COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 16 July 2025

AGENDA ITEM 7 – PUBLIC QUESTIONS - WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITHCOUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

1	**Question from Avalon Rawling to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Communities – Councillor A U Pinnock** “What challenges does the Council anticipate would arise in the setting up of a CIC to support the operations of critical public services, and what support or safeguards would the Council need to see to ensure such a model could succeed?” <u>Cabinet Member Response</u> We recognise the value of community organisations of all shapes and sizes to deliver positive outcomes for residents and local communities. Community organisations are often able to deliver flexibly and at pace, working alongside public sector partners to deliver community impact. This includes small grassroots groups, large established charities, and social enterprises such as Community Interest Companies (CICs). That’s why we've included the role of CICs in the Inclusive Economy Strategy presented to this Council meeting. In many of our communities we rely on community organisations to deliver the outcomes for residents. The Council has not undertaken a comprehensive review of the potential opportunities or risks of working with CICs in particular service areas. Social enterprises can participate in council procurement exercises or apply for grant schemes wherever they meet the eligibility criteria. There is no single set of safeguards or criteria for CICs. The kinds of safeguards and criteria would depend on the service in question, how it is being delivered, and how it is being funded. We have specific requirements around particular contracts, grants, and services. For example, we might require evidence of particular kinds of insurance such as public liability insurance or buildings insurance. If working with vulnerable people or with social care, other safeguards such as DBS checks or regulatory requirements might be in force. We would assess opportunities to collaborate with social enterprises on a case-by-case basis. The relevant team can provide more advice, dependent on the service area of interest.
2	**Question from Avalon Rawling to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration – Councillor Turner** “The Inclusive Economy Strategy endorsed by the Councillors at Agenda Item 10 of this meeting, commits to (among other things) local wealth building, supporting social enterprises and cooperatives, and ensuring that public spending delivers social value and inclusive outcomes. How do the Councillors envisage that social enterprises and cooperative models can not only be supported, but encouraged, among the citizens of Kirklees who are ready and

	able to get involved in solving many of the problems that the Council faces, not least in respect of budgetary constraints?” <u>Cabinet Member Response</u> The Council is cognizant of relatively low awareness and understanding of cooperative and social enterprise models and their benefits in contributing to a productive, resilient, inclusive and environmentally sustainable economy. The Council’s business team provides support to all residents who are considering starting their own business. It operates a ‘gateway’ model to ensure that start-ups receive the most appropriate support to meet their needs – either delivered by our in-house advisors or signposted to another provider. Most recently the Council team has provided advice and support to the ‘Makers and More’ co-operative to establish a presence in Byram Arcade. In Dewsbury, the Council has provided direct support to the establishment of The Arcade Group, a community benefit society – another form of cooperative – that will be taking on management of the arcade once the renovations are complete. This innovative approach means Dewsbury Arcade will be the UK’s first community-run shopping centre. We hope that together with the revamp of the Dewsbury Market it will lead to a big boost in town centre footfall. The Council also works closely with TSL Kirklees who are leading a partnership programme – Business for Good West Yorkshire – that supports and promotes these models. The programme, financed through West Yorkshire Shared Prosperity Fund monies, includes a series of webinars and study visits that look at different businesses. In 2025 this series has already covered creative industries and asset transfers in June and will cover health and climate in October. Social entrepreneurs are encouraged to contact the Business for Good West Yorkshire programme to understand the support that is available.