

RURAL PROOFING OF OPTIONS ON POLICIES ON CULTURE, SPORT & TOURISM

1.1 Introduction

This paper presents the findings from the rural proofing the draft options on policies on Culture Sport and Tourism and is a key component for influencing the authors of the draft preferred RSS Spatial Option. In pro-actively assessing the development of the Policy Options for the RSS Phase Three Revision the following has been considered:

- Whether the various options are likely to have a potential different impact for rural areas/people or uncertainty from that elsewhere, because of the particular characteristics of rural areas; and
- Where necessary, exploring what adjustments or compensations might be made to reflect rural needs and circumstances and produce the desired outcomes in rural areas or avoid/mitigate any undesirable impacts. Where appropriate rural proofing may also highlight opportunities to maximise positive impacts in rural areas

The options and explanatory text have been appraised against the Commission for Rural Communities Guidance [published May 2009] and is designed to be used alongside other appraisal systems including the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Please note that the checklist is designed to complement and not substitute consultation with rural communities, businesses and organisations. It is meant to be applied from the early stages of policy making although it may also be used during implementation and evaluation.

1.2 Culture, Sport and Tourism

The Phase Three Revision is intended to strengthen WMRSS policy to meet the cultural needs of the Region and compliment urban and rural renaissance. It is therefore seeking to improve the provision of, access to, quality cultural and sports assets and provide opportunities to increase the rate of participation/attendance in cultural activities.

The Options being considered are:

1. Removing the Portfolio of strategic cultural assets from PA10A
2. Updating the Portfolio of strategic cultural assets in PA10A to reflect the most up to date information – regional, national and international importance
3. Retain existing Policy PA10 B&C as currently drafted with the focus remaining on the economy
4. Amend policy PA10 B&C updating criteria but still the focus would be on the economy
5. Develop a new criteria-based policy with a broadened focus to complement the economic drivers and recognise the social benefits with identification of specific facilities in broad locations

1.3 Analysis

In reviewing how rural issues relate to the policy options on Culture, Tourism and Sport, i.e. setting out the questions to be explored by the Rural Proofing process, the four options have been considered. The table overleaf highlights which issues are likely to be relevant.

Table: Rural Proofing

RP Topic	Will the option/proposal.....	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	Comments
Availability and Provision							
RP1: Service provision and availability	Affect the availability of public and private services?	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Rural communities are particularly vulnerable to service cuts as they are already reliant on a limited number and have reduced access to alternatives in terms of culture, tourism and sport</p> <p>Consider in particular the difficulties of transport/accessibility for rural communities. By encouragement of projects in suitable areas well served by public transport means that most rural areas will be denied equitable access.</p> <p>Improve transport/accessibility to compensate and encourage alternative access/transport solutions and encourage alternative funding streams</p>
RP2: Service Delivery	Be delivered through existing service outlets and how will you ensure rural residents can access culture, tourism and sport in areas where assets and facilities are few and far between?	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Consider the use of mobile and outreach opportunities or the use of ICT to link up individuals/communities with the opportunities available.</p> <p>Multi-use centres – sharing premises with other providers in order to maintain or create sufficient critical mass thus ensuring the viability of provision.</p> <p>Deliver effective public and community transport solutions</p>

<p>RP3: Private sector involvement</p>	<p>Be delivered by the private sector or through a public-private partnership? Will the smaller and scattered population in rural areas provide a sufficient market to attract the private sector? Will there be similar opportunities for choice and competition? Does the private sector in rural areas have the capacity to deliver?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>All options encourage local authorities to identify areas where “sustainable tourism”, culture or sporting opportunities can be promoted. Rural areas have some of the most superb natural assets and local distinctiveness on offer – much in private sector ownership.</p> <p>However, to unlock this potential it may be necessary to encourage commercial providers with incentives and offset higher rural costs where necessary.</p>
<p>Delivery Costs</p>							
<p>RP4: Cost of delivery</p>	<p>Be more expensive to deliver in rural areas where people are more widely dispersed or economies of scale harder to achieve?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>All options encourage local authority involvement but many will be hard pushed in terms of implementation particularly to remote rural communities.</p> <p>Further encouragement to allow for higher unit delivery costs in funding formulae (e.g. a ‘sparsity’ factor) or when specifying cost efficiency criteria; and encouragement towards joint provision to reduce costs is advocated.</p>
<p>RP5: Local delivery</p>	<p>Rely on local institutions for delivery? Will the policy be as effective in rural areas, where private, public and voluntary sector organisations tend to be smaller and have less capacity to build partnerships?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Not mentioned. Clearly important to see policies embedded in county and district LDDs and provide specific support for capacity building where required.</p>

Accessibility & Infrastructure							
RP6: Travel Needs	Affect travel needs or the ease and cost of travel? Will the impact be different in sparsely populated or remote rural areas, where typically journey times are longer, public transport is poor, and travel options are limited or expensive, especially for low income groups?	√	√	√	√	√	<p>The policy options do not set out sufficiently specific proposals to address these needs.</p> <p>Rural solutions might include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reduce the need to travel by using mobile services, local delivery or telephone/internet; 2. ease travel by co-ordinating or improving transport links (e.g. additional services, demand responsive transport, community transport/community car schemes, taxi vouchers); 3. alleviate the costs of travel by subsidising services or individuals(remembering that there may be no public transport service or operating times between many locations).
RP7: Infrastructure	Rely on infrastructure (e.g. broadband ICT, main roads, utilities) for delivery? How will the policy work in rural areas, where the existing infrastructure is typically weaker (e.g. roads, electricity grid), some infrastructure doesn't exist and upgrading of infrastructure may be difficult or expensive?	√	√	√	√	√	<p>All options rely on sufficient infrastructure being available but in rural areas this typically often much weaker or lacking altogether. Rural transport provision is a major concern and many rural areas remain poorly served by public transport</p> <p>It may be necessary to consider using regulation or licences to encourage the development of improved infrastructure; encouraging or co-ordinating demand to make supply viable; using the public sector's collective demand to stimulate supply; or providing alternative means of accessing the cultural, sporting or tourism offer.</p>

<p>RP8: Administrative Areas</p>	<p>Delivery of the policy be challenging at the edges of administrative areas? Many rural people find it easier to cross an administrative boundary to access sport, culture or tourism facilities.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Encourage “postcode” blindness and reciprocal sharing of service provision across administrative borders where this makes sense.</p> <p>Note: additional needs of rural communities/tourists accessing assets and facilities either side of the Welsh Border: Border Proofing Welsh and English policies and delivery to ensure minimal impact.</p>
<p>RP9: New buildings or development sites</p>	<p>Depend on new buildings or development sites? Where will these be located in rural areas, given that there are few brownfield sites and fewer locations where housing or other development will be acceptable?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Clearly important to see policies embedded in county and district LDDs and sites/areas defined ensuring any development will contribute to local character and distinctiveness. Ensure high quality sustainable development that will contribute to local character and distinctiveness</p>
<p>Communications</p>							
<p>RP10: Communication</p>	<p>Rely on communicating information to individuals and communities? How will they access information in rural areas, where there are fewer (formal) places to obtain advice and information?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>A clear communications policy for rural communities is advocated.</p> <p>It may be possible to use the networks that do already exist e.g. post offices, village halls.</p> <p>Equally thought should be given to linking up with other information providers; use local radio and newspapers; the provision of mobile advisers; use internet and information technology (remembering that some groups, such as older people, use ICT less).</p>

Economies							
<p>RP11: Impact on rural businesses</p>	<p>Impact on rural businesses, including the self-employed? Will it have a different effect on smaller businesses (which employ a greater proportion of the workforce in rural areas) or those sectors which are typically more significant in rural areas - farming and construction?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>A positive effect – but where possible the policies should avoid imposing additional regulatory or other burdens that will disproportionately affect small firms and micro-businesses</p>
<p>RP12: Impact on land-based industries</p>	<p>Have a particular impact on land-based industries and therefore on rural economies and environments? How will the policy affect the agricultural sector and the mining, extraction and water industries, which have a particular importance in many rural areas? Will there be a knock-on effect on the environment (given that 70% of the land is farmed)? Conversely, if the policy affects the environment, what are the implications for businesses based on natural resources such as tourism, leisure, renewable energy and food production?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>A positive effect on the rural economy if the cultural, sporting or tourism offer is located in rural areas.</p> <p>Local authorities have been asked to identify areas that can be promoted without damaging local environment or character and must assess the cumulative impact on the environmental assets – limiting development in the light of expected impacts.</p> <p>Where possible the policy advocating the identity of ‘win-win’ solutions which deliver economic and environmental benefits (e.g. promoting local supply chains, especially between food producers and consumers); consider incentives for environmentally-friendly practices; and allowing for and encourage a diverse range of rural enterprises.</p>

<p>RP13: Impact upon those on low income</p>	<p>Affect those on low wages or in part-time or seasonal employment? For those who work in rural areas, wages tend to be lower on average and a higher proportion of the workforce are engaged in part-time or seasonal employment.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>For those locations where the cultural, sporting or tourism offer is to be created or enhanced this will have a positive impact with the likelihood of greater employment opportunities.</p> <p>Consider measures to improve the choice of work through increasing skills and transport links.</p>
<p>Disadvantage</p>							
<p>RP14: Disadvantaged Groups</p>	<p>To be targeted at disadvantaged people or places? How will it target disadvantage in rural areas, which is not usually concentrated in neighbourhoods? Do the indicators to be used for identifying need measure deprivation issues that are particular rural features (e.g. access to services, access to job opportunities, low earnings and housing affordability)?</p>	√	√	√	√	√	<p>Consider targeting population groups rather than deprived areas – aimed at increasing participation and improving the quality of life</p> <p>Specific distribution/locational criteria would maximise investment and regeneration opportunities, addressing social drivers</p>