

Contact Officer: Steve Copley

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday 12th September 2016

Present: Councillor Rob Walker (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor David Hall
Councillor James Homewood
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Hilary Richards
Councillor Cathy Scott
Councillor Mohan Sokhal
Councillor John Taylor

Apologies: Councillor Fazila Fadia
Councillor Robert Light
Councillor Sheikh Ullah

Observers: Councillor Gemma Wilson

1 Membership of the Committee

Cllr Rob Walker welcomed members to the first meeting of the Policy Committee in the 2016/17 municipal year.

Apologies for absence were noted on behalf of Cllrs Fazila Fadia, Robert Light and Sheikh Ullah. Cllrs Cathy Scott and Mohan Sokhal substituted for Cllrs Cllrs Fazila Fadia and Sheikh Ullah.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the Policy Committee meeting on 14 April 2016 were approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

Today's meeting was held in public session.

5 Public Question Time

No questions were submitted

6 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

7 Member Question Time

No questions were submitted

8 Policy Committee - Arrangements and Programme of Work for 2016/17

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Director for Legal, Governance and Monitoring which sought members approval to:-

(a). The proposed arrangements for the meetings and work of the Policy Committee in 2016/17, based on the decisions and methodology used in 2015/16

(b). Permission to complete the work which is outstanding from 2015/16 on the draft policy statements on:-

- Sustainable communities
- Working with schools and their roles as hubs in the local communities
- Passive housing

(c). The nomination of a number of new and potential topics for review in 2016/17.

The discussion focused on (c) above, and the following five potential topics – policy issues - put forward for review to-date by Directors and Cabinet Members.

The comments of the members of the committee are also summarised under each item:-

(1). Waste management strategy - The changing national policy context, the current waste management contract and the strategy to be adopted moving forward.

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Need to be clearer about the brief and scope, plus the timing of the review as officers are actively involved in negotiations on a new waste management contract.

The review of policy should include looking at waste minimisation, recycling and recycling rates and the “circular economy” (economic, recycling and waste)

(2). Education in Kirklees – Changes in our working environment - The potential impact of emerging government policy in Kirklees including emerging proposals around the use of selection in admissions and the nature of the Councils relationships with schools and academies

Need to be clearer about the brief and scope.

These are important issues. However, some of these are national issues and beyond our control and influence. It may be more appropriate to look at something which is more local, manageable and topical. For example, the school admissions policy in Kirklees in light of growing demand from parents for places at some local schools, plus the Local Education Authority’s communications and working relationships with schools.

(3) Local Plan - How we maximise delivery of housing numbers to respond to increasing demand.

Need to be clearer about the brief and scope

It may be better to focus on how we increase and maximise on the delivery of housing, the organisations that could be created to help do this and the demands on the facilities and infrastructure in those areas where the houses are built.

(4) Kirklees and its green infrastructure - How green infrastructure supports economic growth and the policy opportunities for the council with regards to this agenda.

Need to be clearer about the brief and scope.

It would be worth looking at the policy and what we mean when we talk about green infrastructure, plus its links to economic growth in Kirklees. Plus, what we can do to support those local business and ventures which are put forward for approval, development and support in Kirklees. The implications also need to be considered.

(5) Procurement and social value(s) - How the councils procurement policy should be reviewed to consider the opportunity to maximise social value.

Need to be clearer about the brief and scope.

The funding and expenditure available to local authorities is becoming increasingly limited, so how can the council work with local companies and firms to help them compete for our contracts and tenders and work. It can be difficult for some local

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firms to meet some of the expectations and rules which the council and its partners set.

RESOLVED – Members of the Policy Committee went on to resolve that:-

(1) The arrangements for the meetings and work of the Policy Committee in 2016/17, as set out in the report, be approved

(2) Members and officers to complete the work on the following topics from 2015/16, in order to present reports to Cabinet:-

- Sustainable communities
- Working with schools and their roles as hubs in the local communities
- Passive housing

(3) Officers be asked to prepare a further report for the next Policy Committee with further information on the potential brief and scope and best dates for the review of each of the items described above, so that formal presentations can be presented to subsequent meetings. The presentations will help members to determine which particular areas of policy need to be reviewed in 2016/17.

9 Policy Committee in 2015/16 - Work on a Policy Statement on Passivhaus

Following on from item 8 above, Cllr Andrew Cooper introduced a draft report and set of recommendations on behalf of a Policy Committee task and finish group that had been established to review the topic of “Passive housing” in order to produce a draft policy statement for the Policy Committee to consider.

Cllr Andrew Cooper reported on the work of the task and finish group, which has involved Cllrs Andrew Marchington, Naheed Mather and Gemma Wilson to-date

Members of the Policy Committee agreed to receive the report, but went on to discuss the report and the policy statement and the recommendations made for a phased and three stage approach to help develop the options and use of passivhaus in Kirklees for some - not all - housing developments in the period from 2016 -2026. The three phases would involve – pathfinding, mainstreaming and adoption by the market.

The discussion focused, in summary, on the following concerns and questions:-

- The need for some more scenario planning to check the potential and the timescales involved
- The need for more engagement and stakeholder analysis with those developers, building firms and housing organisations that could be involved in delivering on these changes e.g. Are they ready?
- The consequences and implications of promoting the development of passivhaus e.g. reduced energy bills may be possible, but the increased costs of

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building passive homes could potentially be reflected in the price of those homes and then the increased costs of the mortgage or rents that the owners and tenants may have to pay over the longer term.

- Living in passivehaus homes does require the owners or tenants to adapt their behaviours in order to achieve the benefits and savings.

The Committee went on to discuss how these issues could be addressed in order that a revised policy statement can be prepared for the Policy Committee, and before the item is referred to Cabinet for attention.

RESOLVED -

(1) The work on the draft report and its policy statement and recommendations to-date be received at this stage.

(2) Cllr Andrew Cooper to organise a further meeting with members of the task and finish group, plus any of the current members of the Policy Committee, to try to address the concerns and questions raised in today's meeting

(3) The outcome and the work on the development of the policy statement and its recommendations to be considered at a future meeting of the Policy Committee.