

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
23RD OCTOBER 2008

Wyre Forest District Rural Economic Strategy

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Economic Success shared by all
CORPORATE PLAN AIM	A Vibrant Local Economy
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr Stephen Clee
HEAD OF SERVICE	Head of Planning, Health & Environment
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APPENDICES	1. Draft Rural Economic Strategy 2. Consultee responses <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details).</i>

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise on the development of the District Rural Economic Strategy and seek approval to its adoption by the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE to recommend to Council:

- 2.1 that the Rural Economic Strategy be approved and adopted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 7th February 2008, the former Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel recommended to Cabinet that a draft Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper be endorsed as the basis for the development of a draft strategy for public consultation.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 21st February 2008, the Cabinet approved the Draft Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper as the basis for the development of a draft Strategy document and subsequent public consultation (the responses from which are included at Appendix 2).
- 3.3 Members are reminded that 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.

3.4 A high proportion (over 85% in land use terms) of Wyre Forest District is classed as "rural". The Rural Economic Strategy is the first document that puts the economic issues of the rural areas of the District within an agreed framework.

3.5 The first stage in developing the strategy was to draft a Scoping Paper which:-

- gave a contextual framework of other relevant strategies
- proposed a number of aims and objectives
- set out an initial SWOT analysis and
- identified proposed consultees and a timetable for the development of the strategy.

The Scoping Paper invited responses to a number of questions relating to the above.

3.6 A working draft Strategy document was subsequently prepared which has been consulted on by a wide variety of organisations.

3.7 The proposed Strategy (Appendix 1) which is centred on the West Midland's Regional Economic Strategy themes of "Place, Business, People and Powerful Voice", reflects the comments made from the consultee organisations (Appendix 2).

3.8 At its meeting on 15th October 2008, the Regeneration and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee will consider the draft Strategy and formulate recommendations to Cabinet.

3.9 Once the Strategy is adopted, the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity team will develop an Action Plan to guide the implementation of the Strategy.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are currently no direct financial implications arising from this report

5.0 LEGAL & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Other than the fact that the Strategy will form Council policy, there are no other legal and policy implications arising from this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The development of an Action Plan will identify how and when the various Objectives are to be taken forward. There may be some risk in determining the appropriate resources required to implement the Strategy's Objectives.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The Rural Economic Strategy puts the economic issues of the rural areas of the District within an agreed framework.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel 7th February 2008, Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper

8.2 Cabinet 21st February 2008 Rural Economic Strategy Scoping Paper

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