

Rural Strategies

Results from Survey of Rural Authorities

A survey was sent to all member Local Authorities of the Rural Services Network in April 2016 focusing on Rural Strategies. It aimed to understand whether authorities had targeted Rural Strategies, the groups involved in such work and areas covered by potential strategies.

There were 56 respondents to the survey which is a 36% response rate.

Responses to the survey were as follows:

Question 1 – Does your authority have a specific Rural Strategy?

Responses	Responses	Percentages
Yes and it has been adopted	12	21%
Yes, though it is currently in draft	1	2%
No, but one is being considered	7	13%
No, and there are no plans for one	36	64%

Question 2 – If you have a strategy, when was it adopted (signed off)?

Responses	Percentages
Within the last year (2015/16)	22%
During 2014/15 or 2013/14	44%
During 2012/13, 2011/12 or 2010/11	33%
Earlier than any of the above year	-

Question 3 – Does it have an agreement from any of the following organisations? Please tick all that apply.

Responses	Percentages
County/Unitary Council	17%
District/Borough Councils	33%
Parish/Town Councils sector	67%
Local Enterprise Partnership	33 %
Rural Community Council (ACRE member)	33%
Public Health	17%
NHS eg Clinical Commissioning Group	17%
Police Authority	33%
Farming and Land Management Sector	17%
LEADER Local Action Group(s)	33%

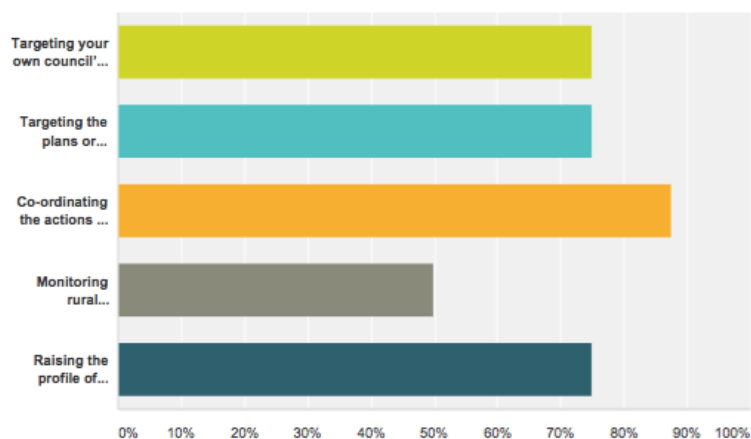
Other Comments:

- It was agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership which includes some of the players listed above.
- We have a broad-based Rural Partnership which includes the above and others
- None, it is only a framework for further development, full consultation has not been undertaken

Question 4 – What is your Rural Strategy used for? Please tick all that apply

**Q4 What is your rural strategy used for?
Please tick all that apply**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 48



Answer Choices	Responses
Targeting your own council's directorate plans or programmes	75.00% 6
Targeting the plans or programmes of other organisations	75.00% 6
Co-ordinating the actions of organisations	87.50% 7
Monitoring rural conditions and rural outcomes	50.00% 4
Raising the profile of rural issues externally	75.00% 6
Total Respondents: 8	

Comments:

- It is not a 'rural strategy' as such, but a 'deprivation strategy' that includes rural element including actions
- Tackling rural crime
- Evidence base to lever funding

Question 5 - Which, if any, of the following arrangements are in place to monitor progress with your rural strategy? Please tick all that apply.

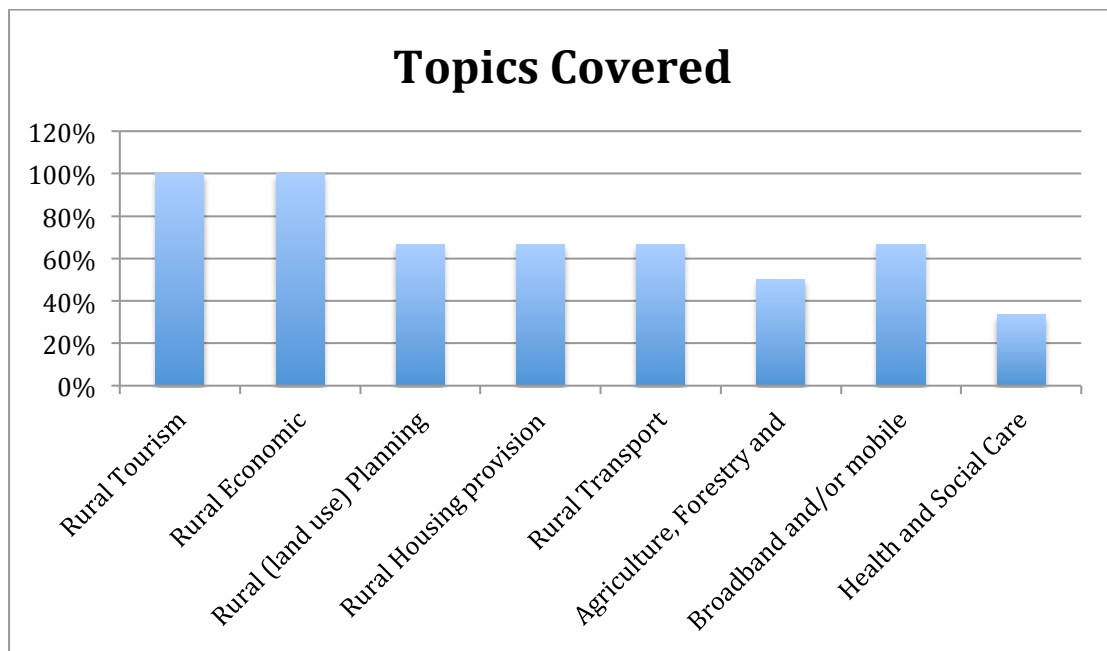
	Percentages
Regular partnership monitoring meetings	88%
Reviews of delivery plan or similar	75%

Strategy updates to address identified issues	50%
Scrutiny Committees	37%

Comments:

- An annual rural conference at which a performance report will be presented against the strategy
- A mid term review is planned for 2017

Question 6 – What are the main policy topics covered by the strategy?
Please tick all that apply



Comments:

- Access to services and facilities; Community Safety & Empowerment; Countryside Protection and Enhancement
- Access to services (especially for the rural disadvantaged)
- Rural crime
- Green infrastructure, rural communities, key sectors in the rural area

Question 7 - Any other comments you would like to make about a Rural Strategy?

- We represent two LA's that are both Rural 80 authorities, so rural issues are important to us. We recognise that a specific approach needs to be taken to deliver housing and economic growth in rural areas, but that this work needs to be tied in to district wide Housing and Economic Strategies. There is recognition of the rural character and challenges of delivery of homes and jobs within our draft joint Local Plan and our draft Joint Strategic Plan.
- We are looking at a rural framework that will underpin the County

Economic Strategy Statement and build in a local response to Lord Cameron review and the Rural Productivity Plan.

- The strategy has been designed to be a working document and has been summarised on 2 sides of A4 to include key deliverables for the coming year, and will be reviewed at an annual rural conference
- Village Agents are key to delivery. Often difficult to get key partners to focus on rural issues due to the presence of significant urban deprivation / lack of (diminishing) resources (both people and funds)
- In XXX we have had a Rural Strategy since 1998/99. A new Strategy for 2016-20 is currently in preparation. It has been invaluable in keeping rural issues high on the agenda and raised the profile of the rural area at national and regional levels. It would help if the Government would put more weight behind the importance of the concept.
- We are covered by the Rural Strategy in place at the County Council.
- We are Partners in our Countywide Rural Strategy, which we consider meets our needs.
- All of the council is Sparse and rural. We think rural in everything we do
- It depends what you mean by Strategy. In our authority we have 3 different strategies for 3 different areas
- We don't have a rural strategy because rural is in all that we do.
- As part of the Councils' drive to reduce the number of individual policy and strategy documents, we instead take the approach of: - including rurality as an issue in our policy development / appraisal tool (i.e. rural proofing is included in consideration of new ideas); - put in place individual rural initiatives (e.g. rural grant programmes; a rural local plan document (part of our Vision 2031 local plan); rural rate relief; and parish conferences and parish forums.
- The preparation of a Rural Strategy is being considered within the context of devolution to the North East Combined Authority
- Whilst there is no specific rural strategy the rural proofing concept is imbedded in all that we do.
- We are currently developing a Rural Policy Statement, I'd be happy to discuss where we are up to and our approach.
- We service the Rural Enterprise Group of the LEP, and have written a rural strategy for this. Rural issues feature prominently within the Council's Enabling Economic Growth Strategy. The area is covered by two LEADER LAGs.
- The Rural Development Strategy was commissioned and paid for by the County Council, but is 'owned' and driven by the partnership - therefore didn't have to be adopted by Council. We took a bottom up approach to its development - by consulting rural stakeholders and business who shaped it. We didn't draft it and then consult on it as usually happens in a Council. The data document has been successfully used to lever funding e.g. LEADER, and influence/inform the ESIF strategy. I have spoken at a conference about how successful it has been.
- The Council does not have a specific rural strategy however the Council's approved priorities are: To provide high quality services at

the lowest possible cost to Council Taxpayers; To protect the local environment whilst supporting economic growth; To champion issues which are important to local people; The second and third priorities are clearly significantly driven by the rural nature of the district. While the Council does not have a rural strategy, many of the key tasks are around protecting service delivery (directly or through lobbying other service providers) in rural areas and balancing the requirement to protect the area (significant parts of which are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) with the requirement to provide economic growth, housing and infrastructure for the people of the area. This will be delivered through tangible policies (such as the Local Plan) and actions (e.g. planning, working with communities and lobbying on their behalf). Sorry for the length of this response but hope it helps!

- One provided at county level
- The Council does not have a specific rural strategy but will be including the rural economy in its Economic Development Strategy due to be finalised later this year. The comments in this response relate to a specific area Strategy which also includes rural aspects
- Our rural strategy is incorporated in our wider corporate and economic strategies
- As stated, the Strategy that is adopted is titled Rural Transport & Economic Strategy and is a framework for further development. It has an action plan, but is a live document so can be amended and added to. The strategy relies on delivery with and by partners.
- We deal with rural issues via our local plans and housing and economic strategies - and via our Council Plan
- We do not see the need for a specific rural strategy as rurality is embedded within our corporate strategy/ Council Plan.
- Currently being revised
- We did have an adopted Rural Strategy. It expired in 2014 and we don't have the resources to write and support a new one.
- We are a rural council - all our strategies are explicitly rural. We mainstream rural into everything we do.