

Devon Local Area Agreement

Sustainable Villages

Outline of Brief for Consultancy Work

Background

PPS1 – ‘Delivering Sustainable Developments’ – Key aims of planning

- § Effective protection of the environment
- § Prudent use of natural resources
- § Social progress which meets the needs of everyone
- § Maintenance of stable levels of economic growth and employment

Links to Local Government White Paper and changing delivery landscape; improved working; integrated delivery; devolved decision making.

RSS/Govt policy – urban focus...rural concerns

What role does development play in sustainability?

How can we make places more sustainable?

What criteria should inform our choice of places for further development?

Seminar output [appendix]

Objectives

To design a practical “toolkit” [or 2 inter-related but separate toolkits] for use at Local Authority and Community level which helps decision makers assess what is a sustainable rural community. Toolkit should address the concerns of rural policy makers that social sustainability and cohesion is not considered adequately at present.

Develop a process that is practical – enables a consistent approach. Emphasis to be on a methodology that is easily applicable, can be replicated and monitored, assisting the development of LDF policy.

At the Local Authority level:

A toolkit that signposts the information and data available to identify the role and function of rural settlements on a consistent basis across Devon. Should enable LAs to:

- § move beyond a simple hierarchy of settlements based on service provision.
- § Identify places that are more, or less sustainable
- § Suggest networks or clusters of places that operate together in a sustainable way
- § Identify places where particular policy approaches may be appropriate to improve sustainability
- § Apply the toolkit “in house” without additional resources
- § Satisfy the evidence base requirements of RSS Development Policies B and C and reflect the strategic emphasis of the spatial strategy
- § Enable Local Authorities to integrate the output of the community toolkit process into LDF preparation

At the community level:

A toolkit that identifies:

- § The themes a community should consider when planning for the future [including how it relates to other places]
- § Signposts to resources that will help local appraisal of sustainability performance – a self assessment

- § Sources of practical help and information about how to make a village more sustainable [related to the themes]
- § Ways for the community to consider what the role of future development might be in improving sustainability
- § Links to the Local Authority toolkit and an understanding of how the output will be taken forward in the LDF process

Achieving Consensus

Consultation and active involvement of stakeholders in the toolkit design is expected.

Methodology

Looking for contractors to add value to the brief with innovative suggestions

Likely the work will cover:

- § Assessment of current approaches to settlement selection in LDDs
- § Brief overview/scoping of work already undertaken [eg CRC; CCD toolkits; East Northants study; rural policy approaches] – what can be learned from them? Can any approaches be enhanced to deliver the product required?
- § Scoping of relevant data and signposting to sources
- § Scoping of relevant themes and issues from rural strategies; MCTI and village plans; community strategies etc
- § Consultation and workshop participation in toolkit design
- § Development of toolkit[s] and testing - in partnership with two Local Authorities of contrasting settlement pattern and strategic emphasis [N Devon; E Devon] where the LDF process is at an early stage. This emphasis will be on a toolkit that has a generic applicability rather than tailored to the needs of a partner District.

Outputs

- § Toolkit[s] – clearly demonstrate how the Local Authority and community approaches are complementary
- § Report setting out the methodology, findings and consultation responses
- § Recommendations regarding
 - future reviews of the toolkit
 - ongoing monitoring of village performance
 - how to embed the process in future LDDs
 - § timing and “frontloading” of LDDs
 - § incorporating the toolkit into the policy framework
 - how to roll out the toolkit to the community

Reporting Arrangements

Contractual Arrangements

Timescale

Indicative Budget?