

Kirklees Council

Scrutiny lead member report - February 2018

Lead Member: Rob Walker – Economy and Neighbourhoods Panel

Period of Update : First report (18 Sept to 27 Nov 2017) and second report (28 Nov 2017 to 26 Feb 2018)

Panel Highlights

(a). Recap - Summary of the things which we included in the first report

4 Oct – First Panel meeting - First formal meeting of the Panel. Agreement that the topics to consider and prioritise were:-

1. Housing
2. Transport
3. Towns and communities

7 Nov – Second Panel meeting – Presentation on state of nation in terms of housing issues. Discussion highlighted several topics for consideration and/or further attention.

- Age designation and the letting of properties (Allocation of properties etc)
- The availability and demand for supported housing
- The provision of more affordable new homes
- The condition and regulation of private rental accommodation
- Homelessness
- The infrastructure required to support housing development

The Panel agreed that it should probably consider focusing its attention on:-

- The availability and demand for supported housing
- Plans for the review of the housing allocations policy by 31 March 2018
- Opportunities to improve upon the current figures for the actual delivery of affordable new homes for purchase or rental, having considered the total number of planning permissions granted in the period from 2007 to 2016.

(b). New things for this second Lead Member report

6 Dec – Briefing meeting with Cllrs Bolt and McBride - To help discuss and shape the presentations on transport for the Panel meetings on 18 Jan and 15 Feb 2018.

14 Dec – Third Panel meeting – Presentation on the demand for and supply of supported housing in Kirklees.

Members also suggested establishing an informal reference group – consisting of members of the panel – to allow members and officers to meet again to:-

- Follow up on the issues raised in the debates on housing in Nov and Dec 2017
- Track progress with the actions that should follow on from the announcements on housing in the Chancellors budget statement on 22 Nov 2017
- Follow up on the issues raised in the debate on supported housing and the actions and tasks which officers are planning to undertake

Late Jan 2018 – Opportunity for members of the Panel to visit the extra care housing schemes at Sandymount, Crosland Moor and Meadow Green and Meadow Green Lodge, Heckmondwike (Cllrs Judith Hughes and Rob Walker participated in the visits)

18 Jan – Fourth Panel meeting – Presentation and good cross party discussion on the key issues facing the development of the transport links in Kirklees and West Yorkshire, focusing in particular on our local rail links, including plans for the:-

- Development of the rail franchises (2023/2025)
- Trans Pennine upgrade scheme, including plans for the electrification of the route (TRU) (2025)
- High speed rail link (HS2) (2033)
- Northern powerhouse rail link (NPR) (2046)
- Other local rail issues e.g. the need for the improvement of local stations, the need for more car parking and the increased use of the Huddersfield to Sheffield line “*The Penistone line*”
- The agencies that are involved in making the decisions for these various schemes and ventures to progress – Department for Transport, Network Rail, Highways England and HS2 Ltd.

The discussion also led to a suggestion that Kieran Dunkin, Network Rail, be invited to meet with members of the Panel on 15 March 2018 – for a further informal discussion – on how these developments will impact on our local rail services and our towns and villages.

5 Feb – Adults and Public Health Portfolio Briefing meeting – Meeting with Cllr Cathy Scott to discuss how to follow up on the discussion on extra care housing and plans to convene the first meeting of the informal housing reference group in February 2018.

15 Feb – Fifth Panel meeting – Further presentation on the key issues facing the development of the key transport links in Kirklees and West Yorkshire, focusing in particular on our local road links.

19 Feb - Economy Portfolio Briefing meeting – Plans to meet with Cllrs McBride and Mather, plus Karl Battersby, the new Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure, to discuss the work of the Panel to-date, plus potential items for the work programme in 2018/19.

Outcomes to-date:

Housing

- Raised awareness and understanding of the key issues which members and officers need to consider in 2018
- Identification of key issues for further attention e.g. supported housing
- Proposed creation of informal housing reference group to consider a number of issues, but starting with how to deal with the demand for and supply of more supported housing.

Transport

- Raised awareness and understanding of the key issues which members and officers need to consider in 2018. Informal and private meeting with Kieran Dunkin, Network Rail, due to take place on Thursday 15 March 2018. Invites for the meeting will be extended to other key KMC councillors too.

Monitoring Work

Details of the Q1 and Q2 reports to be shared with members of the panel in Dec 2017.

Details of Q3 and Q4 reports will be shared with members of the Panel, when they become available in February 2018 and May 2018.

Looking Ahead

15 Mar – Sixth Panel meeting - The draft agenda for the Panel will include:-

- The Panel and its work programme – Review of progress with items and work for 2017/18, and potential items for 2018/19
- Kieran Dunkin, Network Rail – for an informal discussion – on how the major rail developments will impact on our local rail services and the towns and villages.

General comments