



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services
Tuesday 21st January 2025
2.30pm – 3pm
Room R, Portcullis House, London

1. Attendees:

Sarah Dyke MP, Vikki Slade MP, Lord Cameron of Dillington, Lloyd Hatton MP, Lee Dillon MP, Dame Harriett Baldwin BDE MP, Blake Stevenson MP, Helen Morgan MP, Kieran Mullan MP, Callum Anderson MP
Kerry Booth, Rural Services Network
Barnaby Burrowes and Luke Goddard on behalf of Stuart Anderson MP

2. Apologies for absence

The Rt. Revd Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford, Ellie Chowns MP, Joe Morris MP

3. Notes of previous meeting

These were approved as a record of the meeting
[APPG Meeting Minutes 10.09.2024](#)

4. Discussion on Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and implications for rural local authorities.

A [briefing note](#) was prepared by the Rural Services Network which was circulated prior to the meeting.

Kerry Booth, CX of the Rural Services Network provided some background information to the report and set out the differences in funding for rural councils when compared to urban.

- Urban councils will receive 41% more in Government Funded Spending Power per head compared to rural councils.
- Rural Residents pay on average 20% higher council tax per head than urban residents

A number of issues were also highlighted by the MPs in attendance:

- The cost of providing home to school transport in rural areas
- The lack of affordable rural housing for local workers
- The lack of public transport
- The greater proportion of older residents in rural communities and the demands they place on services.

Action: It was decided that the Chair would write a letter on behalf of the APPG to the Minister at MHCLG to express their concerns on behalf of rural councils with the provisional settlement.

Questions were also asked about how we distinguish between rural and urban authorities. Currently the DEFRA Rural/Urban classifications are used which are available at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2011-rural-urban-classification>

5. Devolution White Paper

There was a short discussion on the impact of the Devolution White Paper for rural authorities and more specifically, local government reorganisation. This will impact rural councils as the two-tier system exists predominantly in rural areas. Concerns were raised on the resources required for rural councils to go through the process of reorganisation in the next few years, along with the lack of financial resources from the settlement.

It was decided to keep a watching brief on this issue.

6. Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.