

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
21ST FEBRUARY 2008

Wyre Forest District Draft Rural Economic Strategy

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Shared Prosperity
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Promoting Economic Prosperity
KEY PRIORITY:	Regeneration
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Stephen Clee
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning Health and Environment
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper <i>The appendix to this report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details).</i>

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members of the purpose and scope of a District Rural Economic Strategy and seek agreement for the development of a draft Strategy document and subsequent public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to **DECIDE** that:

- 2.1** The “Draft Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper” contained at Appendix 1 to this report, be approved as the basis for the development of a draft Strategy document and subsequent public consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In land use terms, Wyre Forest District is defined as being approximately 30% urban and 70% rural.
- 3.2 Whilst there are strategies and initiatives aimed at developing the urban areas of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, no strategy currently exists to address economic issues within the district's significant rural areas.
- 3.3 The first stage in developing a strategy has been to draft a Scoping Paper, set out in Appendix 1, which:-
- gives a contextual framework of other relevant strategies
 - proposes a number of aims and objectives
 - sets out an initial SWOT analysis and
 - identifies proposed consultees and a timetable for the development of the strategy

and invites responses to a number of questions relating to the above.

- 3.4 The draft Scoping Paper (Appendix 1) was considered at the meeting of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 7th February 2008. Recommendations emerging from that meeting will be reported directly to Cabinet.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Rural areas are important for service delivery across the authority. The purpose of the Scoping Paper is to set out and seek views on a number of key issues to ensure that the proposed strategy has appropriate coverage to provide a joined-up approach to economic regeneration in the District's rural areas.
- 4.2 The aim is to prepare a draft strategy document based on the Scoping Paper and carry out subsequent public consultation. The draft strategy will then be considered by the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet for subsequent adoption.
- 4.3 The strategy will be developed alongside and will help to inform the emerging Local Development Framework and other relevant local and sub regional initiatives.

- 4.4 The Scoping Paper acknowledges the existing “Parish Plans” that have been adopted by three of the Parish Councils in the District. The strategy will, in particular, be developed in partnership with the Parish Councils.

5. TIMETABLE

February 2008: Rural Strategy Scoping Paper considered by the Community and Regeneration Committee and Cabinet.

March to May 2008: Public Consultation and development of a draft Rural Economic Strategy.

June 2008: Draft Strategy considered by Community and Regeneration Committee and Cabinet for final comment and proposed adoption.

July 2008: Strategy adopted.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal or policy implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Rural Economic Strategy will aim to develop a joined-up approach to rural regeneration in the District, in order to meet the economic needs of the rural areas/rural population.

10. CONSULTEES

- Corporate Management Team

11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Rural White Paper (2004)
- West Midlands Rural Delivery Framework 2006
- Advantage West Midlands Tourism and Leisure Cluster Business Plan 2005- 2008
- The West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy, "Connecting to Success" – Rural Dimension Paper
- The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, June 2004
- The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)
- Worcestershire Partnership Rural Action Plan June 2004
- Wyre Forest District Adopted Local Plan 2004 – 2011
- Local Development Framework
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Chaddesley Corbett, Rock and Upper Arley Parish Plans