

## **Notice of Meeting**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the membership of THE RURAL SERVICES NETWORK is to be held on MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2018 at approximately 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. at City of Westminster Archives Centre, 10 St Ann's Street, London SW1P 2DE when the business set out below is to be transacted.**

**Dated: the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

**Graham Biggs MBE,**

**Chief Executive- Rural Services Network**

### **PART 1: AGM SPECIFIC ISSUES**

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes:** To consider the Minutes of the last RSN AGM held on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 (Attachment 1)
- 3. Appointment of Chairman for the ensuing year (to also be the Chair of the SPARSE-Rural sub-sig) [Present Chair Councillor Cecilia Motley]**
- 4. Appointment of Vice Chairmen for the ensuing year (to also be the Vice-Chairmen of the SPARSE-Rural sub-sig).**

**Current Vice Chairs are:-** Cllr Rob Waltham Vice Chair (Unitary), Cllr Roger Phillips Vice Chair (West Midlands), Cllr Philip Sanders Vice Chair (County 1), Cllr Gill Heath Vice Chair (County 2), Cllr Robert Heseltine First Vice Chair (Yorkshire), Cllr Peter Thornton Vice Chair (Without Portfolio), Cllr Peter Stevens Vice Chair (East), Cllr Kevin Beaty Vice Chair (North), Cllr Trevor Thorne Vice Chair (North East), Cllr Adam Painter Vice Chair (South West), , Cllr Sue Sanderson Vice Chair (Without Portfolio),

Present Vacancy for Vice Chair – South East (Junet Duncton Resigned) and Vice Chair Without Portfolio (Derrick Haley Resigned)

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

David Inman, Director Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0BZ  
Tel: 01822 813693

[www.rsnonline.org.uk](http://www.rsnonline.org.uk) email: [admin@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:admin@sparse.gov.uk) twitter: @rsnonline

5. IF DEEMED NECESSARY AND BENEFICIAL. To appoint a Chair and Vice Chair(s) of the RURAL ASSEMBLY SUB-SIG
6. CONSTITUTION: SUGGESTED CHANGES TO REFLECT EVENTS SINCE LAST REVIEWED SHOWN IN TRACKING (Attachment 2)
7. **NEXT MEETING:** Next RSN AGM to be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## **PART 2: RURAL ASSEMBLY SUB-SIG ISSUES**

8. **Minutes of the last full meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018**  
To approve the Minutes of the last Rural Assembly Meeting in April (Attachment 3)
9. **Minutes of the last Executive meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018**  
(Attachment 4).
10. **RURAL CRIME SURVEY 2018:** Presentation by Julia Mulligan PCC North Yorkshire and Chair of the National Rural Crime Network
11. To approve (with or without amendment) the RSN Draft Rural Strategy (Presentation by Graham Biggs) (Attachment 4(a))
12. **Membership (Constitutional Requirement)**  
To consider the annual report on membership (verbal report)
13. **Member Contributions**  
To consider the Executive's Recommendations for the level of member contributions from 2019/20 onwards.  
(Attachment 5 & 5(a))
14. **Budget 2018/19 and 2019/20 (Constitutional Requirement)**  
Budget report for 2018/19 (with Actual to end October 2018 & Proposed Budget for 2019/20 (Attachment 6)
15. **Rural Conference 2018**

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To receive a report from Kerry Booth

- 16. Sounding Board Survey**  
To receive an update on the survey from Kerry Booth
- 17. Meeting Dates for 2019** (Attachments 7 (a) and (b))
- 18. Any Other Business**

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## Note of last SPARSE Rural Special Interest Group meeting

**Title:** Rural Services Network Special Interest Group

**AGM Meetings:**

- SPARSE Rural Sub SIG
- Rural Services Partnership Limited
- Rural Services Network

**Date:** Monday 20 November 2017

**Venue:** The Westminster Archives, London

**Attendance**

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> The Chair, Cllr Cecilia Motley welcomed members and noted apologies.
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous meeting</b> The minutes from the last RSN AGM held on 21 <sup>st</sup> November, 2016 were received and approved.
<b>3</b>	<b>Appointment of Chairman for the ensuing year (to also be the Chair of the SPARSE-Rural sub-sig) [Present Chair Councillor Cecilia Motley]</b> Nominations for the existing Chair to continue in her position were accepted.
<b>4</b>	<b>Appointment of Vice Chairmen for the ensuing year (to also be the Vice-Chairmen of the SPARSE-Rural sub-sig).</b> Nominations for the current, First Vice-Chair and all other Vice-Chairs to continue in position were supported. Members expressed their gratitude for all his work having noted that Cllr Strange had recently stood down from the Group. One vacancy was reported for a unitary council vice chair representative and Cllr Rob Waltham, North Lincolnshire volunteered for the position. This was agreed by members.
<b>5</b>	<b>IF DEEMED NECESSARY AND BENEFICIAL. To appoint a Chair and Vice Chair(s) of the RURAL ASSEMBLY SUB-SIG</b> It was agreed that both would remain the same.
<b>6</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b> Members noted the date for the next RSN AGM being 12 <sup>th</sup> November, 2018.

**7 Minutes of the last full meeting – 10th April 2017S**

The Minutes of the last full meeting of the group were received and approved.

**8 Minutes of the last Executive meeting – 25th September 2017**

Members noted the minutes and the attached reports on (a) future fees levels (b) the Forward Budget and (c) Regional Meetings and Seminars.

**Action:**

The minutes and the recommendations in those Minutes and the reports referred to be approved.

The Chairman invited any members who had any concerns or issues to raise in respect of any of these matters to forward them to David Inman for consideration by the Executive at its January meeting.

**9 Membership (Constitutional Requirement)**

Members noted the membership report from David Inman.

He outlined difficulties in retention and recruitment saying that membership was falling. Referring members to the benefits of being part of the Group, he stated that without its existence, rural matters would be very exposed and under-discussed. It was vital in taking forward important rural issues and the group agreed to encourage others to join and stick together.

Members noted details of the constitutional notice (being the same as required by the LGA) – but they expressed their worries that authorities see it as a discretionary service and might therefore withdraw their membership. This of course would impact themselves and their residents and therefore it was vital to hold the SIG together.

**Action:**

Members spread benefits of membership to peer councils as they see fit.

**10 Budget 2017/18 and 2018/19 (Constitutional Requirement)**

Members noted the current budget report which showed a positive balance being carried forward, despite some subscriptions still outstanding. Estimates will be taken to the January meeting for the Executive to agree and to determine the budget for following year.

**11 Brexit Rural Roundtable: Outcome from Meeting 2**

Graham Biggs outlined short-term priorities as agreed by participants at the recent Brexit Rural Roundtable discussion. It was intended that a discussion would take place with the LGA and members noted that work around the review of the previous Rural White Paper had already been commissioned. Once priorities for discussion had been set, another meeting of the roundtable will be called.

**12 RSN “So What Survey” agreed at the last meeting - Analysis Note**

Members received a presentation from Brian Wilson on the Survey of RSN local authorities to test findings in the State of Rural Services 2016 report.

He outlined the work which covered nine different service areas. (Full info and the report are available on RSN's website). LAs had been asked to respond to the findings and he summarised the results of this consultation on the report. Overall, the general agreement was to headline key findings.

Members noted the conclusions of the survey. It was clear that the impact was the greatest concern for certain groups and they agreed that local community action needed support to enable and sustain it either via grants or direct funding.

Member comments included the following:

- Some problems are being created by not supporting current services and there needs to be alternative ways of accessing these – there is too much reliance on the same volunteers;
- Young adults and transport – does it include the fact that grants for disenfranchised young people had been taken away – subsidies have also been removed;
- If there are alternatives such as online banking – we should leave these out as it is vital to prioritise the work of RSN and instead, look at situations where there is no alternative available at all.
- Provision for 6th form students in rural areas is lacking - there is not enough demand to warrant 6th forms in many areas and so those that need it are having to travel much further.

Members noted the presentation and the Chairman thanked Mr Wilson for details of his study.

**Action:**

Presentation to be made available on RSN's website.

**13 Presentation by Neil Parish MP, Chair of the EFRA Select Committee and Member of Parliament for Tiverton and Honiton on the work of the EFRA Select Committee**

The Chair welcomed Neil Parish MP, Chair of EFRA Select Committee and MP for Tiverton and Honiton.

Mr Parish outlined the work of the Select Committee, including looking at issues around Europe and putting various scenarios together to try and predict what may happen post Brexit. He acknowledged differences between figures around urban and rural areas and in particular being conscious of different needs such as farming. Members were invited to provide input for him to take forward.

Comments included:

- Had the issue of rural-proofing and rural weighting been recognised – Mr Parish MP agreed that to look into what has happened to it.
- Were any thoughts being given to overseeing environment improvement and development? The Minister acknowledged the importance of encouraging engagement with farmers and he hoped that the 25 year environment plan would work alongside farming and food.
- It was important to keep RDPE Programme type activity continuing, although Members realised that its benefits must be justified in order for this to be assured. Mr Parish stated that nothing should be taken for granted but that he

would endeavour to ensure this;

- Many market towns are struggling and for a lot of rural areas their existence is very important. Members asked whether something might be done at a national level to help them survive. Mr Parish said that he would try and incorporate this into the Select Committee's activity;
- The group mentioned that they would like to see a wider agenda to include better planning on sustainability and ways of enlisting farmers to get involved. Certainty was needed in terms of agricultural payment bills and was affecting confidence to invest;
- Difficult issues around planning permission needs addressing as current rulings interfere with developments. Mr Parish responded that strict control of the number of sites must be met to allow building with restrictions.

Cllr Motley thanked him for his time and an interesting discussion.

**Action:**

Chair to write to Neil Parish MP asking him to look into the issues raised.

## **14 Urban and Rural Dementia Challenges and Solutions**

Members then moved onto the affairs of the Rural Assembly beginning with item 14 and the Chair introduced Ian Sherriff, Academic Partnership Lead for Dementia Primary Care Group.

Members received a presentation which explored problems around dementia, noting current statistics.

Key points in the presentation included:

- Challenges around funding and increase in elderly population;
- Prevalent figures around abuse and neglect;
- Numbers of unpaid and under supported carers whose needs are not being met;
- Worrying evidence that diagnosis is occurring at a younger age;
- Research shows dementia is most severe in rural areas and that social isolation and loneliness can lead to the illness;
- Caring is key and involvement of the public.

Mr Sherriff outlined possible solutions, including the importance of integration. Members heard about how the Group collaborates with key organisations to encourage this and they noted existing systems which assist, for example using GPs and monitoring systems to ensure peoples safety.

**Action:**

Details of data and presentation are available on the RSN website.

## **15 Rural Conference 2017**

Apologies were received from Kerry Booth.

Members noted the presentation which headlined the following information:

- 71 % of attendees were from member authorities – the rest from other organisations.

- 8% of attendees were from government departments.
- Feedback included support of the location, more informal networking and interaction opportunities and more workshops; less political content as it came across as having political agendas.

Mr Biggs agreed that these comments would be addressed in order to work out the format for the next conference. Members noted that the date would follow in due course.

**Action:**

Slides to be made available on RSN's website.

## 16 Sounding Board Survey

Mr Biggs stated that the next Sounding Board Survey would be in respect of Affordable Housing issues.

## 17 Meeting Dates for 2018

Members noted meeting dates for 2018 and were informed that most of these would take place back at the LGA, 18 Smith Square. The next meeting on 29 January however will take place at Westminster Archive, Centre.

The full list of dates and venues for 2018 is as follows:-

### Schedule of RSN Executive Meeting Dates and Venues 2018

Date	Meeting	Venue
<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January</b>	RSN Executive	Eaton Room, LGA, Smith Square, London
<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	RSN Executive	Smith Square 1, LGA, Smith Square, London
<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June</b>	RSN Executive	Eaton Room, LGA, Smith Square, London
<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September</b>	RSN Executive (also RSP Ltd Board of Directors)	City of Westminster Archives Centre, London

### Schedule of Main Meeting Dates and Venues 2018

Date	Meeting	Venue
<b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January</b>	SPARSE Rural Sub SIG	City of Westminster Archives Centre, London
<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Rural Social Care & Health Group & Rural Assembly Sub SIG	Smith Square 1 & 2, LGA, Smith Square, London
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June</b>	SPARSE Rural Sub SIG	Smith Square 1 & 2, LGA, Smith Square, London
<b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November</b>	AGM meetings	City of Westminster Archives Centre, London



## **18 Any Other Business**

A member suggestion that the radio programme – the Archers - be approached to include reference to rural issues as a key platform attracting many listeners.

There was no other business.

**Attendance:**

Cecilia Motley – Chair RSN  
Graham Biggs – Chief Executive, RSN  
David Inman – Corporate Director, RSN  
Andy Dean - RSN  
Cllr Les Kew – Bath & NE Somerset Council  
Cllr Peter Wilding – Chichester DC  
Paul Over – Chichester DC  
Cllr Paul Diviani – East Devon DC  
Cllr Craig Leyland – East Lindsey DC  
Cllr Wendy Bowkett – East Lindsey DC  
Pam Howard – Housing Services, English Rural Housing  
Cllr Rob Waltham – North Lincolnshire Council  
Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick – North Norfolk DC  
Cllr Robert Heseltine – North Yorkshire CC  
Cllr Yvonne Peacock – Richmondshire DC  
Jeremy Savage – South Norfolk DC  
Cllr Peter Stevens – St Edmundsbury BC  
Cllr Cameron Clark – Sevenoaks DC  
Cllr Michael Hicks – South Hams DC  
Cllr Gwilym Butler – Shropshire Council  
Frances Bedding – Head of External Funding, Suffolk CC  
Cllr Philip Sanders – West Devon BC  
Cllr Owen Brierley – West Lindsey DC  
Cllr Mrs Sheila Bibb – West Lindsey DC  
Ian Knowles – West Lindsey DC  
Ian Sherriff – Plymouth  
Lee Chapman – Shropshire Council  
Revd. Richard Kirlew – Chair RSP  
Cllr Rupert Reichhold – ENDC  
Peter Thornton – South Lakeland / Cumbria CC  
Sue Sanderson – Cumbria CC  
Malcolm Leading – Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils  
Cllr Jane Mortimer – Scarborough BC  
Cllr Lindsey Cawren – North Kesteven DC  
Cllr Derrick Haley – Mid Suffolk DC

## **Apologies for Discussion on Rural Social Care and Health Group**

Kerry Booth – Assistant Chief Executive, RSN  
Cllr Cameron Clark – Sevenoaks District Council  
Cllr Adam Paynter – Cornwall Council  
Cllr Colin Morgan – Daventry District Council  
Cllr Roy Miller – Barnsley MBC  
Tom Crowley, Chief Executive – Horsham District Council  
Ian Richardson, Chief Executive – Shropshire Rural Housing Association Ltd  
Cllr Samantha Dixon – Cheshire West and Cheshire Council  
Cllr Mrs Geraldine Carter – Calderdale MBC  
Cllr Louise Gittins – Cheshire West and Cheshire Council  
Cllr Kevin Beaty, Leader – Eden District Council  
Georgina Fung, Head of National Programmes – UK Youth  
Cllr Ian Hudspeth – Oxfordshire County Council  
Cllr Julian German – Cornwall Council  
Cllr Stephen Arnold – Ryedale District Council  
Simon Riley, Head of Finance – Harborough District Council  
Cllr Jean Wharmby, Cabinet Member for Adult Care – Derbyshire County Council  
Cllr Carol Hart, Cabinet Member for Health & Communities – Derbyshire County Council  
John Birtwistle – Head of Policy (UK Bus)  
Cllr John Barrott – Warwick District Council  
Cllr Sue Woolley, Executive Member NHS Liaison – Lincolnshire County Council  
Cllr Polly Andrews, Chairman of Adults & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee – Herefordshire Council  
Cllr Adrian Davis, Lead Member for Adults – Council of Isles of Scilly  
Cllr Adrian Hardman, Member for Adult Social Care – Worcestershire County Council  
Cllr Sally Hawken, Portfolio Holder for Children & Wellbeing – Cornwall Council  
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE, Health & Wellbeing Board Chair – Warwickshire County Council  
Cllr Ernie White, Lead Member for Health - Leicestershire County Council  
Cllr Les Caborn, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Health – Warwickshire County Council  
Cllr Dawn Payne, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services – North Somerset Council  
Cllr Sylvia Hughes, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Wellbeing – Northamptonshire County Council  
Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults & Health – West Sussex County Council  
Cllr Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing – Lancashire County Council  
Cllr Carol Hart, Cabinet Member for Health & Communities – Derbyshire County Council  
Cllr Andrew Leadbetter, Cabinet Member Adult Social Care & Health Services – Devon County Council  
Cllr Lawrie Stratford, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care – Oxfordshire County Council  
Cllr Paul Rone, Cabinet Member Health & Wellbeing – Herefordshire Council  
Cllr John Spence CBE, Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Social Care – Essex County Council  
Cllr Graham Gooch, Cabinet Member for Adult Services – Lancashire County Council  
Cllr Liz Fairhurst, Health & Wellbeing Board Chair – Hampshire County Council  
Elaine O’Leary, Chief Executive – Northamptonshire ACRE  
Gary Powell, Community Projects Officer – Teignbridge District Council

### **Apologies for RSP AGM – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

Ian Richardson, Chief Executive – Shropshire Rural Housing Association Ltd  
Georgina Fung, Head of National Programmes – UK Youth  
Erin Mee, Policy & Research Officer – Age UK  
Peter Shipp, Executive Chairman – EYMS Group Ltd  
Helena Cox, Senior Advisor Democratic Services – West Sussex Fire & Rescue

### **Apologies List for RSN AGM – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

Kerry Booth – Assistant Chief Executive, RSN  
Cllr Adam Paynter – Cornwall Council  
Cllr Julian German – Cornwall Council  
Cllr John Williams – Taunton Deane Borough Council  
Cllr Dr Ken Pollock – Worcestershire County Council  
Cllr Mrs Geraldine Carter – Calderdale MBC  
Cllr Michael Cooper – Boston Borough Council  
Cllr Colin Morgan – Daventry District Council  
Cllr Roy Miller – Barnsley MBC  
Tom Crowley, Chief Executive – Horsham District Council  
Ian Richardson, Chief Executive – Shropshire Rural Housing Association Ltd  
Cllr Samantha Dixon – Cheshire West and Cheshire Council  
Cllr Louise Gittins – Cheshire West and Cheshire Council  
Cllr Kevin Beaty, Leader – Eden District Council  
Georgina Fung, Head of National Programmes – UK Youth  
Cllr Ian Hudspeth – Oxfordshire County Council  
Cllr Julian German – Cornwall Council  
Cllr Stephen Arnold – Ryedale District Council  
Simon Riley, Head of Finance – Harborough District Council  
Erin Mee, Policy & Research Officer – Age UK  
Peter Shipp, Executive Chairman – EYMS Group Ltd  
Cllr John Clarke – Gedling Borough Council  
Cllr Gonzalez De Savage – Northamptonshire County Council  
Cllr John Barrott – Warwick District Council  
Cllr Tony Miller – Worcestershire County Council  
Cllr Brian Long – Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk  
Cllr Mark Whittington – Lincolnshire County Council  
Helena Cox, Senior Advisor Democratic Services – West Sussex Fire & Rescue  
Martin Flitcroft, Finance Manager – Teignbridge District Council  
Cllr Leigh Higgins – Melton Borough Council

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6. CONSTITUTION: SUGGESTED CHANGES TO REFLECT EVENTS SINCE LAST REVIEWED SHOWN IN TRACKING (Attachment 2)
7. **NEXT MEETING:** Next RSN AGM to be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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**16. Sounding Board Survey**

To receive an update on the survey from Kerry Booth

**17. Meeting Dates for 2019** (Attachments 7 (a) and (b))

**18. Any Other Business**



# THE RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN) SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

DRAFT November 2018

Suggested changes in red

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## CONSTITUTION

### 1. Title and Membership

- 1.1 The Organisation shall be known as The Rural Services Network Special Interest Group [“the Group”].
- 1.2 The Group shall be open to those **English** Authorities who are classified as **Mainly or Largely Rural or Urban with Significant Rural Area (all including hub towns)** by the Government and to previous members of the Rural Commission of the Local Government Association. **Other Principal Councils which have large rural areas within their boundaries may apply to become members and their applications will be treated on their merits.**
- 1.3 The Group will consist of such Principal Councils and Fire and Rescue Services in England, as The Rural Services Network desire to be and remain in membership [“Member Authority”].
- 1.4 The Group shall act in a non - political way concentrating on achieving consensus views on rural best practice and service interests.
- 1.5 The Group meetings will not be preceded by political meetings.
- 1.6 The authority may be represented by Councillor or Officer or both.**
- 1.6 Those authorities who are eligible to become members of the Group as specified under 1.2 above may instead of becoming members elect to have a straight contractual relationship with the group that is based solely on service provision and is non- representational. Under such a relationship the group will enter into a service level agreement with the authority involved and provide financial monitoring, best practice, performance, community, rural and economic services available for a flat rate annual payment constituting 95% of the charge which would have been levied on the authority had it joined in the normal way. Authorities who elect to take this arrangement will not be formal members and will therefore not be entitled attend or vote at meetings of the Group and will not receive agendas and minutes or be involved in the representational work of the Group.
- 1.7 Whilst all membership shall be with the Group, operationally much of the work of the Group will be through **three** sub groups; namely SPARSE Rural; The Rural Assembly; and The Rural Fire and Rescue Services Group
- 1.8 The Group shall have power to establish such Associate and Alliance arrangements as it considers to be appropriate to its and the general rural interest.**

### 2. Purpose of the Group

- 2.1 To be a voice for councils with a rural interest within the Local Government Association [LGA] and to influence appropriate work so that the views and rural interests of these councils are fully considered.
- 2.2 To research, promote and lobby for the rural interests of communities served by member authorities

- 2.3 To establish in as many work areas as is feasible collective working targeted to the benefit of individual member authorities and their communities including the sharing of best practice.

### **3. Objectives and Powers of the Group and ways of working**

- 3.1 To provide forums in which member authorities can exchange views and initiate shared activities on issues of common interest/benefit, particularly relating to rural service delivery, rural policy generally and the rural economy.
- 3.2 To raise awareness of the contribution member authorities make to rural service and rural community issues.
- 3.3 To provide greater capacity for member authorities to contribute to and influence the national agenda by direct representation to government departments and other decision makers/**opinion formers**.
- 3.4 To represent, wherever possible by consensus, the interests of member authorities in national government, to Parliament, political parties, European and other international institutions and other bodies, and the LGA and other decision makers/**opinion formers**.
- 3.5 To organise collective working to achieve potential cost savings for member authorities
- 3.6 To formulate sound policies and practices in respect of rural issues particularly those relating to rural services and rural communities.
- 3.7 To promote the policies of the Group to national government and other relevant organisations.
- 3.8 To develop relationships with other the LGA Special Interest Groups, with its People and Places Board and with other appropriate Service Boards **as** may be established from time to time.
- 3.9 To do anything that is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of the objectives of the Group.
- 3.10 To promote innovation and best practice in furtherance of the achievement of greater efficiencies across member authorities.
- 3.11 To work with other Service Providers and those interested in rural services (grouped together as The Rural Services Partnership Limited – **(RSP)**) and the Rural England Community Interest Company and with the RSN Community Group as a section of the umbrella partnership known as The Rural Services Network to represent rural services generally, facilitate best practice and create the strongest network possible in support of continuous improvement of services and well being in general in the rural areas of England.
- 3.12 **In addition to the formal sub groups referred to in 1.7 above the Group may from time to time at an Annual General Meeting decide to establish service specific or topic groups based on the Groups Priorities for Action. All members will be entitled to attend such meetings. In respect of such meetings, in addition to each member authority's normal representatives, the Portfolio Holders and Chief Officers (or their representatives) will be invited to attend.**
- 3.13 **Unless the group at an Annual Meeting decides to the contrary, each year a series of "Regional Meetings/Seminars" will be organised. Whilst all member authorities will be**

“allocated to a Region” their representatives will be able to attend in a different “region” if they prefer

. **Purpose of Sub Groups**

- 4.1 The Group will undertake its work through the operation of a series of Sub Groups
- 4.2 These Sub Groups shall be named SPARSE Rural, The Rural Assembly, The Rural Fire and Rescue Services Group.
- 4.3 The purposes of the Sub Groups shall be as follows-

A. SPARSE Rural :

This sub group will represent the financial interests of Principal Councils classified as Predominantly Rural and those Significantly Rural authorities which stand to gain by the Group's financial representations.

To promote the financial interests of the most rural local government authorities and to make representations to Government and other relevant bodies on the allocation of funding to the most rural authorities and other publicly funded bodies serving their areas.

To establish comprehensive e networking to allow members to discuss in detail rural considerations relating to the range of service areas they provide and where appropriate for these networks to also involve community representatives and **non-local** authority service providers to allow service issues to be viewed holistically.

To seek to facilitate collective working across authorities with a view to achieving both maintenance of service and cutting of cost. This to include the financial and non- financial performance analysis and comparison services and service groupings provide through the service charge for this sub group

B. THE RURAL ASSEMBLY

To provide to all members appropriate information on rural matters generally.

To act as a conduit on rural issues between authorities with rural areas and those rural areas themselves with the LGA's People and Places Board and other appropriate Service Boards, with Parliament and Government Departments and with other organisations with a rural interest.

To allow a consensus view to be established on current issues between authorities with a rural interest so as best to inform the LGA's operational structures of the position relating to rural areas in England and Wales.

To facilitate discussions between rural authorities and other bodies with an interest in issues which affect rural areas/communities/businesses in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with a view to establishing rural best practice and inter organisational learning.

To where possible assist in establishing a rural dimension to appropriate LGA conferences.

### **C. THE RURAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES GROUP**

**The group shall be open to representatives of the Rural Fire and Rescue Authorities and to Chief Fire Officers or their nominees.**

To seek to achieve maximum linkage between the operation of Fire and Rescue Services in rural areas and the communities involved.

To seek to share operational experience and best practice established through providing services in rural areas

To argue the financial case relating to the additional costs of Fire and Rescue Services operation in areas classified as **Mainly Rural or to have Significant rural areas**.

Address the Fire & Rescue Service issues which are unique or more prevalent in rural areas (retained fire **and rescue** service operation, open countryside fires and flooding and accidents involving classified roads are examples.)

## **5. The Annual Meeting**

- 5.1 The Group will meet as an Annual Meeting to appoint the office holders.
- 5.2 The Annual Meeting shall meet towards the end of each calendar year to approve the accounts of the Group, agree the budget of the Group, to set the annual service charges and approve the work programme. Other meetings including where considered necessary Extraordinary Annual General Meetings will be held as required and the meetings shall deal with such other business as may be determined by the Executive.
- 5.3 The Annual Meeting may from time to time make standing orders for the regulation of the Group's proceedings.

## **6. Membership of Meetings and Sub Group Meetings**

- 6.1 The Meetings shall comprise the appointed representatives of the Member Authorities or Leaders of those authorities who have not made such an appointment. Elected members may be accompanied by an Officer of the Member Council if they so wish. Meetings of the Rural Services Network as a whole may follow on from Group Meetings and where necessary separate votes may be taken of the Rural Services Partnership's membership. Meetings of **service specific or topic groups as referred to in 3.10 above will meet prior to either SPARSE-Rural or Rural Assembly sub group meetings.**
- 6.2 The names of members appointed by member authorities to serve at meetings and any appointed substitute appointments shall be given to the Corporate Director in writing by the Chief Executive of their Member Authority (or other officer nominated to act on their behalf) as requested.
- 6.3 The period of office for members shall normally begin with effect from member authorities Annual Meetings in each year and shall end immediately before their Annual Meeting in the following year, provided that representatives shall cease to be eligible for membership when they cease to hold office as members of their authority or when their authority ceases to be in membership **of the group.**
- 6.4 Member Authorities may if they wish appoint different members to serve on different Sub Groups but one member must be named as the representative of the Council for the purposes of Annual Meetings of the Group.

## **7. Voting at Meetings**

- 7.1 Each Member Authority shall be entitled to cast one vote at all meetings on occasions when it is decided to proceed by vote and a decision is not reached by consensus (which will be usual practice).
- 7.2 In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- 7.3 A member may nominate another member being a currently serving member of any member Authority and attend a meeting on his or her behalf and exercise his or her vote(s) provided that written notice is given to the Director of the Group before the start of the meeting by the Chief Executive or other appropriate officer of the Member Authority or by the originally nominated member.

## **8. Office Holders**

- 8.1 The Annual Meeting of the Group shall in each year appoint from amongst the members representing Member Authorities the following office holders:

(a) A Chairman;

(b) Vice-Chairmen (The number of which shall be determined by the Annual Meeting making the appointment. One of the vice-chairmen shall be identified as First Vice-Chairman).

- 8.2 The Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of The Group shall to achieve continuity of overall operation also hold the same offices on the Executive and on the SPARSE Rural Sub Group.
- 8.3 The Rural Fire and Rescue Services Sub Group shall appoint their own Chair and Vice Chair.
- 8.3 Voting on all appointments shall be as follows:
- Where there are more than two persons nominated for each position, and of the votes given there is not a majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.
- 8.4 The Chairmen (and in their absence Vice-Chairmen) will have the following responsibilities:
- (a) To promote The Group and Sub Groups as a whole;
  - (b) To uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution and to interpret the Constitution where necessary;
  - (c) To preside over meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently; and
  - (d) To ensure meetings are a forum for the debate of matters of common interest.
- 8.5 The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen will hold office until:
- (a) The next Annual Meeting of The Group or in the case of the Rural Assembly the Rural Unitary Councils and the Rural Fire and Rescue Services Sub Groups the first meeting in any calendar year
  - (b) They resign from the office; or
  - (c) They are no longer a Councillor; or
  - (d) They are removed from office by resolution; **or**
  - (e) The member authority they represent ceases to be a member of the group**
- 8.6 In the event that a Chairman ceases to be the Chairman as a result of Article 8.5 (b), (c), (d) or (e) above the Group or Sub Group shall forthwith appoint a new Chairman and pending the appointment of a new Chairman all powers and functions of the Chairman shall be vested **respectively** in the First Vice-Chairman in relation to the Group and the SPARSE Rural Sub Groups and the Rural Assembly **sub group**, and **the Vice-Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Services** Sub Group.
- 8.7 The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Fire **and Rescue** Sub Group shall be members of the Executive



## **9. The Executive**

- 9.1 There shall be an Executive whose purpose shall be to provide strategic direction and conduct the normal day to day business of the Group apart from work delegated to the Group's Officers.
- 9.2 The Annual Meeting shall determine the terms of reference, delegated powers, size and composition of the Executive and may, if felt necessary, make Standing Orders for the regulation of their proceedings.
- 9.3 The Executive will where appropriate meet together with the Board of Directors of the Rural Services Partnership Limited and up to 6 further nominees of their choice to achieve overall Rural Services Network purposes. Where it is felt necessary separate votes will be taken when formal decisions are required to be made by the Directors of the Rural Services Partnership Ltd.
- 9.4 The Chairman of the Group from time to time shall be Chairman of the Executive.
- 9.5 The Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Group may nominate another member being a currently nominated member of any member Authority to attend an Executive meeting on his or her behalf and exercise his or her vote(s) provided that written notice is given to the Director of the Group before the start of the meeting.

## **10. Responsibility for Action**

- 10.1 In matters of local government in general or which concern all member authorities of the Sub Groups, the Group and its Sub Groups will speak for all its member authorities. The Group and its Sub Groups, however, cannot commit their individual member authorities to any particular course of action or to support or not support any particular policy position.

## **11. Meetings of the Group, Sub Groups and Executive**

- 11.1 Meetings of the Group and Executive shall be held on such days and at such places as may be decided by the Executive.
- 11.2 The Corporate Director shall ensure:
  - (a) Not less than twenty-eight clear days before each ordinary meeting including Extra Ordinary Annual Meetings of the Group and not less than two months before the Annual Meeting there shall be posted on The Group's website, a notice stating the date, time and place of the meeting; and
  - (b) Not less than ten working days before the meeting send to each Member Authority by email or post an agenda specifying the business to be transacted.

## **12. Nominated Officers and Staff**

- 12.1 There shall be a Chief Executive and a Corporate Director of the Group appointed on such terms and conditions as the Executive may think fit and such other staff as may be necessary for the purpose of implementing the Group's and the Sub Groups aims and objectives. These staff individually and collectively will support the working of the Group and the Sub Groups.
- 12.2 The Group and Sub Groups shall, where considered necessary, ask the Chief Executives of Member Authorities to provide advisors to support the work programme as necessary including financial and strategic service advisers.

## **13. Finance**

- 13.1 The Executive shall submit for consideration to the Annual Meeting of the Group in each year a statement of estimated expenditure for the year commencing on the following first day of April. The Executive shall have delegated authority to vary the budget within the financial year as necessary – subject to report at the next Group meeting.
- 13.2 The service charges for each year commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April shall be at rates to be determined from time to time by the Group and those rates shall vary across groups having consideration to the running costs involved.
- 13.3 The Chief Executive shall be responsible for the preparation of an Income and Expenditure Account involving the Rural Services Network Special Interest Group and the Rural Services Partnership Limited jointly, each year, for the preparation of Company Accounts by professional tax accountants and for the submission of those accounts to the Group.
- 13.4 The income and property of The Group shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the Group's objectives.
- 13.5 The Group may invest, lend, or otherwise deal with monies not immediately required for its purposes in such manner as may be thought fit by the Executive and may borrow or raise money in accordance with financial regulations agreed by the Annual Meeting.
- 13.6 The Group may purchase, take on lease or otherwise obtain land to provide accommodation for the use of staff provided that if land or buildings are leased from a Member Authority this shall be on a basis that the rent paid is no more than a reasonable and proper rent in the circumstances.
- 13.7 The Chief Executive and the Director, or in their absence another appointed officer shall be authorised to enter into and execute all instruments, deeds or assurances on behalf of the Group.

- 13.8 The cost of attendance, travel and subsistence in connection with meetings of the Group and Sub Groups shall be met by the member or officer's own authority. The Group itself will meet those costs in respect of members of the Executive attending Executive Meetings or otherwise representing the Group.

#### **14. Resignation of Member Authorities**

- 14.1 Any Member Authority wishing to terminate its membership shall give not less than twelve months' notice, in writing, to the Director to expire on 31 March in any year.
- 14.2 Any Member Authority shall, upon ceasing to be a member of the Group, forfeit all right to and claims upon the Group and its property and funds, and, without prejudice to Article 15, shall pay such amount representing the authority's share of responsibility towards liabilities incurred by the Group on behalf of member authorities, including payments due to contractors, during the currency of the authority's membership, such share to be calculated having regard to the proportion which the subscription paid by that authority bears to the total annual subscription of the Group from its members in total.

#### **15. Dissolution**

- 15.1 A motion for dissolution of the Group must be notified in advance as an agenda item for the Annual Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 15.2 A motion for dissolution shall require a formal majority of at least two-thirds of members present with at least two-thirds of such authorities represented at the meeting, or through a postal vote procedure authorised by an Annual Meeting decision under the procedures outlined in 16.1 below.
- 15.3 In the event that the Group's funds should prove to be insufficient to discharge its liabilities Member Authorities shall contribute such additional sum as is required collectively to eliminate the deficiency pro rata to the level of their subscription.
- 15.4 In the event of a dispute between a member or former member authority and the Group as to the amount which an authority should contribute under this rule the matter shall be referred to arbitration.
- 15.5 The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and the Arbitrator shall be asked to determine the extent to which an authority or authorities should contribute and to determine the matter in accordance with what is fair in all the circumstances. In the event that the Arbitrator issues a determination providing that a member or former member Authority is liable to contribute a specified sum under this Rule the authority shall pay the monies which the Arbitrator determines it ought to pay within sixty days of the issue of the award. The Arbitrator shall be appointed by agreement of Chief Executive and Director or in default of such agreement by the President for the time being of the Law Society.

## **16. Amendment to the Constitution**

16.1 The Annual Meeting (or an Extraordinary General Meeting convened for the purpose) shall have power to amend this Constitution:

(a) save that no amendments may be made to articles 13.4 or 14.1 and any purported amendments to those articles shall not be effective; and

(b) provided that a motion in favour of each such amendment shall be passed by at least two thirds of members present **and voting (in person or by Proxy)** and if necessary through the following additional procedure:

**If 10% of the members signify to the Corporate Director in writing prior to the meeting that they wish the amendment to be put to** a postal ballot of the membership. The amendment shall be carried if it receives the support of at least two thirds of the ballot papers returned.

## **17. Urgent Decisions**

17.1 The Chairman in consultation with the First Vice-Chairman may take a decision which is a matter of urgency and is not delegated to the Officers. However, the decision may only be taken:

(i) if it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the Executive; and

(ii) if the Chairman of the Group agrees that the decision is a matter of urgency.

17.2 The reasons why it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the Executive and the consent of the Chairman to the decision being taken as a matter of urgency must be noted on the record of the decision. Following the decision, the Chairman will provide a full report to the next meeting of the Group or Executive explaining the decision, the reason for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

## Note of last SPARSE Rural Special Interest Group meeting

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rural Services Network Special Interest Group</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rural Assembly Meeting</b></li> </ul>
<b>Date:</b>	Monday 9 April 2018
<b>Venue:</b>	Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note.

### Rural Assembly Meeting 12.30 – 3.00pm

Item	Decisions and actions
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Members noted apologies for this part of the meeting. A list is included at the end of the minutes.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the last Rural Assembly meeting and RSN AGM 20th November, 2017</b></p> <p>Cllr Cecilia Motley (Chair), RSN, asked members to approve the minutes of the last meeting. These were agreed as a true record.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the last Executive meeting – 28th March 2018</b></p> <p>The minutes had not been circulated and will be available in due course.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>A Community Banking Initiative: Presentation by Comoola Tree Ltd</b></p> <p>Mr Biggs introduced representatives from Comoola Tree Ltd, Mr Jeffrey Payne, Professor Alan Braithwaite and Emeritus Professor Tony Davies.</p> <p>The group received a presentation which outlined the ways in which the company proposes to use radical innovations to reverse rural decline and deprivation. They outlined the kind of work they do to enable benefits to rural communities via better accessibility to services such as banking. Their role is primarily as facilitator to support all the mechanisms available and in place, to enable successful community initiatives in a more commercial and effective way.</p> <p>Members noted stakeholders currently involved and the offers and services</p>

available via Comoola to enable social cohesion and to help bring communities together.

Members were informed of the benefits from a commercial prospective and in terms of career prospects. Profits generated would be returned to the community.

Members comments included:

- Integration between the post office and banking would be useful – but noted that limitations on opening hours was an issue. Mr Payne reminded the group that with their model, accessibility was 24 hours a day;
- They raised issues about the viability of the proposals generally, especially given the cost of keeping hubs consistently open.;
- Although they agreed that community ownership was an incentive to do well, there were still concerns about realistic expectations for communities to actually be able to retrieve the cost of their initial investment;
- They noted that profits made should go to support the most vulnerable, particularly the elderly and to provide facilities and career prospects for the young.

Mr Biggs thanked the speakers for their presentation and agreed to discuss the prospect of taking forward their offer later on with the group.

Further to the presentation, the SIG discussed the proposals and raised several concerns. Mr Biggs suggested that he pass their details onto others who may be interested and wish to broker further discussion, it would be up to them if they wish to take conversation forward. It needs to be clear that it is **not** endorsed by the group. Members generally felt that, without a working example, it was difficult to not be sceptical at this point, but agreed that these kind of initiatives should be considered *at least* as a duty to their communities.

The presentation is circulated with these minutes.

## **5 Regional Meetings/Seminars**

The group had discussed these earlier on in the agenda.

## **6 Brexit Related**

Mr Biggs outlined the outcome of the third meeting of the Rural Brexit round table and the position of the different organisations, as part of it. It became clear that members were reluctant to put any money or resources into the subject and that it was not possible to obtain agreement that lobbying would be done as partners. It was however agreed, that the meeting was very positive in that it was very open and enabled sharing of ideas and joint issues.

Everyone was concerned that issues affecting rural communities as opposed to specific sectors, would not get much attention at all. Mr Biggs had put forward the idea of a rural strategy template as part of the SIG's remit.

Members discussed issues around current spending and how this might change in the future.

Mr Biggs reminded the group of the questionnaire sent out by the LGA Brexit

commission which members had been asked to fill out. There had been very few responses and they were informed that a letter would be sent out as a reminder to engage in the future.

**Recommendation:** That the group agree work be taken forward in continuing with the rural strategy as part of the SIG's remit.

Members agreed the recommendation.

## **7 Rural Vulnerability Day and Parliamentary Group**

Mr David Inman, RSN, summarised the background and the purpose in setting up the rural vulnerability day. It was clear that rural MPs found it very informative and an interesting event and members noted that attendance had been very good.

Rural England would be taking forward other events.

Members asked that the names of the MPs be shared if possible so that they can be directly lobbied.

**Action:** RSN to contact MPs who had agreed to be members of a Rural Vulnerability Group of MPs to request whether their attendance can be disclosed to colleagues in the first instance.

## **8 Government Consultation on National Planning Policy Framework**

Members noted the current position on the preparation of a response to the consultation. A draft RSN response would be circulated.

## **9 Budget Report**

Members noted the current position with the budget Members noted the report.

## **10 Affordable Housing Sounding Board Survey March 2018**

Mr Biggs outlined the outcome of the survey which showed that provision of affordable housing is a real issue among all rural areas. Members referred to the exemption of holiday lets from paying any business rates or council tax.

## **11 Rural Services Network Annual Rural Conference**

Members were given an outline of the agenda for both days with much of the focus on relevant workshops.

Confirmed speakers included Tony Travers and Lord Gardiner.

## **12 Report on the RSP Service Groups/ Network Bodies**

The group received updates from the various groups which covered current work and meetings on issues including health, housing, fire and crime in rural

communities.

Members noted dates of upcoming conferences and events.

Concerns were noted on current issues around changes to the location and accessibility to court services which lead to subsequent additional costs to police commissioners.

Members also noted updates on meetings with APPG and Rural England.

### **13 Any Other Business**

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.



## Appendix A

Name	Organisation
Graham Biggs	RSN
David Inman	RSN
Cllr Cecilia Motley, Chair	RSN
Andy Dean	RSN
Chris Cowcher, Community Manager	ACRE
Cllr Neil Butters	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Mark Whittington	Lincolnshire Council
Heidi Turnbull, Economic Development Officer	Maldon District Council
Cllr Robert Heseltine	North Yorkshire County Council
Revd Richard Kirlew	Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy
Cllr Gwilym Butler	Shropshire Council
Cllr Peter Thornton	South Lakeland District Council
Cllr Gill Heath	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Peter Stevens	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Cllr Owen Bierley	West Lindsey District Council
Frances Bolding	Suffolk County Council
Malcolm Leeding	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
Cllr Peter Wild	Chichester District Council
Cllr Cameron Clark	Sevenoaks District Council
Sue Sanderson	Cumbria County Council

**MINUTES OF THE SPARSE RURAL AND RURAL SERVICES NETWORK EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RURAL SERVICES PARTNERSHIP LTD MEETING, MONDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018 HELD AT THE SOROPTOMISTS, NO 63 BAYSWATER ROAD, LONDON**

**Present:** - Cllr Cecilia Motley (Chairman) Cllr Philip Sanders, Cllr Robert Heseltine, Cllr Peter Thornton, Cllr Sue Sanderson, Cllr Peter Stevens, Revd Richard Kirlew

**Officers:** - Graham Biggs MBE (Chief Executive), David Inman (Director), Kerry Booth, Jon Turner

**Apologies:** - John Birtwistle – Head of Policy, UK Bus; Cllr Kevin Beaty – Eden District Council; Cllr Rob Waltham – North Lincolnshire Council; Cllr Roger Phillips – Herefordshire Council

**1. Notes of Previous Executive Meeting – 22nd May 2018.**

Agreed as a correct record.

**2. Notes of the Main Meeting – 25th of June 2018**

Agreed as a correct record.

**Matters arising:-**

- A. Rural Services APPG:- the one that was the second part of the enquiry into Social Care had been inquorate. This was discussed. Some members said they would be writing to their MPs about the situation. For the next meeting it was agreed MPs would be specifically targeted.
- B. People and Places Board arrangements - a verbal report was received. There were a significant number of the Board's membership from RSN member authorities. It had been agreed with the LGA that in future the RSN's Chief Executive would be sent the Board's meeting papers in advance of meetings. This would enable the RSN to brief members from RSN member authorities on any issues and submit comment direct to the LGA

**3. Composition of the Executive: -**

- (1) The new Vice Chair for the NE Region, Cllr Trevor Thorne - Northumberland County Council would be contacted.
- (2) Anna Price from the Rural Small Business Awards to be offered a place as a Director of the Rural Services Partnership (agreed unanimously by RSP Directors present) and to be on the RSN's Executive representing small business.
- (3) To facilitate involvement it was agreed that the September meeting would be arranged around the Conference and the May meeting would be a core membership present at a meeting and a phone conferenced one for others

- (4) The new Policy Director John Turner was formally introduced. He was added to the Executive listings.

**4. Joint RSN/CCN commission from Pixel re Additional Evidence Required MHCLG**

A verbal report was given by Graham Biggs on this matter.

PIXEL had concluded the first phase of the joint commission from the RSN & CCN aimed at demonstrating the rural premium cost penalty. The study had concentrated on Refuse Collection but as a "Proof of Concept" for other services. Dan Bates had presented a summary at 2 workshop sessions at the conference. This first phase report had been discussed with MHCLG Officials and those discussions went well.

It is intended to finish the work on waste collection in North Yorkshire. This could lead to working with them to look at Waste Disposal which would provide a traversal proxy for both upper and lower tier. MHCLG were interested in us being able to demonstrate where we think that dispersal, traversal and remoteness applied to other services but seem to accept that this might have to include more anecdotal work - the intention here then would be to look to build upon the more statistically sound work (which establishes a proxy for traversal) but to supplement this with case studies in other areas - we could build upon the NY domiciliary work quoted by CCN for example.

Developing some case study work on non - provision and unmet need will be considered.

Once the report is finalised a meeting of the Rural Fair Share Group of MPs will be convened to ensure they remain fully briefed

**5. Partnership between RSN and the National Centre for Rural Health and Care: Rural Health and Care Alliance.**

Graham Biggs detailed the initiative and members also received a written report. The National Centre was happy with the Heads of Terms which RSN had suggested and matters would proceed as detailed in that document.

Membership of the Alliance would normally be at a subscription of £500 a year. Membership would run from 1st of January to 1st of January.

The Centre and the intended accompanying Alliance would be formally launched in the House of Commons on the 16th of October. Jon Turner and Bethan Aldridge would be working to seek a significant number of members of the Alliance over the coming months.

**6. Time for a Rural Strategy**

The latest draft of this was presented. The draft would be amended to accord with a wide range of representations which had been received.

It was agreed

- (A) to include paragraphs on the position relating to rural schools where Cumbria would assist with the drafting.
- (B) the rural proofing section would be beefed up And based on the recent legislation in Northern Ireland upon which a presentation had been made to the Conference

## **7. Communication Strategy Update.**

Kerry Booth presented a full report.

Members noted the communication strategy review and the recent changes that have taken place with the revised rsnonline website and Rural Bulletin. The changes were warmly welcomed and congratulations given to all involved

It was agreed that RSN would develop its social media with a regular campaign of awareness raising on rural issues and statistics.

Members approved the RSN Meeting Schedule for 2019 and the proposed subjects for consideration for the seminar and meetings.

It was noted that for the Executive in 2019 there would be 3 meetings plus one more based upon by teleconference. One of the meeting dates may be moved to be held at the end of the conference to save Members travelling and additional time.

At a further item in the meeting it was agreed to include an additional seminar in the SE of the country on the subject of Vulnerability.

## **8. RSP Recruitment**

The Policy Director Jon Turner presented a full report as well as the Papers (F) and (FF) in the report.

Members congratulated Jon on the progress that has been made in the past 5 months with some twenty five new RSP members having been gained.

The meeting was supportive of the 'sector groupings' and the engagement of potential private sector organisations who deliver services in rural England. An "ethical framework" had been prepared for commercial organisations would be circulated to Executive members for comment.

Members endorsed Jon's recommendation that the financial threshold should be introduced, including an Individual Membership of c£90+VAT.

Members were supportive of the idea that RSP members should be encouraged to participate in both the National Rural Conference and Regional Seminars.

They were also supportive of Richard Kirlew's suggestion that faith groups should be encouraged to join the Partnership.

## **9. Rural Vulnerability**

(A) Suggested Revised Priorities Document.

The new document including Rural Vulnerability as a cross-cutting issue was formally agreed subject to tidying around the wording in the current - document to avoid any duplication.

(B) Report on the topic of 'Rural Vulnerability'.

The Corporate Director presented his report.

A full discussion took place on the way people in rural areas were increasingly coming under more and more pressure from the situation relating to rural services. This together with a rural population that was statistically getting older was creating considerable difficulties for many people. Discussion took place about terminology and approach but it was concluded that the approach suggested was the correct one as the situation was in danger of affecting the continued sustainability of rural areas was in need of being described and detailed.

It was decided that:-

(A) Rural Vulnerability should be accepted as a cross cutting issue in respect of the RSN priorities.

(B) A specific section relating to Rural Vulnerability should be included in the RSN website as time permitted.

(C) A regional seminar and meeting should in future be held in the South East and the schedule would be altered accordingly. The first of these meetings would seek to cover the issues around the topic. Consideration would also be given to the topic being considered in next year's North West event due to be held in October 2019.

(D) A new Vulnerability Grouping within the RSP of the most appropriate RSP members would be established. Meetings held would be grouped with other London meetings to avoid additional expense.

#### **10. Separate RSP Meetings**

The meeting received a joint report from the Corporate and the Policy Directors. It was agreed to hold two separate RSP meetings from 2019. It was hoped the meetings to be held in April and November every year could be held on the days following the RSN meetings to allow any necessary dovetailing of Agendas and to avoid further travelling expenses.

#### **11. RSN Budget 2018-19, 2019-20**

Graham Biggs updated members on the position. Although this was currently satisfactory there were a list of members who had not paid and they all would have to be chased.

A separate report regarding the charging structure for 2019-20 and following years was discussed.

RECOMMENDED:

(1) The previously agreed policy of increasing contributions to reflect reductions in membership income be rescinded forthwith. There was

(2) In lieu of the policy referred to in (1) above an annual inflationary increase of 2% be included across all charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019.

#### **12. Rural Conference 2018**

A verbal report was given on the event held over two days in early September. Attendance had been up on 2017 and it was felt the Conference had been a very successful one which had been generally well received by those who had attended.

The event would be staged in 2019 and in future the event would be titled the National Rural Conference.

### **13. House of Lords Select Committee on the Rural Economy**

An update report for information was given. Graham Biggs had been invited to give evidence on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Regional Meetings Update**

These continued to be well received and attendances had been encouraging. The last two in the North West and Yorkshire would be held on the 8th of October and the 10th of December respectively.

### **Any Other Business**

#### **A. Draft Agriculture Bill**

There no provision relating to funding Rural Development and Rural Community issues (including LEADER type activity) in the current drafting. This could be an omission if these matters were not be empowered elsewhere. In Wales a different pattern had emerged. The Chief Executive would make enquiries, and if necessary make representations – including in response to the EFRA Select Committee's Call for Evidence closing on 6<sup>th</sup> October and report back at the November AGM.

**NB It was subsequently determined that the Government had the power referred to in other legislation affecting England**

#### **B. Request to have a Special Offer in the RSN Bulletin**

The Chief Executive reported on a request that had been made but which was not likely to go further because of failure to agree terms. The meeting agreed with the stance that had been taken by officers. The officers were asked to present a report on the position and the principles involved to the next meeting.

# Time for a Rural Strategy

## Why a Rural Strategy?

The Rural Services Network (RSN) calls on the Government to take the lead, working with other interested organisations, to produce a comprehensive, long-term and funded Rural Strategy.

This document should set out the Government's priority objectives over the next decade for England's rural communities and rural economies. It should also define a set of policies and initiatives which will achieve them. Some of these policies and initiatives will be new, whilst others may exist now and simply need enhancing to better meet rural needs.

Rural communities are frequently overlooked in a policy environment dominated by (majority) urban thinking and by urban policy concerns. So called "rural mainstreaming" has often led to policies which are inappropriate in a sparsely populated or rural setting. The result is that communities miss out on the benefits or experience unintended consequences from policies which are poorly thought through from a rural perspective.

Rural economies are also widely misunderstood, with their potential to grow and add value to the national economy overlooked. Too often they are conflated with agriculture and land-based industries. Whilst agriculture certainly remains an important consideration, it is today one element within broad-based and diverse rural economies.

It is time for a Rural Strategy which raises rural opportunities and challenges up the political agenda: which is forward looking and ambitious, recognising the contribution that rural areas make and those they could make to the wellbeing and prosperity of the nation as a whole.

The RSN considers there is now a compelling case for such an approach. Years of public sector austerity have left significant challenges for service delivery in rural areas, which must be addressed. There is an urgent need to define a new settlement for rural areas, replacing the current model based heavily on European Union policies and funding streams. Change is also needed to overcome issues with the rural policy framework which were highlighted by a House of Lords Select Committee inquiry into the NERC Act.

The Rural Services Network is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice. It is fighting for a fair deal for rural communities to maintain their social and economic viability for the benefit of the nation as a whole.

The RSN membership is 154 local authorities (counties, unitaries, districts and boroughs) from across England and over 85 other public, private and civil society sector organisations, such as fire and rescue authorities, housing associations, bus operators and land-based colleges.

**November 2018**

## The context

Rural areas are home to 9.4 million people according to 2016 population estimates. That is, 17% of the population of England live in small rural towns, villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings. This is more people than live in Greater London.

Those rural areas are varied in type and character. They include – among others – remote and upland communities, coastal settlements, commuter belt villages and former mining settlements. Indeed, they often vary within a single local authority area. Policies ought to be flexible in their design and delivery, if they are to meet the needs of such diverse places.

There are, however, a number of policy challenges which are common to most rural places and which are frequently inter-connected. They are:

- **Ageing:** rural areas have a high proportion of residents in older age groups, raising demand for services such as health and social care. Moreover, growth in numbers aged 85 or over is expected to happen fastest in rural areas;
- **Living costs:** the cost of housing is typically high, whilst local wages in rural areas are 10% below the national average, leading to severe affordability issues. Costs of transport and home heating are also higher than average in rural areas;
- **Infrastructure:** it is relatively costly to build infrastructure, like broadband and mobile phone networks, putting many rural homes and businesses at a disadvantage. Maintaining rural roads is also an issue;
- **Accessibility:** limited public transport options often leave vulnerable groups isolated or without ready access to jobs, training, key services and social opportunities;
- **Delivery:** organisations responsible for delivering services to rural communities face added costs, due to time and expense travelling, a need to operate from multiple service outlets and lost economies of scale;
- **Perception:** portrayals of rural life often paint a stereotypical and affluent picture, failing to recognise the very real poverty that exists.

In 1995 and in 2000 the Governments of the day published a Rural White Paper. In many respects these were impressive documents, outlining a wide range of policy measures in an effort to address rural challenges at the time. Eighteen years have passed since the more recent White Paper. The Rural Productivity Plan of 2015 was welcome, but was narrower in its scope and is already largely out-of-date.

In March 2018 a report published by a House of Lords Select Committee reviewed progress since the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It highlighted serious concerns with the way that Government handles rural needs and a diminished focus on the potential of rural areas. It called for a strengthening of rural proofing, with all Whitehall departments doing more to ensure a rural dimension within their policy making.

The RSN accepts that producing another full White Paper may be overblown. However, it believes a comprehensive, properly resourced and up-to-date Rural Strategy is urgently needed to provide the required vision, priorities and policy drive to meet the challenges in



rural England. Such a document would reassure rural communities their needs are recognised and being addressed.

This should have buy-in and bite across sectors and at all levels. To a significant degree it will depend on local delivery. It should therefore be drawn up in consultation with local government, rural interest organisations and others, creating a shared framework for action.

It must provide an overarching approach to the future sustainability of rural communities. It is clear that a piece-meal or short-term approach simply will not deliver.

## A thriving rural economy

*Businesses of all types, sizes and sectors should be supported to prosper, grow and provide decently paid employment opportunities. This will be of direct benefit to rural communities and will contribute significantly to the national economy.*

### Key facts<sup>1</sup>

547,000  
businesses

£246 billion  
productivity

84% working  
in SMEs

22% of jobs  
home-based

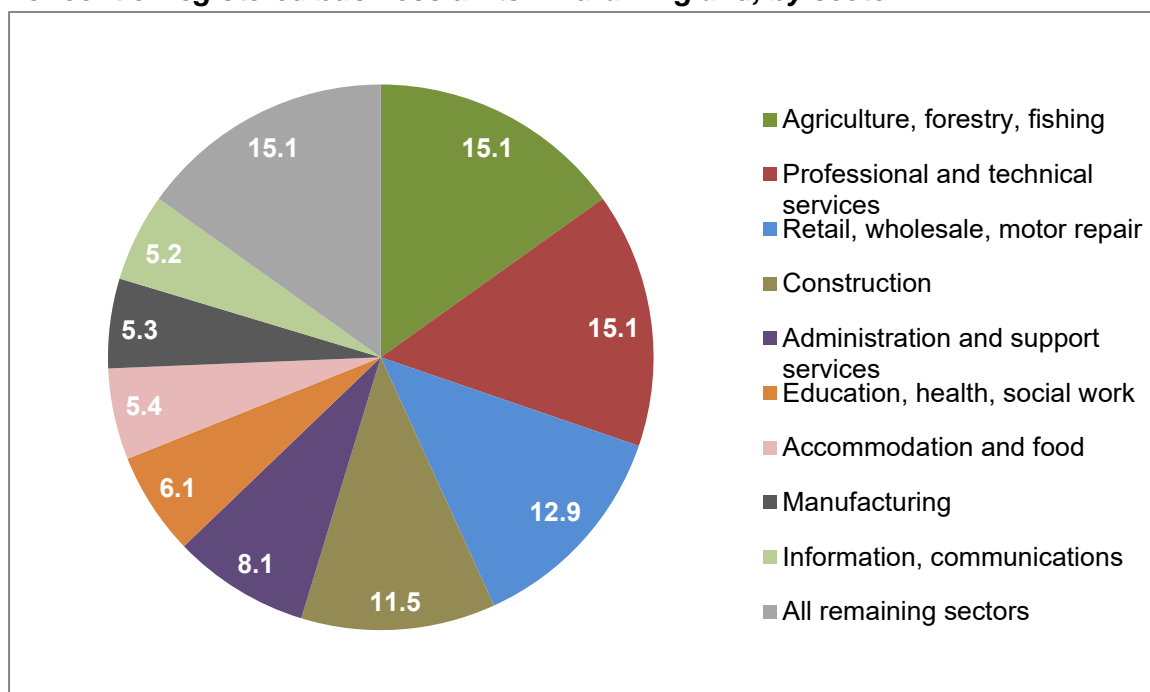
£21,400  
ave. wage

There are 547,000 registered businesses based in rural areas (and probably as many micro-businesses again which are unregistered). They are 24% of all the registered businesses in England, so form a vital part of the national and regional economies.

Those registered businesses have an annual turnover of £434 billion or £124,000 of turnover per person employed. Productivity (Gross Value Added) in rural areas is £246 billion (2016 figure) or £44,740 per workforce job, which is below the England average (£50,270).

Rural economies are diverse, with businesses from across the range of sectors. Land-based businesses (including farming) are important, but 85% of rural businesses are from other sectors. Other key sectors are professional services, retail and construction.

### Per cent of registered business units in rural England, by sector



<sup>1</sup> Sources are Defra and ONS. All figures in the Key facts section relate to 2017 unless otherwise stated.

Most registered businesses in rural areas are small. Indeed, almost 18% of them have no employees, being sole traders or partnerships (more than double the equivalent urban figure). Some 84% of employees in rural areas work in SMEs.

Those registered rural businesses employ 3,500,000 people. This figure implies a significant outflow of people commuting to urban-based jobs. However, home working has grown and 22% of all rural jobs are home based (compared with 13% in urban areas).

Whilst the unemployment rate in rural areas is relatively low, many job opportunities are poorly paid, seasonal or insecure. Many have two or more part-time jobs to make ends meet. Median (average) annual earnings from rural employment are £21,400. This is 10% less than annual earnings in England as a whole (£23,700).

## The rural challenge

Rural economies in different areas vary and some are closely integrated with urban centres. The level of entrepreneurship within them all presents a policy opportunity, but there are significant challenges which should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Reducing the productivity gap;
- Helping rural businesses (especially SMEs) to grow locally;
- Supporting further diversification, especially into high value-added sectors;
- Sustaining high streets and their businesses in rural towns; and
- Creating better paid and more secure jobs.

## What would make a difference?

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for thriving rural economies:

- ✓ **A dedicated rural business support programme:** in 2020 EU programmes, such as the LEADER and EAFRD initiatives, will come to an end. Although modest in scale and scope, these have provided grants to support rural business growth, diversification and innovation. Government should replace them with a dedicated, rural business support programme, which could be funded from its proposed Shared Prosperity Fund. This should be flexible in scope – potentially open to all business types and sectors – enabling local bodies to tailor delivery to locally decided priorities. There is now an opportunity for Government to scale-up its ambitions for rural economies by announcing a significant new investment programme.
- ✓ **A rural proofed Industrial Strategy:** many objectives in the Government's Industrial Strategy are highly relevant to the needs of rural economies. However, in order for its benefits to reach into rural areas careful 'rural proofing' is required. This should apply to Local Industrial Strategies as they are developed by Local Enterprise Partnerships, to ensure they take account of rural needs and opportunities. Where new initiatives are tested this should include rural pilots and where groups are set-up to take forward elements of the Strategy they should include rural specialists. In seeking to boost productivity the Strategy places a lot of focus on hi-tech and

innovation sectors. This needs balancing with support aimed at more traditional and numerous rural sectors, such as retail and tourism.

- ✓ **A re-purposing of Local Enterprise Partnerships:** these partnerships (LEPs) are the conduit for considerable sums of public money to support growth and economic development. Most operate across a mix of urban and rural places. However, whilst some have performed well in taking rural priorities into account, others have failed to do so – focussing their efforts on a few large urban projects. All LEPs whose geography includes rural places should have to identify and target their priorities through a bespoke strategy or action plan, the delivery of which is monitored. Building on the 2018 LEP Review, Government should ensure LEP Boards receive training on rural proofing and that LEP end of year reports state publically what has been delivered in their rural areas.
- ✓ **A training offer to suit small rural businesses:** all businesses should be able to benefit from training. This would assist them to develop or grow their businesses. Equally it would help them stay up-to-date on matters such as tax and regulation. Finding the time to attend and getting to training events can be a barrier for the smallest rural businesses. Sessions or courses therefore need to be made as readily accessible as possible. Training providers should seek to deliver early evening sessions in easy-to-reach rural locations. They should also consider whether more courses could be delivered online, including as distance learning.
- ✓ **A Further Education system accessible to rural pupils:** young people from rural areas often experience difficulties getting to Further Education colleges or sixth forms. For some this means undertaking long or complex journeys to get there and back, whilst for others it means compromising on the course topics they take. This dampens young people's aspirations and curtails their opportunities. One rural barrier would be removed if those travelling to post-16 education or training were entitled to subsidised bus fares. Those aged 17 and 18 should receive the same free travel as the statutory and reimbursed provision for those aged up to 16.

## A digitally connected countryside

*All rural households and businesses should have the option of affordable and reliable access to broadband and mobile networks. Digital infrastructure should be considered essential for a modern economy and to enable fair access to services and other opportunities.*

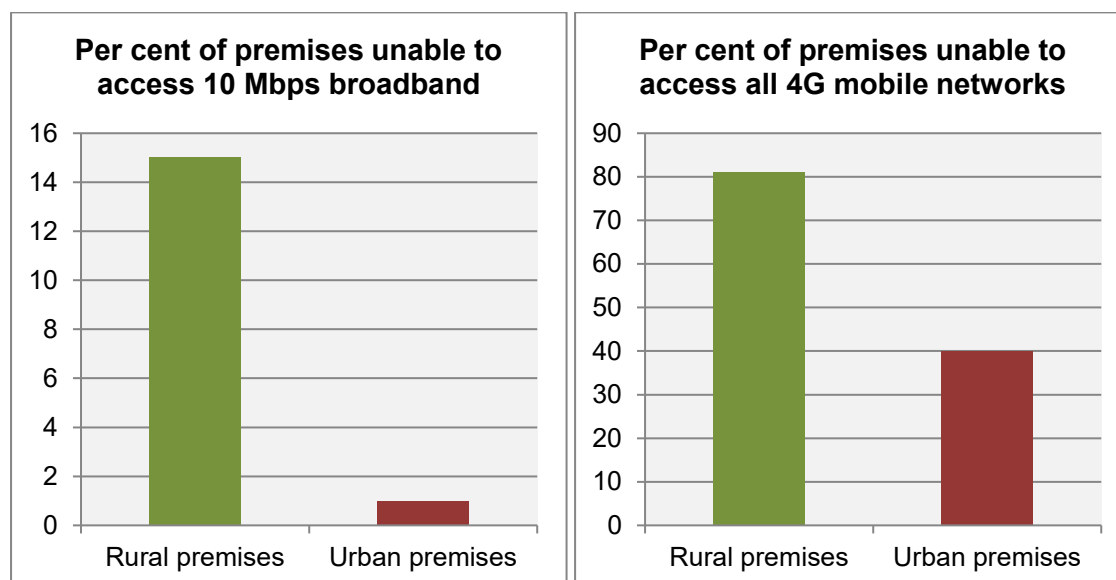
### Key facts<sup>2</sup>

Significant sums of public expenditure have been invested to extend the reach of superfast broadband networks into less commercial areas. This included match funding from rural local authorities (a cost not borne by urban authorities). However, there remains a noticeable gap between levels of connectivity in rural and urban areas.

In England's rural areas 15% of premises – households and businesses – are unable to access a broadband connection with a 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) download speed. Industry regulator, Ofcom, considers this a necessary speed for everyday online tasks.

In the most remote rural locations connection speeds can be significantly worse. A survey of its members by the National Farmers Union in 2016 concluded that over half (56%) could not yet access a basic 2 Mbps connection.

Mobile connectivity has improved, but the indoor signal is poor in England's rural areas, with phone calls on all four networks only possible at 59% of premises. Meanwhile, using 4G on all networks – giving fast internet access – is only possible inside 19% of rural premises.



Rural take-up of superfast broadband is fair where it is available, with almost four in ten premises upgrading. However, a rural business survey by Rural England and SRUC found only 19% had a superfast connection and most (59%) relied on standard broadband. It also found high rates of dissatisfaction with connection speed and reliability.

<sup>2</sup> Sources are Ofcom, NFU and Rural England/SRUC. All figures in the Key facts section refer to 2017 unless otherwise stated.

The survey, cited above, identifies significant and wide-ranging rural business benefits from digital adoption. It estimates that if constraints to digital adoption, such as skills and recruitment, could be overcome it would unlock at least £12 billion of extra productivity per annum (Gross Value Added).

Rural businesses say their top three benefits from digital adoption are:		
It enables remote working	It improves access to customers and suppliers	It boosts overall business efficiency

## The rural challenge

Broadband and mobile networks are improving and rural business adoption of digital technologies demonstrates real potential. However, there are significant challenges which should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Extending broadband networks to those premises still missing out;
- Future proofing broadband policy, so rural areas do not fall behind again;
- Capitalising on the benefits from the roll out of superfast networks; and
- Addressing issues with mobile network coverage (including 4G).

## What would make a difference?

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for a digitally connected countryside:

- ✓ **A USO that is fit for purpose:** in the short term, the planned introduction (in 2020) of a broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) is welcome. However, the proposed USO level, at 10 Mbps, risks becoming out-of-date. Ofcom should review this prior to its introduction, not least because there will be pressure to leave the USO unchanged for a while to bed down. When the USO is applied decisions about upgrading networks should be taken on a value for money basis and not just a cheapest solution basis. Whilst the cheap option may get premises or areas just over the 10 Mbps threshold, a value for money solution could deliver much higher speeds that result in more sustained benefits.
- ✓ **A focus on full fibre roll out:** the Government's Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) is welcome, setting a longer term goal for the nationwide roll out of full fibre networks. That technology should avoid rural areas falling behind again as demand for bandwidth continues to grow. Significant public funding, as indicated by the FTIR, is clearly justifiable given the market failure that would exist otherwise, with many rural areas considered uncommercial for the roll out. The plans for a rural first (or outside-in) approach to using public funds are exactly what are required. Further announcements how the goal will be turned into practice will be eagerly awaited. The upcoming Spending Review should begin allocating the funding.

- ✓ **A drive to connect rural businesses:** evidence from the Rural England and SRUC survey of rural businesses is that those with a superfast connection realise more business benefits and face fewer digital challenges than those still dependent on a slower connection. The survey report concludes that, in order to capitalise on the public investment in superfast networks, more businesses should be encouraged to upgrade (where they have the option to do so). Government and local broadband partnerships should reinforce their efforts to promote the business benefits. This could include finding rural businesses which are already adopters and are willing to act as broadband champions among their peer group. Alongside this should be training and resources to help rural SMEs improve their digital skills.
- ✓ **A review of mobile connectivity:** whilst mobile connectivity is improving, rural areas lag behind and there are particular rural issues, such as signal strength inside premises and signal loss for those on the move. Previous targets set for mobile network providers (as part of their licences) proved insufficient. It is imperative the regulator, Ofcom, sets sufficiently stretching targets when auctioning the next round of licenses. These should apply equally to all awarded a licence and ensure many more rural communities gain access to mobile internet/data services (as well as basic voice/text services). The sharing of phone masts by providers, to address gaps in provision, should be supported and, if necessary, regulated for. Looking ahead, it is crucial that rural communities feature prominently in plans to develop 5G networks.

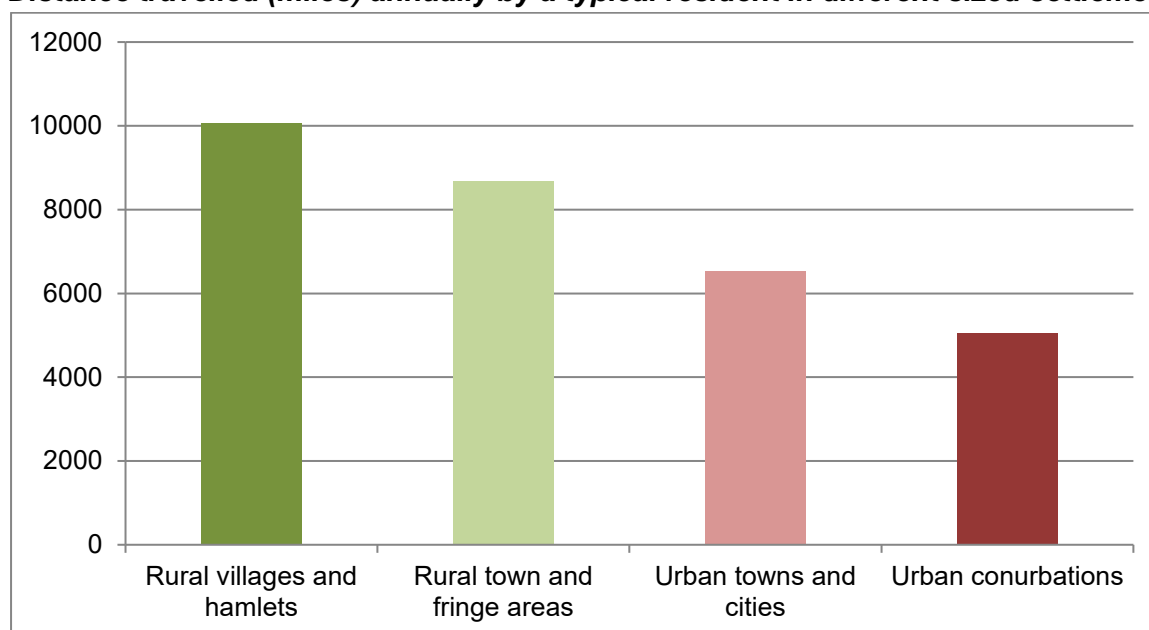
## A place everyone can get around

*People of all ages must have the means to travel to services, jobs and other opportunities. Not least those in the one in nine rural households that do not have a car. Transport is crucial to life opportunities and its absence can compound isolation and loneliness.*

### Key facts<sup>3</sup>

Rural residents need to travel further than their urban counterparts. Those living in small rural settlements (villages and hamlets) travelled an average of 10,055 miles per year in 2016/17. That is 54% more than the average for residents living in urban towns and cities.

#### ***Distance travelled (miles) annually by a typical resident in different sized settlements***



Car ownership is relatively high in rural areas. Particularly notable is that low income households are 70% more likely to run a car if they live in a rural (rather than urban) area. Car ownership is a necessity for many to get around and an added cost they face.

Less than half (49%) of households living in small rural settlements (which are villages and hamlets) had access to a regular and nearby bus service in 2012. This figure, which is due to be updated, seems likely to have decreased since.

Local authorities in rural areas have far less funding available to them to support bus services. In 2017/18 expenditure in predominantly rural areas was £6.72 per resident to subsidise services, compared with £31.93 in predominantly urban areas. Expenditure to cover concessionary bus fares was £13.48 (rural) and £25.54 (urban) respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Data sources are Department for Transport, Rural Services Network, Campaign for Better Transport and Community Transport Association.



Over the six years to 2016/17 transport budgets in shire local authorities were cut by:



There have been widespread cuts to rural bus services which depended on some public subsidy. During 2016/17 alone some 202 bus services were withdrawn altogether in shire areas and a further 191 services were reduced or altered.

Around half (52%) of all community transport organisations either wholly or mostly serve rural communities. However, in rural areas these organisations tend to be small-scale and they rely more heavily on fare revenue (receiving less grant income).

### The rural challenge

Rural bus services are under huge financial pressure and, despite much good practice, community transport struggles to plug the gaps left behind. There are significant challenges which should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Reversing the widespread decline in rural bus service provision;
- Making bus services a more attractive option for rural travellers;
- Providing sustained support for complementary community transport schemes; and
- Ensuring future transport innovations will benefit rural communities.

### What would make a difference?

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for a place everyone can get around:

- ✓ **A fair deal from local government funding:** it is inevitable that many bus routes require some subsidy to survive. The widespread cuts to rural bus services primarily result from the long-term squeeze on local government budgets, coupled with growing demands on their other statutory functions. That squeeze must now be ended. Funding rural bus services would also be far easier if the distribution of funding between local authorities was fair. In 2016/17 urban local authorities received 40% more (£116 per resident more) in funding than rural authorities. This historic imbalance needs correcting, with proper account taken of the added (sparsity) cost of service delivery, like supported bus routes, in rural areas.
- ✓ **A viable deal for transport operators:** Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) provides operators with a 60% fuel duty rebate for commercial services. It is particularly valuable in rural areas, where it helps sustain many financially marginal routes. From time to time BSOG has come under scrutiny. A positive signal from Government recognising the importance of BSOG and committing to retain it (at least) at its current level would stabilise the market and provide longer-term reassurance for operators. Where BSOG is paid out via local authorities (for

tendered services) it must remain fully funded by central Government. Bus operators should be able to offset against tax their capital expenditure to retro-fit vehicles in order to meet latest emission standards.

- ✓ **A sustainable approach to community transport:** many rural communities are struggling to establish schemes to replace lost bus services or to keep existing schemes viable. Grants may be sourced from local authorities, the national lottery and various trust funds, though often these offer only start-up or short-term funding. That said, the Government's £25 million Community Minibus Fund has been useful, if modest compared with the growing level of need. A £50 million per year fund, which targets rural areas, could easily be justified. A fair funding deal for local government (as above) would enable more grants to be paid to sustain rural community transport schemes.
- ✓ **A realistic concessionary fares scheme:** the statutory concessionary fares scheme, which gives pensioners and the disabled free bus travel, is overly restrictive in a rural context. It covers only weekday travel after 9.30 am. Some villages are served by just a few daily buses, one or two of which may run early morning. Others are served, not by traditional buses, but by community transport schemes which fall outside the current concessionary fares scheme. The statutory scheme therefore needs (funded) reform to make it valuable and fair to rural users. Government should also consider amending the law so that pensioners entitled to free travel may make voluntary contributions to help keep services viable.
- ✓ **A search for new rural solutions:** there is more scope to build on the learning from Total Transport pilot projects, which sought to improve use of existing resources, not least by pooling vehicles used by different sectors (such as education, social services and health). Government could pump prime more projects with an investment pot open to local and health authorities, and ensure the learning is shared among transport practitioners. Government could also explore whether there is rural merit in the Scottish system which allows local authorities to set up a transport company. The Government's Future of Mobility work – part of its Industrial Strategy – should examine rural transport needs and recommend rural applications. Any subsequent technology trials should include rural pilots.

As highlighted in the 'thriving rural economy' section, local authorities should also be funded to provide subsidised travel for 17 and 18 year olds travelling to further education.

## An affordable place to live

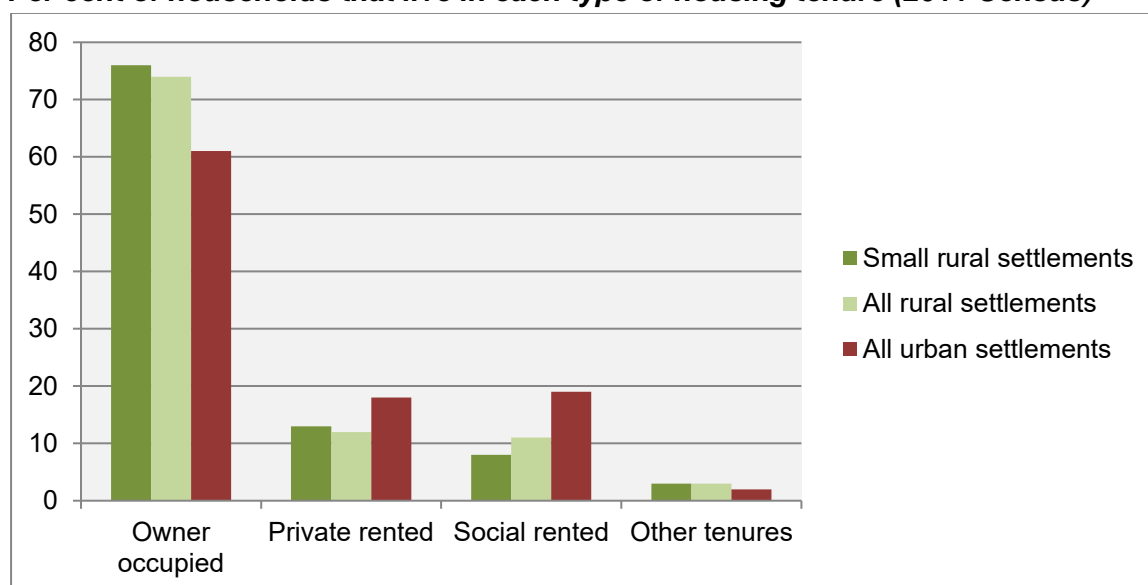
*Rural communities are only likely to thrive economically and socially if they are home to residents from a mix of age groups and backgrounds. This includes providing those brought up locally or working there with a chance to buy or rent a home they can afford.*

### Key facts<sup>4</sup>

Average house prices are £44,000 higher in rural areas than urban areas (2017). Housing is less affordable in predominantly rural areas, where lower quartile (the cheapest 25%) house prices are 8.3 times greater than lower quartile annual earnings (2016).

Options for those on low incomes seeking social rented housing are typically limited in small rural settlements. Only 8% of households in villages live in social housing. By contrast, 19% of households in urban settlements live in social housing (2011 Census).

### Per cent of households that live in each type of housing tenure (2011 Census)

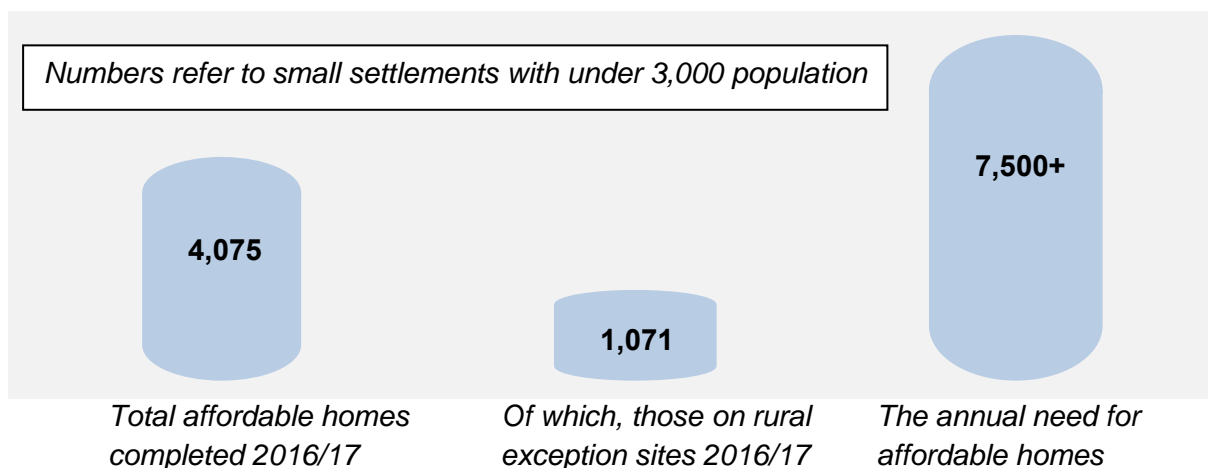


The rural stock of social rented housing has shrunk under the Right to Buy policy, with sales quadrupling between 2012 and 2015 to reach 1% of the stock each year. Although the sale income is intended for reinvestment, only 1 replacement home was built in rural areas for every 8 sold during this period, and these replacements are rarely in the same settlement.

Second homes and holiday lets often add to rural housing market pressures, especially in popular tourist areas. They form a particularly large share of the housing stock in some local authority areas – Isles of Scilly (15%), North Norfolk (10%) and South Hams (9%).

It has previously been estimated there is a need to build 7,500 new affordable homes each year at England's small rural settlements, a figure now considered an under-estimate. Around 3,700 such homes were completed in 2015/16 and just over 4,000 during 2016/17.

<sup>4</sup> Data sources are Halifax Building Society, ONS, Rural Housing Policy Review, MHCLG and Rural Services Network.



Two thirds of rural local authorities say that affordable housing delivery decreased in their rural areas in 2017. This follows a change in planning policy, with developers no longer required to include any affordable homes on small market development sites.

## The rural challenge

Rural communities are generally attractive places to live, but they need to be able to grow in ways which meet the needs of local people. There are significant challenges which should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Bringing forward development sites at a price suited to affordable housing;
- Making sure such homes are and remain genuinely affordable;
- Planning new housing in ways which attract community support; and
- Ensuring the funding model for affordable house building adds up.

## What would make a difference?

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for an affordable place to live:

- ✓ **A planning policy to fit rural circumstances:** most development sites in rural areas are small. Recent changes to planning policy exclude small sites (of less than 10 dwellings) from the requirement that private developers include a proportion of affordable homes. Despite certain qualifications in designated rural areas, the impact on affordable housing delivery is proving significant and negative. Indeed, this had been the main way that such housing was built and it required no public subsidy. A simple solution would be to exempt all small rural settlements from the policy change, allowing affordable housing quotas again where they are most needed.
- ✓ **A realistic definition of affordable:** in most rural areas the greatest need for affordable housing is that for social rented housing. Many households cannot afford to pay anywhere near open market prices or rents. However, national policy has broadened the definition of 'affordable housing' to include Starter Homes, which are for sale at a 20% discount, and Affordable Rent, which is for rent at up to 80% of market prices. These tenures have their place, but the overriding need is to increase

the supply of truly affordable homes. This could be assisted by improved funding for housing associations (see below) and allowing local planning authorities more discretion to set tenures in Local Plan policies.

- ✓ **A dedicated rural affordable housing programme:** a specific grant programme is needed, designed to boost delivery by housing associations in small rural settlements. This could be managed by Homes England and run at a scale which meets the shortfall in delivery identified by the 2014 Rural Housing Policy Review. It should offer grant rates which account for the fact that small-scale development in rural areas is comparatively costly. Grants should also be sufficient to encourage good design and energy efficiency measures. Similarly, a share of the Community Housing Fund, which usefully supports community land trusts, co-housing and self-build projects, should be allocated to rural projects, thus meeting the original objective for this fund.
- ✓ **A bolstering of landowner and community support:** landowners' willingness to release land for rural exception sites, at prices which forego hope value, depends on them being assured it will only ever be used for affordable housing. At present there is uncertainty, which undermines policy delivery. One way to boost delivery of exception sites would be putting into law the ability to attach an affordability purpose to the sale deeds. Rural community support for affordable housing development would be enhanced if the occupancy of new homes was widened from those on local housing registers, to include those in nearby parishes or settlements who currently live in insecure rented or tied accommodation. Government could also explore exempting the sale of land for rural exception sites from Capital Gains Tax.
- ✓ **A replenishing of social housing:** the Right to Buy policy for local authority housing tenants has severely depleted the stock of affordable homes in rural areas. Figures show that for every 8 rural homes sold to their tenants, only 1 replacement home was built. At present only half of the sale proceeds go back to local housing authorities. Those authorities should be able to retain 100% of the proceeds from Right to Buy sales, enabling them to re-invest it and replenish the stock of affordable homes. This would complement the recent Government announcement, that it is lifting the cap on local authority borrowing to build social housing.

## A fair deal on health and social care

*Rural communities, like communities everywhere, need access to high quality health care and some require extra support from social care services. This is fundamental to wellbeing and anything less may pose a health risk. They should not have to pay extra for this (either directly or indirectly).*

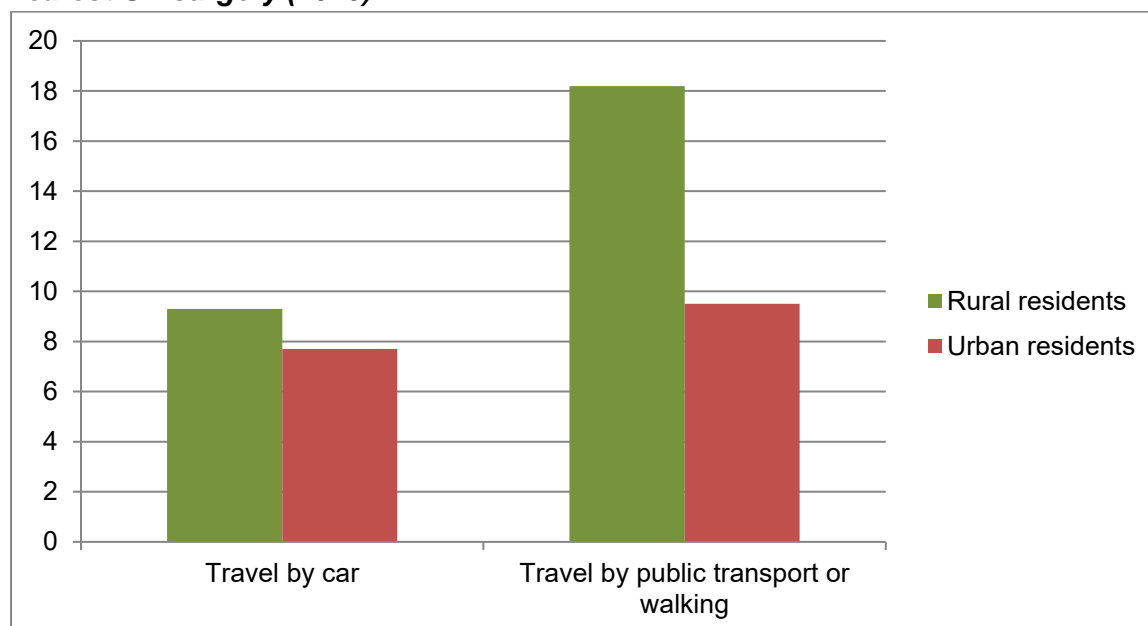
### Key facts<sup>5</sup>

Older age groups form a significant and growing share of the rural population. In 2011 29% of the rural population were aged 60 or over, up from 24% in 2001. Comparative urban figures were 21% in 2011 and 20% in 2001. By 2039 nearly half of all households in rural areas will contain people aged 65 or over.

Rural and urban areas receive similar funding (per resident) under the NHS allocations to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). This does not reflect the older rural demographic, which places extra demand on NHS services due to chronic illness, disability and mortality.

Rural residents face longer journeys to reach a GP surgery than their urban counterparts. Those who travel by public transport or walk have an average 18 minute journey, though this figure takes no account of the frequency of such transport and hence any waiting time.

### ***Minimum travel time, in minutes, for average rural and urban resident to reach their nearest GP surgery (2016)***



The Government's resource allocation system for local government (Settlement Funding Assessment) provided urban areas with 40% more funding per resident than rural areas in 2016/17. With reducing budgets, spend to meet on growing social care needs risks overwhelming rural county and unitary council budgets at the expense of other services.

<sup>5</sup> Data sources are ONS, National Housing Federation, Department for Transport, Rural Services Network and Rural England.

Rural residents also face an additional cost burden for the adult social care provision in their areas. In 2017/18 they funded 76% of the cost of its provision through their Council Tax bills. The urban comparator figure was 53%.

Home care providers face various challenges in rural areas, including difficulties recruiting staff and unproductive staff travel time between geographically spread clients. Rates of delayed transfer of care upon hospital discharge are higher in rural than urban areas.

#### ***Rates of delayed transfer of care from hospitals in 2016/17***

Predominantly rural areas:

Rate = **19.2** cases per 100,000 adult population

Predominantly urban areas:

Rate = **13.0** cases per 100,000 adult population

Almost 12% of all residents who live in rural areas are providing informal care to someone else on a regular basis. That figure doubles to 24% amongst older people who live in rural areas. Both these figures are higher than the urban equivalents.

### **The rural challenge**

On measures of healthiness the rural population can score rather well, but demand for health and social care services is growing and access to them is frequently a concern. Significant challenges should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Ensuring that patients can get to secondary and tertiary health services;
- Delivering quality primary health care locally within rural settings;
- Making sure social care reaches those who need it in remote locations; and
- Benefitting rural clients through improved health and social care integration.

### **What would make a difference?**

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for a fair deal on health and social care:

- ✓ **A fair allocation of funding to rural areas:** funding for the NHS, social care and public health should each be overhauled to reflect actual patterns of demand and to take full account of the extra costs of service provision in sparsely populated areas<sup>6</sup>. As a matter of principle, rural and urban residents should receive equitable service provision. Rural residents should not be paying more Council Tax for fewer services. Local taxation has become unable to meet the growing need for social care and a case now exists to finance social care services managed by local authorities differently, with their statutory provision fully funded by central Government. This would address the current unfairness and make it easier to cope with future demand.

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<sup>6</sup> To this end, the Government's Fair Funding Review for local government finance is welcome, but it needs to progress more rapidly.

- ✓ **A rural proofed model for health care delivery:** in many areas the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) propose reconfiguring secondary and tertiary health care services, including A&E, elective and other hospital provision. Often these plans would result in more centralised services. Whilst a medical case can be made for specialising care at one location, this needs balancing against the need for patient (and visitor) access to services, not least from outlying rural areas. STPs should also seek more local delivery for non-urgent treatments at clinics, health centres and community hospitals, whilst improving hospital patient transport.
- ✓ **A stronger focus on filling vacancies:** recruiting GPs, care workers and other health or social care professionals is difficult in many rural areas. A growing number of surgeries report unfilled vacancies for family doctors, with postings in smaller or rural surgeries apparently less attractive to trainee and younger health care professionals. It is important that rural communities benefit sufficiently from the NHS fund to attract recruits into hard-to-fill posts. Helpful recent recommendations made by the new National Centre for Rural Health and Care include introducing a spatial component to Health Education England's STAR workforce planning tool and developing centres of excellence in rural health and care delivery.
- ✓ **A joined up approach to health and social care:** options for integrating health and social care services may be constrained in rural areas, but the benefits of doing so are perhaps even greater than elsewhere. To that end, the Better Care Fund has been a helpful (pooled) funding pot, despite giving less to rural than urban areas<sup>7</sup>. The upcoming Social Care Green Paper offers an opportunity to move to a more sustainable and effective approach. It should place the emphasis on preventative approaches and encourage innovation, looking beyond traditional care models. It will be important to address rural service delivery cost issues.
- ✓ **A housing policy ready for an ageing population:** the Social Care Green Paper should also address housing issues, such as access to specialist housing for older people and adapting homes for those who live independently. This is important in rural areas where there are typically limited housing choices. New housing should be built to meet the accessibility needs of an ageing rural population. This is more effective and efficient than adapting homes later. Government should work with local authorities, housing associations and the house building industry to ensure that many more new homes are designed and built to meet the Lifetime Homes standard.

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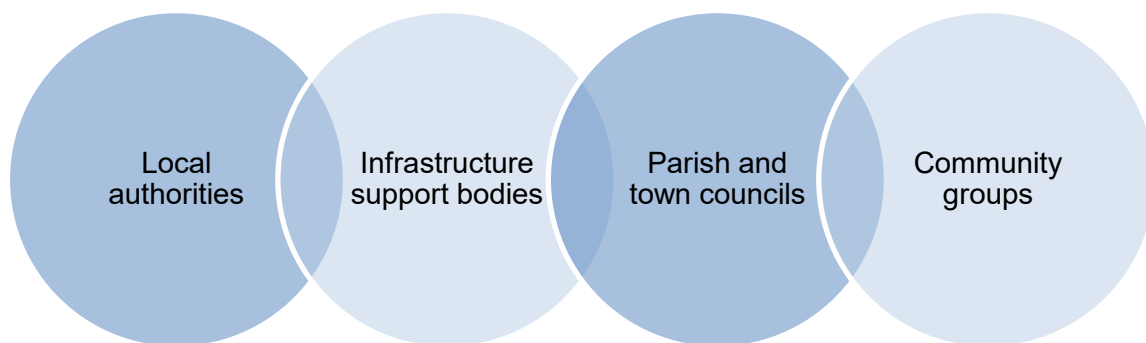
<sup>7</sup> This Fund will provide £29.54 per rural resident and £37.74 per urban resident in 2019/20.



## A settlement to support local action

*The needs of rural communities are best met when policy decisions are taken locally by those who understand the area. This means devolving decisions to local authorities and those who work with in the public, private and civil society sectors, including parish councils and community groups. Local action can also help to address issues such as isolation, loneliness and vulnerability.*

### Key facts<sup>8</sup>



Local authorities are fundamental to efforts to ensure sustainable and inclusive rural communities. They provide democratically elected local leadership, address community needs and deliver a range of important public services, either directly or working with others.

To be effective local authorities must be sufficiently resourced. In rural areas their capacity has increasingly been curtailed both by funding cuts, which affect the whole local authority sector, and because they receive less funding than local authorities in urban areas.

At the very local level there are roughly 10,000 Parish and Town Councils, mostly in rural areas. Increasingly, they are taking on facilities and services which principal local authorities can no longer afford to run. This is a positive response, though the long term survival of such services often remains uncertain.

Rural England has almost 10,000 village halls or community buildings, usually managed by volunteer trustees. These are venues for a wide variety of social, sports, recreation and arts activities. Many host services like a pre-school, outreach post office, country market or cafe.

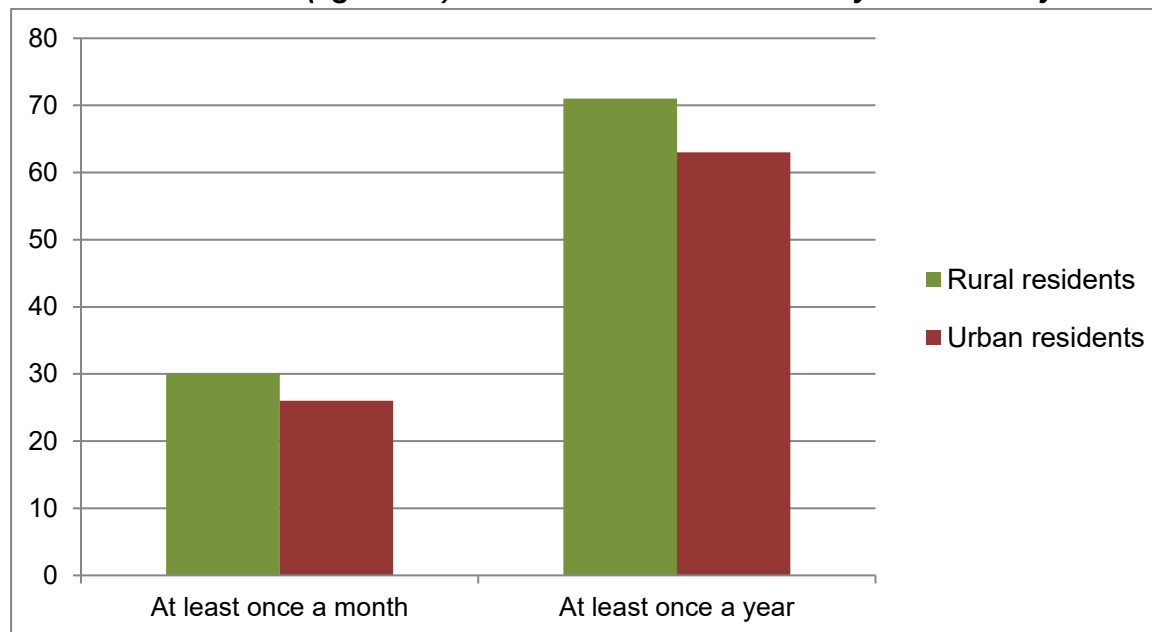
Much of the growth in numbers of community-run shops, pubs and libraries has taken place in rural communities where their private or public provision has disappeared. In 2016 there were 296 community-run shops in England, some 59% of which hosted a post office.

Survey data shows that 30% of rural residents aged 16 or over volunteered on at least a monthly basis (2017/18), which is higher than the urban figure (26%). The voluntary sector, however, often expresses concern about growing expectations and volunteer burn-out.

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<sup>8</sup> Data sources are NALC, DCMS, ACRE and Plunkett Foundation.

***Per cent of residents (aged 16+) who volunteer either formally or informally***



In many parts of the country local action has been taken to draw up Community Resilience Plans. This is particularly important in rural areas where residents and businesses have experienced extreme weather events, such as flooding, drought and storm damage.

Earlier sections in this document contain other facts relevant to local action, such as those about community transport and neighbourhood planning.

## **The rural challenge**

The extent of community activism and self help is a positive feature found in many rural communities. However, there are significant challenges which should be addressed by a Rural Strategy. They are:

- Ensuring that local authorities retain the capacity to serve their rural communities;
- Boosting the capacity of parish and town councils to bring about local solutions;
- Recruiting and retaining volunteers with sufficient time and the right skills; and
- Providing the support infrastructure to facilitate community action in more areas.

## **What would make a difference?**

The Rural Services Network believes that the following initiatives should be included within a Rural Strategy for a settlement to support local action:

- ✓ **A properly resourced local authority sector:** from 2011 to 2017 revenue funding to pay for local authority services was reduced by £16 billion, forcing the sector to make uncomfortable cutbacks which impact negatively on the quality of residents' lives. Those impacts have been particularly felt by rural residents, as their local authorities had below average levels of funding to start with. Ending the long funding squeeze would take pressure off vital services now at risk, as would a move to fair funding

allocations. It would also provide rural local authorities with more headroom to work with and support their communities.

- ✓ **A realistic deal for parish and town councils:** many parish and town councils have taken on discretionary services previously provided by principal local authorities, such as maintaining open spaces, public footpaths and public toilets. Typically they do this well and it can be a chance to redesign services. But with shrinking local authority budgets these services must often be taken on without accompanying funding. This inevitably adds to the level of the Council Tax precept set by town and parish councils. Government should therefore remove its threat to impose a cap on increases to the precept they charge. More of these councils could be encouraged to group together to provide services cost-effectively.
- ✓ **An underpinning for local action:** the rural voluntary and community sector needs access to support and training. That includes advice on governance, finance, operational and other matters. In some areas there is limited community action and more intensive support is needed to build capacity. All this requires infrastructure bodies that specialise in providing advice, training and support to rural community groups and volunteers. Such bodies offer good value for money, but can only survive with some underpinning funding. Wherever possible this should last a few years, to give more certainty and let them focus on delivery. Proposals outlined in the Government's Civil Society Strategy have potential to address this rural need, especially if local authorities are resources to fulfil the expected enabling role.
- ✓ **A support package for communities:** community activism is low cost, but rarely comes free. This is especially so when community groups take on buildings or other assets. Various trusts are generous funders of local projects. Government, too, has provided some grant funding through bodies such as Locality. If rural communities are expected to play a growing role in service delivery and the management of local assets it is imperative this funding continues and at a level which matches the policy aspiration. This should be backed up with resources, such as good practice guidance and networks where communities can learn from each other.
- ✓ **A local response to extreme weather:** rural communities have increasingly experienced extreme weather events. In recent years rural communities in places such as Cornwall, Somerset and Cumbria have faced torrential rainfall and flooding. In 2017 some communities were cut-off by snow and in 2018 many suffered from drought conditions, not least those homes and businesses which rely on abstracted water from bore holes, springs, streams and the like. Communities in vulnerable locations need assistance in the form of infrastructure and measures to mitigate future risk, and having plans in place to respond to extreme circumstances. Local Community Resilience Plans should be encouraged and supported.

## A rural-proofed policy framework

*Mainstream policies, such as those on housing, health, education, planning and economic growth, must be workable in rural areas, where there can be distinct challenges delivering to small and scattered settlements or where economies of scale are harder to achieve<sup>9</sup>.*

### Key points

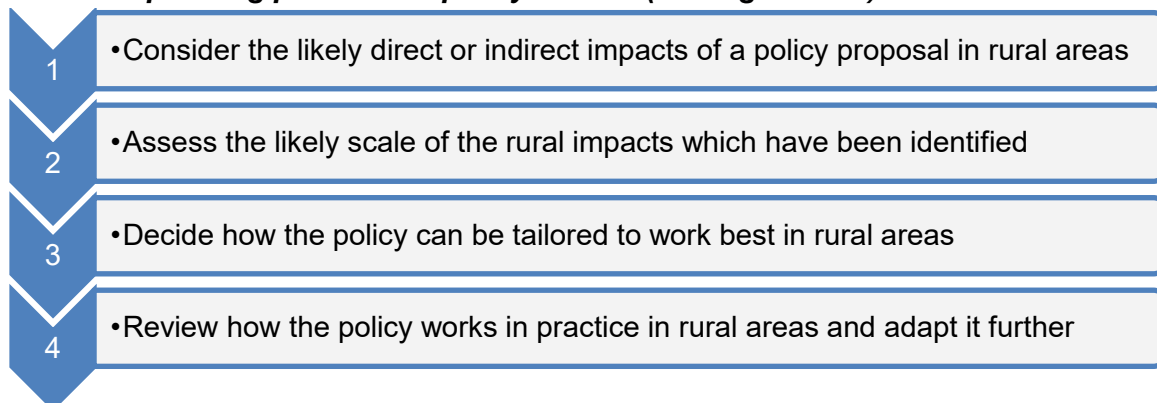
Policies that work in an urban context will not necessarily work in a rural context. Rural areas have specific needs and circumstances which need to be taken into account.

Rural proofing is the policy making process intended to achieve that end. Unfortunately, various reviews have found that its implementation is patchy – including, most recently, the Independent Rural Proofing Implementation Review led by Lord Cameron.

The review by Lord Cameron concluded that Defra has insufficient staff resources working on rural affairs. It questioned the ability of Defra, as lead department on this topic, to engage sufficiently with other Whitehall departments and to support rural proofing.

Various commentators have cited other factors that, when in place, make rural proofing more likely to succeed. They include having buy-in from departmental Ministers, policy makers consulting with rural interest groups and making rural proofing a more transparent process.

### ***The rural proofing process for policy makers (Defra guidance)***



That rural proofing can work well seems clear. A recent example of good practice is the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review issued by DCMS. This seeks to address market failure in rural areas, proposing an approach to ensure rural communities are not left behind.

Rural proofing can add just as much value at the local level, where services and policy initiatives are typically delivered. Its application can be especially beneficial in administrative areas that are mostly urban in character, yet which also contain rural localities.

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<sup>9</sup> Examples include the extra (per household) cost of refuse collection from remote or small settlements and the extra (per pupil) cost of education provision in small schools. The latter rises rapidly where primary schools have fewer than 50 pupils.

## The challenge

Whilst the application of rural proofing has a mixed record, it has nonetheless proved a useful lever for seeking to have rural needs and circumstances taken into account. To improve its effectiveness a Rural Strategy should address certain points. They are:

- Reaffirming the rural proofing commitment and placing it on a firmer footing;
- Providing sufficient staff and resources to carry out the rural proofing function;
- Making it clearer what rural proofing actions policy makers are taking; and
- Ensuring that rural proofing filters down more consistently to the local level.

## What would make a difference?

- ✓ **A proper legal basis for rural proofing:** there is now a real case for placing rural proofing on a stronger legal footing, in the way that it has been in Northern Ireland. The centrepiece of a Rural Strategy should be to place a responsibility on all public bodies, to have regard for rural needs whenever they develop or revise policies, strategies and plans. This duty would be the best way to ensure rural proofing is more consistently and adequately applied. It would also send a welcome, visible signal that the Government of the day reaffirms its commitment to the wellbeing of rural communities and the success of rural economies.
- ✓ **A more transparent proofing process:** it is frequently unclear the extent to which Whitehall departments have considered rural needs and circumstances when developing policies or initiatives. Three actions could help. First, policy making teams could more often consult rural interest groups who have relevant subject expertise. Second, departments could report annually and publically on their rural proofing activities. Third, the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Select Committee could hold a short, regular (say, biennial) inquiry to review progress.
- ✓ **A better resourced team within Defra:** the dedicated rural affairs team within Defra has a key role to engage with policy making teams across Whitehall, helping them to understand rural issues, to undertake rural proofing and to apply rural evidence. This is an ongoing function: rural proofing activity quickly withers if it is not supported. Whilst Defra staff will never be able to engage with every policy development that takes place, there nevertheless needs to be sufficient resources to cover a broad sweep of topics which impact significantly on rural communities and economies.
- ✓ **An effective approach to local policy delivery:** the principle of rural proofing should also apply at the local level where policies are delivered. A legal basis for rural proofing would cover statutory bodies. It should be good practice for private and civil society sector organisations too. Local practice can include adopting rural strategies, assessing rural impacts, holding rural scrutiny sessions, testing initiatives with rural pilots, appointing rural champions to key groups or committees and monitoring rural outcomes. It will help if there are opportunities and resources that enable the sharing and learning from existing rural practice. Organisations such as the Rural Services Network stand ready to play their part.

## Our call to Government and others

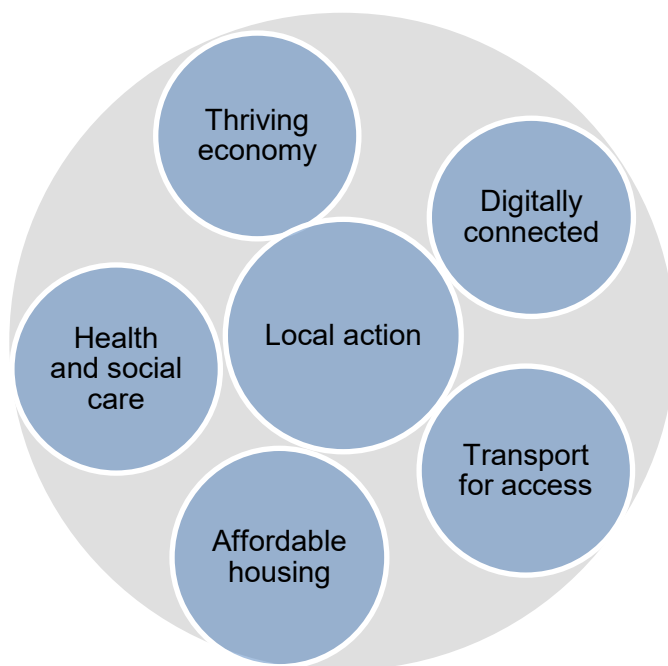
In this document we have set out our ideas for a Rural Strategy. Although they have been described under a series of headings, there are strong links between them and actions taken under one heading will create benefits under others. Truly sustainable rural communities need job opportunities, digital connectivity, transport options, affordable homes and access to services.

Whilst this document commands wide support across the extensive membership of the Rural Services Network, it was not written as a set of fixed ideas and we look forward to discussing it with Government and other interested parties.

What we do feel strongly about is that such a strategy must be:

- ✓ Ambitious – setting challenging objectives for rural England a decade from now;
- ✓ Comprehensive – addressing a range of important policy agendas that impact on rural prosperity, wellbeing and quality of life;
- ✓ Current – ensuring rural areas benefit fully from latest Government strategies and green papers, such as those for industry, connectivity and social care, and take proper account of future trends;
- ✓ Resourced – providing realistic financial resources to deliver on its ambitions, recognising that delivery almost always costs more in rural areas; and
- ✓ Supported – commanding wide support from across Government and beyond.

At a practical level, to be effective a strategy must have buy-in from across Whitehall departments and must be capable of delivery at a local level and in ways which match local circumstances. Rural areas are not homogenous and the best solutions are frequently those defined and delivered locally.



We are convinced there is an opportunity for Government to make a real difference, benefitting rural residents, businesses and communities alike. We are similarly convinced that this would prove beneficial to the nation as a whole. If business support and digital connectivity boosts the productivity of the rural economy, then the UK wins. If preventative measures reduce demand on health and social care services in rural areas, then taxpayers at all levels win.

If pressed to name one way in which a Rural Strategy could leave a lasting legacy, our answer is that it should contain a commitment to introduce a Rural Needs Bill, to place rural proofing on a firmer, statutory footing. Why? Because rural proofing is intended to inform and influence every policy agenda that impacts on rural life.

**Our conclusion? It is time for a Rural Strategy. We hope that others agree.**

Document version:

23/10/18 revised full draft for Rural Assembly sign off

**RURAL SERVICES NETWORK  
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RSN EXECUTIVE MEETING  
24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2018**

**RSN CHARGES 2019/20 AND BEYOND**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** The 2017 AGM agreed the level of charges for the current year (2018/19) and for the following three years through to 2021/22. That decision made changes to the formula agreed the previous year. In respect of the principle of increases in charges through to 2021/22 to re-set the staffing establishment etc over a period to 2021/22 that aspect of the policy agreed at the 2016 AGM remained.
- 1.2** The second part of the policy agreed in 2016 also remained unchanged and still is that if we lose members (and therefore income) the level of charges for the next year onwards would be increased for the remaining members to meet the shortfall. Similarly, if more members were recruited charges would reduce.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN POLICY**

- 2.1 We do not consider the policy referred to in paragraph 1.2 above is sustainable and recommend it should now be rescinded** – this, in part, is in recognition that in 2018/19, not only had the formula changed but we also introduced a voluntary extra levy of £350 for unexpected extra work on the fair funding review (of those paid to date only 4 members have declined to pay the levy).

**3.0 RECOMMENDED LEVEL of CHARGE FOR 2019/20 – 2021/22**

- 3.1 Attached to this report is a Schedule** setting out the recommended charging level for current member authorities assuming the policy referred to in paragraph 1.2 above is rescinded but in lieu all proposed charges be increase by 2% p.a. to reflect inflationary increases in costs.



**3.2** The attached schedule details the impact **of known** local government re-organisations and District Mergers on RSN members from 2019/20 and assumes that we will be successful in recruiting the new authorities created as RSN members.

**3.3** Without the 2% inflationary increase recommended then compared to our 2017 policies there would be a “loss” of £8732 in 2019/20 increasing to a loss of £14155 in 2021/22.

Cecilia Motley  
RSN Chair

Graham Biggs  
Chief Executive

October, 2018

# ATTACHMENT 5(A)

## CONTRIBUTIONS RECOMMENDED TO 2018 AGM BY THE EXECUTIVE

		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Allerdale	SPARSE	2637	2958	3119	3292	3358	3425
Ashford	SPARSE	2010	2170	2242	2320	2366	2414
Aylesbury Vale		0	0	0	0	0	0
Babergh	SPARSE	2479	0	0	0	0	0
Barnsley	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Bassetlaw	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Bath and North East Somerset	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Blaby	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Boston	SPARSE	1775	1875	1914	1956	1995	2035
Bradford		0	0	0	0	0	0
Braintree	SPARSE	2604	2916	3073	3241	3306	3372
Breckland	SPARSE	3039	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Broadland		0	0	0	0	0	0
Bromsgrove	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire		0	0	0	0	0	0
Calderdale	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Canterbury	ASSEMBLY	600	0	0	0	0	0
Cherwell	SPARSE	662	0	0	0	0	0
Cheshire East	SPARSE	4925	5830	6315	6630	6763	6898
Cheshire West and Chester	SPARSE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chichester	SPARSE	2359	2609	2731	2861	2919	2977
Chorley	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Copeland	SPARSE	2333	2576	2694	2820	2877	2934
Cornwall	SPARSE	6200	6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
Cotswold	SPARSE	2478	2757	2896	3045	3106	3168
County Durham	SPARSE	6200	6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
Craven	SPARSE	2064	2239	2319	2404	2452	2502
Cumbria	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Dartford	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daventry	SPARSE	2364	2615	2738	2869	2927	2985
Derbyshire	SPARSE	662	782	817	854	871	888
Derbyshire Dales	SPARSE	2339	2583	2702	2830	2886	2944

Devon	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Dorset	SPARSE	3100	0	0	0	0	0
Dover		0	0	0	0	0	0
East Cambridgeshire	SPARSE	2489	2771	2911	3062	3123	3185
East Devon	SPARSE	2656	2982	3146	3315	3381	3449
East Hampshire		0	0	0	0	0	0
East Hertfordshire	SPARSE	1979	2131	2199	2272	2317	2364
East Lindsey	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
East Northamptonshire	SPARSE	2090	2271	2355	2445	2494	2544
East Riding of Yorkshire	SPARSE	6200	6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
East Sussex	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Eden	SPARSE	2120	2308	2396	2491	2540	2591
Essex	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Fenland	SPARSE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Folkestone & Hythe	SPARSE	1990	0	0	0	0	0
Forest Heath	SPARSE	2205	0	0	0	0	0
Forest of Dean	SPARSE	2422	2687	2818	2958	3017	3078
Gateshead	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Gedling	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Guildford	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Hambleton	SPARSE	2552	2850	2999	3159	3222	3287
Hampshire	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Harborough	SPARSE	2447	2719	2853	2997	3057	3118
Harrogate	SPARSE	2305	2541	2655	2778	2833	2890
Herefordshire, County of	SPARSE	4347	5104	5507	5940	6059	6180
Hinckley and Bosworth	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Horsham	SPARSE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Huntingdonshire	SPARSE	662	782	817	854	871	888
Isle of Wight	SPARSE	3280	3346	3346	3346	3413	3481
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	SPARSE	2652	2976	3140	3315	3381	3449
Lancashire	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Lancaster	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Leicestershire	SPARSE	535	566	587	607	619	631
Lewes	SPARSE	1967	2117	2183	2254	2299	2345
Lichfield	SPARSE	1851	1970	2020	2073	2114	2157
Lincolnshire	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449

Maldon	SPARSE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malvern Hills	SPARSE	1961	2109	2174	2245	2290	2335
Melton	SPARSE	2094	2276	2360	2451	2500	2550
Mendip	SPARSE	2789	3148	3264	3315	3381	3449
Mid Devon	SPARSE	2417	2681	2811	2951	3010	3070
Mid Suffolk	SPARSE	2617	0	0	0	0	0
Mid Sussex	SPARSE	662	782	817	854	871	888
New Forest	SPARSE	2443	2714	2847	2991	3051	3112
Newark and Sherwood	SPARSE	2292	2523	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
North Devon	SPARSE	2232	2449	2553	2664	2717	2772
North Dorset	SPARSE	2309	2546	2660	2783	2839	2896
North Kesteven	SPARSE	2525	2817	2963	3119	3181	3245
North Lincolnshire	SPARSE	3303	3793	4048	4323	4409	4497
North Norfolk	SPARSE	2697	3033	3203	3315	3381	3449
North Somerset	SPARSE	3359	3863	4127	4410	4498	4588
North Warwickshire	SPARSE	2172	2374	2469	2572	2623	2676
North West Leicestershire	SPARSE	2140	2333	2424	2521	2572	2623
North Yorkshire	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Northamptonshire	SPARSE	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northumberland	SPARSE	6200	6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
Nottinghamshire	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Oxfordshire	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Purbeck	SPARSE	1944	0	0	0	0	0
Redcar and Cleveland	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ribble Valley	SPARSE	2126	2316	2405	2501	2551	2602
Richmondshire	SPARSE	2113	2300	2386	2480	2529	2580
Rother	SPARSE	2059	2232	2312	2397	2445	2493
Rotherham	ASSEMBLY	600	663	0	0	0	0
Rugby	SPARSE	1786	1889	1930	1973	2013	2053
Rutland	SPARSE	2382	2637	2762	2896	2954	3013
Ryedale	SPARSE	2110	2296	2383	2476	2525	2576
Scarborough	SPARSE	2055	2227	2305	2390	2438	2486
Sedgemoor	SPARSE	2365	2616	2738	2870	2927	2986
Selby	SPARSE	2461	2736	2872	3018	3079	3140
Sevenoaks	SPARSE	2460	2736	2872	3018	3078	3140

Shropshire	SPARSE	6200	6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
Solihull	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Somerset	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
South Cambridgeshire	SPARSE	2843	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
South Derbyshire	SPARSE	662	782	817	854	871	888
South Hams	SPARSE	2413	2676	2806	2945	3004	3064
South Holland	SPARSE	2169	2369	2464	2566	2617	2670
South Kesteven	SPARSE	2561	2862	3013	3174	3237	3302
South Lakeland	SPARSE	2723	3065	3238	3315	3381	3449
South Norfolk	SPARSE	2769	3123	3264	3315	3381	3449
South Northamptonshire	SPARSE	2302	0	0	0	0	0
South Oxfordshire	SPARSE	2992	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
South Somerset	SPARSE	2862	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
South Staffordshire	SPARSE	663	783	818	855	872	889
St Edmundsbury	SPARSE	2304	0	0	0	0	0
Stafford	SPARSE	2167	2367	2461	2563	2614	2666
Staffordshire	SPARSE	3100	0	0	0	0	0
Stratford-On-Avon	SPARSE	2917	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Stroud	SPARSE	2059	2232	2311	2396	2444	2493
Suffolk	SPARSE	3100	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Suffolk Coastal	SPARSE	2510	0	0	0	0	0
Sunderland	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Surrey	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Swindon	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tandridge	SPARSE	662	782	817	854	871	888
Taunton Deane	SPARSE	2038	0	0	0	0	0
Teignbridge	SPARSE	2529	2822	2967	3124	3186	3250
Telford and Wrekin	ASSEMBLY	600	663	714	765	780	796
Tendring	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tewkesbury	SPARSE	2014	2175	2248	2326	2372	2420
Torridge	SPARSE	2253	2475	2582	2697	2751	2806
Tunbridge Wells	SPARSE	2044	2213	2290	2373	2421	2469
Uttlesford	SPARSE	2437	2706	2839	2982	3041	3102
Vale of White Horse	SPARSE	2307	2543	2658	2780	2836	2893
Wakefield	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warwick	ASSEMBLY	600	0	0	0	0	0

Warwickshire	SPARSE	658	778	813	849	866	884
Waveney	SPARSE	662	0	0	0	0	0
Wealden	SPARSE	2986	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Wellingborough		0	0	0	0	0	0
West Berkshire		0	0	0	0	0	0
West Devon	SPARSE	2132	2323	2413	2509	2559	2610
West Dorset	SPARSE	2603	0	0	0	0	0
West Lindsey	SPARSE	2547	2844	2993	3152	3215	3279
West Oxfordshire	SPARSE	2736	3082	3257	3315	3381	3449
West Somerset	SPARSE	1909	0	0	0	0	0
West Sussex	SPARSE	3100	3213	0	0	0	0
Winchester		0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcestershire	SPARSE	658	778	813	849	866	884
Wychavon	SPARSE	2851	3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
Wycombe	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wyre Forest		0	0	0	0	0	0
York	ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	0	0	0
		<b>302094</b>	<b>292114</b>	<b>296400</b>	<b>306996</b>	<b>313136</b>	<b>319399</b>
ADD REORGANISATIONS							
DORSET NEW UNITARY			6426	6528	6630	6763	6898
SUFFOLK EAST			3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
SUFFOLK WEST			3213	3264	3315	3381	3449
STH SSET & TAUNTON			2688	2877	3042	3102	3165
BABERGH & MID SUFFOLK			3213	3264	5355	5462	5571
TOTAL		<b>302094</b>	<b>310867</b>	<b>315597</b>	<b>328653</b>	<b>335226</b>	<b>341930</b>

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		<b>ATTACHMENT 6</b>							
2									
3		<b>RSN (INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE) 2018/19 AND</b>							
4		<b>ACTUAL TO END SEPTEMBER 2018</b>							
5		<b>WITH ESTIMATE 2019/20</b>					<b>ACTUAL TO</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>
6							<b>END SEPT 18</b>	<b>18/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
7		<b>INCOME</b>					<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
8									
9		<b>DEBTORS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR (NET OF VAT)</b>							
10		SPARSE/Rural Assembly held by NKDC at year end					3000	5345	
11		SPARSE Rural Assembly Outstanding NK)						0	
12		RHA - Website Contribs.					300	300	
13		RSP Subscriptions						495	
14		Rural Crime Network							
15		Rural Health Conference							
16		Coastal Communities Alliance (Gross)							
17		CCN re Bexit Roundtable					381	381	
18		SPARSE Rural/Rural Assembly					239223	302094	310867
19		Ditto Held by NKDC at Month End							
20		RSN Extra £350Levy					30450	31000	
21		Extra Levy held by NKDC at month end							
22		RSP					10382	14500	17500
23		Commercial Partner First Group Buses					10000	10000	10000
24		Income from Rural Housing Group					6917	7640	7640
25		Income from Fire & Rescue Group					3170	4755	4755
26		FIRE GROUP LEVY RE SPARSITY EVIDENCE					6000	6000	
27		OTHER INCOME							
28		Conferences/Seminars							
29		Rural Conference Income					13625		
30		Rural Conference Surplus						6500	6000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
31		Assumed additional Income Generated							
32		Recharges ro Rural Crime Network (5 months 17/18)							



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
33							<b>ACTUAL TO</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>
34							<b>END SEPT 18</b>	<b>18/19</b>	<b>19/20</b>
35							£	£	£
36		Contras re RCN@							
37		Recharges to Rural England Back Office Support £1200)						1400	1428
38		RE recharge re Amazon Contract							
39		RE recharge re Elec NW Commission						1100	1100
40		RE recharge re Southern Water Commission						1000	1000
41		Coastal Communities Alliance Gross)					1089	4358	4358
42		RHCA - Fee Income						1529	4567
43		RNCA Expenditure Reimbursement					5000	8883	18000
44		Contributions to RHA Website Development/Maintenance							
45		RE Website Maintenance						2241	2286
46		Miscellaneous (BT)					979	979	
47		Contras					567		
48		VAT							
49		VAT Refund					1290		
50		VAT Received					11569		
51		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>					<b>343942</b>	<b>410500</b>	<b>389501</b>
52									

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
53							<b>ACTUAL TO</b>	<b>EST</b>	<b>EST</b>
54							<b>END SEPT 18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
55		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
56		VAT Paid on Goods & Services					9196		
57		VAT Paid to HMRC							
58		General Provision for Inflation							2200
59		<b>NET WAGES &amp; CONTRACTS FOR SERVICES</b>							
60		Corporate Management				DI,GB,AD, J	67966	133601	128601
61		Finance/Performance and Data Analysis				, DW, 100%,	11952	30045	30045
62		Communications (incl Seminars)				RoseR,RCM	6215	39261	37261
63		Administrative and Technical Support				RI, WI,WC,B	23653	49213	49213
64		Research and Monitoring				BW, 100%	3525	10575	10575
65		Service Group Networking				KB40%			
66		Economic Development Service				AD5 100%	2550	5100	5100
67		Coastal Communities Contract					1825	3650	3650
68		Rural Communities Housing Group				AD2 100%	3315	6630	6630
69		Rural Transport Group				AD6 100%			
70		Employee Deductions					8150		
71		Less March 19 Employee Deductions						-2370	
72		Provision for Inflation on Contracts (2% p.a.)							3480
73		PAYE - Employers NIC (11 mths)					5600	8269	8520
74		PAYE ADMIN (Accountants)					126	252	252
75		NEST PENSIONS (Employee & Employer in Actual to date)					2190	3220	3220
76		<b>OTHER EXPENDITURE</b>							
77		Budget for Brexit Project							
78		Rural Fair Shares Campaign etc.					3500	8500	8500
79		Pixell Financial Service (core Annual Service)					3500	8500	8500
80		Fair Shares and Other Campaign Media Relations							
81		SPEND FROM VOL CONTRIBS (BUSINESS RATES)							
82		SPEND FROM 2018/19 £350 VOL CONTRIB						17000	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
83		<b>Conferences/Seminars</b>							
84		Rural Conference 2018					3926		
85		Rural Conference Drinks Reception					962	962	1000
86		Seminar Costs							
87		Regional Meetings/Seminars					635	1500	2000
88							<b>ACTUAL TO</b>	<b>EST</b>	<b>EST</b>
89							<b>END SEPT 18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
90							£	£	£
91		<b>Service Level Agreements</b>							
92		RCN -CONTRAS @							
93		Rural Housing Group (RHG)					573	1000	1300
94		RHG Website Maint					612	1224	1224
95		RE Website Maint					1020	2040	2040
96		Rural England CIC to re-charge)					1301		
97		Rural Inland CIC transfer of part of First Group Support					4000	7000	7000
98		APPG/Rural Issues Group Costs					354	1200	1200
99		Parlia Rural Vulnerability Group						500	500
100		Rural England/Vulnerability Service Contrib					3000		
101		RHCA Direct					3279		
102		<b>Business Expenses</b>							
103		RSN Online etc.							
104		Database Update (media contracts)							
105		Website Upgrade					250	450	
106		Ongoing Website Updates							
107		Travel and Subsistence					12240	22500	23000
108		Print, Stat,e mail, phone & Broadband@					1690	3500	4000
109		Meeting Room Hire					409	1000	1000
110		Website and Data Base software etc					1695	3000	3000
111		Rent of Office & Associated Costs					2952	5500	8000
112		Accountancy Fees					354	800	800

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
113		NKDC Services						2345	2345
114		Companies House Fees					13	13	13
115		Bank Charges					47	90	90
116		IT Equipment & Support & Other Capital					146	750	750
117		Insurance					55	650	650
118		Corporation Tax							300
119		Membership of Rural Coalition						250	250
120		Refunds of Overpayments/ Contrasts@							
121									
122							<b>ACTUAL TO</b>	<b>EST</b>	<b>EST</b>
123							<b>END SEPT 18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
124							<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
125		<b>ARREARS - PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR</b>							
126		Regional Meetings/Seminars					450	450	
127		Rural Housing Alliance							
128		NKDC						0	
129		Contract for Service (ADMIN)					1660	1660	
130		Contracts for Service (CORP MAN)							
131		Communications					500	500	
132		Extra Media by RCM					963	963	
133		Rose Regeneration					2000	2000	
134		Seminar Costs							
135		PIXELL					21958	21958	14000
136		Research Costs					11707	12350	3250
137		RSN Online arrears					4523	4523	
138		RHA website Maint					300	300	
139		Travel and Subsistence arrears					823	823	700
140		Printing, Phone and Stationery (arrears )					9	9	
141		Office Costs						4000	
142		Data base etc (arrears )					433	433	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
143		Rural England							
144		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>					<b>238102</b>	<b>427689</b>	<b>384159</b>
145									
146									
147		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>						<b>410500</b>	<b>389501</b>
148		LESS TOTAL EXP						-427689	-384159
149		<b>DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IN YEAR INC &amp; EXP</b>						<b>-17189</b>	<b>5342</b>
150		<b>ADD GEN BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD</b>						<b>25875</b>	<b>8686</b>
151		<b>ADD RESERVE BALANCE B/FWD</b>							
152		<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD</b>						<b>8686</b>	<b>14028</b>
153									
154									
155									

<b>Schedule of Meetings – 2019 SPARSE RURAL AND RURAL SERVICES NETWORK EXECUTIVE MEETINGS</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	11.30 am	TBA
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	11.30 am	TBA
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019  11.15 am Executive  2.30 pm RSP Ltd Board of Directors	11.15 am	TBA

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David Inman, Director Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0BZ  
 Tel: 01822 813693  
[www.rsnonline.org.uk](http://www.rsnonline.org.uk) email: [admin@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:admin@sparse.gov.uk) twitter: @rsnonline

<b>Schedule of Meetings – 2019</b> <b>SPARSE RURAL Sub SIG</b> <b>RURAL ASSEMBLY Sub SIG</b> <b>RURAL SERVICES PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS</b> <b>AND</b> <b>RURAL SOCIAL CARE &amp; HEALTH GROUP</b> <b>RURAL ECONOMY GROUP</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2019  <b>Normal Meeting:</b>  Rural Economy Group Sparse Rural Sub SIG	11 am – 12.45 pm 1 pm – 3.30 pm	TBA
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2019  <b>Normal Meeting:</b> Rural Social Care & Health Group Rural Assembly Sub SIG	11 am – 12 pm 12.00 pm – 3 pm	TBA
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2019  <b>Normal Meeting</b> Rural Economy Group SPARSE Rural	11.00 – 12.30 pm 1 pm – 3.30 pm	TBA
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2019  <b>Annual General Meeting:</b> Rural Social Care & Health Group  RSN AGM	11.00 am – 12.30 pm  1.00 pm – 3.30 pm	TBA

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