to all farmers in low risk areas due to the risks related to movement of cattle.

Action:

- **LB, HJ and AB to discuss a Bovine TB seminar maybe before the GYS next year as this was a priority area**
- **HJ to circulate details on the project proposal and the lead vet for Hill Sheep Farming Participatory Epidemiology Project for Cumbria and Yorkshire through the Farmer-Scientist Network and to link LB with the lead vet.**
- **HJ to send LB link to Sapient Sensors**

9. Dates for meetings 2018:

- Monday 26th February
- Monday 18th June
- Monday 15th October

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Description	By whom	Progress
MM to make contact with Anthony Braithwaite to suggest a joint meeting between Yorkshire and the North East to	Madge Moore	ASAP

host the RFN Chairs meeting and copy in AT.		
<p>Following the above, MM to contact Andrew Robinson for an update on the next RFN Chairs meeting and copy in AT.</p> <p><i>16/10/17 Update: There has been a reorganisation in Defra, Sarah Severn is now the Deputy Director for rural policy and covering the RFNs. Further update to follow.</i></p>	Madge Moore	Complete – see comment below the task description.
HJ to contact Kevin Hollinrake’s office to discuss timings and venue.	Holly Jones	In progress – contacted 16/10/17
MM and NP to agree format for the meeting with Kevin Hollinrake and share/request support from the Network.	Madge Moore and Nigel Pulling	By November 2017
DF, LB and AB to keep the network up to date with their efforts on Brexit/CAP.	Adam Bedford/ Dorothy Fairburn and Libby Bateman	On-going
Update from the YNYER LEP.	Gesa Reiss	By end of October
ES to speak with Barney Mynott and invite him to join the Rural Proofing task and finish group.	Emma Smailes	ASAP
HW, DM and JT to work with Barney Mynott to contribute to the rural proofing checklist for the LCR Strategic Economic Plan.	Helen Wright, Dave Melling, Janet Thornton	ASAP
All to contact GC if they can think of any representatives that could join the board from the rural tourism sector within South Yorkshire, Derbyshire or East Midlands.	All	ASAP
HJ, LB and DM to work on putting together a seminar focusing on the next steps for broadband at GYS 2018. Work up copy for the CLA magazine and for the YAS/Farming Discussion Group newsletters and promote.	Holly Jones, Libby Bateman and Dave Melling	By next meeting
AT and LB to email separately about the issues around the full fibre funding voucher scheme and the EFRID funding scheme.	Andy Tordoff and Libby Bateman	ASAP

All to contact DM with other organisations that may be able to support the next steps for the broadband campaign.	All	ASAP
MM, AT, GF JT and DF (LS for housing theme) to form a task and finish group to develop a business conference to showcase Yorkshire and collaborate with the other RFN Chairs for a national event.	Madge Moore, Andy Tordoff, Graham Finn, Janet Thornton and Dorothy Fairburn (Leah Swain – affordable housing element)	By early November
MM, JT, HJ, AB, to form a rural data task and finish group.	Madge Moore, Janet Thornton, Adam Bedford	By early November
HJ to request an amendment to the logo and circulate to the Network. Website to be then updated	Holly Jones	In progress
HJ to ask AB for more information about the new Barclays Agriculture Apprenticeship Scheme and work with SG (Future Farmers) and YAS about what we can do to champion the scheme.	Holly Jones Adam Bedford and Sophie Green	By early November
Due to time constraints, HW will send a short summary of her recent request from Lord Haskins via email.	Helen Wright	By end of October
All to continue to champion the CHAP Farmers Day to their connections.	All	ASAP
LB, HJ and AB to discuss a Bovine TB seminar.	Libby Bateman, Adam Bedford and Holly Jones	By next meeting
HJ to circulate details on the project proposal for Hill Sheep Farming Participatory Epidemiology Project for Cumbria and Yorkshire through the Farmer-Scientist Network.	Holly Jones	ASAP
HJ to send LB link to Sapient Sensors	Holly Jones	Complete