

Minutes of a meeting of the Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review

At 6:00pm on Wednesday 6th October, 2021 via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Zoe McGhee (Chair)
Councillor Robin Carter
Councillor Kevin Watt

Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Paul Marks

Officers

David Watt – Executive Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing
Callum Galluzzo – Democratic Services

1 Election of Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Anne Lee and seconded by Councillor Robin Carter that Councillor Zoe McGhee be elected chair of the Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review

It was therefore

RESOLVED

that Councillor Zoe McGhee be appointed Chair of the Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review

2 Apologies for absence

None

3 Members' Declarations of Interest

None

4 Terms of Reference

David Watts (Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing) addressed the meeting and provided a draft terms of reference document which set out the purpose of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review

It was heard that the purpose of the Scrutiny Review was to ensure that appointments to undertake investigation into options available for the council to contribute to the Government's Levelling Up agenda. With specific reference to the areas identified by

Government within North Northamptonshire.

The Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review Panel will review those that are appointed to by the Council or proposed to be appointed to and determine if they add value to the organisation. Determination will be based on one or more of the following criteria being met:

- the proposed appointment is a statutory requirement;
- the proposed appointment would be consistent with the Council's policy or strategic objectives; and/or
- the proposed appointment would add value to the Council's activities.

It was stated that the Panel was to categorise into the following categories

- **Key Strategic Partnerships**
Participation contributes to the Council's strategic functions, priorities and community leadership role.
- **Community Partnerships**
Participation is not necessary to fulfil strategic or key partnership role but, nonetheless, beneficial in terms of leading, engaging and supporting the community from North Northamptonshire perspective
- **Area/Ward Partnerships**
Beneficial in terms of leading, engaging and supporting the community from a ward perspective

Members heard that in adding items for review to the Work Plan, the Chair of the Panel would also consider:

- If the item is of significant community concern
- If the issue is significant to Partners and/or Stakeholders
- What the added value is of doing the work (It must have an impact)
- What evidence there is to support the work
- If the additional work can be completed within the finite timeline of the work of the task and finish group
- If the work is being done somewhere else
- What will be achieved
- If the Council has the resources to carry out the work effectively

Members heard that a closure report for 2021 was to be provided to the Scrutiny Commission in March 2022, however an interim report was to be prepared for December 2021.

During debate members stated their intention to involve local schools and nurseries within the partnership process to allow for a greater understanding and depth of knowledge.

Following debate it was:

RESOLVED

that the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review Terms of Reference be approved

5 Scope of the Scrutiny Review and Proposed Work Plan

The Draft Planning & Scoping document was presented to members which stated that Kingswood in Corby, Avondale Grange in Kettering, and Queensway in Wellingborough were among the neighbourhoods identified across the country by an All-Party Parliamentary Group as 'left behind'.

An amended motion at Full Council on 28 July 2021 called for the Scrutiny Commission to review the underlying data and associated report relating to areas highlighted as "left behind".

Working with local communities and partners the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review will seek to propose an approach on the way forward, including learning from the Big Local Programme in Kingswood, in order to develop a plan on how The Council can level up - as per the government's levelling up agenda - those left behind neighbourhoods in North Northamptonshire in an appropriate and agreed timeframe. This may involve specifically targeting health inequalities, youth unemployment and new skills, and improving housing in these areas."

Members stated that as part of the proposed work plan, the original data which set out the local communities as 'left behind' needed to be examined to further understand the current situation. It was heard that the data would be analysed in consultation with Public Health including refreshing with up to date information. It was stated that this would then be fed back to the Scrutiny Review at a future formal meeting.

It was also recommended by members that as part of the community consultation and engagement that informal physical events take place in each of the recognised communities which would include opportunities for partners and members of the public to engage within the Levelling Up process. The opportunity to research and explore existing areas of good practise were also discussed within the work plan.

To further engagement, it was heard that a communication plan would be developed in consultation with the comms team which included a dedicated page to provide updates on the progress of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review. Officer support was also discussed which included being able to include the follow partners and departments:

- Children's Trust
- Adults, Wellbeing Services
- Youth Offending Service
- Safer Communities Team
- Neighbourhood Services
- Housing
- Northamptonshire Police
- Environment Health/Protection
- Public Health
- Communication team
- Finance

Following debate it was

RESOLVED

that the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review Scoping and Planning Document be approved

It was noted that the next meeting of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review would take place at 6:10pm on Thursday 9th November 2021 Via Zoom.

26 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Chair

Date