

Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development: Rural Needs Bill

Name: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Date: 17th November 2015

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Newry, Mourne and Down District Council provide below a written submission in relation to the Rural Needs Bill

Response returned to: committee.agriculture@niassembly.gov.uk

(The closing date for submissions is 12.00pm on Monday 23 November 2015)

Response

The Bill requests that Council must consider rural needs when developing, adopting, implementation or revising policies / strategies and plans:

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is one of 11 Local Authorities established on 1st April 2015 as part of Local Government Reform. The 3rd largest Council in NI, Newry, Mourne and Down has the highest Rural density of the NI Council regions.

Rural needs are central to all functions of Council, and the actions that Council take in addressing rural needs are informed and directed by the hierarchy of policies and strategies adopted by Council.

Rural needs are specifically recognised at the highest level of Council, where the regeneration of our rural areas is listed as one of the 8 corporate objectives. This recognition again filters through our Community Plan, where rural issues and rural needs have been identified, considered and addressed. Rural Development and Rural Regeneration is also one of 5 key pillars of the Councils Economic Regeneration and Investment Strategy, which details the key actions over a 5 year period that the Council will implement in it's efforts to revitalise, regenerate and develop our rural areas, and rural businesses and rural communities. One of the key actions from this strategy is the development and implementation of a strategy for the delivery of Rural Development Programme funding, to the regions rural businesses, villages and communities.

The Council's policies and strategies for addressing rural needs, and seeking to regenerate and develop our rural areas, communities and businesses have been informed and developed through intensive consultation with our rural representatives, rural businesses and rural communities. Council recognise this partnership working as essential for ensuring that the delivered actions will address the needs and requirements that exist at the local level.

Actions delivered by Council to address rural needs will be recorded and monitored, and can be reported on if required and requested by the Department (DARD).

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