

**Name of meeting: Council (Reference from Cabinet)**

**Date: 13 July 2022**

**Title of report: Inclusive Communities Framework**

**Purpose of report:**

For Council to:

1. Note the contents of the Inclusive Communities Framework (ICF), as recommended by the Communities Board
2. Decide whether to adopt the ICF as part of the Article 4 Policy Framework

<b>Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?</b>	Yes  <b>If yes give the reason why</b>  The Inclusive Communities Framework will impact on all electoral wards.
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u></b>	<b>Key Decision – Yes</b>  <b>Private Report/Private Appendix – No</b>
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	Yes
<b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b>	Mel Meggs 1/7/2022  Eamonn Croston 23/06/2022  John Chapman 23/06/2022
<b>Cabinet member <u>portfolio</u></b>	Cllr Carole Pattison Learning, Aspiration and Communities

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Yes via political groups

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes

## 1. Summary

As organisations we face challenges in how we work with communities. Often, we do not hear all the voices from the range of people that we need to, losing the valuable experiences that will help us shape better services and places. It is easy to fall into always talking to the same people, and missing people due to their age, background, where they live or their ability to attend a meeting. Our services must respond to a growing diversity of people and ensure we can respond to all their needs collectively and not working in isolation.

The ICF was commissioned by partners on the Communities Partnership Board and is the product of partnership working and engagement, supported by Council officers.

The ICF provides a partner-produced strategic approach to building cohesive communities. It acts as a guide to all Kirklees partners to play their part in talking and listening to communities and, where possible, working out together how to address challenges and unequal access and build on what works. It is guided by the following principles, the pillars of working inclusively:

1. **Belief** that communities hold solutions, with skills and knowledge that is valuable and will help us achieve our shared goals
2. **Build belonging and trust** with and between our diverse communities on shared interests and challenges, celebrating what is good in local places
3. **Care** about what matters to local communities and own our shared actions that give us a collective purpose to make a change

In addition, to support implementation, the ICF provides a toolkit consisting of:

- underpinning knowledge;
- links to useful reference material;
- Our 5 Inclusive Approaches;
- statements;
- examples;

- checklists; and
- a self-evaluation tool to enable reflection on practice and a continuous learning loop.

The Council is one of the organisations considering the adoption of the ICF. As with other partnership strategies (e.g. the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy), these are approved at partnership level and then considered for adoption in each individual organisation (e.g. the Council, the police, etc.). The relevant governance processes of each organisation are then used to monitor its implementation in each organisation. The ICF will follow this model, with scrutiny therefore able to take a role in monitoring the Council's implementation of the ICF within Council services.

It is proposed that for the Council the ICF will replace what was previously called the Cohesion Strategy. This is in the Council's Policy Framework as per Article 4 of the constitution. For this reason, the decision about whether the Council adopts the ICF will be made at Council.

The report was considered at the meeting of Cabinet on 5 July 2022, and it was resolved that (i) the contents of the Inclusive Communities Framework, as recommended by the Communities Board, be noted and (ii) the report be referred to the meeting of Council on 13 July 2022 with a recommendation that the Inclusive Communities Framework be adopted and included within Article 4 of the Council's Policy Framework.

Article 4 can be found in Part 2 of the Council's constitution – Articles of the Constitution - and details the responsibilities of scrutiny, cabinet, and council in relation to the Policy Framework.

More information can be found at:

- [The Constitution | Kirklees Council](#)
- [Constitution Part 2 Articles of the Constitution \(kirklees.gov.uk\)](#)

## 2. Information required to take a decision

### Background

#### *Partnership discussions*

The commissioning of the ICF by the Communities Board was the result of various partnership and community discussions in recent years.

Before the pandemic the Council began conversations with partners and communities about cohesion and how they experienced the Council's approach. It became clear that partners thought we focused cohesion activity through a very narrow lens and presented cohesion as a 'problem to be fixed'. This, and our experiences working alongside communities during Covid, allowed for reflection on the role of large organisations like the Council and who was best placed to address cohesion in communities.

The Council were given some very clear messages by partners and communities:

- A range of factors influence how people feel about cohesion, and being included is one of them
- If a wide range of partners create the right inclusive conditions, then communities have a much better chance of being cohesive.
- Do not keep asking us the same questions when we have already told you what is important
- Being included means: knowing neighbours and feeling connected; a feeling of being treated fairly; being safe; having access to opportunities through good education and employment; and being heard and able to influence

Prior to these conversations, people had already told the Kirklees Democracy Commission that they want to be part of 'ongoing conversations, not stop-start consultations' about what happens locally. Furthermore, other discussions with communities, the Council, and partners led to the agreement of the 'Working Alongside' shared value, which describes how we all want to work together to make our local places even better.

#### *Council priorities*

The co-production of the ICF was included in our 2021/23 priorities, as set out in Our Council Plan ([link](#)).

In Our Council Plan (2021/23) ([link](#)), we set out how we want everyone to be proud of the communities in which they live, feel happy, be safe, and get on well. Enabling people to get actively involved in their neighbourhoods and the decisions that affect them will create stronger communities and a more cohesive district. Under a new 'Shaped by People' shared outcome, we also set out ([link](#)) how we want everyone to be able to take part in making the places where they live, work and play better. We said we want to know people in our communities well and understand and appreciate what we and others can offer, to help people be able to get help when they need it. We stated that people should feel valued, respected, involved and listened to.

To deliver on this, we committed to 'support our communities to live well together' by 'co-producing a partnership Inclusive Communities Framework to help to achieve safe and cohesive outcomes', including a guide on how to put principles into action and a framework for how all partners contribute to the building blocks of inclusive communities ([link](#)). The ICF delivers on this commitment.

### **How it will make a difference**

The ICF is guided by the following principles, the pillars of working inclusively:

1. **Belief** that communities hold solutions, with skills and knowledge that is valuable and will help us achieve our shared goals
2. **Build belonging and trust** with and between our diverse communities on shared interests and challenges, celebrating what is good in local places
3. **Care** about what matters to local communities and own our shared actions that give us a collective purpose to make a change

To support implementation and improvement against these principles, the ICF provides a toolkit consisting of:

- underpinning knowledge;
- links to useful reference material;

- Our 5 Inclusive Approaches;
- statements;
- examples;
- checklists; and
- a self-evaluation tool to enable reflection on practice and a continuous learning loop.

Organisations who adopt the ICF, including the Council (if agreed), will use these tools to self-evaluate and support their improvement activities.

Through these tools and practices, the ICF enables an improved way of working with communities, shifting away from siloed approaches that focus on fixing problems or communities, and addressing root causes. It aims to simplify what organisations need to do by providing a structure to how we work, rather than requiring changes to organisational policy and strategy. The ICF therefore provides a way for organisations to still be responsible for their own delivery, policy and impact measures whilst also emphasising their accountability for how these are done through inclusive ways of working. The framework approach provides a wrap around for organisations to be able to actively see how well their actions contribute to inclusive communities. It offers a more mature way of engaging with communities and marks a shift towards 'doing with' not 'to' across the system.

For Kirklees Council, implementation will include shifting our own work around cohesion to role model the ICF principles and approaches.

### **Connections with other Council and partnership strategies**

The ICF is one of four 'top-tier' strategic documents currently in development, setting out how we will achieve our shared outcomes in partnership. The other four are the: Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the Economic Strategy, and the Sustainable Environment Strategy.

As well as the other top-tier strategies, it will also support the delivery of:

- Our Council Plan (2021-23), especially action under the Safe & Cohesive, Shaped by People, and Efficient & Effective outcomes

- Inclusion & Diversity Strategy (2021-23), by complementing its focus on changing the way the Council works with a focus on external engagement and partnership working
- Communities Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027, particularly strategic priority 3: Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities. It will do this by enhancing cohesion and inclusion in programmes of work.

The ICF will be instrumental in supporting the development and implementation of the next iterations of these strategies too.

### **Expected impact**

Effective implementation will lead to:

- Members of the community at the centre of our approach
- Greater resilience within communities
- Improved and in-depth understanding of communities in Kirklees, their lived experience, and the complexity of the issues they experience.
- More evidence and insight data to inform future service delivery
- More efficient and effective allocation of resources
- Easier for services to provide an immediate response whilst holding in sight the long-term solutions and need for collaboration
- Improved learning and development across organisations
- A more partnership-led, whole system, and organisational approach to building a sense of belonging in and across communities.
- More celebration of what's in our communities
- More pride and belonging
- Better local integration of services and place-based working.

### **Evaluation**

In terms of monitoring adoption, self-evaluation, and progress across partners:

- Each organisation will be responsible for self-evaluating with the ICF self-evaluation tool and monitoring its own self-improvement through its own governance structures
- The Communities Board will monitor the impact and implementation of the ICF across partners and will develop a partnership improvement plan

On 28 June, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was asked to consider its role in the Council's implementation of the ICF. As well as providing feedback that will be incorporated into the implementation plans of the ICF, Scrutiny asked for a further discussion and report on progress implementing the ICF.

In addition to monitoring the ICF via self-evaluation, as set out in Our Council Plan, through survey-based methods of measurement and flexible and informal group conversations, we will continue to monitor the proportion of adults feeling they get on well together and the proportion of adults feeling safe. The ICF will play a part in influencing these measures.

### **Risks and mitigation**

There are some risks across partner organisations that will be monitored by the Communities Board:

- The challenges of the emerging post-Covid landscape and its social pressures increasing the risk that services (Council and wider) focus more on the 'immediate' at the expense of long-term strategic development
- Shifting organisational priorities might mean that organisations choose not to adopt the ICF and its principles or are unable to implement it
- Leadership and accountability are directed by siloed budgets

To manage these risks, the Communities Board might consider:

- Promoting proper use of the self-evaluation toolkit
- Ongoing leadership development
- Communities Board approaches to leadership and accountability at the highest level, building on the existing commitment from senior leaders to work collaboratively and realise and enable the capacity in our communities as key to sustainable long-term changes
- Additional support in the first year for organisations to complete their self-evaluation, and development of the resulting implementation and support action plan. These plans will be held by each partner and require appropriate resources and ongoing accountability.

### **Sustainability**



The ICF pillars, inclusive ways of working, and the ongoing implementation and support work demand a continuing dialogue with communities which will ensure the framework remains live and dynamic as part of each organisation's self-improvement activities.

### **Cost breakdown**

There are no specific costs identified in the ICF.

### **Timescale**

5-year Framework with an annual self-evaluation cycle.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

An IIA has been carried out and is included in the documents.

In summary, based on involvement in the partnership discussions listed above, a social cohesion roundtable, and the evaluation of the Kirklees Community Champions Programme 2021, officers have judged that the impact will be neutral on the environment and very positive on employees, residents, and service-users across all protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, and unpaid carers) and those who live in poverty or have low-incomes. Because of this, a Stage 2 assessment was not required.

### **Consultees and their opinions**

Communities Board have steered the development activity throughout, supported by a strategic reference group of key partnership leaders. This group has had oversight of development and offered constructive advice throughout the process. Each organisation involved has been tasked with feeding back to their teams information developed via the collaborative work (in 'Design Circles') for further comment and refinement.

In addition, the following groups have been engaged as part of the development process:

- Informal scrutiny (03/02/2022)
- Executive Team (07/06/2022)
- Communities Board (14/06/2022)
- Leadership Management Team (20/06/2022)

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (28/06/2022)
- Third Sector
- Health
- Education services
- Council services, including Senior Leadership Teams in all Council directorates
- Political groups

Feedback from these fora has been incorporated into the final version of the framework and will inform implementation of the ICF.

On 28 June, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee provided comments on next steps, including asking for councillors to be at the heart of implementation, for simpler public-facing information to support the implementation, and for a wide range of voices to be involved without forgetting the value of long-standing voices. This will be incorporated into the implementation plans of the ICF, and a further scrutiny discussion will take place to demonstrate this and report on progress implementing the ICF.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

- **Working with People**

As set out above, at its heart, the ICF is about the relationships between organisations (of which the Council is one) and the communities we serve.

- **Working with Partners**

Developed in collaboration with partners, the ICF will be partnership owned and will offer direction for the inclusive work of any partners who adopt the ICF. It marks a wholesale shift to all partners playing their part.

- **Place Based Working**

The ICF centres on working with communities in their places and reviewing and monitoring relevant insight and data. It has a focus on relationships and connectivity within a place.

Through our Place-Based Working Programme, we are changing our council's relationship with local people, so that we can enable more people to shape their communities as citizens, and not just deliver services to customers.

When we talk about having a ‘place-based’ approach, we mean working with and alongside our citizens and partners, where they are. It’s about recognising and celebrating our unique local places and communities, their strengths and aspirations. Above all, it’s about putting our relationships first and growing trust. We don’t always have to be the people doing things or deciding things. Our role is also about enabling others to act.

Place based working involves meeting people and communities where they are on their journey (whether this is emotionally, mentally, physically or geographically). So it’s not only about where we are in Kirklees – it’s about where we are in our lives and where we are in relation to each other. We all want to live in places where everyone can trust each other.

The ICF fully supports this approach.

- **Climate Change and Air Quality**

No direct impact on climate change or air quality.

As part of the suite of top-tier strategic documents, the ICF will support the development and delivery of the Sustainable Environment Strategy (currently in development). It will provide guidance to including communities in the development and delivery of that work.

By adopting the pillars and inclusive approaches we will hear more from the people who are most adversely impacted by climate change in its broadest sense.

- **Improving outcomes for children**

Children will be positively affected as part of the wider impact on communities.

We know that strong and inclusive communities are a protective factor for our children.

Through our community-based family support, and support for care leavers we know that a feeling of belonging is critical for children and young people.

- **Financial implications for the people living or working in Kirklees**

No direct financial implications for people living or working in Kirklees.

As part of the suite of top-tier strategic documents, the ICF will support the development and delivery of the Inclusive Economy Strategy (currently in development). It will provide guidance to including communities in the development and delivery of that work.

By adopting the pillars and inclusive approaches we will hear more from people living or working in Kirklees about how they are affected by our decisions.

- **Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

No immediate financial or legal implications but there will be ongoing calls on partners' human resources to enable and support the inclusive approaches. This may have an impact on time needed for appropriate staff development.

#### **4. Next steps and timelines**

14/09/2022 Communities Board

September 2022 onwards – implementation across Council and partners who adopt the framework.

All council services and partners who adopt the ICF will be expected to adopt and follow the principles and approaches outlined in the framework

The Council's annual self-evaluation, alongside those of Partners, will be reported to Communities Board and progress towards working more inclusively will be monitored.

## **5. Officer recommendations and reasons**

That Council:

1. Notes the contents of the Inclusive Communities Framework (ICF) as recommended by the Communities Board;
2. Adopts the ICF, and that it be included within Article 4 of the Council's Policy Framework.

## **6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

I would wish to commend the officer recommendations.

The ICF is a new and positive approach to building inclusive communities, through ongoing conversations and understanding and it helps to achieve our goal of inclusive resilient communities with a sense of belonging.

Cllr Carole Pattison

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Learning, Aspiration and Communities

## **7. Contact officer**

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## **8. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

- Informal scrutiny date 03/02/2022 – discussion on the ambitions of the ICF
- Kirklees Council Executive Team 07/06/2022:
  - o recommendation to Council to adopt the ICF
- Communities Board 14/06/2022:
  - o approval of the content of the ICF
  - o recommendation to partners to adopt the ICF
- Leadership Management Team 20/06/2022
  - o recommendation that the Council adopt the ICF
- Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee 28/6/2022
  - o discussion on the implementation of the ICF if adopted
- Cabinet 05/07/2022
  - o recommendation that the Council adopt the ICF

## **9. Service Director responsible**

Jill Greenfield

Service Director for Customer & Communities