

**Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015
(Report by the Head of Environmental and Community Services)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable members to make known their views on the above strategy document, so that the authority's comments can be fed back to Cambridgeshire ACRE by the 23 April when the consultation period ends.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire Together Board commissioned Cambridgeshire ACRE to produce on their behalf a rural strategy for Cambridgeshire that sets out the "future viability of the county's rural areas". The strategy document assesses the challenges of living and working in the Cambridgeshire countryside. The strategy document also reviews Cambridgeshire's rural economic well-being and sets out a long term vision for rural Cambridgeshire.
- 2.2 During 2009 Cambridgeshire ACRE held a number of consultation events across Cambridgeshire to gather the views of statutory agencies, community organisations, rural business and individual residents on both the challenges and opportunities that living and working in rural Cambridgeshire presents.
- 2.3 At its meeting in December 2009 the Cambridgeshire Together Board agreed that the document headed Rural Cambridgeshire, Ensuring a Vibrant Future, A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015 should go out for consultation from 1 February – 23 April 2010 following which Cambridgeshire ACRE will produce a final document for consideration by Cambridgeshire Together.
- 2.4 The Rural Strategy document has been circulated to officers within the authority and specific officer comments are set out in response to what actions are proposed to be taken in the report in Appendix 'A' of this report. In addition to the report been discussed and considered at the meetings outlined above the rural strategy document is due to be discussed at the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership board meeting on the 3 March 2010.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Whilst the ambitions of the rural strategy are commendable and some are complementary to the District Council's objectives. The strategy fails to take into consideration the present economic challenges facing statutory agencies and could possibly commit the authority to programmes/initiatives that are not Huntingdonshire priorities. The rural strategy consultation document states "how we can get there and who can make it happen" at no point within the document is there any reference as to which agency or agencies will be responsible for delivering and funding the actions outlined in the document or regards to actions already been undertaken or provided.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members note officer comments on strategy document
- 5.2 Members comments requested on strategy document

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Rural Cambridgeshire Strategy Document

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