

**Box 8. "Refreshed" Rural Proofing Toolkit**

**Step One: The policy development process – where thinking rural will be most useful:**

- What are the objectives of the proposed policy?
- What are its intended impacts or outcomes?
- Which areas, groups or organisation are supposed to benefit?
- What is the current situation and why is it not delivering the outcomes required?
- On implementation, monitor change – evaluate the impact the policy is having, using appropriate data collection and assess what is, or isn't being achieved.

**Step Two: Rural proofing policy development:**

1. Evidence base – a strong and credible evidence base should be available. It should include:
  - a. existing research, survey or analysis with a rural dimension;
  - b. specially commissioned data and research; and
  - c. use of the ONS Rural And Urban Areas definition to interpret data sets
2. Service provision and availability:
  - a. Will the policy affect the availability of public and private services?
  - b. Will the policy rely on existing service outlets, such as schools, libraries and GP surgeries?
  - c. Will the policy rely on the private sector or a public-private partnership?
3. Delivery costs:
  - a. Will the cost of delivery be higher in rural areas where clients are more widely dispersed and economic of scale can be harder to achieve?
  - b. Will the policy rely on local institution for delivery?
4. Accessibility and infrastructure:
  - a. Will the policy affect travel needs or the ease/cost of travel?
  - b. Does the policy rely on infrastructure (e.g. broadband ICT, main roads, utilities) for delivery?
  - c. Will delivery of the policy be challenging at the 'edges' of administrative areas?
  - d. Is the policy dependant on new buildings or development sites?
5. Communications:
  - a. Does the policy rely on communicating information to clients?
6. Economies:
  - a. Will the policy impact on rural businesses, including the self employed?
  - b. Will the policy affect land-based industries and, perhaps, rural economies and environments?
  - c. Will the policy affect people on low wages or in part-time or seasonal employment?
7. Disadvantage:
  - a. Will the policy target disadvantaged people or places?

**Step Three: policy implementation and evaluation – policy initiative has been implemented, it is important that there is a rural perspective.**

Source : CRC (2009) Rural Proofing Guidance, CRC available at <http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/rural%20proofing%20toolkit.pdf>

*And, the emphasis on partnership working and community empowerment*