



Kirklees Council

Our Council Plan

1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026



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ACHIEVING INCLUSION

Introductions



Introduction from the Leader

This Council Plan sets out our commitment to continue to serve the people of Kirklees, make things better where needed, and enable thriving communities across Kirklees, now and over the longer-term.

Every day, we deliver a large variety of services to people across Kirklees, doing brilliant things for people in need. But we know that sometimes it is difficult for people interacting with us, and there is always room to do better.

That's why this year, the Council will focus on getting the basics right for our residents and customers. Our commitment is to ensure that, as much as possible, residents have a positive experience when interacting with us. It might be small things, like keeping people informed about an issue they've reported, having easily accessible information on our website, or making sure people are clear about what they can expect from us. But it's also about larger change and transformation, ensuring we have the technology, processes, culture, and skills to make improvements where needed. This is better for our residents and service-users, and it's also better for our committed staff, who need the right support to continue to do the brilliant things we see across services every day.

As part of getting the basics right, we know we need to maintain a partnership focus on protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities, who rely on our services. People continue to face complex, long-standing economic, health, and social challenges. Yet despite over a decade of underfunding of services in Kirklees, together with our partners, we continue to help a large variety of people to access support. This remains a priority.

As well as addressing the challenges we face, we see significant opportunities on the horizon, and that is why ambition is also at the heart of this plan. Our long-term plans to regenerate the towns and villages across Kirklees will continue to help us with this, as well as national policy changes. These present us with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address the underfunding of the last decade, face our challenges head on, and unlock the local economic growth we need.

We can only build thriving communities in Kirklees if we work with partners to tackle our challenges head-on, do things better when we need to, and maintain our ambitions for the future. This plan sets out how we will do just that. I look forward to continuing to work with you to deliver together.

Cllr Carole Pattison
Leader of the Council



Introduction from the Chief Executive

Recent years have been extremely challenging for council finances, both in Kirklees and across the country. We have already made significant strides towards putting our council on a sustainable footing, and this journey must continue. Our budget for the coming year does include new savings, but at a lower level than in previous years.

This is not just about reducing services. Where needed, we have put additional resources into budgets that need it to cope with demand, inflation, and shortfalls. We have also ensured there is funding available to facilitate further service transformation. Throughout our budget planning process we have asked ourselves not just about where we need to do less, but how we can do it differently.

This Council Plan sets out our direction for this ongoing transformation. We know there is always room to do better. It's essential that we work more closely with communities and listen to them about what is needed. This will require changing the way we work across all council services, building a customer focussed culture, and developing a shared understanding with partners and communities about the services they can expect from us.

We don't always have the powers and resources that our residents expect, and sometimes the best way to meet our communities' needs is for the council to get out of the way. Partners and communities – with the right support – can often be better placed to deliver. That's why engagement and partnership working runs throughout this plan. We will only be able to deliver our shared aspirations together.

It won't be easy, but I have complete faith in our ability to make the changes required. Our recent Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge confirmed what I have seen every day at every level of the organisation: the strength of our workforce. Our workforce's pride in serving the people of Kirklees continues to shine through, and I've seen this confirmed in the visits I make to teams across the district. It's this pride that will provide the springboard to the transformation we need to make and to deliver a sustainable, positive future for people in Kirklees.

Steve Mawson
Chief Executive

Our Council Plan – Summary



Vision

For Kirklees to be a district which combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.



Shared Outcomes

Shaped by people	Best start	Well	Independent
Aspire and achieve	Sustainable economy	Safe and cohesive	Clean and green



Partnership Strategies

- Environment Strategy
- Inclusive Economy Strategy
- Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Inclusive Communities Framework



Kirklees Council Plan

- Working smart and delivering efficiently and effectively
- Working with people and partners using a place-based approach
- Our values and behaviours
- Our priorities
- Our day-to-day services



Working in partnership

Our vision

For Kirklees to be a district that combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives.

Shared outcomes

Our shared outcomes are descriptions – agreed in partnership – of the ongoing collective impact we aim to have now and over the long-term. Change in these outcomes is only possible in collaboration across our organisations.

Our Shared Outcomes are:



Shaped by People

We make our places what they are.



Aspire and Achieve

People in Kirklees have aspiration to achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment, and lifelong learning.



Best Start

Children have the best start in life.



Sustainable Economy

Kirklees has sustainable economic growth and provides good employment for and with communities and businesses.



Well

People in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible.



Safe and Cohesive

People in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe, and are protected from harm.



Independent

People in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives.



Clean and Green

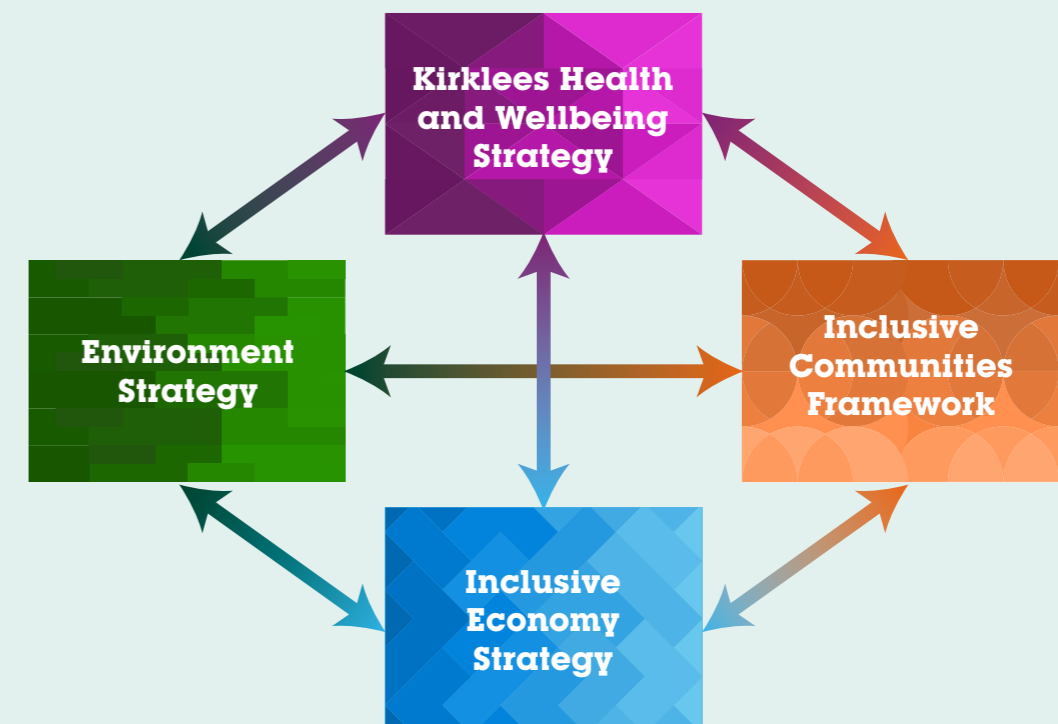
People in Kirklees experience a high quality, clean, sustainable, and green environment.

Our key partnership strategies

Our four key partnership strategies are developed and delivered with partners, across the district. In supporting our shared outcomes and vision for Kirklees, they complement each other and our Council Plan.

These strategies are partnership-led. They explain where we are at in Kirklees – what our opportunities and challenges are, what we need to do to improve, and the role each of us has to make this happen together. Each of these top-tier strategies support the others to achieve the overall vision of the Council Plan. Success in one, translates into success in another.

Acting on the feedback from the council's recent corporate peer challenge, we will aim to work even more closely with partners on delivery of our shared priorities and outcomes.



You can find out more about these strategies at: www.kirklees.gov.uk/policiesandstrategies



Our Council Priorities for 2025/26



Getting the basics right – a balanced budget and a modern organisation

We are committed to being a well-run organisation where excellence, accountability, and transparency are at the core of everything we do.

For residents, this means having access to reliable, high-quality services that improve their lives as well as residents having a clear understanding of what we can and can't do with the powers and resources available to us. This includes communicating effectively with residents whilst also celebrating our assets and successes. Partners, including business, community organisations, and public-sector services, will find a stable, well-managed partner that can champion, advise, and support their activities. Employees will benefit from a supportive and effective workplace where their contributions are clearly defined and valued. Overall, this priority is essential for our role alongside partners in enabling a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable district. Whatever we do, we do it well, striving to deliver services with the highest standards within the powers and resources available.

Areas of focus

High demand services

- Build on our refuse collection performance, reduce contamination to improve recycling rates, and deliver on the new national requirements around simpler recycling.
- Deliver an effective road network to help people get to where they need to be, including repairing potholes in a timely manner and responding to extreme weather.

An efficient and effective organisation

- Support our councillors to carry out their roles effectively, including building officer awareness of councillors' work and confidence in working with them.
- Build on the progress to design and deliver improvements in residents' and customers' access to and experience of our services, with a focus on reducing failure demand and establishing shared expectations.
- Deliver a programme of work to ensure managers are confident managing the budgets, performance, contracts, and staff in their services, supported by a technology strategy to help all staff use technology to make services more efficient and effective.
- Identify opportunities for further development of services through:
 - continuing to use a range of data to benchmark our performance compared to other councils
 - monitoring the activities of other councils and learning from national best practice
 - strengthening connections with researchers and experts across the region.
- Develop and begin delivery of an action plan setting out how we will act on the recommendations from the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2024.

Financially sustainable services

- Deliver and monitor the agreed budget to ensure the sustainability and value for money of council services across the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, including reviewing the capital plan and rebuilding council reserves following demand and inflationary pressures in recent years.
- Bring in additional external funding for projects in Kirklees, both council-led and partnership-led, working especially closely with the local community sector, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Homes England, and central government.

Knowl Park House, new Dementia Day Care Centre



Protecting the vulnerable and achieving inclusion

Protecting the vulnerable and inclusion is key to our vision of being an organisation with a culture of inclusion and diversity, where our people and those we work with have equal access to opportunities and resources and feel valued for who they are.

Some people face greater disadvantages or structural barriers, requiring targeted help to reach their full potential. By addressing the needs of the most vulnerable, we want no one to be left behind and everyone to have the chance to contribute to and benefit from our collective progress. Inclusive and supportive communities are the backbone of a thriving society, where diverse perspectives and experiences are not only acknowledged but celebrated.

Areas of focus

Inclusive care and support

- Implement 'The Big Plan', our offer to children and families with special educational needs and disabilities, with a focus on:
 - providing the right support at the right time in the right place
 - supported transition of children into adulthood, enabling people to live fulfilled adult lives.
- Work to ensure we have the right blend and availability of accommodation for people with social care needs, supporting the local care market to be diverse, high quality, and sustainable. In particular, we will do this by:
 - accelerating delivery of more extra care units
 - increasing supported living arrangements
 - reviewing in-house and external market provision, working across our adults, housing, and capital programmes
 - continue the partnership with our local care association (KirCA), including progressing work to improve the experience of local people who are LGBTQ+ and using social care services
 - continue the focus on adaptations to enable people to live well in their current accommodation.
- As Corporate Parents, deliver the best services and outcomes for our children and young people, and provide continuing support for those that are care experienced, including:
 - enhancing our foster carer recruitment and retention approach to increase the number of foster carers
 - enhancing our corporate parenting responsibility by more widely implementing the concept of a 'family firm' for all our children in care and care leavers in Kirklees
- Work with partners to enable children in care and care leavers to access the services they need, including:
 - employment and skills support
 - access to housing, building on recent successes in ensuring wrap-around arrangements are in place for care leavers.

An inclusive organisation

- Promote inclusion through workforce planning, including pathways for underrepresented groups that enable better representation in our leadership positions.
- Deliver on 'Year 1' of the action plan for the new Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.
- Review and improve the use of integrated impact assessments, which help services consider the impact of our decision-making on inclusion and equality, the environment, and access to services.
- Implement new support and guidance for employee networks, enabling them to support organisational and member priorities and expectations.
- Enhance our workforce data, ensuring we have the data we need to meet changing statutory requirements and our organisational ambitions for inclusion.

Preventing homelessness and rough sleeping

- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, ensuring those most in need can access the right help in the right place at the right time. We want to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place, and ensure rough sleeping is rare, brief, and not recurring. We will do this through:
 - rapid early help and intervention
 - strengthening partnership working to secure the right accommodation
 - improve access to safe, decent, accessible, and affordable accommodation, whether long-term homes or temporary accommodation
 - work with private sector partners to enhance and incentivise access to private rented tenancies and provide good quality rented, affordable accommodation available for long term tenancies.



Thriving people and communities – now and over the longer-term

We will work closely with local leaders and partners to foster thriving communities, recognising that each area has unique needs.

By focusing on health, education, sustainability, and early intervention, we aim to build robust support networks across our communities involving schools, healthcare providers, and community organisations. This collaborative approach ensures that everyone in our diverse communities receives the help they need to live healthy, independent lives, thereby creating a stronger and more inclusive society for all.

Our strategy is rooted in the fundamental role of community organisations, which are the backbone of our efforts. These local champions, passionate about their neighbourhoods, collaborate with a variety of partners including health, care, police, fire services, education, and local businesses. Together, we strive to provide accessible, high-quality services, enhance learning outcomes, and promote clean, safe, and healthy places.

Every one of our services are pivotal to these efforts, designing services that make sense alongside partners, and working alongside partners and communities to ensure tangible benefits for local residents.

Areas of focus

Children and families

- Work with our whole family of schools and educational settings to develop longer-term plans for our operational arrangements and relationships.
- Build on our children's services continuous improvement plan and success, we will implement integrated models of care and preventative services to provide holistic support to our children, young people and families.

Clean, safe and healthy places

- Work with businesses and community groups in local places to support their efforts to build safe, clean, and green places where people want to live, work, and visit.
- Work with statutory partners, including the police and fire service, to coordinate enforcement activity and raise standards.
- Work with partners in agreeing a new shared Physical Activity Strategy for Kirklees.
- Ensure people are living in homes that are modern, safe, and warm, addressing all outstanding issues in compliance relating to fire safety, water quality, and damp, mould, and condensation.
- Raise awareness of the Environment Strategy, engaging with partners and communities on our shared role in delivering its ambitions.

Thriving communities

- Work closely with ward councillors as local place-leaders, enabling place-based responses to the unique challenges and opportunities in each place with the support of place standard engagement and action plans.
- Continue to work with local places to support an excellent network of libraries.
- Continue to support the development and growth of a stronger community sector through our community sector infrastructure contract with Third Sector Leaders, supported by a clear plan for improving council processes and collaboration with the community sector.



Local economic growth, working with regional and national partners

We will enable local economic growth by making the most of partnership working through our role in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and partnership with government bodies, businesses, communities, and other key organisations. This means attracting investments, promoting business growth, and creating jobs, in particular when it comes to benefitting from innovation and technology as well as national economic growth and devolution.

Enhancing our transport network is central to our plans. We want to ensure we benefit from our unique position at the heart of the north, with ever stronger connections into surrounding cities and towns. We also want transport to be better within Kirklees, whether that's road, rail, or active travel.

We are ambitious about sustainability and inclusion, ensuring everyone in this generation and future generations can benefit from economic growth. As set out in the Environment Strategy, we continue to aim for a greener, net zero, and climate-ready Kirklees by 2038 – that means mitigating and reducing emissions as well as adapting to the social, economic, and environmental impacts of climate change.

Our long-term programmes include our ongoing work to revitalise our town and village centres, creating good places to do business and vibrant, safe, and inclusive spaces, where everyone can enjoy the district's rich leisure, cultural, and heritage activities, including women and girls. This lies at the heart of our approach to growing the local economy.

Areas of focus

Investment & Place

- Engage on and deliver the Inclusive Economy Strategy.
- Progress Phase 1 of Our Cultural Heart, an ambitious centrepiece for Huddersfield and the whole of Kirklees, including a new library, food hall, and events square.
- Progress the Dewsbury Blueprint through the Arcade, Market, Field House, Civic Spaces, and Bond Street improvements.
- Progress our smaller town regeneration plans across the district, including in Batley, Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike, Holmfirth and Marsden.
- Work with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Huddersfield University, and Leeds and Bradford councils to deliver on the next stages of the West Yorkshire Investment Zone, focussing on the development of the Gas Works Street site for high value business expansion and relocation.
- Work with local, regional, and national partners across all sectors to promote investment in local places, including supporting:
 - the relocation, retention and expansion of a major local IT company
 - both new inward investors and existing indigenous companies looking to grow and locate within and adjacent to the Investment Zone and Station to Stadium Corridor areas.

Transport

- Produce, consult on, and begin delivery of the Kirklees Transport Strategy, setting the vision and framework for the future transport network in Kirklees.
- Strengthen rail links within the district and beyond, working with government and partners including Network Rail to deliver transformational change through improvements to the Penistone Line connections to South Yorkshire and the unprecedented investment in the Transpennine Route Upgrade.

- Deliver priority improvements to our transport hubs through a number of sites, including bus stations in Huddersfield, Dewsbury, and Heckmondwike.

Skills and employment support

- Work with local employers to develop workforce skills and support inclusive recruitment through promoting apprenticeships, and delivery of Skills Bootcamp and the Employment Kirklees programme in key sectors including textiles, construction, and early years education.
- Develop and deliver new employment programmes to support residents with long-term health conditions to access and remain in good work, in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- Deliver a range of adult learning programmes in several community settings including provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Housing growth

- Progress planning and development on our key housing sites at Dewsbury Riverside, and Bradley Park, ultimately delivering 3,000 units for Riverside and 473 for the first phase at Bradley.
- Progress the refresh of the Local Plan in line with the revised National Planning Policy Framework ahead of submission to government in late 2027.

Devolution

- Ensure Kirklees responds to and maximises the benefits from national changes in devolution as set out in the English Devolution White Paper published December 2024, particularly the opportunities that are likely to emerge through the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.



Who we are and
how we do things

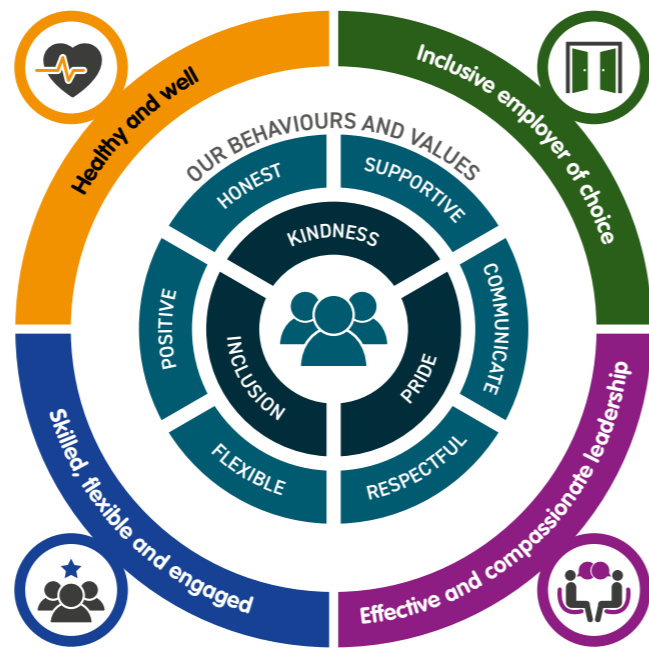
Our people

Our People Strategy sets out how we will achieve our shared outcomes by having people with the right skills, values and behaviours, and by working in partnership in our places.

Our People Strategy has our values and behaviours at its heart. The Strategy has four outcomes, supported by our People Pledge and a programme of work that supports working towards achieving the outcomes for all our staff. These outcomes are: 'healthy and well', 'inclusive employer of choice', 'effective and compassionate leadership', and 'skilled, flexible and engaged'.

We want healthy, motivated and flexible staff with the right skills, values and behaviours to work in partnership with people and places.

Our six behaviours are: supportive, communicate, respectful, flexible, positive and honest.



Our values

Just like individuals, our organisation's values guide the way we think and act, and our behaviours underpin our values and set out how we act upon them. These are the foundations for our People Strategy, which sets out how we will achieve our shared outcomes by having people with the right skills, values and behaviours.

Kindness

- We are kind so that our behaviour makes each other feel included, happy and well.
- We work with each other and are friendly, considerate and appreciative.
- We 'do with, not to', showing kindness to each other and to our citizens.

Inclusion

- We recognise the unique identities of our local places, their strengths and aspirations. We know that one size doesn't fit all.
- We want to enable active citizens to make a difference, recognising their valuable skills, strengths and local knowledge, as well as delivering support and services that are shaped by local people.

Pride

- We work with pride to achieve positive outcomes for colleagues, citizens and our places.
- We have self-respect, dignity and take satisfaction from our achievements and those of our colleagues.
- We are proud of what we do as individuals, together as a council, and together with our citizens and places.

Who we work with

We use the phrase 'We're Kirklees' within our staff teams to reflect our pride in Kirklees and our commitment to working together for all our places. 'People', 'partners', and 'place' are three principles that cut across everything we do.

People

We work with people; we don't do things to them. Our focus is on engaging people, building relationships based on trust, and working together with people and communities to solve problems and make the most of opportunities.

Partners

We work with and alongside our partners. With a shared sense of purpose, we bring our collective insight, expertise, and resources together to achieve greater impacts and make our local places even better.

This includes collaborative partnership working to inform and shape priorities and action across the public, private and community sectors in Kirklees.

Place

We recognise the unique identities of our local places, their strengths and aspirations. We know that one size doesn't fit all. We want to enable active citizens to make a difference, recognising their valuable skills, strengths and local knowledge, as well as delivering support and services that are shaped by local people. This also includes recognising how places are shaped by their natural environments and the wider changing climate.

Shared customer and resident expectations

Over the course of the coming year we will be continuing an important piece of work related to customer and resident expectations. This relates to all of our services

Not all customers and residents have the same expectations of the council, and so it is impossible to provide everything that people expect of us. Furthermore, we don't always have the powers and resources people think we have. This is made even harder at a time of severe budget cuts.

Our aim is to create a mutual understanding between the council and the residents. We recognise that residents see the council as a unified entity and expect seamless service without being shuffled between teams. Our commitment lies in delivering excellent services while also ensuring that residents understand that some issues are inherently complex and require time to resolve.

In essence, we are committing to open and honest communication with our residents, setting realistic expectations, and collaborating to achieve the best possible outcomes. This approach helps build trust, manage expectations effectively, and ensures that our residents feel valued and informed about the services they receive.



Our ongoing day-to-day focus

Supported by this year's Council priorities, we will maintain a focus on the day-to-day activities that support our shared outcomes. In this section you will find a description agreed with partners of the ongoing collective impact we aim to have now and over the long-term. It also includes a set of indicators which help us measure how well things are going against the outcomes. The measures are influenced by regional, national, and even international events, but we can use them to help us understand our collective impact across our partnerships.



Shaped by people

We make our places what they are.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- More people believe that getting involved is worthwhile and feel inspired to take part.
- More people have the confidence to get involved and know how to get support.
- More people feel included, respected, listened to and able to contribute.
- More people feel connected and know people in their communities well.

Tracking our shared impact:

- % people who agree that (in the last 12 months) they got involved in their community and something positive came out of it
- % people who agree that people in their local area pull together to improve the local area
- % people who agree that they personally can influence decisions affecting their local area
- % people who agree that their local area is a place where people trust each other.



Best start

Children have the best start in life.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- Confident children ready to do well at school and in life.
- Better outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Child focused activities that support families.
- As many children as possible staying with their families.

Tracking our shared impact:

- healthy birth weight
- school readiness
- children in poverty
- emotional wellbeing at age 13-14 years.



Well

People in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- People have access to opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing.
- A joined-up health and care system in Kirklees.
- Support, help and advice for people in the communities where they live.
- Protection of the public's health through education, support and interventions.

Tracking our shared impact:

- healthy life expectancy
- confidence managing health (with multiple conditions)
- emotional wellbeing (adults).



Independent

People in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- Joined-up and personalised support that enables independence, helps people to live as close to home as possible, draws on support from their communities and prevents or delays inappropriate admission to hospital or long-term care.
- If people need it, they can choose between a broad range of high-quality options for care and support and are always treated with dignity and respect.
- People can successfully manage the changes in their lives.
- People live in suitable and affordable homes in attractive places within a supportive community.

Tracking our shared impact:

- overall life satisfaction
- loneliness and isolation
- suitable housing
- % people who live without social care support.



Aspire and achieve

People in Kirklees aspire to achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment, and lifelong learning.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- People in Kirklees have access to the highest quality, inclusive learning and education provision.
- Learning provision responds to the needs of people throughout their lives.
- Children making good progress and achieving the best outcome, and improved life chances for everyone.
- A highly skilled population able to secure good jobs both now and in the future.

Tracking our shared impact:

- educational achievement (reading, writing, maths) at age 11 (KS2)
- people qualified to Level 2, Level 4, Level 6 and Level 7.



Sustainable economy

Kirklees has sustainable economic growth and provides good employment for and with communities and businesses.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- More and better-quality jobs in Kirklees.
- Create the environment to enable major regeneration activity to support economic resilience and greater inward investment into the district.
- People have access to an appealing cultural offer and vibrant town centres.

Tracking our shared impact:

- disposable income per household (£)
- start-up businesses/businesses exporting
- productivity per hour worked (£) - Gross Value Added (GVA)
- median earnings.



Safe and cohesive

People in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe and are protected from harm.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- More people active in their communities and engaged in local democracy.
- A thriving voluntary and community sector.
- High quality, joined-up and accessible services that safeguard children and adults from harm.

Tracking our shared impact:

- % adults who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- % adults who say they feel safe
- recorded crime rate.



Clean and green

People in Kirklees enjoy a high quality, clean and green environment.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- Well planned places and sustainable communities.
- Better infrastructure for our communities.
- People have access to greenspaces, including appropriate sports and leisure opportunities.
- Address the Climate Emergency in Kirklees and work towards achieving our net-zero and climate ready ambitions for 2038.

Tracking our shared impact:

- overall satisfaction with local area
- greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ equivalent)
- waste recycling rate
- % of mortality attributable to particulate pollution.



Efficient and effective

Kirklees Council works smart and delivers efficiently and effectively.

Our shared day-to-day focus

- Healthy, motivated and flexible staff with the right skills, values and behaviours to work in partnership with people and places.
- Strong political leadership, intelligence-led decision making, strategies and policies.
- Getting the basics right, with robust systems, processes and governance that make best use of available resources.
- Collaborative partnership working to inform and shape priorities and action across the public, private and community sectors in Kirklees.

Tracking our shared impact:

- % employees who agree they are happy in their job
- staff sickness absence
- local spend (amount spent on locally-based suppliers)
- overall efficiency and effectiveness of council plan areas of focus.





Our beautiful borough