

Appendix 1 - The Closer to Communities Themes

Four themes of decentralisation have been identified to track and evaluate the council's approach to the work. They are:

- devolved decision-making
- devolved funding
- co-designed and co-produced
- place-based and targeted support or interventions.

Theme: Devolved decision-making

Devolved decision-making refers to a process in which the authority and responsibility for making decisions is distributed across authoritative bodies, groups or individuals, rather than being concentrated in a single central place. Decisions are made at various levels of an organisation, system, or community, allowing for a broader range of stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process. These stakeholders may hold a more direct understanding of the specific context and factors involved and devolved decision-making can empower those closest to the issues to make choices that are better informed and aligned with the needs of the context, leading to increased responsiveness and adaptability. Devolved decision-making may therefore be employed in situations where local knowledge, experience, capability, and agility are crucial.

Potential outcomes:

- Decision-making authority is given to local bodies, groups or partners within the system or community.
- Local communities, partners or individuals have a degree of autonomy to make decisions that are relevant to their specific roles and responsibilities.
- Allows and encourages a diverse range of perspectives to be considered in the decision-making process.
- Decisions can be made more quickly and effectively because they don't require approval from a central authority.
- Local bodies, groups and partners can adapt their decisions to suit their unique circumstances, fostering innovation and tailored solutions.
- Facilitates an enhanced resilience of the system by reducing dependence on a single point of control.

Theme: Devolved funding approach

Devolved funding is where the distribution of authority and financial resources is moved away from a central governing body to various local or regional bodies, groups, and partners, empowering local communities, governments, or organisations and groups, giving them greater control within their specific remit.

Potential outcomes:

- Delegated financial decision-making authority and responsibility to local or regional bodies, groups, and partners.
- Autonomy to make choices relating to the priorities at the most local level, enabling better and tailored solutions for the specific needs and circumstances of their community.
- Ability to manage and allocate funds to support local projects, initiatives and services according to the local need, leading to more efficient resource allocation and responsive decision-making.

- Enhanced citizen participation and improved service delivery through innovation and reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies.

Theme: Co-designed and co-produced approaches

Co-designed services refer to services that are developed and designed collaboratively, involving both service providers (government bodies, organisations, or businesses) and service users (residents, customers, or clients). This approach aims to create services that are more user-centred, responsive, and effective by actively involving the people who will use the services in the design and decision-making processes.

Potential outcomes:

- Co-designed services prioritising the needs, preferences, and experiences of residents.
- Closer collaboration and partnership between service providers, residents, and other stakeholders empowering them in shaping the services they rely on, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement.
- Residents have a voice, contributing their insights, ideas, and feedback to shape the design, features, and delivery of the service leading to innovative solutions addressing specific user challenges resulting in more effective and efficient services.
- Services that are more adaptable to changing user needs due to ongoing collaboration and co-designed adjustments, leading to improved user satisfaction and better overall service delivery.

Theme: Place-based and targeted approaches

Place-based or targeted approaches focus on addressing specific challenges, needs, or opportunities in a particular geographical area or among a specific group of people. Instead of applying a one-size-fits-all approach, tailored interventions are aimed at the unique characteristics, circumstances, and priorities of the chosen location or target demographic/

Place-based approaches involve designing and implementing interventions that take into account the distinctive features and context of a specific geographic area, such as a neighbourhood, community, city, or region and recognises that different places have unique assets, challenges, and resources that should be considered. Targeted approaches focus on addressing the needs of a specific group of individuals, communities, or populations that share common characteristics or experiences. These characteristics can include factors such as income level, age, ethnicity, gender, or specific challenges they face. Therefore, these approaches work well together to address the specific challenges and needs of a geographical area and the people who live there.

Potential outcomes:

- Maximised and effective interventions tailored to benefit a specific set of people or geographical area.
- Improved service delivery and resident satisfaction.