

Minutes of a meeting of the Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review

At 6:10pm on Tuesday 9th November, 2021 via Zoom

Present:-

Members

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

Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Paul Marks
Councillor King Lawal

Officers

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

1 Apologies for absence

None

2 Members' Declarations of Interest

None

3 Community Engagement Timetable

Members were provided with results to a recent survey which sought to confirm member availability in order to undertake community engagement activities on behalf of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review.

It was suggested to members and confirmed that that the ward walkabout/tour would be immediately followed by a community workshop in order to maximise engagement with members of the public and partner organisations.

Members also discussed potential venues, timings and partner organisations that would benefit from engagement with the community workshops. Members were asked to forward any contact information with regards to community organisations and individuals.

Following debate it was:

RESOLVED

that the timetable for The Levelling Up Scrutiny Review was agreed as following:

Date	Area	Venue	Session content
Saturday 27 November 2021	Avondale Grange (Kettering)	Crescents Community Centre	13:00-15:00 - Tour of the area to see both areas of concerns and examples of things that are working 15:30-17:30 – Facilitated community discussions
Saturday 04 December 2021	Kingswood & Hazel Leys (Corby)	Hazelwood Neighbourhood Centre	
Saturday 11 December 2021	Queensway (Wellingborough)	To Be Confirmed	

4 Levelling Up Communities Report

David Watts (Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing) addressed the meeting and provided members with a presentation which sought to inform members on the Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) Understanding communities on the edge report.

Members heard that the index covered 19 indicators, across three domains which included;

- **Civic Assets:** Measures the presence of key community, civic, educational and cultural assets in close proximity of the area. These include pubs, libraries, green space, community centres, swimming pools facilities that provide things to do often, at no or little cost, which are important to how positive a community feels about its area.
- **Connectedness:** Measures the connectivity to key services, digital infrastructure, isolation and strength of the local jobs market. It looks at whether residents have access to key services, such as health services, within a reasonable travel distance. It considers how good public transport and digital infrastructure are and how strong the local job market is.
- **Active and Engaged Community:** Measures the levels of third sector civic and community activity and barriers to participation and engagement. It shows whether charities are active in the area and whether people appear to be engaged in the broader civic life of their community.

Civic Assets

It was noted that Left Behind Neighbourhoods (LBNs) had a lower density of community spaces, cultural, educational, leisure and green assets than other deprived areas and England.

Members heard that;

- 72.9% of LBNs had less community space assets in their local neighbourhoods per person than the national average with the lowest density in Manor House in Hartlepool.
- 77.8% of LBNs had a lower density of educational assets than the England average Sheppey East in Swale and Knottingley in Wakefield have the lowest density of educational assets of all LBNs.
- 77% of LBNs had less sport and leisure assets per person than nationally, with the lowest rates in Talavera in Northampton.
- Three LBNs record no green space assets in their local areas these are in Bolton, North West Leicestershire and Middlesbrough.
- Four LBNs are amongst the areas with the lowest density of community or cultural assets on three or more of these measures: Brightmet (Bolton), Norton South (Halton), Sheppey East (Swale) and Yarmouth North (Great Yarmouth).

The third sector

The meeting heard that Left Behind Neighbourhoods were less than half as likely to have a registered charity in their local area than the average across England as a whole.

- 97% of all LBNs had a lower rate of charities per 100,000 population than nationally.
- LBNs were also less likely to have other third sector organisations operating in their local areas including mutual societies, co operative societies, community benefit societies and former industrial and provident societies groups.
- 92% of LBNs had a lower proportion of Mutual Societies registered locally than the national average while 63 LBNs have no co operative groups operating in their local area
- LBNs received fewer grants per 10,000 population than other deprived areas and England though coastal LBNs (including Nelson in Great Yarmouth and Pier in Tendring) typically received the highest levels of grants funding per head.
- There were relatively fewer grants issued by charitable foundations in response to COVID 19 in LBNs than in other deprived areas and England, as well as fewer Mutual Aid groups set ups specifically in response to the pandemic.

Community Participation in 'Left behind' neighbourhoods

Members then noted that Left Behind Neighbourhoods performed less well than the England average on measures of social connectivity, though broadly in line with the average across other deprived areas.

- However, LBNs performed particularly poorly on measures exploring the extent of civic engagement and participation with lower levels across all identified measures than the average in other deprived areas and England as a whole 97% of LBNs have lower levels of civic engagement than the national average and 98% have lower rates of volunteering
- Voter turnout was lower than the national average in 92% of LBNs, with the six LBNs with the lowest levels of voter turnout all found in Kingston upon Hull.
- LBNs had a lower predicted strength of local social relationships than nationally, with 70.2% of all LBNs with lower scores on this measure than the average across England as a whole.
- Adults in LBNs were less likely to be physically active than those in other deprived areas or nationally with 97.2% of LBNs seeing a lower proportion of adults engaging in 150 minutes of moderate intensity equivalent (MIE) physical activity than the national average.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Review would take place at 6:10pm on Tuesday 7th December 2021 Via Zoom.

26 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Chair

Date