



**Priority Recommendations as Identified by the Cross-Party Working Group on Friday 2 March 2018:**

Active Citizens:

- Kirklees Council should make Active Citizenship a shared strategic priority and use this as a basis for developing a new democratic relationship between Kirklees citizens and the state.
- Kirklees Council should ensure that schools play a central role as local democratic hubs as part of the delivery of an Active Citizens Strategy. This should involve designing (and putting into practice) a range of approaches which will create pathways for young citizens to become involved in civic society, including raising awareness about being a councillor. These could include:
  - Designing local democracy resources for Kirklees schools to be used in the context of civic education.
  - Strengthening the links between local councillors and the schools in their wards through programmed “school surgeries” as part of citizenship education.
  - Working with the National Citizen Service to develop a mentoring scheme, to be piloted in Kirklees.
  - Working with the Local Government Association (LGA) to develop a young councillors “apprenticeship” scheme, to be piloted in Kirklees.
  - Working with the University of Huddersfield and local colleges to develop a structured approach to work placement.
  - Developing a mentoring scheme between Kirklees Councillors and Kirklees Youth Councillors.

Governance and Decision Making:

- Kirklees Council should carry out a full review of our governance and decision making arrangements. The review should be based on the issues and core design principles that are set out in the report.
- Kirklees Council should revisit our approach to consultation. We should place a greater emphasis on appropriate, timely citizen engagement as part of the policy development and decision-making process. We should test this on a pilot basis to begin with, and consider models of good practice from elsewhere.

- Kirklees Council should develop online and off-line interpretive information for the public relating to all of our public meetings. Such information can be used at meetings but can also be part of wider civic awareness about the council and our democratic processes.
- Kirklees Council should review our approach to creating and sharing democratic content. This should involve exploring different and innovative ways of developing content to facilitate dialogue and engagement before, during and after the formal decision-making process.

### Regional Devolution:

- Kirklees Council should review and improve the ways in which we support senior councillors to carry out their role in the context of the wider region. This should involve improving the information flow, in both directions, between the City Region and local areas. We should also make sure that all our councillors receive timely information about the wider regional devolution agenda.
- Kirklees Council should engage with local citizens to address the issue of local identity. Local devolution and governance are an ongoing challenge. We should be clearer about our local identity so that we can make a strong and powerful contribution to regional discussions.
- Kirklees Council should develop local approaches to strategic planning and priority setting (within different parts of Kirklees), based on the findings of our engagement work with citizens on local identity.

### Councillors:

- Kirklees Council should use the evidence gathered by the Democracy Commission to re-define the role profile for Kirklees councillors, so that this reflects the changing and long term expectations and needs of the role. The revised profile should include core expectations, linked to ongoing performance. These should be used to demonstrate the impact that councillors are having, particularly in their wards.
- Kirklees Council should redesign support for councillors in a way that has a greater focus on their wards. This should enable councillors to provide better support for communities in developing effective facilities, programmes and social networks to improve people's quality of life.
- Kirklees Council should make performance evidence about what councillors do available to the public, in an easy-to-digest format.
- Kirklees Council should support all our councillors to understand and embrace digital technology. Digital literacy should be a core expectation of the councillor role. It should be part of new councillor induction and councillor development, so that we support councillors in developing their digital skills and confidence, and enable them to play an active part in explaining our decision-making processes to our citizens. Commission members should pilot this approach.