

RDPE/RSN Seminar 2

Ivan Annibal

Rural Services Director

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Objectives

- Enhancement of the delivery of the RDPE through greater exchange between local authorities – sharing information, practice and expertise.
- Development of innovative and new approaches to key challenges within the programme, through themed meetings, in relation to : integration of projects across the axes, community engagement, provision of local intelligence on complementary and value adding issues within the rural economy, encouraging use of the Network.
- Through the above supporting the development of projects which ensure spending targets are hit by projects of the best possible quality.

The RSN

- Network of service providers from across the public, private and voluntary sectors, operating in predominantly rural areas.
- Our 200 plus full members include local authorities (counties, districts and unitaries), police forces, fire and rescue authorities, primary care trusts and other NHS bodies, housing associations, transport providers and colleges , community councils and the national teams of voluntary bodies.
- In short, a cross-section of organisations at the sharp end of delivering to rural communities.
- In community membership some 4,000 parish and town councils, some 3,000 local schools and about 1,000 other local organisations and other community level groups. Weekly rural news and analysis briefings go out by e mail to over 40,000 people a week.

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4 Themes

- Leader
- Environment
- Business Support
- Cross Axes Projects/ Working
- Some resonances on the slide to follow:-

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Territorial/Delivery – Supporting Sub-Regional/Shire Approaches

1. Councils power of general competence
2. Councils to return to traditional (committee structure) governance if they so desire
3. Stop restructuring in Norfolk, Suffolk and Devon
4. Communities powers to save local facilities threatened with closure and right to take over state run services
5. Abolish Comprehensive Area Assessment
6. LEPs to replace RDAs, these may take the form of RDAs, in areas where popular
7. Devolution of power and financial autonomy to local authorities
8. Rapidly abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and return decision making on housing and planning to local councils
9. Abolish GO London and consider abolition of the other GOs
10. Free up housing revenue account

Environmental/Planning – Freeing up the Countryside

1. Social and Environmental responsibilities to be covered in company reporting
2. Planning reformed to give neighbourhoods more ability to shape the nature of places
3. National planning framework setting out economic, environmental and social priorities
4. Commitment to bring more empty homes into use
5. Home on the Farm – conversion of agricultural buildings to homes
6. Review governance of National Parks
7. Take forward Pitt Review on flooding
8. Reduce regulations on farmers and develop extra support for hill farmers
9. Take forward marine and coastal access act
10. Presumption in favour of sustainable development in planning

Economic –De-regulation, Enterprise, Skills and Innovation

1. “one in one out” rule for new regulation
2. Practical way to make small business relief automatic
3. Private cash into Post Office
4. Quicker to start a new business
5. Social tenants running businesses in their own homes
6. Government small business procurement focus
7. Implement Dyson review – UK most successful hi-tech exporter
8. Improve competitiveness of tourism industry
9. Apprenticeships, internships, work pairings and college and workplace training
10. Reduce state control of colleges and abolish FE quangos
11. Review support for part time students
12. Consider implementation of Lord Browne review of HE
13. Publish more information about costs, graduate earnings and course satisfaction
14. Public funding research implemented in a way which supports academic integrity
15. Cut £6 Billion in year

Social – Enhanced opportunities for Self Reliance

1. Promote shared ownership schemes for social tenants
2. Trusts to bring forward community housing
3. Incentives for authorities to deliver sustainable development in new homes and businesses
4. Support rapid roll out of broadband – esp in remote areas (possibly using TV licence fees linked to digital switch over)
5. Tackle fuel poverty in remote rural areas
6. Single welfare to work programme
7. Greater results focus for welfare to work contractors
8. Service Academies offering pre-employment training and work placements
9. Cut health quangos
10. Support creation of mutual, coops and charities
11. Public sector employee owned cooperatives
12. Train community organisers
13. National Citizen Service