

SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)

MONDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, N Dawson, J Hardy,
A Khan, A Lowe, C Macniven and R Wood

80 Late Items

There were no late items.

81 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

82 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor J L Carter.

83 Minutes - 24 February 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

84 Executive Board Minutes - 5 March 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 5 March 2014 be noted.

85 Leeds City Council's Decision Making process and Due Regard to Equality

The Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) submitted a report outlining the approach used by the Council to ensure that due regard to equality is considered appropriately in the decision making process.

The following were in attendance and responded to Board Members questions and comments.

- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member, Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services
- Councillor David Blackburn, Leader of the Green Group (member of the Member Champions Equality Action Group)
- Dennis Holmes, Deputy Director, Adult Social Care
- Lelir Yeung, Head of Equalities
- Geoff Turnbull, Senior Policy and Performance Officer
- Pauline Ellis, Senior Policy and Performance Officer.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- Whether the current Equality Impact Assessment process provides the quality assurance of decision making demanded by the council.
- Whether the current Equality Impact Assessment process enables communities and interested groups to be involved appropriately in considering the impact of any proposals or whether other mechanisms should be adopted.
- Whether there is sufficient support within the council to help promote and develop the equality agenda and to act as the champions for the nine 'equality characteristics' (Equality Areas); Race, Disability, Gender, Transgender, Age, Sexual orientation, Religion or Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carers.
- Whether the current process for 'due regard' and approaches to wider involvement and engagement specifically meet the needs of disabled people in Leeds. This is a particular issue that has been raised through the council's Equalities Assembly Disability Hub as a barrier to inclusion.
- The specific examples of where the Equalities Assembly Disability Hub has been actively involved in key discussions.
- The quality control measures operated by the equalities team to ensure compliance.
- The escalation routes to deal with non-compliance.

It was noted that a working group of the Scrutiny Board would be held on 28 March 2014 at which Members of the Council's 'Equality Assembly' would be invited to address the Board on the above issues.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To thank Members and officers for the information presented
- (ii) To hear the views of representatives sitting on the Council's 'Equality Assembly' on 28 March 2014
- (iii) To consider the Board's findings at its meeting on 7 April 2014.

(Councillor A Khan joined the meeting during the discussion of this item.)

86 Work Schedule and draft conclusions and recommendations following the discussions on grants to the third sector

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the draft work schedule and the Board's conclusions and recommendations following the discussion on grants to the third sector.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the Board's work schedule be updated to reflect the work areas identified during today's meeting.

(ii) That the conclusions and recommendations following the discussion on grants to the third sector be agreed.

87 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 7 April 2014 10.00 am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 10.55 am).