

<b>Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 3</b>
<b>27 July 2009</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Solicitor to the Council**

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### **A Rural Definition**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

Determine what is meant by 'Rural Communities' to ensure scrutiny function is focused correctly on rural communities.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Scrutiny Commission agree upon a definition, or at the least come to an understanding, of Rural Communities and identify rural areas so that members are confident about the focus of the remit of the Commission.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

The Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities was established at Annual Council on 18 May 2009.

#### **4. REPORT**

4.1 To provide effective and focused scrutiny, the commission would require an understanding of what is deemed to be a 'rural community' and where these are located within the Peterborough boundary. This report provides definitions and also a map (Appendix A) showing the rural areas under Peterborough City Council's authority.

4.2 Dictionary definitions:

- (i) Rural: in, or like the countryside  
 Countryside: land not in towns, cities or industrial areas, which is either used for farming or left in its natural condition  
 (Cambridge Dictionaries Online – Cambridge University Press).
- (ii) Rural: adjective relating to or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town  
 Countryside: the land and scenery of a rural area  
 (Oxford Dictionaries, askoxford.com).

4.3 If the above definitions are used then rural communities are any that are located outside of the town or city area within the surrounding countryside. How far outside the city or urban area and into the countryside is not specific.

4.4 To determine where the rural communities are located, the committee needs to recognise where the town or city boundary ends. The enclosed map (attached as appendix 1) shows the neighbourhood management locations with the North and West Rural location separate from the

rest of the city and urban areas.

- 4.5 However, the map is designed using Ward boundaries (mainly drawn along lines of roads and highways) and therefore anomalies occur such as eastern parts of the Paston Ward have been included in the North and West Urban category along with western parts of the Werrington North Ward when these areas could be considered rural. The majority of the rural area is located in the North and West Rural location.
- 4.6 If the attached map is used as an indication or consensus of where rural communities are located within the Peterborough area, some common sense would need to be applied when specific locations bordering the urban/city area are discussed as it could be argued that some Ward boundaries cover both rural and urban areas.

## **6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None.

## **7. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - map of Neighbourhood Management Locations.

Appendix B - letter from DEFRA.