

Rural Needs 1st Annual Monitoring Report

June 2017 - March 2018

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Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

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**INVESTORS
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Foreword

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 9th May 2016 and came into effect on the 1st June 2017 for Northern Ireland departments and district councils. The Act has been implemented on a phased basis with Phase 1 covering government departments and local councils commencing on 1 June 2017 and Phase 2 covering the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act commencing on 1 June 2018. This report is the first Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report since the Acts implementation and refers to Phase 1 only, i.e. government departments and local councils, covering the period 1 June 2017 to 31 March 2018.

The Act introduced a new duty on Northern Ireland departments, district councils and the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that public authorities have due regard to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas when carrying out certain activities and to provide a mechanism for ensuring greater transparency in relation to how public authorities consider rural needs when undertaking these activities.

The Act also seeks to ensure that public authorities give fair consideration to the issues that may impact on rural dwellers. It should be the aim of public authorities to ensure equitable treatment for rural dwellers and the Act requires each public authority listed in the Schedule to ensure that due regard is given to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services.

As the Act has been introduced on a phased basis the Department undertook a review of Phase 1, at the end of 2017. Following completion of the review the Department produced revised guidance in April 2018. This aimed to provide more clarity on the statutory duties imposed on public authorities under the Act and to help public authorities ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties.

This report which covers the period from 1st June 2017 to 31st March 2018 provides details of the Rural Needs Impact Assessments undertaken by government departments and local councils during that period.

Overview

Around 670,000 people in Northern Ireland live in a rural area representing approximately 37% of the population (2011 census). Most strategies and policies developed and implemented across government have a rural dimension. It is recognised that they can have a different impact in rural areas than urban areas due to issues relating to, for example, geographical isolation and lower population densities which can impact on service provision and accessing services. It is recognised that as a result of rural circumstances people in rural areas may have different needs and therefore a policy or public service that works well in urban areas may not be as effective in rural areas.

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (the Act) was introduced to ensure that consideration of the needs of people in rural areas becomes more firmly embedded within public authorities. The Act seeks to deliver fairer and more equitable treatment for people in rural areas by requiring public authorities to have due regard to rural needs. The Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report is an important part of the monitoring process under the Act as it provides a formal record of all the Rural Need Impact Assessments undertaken by the public authorities.

These assessments provide evidence of how public authorities have complied with their duty to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services. They demonstrate how the Act is helping to deliver better outcomes for people in rural areas and helping make rural communities more sustainable. The Act also seeks to increase transparency by requiring public authorities to compile and publish information on how they comply with the due regard duty when carrying out certain activities. The Department has a number of additional responsibilities under the Act such as providing advice, making arrangements to secure co-operation and exchange of information between public authorities and publishing an Annual Report.

Under Section 2 of the Act, the Department produced guidance and shared this with all departments and district councils. During the period of this report the Department reviewed the first phase of implementation of the Act to assess how effectively it was implemented. This review highlighted a number of issues and following the completion of the review the Department issued new guidance which came into effect on 1 April 2018.

To fulfil its obligations under Section 3 of the Act, the Department has collated information from other departments and district councils and published it in this report. In order to fulfil its obligations under Section 4 of the Act, the Department held a Co-Operation Event on 28th February 2018 involving government departments and district councils. The purpose of the event was to facilitate the exchange of information, impart learning and share experiences, ultimately supporting better outcomes for people in rural areas.



GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Delivery of agri-food funding programmes and schemes.</p>	<p>The programmes and schemes were designed to meet the needs of farmers, their families and others living and working in rural areas. They are promoted and delivered through appropriate channels to the target audience.</p>
<p>AHS & TSE Branch within the Animal Health & Welfare Policy Division completed a Rural Needs Impact Assessment in 2018 when in the process of amending and replacing the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.</p>	<p>The policy objective is to have TSE controls which maintain animal health and public health; as the basic structure of the agriculture industry is carried out in rural areas, it follows that the proposals relate to rural areas and regions.</p>
<p>Delivery of Common Agricultural Policy schemes.</p>	<p>EUASD has contributed to DAERA meeting its statutory obligations by continuing to adopt a Customer Service Model which fully takes into account the needs of the rural community when applying for area-based schemes. The Department provides telephone, online and face-to-face assistance for applicants across Northern Ireland who may find accessing or using the Department's online services challenging due to a lack of IT equipment, skills or poor rural broadband.</p> <p>Services, such as guidance about the implementation of agri-environment agreements is provided to farmers in rural offices, together with access to update farm maps and discuss land inspection findings.</p> <p>The Department held a public consultation on DAERA's Review of Decision process, during which the Department consulted widely with stakeholders, particularly those in rural areas. The purpose was to obtain views and fully understand impacts and</p>



<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
	<p>the mitigating actions that may be appropriate in developing a process which better meets the needs of farmers.</p>
<p>Consultation on the Department's response to the TB Strategic Partnership Group's TB Eradication Strategy.</p>	<p>From November 2017 to February 2018 the Department undertook a public consultation on the issue of eradicating bovine Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>In developing a public consultation paper the DAERA Animal Health and Welfare Policy Division considered fully the potential impact of options being consulted on in the context of the Department's duty under Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p> <p>The focus of the consultation and the options within the consultation focused on the eradication of bovine TB. Given the nature and spread of the disease, all rural parts of Northern Ireland are, and can be, affected. All stakeholders, farmers, herd owners land owners, processors, mart operators, veterinarians and environmentalists and the general public given the impact on the public purse, were identified as having an interest in the eradication of this disease.</p> <p>Proposed actions within the consultation would be applied equally across all rural/farming areas where the disease occurs and involve all those stakeholders who have an interest in eradicating the disease.</p> <p>In this context it was considered that there is no potential for partiality or imbalance in the proposed actions and approaches which would impact on the rural community given that the focus is on the disease itself and addressing its spread.</p> <p>A full rural impact assessment was therefore not considered to be required.</p>

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Draft Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) regulations (NI) 2018.	Rural stakeholders, including farmers' union, included in consultation process. No rural issues anticipated by the Department, as there were none in any earlier consultations on F-gases. However, the Department remains open to the possibility of rural consultees replying to consultation and welcomes any comments they may have.
Draft Northern Ireland Air Quality Strategy.	The strategy contains proposals; these proposals are subject to a public consultation and rural community organisations will be encouraged to participate in this consultation. If implemented, any policies arising from these proposals will be under the remit of other government departments and the social and economic needs of people in rural areas will be addressed at this stage through a full Rural Needs Impact Assessment.
The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural stakeholders, including farmers' union, were included in the consultation process. No rural issues were anticipated by the Department. The Regulations will have a positive effect on protection to human health including rural areas in relation to private drinking water supplies. The amendments will enhance the current high level of protection of human health in relation private water supplies set under the older regulations.
The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural stakeholders, including farmers' union, were included in the consultation process. No rural issues were anticipated by the Department. The Regulations will have a positive effect on protection to human health including rural areas in relation to public drinking water supplies. The amendments will enhance the current high level of protection of human health in relation to public water supplies set under the older regulations.



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Transposition of Council Directive 2013/59/EC - Basic Safety Standards Directive.	A rural needs impact assessment was carried out in respect of the transposition of this Directive. The Directive doesn't relate to any rural policy areas. It deals with ionising radiation. Due regards to rural needs will be ensured when the section revises transposition of the Directive by carrying out another rural needs assessment.

Department for Communities

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Programme for Women Involved in Community Transformation.	<p>Programme model modified to take account of feedback received through stakeholder engagement events.</p> <p>Additional areas included in stakeholder engagement programme.</p> <p>Additional delivery location (Fermanagh) included in the programme delivery schedule.</p>
Universal Credit - Revised Transition Plan.	<p>Account taken of broadband availability, transportation links and provision of service hours.</p> <p>Digital service supported with telephone and face-to-face services.</p> <p>Provided 38 locations across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Opening hours extended, digital zones, free Wi-Fi.</p> <p>Trained staff on site to assist claimants.</p> <p>Telephony service extended 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.</p>
The Bereavement Support Payment (No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	<p>No specific differences between claimants in rural and urban areas for the purposes of this legislation. Necessary delivery mechanisms already exist in rural areas.</p>
The Social Security (Emergency Funds) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	<p>No barriers to delivery are envisaged by virtue of the legislation.</p> <p>Rural-based claimants will benefit from the scheme in exactly the same way as urban-based claimants.</p>
The Social Security (Infected Blood and Thalidomide) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	<p>No specific differences between claimants in rural and urban areas for the purposes of this legislation. Necessary delivery mechanisms already exist in rural areas.</p>

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
The Housing Benefit (Executive Determination) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	No specific differences between claimants in rural and urban areas for the purposes of this legislation. The necessary delivery mechanisms already exist in rural areas.
The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No 3) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	No specific differences between claimants in rural and urban areas for the purposes of this legislation. The necessary delivery mechanisms already exist in rural areas.
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Revaluation of elements of State pension. There is no policy change.
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) (No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Revaluation of elements of State pension. There is no policy change.
The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Revaluation of earnings factors which derive from a person's annual National Insurance contributions. There is no policy change.
The Contracting-out (Transfer and Transfer Payment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Judicial Pensions) (Consequential Provision No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural needs have been considered and no differential impact exists.
The Employers' Duties (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the Order, no potential for differential impact has been identified.

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The Pension Protection Fund (Compensation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Levy Ceiling and Compensation Cap) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the Order, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Transitional Provisions and Appropriate Independent Advice) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Transitional Provisions and Appropriate Independent Advice) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Guaranteed Minimum Pension Increase Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the Order, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Employer Debt and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Contracting-out (Transfer and Transfer Payment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the Order, no potential for differential impact has been identified.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Administration and Disclosure) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Preservation of Benefit and Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	Rural needs have been considered. Given the technical nature of the amendments, no potential for differential impact has been identified.
2017/18 Annual up-rating of pensions and benefits - remaking of the legislation.	Rural-based claimants will benefit from the legislation in exactly the same way as urban-based claimants, so there will be a fair rural outcome.
2018/19 Annual up-rating of pensions and benefits.	Rural-based claimants will benefit from the legislation in exactly the same way as urban-based claimants, so there will be a fair rural outcome.
Increase in the Carer's Allowance earnings limit.	No adverse impacts on rural areas expected.
The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No. 2) Regulations (NI) 2017.	No adverse impacts on rural areas expected.
The Social Fund Funeral Expenses (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	The policy and legislation sees no distinction between rural and urban.
Draft Local Government (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018.	The draft Regulations make minor and technical amendments to existing legislation and do not introduce any policy changes.

Department for the Economy

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
The non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.	The RHI Taskforce undertook a Rural Needs Impact Assessment as part of the passage of legislation required to allow the continuation of the interim cost control measures introduced in 2017 for a further 12 month period to 31 March 2019 to enable development of longer term policy.

Department of Education

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
<p>The cessation of DE's Achieving Belfast/Achieving Derry Programme budget of £0.5m on 31 March 2018.</p>	<p>This programme was an urban specific programme designed to address underachievement in two urban areas with some of the highest levels of social deprivation in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>There are a wide range of policies, programmes, services and funding provided by the Department to ensure that disadvantaged children from both rural and urban areas have access to and can fully participate in school life, obtain formal qualifications, enhance their employment opportunities and ultimately provide a route out of poverty.</p> <p>The continued implementation of these policies and programmes will help to offset the minor adverse impact anticipated from the ending of this programme in the two urban areas.</p>
<p>Extended Schools programme proposed £1.5m budget reduction for 2017/18.</p>	<p>There is no barrier to implementation of the proposed budget reduction for rural schools, and there has been no barrier to entry to the Extended School programme itself. The eligibility of schools for Extended Schools funding is based on criteria indicating disadvantage (free school meal entitlement and/or residence in an area classified as disadvantaged). An amount of funding is allocated to each eligible school according to a formula based on pupil enrolment data. Both the eligibility criteria and funding formula are applied equally across both rural and urban schools. All schools and clusters produce an Action Plan at the beginning of the school year setting out each planned activity and indicating how they will measure the outcome. Schools have a great deal of flexibility to tailor service provision to the needs of the school and its pupils, parents and local community. Rural schools are therefore able to respond to the needs of the rural community by offering services that will most effectively</p>



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
	<p>address the school's needs. For some schools (where assessed as required), this may include provision such as breakfast clubs, summer schemes, transport services for pupils, or homework clubs offering access to IT equipment.</p> <p>Schools will continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of their Extended Schools provision in line with agreed procedures. As with all schools, the EA will continue to support rural schools in the planning, delivery and monitoring of extended schools provision to ensure that objectives are being met.</p> <p>Pupils across all areas, both rural and urban, attending Extended Schools may benefit from Extended Schools provision aimed at enhancing educational attainment and improved life chances. However, given that schools in rural areas are less likely to be receiving ES funding as a result of lower levels of free school meal entitlement among their pupils it follows that the budget reduction will have less impact in rural areas. Additionally, the data also shows that rural pupils are more likely to have higher levels of educational attainment, which indicates that the need for extended school provision is lower. The data therefore suggests that the proposal is unlikely to have a differential impact on rural pupils when compared to urban pupils.</p> <p>It is for individual schools to decide how best to utilise the ES funding made available in accordance with identified needs. It is unlikely that the cost to schools of adapting provision to align with the proposed budget would differ between urban and rural schools.</p>
<p>Entitlement Framework proposed £2.0m budget reduction for 2017/18.</p>	<p>There is no barrier to implementation of the proposed budget reduction for rural schools, and there has been no barrier to entry to the Entitlement Framework funding itself. The funding allocated to eligible schools is based on a formula and each school receives a separate allocation based on that formula.</p>

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	<p>The formula includes a different weighting whether a school is located in an urban or a rural area. In determining the funding allocated to a school where pupils have undertaken courses delivered collaboratively with other schools (be they exporting pupils or importing pupils) the monetary value will be calculated at a higher rate (+20%) for pupils in a rural school than an urban school.</p> <p>The Entitlement Framework is designed to give all post-primary age pupils, regardless of where they live or which school they attend, equality of access to a broad and balanced range of economically relevant and individually engaging courses at Key Stage 4 (KS4) and post-16. From September 2017 schools will be required to offer a minimum of 21 courses at both Key Stage 4 and post-16, at least one third general and one third applied courses. However, it is for each school to determine which courses it wishes to offer and how best these courses can be delivered, be it in-house or through collaboration with another school(s), colleges of further education and/or other training providers. In rural areas, schools have flexibility to tailor service provision to the needs of the school and its pupils.</p> <p>Schools will continue to review how they are complying with the requirements of the EF and the Education Authority (EA) and the Department of Education will monitor and evaluate the level of compliance and the level of collaboration through the EA On-line Audit System. As with all schools, the EA will continue to support rural schools in the planning, delivery and monitoring of EF provision to ensure that objectives are being met.</p>
Strategy for Looked After Children: Improving Children's Lives (joint Strategy with DoH).	At the pre-consultation stage of the development of the strategy and action plan, access to services was identified as a possible barrier in rural areas. This has been considered and addressed or mitigated within the context of the draft Strategy.



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	<p>It is not expected that the implementation of this strategy and action plan will present significant rural impacts. It is recognised that Looked After Children in rural areas may have to travel further to access key services and that additional resources may be required to overcome this issue.</p>
<p>Children's Book Week Budget Reduction.</p>	<p>Children's Book Week (the Children's Books Ireland Project) is an all-island programme which was initiated as part of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) work programme. It is jointly funded by DE and the Department of Education and Skills.</p> <p>It is not considered that this proposed budget reduction would have a direct or indirect impact in rural areas.</p>
<p>Puskin Trust - Write-Up Programme Budget Reduction.</p>	<p>DE has provided funding to support the work of the Trust since 2000/01.</p> <p>The programme aims to raise standards in literacy and ICT by helping teachers to design more creative learning activities for their pupils; to encourage children to reflect on their writing; and to provide relevant and interesting contexts to inspire writing.</p> <p>It is not considered that this proposed budget reduction would have a direct or indirect impact in rural areas.</p>

Department of Finance

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Provision of information to decision makers on Rural Needs Impacts related to the Budget.	In the development of the Budget the department requested information from all departments in relation to the impact of the worst case scenario on rural needs. The information provided to the department was collated and summarised. This summary was presented to the NIO in advance of decisions being taken on the 2018-19 Budget. The final Budget took account of the information and provided continuing funding for the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme as well as maintaining funding for vital services which provide significant value to rural communities and wider environmental benefits.
Due regard to rural needs when implementing a plan, in this case a staff accommodation move within the Greater Belfast Area.	No specific rural needs have been identified through the rural needs impact assessment.
The NI Direct Digital Transformation Programme works with departments and their ALBs to develop on-line access to government services. These services allow rural dwellers to complete transactional processes at a place and time of their choosing. One of the key objectives of this programme, in partnership with both public and private sectors, is to address the barriers of digital exclusion and promote the benefits of being online.	<p>ENGAGEMENT - the Programme interfaces with DAERA Digital Engagement Group and the programme works directly with DAERA on on-line service development . Go ON NI and the Digital Inclusion Team, the Digital Transformation Service will continue to build upon current initiatives and Strategy commitments.</p> <p>DATA - the Digital Transformation Programme receives regular feedback from service owners and government clients including DAERA. DIU will continue to use the NISRA Omnibus Survey, collect data from relevant surveys conducted by OFCOM and will commission research as required to measure the impacts in rural areas - including the digital resilience report for rural areas.</p>



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	<p>DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES rural needs assessment of Strategy has identified a number of issues in respect of access to services that have a particular impact in rural areas. Digital inclusion is a key enabler and policy makers and service delivery providers will be expected to have due regard to rural needs by ensuring that they consider the needs of those at risk of exclusion - assistance and support will be provided to service owners.</p> <p>GOVERNANCE - measures in place to review and monitor all aspects of the programme and strategy and service delivery plan.</p> <p>REVIEW the RNIA will be reviewed on a regular basis.</p>
Cyber Security Strategic Framework for Action 2017-21.	No specific rural needs have been identified through the rural needs impact assessment.
NICS ICT Strategy 2017-2021.	No specific rural needs have been identified through the rural needs impact assessment.

Department of Health

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Policy development - public consultation on Continuing Healthcare in Northern Ireland: Introducing a Transparent and Fair System.	A draft Rural Impact assessment (RIA) was completed and issued alongside the policy documents for public consultation. The draft RIA concluded no impact on rural needs. No contradictory evidence was received during consultation.
Policy development - public consultation on The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Workers Prohibition) and Fitness of Workers (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	This was a targeted consultation as part of the roll out of a wider policy consultation conducted in 2012. The Rural Needs Act was considered in terms of impact, however, the amendments to the subordinate legislation were taken forward based on the original publicly consulted upon policy and a series of further targeted consultations to implement roll out. The Department is satisfied there is no impact on rural areas.
Policy development - public consultation on Changes Required to the Passporting of Individuals to Help with Health Costs as a Result of the Introduction of Universal Credit.	An RIA was completed and concluded that the policy would have a neutral impact on both rural and urban communities. Reporting/monitoring mechanisms are already in place with the HSCB, BSO and HSC Trusts in respect of identifying the uptake of Help with Health Costs under current arrangements in both rural and urban areas. The policy is expected to meet the set objectives in both rural and urban areas No contradictory evidence was received during consultation.
Policy development - public consultation on Regulations Restricting the Age of Sale for Nicotine Inhaling Products to Over Eighteens.	A draft RIA was completed and issued alongside the policy documents for public consultation. The draft RIA concluded that the policy should have a positive impact on both rural and urban communities. No contradictory evidence was received during consultation.
Policy development - public consultation on Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018 Consultation.	A draft RIA was completed and issued alongside the policy documents for public consultation. The draft RIA concluded no impact on rural needs. No contradictory evidence was received during consultation.

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Strategy development - public consultation on Consultation on a draft "Strategic Framework for Imaging Services in Health and Social Care".	A draft RIA was completed and issued alongside the policy documents for public consultation. The draft RIA concluded no impact on rural needs. The consultation ended on 22 January 2018 and comments are currently under consideration.
Developing a Plan - public consultation on Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.	N/A - Rural Needs will be assessed at individual policy level.
Policy development - public consultation on Promoting Organ Donation and Transplantation in Northern Ireland.	A Rural Impact Assessment was completed which concluded that as the policy aim (making more organs available for transplantation) stands to benefit anyone on a transplant waiting list, regardless of where they reside, it is not envisaged that it will impact rural communities differently to other areas. The policy acknowledges that there is a social and economic impact of requiring and receiving an organ transplant, and proposes a coordinated, varied programme of communications activity to be delivered across all sectors of the population, with the aim of increasing the rate of consent and ultimately improving the lives of those who require a transplant. The Consultation ended 5 March 2018 and any evidence submitted as part of the consultation process will be taken into account.
Developing a Plan - public consultation on Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing 2018-21.	A draft RIA was completed and issued alongside the policy documents for public consultation. The draft RIA concluded no impact on rural needs but any comments or evidence raised during consultation (ends 31 May 2018) will be taken into account.



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Policy implementation - NICE consultations - numerous.	The majority of NICE guidance is of a technical nature and is not regarded as falling within the scope of the Rural Needs Act. Guidance falling within the scope of the Act is subject to assessment and will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report. No relevant consultations were completed in the reporting period 1 June 2017 - 31 March 2018.

Copies of all consultations and RIAs can be found at:
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations>



Department for Infrastructure

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>RSPPG E042 Resident’s Parking (Version 5)</p> <p>The objective of the policy is to provide guidance on the provision of residents’ parking schemes on roads under Part IV of the Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997. Resident’s parking schemes are intended to help alleviate some of the difficulties caused where longer stay parking (for example from nearby businesses, sports facilities, hospitals, schools, universities, theatres, shopping areas) prevents residents from parking in reasonably close proximity to their houses.</p>	<p>In this instance there are no barriers to delivery in rural areas as there is little or no need for such schemes in the rural environment, primarily only in urban areas.</p> <p>The problem of commuter parking impacting on residential streets in rural areas is unlikely to arise.</p> <p>The records available indicate that no residential areas within rural settlements (<5000 pop) have applied to the Department (DRD/DfI) to introduce a Resident’s Parking Scheme.</p> <p>If the problem did exist the delivery method would be the same as that taken in the urban context.</p>
<p>DfI Roads - Owned and Maintained Laneways</p> <p>The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach is used when maintaining laneways that are owned by the Department, for the safety of all users.</p> <p>These laneways are dispersed throughout Northern Ireland, and whilst the majority are in rural locations there are also a number in urban areas. This policy does not distinguish between rural or urban laneways, and the policy will have the same impact on laneways in both urban and rural locations.</p>	<p>The Department has section offices and depots dispersed across Northern Ireland which will be used to deliver the policy effectively to both urban and rural locations. It is therefore not considered that there are any barriers to delivery in rural areas.</p> <p>Using the Department’s network of section offices and depots, the policy’s objectives can be delivered throughout Northern Ireland in both rural and urban environments.</p> <p>Records of all inspections and subsequent defects are recorded onto the Department’s Roads Maintenance Client System (RMCS). From these records, inspections and maintenance tasks can be monitored against the standards outlined in the policy.</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Driver Licensing System Online</p> <p>The DVA is launching a number of online services to enable applications to be completed and submitted online.</p> <p>These online services are aimed at enhancing the customer experience, improving turnaround times and delivering service efficiencies.</p>	<p>Uptake of the online services in rural areas will be dependent on the availability of broadband and broadband speeds. However, if access to internet is not available or is impacted by low speeds, customers can apply to the DVA by paper form.</p> <p>The DVA will continue to monitor the uptake rates for the online services and will examine ways in which to improve uptake across urban and rural areas if applicable.</p>
<p>Enniskillen Southern Bypass</p> <p>The primary objective of this project is to improve the effectiveness of the A4 Key Link Corridor by improving road safety and reducing journey times. The objective and associated benefits are not linked solely to strategic traffic but to all traffic moving through and within the area.</p>	<p>The delivery of further road crossings over Lough Erne would be difficult to justify given that new bridges would inevitably be of very large span and therefore costly to deliver. Furthermore the relatively low traffic volumes using the rural network in Fermanagh would make it difficult to realise a new a net positive return on investment through fuel and journey time savings etc.</p> <p>The Economic Appraisal (Business Case) for the scheme has set a number of measurable targets. These include a reduction in the number of traffic accidents to below the national rate on the improved section of the A4 route, the improvement of journey time reliability and reduction in journey times on the A4 through Enniskillen across Lough Erne and the reduction in traffic volumes on the Wellington Road within Enniskillen by 30%.</p> <p>The targets specified within the business case will be assessed after opening by travel/journey time surveys etc and report to DfI Road Senior Management. These objectives will indicate if the benefits to both rural and urban communities have been realised.</p>
<p>Change of Definition for Gas-fired Appliances</p> <p>The Department is proposing to amend the definition of a “gas-fired appliance” in Regulation 2(1) of the</p>	<p>The Department deems that there are no rural specific impacts as this is a change of to a definition to in current domestic legislation and is deemed to be a technical amendment to update a reference to redundant entity (British Gas Corporation). There will</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 because the current reference to “British Gas Corporation” in the definition is out of date. The Department proposes to amend this to “gas licence holder” to ensure the reference is relevant and up to date.</p>	<p>There will be no impact from the change to the definition as the definition is already deregulatory as it exempts the term gas-fired appliance being applied to devices owned and used by certain bodies and organisations such as gas companies. Therefore policy will have no impact across the region in both urban and rural areas. There is no evidence that this change to a definition will differentiate between urban and rural jurisdictions.</p>
<p>Management Strategy for Concrete Half-Joint Bridge Deck Structures.</p> <p>This policy provides technical guidance for staff involved in managing the Half Joint structures which are situated at various locations along the DfI road infrastructure in both urban and rural areas. However the policy does not distinguish between structures in urban or rural areas.</p>	<p>The policy outlines how a range of actions can be implemented, using a tailored approach for each structure, in order to maintain the integrity of the structures for the safety of all users, and as such the policy has no specific impact on the needs of people in rural areas.</p>
<p>RSPPG On Special Events on or near Public Road</p> <p>The object of this new policy is to provide DfI officials with guidance to assist when considering applications to hold special events in both urban and rural situations.</p>	<p>The policy is aimed at consideration of a special event in both the urban and rural situation. Alternative delivery mechanisms are therefore not necessary. If the problem did exist the delivery method would be the same as that taken in the urban context.</p>

Department of Justice

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Executive Action Plan for Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime</p> <p>The action plan has four long term outcomes: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 paramilitarism has no place in our society; 2 the public support and have even more confidence in the justice system; 3 safer and more confident communities; 4 support is available for those who wish to move away from paramilitary activity and structures. 	<p>Outcome measures apply to NI as a whole; programme level indicators will be developed and will include measures on: prevalence of paramilitary activity and criminality; coercive control of paramilitary groups over local communities.</p> <p>Project leads are responsible for working with relevant stakeholder to design and deliver projects / interventions committed to the action plan and are therefore well placed to consider measures to take account of rural needs.</p> <p>Where possible information will be sought at local level, including, where available, data relating to rural areas.</p> <p>Any review or evaluation of the programme will take account of rural needs.</p>
<p>Proposals to amend the 2009 Magistrates' and County Court Appeal Rules.</p> <p>Rule 16 of The Magistrates' Courts and County Court Appeals (Criminal Legal Aid) (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009 ("the 2009 Rules"), requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to keep the general operation of the 2009 Rules under review.</p> <p>This is the second statutory review of the Rules.</p>	<p>The DoJ does not consider that there would be any barriers to, or additional costs associated with, delivery in rural areas under the 2009 Rules if amended as proposed by the review. The proposed changes to the Rules will potentially introduce new fees for all legal representatives, irrespective of their location.</p> <p>The key issue which may arise for legal representatives operating under the 2009 Rules may be travel to court hearings and, as highlighted above, the Rules currently include mitigation against additional travel costs.</p> <p>The DOJ is of the view that this compensation for additional travel represents a fair rural outcome.</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Pilot Substance Misuse Court (SMC). Establish a pilot Substance Misuse Court pilot by early 2018 and operate it for 12 months.</p>	<p>The DoJ has not set any rural specific indicators and targets to monitor at this stage. These will be considered if the pilot is rolled out.</p>
<p>Proposals to amend the Recovery of Defence Costs Order Scheme. The Scheme is means of recovering such part of the cost of legal aid incurred under a criminal legal aid certificate for the defence of a convicted individual in the Crown Court, as was reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, including the financial resources of the defendant.</p>	<p>DoJ does not consider that there are any barriers to, or additional costs associated with, delivery of the revised RDCO scheme in rural areas, nor that any of the policy options has any negative impact on people living in rural communities. The policy is intended to impact upon all individuals equally, with the discriminating factor being an assisted person's capability to repay the cost of legal aid incurred during the course of their case, rather than the area in which they are located.</p> <p>Following public consultation, and in particular if any amendments are made to the policy, the rural impact of the RDCO scheme will be reconsidered, alongside the other impact assessments completed for the policy.</p>

The Executive Office

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
N/A	N/A



Public Prosecution Service

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Development of a Public Prosecution Service Victim and Witness Policy.</p>	<p>The policy reflects requirements of the PPS in respect of the Department of Justice NI Victim Charter (21015) and Witness Charter (2017), both of which set out the entitlements and standards of service which victims and witnesses of crime in Northern Ireland can expect to receive.</p> <p>No geographical distinction is made in any services provided to victims and witnesses by the PPS. With rare exception, the majority of personal interfaces between prosecution representatives and victims / witnesses of crime will occur at a court location where criminal proceedings are taking place, and which the PPS has no jurisdiction over.</p> <p>Special measures intended to assist witnesses in contributing fully to prosecution proceedings are considered in every appropriate case. Neither the home area of a witness nor court location for criminal proceedings is a factor in considering such measures.</p>
<p>Development of a Witness Expenses Policy.</p>	<p>The purpose of the policy is to set out Public Prosecution Service position with regard to the reimbursement of expenses incurred by members of the public, after inviting and supporting them as witnesses in prosecution proceedings. This policy has been drafted in compliance with victims' rights as set out in the EU Victims Directive, and the Department of Justice NI Victim Charter (21015) and Witness Charter (2017). Those Charters set out the entitlements and standards of service which victims and witnesses of crime in Northern Ireland can expect to receive.</p> <p>The Policy governs the reimbursement of travel and other expenses to court witnesses. It includes provision for expenses incurred by accompanying adults of a minor attending court as a witness, and also those</p>



<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
	<p>incurred by designated adults and carers of witnesses with a learning disability or mental health issue. The policy also accommodates expenses incurred by intimidated witnesses, as well as those travelling from outside the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The policy not only covers reimbursement of expenses incurred by members of the public, but also professional and expert witnesses in prosecution proceedings.</p> <p>No geographical distinction is made in any services provided to victims and witnesses by the PPS.</p>





DISTRICT COUNCILS



Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Christmas Events Policy.	<p>Residents in rural areas can attend any of the 4 main events in Antrim, Randalstown, Glengormley and Ballyclare.</p> <p>There is no differential impact in relation to equality as all categories are affected equally.</p>
Leisure Strategy.	<p>The urban and rural make-up of the Borough and public transport arrangements present a challenge to the service. This does not necessarily require more facilities to be located in rural areas but does require maximizing the opportunities available within these communities, whatever they may be.</p> <p>It is hoped the Leisure Strategy will increase participation equally at all Leisure Centres throughout the Borough both rural and urban. However the implementation of the 'Everybody Active Grant Programme' aims to increase physical activity in harder to reach areas.</p>
Waste Collection Service - partial outsourcing of waste collection service.	The provision of a waste collection service for domestic ratepayers in the Borough.
Equality Action Plan.	<p>Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories. Public authorities are also required to produce an Equality Scheme which explains how they intend to fulfil these duties. The Equality Scheme Action Plan is the output document of the equality commitments we have made.</p> <p>This policy affects all equally.</p>

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Peace IV Project: To Deliver a Capacity Building and Youth Leadership Programme.	Positive impact in rural areas that apply and participate.
Peace IV Project: To Deliver a Community Based Arts Programme.	Positive impact in rural areas that apply as the project is based in the Ards peninsula area.
Peace IV Project: To Deliver a Cross Community Based Sports and Good Relations Programme.	Positive impact in rural areas that apply and participate.
Peace IV Project: Personal Development and Training Programme.	Positive impact in rural areas that apply and participate.
Peace IV Project: To Deliver a Primary School (Out of School Hours) Active Diversity Programme in Multi Sports and Good Relations.	Offers positive impact in rural areas that apply and participate.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Pavement Licensing Guidance.	This policy will be applied equitably to all applicants
Ards and North Down Borough Council Procurement Policy.	N/A as based on procurement good practice.
Tourism Events programme 2018 - 2019.	Addressed with a range of events across the Borough including in rural areas where events are themed and may be hosted based on size, venue, topography etc.
Gun Salute at the Town Hall Bangor.	Location selection is outside the remit of the Council to address.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Domestic Violence and Workplace Policy.	This policy will be enacted equitably to enable any individual to access the information and/or services.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Ards and North Down Borough Council - Potential decision to proceed with a 3G Pitches in Portavogie and/or Portaferry.	This policy has been introduced to ensure adequate provision of pitches in rural areas in line with the Sports Pitch Strategy.
Ards and North Down Borough Council - Feasibility assessment 3G rubber crumb pitch Comber Parkway.	This pitch upgrade will meet current and future demand in this area and for the surrounding areas in line with the Sports Pitch Strategy.
Integrated Strategy for Ards and North Down Tourism, Regeneration and Development.	The needs of all areas and citizens and visitors are considered throughout the development of this strategy.
Name/brand for the replacement Ards Leisure Centre.	The name selected will encourage usage from across the Borough and province as a shared and welcoming environment.
Policy on dealing with alleged and asserted Public Rights of Way.	Statutory criteria is to be met in dealing with alleged and asserted Public Rights of Way.
Local Economic Development Plan.	This plan takes into consideration Rural Needs as well as all other criteria of the Development Plan.
ANDBC Information Access Policy.	This policy is applied equitably to all requests.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Newtownards Masterplan.	This plan is specific to the needs of the area and links to the rural areas it serves.
Ards and North Down Borough Council War Memorial Refurbishment programme.	Improvements are appropriate to the need of each Memorial - not on its location.
Naming of New Leisure Facility in Newtownards.	Outcome of S 75 EQIA will identify if potential or actual adverse impact.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Donaghadee Masterplan.	This plan is specific to the needs of the area and those using the town from the rural areas that feed into the town.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Comber Masterplan.	This plan is specific to the needs of the area and those using the town from the rural areas that feed into the town.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Holywood Masterplan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and those using the town from the rural areas that feed into the town.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Kircubbin Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Kircubbin.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Portaferry Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Portaferry.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Conlig Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Conlig.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Greyabbey Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Greyabbey.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Ballywalter Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Ballywalter.
Ards and North Down Borough Council Ballyhalbert Integrated Village Plan.	The plan is specific to the needs of the area and other rural areas feeding into Ballyhalbert.
Gun Salutes at the Town Hall, Bangor.	The location is agreed through Royal protocol and publicity is used to highlight the events.
Community Festivals Fund 2018/2019.	This fund is available to all communities that comply with the agreed criteria.
Royal Wedding Fund 2018.	This fund is available to all communities that comply with the agreed criteria.

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Summer Scheme Review.	The schemes are located, delivered and designed to be cognisant of local need.
Tourism Events 2018 - 2019.	The range of events across the Borough include hosting in rural areas where events are themed and the area is suitable for parking, event management, numbers expected etc.
Customer Care Strategy.	The same standard exists across all council services.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Public Right of Way Policy.	This policy outlines an approach for asserting and protecting public rights of way in the Borough. It will assist in ensuring the Council complies with Article 3 of the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983.
Safeguarding Policy.	This policy sets out the framework for safeguarding, ensuring the Council meets all its legal responsibilities to children, adults at risk and families that it directly or indirectly provides a service to. It is a Council wide policy.
Corporate Plan.	<p>As part of service delivery for the Borough, each department operates within their business plan and seeks to address a number of barriers to deliver eg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Services: partnership working with Translink, Transport NI; • Service Infrastructure: delivered in partnership with Economic Development/Regeneration; • Demographics The Borough has 9 super Output Areas (10% of the total 87 SOAs in the Borough) in the top 100 most deprived in NI on the Access to Services domain, each of these are defined as rural on the default NISRA classification; • Economic structure and employment: SOAR Programme/Regeneration/Economic Development. <p>All strategies, plans, projects, services detailed in the Council's departmental business plans will be rural impact assessed in order to ensure that the Council's statutory duty to promote rural needs is fully considered.</p>

Belfast City Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Belfast Agenda.	<p>According to the 2011 census, 1,699 residents or 1,484 (NISRA 2016) reside in Belfast's rural areas which includes the small settlements of Edenderry, Loughview and Hannahstown. We have taken account of the views of stakeholders across the City through the plan creation process ie Belfast Residents Survey 2014 and the Belfast Conversation, an extensive citywide programme of engagement. Public consultation on the draft Belfast Agenda was held Dec 16- Apr 17 for 18 weeks. During this period the views of rural stakeholders were sought through specific consultation meetings and workshops and online consultation questionnaires. Specific consultation meetings were held with Edenderry Residents Association and Hannahstown Community Association. For Belfast, barriers to service delivery for people living in rural areas might not be considered to be as severe to those in remote parts of Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The complete RNIA document is available at: http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality/Ruralneedsact</p>
East Bank Development Plan.	<p>As part of the development of the masterplan, extensive consultation was undertaken including those representing rural communities. The Belfast Conversation 2015 included engagement meetings with Edenderry Residents Association and Hannahstown Community Association. At this time no mitigations have been identified, other than improving transport links to and from the areas and the city generally for those visiting from rural communities.</p> <p>The complete RNIA document is available at: http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality/Ruralneedsact</p>

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Land and Property Policy (Disposal, Letting and Leasing).	Not Applicable
Risk Management Strategy (Reviewed).	Not Applicable.
Landfill Communities Fund Policy Review.	Not Applicable.
Museums Accreditation Policy.	Not Applicable.
Policy on Assistance to Study (for Employees).	Not Applicable.
Communications Strategy.	Not Applicable.
Information Sharing Protocol - Landlord Registration.	Not Applicable.
Grant Funding Policy (Reviewed.)	Not Applicable.
Issue of Formal Cautions Policy.	Not Applicable.
Car Park Strategy.	Not Applicable.
Facilities Energy Management Strategy.	Not Applicable.
Performance Improvement Policy.	Not Applicable.



Derry City and Strabane District Council

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Development of a Community Plan for the Derry City and Strabane District Council Area - In line with Section 10 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.</p>	<p>Over 5,000 people were engaged in the co-design of the Strategic Growth Plan. This co-design process agreed the framework for the development of the plan and facilitated the establishment of eight thematic working groups to develop the outcomes, indicators and actions. Within these thematic working groups a number of specific needs pertaining to rural areas were identified. These included (but were not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for improved broadband connectivity in rural areas; • The need for more direct transport links/connectivity with and to other regions and connectivity within and between local communities; • The need to strongly improve and enhance rural social, economic and environmental regeneration; • The need to conserve, enrich and protect environmental and built heritage assets in rural areas. <p>All issues identified pertaining to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas were considered in the development of the Strategic Growth Plan. The final plan includes a long list of actions aligned to 8 outcomes. These were subject to a 16 week public consultation and amendments have been made to the final plan to address any issues raised as a result of the public consultation feedback.</p> <p>The Strategic Growth Plan includes the following actions which have been developed to address the specific needs of rural areas. The full list of actions aligned to the 8 outcome of the Strategic Growth Plan are detailed in the full document (http://www.derrystrabane.com/getmedia/1eb99e2e-e657-45a1-8b27-e2b35a36d65c/SGP_22-November2017_lowres.pdf)</p>



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise job creation and investment opportunities in our City and Town Centres, regionally significant regeneration sites and rural areas. • Develop a pilot Rural Community Broadband Scheme and roll out in multiple locations. • Deliver business start-up programmes and development support focused on areas of high economic inactivity and rural community hubs. • Develop a heritage/conservation-led masterplan and renewal action plan for the village of Sion Mills and other settlements, including Newtownstewart town centre conservation area. • Protect and promote our natural and built heritage assets through the establishment of multi-sectoral heritage partnerships, heritage education programmes, skills specialisms development and integration with our tourism product offering. • Provide quality social and private housing in sustainable urban and rural neighbourhoods to meet the needs of our growing population providing attractive places to live within easy access to local services and amenities. • Promote neighbourhood and village enhancement through the development of local environmental improvement schemes and community play parks and facilities. • Promote greater integration and inclusion within and between communities through animating shared spaces, services and facilities and the development of rural community clusters. <p>This plan has been screened to ensure that this strategic policy supports sustainable rural development in accordance with The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Local Community Planning Process - Development of 8 Local Growth Plans for 7 DEAs and Strabane Town. Three of DEAs are Rural, Sperrin, Derg and Faughan.</p> <p>The establishment of 8 Local Community Growth Partnership Boards for Strabane Town, Ballyarnett, Moor, Waterside, Foyleside, Sperrin, Derg and Faughan to take forward the 8 Local Community Growth Plans.</p>	<p>The 8 local community plans have been developed via a co-design approach through consultation with residents from the specific DEAs including input from the Community & Voluntary Sector and Statutory Partners. Consultation workshops have been held in the 3 rural DEA's of Sperrin, Derg and Faughan - the issues raised are specific to the 3 rural areas and have been highlighted within the 3 local growth plans for these DEAs. The local plans will be screened to ensure that they support sustainable rural development in accordance with this important statutory rule.</p> <p>The implementation of the local plans will lead to the development and improvement of the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of citizens in the three rural DEAs of Sperrin, Derg and Faughan.</p>
<p>A strategic programme of activity to maximise the region's tourism potential and position the (tourism) sector as a key driver of economic growth. The specific ambition of this activity will be to double visitor spend over the period (2018-2025) from £50mn to £100mn and creating an extra 1,000 jobs within the sector.</p> <p>Providing the road map for delivery is the document: Derry City & Strabane District Tourism 2018-2025: A New Level Of Ambition.</p> <p>It identifies a total of 64 key actions - relating to Product & Experience; Visitor Serving and Destination Marketing- which will require development and investment to enable the achievement of our targets for growth.</p>	<p>Derry City & Strabane District Tourism 2018- 2025: A New Level Of Ambition.</p> <p>The strategy and its actions have been informed by the Community Planning Process undertaken by Derry City & Strabane District Council (and the due regards to rural needs it applied).</p> <p>The development of the strategy was informed by an extensive consultation process which included representation from citizens from throughout the region and from the private and community sectors and multi government agencies.</p> <p>The adoption of strategy was subject to the approval of elected representatives including those representing rural areas.</p>



<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Successful delivery will be dependent also on a collaborative approach being adopted by key stakeholders. To enable partnership working a Tourism Delivery Partnership has been created.</p>	
<p>Preparation of Rural Proofing - Baseline and Interim Report for Local Development Plan (LDP) Preferred Options Paper (POP) Stage published in May 2017. This is an interim report and a full Rural Proofing consideration of all the proposed draft LDP policies will be published at the draft Plan Strategy Stage expected in 2019.</p>	<p>The POP document published a series of preferred options which indicated Councils preferred direction of travel in terms of the future development of planning policy which will be set out in the 2019 LDP Plan Strategy.</p> <p>To develop these preferred options, Planning officials undertook a series of 2017 meetings with stakeholders, Rural Focus Groups and Elected Members to ensure the development of the POP had due regards to rural needs and pertinent issues where fed in to inform option development. The publication of the POP in May 2017 was also accompanied by a three month consultation period and an extensive social media campaign to extract feedback from across the entire District. Hard copies of the POP documents were also distributed to all Council Sports facilities, community facilities, libraries, and Health practices to ensure they were widely distributed to maximise potential feedback. Successful public consultation events (am & pm) were also held in Claudy, Donemana and Castlederg to gather feedback.</p>
<p>Good Relations Audit, Strategy, and Action Plan 2018 - 2021.</p>	<p>A number of workshops have been held within each of the Rural DEAs - the information and needs identified at these workshops in the rural DEAs have been taken on board and reflected in the Good Relations Strategy and Action Plan for 2018 - 2021.</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
<p>Implementation of revised Streetnaming and Property Numbering Policy.</p>	<p>DCSDC revised the Streetnaming and Property Numbering Policy which was in effect in the legacy Council to include an explicit reference to ‘roads’ thereby allowing rural dwellers the opportunity to make applications for dual language road names in the area. This revised policy also make provision for the inclusion of the relevant townland name in addition to the road name thereby preserving traditional placenames. This policy was revised in consultation with rural communities in the Council area.</p>
<p>Derry City and Strabane District Council commissioned the Arts & Culture Strategy 2019 - 2024. This strategy supports the ambitions of Derry City and Strabane District Council and its sector wide co-design and co-delivery partners in the pursuit of world class arts, heritage and cultural offerings.</p> <p>It is based on evidence about the current scope, scale and value of the arts and the relevant outcomes of the Derry City and Strabane District Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan 2017-2032 and the local area plans. It has reviewed key trends and statistics locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. It is based on extensive consultation with stakeholder organisations, individual artists, practitioners and interested parties, external strategic stakeholders and communities and establishes indicators directly aligned with the Community Plan.</p> <p>The strategy identifies synergies and potential collaborations with its key</p>	<p>The Arts & Culture Strategy 2019-2024 is designed to support the Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan. This Growth Plan was informed by the Community Planning Process including extensive consultation and engagement with rural citizens and representatives to ensure that rural needs were clearly articulated and addressed.</p> <p>For the Arts & Culture Strategy we used a co-design methodology to promote creativity and collaboration, establishing a co-design group to drive the development of this ambitious strategy. Its members were drawn from across the city and district including those from rural areas as they led more than 150 groups, organisations and individuals from across the district to both identify the issues and innovative solutions. Five elected members and 18 representatives from statutory and support organisations were co-opted to help.</p> <p>From the outset, the co-design group invested a significant amount of time and energy into tapping into the knowledge and expertise of the internal and external stakeholders, including rural communities, engaged with the arts and culture sector in the Derry City and Strabane area. This process resulted in a collective view of how the sector’s arts ecosystem could be strengthened through working and creating together.</p>



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
<p>internal and external strategic stakeholders and establishes indicators directly aligned with the Community Plan. It identifies potential resource requirements, efficiencies and service design opportunities for Council and the Co-Delivery Working Group. The action plan is ambitious, achievable, time bound, evidence based, and costed to deliver against agreed indicators.</p>	<p>Key to stakeholders and strategies used to inform strategy design included; Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Growth Plan Delivery Partnerships, Local Growth Partnerships x 8 (Delivery bodies for Local Community Plans), North West Regional Development Group and the Rural Development Partnership.</p> <p>The Co Design Process included cross party representation including councillors from rural areas. Furthermore the adoption of strategy will be subject to the approval of elected representatives (including those representing rural areas) when presented to business and culture committee in December 2018.</p>

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Lone Worker and Personal Safety Guidance.	With the exception of the two main towns of Omagh and Enniskillen, all other areas of the district are considered to be rural. The Council is aware of the major factors affecting Rural Dwellers, with particular reference to the Economy, Employability, Housing ownership and levels of unfitness, Transport and Access to Services. A pilot programme to test the effectiveness of the Lone Working Devices was carried out with particular reference to their operation within the rural areas of the district where mobile connectivity is severely limited.
Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan - Draft Action Plan.	<p>In relation to the development of the Draft Action Plan, the following data has been gathered and used to inform the actions:</p> <p>1. Under Outcome 2: "Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives", the relevant indicators are:</p> <p>2b: % of people aged over 65 years in good health 88% of the over 65 population in Fermanagh and Omagh report that they are in good health and this is a statistic which we would aim to maintain and, where possible, improve. Older people are at particular risk of loneliness and isolation, particularly those living in dispersed rural communities, and it is important that older people are enabled and supported to live long, active, healthy lives. Many families and communities within our district already benefit from the contributions of healthy, active older people through their volunteering activities and this is an area which could continue to develop and grow with the right support.</p> <p>2e: Number of senior smart pass holders Data indicates that 77% of those eligible for a</p>



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
	<p>senior smart pass in the Fermanagh and Omagh district currently have one. Of those who haven't applied, this may be due to a lack of awareness or, perhaps, due to rurality and extremely limited or infrequent public transport services. Those with access to a car may feel that they would not benefit from this. It is important that those who could benefit from this service are encouraged to do so and that all age groups make better use of public transport, where practicable.</p> <p>2. Under Outcome 6: "Our district is better connected" the relevant indicators are:</p> <p>6b: % of journeys made on public transport and active travel (walking, cycling)</p> <p>At 19%, the figures for the district fall below the Northern Ireland average of 23%. This could be due to the rurality of the district and the limited public transport service available across rural areas. In some cases there will be no alternative to use of the car, particularly for commuting, however efforts should be made, where practicable, to encourage use of public transport and/or other forms of active travel due to the personal, social and environmental benefits which could be gained.</p> <p>In delivering the Actions contained within the Plan for which the Council is the designated Action Lead, the Council is committed to working in partnership with identified Support Partners.</p> <p>Delivery in Rural areas will be informed not only by the experience of other Statutory Agencies, but also by working with organisations from the Community and Voluntary Sector and the Rural Community Transport Networks, with specific expertise and knowledge of the issues affecting local areas: Community and Voluntary Sector, Rural Community Transport Networks.</p>



<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
	<p>To ensure the delivery of fair rural outcomes, the Action Plan will be kept under continual review and actions may be revised according to the data gathered from the performance measures.</p>
<p>Work Experience/Placement Procedure for People With Disabilities.</p>	<p>With the exception of the two main towns of Omagh and Enniskillen, all other areas of the district are considered to be rural. The Council is aware of the major factors affecting Rural Dwellers, with particular reference to the Economy, Employability, Housing ownership and levels of unfitness, Transport and Access to Services.</p> <p>The Community Planning Partnership has recognised that further work needs to be undertaken in relation to developing indicators for the measurement of the life satisfaction of people with disabilities.</p> <p>Around 6% of people with a learning disability are in paid employment, despite more than 60% wanting to and being able to be in work.</p> <p>Work placements offer people an opportunity for learning and personal development. For people with physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties this opportunity can be a key to the world of work from which they might otherwise be excluded.</p> <p>An initial draft procedure was developed by a cross-departmental group of officers, and agreed with the Trades Unions, followed by an in-depth focused consultation with groups representing people with a range of disabilities and with representatives from the Trust. The final draft Procedure is representative of the views and comments gathered during the consultation exercise.</p> <p>Requests for Work Experience Placements will be made from any one of the Partnership Organisations who work with people from across the district.</p>



Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
	<p>The Council will monitor the numbers of placements which are taken up by people from the rural areas in order to better understand whether there are any mitigating actions which can be undertaken in order to ensure equitable access to opportunities.</p>
<p>Collections Management Policy.</p>	<p>With the exception of the two main towns of Omagh and Enniskillen, all other areas of the district are considered to be rural. The Council is aware of the major factors affecting Rural Dwellers, with particular reference to the Economy, Employability, Housing ownership and levels of unfitness, Transport and Access to Services. This Strategy does not have any potential direct or indirect impacts in rural areas.</p> <p>In considering mitigation in relation to Access to Services, Museum Survives Staff provide an outreach service within the District Council area including talks to Historical Groups on request. There are also plans to develop a Collections Management System in 2018/19 which will provide access to view the collections on-line.</p>
<p>Travel and Subsistence Policy for Staff.</p>	<p>The Travel and Subsistence Policy will apply to all employees whether they live in, or are based in, a rural area.</p> <p>With the exception of the two main towns of Omagh and Enniskillen, all other areas of the district are considered to be rural. The Council is aware of the major factors affecting Rural Dwellers, with particular reference to the Economy, Employability, Housing ownership and levels of unfitness, Transport and Access to Services. This Strategy does not have any potential direct or indirect impacts in rural areas.</p> <p>As no impacts have been identified, no options have been considered. If during the course of implementation any impacts are identified or experienced, mitigation will be considered.</p>



Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Impact assessment compiled for our own Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Belfast City Council.	Rural needs given due consideration through the screening exercise undertaken by the Council.
<p>Other relevant policies have been taken forward by Council through the Screening process (please see below). This list is indicative of those that take rural needs into consideration;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management • Small Grants Policy • Village Renewal Scheme • Start Up/Go for It 	<p>As appropriate, rural needs are given consideration within the Section 75 equality screening of all Council policies. Where the screening decision indicates that consideration should be given to conducting a (full) EQIA, inclusive of a mandatory 12 week consultation period, this will be undertaken and rural needs would be built into this impact assessment process. This will ensure that any policy which it is considered will have a major impact on rural needs will be effectively dealt with inclusive of consultation prior to full implementation.</p>
Integration of Rural Needs Assessment into the EQIA Screening Procedures of the Council.	<p>Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (L&CCC) is already subject to Section 75 of the 1998 NI Act and this involves giving consideration to and assessing the impact of any Council policy and/or service on the nine designated groups. Since June 2017 Council is also now subject to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 which itself also involves giving consideration to policy and/or service impact on those specifically in rural areas.</p> <p>In reality therefore two “templates” would require to be completed in respect of policy and/or service impact in either urban, rural or both types of area. Consequently, to better facilitate the requirements of both pieces of legislation going forward and to make the process as effective as possible within Council it is anticipated that the two templates will be “merged” in order that not only will Section 75 continue to be given due consideration but that rural needs will also become</p>

<p>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.</p>	<p>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.</p>
	<p>central to policy development and “assessment” throughout all Council activities and functions.</p> <p>Such work is presently being progressed by relevant officers with a view to taking appropriate documentation to the Corporate Management Team for decision and thereafter Committee and Council for approval and ratification. By so doing it is considered that rural needs will be better met in the coming period within the context of assessing the impact of all policies of Council through the whole L&CCC area.</p>

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
Performance Improvement Plan.	Considered appropriate data; consultation information provided through community planning and consultation of performance improvement plan; completion of screening and mitigation where appropriate.
Amplify - integrated Economic Development Strategy.	Considered appropriate data; consultation information provided through community planning and consultation on economic development strategy; completion of screening and mitigation where appropriate.
Household recycling centre opening hours.	Considered appropriate data; consultation information provided through community planning; completion of screening and mitigation where appropriate.

Mid Ulster District Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
ICT Policy.	<p>This policy aim is to safeguard the information of council customers and ensure that it is in a position to continue to provide activities in the event of significant Information Security breach/incident.</p> <p>The policy covers all council functions whether delivered in a rural or urban environment.</p>
CCTV Policy.	<p>The Council has placed an emphasis on the role of CCTV in many of the district's smaller towns, specifically in relation to crime prevention. Facilities and venues at many of Council's rural bases have been equipped with CCTV equipment. The objectives of the policy are applicable to both rural and urban areas thus providing a fair rural outcome.</p>
Maintenance of Unadopted Roads.	<p>This is a council policy 'responsive' to requests and demands allowing it to act on requests received. There are no plans to seek requests as referenced within the policy. A differentiation between urban and rural requests have not been made, nor is it intended to do so. The outcomes, will, as per the policy, be consistent across the entire council district.</p>
Air Quality Action Plan	<p>This policy has been developed in line with relevant legislation. The councils Environmental Health Service (Public Health & Infrastructure Dept.) will continue to review urban and rural settlements in line with legislative requirements. Guidance, where required, will be compiled and additional monitoring undertaken.</p>

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.	Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service.
NMDDC Fleet Policy.	The owner of the Council's Fleet policy has given due regard to the rural needs implications of this policy and has advised that it does not have a differential impact. The performance of the Internal Fleet Policy will be assessed by a range of Council's Performance objectives.
Newry, Mourne and Down Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2022 (NMD LBAP).	The owner of the Council's local biodiversity action plan has given due regard to the rural needs implications and has advised it does not have a differential impact. The officer has advised that a project may be more expensive to run in a rural area but this will not be a barrier to the project if the need has been identified.
Proposed phased withdrawal of the provision of public space and facilities- based CCTV	The owner of this plan has given due regard to the rural needs implications and has advised it does not have a differential impact. Implementation will be a phased approach with progress monitored by the Council's Strategic Projects Working Group.
Play Strategy 2017- 2022	The consultations for the play strategy took place in each of the council's seven DEA's. The national standard from Fields in Trust was applied to the findings which was 150 children populated within a 20 minute walk. As a result of this application various hotspots in the lack of fixed play within the rural community were identified and Council has engaged with local rural communities with the provision of training and also free play pods for children in rural areas to avail of.
Safeguarding Policy	The owner of the Safeguarding policy has given due regard to the rural needs implications and has advised it does not have a differential impact. It is a council wide policy that's purpose is to promote safe experiences for all within the district.

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