

AGENDA ITEM 8

RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

07 JUNE 2017

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TITLE OF COMMITTEE

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give Members an opportunity to consider the renaming of the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 **This Committee recommend to the Governance Committee that the Constitution be amended to set the name of this Committee as Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee**
- 2.2 **Further that this Committee recommends to the Governance Committee that the Terms of Reference of the policy committees be amended as follows:-**
Policy, Finance and Administration Committee have included new delegations as follows:-
- 1. To deal with all responsibilities within the remit of this Committee in accordance with the best interests of all local communities, including rural.**
 - 2. Receive an annual report of the Chief Executive upon the rural matters affecting and the actions taken by the Council during the previous financial year.**
 - 3. The Terms of Reference of the Community and Social Affairs Committee and those of this Committee as retitled as added**
 - 4. To deal with all responsibilities within the remit of this Committee in accordance with the best interests of all local communities, including rural.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Leader in his acceptance speech at the Annual General Meeting indicated that in order to develop the inclusivity of the Council the focus on rural issues should not be placed within only one Committee of the Council, that is this Committee but should be the specific responsibility of all of the Councils Committees. As Members are aware Melton is one of the most sparsely populated Boroughs within the local government family. Melton is a member of the SPARSE 50 group of Councils which through the Rural Services Network receives support and access to lobbying to take forward rural issues for relevant districts and boroughs.
- 3.2 To better reflect the rurality of the Council and that rural services are delivered as business as usual it is suggested that the addition of "Rural" to the title of this committee is no longer relevant to the way the Council is operating and will continue to operate in the future. It has to be acknowledged that at this time the other policy committees do deal with rural service issues and take account of such matters for instance the Community and Social Affairs Committee deals with the provision of rural social housing either through the Council or Partner Housing

Associations, also the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee deals with all land and strategic property issues across the Borough which includes relevant council rural property. It can be seen therefore that the Council on a “services” basis has adopted a business as usual approach to its delivery of its services in rural areas and this amendment to the title of this Committee as well as giving clarity to the delegated authority and Terms of Reference of the policy committees will develop this inclusivity further.

- 3.3 This Committee in particular has several rural services areas which will continue to need particular attention moving forward. The LEADER programme, the Local Development Order and Food Enterprise Zone approach together with the developing approach for market towns to be a focus for their rural hinterland will fall within the economic purview of this committee. This further illustrates the need for the Councils “form” to follow its “function” in relation to the Terms of Reference and their operation across the policy committees.
- 3.4 As the Committees move toward the provision of rural services in a way that is designed to better deliver a service to all communities and businesses within the Borough Members may wish to consider for the foreseeable future requiring the Chief Executive to prepare an Annual Report upon the rural activities of the Council. This can act as a monitoring approach to ensure that the proposed greater inclusivity of the council’s activity in relation to rural areas is being properly handled at a service level following direction of the policy committees but also can work in tandem with the activity of the Town Area Committee.
- 3.5 This approach of an “Annual Rural” report to Councils is becoming more common and has recently been praised by the Leicestershire Rural Partnership as an example of good practise in the way Councils can “rural proof” their service delivery which is in line with this Council’s developing business as usual approach to its rural services

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The policy implications of this report are contained in the section above.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

- 6.1 There no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 The Community Safety activities of the Council are dealt with by the Communities and Social Affairs Committee and this key stated approach supports that Committee’s activity.

8.0 EQUALITIES

- 8.1 It is not considered that there are any equalities issues arising from this report as each rural service area will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment as appropriate including those relevant project areas.

9.0 RISKS

9.1

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant				
	D	Low				
	E	Very Low		1		
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4
			IMPACT			

Risk No	Risk Description
1	Rural issues are not dealt with appropriately
2	
3	
4	

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no climate change issues arising from this report.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Full Council were advised of the Leaders considerations and thoughts at the recent Annual General Meeting.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All, but with particular focus on those rural wards.

Contact Officer: Lynn Aisbett, Chief Executive.

Date: 30 May 2017

Appendices : None

Background Papers: Recent presentation and notes of discussion at the Leicestershire Rural Partnership at its meeting on 18 May 2017.

Reference : X : Committees\REEA\2017-18\ 070617\LA