

## **East of England Rural Forum** **Member's Job Description**

*This job description should be read alongside the Rural Forum's Terms of Reference.*

**This document outlines the key roles and responsibilities for members of the East of England Rural Forum.**

### **The purpose of the Rural Forum**

The purpose of the Rural Forum is to provide a voice for rural stakeholders at a strategic level, capable of influencing the rural agenda in the East of England. Specific roles of the Rural Forum are set out in the terms of reference.

### **Responsibilities**

Members will represent whole of their relevant constituency and not their particular organisation at meetings of the Rural Forum. They must be able to take account of the wider regional perspective. Members will also need to represent the views of the Rural Forum itself within the region and nationally. Members will be expected to ensure effective communication with and within their constituency.

The Rural Forum will have a chair and two vice-chairs. The role and responsibilities of the Chair are set out in the **East of England Rural Forum Chair's Job Description**, copy of which is attached for information. The vice-chairs will be drawn from the Rural Forum's membership and will be expected to occasionally deputise for the Chair at regional and national meetings and events.

### **Time Commitment**

Members will be expected to attend the four regular meetings of the Rural Forum each year, one of which will include an annual regional conference that will be hosted by the Rural Forum.

Before meetings, members will be expected to read relevant paperwork and to consult widely within their constituency in order to accurately represent the views of this group in discussions at the Rural Forum's meetings.

After meetings, members will be expected to spend time disseminating information and the outcomes of decisions within their constituency. The time commitment required for this will depend on the type of constituency and the types of communication mechanisms that are in place.

In addition, members may be invited to join task and finish sub-groups focussing on specific issues or projects.

### **Skills and qualities**

The Rural Forum will have a maximum of 35 members representing a wide range of issues and communities. The members are to be nominated by a range of rural stakeholder constituencies.

The constituencies may nominate anyone who they think is able to effectively represent that constituency, they are not limited to those within a nominating organisation. Where possible, a non-executive representative should be nominated, rather than an officer employed by the organisation. The nominating constituencies are expected to take account of their own cultural and ethnic diversity policies when considering suitable candidates.

Members should:

- Be able to think strategically
- Have a broad experience of rural issues
- Be able to take a regional view
- Be able to understand and distinguish between local, regional and national perspectives
- Be able to express cultural and ethnic diversity issues relating to the constituency they represent.
- Be capable of representing the Rural Forum at regional, national and Ministerial levels.

Members should be persons of integrity and standing within their constituency of interest and should understand, reflect and represent the diversity of that constituency and of the Region. Members should endeavour to take a whole region strategic perspective in their role.

## The Constituencies

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Nominating body</b>	<b>No.</b>
Elected local authority members (ideally covering a broad range of types of authority)	East of England Regional Assembly, through County Local Government Associations (one per county)	6
Sub-Regional Rural Forums	County Rural Forums or, where these do not exist, Sub-regional Economic Partnerships or Local Strategic Partnership(s)	6
Rural, voluntary and community sector	Rural Community Councils	6
Town and parish councils	Regional Association of Town and Parish Councils (BENSCH)	3
Black and minority ethnic interests	Minority and Ethnic Network in the Eastern Region (MENTER)	1
Faith Groups	East of England Faiths Council	1
Land based industries	National Farmer's Union, Country Landowners and Business Association, Forestry and Timber Association	2
Businesses located in rural areas	East of England Business Group	2
Tourism and leisure	East of England Tourist Board	1
Skills and Education	Regional Skills and Competitiveness Partnership	1
Environment	East of England Environment Forum (1 to represent natural environment, 1 to represent land management/conservation)	2
Sustainable Development	Sustainable Development Round Table	1
Culture	Living East	1
Health	NHS Confederation	1

## **Remuneration**

Members will not receive any remuneration for time spent on Rural Forum duties nor will they be able to claim any loss of income resulting from the performance of their Rural Forum duties. However, all reasonable travel and accommodation costs will be reimbursed, including attendance at regular Rural Forum meetings where these cannot be claimed from another source (e.g. employer).

Members will be encouraged to use public transport or other sustainable forms of transport (car sharing etc) where possible. However, where private car use is unavoidable, a mileage rate will be paid equivalent to the rate paid to Defra employees (currently 40p/mile). Claims for expenses will be submitted to the Secretariat for approval and payment.

## **Support and Training for Members**

It is expected that those appointed to be members of the Rural Forum will have all or most of the experience and skills required for the role described above. However, where members consider they would benefit from training in a particular skill (e.g. media handling), proposals should be made to the Rural Forum's Secretary who will make appropriate arrangements.