Agenda Item

Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Communities
20 January 2010
PJ/smep

Rural Manifesto

Summary

The rural service network, which especially represents rural Councils, has produced a Rural Manifesto for the main political parties leading up to the General Election. This report sets out the main parts of the manifesto and allows comparison to our existing Rural Standards Policy.

Recommendation

That Members identify parts of the manifesto that they wish to be brought into Council policy.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To align Council policy to national thinking on rurality.

b) Alternative Options

That the Council continues with its own local policy irrespective of national considerations on rurality.

c) Risk Considerations

The risk is that we do not take full opportunity of the review for the benefit of our rural communities.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

There are no direct budget implications but Members may adopt changes to policy which affect infrastructure or spending decisions in the future.

e) Date for Review of Decision

2 years

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1 Main Body of the Report

1.1 As well as the Carnegie Commission, the Rural Services Network have also produced a rural manifesto. This takes into account the range of rural issues encountered by Councils etc who have a significant rural population (e.g. EDDC).

1.2 The Council's response to the draft manifesto is at Appendix A.

1.3 The summary of the final manifesto is at Appendix B.

1.4 The Council adopted a Rural Standards Policy as a negotiating position some years ago. In light of the manifesto it may wish to adjust parts of this in order to align to national

lobbying on rural issues. It is possible that such considerations might also feed into planning documents such as the Local Development Framework.

1.5 The current rural standards policy is at Appendix C.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications requiring comment.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications identified in the report.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

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Background Papers

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