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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday 9th September 2019

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor Harpreet Uppal
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Habiban Zaman

In attendance: Councillor Shabir Pandor
Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director - Corporate
Strategy & Public Health
Carl Whistlecraft, Head of Democracy

26 Membership of Committee

All members of the Committee were present

27 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 22 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

28 Interests

No interests were declared

29 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public session.

30 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

31 Public Question Time

There were no public questions received.

32 Leader of the Council Priorities 2019/20

Councillor Shabir Pandor, Leader of the Council attended the committee meeting to set out his portfolio priorities for the 2019/20 municipal year. Councillor Pandor highlighted the following issues:

- The most recent Children's Services Inspection Report which indicated good progress and that the council was now out of special measures. The Leader emphasised that the council could not be complacent and the ambition was for the service to achieve an outstanding rating.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

- The successful launch of the Huddersfield Blueprint had taken place. As a mark of the council's commitment to the masterplan, an agreement had been reached to purchase the Huddersfield town centre piazza.
- The Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge had taken place and the findings report was being finalised. The challenges that had been identified were already in view in the council. One issue raised was the need for a single Clinical Commissioning Group on the Kirklees footprint.
- Equality and diversity continued to be a priority area of focus, not just in terms of ethnicity but also disability and LGBT.
- Place based working – including the introduction of locality partnership leads. The peer challenge had identified the place based working as having a solid foundation with members at the heart.
- Greener Kirklees had become a cabinet portfolio issue and the Climate Emergency Working Group had been established to undertake an audit and produce a report for council to agree a way forward.
- In respect of community safety and working in communities work, an approach to ward based meetings was being developed. Work to address gang violence and fear within communities was also a priority area of work.

In considering the areas put forward by Councillor Pandor there was a discussion on effective budgeting, including business rates and the need for longer term financial settlements to support local authority planning processes.

The committee endorsed the view that councillors needed to know what was happening in their wards and communication with key partners was critical to the flow of timely information.

The committee discussed homelessness and housing and Councillor Pandor confirmed that the administration was looking to address the issue of housing in an holistic way, including a review of the Council's future relationship with Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing.

Councillor Pandor confirmed that work was underway to allocate the additional budget allocation for youth services, this included exploring the creation of a youth zone. The aspiration was to support young people to contribute to the community, develop skills and ambition and reduce the risk of them being drawn into criminal behaviour.

In respect of the Huddersfield blueprint work, Councillor Cooper welcomed the launch. Clarification was sought on the governance and ownership of the project. Councillor Cooper was keen that the Council did not lose the initiative but was able to lead and pull other groups in to work together. Councillor Pandor explained that the next phase of the project would be working up more detail and identifying key timescales. A copy of the document would be shared with the committee once it was

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

available. The Council would also seek to identify any lessons learned from the project, which would inform initiatives in other areas of Kirklees.

Councillor Smaje asked about information on the website for local businesses and residents concerned with leaving the European Union. Other local councils had links on their websites to signpost people to information. Councillor Pandor agreed to look into the issue.

The committee continued to explore how local businesses were being supported through the council's approaches. Cllr Pandor explained that procurement processes were being tailored to support the local economy, for example breaking up large contracts to enable smaller local businesses to bid for specific elements. Work was ongoing to help small businesses to be able to access procurement processes. Cllr Pandor undertook to provide a copy of a spread sheet capturing information relevant to retaining wealth locally and inclusive growth.

The committee concluded its discussion by talking about the seven ambitions of the Council and how elected members would be embedded at the heart of the organisation. Cllr Pandor felt that the importance of the democratic process was something all staff needed to understand. In addition the Council was looking at developing the capacity of councillors to give them the tools to carry out their role at the centre of their communities.

Resolved:

(1) The Committee thanked Cllr Pandor, Leader of the Council for attending the meeting and noted the priorities he had identified for the 2019/20 municipal year.

(2) That once available, the committee receive the timetable and key milestones for the Huddersfield Masterplan project.

(3) That the Leader would follow up on the concerns raised about the lack of information on the Council's website for businesses and residents on leaving the European Union.

(4) That the Leader provide the committee with the spread sheet data and other strategic information related to inclusive growth work.

33 Place Based Working - Update Report

The Management Committee considered an update on the work taking place to develop the Council's approach to Place Based Working. Rachel Spencer Henshall, Strategic Director and Carl Whistlecraft, Head of Democracy attended to present the item.

The committee noted that place based working was one of the core elements of Kirklees Council's Corporate Plan. The developing approach was predicated on the view that citizens and communities are best placed to know their own challenges and their strengths but could not always achieve change alone. Communities and their representatives were being put at the heart of system design and delivery which could significantly increase the impact for citizens.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

It was noted that place based working would use a range of local information, insight and intelligence to achieve the best outcomes for individuals and communities. It would involve working with the council's partners to make sure that geographically, the whole system of Kirklees is aligned around local places with which people identify.

It was recognised that solutions would not be 'one size fits all' and wherever possible solutions would be tailored to meet personal and local requirements. Work would bring multi-agency teams together around the place, sharing their knowledge and skills. Work would be in the best interests of the community and the people, not the organisations. Place based working would take a common sense approach to supporting people to help themselves.

In undertaking work it was important to understand that Kirklees was a diverse and vibrant network of towns, people and communities. Council wards sat at the heart of geographies and were the building blocks for developing the approach to place based working.

The report continued to explain how the council had commissioned Collaborate to assess the views and perspectives of stakeholders to help to understand the current situation and the barriers and opportunities to going further. A copy of the Collaborate report was provided for the committee.

The report continued to update on the progress made in beginning to develop an approach to place based working with specific reference to the following areas:

- The wider strategic context
- Place Partnerships
- Ward and sub-ward ward partnerships
- Citizen engagement and the Place Standard
- Proposals regarding strategic coordination and operational support.

The committee thanked officers for the comprehensive report and raised initial concerns about the need to move to innovative practice, having observed some outdated practice at a local ward level. Rachel Spencer Henshall acknowledged that there was work to do to ensure a shared understanding and cohesive approach to the work across council services and partners.

The committee members who had experience of using the place standard agreed that it was excellent for engaging local people in conversations. However, it was resource intensive and the council needed to ensure that work was properly resourced at all stages in order to maximise the effectiveness of the approach.

The committee discussed the challenges facing the Place Partnerships in spending the funding allocated for mental health and domestic violence work, given the delay in the work starting. Ms Spencer Henshall indicated that assurance had already been given that funding could be rolled forward.

The committee recognised that a successful place standard engagement exercise was likely to raise community expectations and queried how those expectations

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

would be managed. Carl Whistlecraft explained the further phases of the place standard work and how it would help to prioritise areas of work and subsequent feedback to communities. It was recognised that in order to maximise effectiveness, the council needed to work closely with partners.

In providing feedback on the approach, Councillor Marchington suggested that councillors need to be involved in the project a little earlier. It was also suggested that perception surveys may be appropriate to gauge how people felt about the engagement.

In respect of the Place Partnership work it was considered important there was evaluation work to understand the effectiveness of the additional funding and how it had been targeted. In order to see impact in the priority areas a longer timescale was required, rather than looking to change the funding priorities every year.

In welcoming the Place Partnership work the committee felt there needed to be clearer intelligence information available on mental health and domestic abuse. It was important to understand where gaps there were in an area, where services were currently working and how the partnership monies could be used to add value and avoid duplication.

The committee discussed how it wished to scrutinise place based working moving forward and agreed that a subgroup would be formed, drawing membership from the Corporate Scrutiny Panel and the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel. It was requested that future information coming to scrutiny should start to include timescales and specific priorities.

Resolved:

- (1) The committee thanked Rachel Spencer-Henshall and Carl Whistlecraft for their informative presentation and report on place based working.
- (2) That a small sub group drawn from members of the Corporate Scrutiny Panel and the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel be set up for the remainder of the municipal year to scrutinise the development of place based working in Kirklees.
- (3) That future information incorporate where possible timescales, milestones and outcomes.

34 Request to establish a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

The Committee considered a request to establish and appoint the membership of a joint health scrutiny committee. The committee would review proposed changes to specialist vascular services for adults in West Yorkshire. The joint committee would include membership from across the region.

Kirklees had been allocated two places on the Committee and OSMC was asked to agree how the places should be allocated in Kirklees with reference to political ratios on the Council.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

The committee was also asked to consider if it wanted to delegate the power of referral to the Secretary of State, to the joint health scrutiny committee or to retain it within the council.

In considering the report the committee agreed that the Kirklees area was significantly affected by the proposals for vascular services and should be part of the joint health scrutiny committee. The places should be allocated on a 1:1 basis. The committee agreed that the power of referral should be delegated to the joint committee for this issue only. Any other formal joint work being undertaken at a regional level would require further consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee if a power of referral may be exercised.

- (1) The Committee approved the participation of Kirklees Council in a Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to look at vascular services.
- (2) That the two Kirklees places on the joint committee be allocated on a 1:1 ratio, with nominations being provided by Group Business Managers.
- (3) That the Kirklees Council power of referral to refer concerns about the proposals to the Secretary of State, be delegated to the joint committee subject to agreement of the terms of reference.
- (4) That due to the urgent need for the joint committee to start its work, once the draft terms of reference are available, they are circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for comments to the Chair. Having due consideration of points raised, the Chair of the committee will make the final decision on approval or the proposed amendment of the terms of reference.

35 Scrutiny Panel Lead Member Reports

The Management Committee considered update reports from the four Scrutiny Panel Lead Members on the recent work of their panels.

Councillor Marchington highlighted the on going work looking at the improvement work in Children's Services. He suggested that there may be a need to look at the effectiveness of partnership working. The panel also needed a better understanding of how Scrutiny can use and interpret data.

Councillor Smaje provided a verbal update on the work she had undertaken as Chair of Scrutiny, including several briefings to help inform discussions at future management committee meetings.

Resolved:

- (1) The committee noted that the Lead Member update reports on the work of scrutiny panels since the beginning of the new municipal year.
- (2) Councillor Smaje provide a verbal update on her work as Chair of Scrutiny, including briefings with the Chief Executive and heads of service.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 9 September 2019

- (3) The committee noted that the Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19 would be considered at Council on 18 September 2019.

36 Date of Next Meeting / Agenda plan

Resolved:

- (1) Noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held on 4 November 2019 at 2.00 p.m. Councillor Marchington submitted his apologies.
- (2) Agreed that an additional meeting be scheduled for 2 October 2019 at 4.30 p.m. (This meeting was subsequently postponed).