

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor J Blake in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, D Coupar, M Dobson,
S Golton, R Lewis, J Lewis, L Mulherin,
M Rafique and L Yeadon

116 Late Items

There were no formal late items of business submitted, however, at the meeting, Board Members were presented with supplementary information providing illustrative examples of how the floods had impacted upon local businesses, together with a draft Strategic Recovery Plan for Members' consideration. (Minute No. 120 refers).

117 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting.

118 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th December 2015 be approved as a correct record.

RESOURCES AND STRATEGY

119 Electoral Review of Leeds City Council - Council Size and Electoral Forecast Information for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

The Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) submitted a report which provided the Board with an update on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) Electoral Review of the Council's size and also of the number of Wards and Ward boundaries that the City Council has. In addition, the report presented the Council Size evidence and the Electorate Forecast information, as appended to the submitted report, for the purposes of approval by Executive Board prior to submission to the LGBCE.

Members welcomed the significant work which had been undertaken in the compilation of the comprehensive documentation. In considering this matter, the Board highlighted the crucial role played by Councillors, especially in the local Wards that they represent, and emphasised how this role would become even more integral, given the current projections of population growth across the city. A point which Members emphasised needed to be strongly conveyed to the Commission.

Alongside the submission, it was agreed by the Board that the Chief Executive write to LGBCE in order to reiterate from a Council officer perspective the critical role played by Ward Members in a city with the geographic scale and diversity of Leeds.

In conclusion, the Board received an overview of the LGBCE's timeframe regarding the undertaking of the review through to the implementation of any decisions made.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council Size evidence and Electorate Forecast information, as detailed in the addendum to the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That the Chief Executive write to the LGBCE highlighting from a Council officer perspective the critical role played by Ward Members in a city with the geographic scale and diversity of Leeds.

ECONOMY AND CULTURE

120 Storm Eva - Recovery Plan

The Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) submitted a report regarding the extent of the impact of Storm Eva in Leeds, and provided details of both the emergency response undertaken at the time and also the short-term recovery work that has followed. In addition, the report sought approval of the strategic recovery approach proposed, with specific reference to financial support, advice and guidance, community engagement, infrastructure repair and flood alleviation proposals. Finally, the report outlined the proposed approach to be taken towards a 'lessons learned' exercise regarding the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements designed to respond to, and recover from incidents of this nature.

At the meeting, Executive Board received further information which provided specific examples of how the flooding impacted upon local businesses, together with a draft Strategic Recovery Plan for Members' consideration. In addition, during the consideration of this item, a range of images illustrating the impact of the flooding across the city were shown.

In considering the submitted report, the following key points were raised:-

- The Board as a whole paid tribute to the resilience of the local residents and those in the business community who had been badly affected by the flooding. In addition, on behalf of the Council, Members placed on record their thanks to all of those communities, Council officers, volunteers, emergency services, partner organisations and armed forces who had given up their time and who made valuable contributions towards the multi-agency recovery work which had taken place to date, and which continued to take place;
- Given the co-ordinating role which continued to be played by the Council in response to the flooding, Members emphasised how these recent events had illustrated the crucial role played by Local Government in the city;
- It was noted that building upon the flood defence schemes as originally proposed, any future feasibility study would look to update and adapt such schemes in order to address the issues which came to light as a result of the recent flooding;

- It was also highlighted that the scope of any future defence strategies would need to be widened in order to consider all water courses affecting the city, and which would require a co-ordinated approach with neighbouring authorities;
- In addition to the comments made around the impact upon the city centre and those areas in close proximity to it, emphasis was also placed upon the impact that the flooding had had upon the more outlying communities;
- Emphasis was placed upon the associated work that the Council could consider in order to mitigate risk of future flooding, such as the establishment of wetlands and reviewing the flooding risk of any sites proposed for development;
- Members highlighted the need to ensure the involvement of any affected communities in the development of associated recovery and regeneration programmes, whilst also providing support to enable communities to develop their own capacity in such areas, in order to harness the community spirit which had been present throughout the response;
- Responding to an enquiry regarding the issues which had been experienced in respect of insurance, the Board received an update on the work which was being undertaken by the Council, in liaison with the Association of British Insurers on such matters;
- The Board also received an update regarding the ongoing actions being taken by the Council as part of an overarching recovery plan, noted the latest statistics in terms of affected properties and businesses, and received the current position regarding the delivery of associated grant schemes.

The Chair advised that the White Paper Motion regarding the issue of flooding, as agreed by Council on the 13th January 2016 had been submitted to Government. In addition, the Board noted that a meeting with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs attended by the Leader, the Chief Executive and Leeds MPs had been held earlier in the day. It was highlighted that the Secretary of State had confirmed that the establishment of appropriate flood defence mechanisms in Leeds was a Government priority, together with an acknowledgement that the current city centre flood defences were not adequate. However, it was noted that no commitment was made by the Secretary of State regarding additional funding to provide flood alleviation measures in Leeds. It was noted that representations had been made at the meeting that the establishment of adequate flood defences, which included the initial development of an associated feasibility study, was urgently required. Members were also informed that a further meeting would be scheduled with the Secretary of State in order to progress such matters, and it was highlighted that all-party representation at that meeting would be sought, together with support from the local business community.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That on behalf of the Executive Board, all staff, partners, local Ward Members, community representatives, volunteers and all those

affected by the floods be thanked for their efforts in supporting the recovery operation;

- (b) That the implementation of a Council Flood Emergency Management Team, which is led by the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) and which met for the first time on the 4th January 2016, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the Local Authority is working with other Councils and partners, especially Calderdale Council, West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, the Environment Agency and other key partners on the recovery work at both a local and West Yorkshire level;
- (d) That the financial support and advice arrangements which have been put in place to support affected householders and businesses, be endorsed;
- (e) That the funding provided by Government to support the schemes detailed at paragraph 3.1.2 of the submitted report be noted, and that the Deputy Chief Executive be requested to keep a record of all relevant expenditure associated with responding to Storm Eva;
- (f) That the Director of City Development be required to work with the Environment Agency in order to submit a report to Executive Board as soon as possible on the city's flood alleviation developments, including plans for seeking Government support for progressing phases 2 and 3 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme;
- (g) That the Chief Executive be requested to write to the relevant Secretary of State requesting the urgent approval of £3m to allow for preparatory and design work to commence on Phase 2 of the Leeds (River Aire) Flood Alleviation Scheme, and which seeks a firm commitment from Government to support both phases 2 and 3;
- (h) That the Director of City Development be required to work with the Environment Agency in order to identify measures that could be undertaken to increase flood resilience for all communities affected Storm Eva;
- (i) That the Director of City Development be required to complete a full assessment of all impacts of Storm Eva on city infrastructure, and to develop proposals for the necessary repair and rebuild work that maybe necessary, including work required on Linton Bridge;

- (j) That the Director of City Development be requested to consider the development of a regeneration based approach towards helping Kirkstall recover from Storm Eva;
- (k) That the Director of City Development be required to make arrangements to undertake a statutory Section 19 investigation into the causes and impacts of the Storm Eva flooding event;
- (l) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) be required to oversee the development and delivery of a Storm Eva Strategic Recovery Plan, and also be requested to report back to Members on this plan, together with a further update on recovery efforts, in March 2016;
- (m) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) be required to undertake a lessons learned exercise and provide a formal report on this to the Council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee;
- (n) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) be required to ensure that the experiences of, and impacts in Leeds are fed into the national review of flooding.

(Councillor R Lewis left the meeting at 4.05 p.m., during the consideration of this item)

DATE FOR PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2016

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00P.M., FRIDAY 29TH JANUARY 2016

(Scrutiny Support will notify Directors of any items called in by 12.00noon on Monday, 1st February 2016)