

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	12 December 2014
Title:	Rural Delivery Strategy Funding proposals
Reference:	6282
Report From:	Director of Culture Communities and Business Services

Contact name: Des Hobson

Tel: 01962 845566

Email: des.hobson@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to make proposals for a second tranche of Rural Delivery Strategy project funding. These proposals have been developed in accordance with the revised Rural Delivery Strategy priorities approved by Cabinet in March 2014 (Report 5684).
- 1.2. In support of these objectives two new proposals for funding have been brought forward, totalling £150,000, out of a total budget of £205,000 remaining.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The County Council's revised Rural Delivery Strategy was agreed by Cabinet in March 2014, with five new priority actions around community resilience, rural transport, self-help, communications and economic development.
- 2.2. The funding proposals identified below fit within these priorities and build on existing initiatives to maximise impact and use of available resources. Many are supported by additional Departmental or partner match funding and they are a good fit with current corporate priorities for the organisation. The proposals have emerged through Departmental submissions to the Rural Coordination Group chaired by Cllr Andrew Gibson.

3. Finance

- 3.1. The previous Decision Report in July 2014 allocated funding to projects totalling £170,800, leaving a balance of £205,000.
- 3.2. It has not been possible to progress the 'supporting older people and reducing pressure on hospitals' initiative, as Government match funding was

not secured. Accordingly, the allocated sum of £10,000 can be reallocated, making a total sum of £215,000 available.

- 3.3. Several new project proposals have been received for this funding round, of which two have been brought forward for consideration by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources.

- 3.4. **Social isolation pilot scheme: Funding sought £100,000**

Adult Services' proposal would run pilot projects in Stockbridge, Netley Abbey and Hayling Island focused on understanding and addressing social isolation among older people in different rural locations. Each pilot would run for 12 months and would be judged against a series of outcomes and benefit measures to be agreed in detail at the outset. The project would target individuals currently most at risk from the impact of social isolation. Using tablet PCs, the aim would be to support them to re-engage with family and friends, and with their local community, and online interest groups. Local agencies and charitable groups would be engaged to assist with the pilots and to maintain an involvement after they conclude.

- 3.5. Benefits may include reductions in GP / community health visits, improved management of medical conditions, improved self-reporting of health. Discussions have been had with both health commissioners and providers about the potential if the pilot is successful. Other improvements could include reduction in reported feelings of isolation, reported improvement in diet, increasing attendance at events outside the home, and increased contact with friends, family and local groups. However, evidence from elsewhere is limited and one of the main aims of the project is to provide the evidence base to secure long term funding from health and other parties.
- 3.6. The pilot projects would also feed directly into the County Council's Digital Strategy, providing evidence of the appetite for and utilisation of smart technology by older people. This will be important in planning future cost effective interventions. One of the hypotheses is that one of the main barriers to older people using technology is opportunity. The project would therefore play a part in providing early help in slowing down demands upon more expensive council-based services.
- 3.7. **'Hitting the cold spots' rural extension: Funding sought £50,000**

This proposal acknowledges the specific difficulties faced by rural households facing fuel poverty, and will enable additional support to be given to rural areas. Around 18% of rural households are in fuel poverty compared to 16% in urban areas. A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of income on fuel to stay warm. Energy costs for rural households, off the gas grid, are likely to be higher. Rural houses are often older, and harder to insulate. The focus will be on supporting vulnerable residents, including older people, and young families to improve household living conditions, and offer small emergency funding to improve heating and hot water. Insulation levels will be assessed, and clients supported to access sources of additional insulation if necessary.

3.8. The projects set out above build on existing initiatives supported previously from the Rural Strategy budget and Departmental funding, and have the full endorsement and engagement of the lead Departments involved.

3.9. **Community Challenge Fund.**

Funding for the Community Challenge Fund was approved in July 2014 (Decision Report 5684). It was agreed that grants of less than £1,000 would be approved by officers following discussion with the Assistant to the Executive Member, using delegated powers, and be reported to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources retrospectively. One project, value £600 towards IT for Stockbridge community market IT help desk has been approved in that way (grant reference CG00006964). Other grant requests have been received, but not shortlisted for funding.

3.10. The Equalities Impact Assessment indicates that these proposed projects would have a high positive impact on people living in rural areas, in particular older people. No negative impacts are anticipated.

4. Recommendation(s)

4.1. Following consideration and support by Councillor Andrew Gibson, the Assistant on Rural Matters, the Executive Member for Policy and Resources is asked to approve funding as set out in paragraph 3 of this report. Full details of the bids shortlisted are at Appendix 1.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Maximising well-being:	yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
Rural Delivery Strategy funding proposals	5940	July 2014
Hampshire County Council's Rural Delivery Strategy	5684	March 2014
Rural Delivery Strategy: review of progress 2009-2013	4835	April 2013
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects: performance against 2011/12 and project proposals for 2012/13	4048	June 2012
Rural Delivery Strategy - progress and future direction	3372	Nov 2011
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects	3001	June 2011
Funding for Rural Delivery Strategy projects	1799	July 2010
Rural Delivery Action Plan for Hampshire County Council – progress and performance	1127	Jan 2010
Rural Delivery Action Plan	865	Aug 2009
Rural Delivery Strategy for Hampshire County Council – consultation and development		March 2009
Rural Delivery Strategy for Hampshire County Council		July 2008
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The proposals are expected to have a high positive impact on people living in rural areas, in particular older people. No negative impacts are anticipated.

Social isolation pilot scheme. This programme, which is focussed on the needs of older people, will test new approaches for reducing social isolation through training and support to use new technology. Hampshire has an ageing population, which is expected to grow fastest in rural areas. The project will play a part in providing early help in slowing down demands upon more expensive council based services. It is also likely to increase access to services, which is often problematic in rural areas. Non-intervention would not tackle social isolation.

Hitting the cold spots rural extension. Around 18% of rural residents are in fuel poverty compared to 16% in urban areas. Energy costs for rural households, off the gas grid, are likely to be higher. Rural houses tend to be harder to insulate as many are of solid wall construction. This project will enable additional resources to be targeted in rural areas. The focus will be on supporting vulnerable residents, including older people, and young families to improve household living conditions. Non-intervention would mean households continuing to be affected by fuel poverty with possible implications for their physical and mental health.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. Support for more vulnerable groups and the infrastructure and networks to deliver it will reduce isolation and exposure to potential criminal acts. More vibrant and active communities are likely to suffer less crime and anti-social behaviour.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? Through supporting local facilities it would reduce need to travel.
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? The initiatives proposed support the culture of self-help and self reliance, and promote energy efficiency, helping tackle climate change.

APPENDIX 1

DETAILS OF FUNDING PROPOSALS

SOCIAL ISOLATION PILOT SCHEME

Background and Introduction

Whilst there are a number of population groups that are vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness, (e.g. young care-leavers, refugees and those with mental health problems), it is widely-recognised that older people (as individuals as well as carers) often living in rural areas, have specific vulnerabilities owing to 'loss of friends and family, loss of mobility or loss of income'.

- 20% of the 65+ population are estimated to be 'mildly lonely' (48,674 people)
- 8-10% of the 65+ population are estimated to be 'intensely lonely' (19,470-24,337 people)

The impact of social isolation on the individual's health and well-being has been shown to be significant. Both isolation and loneliness impair quality of life and well-being. However, only social isolation (and not loneliness) has been shown to be associated with increased mortality, through contributing factors such as depression, and an increased risk of nutritional problems.

Proposed project, outcomes and measures

Our proposal is run 3 pilot projects focused on understanding and addressing social isolation among older people in different rural locations. Key indicators of Social Isolation which underpinned the choice of the 3 areas are set out in the Table below:

Key Indicator	Netley Abbey	RAG Rating	Stockbridge	RAG Rating	Hayling Island	RAG Rating
Transport	Fairly well serviced by commercial bus service, however still geographically isolated	Orange	Isolated, however geographic position between larger urban areas means better bus services. Sparsely populated with many tiny hamlets	Orange	One regular and frequent bus route (but misses out certain areas). Ferry service to less developed side of Portsmouth (although bus takes people to other side). Car share service	Orange
Car/van Access	30.19% of 65+ group have no car/van access	Green	11.00% of 65+ group have no car/van access	Green	48.58% of 65+ group have no car/van access	Orange
Life Expectancy	District one of lowest age expectancy gaps between 20% least and most deprived areas (1yr women, 4yrs men)	Green	District has midscale-low level gap for life expectancy between 20% most and least deprived areas (2yrs women, 5yrs men)	Orange	District life expectancy difference between 20% least and most deprived is high (women 4yrs, men 6yrs)	Red
Deprivation	Pockets of 20-40% most deprived areas for income, crime and disorder, and living environment	Red	One of the least deprived areas, more affluent	Green	Pockets of multiple deprivation (seafront currently undergoing regeneration project)	Orange

Health-rating	49.75% 65+ group rate health as very good-good	Orange	30.15% of 65+ group rate health as very good-good	Red	41.51% of 65+ group rate health as very good-good	Red
Live alone	53.78% of 65+ group live alone	Orange	52.45% of 65+ group live alone	Orange	61.83% of 65+ group live alone	Red
Local Groups and amenities	Active older person's forum, ESPOPF	Green	Few amenities in place: neighbourhood watch scheme, good neighbours' network, Taxishare, falls project	Red	Few adult services teams: one Village Agent in the North. Variety of local clubs separately	Orange

Each pilot will run for 12 months, each in a different part of the county and each will be judged against a series of outcomes and benefit measures to be agreed in detail at the outset. Examples of these may be:

- Reduction in reported feelings of isolation
- Reported improvement in diet
- Ability to use Skype to contact a relative
- Increase in attendance at events outside the home
- Increased contact with one or more of family, friends, local groups.
- Key health outcomes e.g. reduction in GP/Community Health visits, improved management of medical conditions, feeling safe and secure, reduced ambulance outs, improved self-reporting of health

Selection criteria for the pilot will include factors such as:

- Living alone
- Recent bereavement
- No personal transport or easy local access
- Recent Fall
- No local family/friends or regular contact with those living further away
- Not attending any local groups or amenities regularly

The explicit objective of the 3 proposed pilots is to proactively identify and target those individuals who are currently most at risk from the impact of social isolation. The aim then is to support them to re-engage with family and friends with whom they may have lost touch and with their local community or with one of the many communities of interest to be found online.

It is understood that Age Concern Hampshire currently offers computer training in rural areas. It is a service valued by many over 50's [to whom the service is targeted] who are able to benefit from their computer classes for a small donation of £4.50 per session. However the current configuration of the Age Concern service is not explicitly targeting those older people who are socially isolated, or trying to address and resolve the issues of social isolation.

It will be important to create a sustainable solution that continues to deliver benefits for those involved beyond the duration of the pilots. Hence the pilots will seek to engage with CCG's to deliver condition-specific advice and support and local agencies/charitable groups that can both assist in the pilots and maintain an involvement after they conclude. We would also promote use of libraries as non-stigmatised venues and as a vehicle for use of on-line resources. We also

recognise the vital part that local elected members can play in both helping to ensure that the pilots are focused on the most appropriate people within each community, sharing lessons across the wider community. We will keep members informed and involved throughout.

Estimated Pilot Costings

High level costings for each pilot are set out below, which are set within the following context:

- Costs are indicative and in some cases based upon initial assumptions.
- HCC Adult Services in collaboration with key agents identified from the local communities concerned will develop the project delivery plans for each pilot at its initiation. This will include the detailed work required to configure each pilot, the technical due diligence on which type of tablet device will be most appropriate and how this will be configured. It will also include detailed analysis of the most appropriate commercial arrangement [capital purchase vs. rental vs. managed service] and so on. One of the purposes of this initial work will be to develop the detailed cost breakdown.

Pilot 1: High Tech - Pilot site: Stockbridge

A: Estimated cost per person

Tablet PC's:	£400
Mobile/Wi-Fi connectivity:	£350
Total cost per person	£750
Total for the pilot cohort of ~30	£22,500

B: Estimated other pilot costs:

Setup and project management:	£7,500
Facilitator training:	£5,000
Device training:	£1,000
IT support:	£3,500
Facilities hire:	£1,500
Tracking and reporting of outcomes:	£4,000
Other costs [including contingency]	£5,000
Total other pilot costs	£27,500

The total cost of the High Tech pilot has been estimated at **£50,000**. It is expected that the pilot will be delivered with a group of up to 30 participants.

Pilot 2 & 3: Medium Tech (Pilot site 2: Netley Abbey; Pilot site 3: Hayling Island)

*Note: Figures below relate to **each** pilot.*

A: Estimated cost per person

Loan use of Tablet PC's:	TBC
Mobile/Wi-Fi connectivity:	TBC
Total cost per person:	TBC

Total for the pilot cohort of ~30 capped at £8,000

B: Estimated other pilot costs:

Setup and project management	£3,500
Facilitator training:	£2,000
Device training:	£1,000
IT support:	£3,000
Facilities hire:	£1,500
Tracking and reporting of outcomes:	£3,000
Other costs [including contingency]:	£3,000
Total other pilot costs	£17,000

The total cost of each of the two Medium Tech pilot has been estimated at **£25,000**. It is expected that each pilot will be delivered with a group of up to 30 participants.

The total cost of all three pilots is estimated to be **£100,000** and will involve up to 90 participants. The exercise will last 12 months, including detailed planning and design, cohort selection, delivery and reporting. It is proposed that HCC evaluate the pilot independently towards the end of the 12 months to enable continuity towards a more mainstream service if the pilots prove successful.

‘HITTING THE COLD SPOTS’ RURAL EXTENSION

Background and history

Hitting the Cold Spots (HTCS) is the Hampshire County Council response to fuel poverty and has been running since 2010-11 across the County. It works with vulnerable residents including older people and those with children, to find ways to reduce fuel poverty, improve household living conditions, in particular the heating and hot water facilities within properties, and offers small emergency funding to alleviate crises.

This paper recognises that those living in the rural areas of Hampshire are more at risk of fuel poverty and describes the proposal through which fuel poverty can be tackled as part of the Hitting the Cold Spots project to target and reduce hardship for the individuals and the families living in these areas.

Definition

The Hills Review ‘Getting the measure of fuel poverty’ concluded that fuel poverty is not only distinct but also a serious national problem with severe health and well-being consequences. It contributes to 27,000 excess winter deaths each year but also to a much greater number of ill-health incidents.

Households in fuel poverty are those that are at risk of being unable to afford to heat their homes to an adequate standard. They may also be less able to spend money on other necessities. A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to

spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth.

(Appendix 1)

We know that:

- Proportionally more households in rural areas are in fuel poverty than the national average. In 2010, around 18% of households in rural areas were in fuel poverty compared with 16% of those in urban areas.
- Households in rural areas are more likely to be off the gas grid (i.e. not connected to mains gas), and therefore are reliant on potentially more expensive fuels (such as heating oils and solid fuels), than those in urban areas (36% compared with 8% of households).

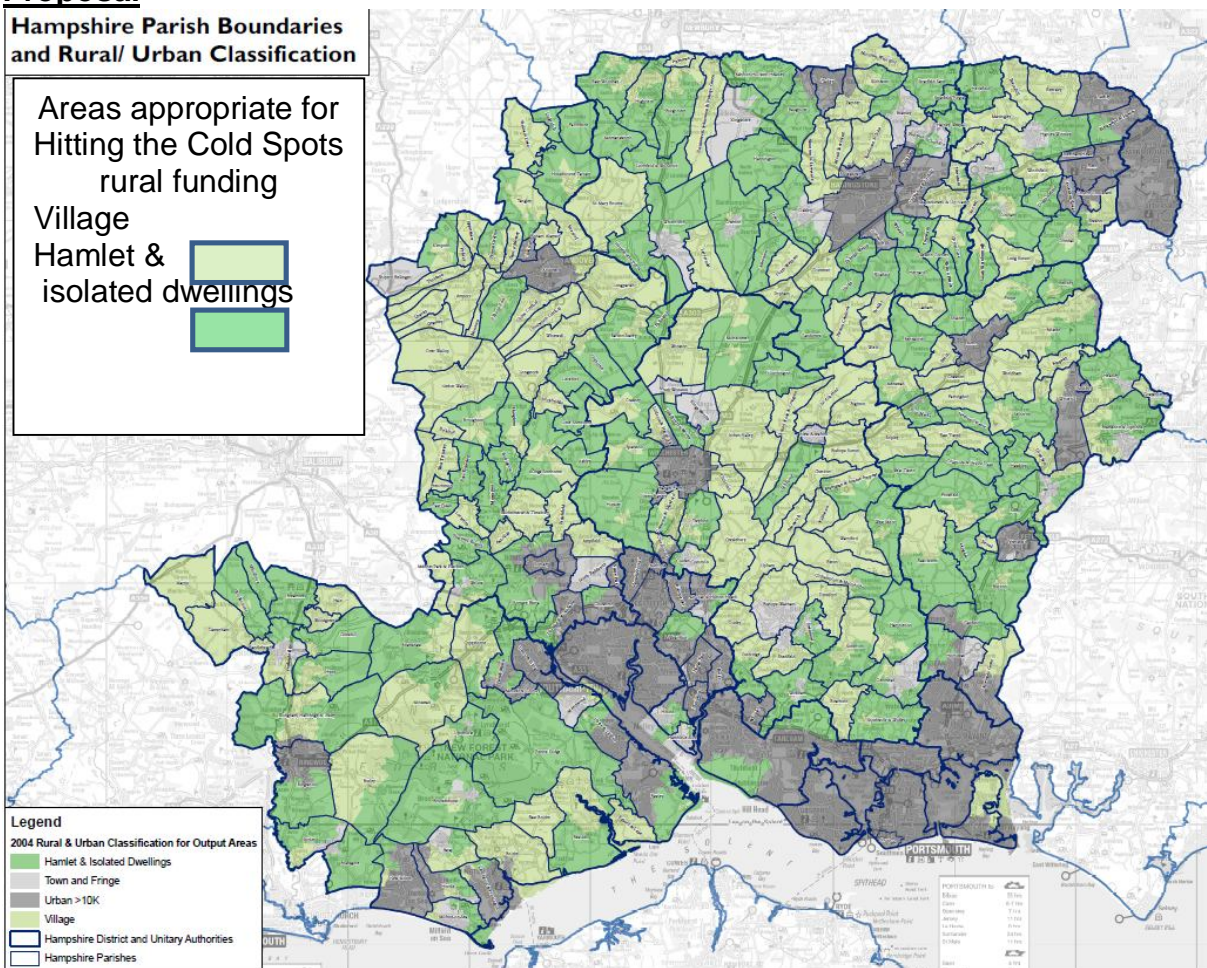
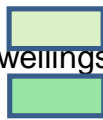
Proposal

Hampshire Parish Boundaries and Rural/ Urban Classification

Areas appropriate for Hitting the Cold Spots rural funding

Village

Hamlet & isolated dwellings



We know that much of Hampshire is rural and so a proportion of the work of the Hitting the Cold Spots project has always included rural activity. This paper seeks to acknowledge the specific difficulties faced by rural households and request funding to tackle them and measure the activity and impact through a supplementary Hitting the Cold Spots -Target Rural Fuel Poverty Project offer. This will involve

- Working closely with the Village Agent network to provide additional support in rural area to identify older people who are struggling to keep warm and/or supply themselves with reliable hot water.

- Utilising extra capacity from the Expert Advisors: The three HTCS Advisors are employed by the Environment Centre (tEC), the delivery partner in Hitting the Cold Spots. The expert Advisors are able to visit people in their own homes and offer advice and practical support. This may include exploring option for mains gas connections in rural areas.
- Access to the Advice Line for professionals volunteers and individuals.
- Provision of additional emergency heating measures: We currently offer a short term solution for those households who have no functioning heating system. This involves the supply and delivery of electric oil filled radiators at the nominal cost of £1.

Expected Outcomes

1. 50 additional visits to households living in rural areas
2. 11 rural households supported with heating and/or hot water repair/replacement
3. 25 radiators distributed to rural vulnerable households without heating
4. 20 small grant payments to help with the cost of solid or oil fuel deliveries

Project timescale

Hitting the Cold Spots has funding to operate through to the end of March 2015, at which point the project may close. The Hitting the Cold Spots-Target Rural Fuel Poverty project addition could also therefore run from January 2015 through to March 2015.

Budget

<i>HTCS Advisor resource</i> 1 x HTCS Advisor at 1.5 days pcw, January – March 2014. Inc. £300 travel expenses	£4,226
<i>Grants for heating &/or hot water system works .</i> 11 households x £3,500	£38,500
<i>Oil filled radiator purchases</i> 25 radiators x £50	£1,250
<i>Small grant payments for solid/oil fuel deliveries</i> 20 households x £300	£6,000
Total	£49,976

Decision Request

Award £49,976 to extend Hitting the Cold Spots activity in rural areas from January– March 2015.