



Date: Wednesday, 26 April 2023

Time: 10am – 11.30am

Venue: via Microsoft Teams call

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
David Andrews (DA)	VisitWiltshire	
Charlotte Boole (CB)	Greenway Training	✓
Rory Bowen (RB)	Wiltshire Council	Apologies
Julian Head (JH)	Wiltshire Council	✓
Ruth Lambert (RL)	FSB	Apologies
Gary Mantle (GM)	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	✓ - left 11am
John Matthews (JM)	Pinkney Park	✓
James Miles-Hobbs (JM-H)	JMH Farming and Renewables	✓
Henry Oliver	North Wessex Downs	
Andy Parsons (AP)	Cotswolds AONB	Apologies
Harry Tipple (HT) / Alex Neale (AN)	Community First	
Paul Walton (PW)	New Forest NPA	
Caroline Wheatley-Hubbard (CW-H)	Boyton Farm	✓ - joined 10.45am
Katie Davies (KD)	NFU	Apologies
Chris Farr (CF)	CLA	✓
SWLEP: attendance will be dependent on topics discussed		
Paddy Bradley (PB)	SWLEP CEO	✓
Tim Burghes (TB)	Head of Marketing & Comms	✓
Chris Stevens (CS)	Head of Business Support	✓

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
Guest(s)	Elly Cooper (EC) - South West and South Wales Regional Manager, Career Transition Partnership (CTP) Fiona Galbraith (FG) - Ruralink Tim Lever (TL) – Rural Employment Manager, High Ground	
Chair	Paddy Bradley (PB)	
Notes	Deborah House (DKH)	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
1.0	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
	The meeting opened at 10.02am. PB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions made. Apologies were noted.	
2.0	Minutes from 20 July 2022	
2.1	The minutes from the meeting on 2 November 2022 were read and approved.	
2.2	Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wiltshire Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) - a group to include Lynn Trigwell, Charlotte Boole, Gary Mantle, James Miles-Hobbs, Katie Davis, Rachel Finley, and Caroline Wheatley-Hubbard to meet to plan what would be a worthwhile contribution to this work from the group. Interested parties to get in touch with DKH. Update: Wiltshire Wildlife Fund (WWF) had called a meeting of various interested parties which was now handed over to Wiltshire Council. The Council was advertising for an officer to lead the preparation but was still waiting to hear from Defra if it had been appointed as the responsible party. No resources had been highlighted as yet. GM advised that he would be retiring by October. Thanks were given for his service to WWF and his attendance at this group. SWLEP should like WWF to maintain a presence on this group and for details to be handed to his replacement. The offer was made to GM to attend any future meetings should he wish. 	
4.0	Agricultural sector and military leavers	
	Taken out of order. Elly Cooper from the Careers Transition Partnership (CTP) spoke to the meeting. A recent meeting held been held to promote the rural sector to Service Leavers.	

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	<p>There were 18 potential career pathways within the rural sector, but CTP staff also needed internal training on what was available in order to inform Service Leavers.</p> <p>15,000 military personnel leave the service every year; many would have significant transferable skills from the military to other sectors, rural being one of them. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they were naturally outdoors people, so the land-based sector seemed a natural progression for them; • they were quick to adapt and quick to learn; • project management delivery was high quality amongst military personnel; and • the rural sector was not necessarily now about how livestock and crops work, but about having strong technical skills with the increase in farming technology. <p>Information should be provided to allow them to make informed decisions, but there were still barriers for military personnel to enter the sector including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lack of role models; and • the sector contained many very small businesses and sole traders which did not come together easily to promote themselves. <p>To combat some of these problems, the aim was to create an event held on a working farm in Wiltshire in partnership with the Council with appropriate people, such as training providers and employers, where potential trainees could discover the opportunities available. Holding a big event such as this would have greater impact.</p> <p>RFi from Wiltshire Council expressed interest in the concept and was keen to be involved. A large percentage of service personnel and their families live and work in Wiltshire. One of the challenges was to encourage Service Leavers to remain in the county and not relocate to their “home” counties. Making them aware of opportunities within the rural sector, may give them the chance to stay.</p> <p>GM advised that WWF had previously worked with Help for Heroes through Tedworth House, assisting service personal to engage with the natural world and developing rural skills to help with rehabilitation. However, there was no mechanism at the moment to deliver this. A programme running at Stanford Hall offered horticultural therapy for mental health and Tedworth would like to reinvigorate the Wiltshire Wildlife Fund programme.</p> <p>Action: TL and GM to have discussion offline.</p>	<p>May 2023</p>

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	<p>Action: establish a small group to include Chris Farr CLA, Charlotte Boole, Rachel Finlay (or other Wiltshire Council representative) Tim Lever, Elly Cooper, Fiona Galbraith and SWLEP to focus on the event.</p> <p>SWLEP was keen to support this initiative with some finance, as routes to employment were one of its priority areas. Tim Burghes could also assist from the Comms point of view.</p>	June 2023
3.0	Forestry Training Fund	
	<p>CB presented to the meeting outlining the types of funded courses currently available within the land-based sector. The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/rural-economy-sector-group-(resg)/2023/26-april/about-the-forestry-training-fund.pdf?sfvrsn=ba8cece1_3</p> <p>In general, communication on what courses were available was not comprehensive. The information funnel was crucial but there was no coherent pathway to ensure that it reached the appropriate people. So, people could be missing out on funded opportunities to re-skill or upskill within the sector.</p> <p>Action: SWLEP to raise the issue of communication provision with Area Lead to make government aware of the situation.</p>	May 2023
5.0	Rural England Prosperity Fund update	
	<p>JH presented to the meeting with an update on the position since his last presentation to the group in November 2022. The presentation can be accessed via the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/rural-economy-sector-group-(resg)/2023/26-april/revise-wiltshire-ukspf_swlep-resg_26apr23.pdf?sfvrsn=4eaccab0_3</p>	
6.0	Updates	
6.1 and 6.2	<p>Rural LEPs and National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE)</p> <p>The National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE) had been established by university partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle University's Centre for Rural Economy and Business School; • the Enterprise Research Centre at Warwick University; and 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Countryside and Community Research Institute at the University of Gloucestershire and Royal Agricultural University. <p>This was in response to the need for the rural economy to have an equivalent organisation to the Centre for Cities for the urban economy, which shared information and lobbied for funding for cities. Research England had provided the funding to develop these prospects. LEPs were supportive of NICRE.</p> <p>NICRE had previously presented to this meeting and could be invited for a further update.</p> <p>SWLEP was compiling an overview of economies in rural areas across different sectors, the strengths and weaknesses and what types of employment were growing or shrinking. SWLEP had access to that data for every part of the country and it was information which could be shared with this meeting.</p>	
7.0	Partner updates and AOB	
	None	
	<p>Presenters and attendees were thanked for their contributions to the debate.</p> <p>Next meeting: Wednesday, 19 July 2023 - 10am to 11.30am</p> <p>Future dates for 2023 Wednesday 1 November 2023 - 10am to 11.30am</p>	
	Meeting closed at 11.30am	

D. Stollen

1 November 2023