

Terms of Reference for the Rural Proofing in Health and Care Task and Finish Group

Context

Members of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee frequently highlight concerns about rurality and access to health and care services through their work. This task and finish group has been proposed in order to draw together the key points and observations that have arisen through the work of the committee during 2022/23, and to take the opportunity to learn from other areas of the country.

Objectives

- To understand what rural proofing means for Shropshire
- To set out/define what 'rural' and 'rurality' means for the Shropshire Council area, including inequalities and access to services
- To identify a view/position on rural proofing affecting Shropshire communities and services (based on work during the year), and through additional research
- To use the evidence collected to propose a consistent set of criteria to be recommended for use to evaluate rural proofing in strategies, plans, policies and service design and provision in health and care in Shropshire

Impact expected/Added value

- Defining a set of criteria for rural proofing in Shropshire – a checklist to evaluate reports/ proposals/ service developments

Information required

- Evidence of rural proofing being considered and contributing to topics that have been considered by the committee in the past year
- Evidence of the importance of rural matters being holistically and comprehensively considered in the development and implementation of strategies, plans, policies and service design and provision measures for Health and Care
- Examples of good practice of rural proofing contributing to Health and Care Service developments from other areas of the country

Methods to be used

- Desktop review of guidance and best practice e.g. Rural Service network
- Desktop review of the impact assessments carried out by NHS and Care organisations in Shropshire (including those based outside of the area commission/provide services in Shropshire)
- Engagement with local organisations with knowledge and an interest in Rural Proofing e.g. Community Resource, Town and Parish Councils etc

- Benchmarking with other similar county unitary and county councils to identify examples of best practice from their experience, and how their HOSC functions have approached rural proofing

Timescales

Suggested approach:

- 3 months Task and Finish Group reporting back to the committee in June/July 2023

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