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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday 3rd February 2022

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

In attendance: Councillor Shabir Pandor, Leader of the Council
Councillor Carole Pattison, Cabinet Member for Learning,
Aspiration and Communities

51 Membership of Committee

All Members of the Committee were in attendance.

52 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st December 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

The Chair provided updates as follows:

(i) Climate Emergency and Net Zero Road Map (Minute 29)

The Kirklees Air Quality Annual Status Report was due to be published on the Council's website in the next few days.

(ii) Strategic Intelligence Assessment/ Communities Partnership Plan (Minute 37)

The further detail requested by Members, in respect of the domestic abuse figures and mortality related to alcohol and drugs, had been collated and would be circulated prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

53 Interests

No interests were declared.

54 Admission of the Public

All items were held in public session.

55 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

56 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

57 Leaders' Priorities Update

Councillor Pandor attended the meeting to discuss his portfolio priorities for 2021/22 and highlighted the following points:

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- The refreshed Council Plan had been approved by full Council in October and set out the vision for the future.
- The previous plan had contained over 100 priority actions, 90% of which had been delivered or were on target.
- Thanks were expressed to all the Council's staff for their hard work, particularly during the pandemic.
- The actions focused on what matters to residents.
- Updates were given under each of the following outcome headings:
 - Sustainable Economy:** the transformation of Huddersfield Town Centre was progressing with Gateway One having been signed off and the move towards Gateway 2; the business case for Dewsbury Town Centre had been submitted to the Government; engagement had been undertaken in relation to funding for smaller town centres; and plans to modernise transport infrastructure were in progress.
 - Best Start:** an inclusion support offer had been delivered in schools; the early intervention service had been widened to parents and carers; and a plan to increase the number of places for children in special schools had been approved.
 - Aspire and Achieve:** a new Learning Strategy had been produced, with a particular focus on children who were most at risk of being marginalised; and an Employment and Skills Strategy was in development.
 - Well:** health checks were being undertaken for those most at risk; work was being undertaken to tackle obesity; and a focus had been placed on mental health using the Community Champions.
 - Independent:** a new Kirklees Care Association had been established to bring together partners; and progress had been made in relation to an improved Aids and Adaptations Policy and the provision of more Extra Care housing.
 - Safe and Cohesive:** fire safety work was ongoing in the high-rise blocks, with a focus on full engagement with tenants.
 - Clean and Green:** the new Waste Strategy had been adopted by Council and was now being delivered, with action having been taken in respect of bulky waste and initiatives in relation to fly tipping and glass collection programmed for later in the year; and progress was being made towards achieving net-zero, with a road map being developed for the next phase.
 - Shaped by People:** the new Homes and Neighbourhoods Service was leading the way in engagement with residents; and Place Standard engagement had been undertaken with communities in Batley, Heckmondwike and Cleckheaton.
 - Efficient and Effective:** a new careers website had been launched; and work had been undertaken to transform Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

- The budget would be set by the Council in February and the issues associated with the current cost of living crisis would be addressed within the proposals, through local welfare provision and support for the voluntary and community sector. The Combined Authority would be considering opportunities from levelling-up funding and the Council would work together with the private sector, the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and healthcare agencies to make best use

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of available funding. This was a priority issue that would be given consideration going forward.

- Questions in respect of community safety and the priorities and role of the Council in areas such as the criminal exploitation of young people, and feedback from the Climate Commission could be discussed with the relevant Portfolio Holders.
- In respect of partnership working with other organisations, with particular reference to the regeneration of Huddersfield Town Centre, it was noted that decisions had to take account of impact on local taxpayers. There may be lessons to be learned, and wider engagement and discussions would take place as the programme moved towards Gateway 2.

Councillor Pandor was thanked for attending the meeting to discuss his portfolio priorities and it was noted that he would be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to provide an update.

58 **Corporate Safeguarding Policy**

The Committee received a report in respect of the refreshed Cross-Council Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

Councillor Pattison – Portfolio Holder for Learning, Aspiration and Communities introduced and welcomed the refreshed and strengthened policy, which clearly established safeguarding as being the responsibility of everyone across the Council. She looked forward to the policy being disseminated throughout the organisation and the rollout of the associated training.

Alexia Gray – Head of Quality Standards and Safeguarding Partnerships and a member of the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group (CSOG) and Carol Gilchrist – Head of Local Integrated Partnerships and Chair of the CSOG attended to introduce the report.

Their presentation covered: the role of the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group; the background to the refresh; the key message and focus of the policy; the content and main updates; the engagement undertaken and feedback received; and the forward plan including submission to Cabinet for approval and the development of a communications plan, training programme and performance monitoring.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

- This policy did not cover the issue of child criminal exploitation and the role of the Council specifically but if a member of staff had a concern in respect of any kind of exploitation they should report it to their line manager. There were a number of initiatives that the Council was undertaking in respect of sexual exploitation and working with the community.
- The National Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation had just released its eighteenth report, which contained a number of recommendations for local authorities. It was suggested that it would be helpful for Elected Members to receive a summary of the report and what Kirklees would do to respond to the recommendations. It was expected that the Safeguarding

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Children Partnership would take a lead in looking at those recommendations, with oversight from the Communities Partnership.

- It had been recognised that the CSOG had a role in sharing learning points from reviews and disseminating messages more widely than those staff that had been directly involved.
- The next full review of the policy was scheduled for 2025. The policy provided the framework for the work with partners and the work programme, which would be reviewed by the CSOG on a regular basis; and if any necessary amendment to the policy was identified as part of this process this would be done.
- The training would include discussion of the role of the Council as a regulator working in the community.
- The Council's Third Sector Team took the lead in respect of volunteers working with the Council and in supporting third sector organisations. The manager of this team attended the CSOG to ensure consistency of approach. The Council's volunteers would be able to access training to the same standards as that provided for staff and work was being done to ensure robust safeguarding policies were in place for volunteers across services and that safeguarding was part of management and supervision. This team also worked with Third Sector Leaders and other anchor organisations to ensure that the necessary information was available and easily accessible to other volunteers. Assurances were required that groups had safeguarding policies and procedures in place as part of the registration process.
- It was noted that the Children's and Health and Adult Social Scrutiny Panels had an ongoing overview of safeguarding responsibilities.

RESOLVED -

- 1) That the detailed and comprehensive policy and the adoption of a corporate approach be welcomed, and that the officers involved be thanked for their work.
- 2) That a further report be provided for the Committee, following the rollout of the refreshed policy, to include an update on how it has worked in practice, the outputs, and feedback in respect of the training.

59 Work Programme 2021-22

A copy of the current Work Programme had been circulated.

The next meeting would take place on 15th March 2022 with the following items scheduled for consideration:

- (i) Annual Review – Local Flood Risk Management
- (ii) Domestic Abuse Strategy.

60 Any Other Business

The Chair reported that an urgent decision had been taken at Cabinet, on 18th January 2022, in relation to the grant of consent in principle to regulations to provide the Combined Authority with the powers to borrow for non-transport related functions. It had been agreed that call-in could be waived, as it was necessary for the decision to be reported to the Government by 20th January 2022