



<u>Committee and Date</u> Bishop's Castle, Chirbury & Worthen and Clun Local Joint Committee 20 th January 2010. 7 pm	<u>Item</u> Publ
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Rural Community Engagement

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Summary

Linked to the work on the Sustainable Community Strategy and the emerging Rural Development Framework, Shropshire Council wrote to all Parish Clerks on 15th of November to make them aware of an approach to evidence-based community engagement that Shropshire Council is planning to introduce in order to make informed and considered decisions about settlements, through ground up intelligent discussion between the Council and the community.

This collaborative approach will very much be grounded in developing our understanding of how communities work and the interdependencies between them, and encouraging collective contribution to the common priorities as set out in our draft Community Strategy of:

- Enterprise and growth, with strong market towns and rebalanced rural settlements;
- Responding to climate change and enhancing our natural and built environments;
- Healthy safe and confident people and communities.

A second Letter was sent on the 3rd of December seeking volunteer communities to come forward to participate in an initial phase of work to help to inform a review of the proposed community engagement.

Phase One of our approach will involve using parish plan and other evidence from rural communities and our own sources, and then testing it with communities themselves to develop a really good understanding about the aspirations, expectations, needs and capacities of communities. This is so that we can meet our requirement on us as a planning authority to make sensible evidence-based decisions about settlements and the development of the Community hubs.

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Community Cluster approach set out in the Core Strategy. . Such evidence however be of value to this and other Local Joint Committees.

The rationale in seeking volunteers has been to seek a geographical spread of communities across rural Shropshire that would be as representative of rural settlements as possible. This has meant trying to include communities were at various stages of parish planning or had completed parish plans and Chapel Lawn, communities where particular rural issues had been highlighted already, such as rural phone box issues, rural schools, and digital radio/

Shropshire Council officers and Members are proposing working with parishes and with the Community Council of Shropshire and West Midlands Planning this approach, to make the most of shared resources and independent council and voluntary sector advice and guidance.

By the end of April it is hoped that 6 community testing events will have been completed as part of phase 1 and that in this LJC area this will have included and Chapel Lawn

Participation in the events will be coordinated with Local members and parishes Councils and will be by invitation only following a prescribed "tool kit" with given to the communities involved.

This report has been brought to the LJC for Information purposes.

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