

Contact Officer: Sheila Dykes

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 7th March 2023

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)
Councillor Yusra Hussain
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Jackie Ramsay

63 Membership of Committee

Apologies were received from Councillor John Taylor.

64 Interests

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Hussain advised that she was employed by a Health Trust outside Kirklees.

65 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public session.

66 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

67 Public Question Time

No questions were submitted.

68 Lead Councillors, Primary Care Networks and Local Health Improvement - Progress Report

A report was submitted which provided the Committee with a progress update on the work of the Lead Councillors - Primary Care Networks and Local Health Improvement.

Richard Parry, Strategic Director for Adults and Health and Emily Parry-Harries, Consultant in Public Health attended to present the report, including the following points:

- The background to the introduction of Primary Care Networks (PCN) in 2019, as a result of a national requirement.
- Each PCN should cover a population within the range of 30,000 and 50,000 people and had to make sense geographically.
- There were nine PCNs in Kirklees.
- One of the challenges associated with this piece of work was that the areas they covered did not align with Council wards.
- The Fuller Review, which had considered the progress to date, and direction of travel, for PCNs had emphasised the potential for the development of the community health function of primary care.

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- The Lead Councillor – PCNs and Local Health Care Improvement initiative aimed to help develop PCNs connections with the communities they served through establishing relationships between them and the Lead Councillor. This would allow them to take advantage of the reach and local knowledge of elected members and to benefit from their starting point of how and where people live their lives.
- It was noted that the relationships were at a relatively early stage, but it was anticipated that opportunities would be realised as they became better developed.

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

- Prior to the initiative being introduced, a number of conversations had taken place with the Director of Primary Care for the Clinical Commissioning Group (now the Health and Care Partnership). The initial concept had been to allow the working relationships to develop organically, although it was now recognised that a focus on specific outcomes would be beneficial in the early stages. A more prescriptive approach, using the relevant data packs, was now being taken with the Lead Councillors.
- In the early stages PCNs had been seen as an opportunity to connect GPs to the wider capacity within communities although subsequent national and NHS requirements had moved them in a different direction. The challenge was working out how best to connect and collaborate.
- It was questioned whether a public health specialist should undertake the role rather than an elected member, who may not have the detailed knowledge of the wider area covered by a PCN and was likely to have constraints on their time. In response it was explained that it was considered that there was a role for both; elected members brought a specific knowledge of their area and how to/what would work with the communities within.
- It was acknowledged that it would be beneficial to engage with members of the wider teams delivering primary care, such as health visitors, in respect of the wider wellbeing and inequalities agenda.
- Engagement with Practice Managers was also proving to be helpful.
- It appeared that the feedback and learning from Place Standard work was helpful.
- There was a need for communication and engagement with ward councillors on the priorities for the local areas, as had been undertaken through the Place Partnerships role; this would assist the Lead Members, giving them a stronger foundation for their discussions with the PCNs.
- Feedback had been sought from all nine Lead Members. Additional support was being provided to those who wanted it and a series of workshops was scheduled for May/June.
- There may be a need for the authority to consider how it wanted to be able to engage with and influence the PCNs as they developed into being the point of access to the healthcare system for most people.
- The levels of operational pressure on the individual PCNs could differ and could impact on the level to which they were able to engage externally.
- It was considered possible that the PCNs could have been better aligned with the district's wards/geography.

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- There was a need for the Council to be assured of the return on the time and investment and to be clear on the outcomes that there was a desire to achieve.
- A formal evaluation of the initiative should be undertaken, including what added value was being achieved.
- One of the challenges to be considered was how to blend the increasing organisational delivery structure of the PCNs with local variations and having a sensitivity to place.
- A focus on early intervention and prevention was considered to be key in addressing health inequalities.
- A range of people, across the partners, were involved in working out where outcomes were not being delivered or people were not being reached in terms of early intervention and prevention. They would work together to influence how the whole range of resources could be used bring about improvement. The approach might be different in the case of each PCN.
- Within a ward there could be a number of communities or sub-communities and there was a need to invest in roles at a very local level, to achieve the necessary level of understanding and have an impact.
- The importance of continuity in the new municipal year was stressed. Assurance was given that there would be stability in terms of the officers who would be supporting the Lead Members which would assist if anyone new was appointed to the role for 2023/24.

Resolved-

- (1) That, in undertaking their review of the role of the Lead Councillors – Primary Care Networks and Local Health Improvement, the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee be requested to give consideration to:
 - The need for a formal evaluation of the role to be undertaken, including outcomes achieved and an assessment of the added value.
 - The need for more prescriptive guidance/support for Councillors undertaking this role.
- (2) That the following issues be taken on board in progressing the Lead Councillors - Primary Care Networks and Local Health Improvement initiative:
 - The need for engagement with all relevant ward councillors, as this will aid the Lead Members in assessing priorities for their area and assist in their discussions with the PCNs.
 - The benefits of engagement with the wider teams involved with the delivery of primary care to further the place-based approach to improving health outcomes.
 - The importance of place and the need for work to take place at very local level to ensure effective understanding of the needs of an area and how to address them.
 - The importance of the focus on early intervention and prevention.
 - The need for partners to work together to understand how the whole range of resources can be used effectively within each PCN.

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Flood Risk Management Update

A report was submitted which considered progress against the Action Plan of the Kirklees Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and set out the process for the development of the new strategy, which was due to be adopted in late 2023.

Councillor Graham Turner, Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration was in attendance at the meeting introduced the report.

Rashid Mahmood – Flood Manager, Planning and Development and Chris Johnson, Operational Manager, Highways, attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions. The report:

- Summarised the work undertaken within the last twelve months and ongoing projects
- Set out the process and anticipated timescales in respect of the development and launch of a new Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- Provided information on the implementation of the new approach in relation to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs).
- Provided an update in relation to the issues that had been raised by the Committee when flood risk management had last been considered.

The Committee also welcomed representatives of partners;

- Matt Snelling, on behalf of the White Rose Forest project, who gave an overview of the Landscapes for Water programme which was a local authority based joint venture to support tree planting across West and North Yorkshire, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and aligned with the national England's Community Forests initiative. He explained that, the creation of woodland in targeted areas would provide significant natural flood management benefits and mitigate flood risk, and provided details on a number of specific projects.
- Rosie Holdsworth, from the National Trust, in relation to the Growing Resilience Natural Flood Management and Woodland Creation Project. This was a partnership project, led by Yorkshire Water and the National Trust, which aimed to reduce flood risk to downstream communities, through use of natural flood management solutions and sustainable drainage interventions, along with landscape restoration. The project had included community engagement, to raise awareness of the benefits of natural flood management, and volunteers had made a significant contribution to delivery. It also aimed to understand the impacts of the interventions and to share that learning.

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

- The engagement to establish community flood plans that would be owned by the local community, with support from officers, was at an early stage. Leads for five areas had been secured.
- The partners included the National Trust, Yorkshire Water, Woodlands Trust Moorlands for the Future and the Environment Agency.
- 'Green Streets' was the urban work undertaken by the White Rose Forest and, in Kirklees, this was undertaken alongside officers from Highways and Streetscene. These schemes came with 15 year funding to support delivery of planting and maintenance.

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- The National Trust worked in close partnership with a wide range of strategic organisations such as Kirklees, other local authorities, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Yorkshire Water, the Woodland Trust, the Environment Agency and Natural England as well as a number of smaller community groups and volunteers. There were also strong relationships with the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Police in respect of issues such as moorland fires.
- The partnership working across a wide range of organisations was appreciated.
- The engagement with local communities and the building of resilience was welcomed but it was important that the community flood wardens were an addition to the current services not a replacement.
- Property flood resilience was one element of this and grants could be offered to householders to undertake improvements to their properties.
- The work being undertaken by the White Rose Forest and the National Trust, alongside partners, was excellent.
- In terms of the ongoing need to maintain the interventions, it was explained that they were designed so that relatively little, or no, maintenance would be needed, but the National Trust had a dedicated team of staff who, together with volunteers, were working to restore the moorland and ongoing maintenance and repairs would form part of that work.
- The Council was to commence a district-wide study to identify opportunities for further natural flood management interventions to be undertaken.
- It was hoped that agri-environment schemes would incentivise other landowners to take such schemes forward in the future.
- The woodland creation used UK native species that were specifically chosen, further to extensive surveys and design work, to be suitable for the site/area concerned.
- Assessing the impact of the intervention works on the water downstream and in reducing flooding was not straightforward. There were models that could try to recreate the situation, but this was a work in progress. A significant amount of research was ongoing to understand this better and work was being done with the University. The National Trust were also monitoring impacts. It was known that these interventions worked but quantifying the results was more difficult.

Resolved –

- (1) That the representatives of the White Rose Forest and the National Trust be thanked for attending the Committee and for their interesting and informative presentations on the ongoing work in relation to natural flood management.
- (2) That the strong partnership working arrangements be welcomed.
- (3) That the new Flood Risk Management Strategy be submitted to the Committee for pre-decision scrutiny in advance of it being presented to Cabinet.

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Lead Members' Updates

Councillor Yusra Hussain, the Lead Member for the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel, updated the Committee on the work being undertaken by this Panel, and an update on the work of the Corporate Scrutiny Panel was submitted on behalf of Councillor John Taylor, the Lead Member.

The updates were noted.

71 Work Programme 2022/23

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