

SCRUTINY BOARD (CITY DEVELOPMENT)

TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, B Atha, J Elliott,
G Latty, R Pryke, M Rafique, M Robinson
and S Smith

13 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the July meeting of Scrutiny Board (City Development).

14 Declaration of Interests

The following personal declarations of interest were declared:-

- Councillor J Akhtar in his capacity as a Member on Plans Panel (West) (Agenda Item 9, 11 and 13) (Minutes 19, 21 and 23 refer)
- Councillor G Latty in his capacity as a Member on Plans Panel (East) and Plans Panel (City Centre) (Agenda Items 9, 10 and 11) (Minutes 19, 20 and 21 refer)
- Councillor J Procter in his capacity as a Member on Plans Panel (East) (Agenda Items 9 and 11) (Minutes 19 and 21 refer)

15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors G Harper and A D Atkinson.

16 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

a) A copy of the Scrutiny Board (City Development) minutes of the scheduled meeting held on 8th June 2010 and the Call-In meeting of the same date were submitted.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of these previous meetings held on 8th June 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

b) At the request of the Chair, Ed Mylan, Chief Officer (Resources and Strategy), City Development attended the meeting to provide a verbal update in relation to the Board's request to receive monthly budget variation reports from September 2010 onwards (Minute 5 refers).

The Chief Officer (Resources and Strategy) referred in brief to the current position with regard to overall income and expenditure and a projected year end overspend of £1.7m and the action plan which had been implemented to pull this figure back.

A brief discussion ensued and in particular on how scrutiny could be involved at an early stage in the budget process for 2011/2012 in order to contribute and comment on the department's priorities and areas where savings were to

be made. Members also sought clarification as to the department's criteria for the filling of vacancies and whether the skills balance had been achieved within the Planning Section despite experienced staff leaving the service.

17 Co-option to the Board

Referring to Minute 6 of the meeting held on 8th June 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report seeking the Board's approval of a co-optee to this Board.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the co-option of Ms Barbara Woroncow, OBE to this Scrutiny Board without voting rights for a term of office which does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of the Council in 2011.

18 Input to the Work Programme 2010/11

Referring to Minute 5 of the meeting held on 8th June 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's input to the work programme for 2010/11.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Board Members' questions' and comments:-

Councillor R Lewis, Executive Board Member with portfolio responsibility for Development and Regeneration

Councillor A Ogilvie, Executive Board Member with portfolio responsibility for Leisure

Jean Dent, Director of City Development

Martin Farrington, future Acting Director of City Development

At the request of the Chair, the above representatives were invited to identify issues which could be included in the Board's work programme for 2010/11.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- Draft Market Strategy – the Chair referred to the Board's decision in June 2010 to undertake an inquiry on Kirkgate Market. He reported that as the Executive Board had asked that officers submit a draft market strategy to its meeting on 13th October there was no time for scrutiny to undertake a detailed inquiry. Instead the Board would be invited to comment on the draft strategy in September prior to this being considered by Executive Board. It was agreed that the Board visit the market to meet with market traders and the Head of City Centre and Markets in late August 2010
- Grants to Organisations - a report was requested on grants made to voluntary organisations by the department to include the amount paid to each, the benefits and safeguards that were applied and what if any Member representation there was on their Board

- Vision for Leeds Bradford Airport - Members asked to receive a report on the 'Vision' for Leeds Bradford International Airport that included access public transport including parking, taxis/road/rail links to the airport. The Board asked that the Chief Executive of the airport and Director General of Metro attend the meeting when this issue was considered
- Open Source Planning - it was reported that that a report from the Chief Planning Officer on this matter would be considered at its meeting on 7th September 2010
- Marketing Leeds - it was reported that a report on Marketing Leeds would be considered at its meeting on 5th October 2010
- Employment of Consultants - Members sought assurances that restraints were being applied in the employment of consultants within the department in view of the current economic climate
(The Executive Member, Development and Regeneration responded and confirmed that whilst restraint was being applied, it was inevitable that the department had to, from time to time, engage consultants on specific projects)
- Cemetery maintenance - an initial report was requested on cemetery maintenance to decide whether to undertake a formal inquiry on this issue
- Budget Issues – that the Board receive monthly budget variation reports

In conclusion, the Chair announced that Jean Dent, Director of City Development would be soon retiring from the authority and that Martin Farrington had been appointed as Acting Director.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That the work programme be further developed to include the following items:-
 - initial report on a review of Cemetery Maintenance to decide whether to undertake a formal inquiry
 - report on grants to organisations – amount of all grants given by the department, benefits and member representation on their Board etc
 - report on the draft market strategy to be considered by Scrutiny Board on 7th September 2010 and for an informal Board visit to Kirkgate Market to meet market traders and to have a briefing with the Head of City Centre and Markets towards the end of August
 - report on Vision for Leeds /Bradford Airport and that the Chief Executive of Leeds Bradford International Airport and Director General of Metro be invited to attend the Board meeting when this item was considered
 - Monthly budget variation reports
- c) That on behalf of the Board, a vote of thanks be conveyed to Jean Dent for her long years of service to the authority and wished her a happy and healthy retirement.

(Councillor B Atha left the meeting at 10.50am during discussions of the above item)

19 Planning Performance Target PI NI 157 - Majors

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report in relation to the planning performance target PI NI 157 for major planning applications.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

Martin Sellens, Head of Planning Services, City Development
Shameem Hussain, Principal Planning Officer, City Development

Specific reference was made to Application Number 09/05453/LA West Leeds Academy, Calverley Lane, Bramley as referred to in paragraph 3.5 of the report. Clarification was sought as to whether Education Leeds would be making a number of financial contributions towards traffic improvement measures.

The Head of Planning Services responded and confirmed that Education Leeds would be making a financial contribution in respect of this application.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That this Board notes that a further report on Section 106 Agreements would be submitted to a future meeting for consideration..

20 Current Position on City Centre Sites

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing the meeting with a brief summary of the current state of the City Centre property market and a summary of initiatives designed to improve the appearance of sites during the period before development takes place.

The following representatives attended the meeting and responded to Member's questions and comments:-

Martin Sellens, Head of Planning Services, City Development
Shameem Hussain, Principal Planning Officer, City Development

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the need for further information to be supplied to the Board on the six sites around Sovereign Street where enforcement action was being taken to stop long stay car parking
(The Head of Planning Services responded and agreed to forward this information to Board Members via e mail)
- requested a report on derelict land that could be used for long stay parking near the city centre e.g. Shannon Street opposite the DWP

building which had been unused for years and could help take the pressure away of motorists parking in residential streets

(The Head of Planning Services responded and agreed to liaise with the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser)

- concern that developers do not seem responsible for the general appearance of a building site when a scheme does not proceed or the company goes in to liquidation. Members asked whether a suitable condition could be applied to planning permissions that would cover this issue

(The Head of Planning Services responded and outlined the powers available to deal with untidy land under the Planning Act)

- concern that empty shops and other vacated premises looked unsightly *(The Head of Planning Services responded in relation to the untidy land and premises powers available and the need for targeted action where appropriate. The Chair outlined the role of the Visual Arts Team in providing temporary displays in vacant premises and encouraged Board Members to forward details of any vacated premises which looked unsightly in their ward to the relevant Chief Officer for appropriate actions)*

RESOLVED - That the contents of the report be noted.

21 Performance Report Year End 2009/10

The Head of Policy and Performance submitted a report presenting an overview of performance against the priority outcomes relevant to the City Development Scrutiny Board, including an analysis of performance indicator results at the end of 2009/10 so that the Board may understand and challenge current performance.

Paul Maney, Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement, City Development was in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- Performance Indicator LSP-TP1e – increase the number of new customers on low incomes accessing credit union services – clarification of the take-up figures
- Performance Indicator LSP – CU1a (i) – number of physical visits to libraries – clarification of the reasons behind the missed targets and the pressure's around the Leeds Strategic Plan in this regard
- Performance Indicator LEGI 4i – to create 1,100 jobs and 800 people from deprived communities in Leeds into employment or self employment by 2011 – clarification of the figures and the need to compare data with other local authorities
- Performance Indicator LSP – TR1B – percentage of non-car journeys into central Leeds in the morning period – the need for a report on a Transport 'Plan C' if funding for the trolley bus and other schemes for the city were scrapped

(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and agreed to liaise with transport colleagues on this issue)

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That a report on a Transport 'Plan C' be submitted to a future Board meeting should funding for the trolley bus and other schemes for the city be scrapped and that, in the interim period, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to revise the Board's work programme.

22 Work Programme, Executive Board Minutes and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing Members with a copy of the Board's current Work Programme. The Executive Board minutes of 22nd June 2010 and the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st July 201 to 31st October 2010 were also attached to the report.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That the Executive Board minutes of 22nd June 2010 and the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st July 2010 to 31st October 2010 be noted.
- c) That the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to update the work programme to include the issues detailed in Minute 18 above and a report on a Transport 'Plan C' if funding for the trolley bus and other schemes for the city were scrapped.

23 Executive Board Response to the City Development Scrutiny Board Inquiry which reviewed the Method by which Planning Applications are publicised and Community involvement takes place

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report advising Members of the decision of the Executive Board to this Board's recommendations following its report which reviewed the method by which planning applications are publicised and community involvement takes place.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations in accordance with the report now submitted.

24 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 7th September 2010 at 10.00am
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.30am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.50am)