



Kirklees Democracy Commission Terms of Reference

Membership:

The Commission will be chaired by Dr Andrew Mycock, Reader in Politics at the University of Huddersfield

Councillor Andrew Palfreeman – Conservative Representative and Chair of the Members Commission

Councillor Eric Firth – Labour Group Representative

Councillor Andrew Cooper – Green Group Representative

Councillor Andrew Marchington – Liberal Democrat Group Representative

Areas of Focus:

- The Commission is responsible for undertaking its work and producing findings and recommendations which it feels best achieves the following Mission Statement:

By 2020 Kirklees is an informed citizen-led democracy with accountable elected representatives who enable communities to influence and affect decisions governing their lives.

- The Commission will be responsible for exploring in detail the current context of local democracy in Kirklees and future challenges and opportunities having regard to:
 - Information and intelligence in respect of current democratic arrangements in Kirklees.
 - Research of practice from elsewhere.
 - Insight from expert witnesses in respect of the three themes.
 - Feedback from councillors, political groups and key officers
 - Engagement with the public, communities and local groups
- The Commission will oversee the planning, delivery and reporting of themed public inquiries covering the following areas:

Theme	Key Lines of Enquiry
The Role of Councillors in a Representative and Participatory Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we understand and resolve the tensions and opportunities that potentially exist between representative and participatory democracy? • How do we improve the representative role whilst facilitating and enabling wider participation? • What is the role of the councillor in the context of communities doing more for themselves? • How does local party politics and political parties relate to local people? • How do we attract the next generation of councillors? • How should councillors be supported in order to be effective representatives, advocates and enablers? • How do we make a virtue of the opportunities presented by digital and mobile technologies to help councillors do democracy differently and better? • What is the role of the councillor in the context of the wider devolution arrangements, the Combined Authority and the emerging Mayoral Model?

Theme	Key Lines of Enquiry
Elections and the Electoral Cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we improve accessibility, interest and voter turnout at district elections? • To what extent would changes to our cycle and pattern of district elections improve accessibility, interest and turnout? • What are the wider electoral considerations in the context of the developing devolution agenda, the Combined Authority and the potential for an elected Mayor? • How do we make a virtue of the opportunities presented by digital and mobile technologies to improve registration and voting / voter turnout?

Theme	Key Lines of Enquiry
Governance, Accountability and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we look to involve the public more, how do we ensure we have decision making arrangements that are enabling, clear, co-ordinated, agile and take place at the right level? • How do we ensure transparency, accountability and the right checks and balances are in place? • What are the implications for governance and accountability in the context of devolution, the Combined Authority and the potential move to a Mayoral model • What governance model and approach is best suited to deliver the above? • How do we make a virtue of the opportunities presented by digital and mobile technologies to improve our governance and decision making arrangements?

Planning and Delivering:

- The Commission will begin its formal business at the beginning of the 2016/17 Municipal Year following the district elections in May 2016.
- Each themed public inquiry will:
 - Be planned by the Commission.
 - Take place in public and be web cast where appropriate.
 - Produce briefing papers in advance and have key lines of enquiry which will be used as a basis for dialogue, wider consultation and evidence gathering.
 - Be formally minuted and the findings summarised in a series of reports.
- The Commission will receive dedicated officer support as part of planning and delivering its work.
- The Commission will report its findings and recommendations to Full Council no later than December 2016.