

INTRODUCTION

Involving communities is fundamental to shaping effective services and supporting positive outcomes for Kirklees. It is important not just socially, but economically: through involving communities we can foster a sense of **shared responsibility**, work together to provide more efficient and cost effective services, support people to do **more for themselves and each other** and achieve **greater impact** through better use of resources.

This framework sets out our common partnership approach to involving communities in Kirklees. It outlines why we need a framework, what we are trying to achieve (our vision, shared aims and intended outcomes) and the key principles and types of activity that will help us put the framework into action.

Our Involving Communities framework...

...is a partnership approach designed to support a shared vision and culture for the future

Importantly, this framework is a **joint commitment** from Kirklees Council and partners to the intrinsic value of involving communities and ensuring this is common practice in the way we work. Involving communities effectively contributes to the achievement of the Kirklees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Board) and the Kirklees Economic Strategy.

...is cross-cutting and broad in its scope

By '**involvement**' we mean a range of different activities (see page 5), as appropriate to the context. Similarly, the term '**communities**' has a number of different elements (see page 4).

...places people at the heart of what we do

Involvement is important because it helps us better understand the needs and experiences of local communities and, together, improve decision making and service delivery. Involving communities is therefore central to the service planning and commissioning cycle.

...is a key part of our approach to localism

Effective and sustained involvement will be key to developing a **new relationship** between communities and public services. Transforming the way services are delivered with improved outcomes for everyone in Kirklees will require a greater sense of shared responsibility and co-operation between all sectors and citizens.

...recognises the need for different activities, but with increasing emphasis on the principles of shared responsibility and capacity building to create social value

Over time we will seek to achieve more shared responsibility with communities. Co-production will mean delivering public services through an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, the people using services, their families and their neighbours. To make this a reality, capacity will need to be developed amongst certain communities to support equitable involvement across Kirklees. When commissioning services we will consider wider social value.

...is about achieving outcomes

Ultimately, the purpose of involving communities is to ensure that, together, we achieve positive outcomes for Kirklees.

PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK

Our vision

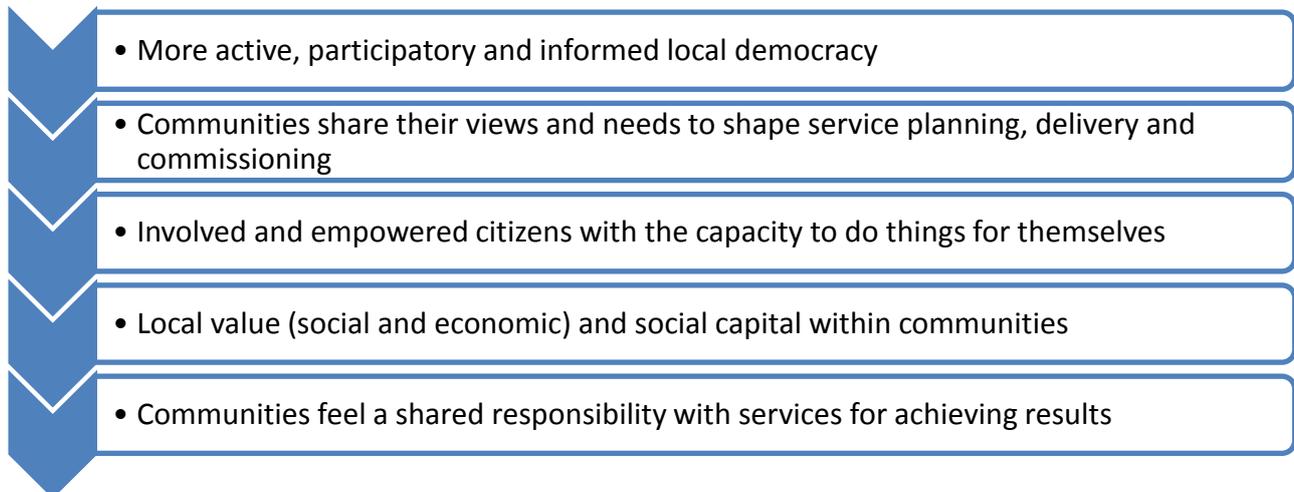
Working together, Kirklees Council and partners will ensure that involving communities is at the heart of what we do. Through **empowered people** (both residents and employees) and **shared responsibility** with communities we will achieve greater **impact** with better use of collective resources. Our vision is that by 2018 we have a **new relationship** between citizens, our communities and public services and we have made significant progress in transforming public services. Effective community leadership will support this new relationship, with **communities enabled to do more** through co-operation. Communities, the voluntary sector, social enterprise and partners will **work together** with the council and partners to provide services and shape outcomes in communities. We will have a new approach to tackling cohesion issues by **understanding** the factors that impact on cohesion with our communities, rather than just dealing with the outcome. By supporting communities to work together to address the issues that matter to them we will promote a shared sense of belonging and ownership.

Underpinning this vision, our **shared aims** when involving communities are to:



Outcomes

Ultimately, through involving communities, the long term **outcomes** we want to achieve are:



This framework also contributes to the following outcomes in the Kirklees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- More people feel healthy, active and **included**, particularly older people
- More people are able to take control of their lives, so they enjoy life and flourish - by feeling **involved**, supported, confident and more resilient
- More people take more **responsibility** for their lives and so have greater independence and contribute to their family and communities, whilst being aware of the impact of the choices they make for themselves, families and others and recognise that interdependence
- More people have access to work or activities to increase their self-esteem
- People are safe from harm and abuse, have a sense of safety and belonging and be at ease with each other
- People **take part** in the design and delivery of services that are suitable for their needs

PUTTING THE FRAMEWORK INTO ACTION

Our key principles¹

The following principles outline our approach to achieving the desired outcomes. They describe an overall way of working and provide a framework for developing specific workstreams and action plans to deliver this framework.

An embedded culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will seek to achieve a genuine culture of involvement that it is built into our routine functions, working practices and decision making.
Ongoing dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will create and maintain an ongoing dialogue with communities throughout decision making processes, involving them at the outset and demonstrating how their involvement has influenced the decisions made.
Appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will involve communities in a way that is appropriate to the situation and communities concerned - but with an increased emphasis on 'collaborating' and 'empowering'. •We will use the right activities (or combination of activities) at the right time to provide appropriate opportunities for people's involvement.
Joined-up and coordinated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will ensure our activities are coordinated, aiming to join up where possible and avoid duplication. •We will proactively use the Involve tool to support planning and better co-ordination of involvement activities.
Using existing intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will make good use of existing intelligence from a range of sources - using evidence, insight and feedback to help plan and prioritise services. •We will listen to what people have already told us and what we already know from our work in communities to stay 'in tune' with issues and priorities.
Making best use of assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By assets we mean the skills, capabilities, expertise and resources of individuals and groups within a community. This includes physical resources such as buildings, but our particular focus will be on people resources. •Wherever possible we will use an asset-based approach to community development to emphasise and make best use of these assets.
Shared responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will increasingly encourage communities to take responsibility for outcomes themselves. •We recognise that the best outcomes may result from providing choices and giving individuals more control (or both). •We will help develop different models for service delivery (e.g. social enterprises, mutuals, co-production, VCS). •Through co-production we will emphasise that people are not passive recipients of services, but active participants. •We will work to remove barriers to help aspiring groups and individuals.
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We recognise the importance of activities that support and develop communities' understanding, confidence and skills. •In doing so we will support people to become more independent and less reliant on having service delivered (see also reduced dependency).
Reduced dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will work to develop a new relationship with communities to help them to help themselves. •We will encourage communities to make informed decisions about lifestyle choices in order to help prevent the problems of the future.
Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We will be clear about what people are able to influence and decide. •We will enable communities to take decisions themselves where appropriate and otherwise use their involvement to inform planning and ensure that better decisions are made on behalf of communities.
Community leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Our councillors will have a greater role in mobilising communities to work together to improve outcomes in their areas. •As community leaders, councillors will seek to initiate and inspire.

¹In promoting these principles we recognise that people's desire for involvement will depend on factors such as their circumstances, life stage and the level of interest in the issue/its perceived impact on them. Our aim is to maximise *opportunities* for involvement, not enforce involvement.

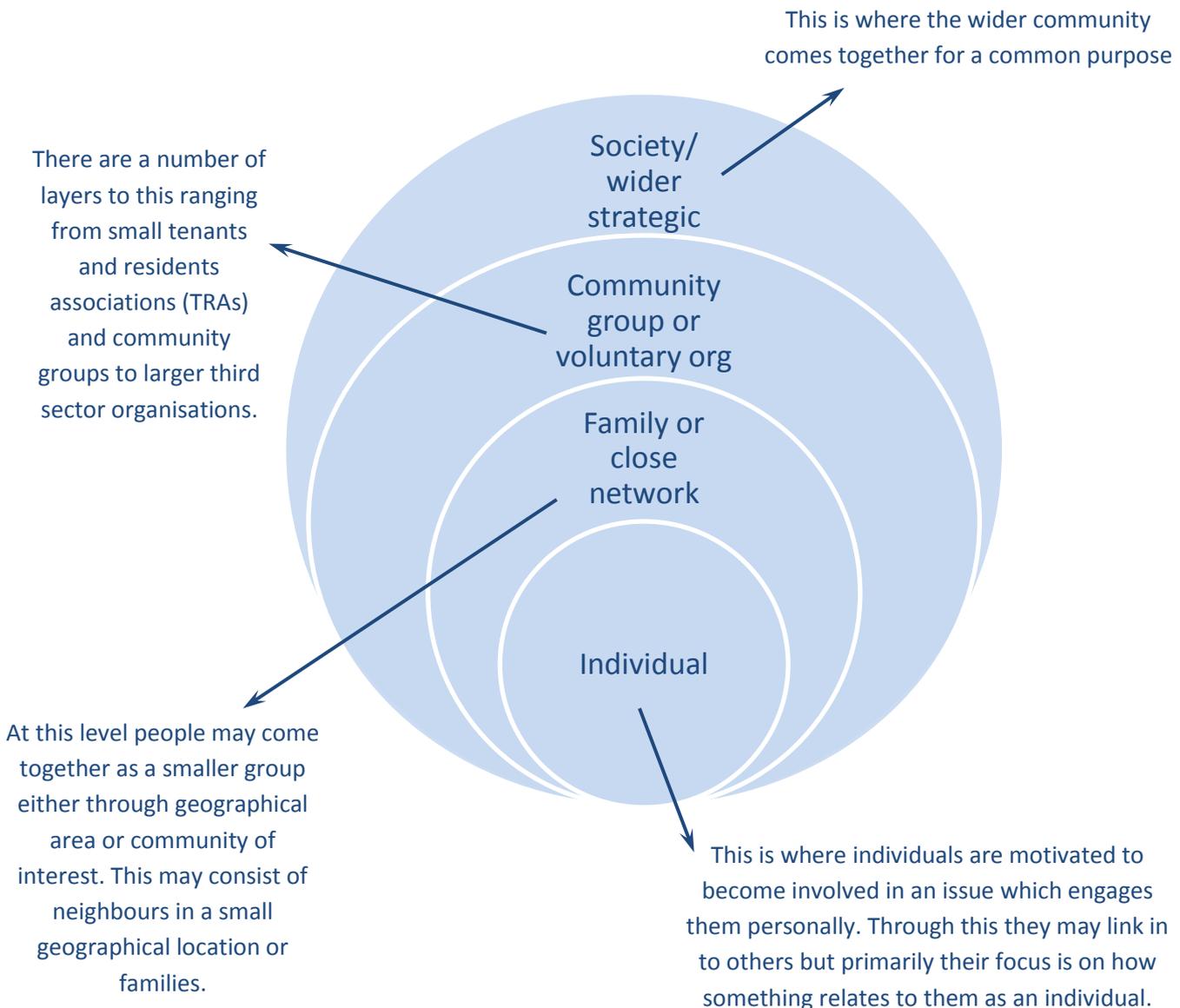
Defining communities

There are a number of different elements to how communities may be defined. If we are to effectively involve communities we need to be clear about how and where they exist. Communities in Kirklees may be:

- ➔ **Geographical communities**, i.e. defined by place
For example, ward or district committee boundaries might be used to define a geographical community.
- ➔ **Communities of interest**, i.e. defined by a common demographic characteristic or social interest
For example, young people or BME people might be defined as a community of interest.
- ➔ **Communities of circumstance**, i.e. defined by a shared set of circumstances
For example benefits claimants might be defined as a community of circumstance.

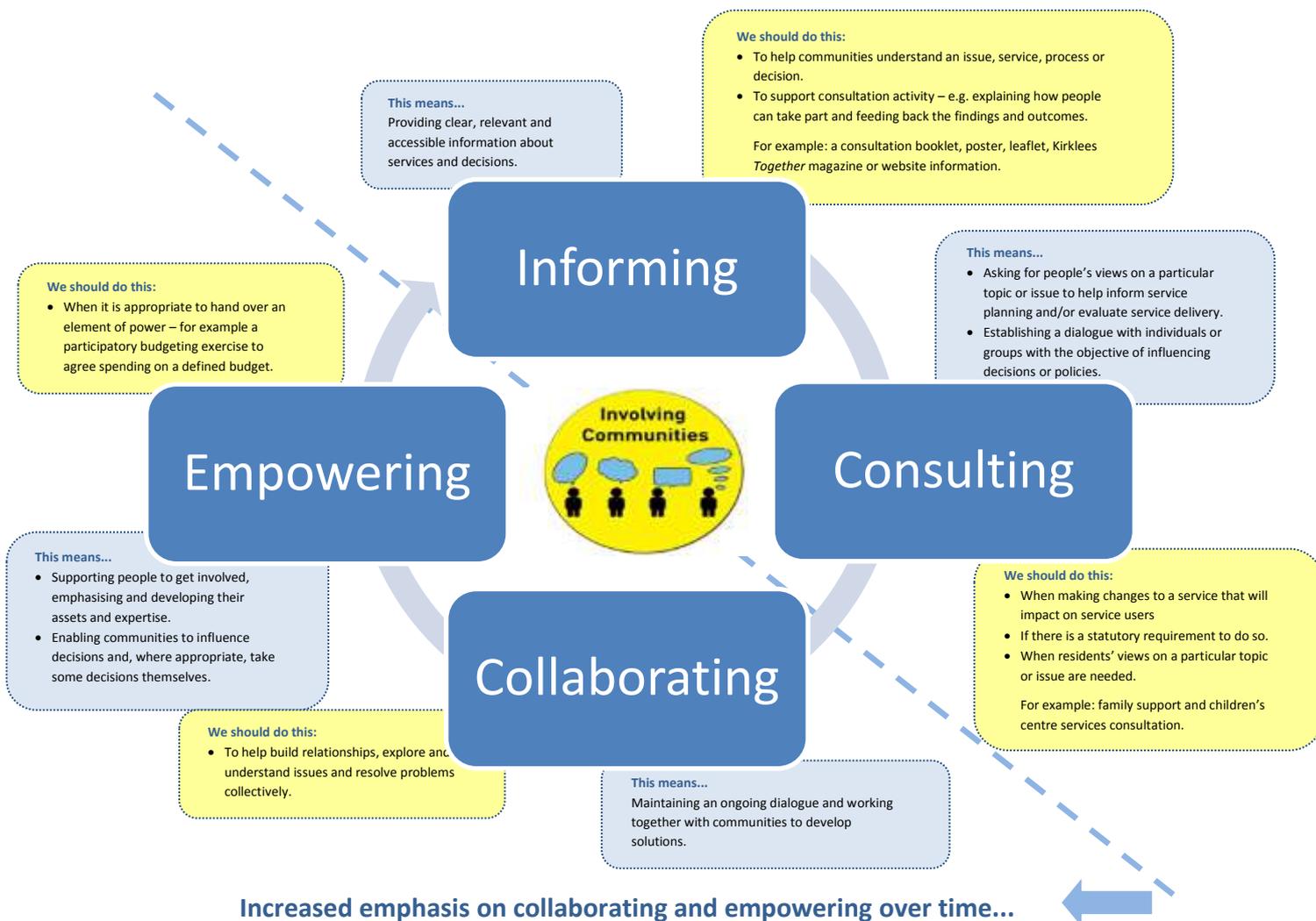
However, it is important to be aware that these types of communities are not mutually exclusive: a community may combine more than one of the above elements. For example, young benefits claimants living in Dewsbury West.

In addition, there are several different 'layers' or level of community in Kirklees – as illustrated by the following diagram:



Our activities

On a day to day basis, activities that help us **inform**, **consult**, **collaborate** with and **empower** people provide the foundation of *how* we involve communities. Over time, we will look to strengthen and develop our approaches to ‘collaborating’ and ‘empowering’. However, it should be noted that in doing so we are not seeking to replace ‘informing’ and ‘consulting’. All these types of activity will remain important and should be used as appropriate to the circumstances.



⇐ ⇐ In selecting appropriate activities we will also seek to use innovative, creative and original techniques to complement more traditional methods, learning from best practice from across the partnership and outside Kirklees ⇒ ⇒



We will ensure that details of all these types of activity are captured and shared using our **Involve** planning tool - www.kirklees.gov.uk/involve

Involve includes:

- ➔ a calendar of planned involvement activities to support better coordination and joining-up
- ➔ information on the findings and outcomes of specific involvement activity
- ➔ access to our Help section of guidance and case studies