

Contact Officer: Sheila Dykes

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 1st November 2022

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)
Councillor Yusra Hussain
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor John Taylor

33 Membership of Committee

Apologies were received from Councillor Jackie Ramsey.

34 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

The Chair provided updates as follows:

(i) Further to pre-decision scrutiny by the Committee at its meeting in November 2021, and informally in September 2022, the Kirklees Community and Social Enterprise Investment Strategy and the 'We are Working Alongside' Shared Values had been approved by Cabinet on 20th October 2022 (Minute 38 2021/22).

(ii) The Communities Partnership Plan 2022-2027 had been approved by Council on 12 October 2022. Scrutiny of the draft plan had been carried out by this Committee at meetings in November 2021 and June 2022 (Minutes 37 (2021/22) and 10 (22/23)).

35 Interests

No interests were declared.

36 Admission of the Public

All items were heard in public session.

37 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

38 Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

39 Inclusive Communities Framework - Update

A report was submitted which provided an update in respect of the Inclusive Communities Framework, including an overview of the Council's plans for implementation and a response to the issues raised by the Committee at its meeting on 28th June 2022.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 1 November 2022

Mel Meggs - Strategic Director, Children and Families and Jo Richmond – Head of Communities attended the meeting to present the report and answer Members' questions. The following points were highlighted:

- A simplified, more accessible version of the framework had been produced.
- The open engagement process and details of those who had contributed.
- The strengthened focus on action; the self-evaluation process would result in action plans which would be collated, monitored and evaluated.
- How the framework would work.
- The key roles of those involved in implementing the framework, both within the Council and partners, and including elected members.
- The annual cycle of implementation.
- The self-evaluation tool, which would become web based.
- An indicative high-level implementation plan.
- Examples of past good practice.
- A list of early adopters; it was anticipated that there would be significant learning from the experience of early adopters in completing the self-evaluation and adjustments would be made as appropriate.

Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning was in attendance to talk about the use of the Inclusive Communities Framework and self-evaluation tool by his teams, to assist them in considering their approach and how this might be improved. One example of its use was to support the development and delivery of the other top-tier strategies, in line with the principles and approaches set out in the framework. This had led to amendments and improvements being made and specific examples were given in respect of the Economic Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The principles had also been used in the early development of the next Council Plan.

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

- The Inclusive Communities Framework toolkit would facilitate use of the principles and approaches by different organisations and services at all different levels of operational work. Examples were given which illustrated how it would help and challenge people to think differently about engagement, ensuring equal contribution from voices from the community as well as statutory partners, and building a community-led response.
- Care needed to be taken that the voices being heard actually reflected the views of a community. The majority of people did not attend community meetings. It was very important that the approach was built around ward councillors as they had a mandate for their communities; hearing and representing a wide range of views and experiences.
- It was better to focus on the values and experiences shared by everybody and on the things that brought people together.
- The starting point for the framework had been the wish for everyone to feel included and have a sense of belonging, and the shared desires of getting a job, access to good schools, clean streets, knowing their neighbours, and feeling safe.
- The Place Standard approach had a significant role to play; it was recognised that ward councillors were at the heart of this approach.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 1 November 2022

- There were communities who were formed around shared characteristics and there was value in bringing them together as such, as well as them being and feeling part of a community formed around a particular place.
- The concept was a difficult one to articulate but the aim was for the framework to provide a starting point to working in a different way, for both the Council and its partners.
- It was important to promote wider awareness with partners of the benefits of working with councillors and of the many different roles that they undertook, including at a strategic level, community representation, and as enablers.
- The vision was for people to feel proud of where they come from, to have a vested interest in their area, to feel happy and supported, to know their neighbours and to feel part of a community, with the associated benefits for health and wellbeing that would bring. Also for there to be strong ongoing relationships between the community, the Council and partners.
- There would be numerous different ways of measuring impact and evaluating effectiveness.
- The Communities Board included representatives from the Police, Health, Probation Service and the Voluntary and Community Sector. These organisations reached different people in different ways and it was considered that the framework would allow partners to challenge each other and to look at things in a holistic manner.
- The Communities Board was the Community Safety Partnership for Kirklees, a statutory body which had certain requirements in terms of membership and acted to reduce crime and disorder in the district. Its remit had been extended to encompass a number of other community-based themes and it had a five-year plan which was refreshed on an annual basis.
- It was noted that, currently, the membership was almost entirely from the public sector and perhaps this should be broadened to include the private sector and community representatives.
- A review of the workstreams was being undertaken and representation on the Board would be one of the things that was considered.
- The framework would also provide a basis for talking to partners and agencies external to Kirklees, including at a national level, and assist in encouraging them to use this approach when working in the district.
- This was the right approach; working with and talking to people in a serious and genuine manner should deliver better outcomes.
- In respect of post-use monitoring; the service concerned would use the self-evaluation tool and deliver an associated action plan. All action plans would be retained centrally and would be tracked and reviewed by the Communities Team/Communities Board.

Resolved –

That the following issues be taken on board in taking the work on the Inclusive Communities Framework forward:

- The integral role of ward councillors due to their position at the heart of the organisation and their unique position within local communities.
- The importance of the Place Standard approach and listening to the voices and experiences of communities.
- Consideration be given to broadening representation on the Communities Board.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 1 November 2022

- The importance of monitoring of action plans to allow any issues with progress to be addressed, to learn from good practice and to assess impact and outcomes.

40 **Lead Members' Updates**

Councillor Andrew Marchington, the Lead Member for the Children's Scrutiny Panel updated the Committee on the work being undertaken by this Panel.

An update was submitted on the work of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel by Councillor Jackie Ramsey, the Lead Member.

The updates were noted and the Panels thanked for their work.

41 **Work Programme 2022-23**

The current version of the Committee's work programme for 2022-23 was submitted for Members' consideration and noted.