

## **RURAL ENGLAND: RESPECTIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This paper sets out details of the respective roles of Rural England's Directors and Stakeholders. They are intended to help Rural England achieve its mission by:

- making the best use of the skills and expertise available through its Directors and Stakeholders
  - clarify the respective roles of Directors and Stakeholders
  - provide a route through which its Stakeholders can fully engage and help shape the work of Rural England
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Rural England exists to bring together rural networks and stakeholders, to improve the rural evidence base, and to help disseminate and debate the findings.

It has adopted the structure of a Community Interest Company that is managed by its team of Directors and whose work programme and outputs are informed by a Stakeholder Group. This structure is designed to ensure that it operates independently of any-one interested party.

### **Roles and Responsibility of Directors – See Memorandum & Articles**

1. Management of Rural England as a CIC business, which includes:

- management of the Company's business.
- select from amongst the Director a Chair of the Directors
- call Director's meetings
- keep and make available minutes of Directors' meetings
- keep and transmit financial records and accounts

2. Formal requirements of Directors to Stakeholder Groups as specified in Memorandum and Articles

Under Rural England's Memorandum and Articles, it can create and support Stakeholder/User Group(s) the purpose of which will be to add value to the workings of the Company in pursuit of its main objects.

## **WORKING TO BENEFIT THE STAKEHOLDER GROUP AND RURAL ENGLAND C.I.C.**

The objectives and operation of the Stakeholder Group of Rural England CIC were reviewed by the Stakeholder Group at its AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024..It was several years since this was last considered. In that time a major change has been that all meetings are now conducted by Zoom.

Rural England Directors are extremely grateful to all Stakeholders for their on-going support and wish to operate in a way that is beneficial both to Stakeholder members and Rural England CIC.

This paper sets out the agreed benefits to both RE CIC and Stakeholder members, and the operation of the meetings.

### **Section A: The Proposals approved by the Stakeholder Group at their AGM held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

#### **Proposals:**

- 1) That the duties and obligations set out for the stakeholder group be replaced by the statement of benefits: Learn, Share, Influence set out in Section B below)
- 2) That Rural England CIC continues to convene bi-annual Stakeholder Group meetings.
- 3) That the agenda of Stakeholder Group meetings be designed to enable **Learning** (from each other and RE CIC), **Sharing** (updates from Stakeholders), and **Influence** (round-table discussion and input from stakeholders to the work of RE CIC).
- 4) That Stakeholder Group members are invited to the annual UK Higher Education and Policy Practitioners seminar event hosted by RE CIC.

### **Section B**

#### **Stakeholder Group brings value to Rural England CIC:**

A Stakeholder Group has been in operation from the very beginning of the Company's work, bringing considerable value to the Company's work by:

- Providing an update on research and campaigning work being undertaken by their organisation relevant to the work/objects of Rural England.
- Alerting Directors and other Stakeholders to policy changes and challenges that are relevant to the well-being of rural areas.
- Offering, where appropriate, access to data or research that has been undertaken by the stakeholder organisation relevant to the work/objects of Rural England
- Providing support for individual pieces of research undertaken by Rural England, which may include the following:
  - Assist in the selection of external consultants if they are commissioned to undertake research on behalf of Rural England
  - Membership of project/research steering groups
  - Peer review of work undertaken by or on behalf of Rural England
- Through their networks promoting the work of Rural England

## **The Benefits of being a Member of the Stakeholder Group**

The benefits to organisations which are supportive of the work of the Company of being members of a Stakeholder Group can be expressed as an opportunity to: **Learn, Share, Influence.**

**Learning** is not just relating to the work of Rural England. At each meeting of the Group there should continue to be a Roundtable Session inviting members to present to the meeting details on research/development underway, recently completed or in contemplation. So, a fairly comprehensive picture of activity relevant to rural areas.

In addition, there is the opportunity to use data and research provided by Rural England in your organisation's work to promote the well-being of rural area (subject to report on its use and outcomes.)

**Sharing** is clearly related to the Learning point above but in sharing your organisation's activities it is often the case that other members of the Group can offer support or guidance to that work including referencing other work/data which may be relevant. There is also the opportunity to support your own organisation's networks through the dissemination of the work of Rural England

**Influencing** in the main relates to the opportunity to influence the work of the Company itself. The Group helps shape the work programme of the Company. Research proposals are wherever possible put to the Stakeholder Group for comment before they proceed. Through the Roundtable sessions referred to above there is also a chance to inform/influence the work of other organisations in membership of the Stakeholder Group.

**Directors are extremely grateful to members of the Stakeholder Group for their support and involvement. We are keen to ensure that stakeholder members gain benefit and value from attending meetings and from engagement with Rural England and other Stakeholders between meetings.**

9<sup>th</sup> July 2024