

Report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to Scrutiny Board (Citizens and Communities)

Date: 10th April 2017

Subject: The development of Community Committees – Tracking of Scrutiny recommendations

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the previous Scrutiny inquiry into the development of Community Committees.

2.0 Background information

2.1 Last year, the Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board agreed to undertake an inquiry into the development of Community Committees. The inquiry concluded in March 2016 and a report setting out the Scrutiny Board's findings and recommendations was published in May 2016. This report is available via the Council's website ([click to access inquiry report](#))

3.0 Main issues

3.1 The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.

3.2 This standard set of criteria is presented in the form of a flow chart at Appendix 1. The questions in the flow chart should help to decide whether a recommendation has been completed, and if not whether further action is required. Details of progress against each of these recommendations are set out within the table at Appendix 2.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Members are asked to:

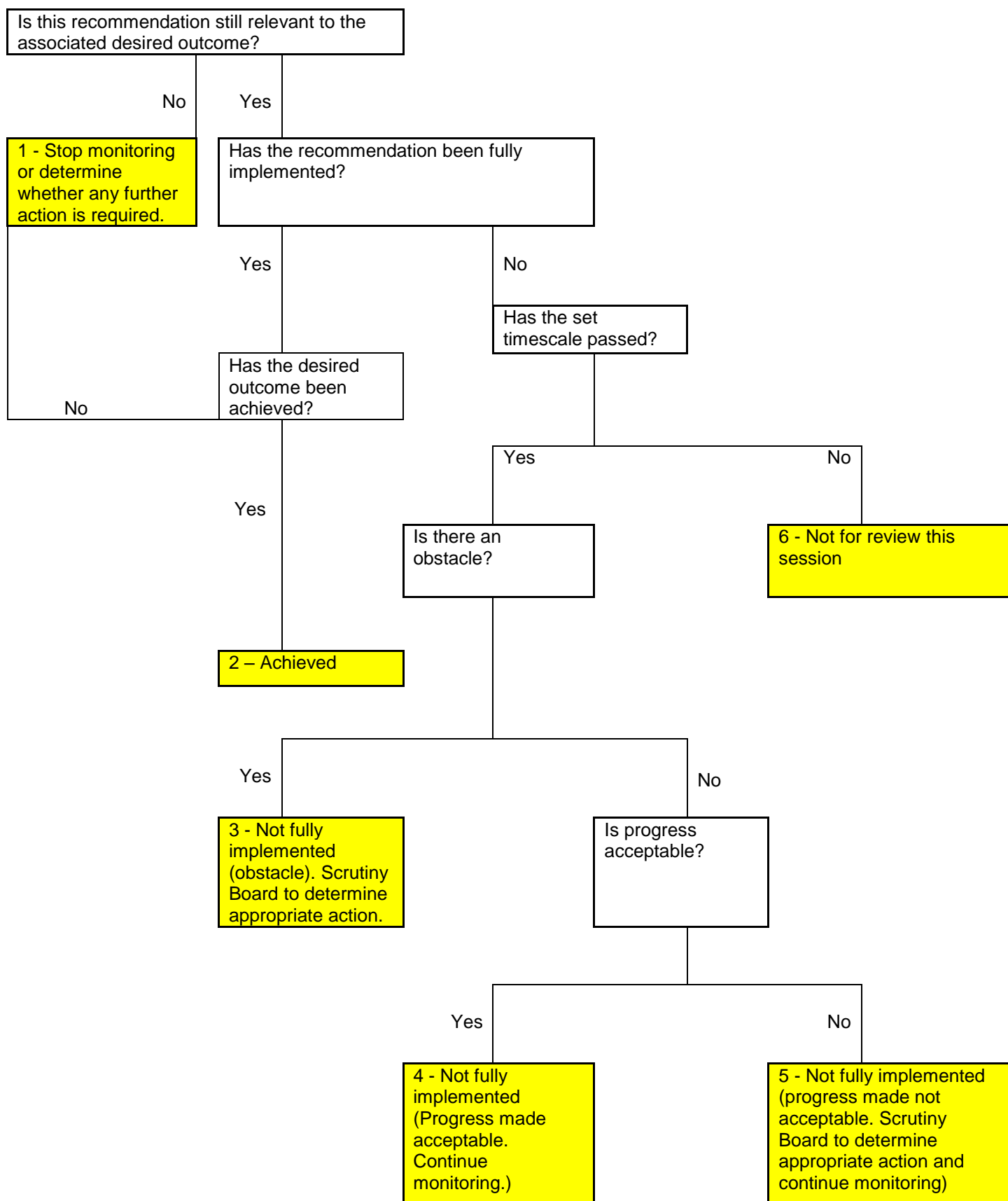
- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
- Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

5.0 Background documents¹

5.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications:
Questions to be considered by Scrutiny Boards



Position Status Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session

<p>Desired Outcome – That all directorates are committed to providing a dedicated resource in supporting Community Committee Champions to undertake their role effectively.</p>
<p>Recommendation 1 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) takes the lead in working with Directors to secure a dedicated resource across directorates in supporting Community Committee Champions to undertake their role effectively.</p>
<p>Formal response in September 2016:</p> <p>Good progress has been made over the previous municipal year. Nevertheless, inconsistencies remain and the Executive Member for Communities and Chief Officer Communities has met with Executive Members to discuss this matter. As a consequence of the feedback they have received, the role description for champions has been simplified and Community Committee Chairs Forum is scheduled to discuss the matter at a forthcoming meeting with invitations to the Chief Officers of key services to attend the meeting. It is recognised that not all services are distributed in a way that allows for geographic responsibilities and also that as services have reduced and continue to reduce their workforce, that changes in personnel have had an impact. Following the forthcoming Chairs Forum meeting we will develop a paper to Corporate Leadership Team inviting Directors to put arrangements in place.</p> <p>Current position:</p> <p>The Executive Member (Communities) has taken a lead supported by the senior officers to engage directly with chief officers whose roles and services should be supporting community committee champions. At the Community Committee chairs meeting on 20 October 2016 and Friday 18th November the relevant chief officers attended, explained the work undertaken to date and agreed to improvement actions, which were minuted. These actions followed up by the chief officer. Lead officers in all directorates have now been established.</p>
<p>Position Status (categories 1 – 6) <i>This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board</i></p>

Desired Outcome – That Community Committee Champions undertake an appropriate level of challenge towards their relevant service areas on behalf of their Community Committees.

Recommendation 2 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) takes the lead in working closely with Area Leaders in providing key tools that will assist in encouraging and supporting Community Committee Champions to undertake an appropriate level of challenge towards their relevant service areas.

Formal response in September 2016:

We will work with services to ensure that Community Committee Champions are well positioned to provide challenge and support to those services.

Current position

Community Committee Champions have been engaged in a series of Executive member led workshops, where the Executive member has set out the challenges faced by services, and have agreed their role as champions.

This has been demonstrated by Community Committee champion leadership on some key issues at Community Committees. Examples include:-

- Health and wellbeing developments including the Leeds Health Plan, and the STP;
- The development of a Children and young people’s “obsession” at a local level
- Services challenges in environmental services and the parks service
- The approach of local police, and liaison with Community Committee Champions

This emerging model of Executive Member led teams of Community Committee Champions, gives the opportunity for all champions and chairs to engage with Chief officers and Heads of key services to understand directorate plans, and to influence the impact at Community Committee level.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome –That Community Committees are given the authority to take lead sponsoring roles for commissioning projects and funding bids.

Recommendation 3 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) explores the feasibility of extending the authority of Community Committees to take a lead sponsoring role for commissioning projects and funding bids.

Formal response in September 2016:

It is recognised that Community Committees derive their authority from full council and also from the Leader of Council through the delegation of specific community committee executive delegations. As a consequence Community Committees can directly make bids which are open to applications from local authorities provided those bids relate to the functions within their remit. Increasingly though, funding streams are becoming available to the Third Sector directly or to consortia of mixed sectors and this means that the Council cannot itself apply directly. However in these circumstances Community Committees have a potential role in facilitating, or taking a lead sponsoring role, on external funding bids or commissioning projects, provided of course that these roles are undertaken in accordance with the Council's risk and financial accountability arrangements.

Current position:

The chief officer has made arrangements to better inform councillors and staff about funding opportunities, including a regular update on funding opportunities. Over time it is expected this will lead to more access to funding by local third sector organisations. Funding bids will be reported to community committees as part of the regular update report.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – There is transparency and accountability of the funding allocated by Community Committees in addressing local priorities set out in the Community Plan.

Recommendation 4 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) ensures that a mid-year and end of year audit of the funding allocated by Community Committees against the priorities set out the Community Plan is undertaken at a formal meeting of the Community Committees.

Formal response in September 2016:

This financial information is already reported through the year to the committee. We will review this documentation and prepare an audit style document for half and full year reporting.

Current position:

A new audit style report is being prepared, this will build on the remodelled “Delegated Budget Report” which currently provides an account of expenditure and decision making for:

- Wellbeing Fund
- Capital funding
- Youth Activities Funding.

It is envisaged that this will be extended to account for

- Neighbourhood Community infrastructure Levy delegated to the Community Committees

And to give information on the other local funds available, such as the Neighbourhood Community infrastructure Levy delegated to Parish and Town Councils. It is envisaged that this report will be extended to give a fuller account of funding in a community committee area. This will be trialled at the end of the financial year.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That Community Committees are made fully aware of how relevant ward based initiative funding and capital monies are being spent within their localities.

Recommendation 5 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) develops an information sharing mechanism which allows Community Committees to be kept fully aware of how relevant ward based initiative funding and capital monies are being spent within their localities.

Formal response in September 2016:

Work has been advanced on a mechanism to share information on a range of funding being spent in localities so that Community Committees are aware of the range of funding available to promote local working. A paper will be taken to the Community Committee Chairs Forum for discussion.

Current position:

The work described at recommendation 4 will also support the delivery of this recommendation. The remodelled “Delegated Budget Report” currently includes all local capital monies available to members including those delivered by the CRIS scheme. We are seeking chairs’ views and will implement any agreed changes in a revised delegated decision report.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That Highways and Transportation services actively engage with Community Committees and Community Committee Champions to share information and gather Member intelligence to help inform service delivery.

Recommendation 6 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works closely with the Director of City Development to promote the mutual benefits of engaging closely with Community Committees and Community Committee Champions in gathering local Member intelligence and experience to help inform service delivery within Highways and Transportation. In particular, the development and delivery of local traffic management schemes and the development of local flood management schemes.

Formal response in September 2016:

Discussions have taken place with the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation and Chief Officer Communities to explore how this might best be delivered. The Community Committee contribution to the consultation on the Transport Strategy following the recent Transport Summit is scheduled for September and will highlight the important role of Community Committees in Highways and Transportation issues. We will seek to build on this opportunity to inform service delivery and provide for improved ward level and regular community committee level reporting.

Current position:

Joint actions continue with the Chief Officer for highways and transportation. We have successfully delivered the local approach to the Leeds Transport Conversation, with all 10 Community committees holding workshops and other activities to engage the general public and local stakeholders in the discussion. The highways team report that the involvement of Community Committees has enhanced the effectiveness of this city-wide consultation. Individual community committees and neighbourhood improvement boards have engaged with highways staff both to discuss general highways issues in a committee area, and to consider particular schemes where the public and members have expressed their views. There is a better understanding of the contribution local committees can make to highways related issues. Further discussion on progress will be brought to the June round of community committees.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That there is an effective action tracker system in place that includes the involvement of relevant service areas and external partners.

Recommendation 7 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) ensures that relevant service areas and external partners are also made accountable for actions agreed by Community Committees through robust monitoring of their actions as part of the new action tracker and performance management framework.

Current position:

A number of different action trackers are in place across the area teams, depending on the locality and member preferences for presentation of performance data, but all achieve the same purpose of robust monitoring of actions. These are reported to Community Committee sub-groups and champions, and the chairs.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That reporting mechanisms are put in place to assist in strengthening links between Cluster Partnerships and the Community Committees.

Recommendation 8 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works closely with the Director of Children’s Services to explore opportunities for strengthening links between the Cluster Partnerships and Community Committees.

Formal response in September 2016:

Much progress has already been made in this area particularly in relation to the engagement of elected members in local cluster arrangements. Nevertheless, it’s recognised that there is more to do and we will explore opportunities with Children’s Services to strengthen links even further.

Current position:

Following discussions with children’s services, lead officers have now been appointed and are working with champions and area officers to develop key priorities, for example through the children and family sub-groups.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That there are robust communication mechanisms between Community Committees and local Parish and Town Councils.

Recommendation 9 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works with the Area Leaders to ensure that robust communication mechanisms between Community Committees and local Parish and Town Councils are put in place in accordance with recommendations made previously by Scrutiny and in ensuring that Community Committees are complying with the Parish and Town Council Charter.

Formal response in September 2016:

Scrutiny developed strong recommendations in its inquiry into relationships with Parish and Town Council's that were welcomed by Community Committees and Officers and promoted strengthened arrangements in Leeds. Good links have been formed between PTCs and community committees in line with both the Charter and scrutiny recommendations with the development of engagement forums for discussion on items of mutual interest. It is timely to review our progress and contribution to the Charter principles.

Current position:

Communities team staff have developed a programme of visits to meet with the chairs or representatives of Parish and Town Councils, attended by Cllr Coupar, the chief officer and area leader, The first visit took place in late 2016 and further visits are scheduled throughout the start of 2017. Once these visits have taken place a further review of the Charter will be undertaken, taking into account feedback from Parish and Town Councillors.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

Desired Outcome – That residents are actively encouraged and supported to engage with Community Committees.

Recommendation 10 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works with the Area Leaders to ensure there are consistent processes in place for publicising details of Community Committee events and meetings and responding to public requests for feedback or to be kept regularly updated on the work of their Community Committee.

Formal response in September 2016:

A cross locality communication action plan is in place and is monitored and reviewed. We will confirm that all committees are following best practice and that each committee has an effective approach to capturing resident contact information, in line with the Council's best practice for handling personal information.

Current position:

Details of community committees, events and workshops and responses to public requests are regularly published through the ten Facebook pages, the Twitter account, through quarterly newsletters, banners and posters, on partners' social media as well as the governance website (agendas and minutes). Social media is also now being used as a means of public engagement rather than simply a broadcast medium.

We capture contact information from residents who wish to maintain contact and this is undertaken in compliance with data protection.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6) *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*