

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

Scrutiny Lead Member Report

Lead Member: Cllr Rob Walker

Panel: Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel

Period of Update: January – March 2019

Panel Highlights

Lead member briefings with:

- Cabinet Member for Corporate, Cabinet Member for Economy, Strategic Partnership Lead – Business and Skills, regarding the Digital Strategy
- Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment, Operational Manager, Health Improvement Practitioner Advanced regarding Air Quality
- Head of Housing Services regarding Housing Strategy Implementation update
- Cabinet Member for Economy, Service Director for Housing, Head of Development Management, Head of Culture and Vibrancy regarding Town Centres

Two members of the Panel joined the Council's working group undertaking a review of the Open Age Policy and Local Letting Framework. The findings of the work and recommendations of the Working Group were reported to the Panel meeting. Members supported the findings and agreed that the recommendations be forwarded for the Cabinet Member to consider the next steps.

Panel Meetings:

- 17 January 2019
 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation
 - Refresh of the Kirklees Economic Strategy (including social value and local wealth building)
 - Waste Minimisation
- 14 February 2019 – Digital Strategy
- 21 March 2019
 - Air Quality
 - Housing Strategy Implementation update

Visits:-

30 January 2019 - Barnsley Market

26 March 2019 – Clare House, Huddersfield; a provider of supported accommodation for homeless people.

Outcomes:

In considering the draft Digital Kirklees Digital Plan, the Panel welcomed the work that was ongoing and asked that reference to developing and utilising digital capacity to build businesses, encourage entrepreneurship and retain wealth in the district be strengthened in the plan.

Members welcomed the progress made, to date, in terms of the implementation of the Housing Strategy and identified a number of issues it would wish to look at in more detail in the future. This included the potential for the development of the green economy in Kirklees by using the existing knowledge of relevant construction skills within the district and how bus service provision links in with the Local Plan, the planning system, new development and air quality issues.

It was also agreed that the issue of Air Quality should be retained on the Panel's Work Programme as an important subject that touched on many areas of work within the Panel's remit.

Monitoring Work

Monitoring implementation of the Council's Housing Strategy 2018-23.

Looking Ahead

The Panel is looking forward to a busy Work programme for the year ahead covering a wide range of topics within the Panel's remit that cut across and link a number of the Council's key strategies and contribute to the Council's corporate shared outcomes.

Work Programme Highlights

The Panel has focused on a number of interlinked strategies, including the refresh of the Kirklees Economic Strategy and the work being undertaken on social value, local wealth building and inclusive growth, the Kirklees Employment and Skills Plan and an overview of the challenges facing the district's town centres and the programmes in place to address those challenges. It has also considered the high profile issue of Air Quality alongside monitoring the implementation of the Council's Housing Strategy.