

# Partnership Workshop

## 7 March 2018

### Summary and Feedback



# Together We're Kirklees

Jacqui Gedman, Chief Executive, Kirklees council welcomed everyone. Jacqui outlined how since 2017 the Council has been investing in the VCS to enhance volunteering, build capacity and support some of our more vulnerable new and emerging communities.



Jacqui reassured partners that the Council has been listening to what VCS organisations have been saying about bureaucracy and red tape. She gave the example of procurement processes and how they are being looked at so they become less top down and paternalistic, and more about co-production and valuing social capital.

The Council has been looking across its policy landscape to identify where there are policies that contradict with what we want to achieve. She gave her commitment to the Council modernizing its approach, increasing flexibility and being far less risk averse.

Hilary Thompson, Chair of Third Sector Leaders Kirklees inspired us with her vision for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).



Hilary set out some challenges and ways forward. She asked that we value difference in the VCS and capture the desire which makes them stand out. She asked that all partners think about how their communications will be received and the impact they may have. Do they demonstrate that the sector and citizens are valued? Is it in language that people can relate to?

Hilary talked about how much she valued the learning she gained from participating in Common Purpose. She asked that we consider how to take a similar approach as we develop our partnership. She stressed the importance of building effective relationships and that our collaboration should not prioritise form over the purpose. Our focus should always be on impact and really knowing what difference we are making and for whom.

Hilary concluded by saying we cannot wait for others to catch up, we need to get on with this now. She then summed up her vision in six words:

**Engage & Inspire  
Support & Progress  
Connect & Develop**



## Active citizens



Cllr Cathy Scott, Democracy Commissioner, talked passionately about the follow up work from the Democracy Commission. She explained that we have an ambitious aim to grow a stronger local democracy - for the next generation and beyond.

Active citizens reminded the Democracy Commission that strengthening the connections between us is what will help our democracy to flourish – because knowing each other helps us to trust each other. Partners asked for more collaborative approaches, and more clarity about who currently makes decisions, and how.

Cllr Scott encouraged everyone to get involved in the new campaign to encourage ‘100 little deeds for local democracy’, in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Representation of the People Act. Anyone can get involved in celebrating democracy. It could be anything from making a badge to organising a community event.



<https://vote100kirklees.com/>

## Outcomes, Commissioning and a Community Strategy

Rachel Spencer Henshall, Director of Corporate Strategy, Kirklees Council gave a presentation on working towards outcomes, being intelligence- led and asking the ‘so what’ or have we improved things for citizens question.



Rachel gave examples of how changing the questions we ask can change our thinking from traditional service based procurement to a whole system commissioning e.g.

- How do we procure a street cleaning service? (traditional)
- How do we commission for clean streets? (outcome-based)
- How do we all work to keep our neighbourhood clean and tidy? (whole system commissioning)

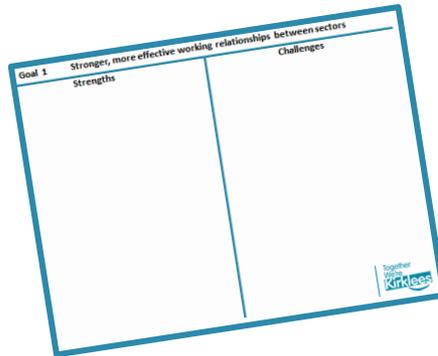
Rachel updated us on the work currently in progress to move us towards delivering the Kirklees Outcomes using the ‘ABC’:

- Outcome Based **A**ccountability
- Outcome Based **B**udgeting
- Outcome Based **C**ommissioning

Taking this approach is about redefining our relationship with citizens and our communities.



# The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2015 - 2025



Carol Gilchrist, Head of Communities, Kirklees Council reminded us of the VCS and Kirklees Council Strategy 2015 – 2025. It is still current but we need to review our progress in implementing it.

Carol started by stressing that the first thing we need to change is the title of the strategy. The title needs to recognise the relationship with the wider partnership, not just the Council.

Carol introduced the exercise by asking the groups to reflect on progress against the three goals by identifying strengths and challenges.

## Goal 1 - Stronger, more effective working relationships between sectors

### Strengths

- Existing good relationships and partnerships
- Openness between sectors
- Approachable relationships in the Council
- Desire to collaborate - complementing each other's work and adding value
- Sharing knowledge, expertise and learning
- Greater insight into our local population
- Third Sector Leaders network
- Comoodle – sharing stuff, space, skills
- Natural Kirklees have set up central insurance for Friends of groups, instigated by Friends of parks groups working in partnership. Opportunity to widen this to others.

### Challenges

- Reaching volunteers and potential volunteers
- Differing vision, values and priorities
- Different accountability structures
- Pressure of time – same for all organisations
- Building trust - open, honest and transparent relationships
- Mechanisms for collaboration
- Genuine consultation – based on trust
- Equality of contribution to consult v difficulty of budget competition/tenders
- Extend the principles of support to include areas such as accountancy and other central services
- Comoodle – embedding, skills, promotion, changing a culture



## Goal 2 – A stronger, more sustainable and diverse voluntary and community sector

### Strengths

- Independence of the voluntary sector is a strength
- Cross sector working relationships – ability to work across all sectors
- Community assets – lots of stuff/groups. Many are self-supporting, others need differing levels of support
- Third Sector Leaders are a strength for the whole sector. Leaders help us become more sustainable.
- Community Plus Hubs – way for local infrastructure, support to engage
- Schools as Community Hubs work and their contribution to planning, delivering and integrating work
- Voluntary Action for Calderdale working together with Greater Huddersfield CCG – quality mark. Bringing groups together and helping them to be self-sustaining.
- Excellent examples of the Council and third sector staff working together:
  - Housing Alliance
  - Adult Community Learning led by CLW (joint Council and third sector bid)
  - Comoodle
  - Housing Solutions/Fusion – levered in external funding
  - Friends of groups (parks and open spaces)

### Challenges

- Loss of small community groups due to lack of funding and lack of infrastructure support
- Smaller groups lack time and resources to do all that is needed
- Sustainability of groups – building new ones and the existing ones understanding things need to change

- Increasing connections and building relationships between businesses and young people's organisation
- Groups operating in isolations whereas they could be combining expertise and knowledge etc.
- Coordinating efforts to collaborate, agree and focus on need
- Sharing expertise across groups and areas to roll out good practice
- Co-ordinating community assets and sustaining activity beyond initial grant/financing periods
- Resources - and maximising how/where they are used for best impact
- Having clear language for shared outcomes
- Being confident that action now will have long term benefits/achieve outcomes
- Diverse population not represented (e.g. today) TSL are becoming more diverse
- Council services changing and the time it takes to introduce new ways of working
- Insurance cover being difficult to get due to policies and procedures needed. First aid courses and food hygiene certificates necessary but expensive to buy in. Inaccessibility of training – lack of communication between Council, workshop providers to voluntary sector that places are still available.
- Duplication of procedures like needing DBS checks that bog down initiatives
- Contradiction in some parts of the Council e.g. decision to pull back capacity building through deleting Community Engagement Team
- Procurement/tendering process too onerous in Council and health (NHS)
- Government work needs to become more local

## Goal 3 - Better outcomes for local people by planning and delivering services in new ways

### Strengths

- VCS understand the communities they work with
- Small organisations are light on their feet - can move swiftly and deliver quickly
- Areas of the sector are already delivering in new ways – capture and don't lose
- There are lots of groups and activities in communities – need to recognise this and not interfere, duplicate or prevent them through bureaucracy
- Businesses want to support community activities, particularly young people's activities
- Individuals can get what they want via a collaborative approach
- Stronger Families/Community Plus
- Commissioned services are evolving

### Challenges

- Asset based conversations
- Moving from 'doing to' to 'doing with'
- Lack of activities for young people
- Consultation on what a good outcome is - What does the measuring tool look like?
- Information sources and connectivity
- Improve communication and access to existing provision and new services

- Sharing information and networking – difficult to find time to access all the information you need. Look at digital platforms, not just sharing information between organisations but also with communities. Use social media and encourage employees to join place based Facebook groups and answer queries
- When planning, need to think about users of services e.g. some people will not go into schools
- Where funding is limited, there are often short term outcomes
- Short term nature of relationships based on short term funding
- Short term contracting or funding stifles creativity and limits impact on outcomes
- Consortia type commissioning over 10 years instead of 3 – 5 years will deliver better outcomes simply due to continuity of funding
- Fund organisations to enable partnership commissioning
- When services close in a community venue, little information is provided about alternatives. Need to think about how closures and end of contracts are communicated.
- Sustainability of community buildings. There is a need for the buildings but we need to plan better together about how they are used.
- Workforce v 'The Workbook'

The next group task was to identify actions to either build on the strengths or tackle the challenges. The actions were then themed and collated before being prioritised by everyone voting with sticky dots



Action	Votes
<p>Support small community groups and organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widen awareness of the impact of community groups</li> <li>• A small grants scheme to support local groups to achieve our shared outcomes</li> <li>• Ensure small funding available to sustain groups</li> <li>• Develop and resource 'community anchors' where informal community action can flourish</li> <li>• Promote opportunities for local collaboration to capture small organisations views and intelligence alongside larger, more structured partners and data</li> </ul>	39
<p>Commissioning and procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less bureaucratic – more conversations</li> <li>• Simplify and make more accessible</li> <li>• Ensure demand matches resources</li> <li>• Longer term contracts (e.g. 10 years) – evolving outcomes, less time wasted on tendering process, new groups can join in over time</li> </ul>	38
<p>Integrated intelligence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on shared expertise, knowledge and intelligence</li> <li>• Have a fully holistic understanding of the population</li> <li>• Co-produced, community led understanding of what is needed and required to support</li> <li>• Telling your story one</li> <li>• The story moves with the person</li> <li>• Key worker</li> </ul>	19
<p>Planning together from the start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build effective two way relationships</li> <li>• Involve citizens, VCS, business from the start</li> <li>• Share intelligence, assets and asset mapping</li> <li>• Ensure the community is well informed</li> <li>• If services are withdrawn, let's decide together what new activities need to be introduced</li> <li>• Have clear and shared terms of reference for involvement and planning and strategy development – known and implemented by all at the outset</li> <li>• Investigate offers of help from the business sector e.g. telephony platform</li> <li>• Broker relationships and act as a catalyst for partnership</li> </ul>	15

Action	Votes
<p><b>Engage young people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it a priority for young people to be engaged in communities</li> <li>• Engage with the University</li> <li>• Widens resources and assets available</li> <li>• Investment for the future</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>	11
<p><b>Communicate what is working well</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better communication of what works already</li> <li>• Don't lose the 'good' in search of the 'new'</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>One point of access for information, support and capacity building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be Comoodle</li> <li>• Place to share skills, knowledge, experience</li> <li>• A safe environment to ask for help</li> <li>• Map, advertise and keep contemporary</li> <li>• Partnership approach</li> <li>• For community groups and citizens</li> <li>• Share learning and build on good practice e.g. Natural Kirklees, Kirklees Youth Alliance</li> </ul>	8
<p><b>Increase diversity at the table</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors to take the lead</li> <li>• Encourage community groups to increase their participation</li> </ul>	6
<p><b>Empower workers to deliver outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess risks</li> <li>• Provide training</li> <li>• Devolve decision making</li> </ul>	6
<p><b>Use plain language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use simple, clear language to express ourselves and our common goals</li> <li>• Use language that grass-roots groups recognise</li> </ul>	6

## Next steps – progressing the actions

The actions will be compiled into an overall plan where the Third Sector Team will have an overview of the delivery of those actions.

We will engage with the sector on individual actions and where the sector needs to take a lead role we will have that dialogue through the Third Sector Leaders in order to ensure the work progresses at pace.

Should any specific organisation wish to take a lead or specifically contribute in any of the individual actions then they should contact with:

[Carol.gilchrist@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Carol.gilchrist@kirklees.gov.uk)

# Thank you

to everyone who came along and got involved in this workshop

# Together We're **Kirklees**

