

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

Report to Executive Board

Date: 18 March 2015

Subject: Best Council Plan 2015-20 – update 2015/16

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: N/A		

Summary of main issues

1. This report presents a new Best Council Plan for Executive Board's approval. It sets out the context for the Council's strategic priorities for the period 2015-20, key areas of work for 2015/16 aligned with the 15/16 budget and linkages to supporting plans. It builds on the previous Best Council Plan 2013-17, with the six objectives in that document remaining in the new proposed Plan.
2. Since the Best Council Plan 2013-17 was written, the financial environment in which the Council operates continues to tighten and, with an upcoming general election, there remain uncertainties around future policy and the pace and scale of further funding cuts. The organisation itself has also developed in recent years, with a greater emphasis on cross-Council and wider partnership-working that replaces much of the traditional directorate-based service delivery. There is therefore a need for a new Best Council Plan that clearly sets out the longer-term strategic priorities for the organisation - *what* we will focus on in the coming years - but that allows for flexibility in the *way* we deliver them.
3. This 2015-20 timescale recognises that outcomes take time to achieve, usually longer than one year. It also provides a realistic framework and period within which the authority can shape its services, financial plans and workplace planning arrangements, resulting in a Council that will look very different by 2019/20.

Recommendations

Executive Board is recommended to approve the new Best Council Plan 2015-20 and note that at the time of writing, further drafting and design work will take place.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report presents a new Best Council Plan for Executive Board's approval. It sets out the context for the Council's strategic priorities for the period 2015-20, key areas of work for 2015/16 and linkages to supporting plans.

2 Background information

- 2.1 On 1st July 2013, Full Council approved a new strategic Best Council Plan that drew on the findings of the Commission on the Future of Local Government to further shape our Best Council ambition and civic enterprise approach. The Best Council Plan set out the Council's six key objectives for the period 2013-17 with a number of long-term priorities. Annual success measures for the period 2013/14 were included to help monitor in-year progress. Council also authorised Executive Board to make 'in-year amendments to the plan as may be required'.
- 2.2 To ensure the Plan remained up to date and aligned with the 2014/15 budget, the Best Council Plan objectives and priorities were reviewed by members and officers last year, culminating in a revised 'Best Council Plan – Plan on a Page' approved by Executive Board on 5 March 2014. The Plan on a Page was then further developed into an 'objective on a page' for each of the six objectives and approved by this Board on 25 June 2014.
- 2.3 In preparation for the new financial year, officers have reviewed the Best Council Plan and present at Appendix 1 a revised version for Executive Board's consideration. The new Plan outlines the context for the Council's priorities for the period 2015-20 and builds on the previous 2013-17 Best Council Plan. The new Plan aligns with the 2015/16 budget approved by Full Council on 25th February with both documents emphasising our firm focus on tackling disadvantages and inequalities in Leeds.
- 2.4 At the time of writing, further drafting and design work is taking place on the new Best Council Plan. An early illustration is shown at Appendix 2.

3 Main issues

Changes to the Best Council Plan

- 3.1 Since the previous refresh of the Best Council Plan, the financial environment in which the Council operates continues to tighten and, with an upcoming general election, there remain uncertainties around future policy and the pace and scale of further funding cuts. The organisation itself has also developed in recent years, with a greater emphasis on cross-Council and wider partnership-working that replaces much of the traditional directorate-based service delivery. There is therefore a need for a new Best Council Plan that clearly sets out the longer-term strategic priorities for the organisation - *what* we will focus on in the coming years - but that allows for flexibility in the *way* we deliver them.
- 3.2 The new Plan reflects these changes:
- A new strategic narrative explains the need for us to work differently if the Council and the City are to thrive in such challenging times. This builds on the propositions developed by the Leeds-led *Commission on the Future of Local Government* (2012) which brought a fresh perspective to the role of

local government based on the concept of civic enterprise: where councils become more enterprising, businesses and other partners become more civic and citizens become more engaged. It includes the 6 Best Council objectives that featured in last year's updated Plan, incorporates the seven 'breakthrough projects' established to provide focus on a set of cross-council priorities in 2015/16 and sets this all within a longer-term 2015-20 context.

- This 2015-20 timescale recognises that outcomes take time to achieve, usually longer than one year. It also provides a realistic framework and period within which the authority can shape its services, financial plans and workplace planning arrangements, resulting in a Council that will look very different by 2019/20.
- The previous Best Council Plan set out very specific annual deliverables and key performance indicators for each of the six objectives, most drawn from the range of supporting partnership plans (e.g. Children & Young People's Plan; Health & Wellbeing Strategy) and other strategies (e.g. Core Strategy; Citizens@Leeds). The new format makes explicit the linkages between the Best Council Plan and these other supporting plans and will include hyperlinks that will be updated as the supporting plans are updated. This will ensure the Best Council Plan remains up to date, becomes a much shorter, more focused document than before, removes duplication with other plans and facilitates stakeholders in drilling down for more detail as required.

Governance

- 3.3 Detailed delivery plans and key performance indicators (KPIs) are in place for the range of supporting plans and strategies that sit beneath the Best Council Plan. Accountability for monitoring and managing these falls within existing governance arrangements - for example, with partnership boards and project boards – with escalation processes as required to members and the Corporate Leadership Team already established through monthly Best Council Plan reporting.
- 3.4 In September 2014, the Corporate Leadership Team approved a Best Council Plan 'basket of measures': a set of KPIs that collectively would be reported and published each quarter to help monitor and manage progress against the 2013-17 objectives. Nearly all are still applicable and so will be rolled forward for the period of the new Best Council Plan, with work currently underway to consider if there are any gaps. The current set of indicators is included as an appendix in the new 2015-20 Plan.
- 3.5 Following approval of the 2015-20 Best Council Plan, the 2013-17 Plan will be closed down with an annual report this summer detailing progress in delivering the 2014/15 objectives.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.2 The proposed revisions to the Best Council Plan have been subject to consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team, Best Council Leadership Team of senior officers, Equalities Board and portfolio holders. The priorities are drawn from existing plans and strategies (themselves subject to stakeholder consultation), including the 2015/16 budget which went through an extensive consultation process with the public, elected members and Council officers.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Tackling inequalities is at the heart of the new Best Council Plan. Since the Best Council Plan draws on a range of supporting plans – for which individual equality impact assessments have been carried out on specific initiatives and decisions – there is no need for a separate assessment on the Best Council Plan itself.
- 4.2.2 Equality impact assessments will continue to be undertaken on particular initiatives and decisions within these supporting plans as required. This will help ensure compliance with the Council's decision-making processes that require due regard to be clearly set out within the cover report with any screening or impact assessments published as routine.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 This report brings to Executive Board a set of Council priorities for the period 2015-20 with a 15/16 focus aligned with the 15/16 budget. This falls within the authority's budget and policy framework.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The new Best Council Plan sets out the Council's objectives aligned with the 2015/16 budget and consideration of future funding changes. The priorities will continue to inform – and be informed by - the authority's budget and workforce planning arrangements.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 The provisions of Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 state that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. As the Best Council Plan forms part of the Budgetary and Policy Framework, it is therefore exempt from call in. There are also no specific legal implications and all information within this report is available to the public.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The Council's strategic and directorate risk registers will be reviewed in light of the changes to the Best Council Plan to ensure that the key risks that could impact upon the priorities are appropriately identified, assessed and managed. An assurance report on the authority's strategic risk management arrangements will be presented to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee later in the year.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 At a time when local government is under greater pressure than ever before and facing significant uncertainties, the Council is changing the way it works building on the concept of civic enterprise. This requires a new Best Council Plan which sets out the context for the authority's priorities for 2015-20 and key areas of work for 2015/16 aligned with the 15/16 budget.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is requested to approve the Best Council Plan 2015-20 and note that, at the time of writing, further drafting and design will be taking place.

7 Background documents¹: None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Appendix 1: DRAFT Best Council Plan 2015-20 - Update 2015-16

[Section 1] Foreword from Leader of the Council, Councillor Keith Wakefield and Chief Executive, Tom Riordan

We have a positive and distinctive vision for the future of Leeds City Council: where the council becomes more enterprising; businesses and partners more civic; and the public more engaged to help Leeds become the best city in the UK.

The last five years have seen major changes across local government and the public sector, with increased demand for services and a significantly decreased central budget. Leeds is no different. What has set us apart is the way we have faced these challenges and continued to deliver real progress for people in the city.

Over the coming years, the projected growth and changes in the Leeds population continue to present a complex range of challenges, from ensuring enough school places are available to meeting the needs of an ageing population. Inequalities persist: for example, although overall life expectancy has been increasing for all Leeds residents, the life expectancy for a man living in a deprived Leeds neighbourhood is 12 years lower than a man living in an affluent part of Leeds. Local employers have evolving skills, in particular in the projected growth areas of innovative manufacturing and financial and professional services. We must meet our responsibilities in these areas within the context of a continued reduction in budget.

For Leeds, funding from government was reduced by £129m between 2010/11 and 2014/15, but in addition, the Council has also faced significant cost pressures particularly within adult and children's social care, as well as reductions in income due to the economic climate. This has meant that savings of around £250m have had to have been found over the last 4 years.

For 2015/16, our net budget has been reduced by £44m, with less core funding from the government being the main element of that. Further reductions in government grant of the scale suggested by the Chancellor's December 2014 Autumn Statement will fundamentally challenge the services provided by the Council and change the way we work.

This is the context for this Best Council Plan to take us to 2020. The impact of these cuts cannot be underestimated but our 2015/16 budget demonstrates our firm focus on countering disadvantage and inequality in Leeds. This will remain central to all our work in the next five years. What will help us rise to these challenges is the way we work together, with our partners and with the public. We will adapt to survive – and we want to do more than survive. We intend to continue to play our part in making Leeds thrive.

We know that local government and public services remain vital to communities in helping them shape their health and wellbeing. We have clear plans with our partners, such as the children and young people's plan, the housing strategy, and the health and wellbeing strategy. We will meet our responsibilities in a way that serves our communities even better, reducing inequalities and achieving our ambitions of being the UK's best council and best city.

At a time when the public consistently trusts local government much more than central government, we will continue to make the case for greater freedoms from Whitehall. Real and meaningful devolution is the key to transforming Leeds, opening up opportunities and improving the lives of people in the city.

These are big ambitions and we need big changes to make them a reality. We have set out here what our focus will be for the next twelve months; and how we will work differently over the next five years. Our five Council Values continue to underpin everything we do: Working as a team for Leeds; Being open, honest and trusted; Working with communities; Treating people fairly; Spending money wisely.

We are again asking our colleagues to do more with less, and continue to find new ways of delivering the very best for Leeds. We value their commitment and would like to share our sincere thanks for all that's been achieved so far, and the continuous hard work that is going to be needed over the coming months and years.

Councillor Keith Wakefield

Tom Riordan

[Text box#1: illustrative facts about Leeds and Leeds City Council, including:

- *Leeds is the second largest local authority in England with a population of 751,500 people*
- *Leeds is increasingly diverse with over 140 ethnic groups, representing almost 19% of the total population*
- *Leeds is by far the largest centre of economic activity in the region, with the total value of the economy estimated at £18bn per annum (GVA)*
- *The council employs around 13,500 people and spends almost £2 billion each year delivering hundreds of different services]*

[Text box#2: key Council achievements including:

- *The Grand Depart of the Tour de France in Leeds in 2014 boosted the city's economy by £xm*
- *Majority of educational standards, including school attendance, the highest ever recorded in the city*
- *Alternative weekly bin collections and improving recycling rates continue to reduce the cost of landfill tax]*

[Section 2] The next twelve months: 2015/16

In the Best Council Plan for 2013-17, we shared our priorities and objectives. We outlined our continued focus on a values-based approach to deliver change, investing significantly in our workforce. We described the difference that a civic enterprise approach is making. The objectives will continue to be important for the next year, with our budget showing how our spending will help to achieve them. The objectives will continue to be supported by a set of plans, each with detailed key performance indicators. The most significant of these indicators form a set to help measure progress on the Best Council Plan as a whole. These are set out in the Appendix.

The six objectives for 2015/16 remain as:

1. Supporting communities and tackling poverty
2. Promoting sustainable and economic growth
3. Building a child-friendly city
4. Delivering the better lives programme
5. Dealing effectively with the city's waste
6. Becoming a more efficient and effective council

With a General Election in 2015, we know there will be changes. These objectives give us a clear focus for the year ahead against this uncertain backdrop.

To accelerate pace, we have established a new way of working that will break through traditional boundaries and silo working and engage partners and communities differently. The council's role in making the Tour de France Grand Départ in 2014 such a success for the city shows how well we can work in this way – and what happens when communities and partners take up a civic role too.

The seven 'breakthrough projects' are:

- Making Leeds the best place to grow old
- Hosting world class events on a global stage as a smart city
- Putting children and families first: tackling domestic violence
- Rethinking the city centre
- Housing growth, and jobs for young people
- Reducing fuel bills and setting a revised 2050 carbon target
- Reducing health inequalities through healthy lifestyles

[Text box #3: illustrative examples of things the Council will do in 15/16, including:

- *Further joining up health and social care services and meeting new Care Act 2014 duties*
- *Continuing focus on helping to keep children safe from harm, healthy and doing well in learning*
- *Providing £4.8m to expand the service to families facing problems such as domestic violence or child protection proceedings*
- *Achieving the housing growth target*

[Section 3] Looking ahead to 2020

We want Leeds to be the best city in the UK – one that is earning, learning, safe, healthy and engaged. A city that is great for people of all ages. To make this happen, we will continue to use our thinking from the Leeds-led *Commission on the Future of Local Government*. This report, published in 2012, set out a new direction for councils that we have adopted and so we already have good examples of this new style of leadership making a positive difference in the city – but we want to do more.

Civic enterprise

We want to invest in the social infrastructure that makes Leeds a success – our communities, our schools and the many incredible community leaders in the city. These leaders are valuable resources - civic entrepreneurs with passion to make things happen. The council will work to create the right environment to harness this power and potential.

We are already seeing great results from social and civic enterprise initiatives. Leaders for Leeds is a cross-sector leadership network that connects civic entrepreneurs around the city. The Leeds Empties Project unites public, private and third sector organisations to bring empty properties up to standard and back into use. Neighbourhood Networks see over 40 social enterprises support more than 25,000 elderly people each year in the city.

Strong local democracy is essential for successful civic enterprise. The council has changed in recent years to become more enterprising and engaging. Our elected members are forging closer relationships with other key community leaders to build capacity, share expertise and develop mutual trust. We will build on these strong foundations to make the council as a whole more enabling and facilitating, and a catalyst for positive change.

Social contract

Our relationship with the people of Leeds has changed and will continue to change. Our ten community committees reflect the shift to a more collaborative way of working, empowering people to influence decisions where they live. We are becoming better connected with the citizens of Leeds, and tackling the challenges of poverty, deprivation and inequality through our community hubs – integrating essential services for those who need them most.

We will build on this approach, and create the conditions that encourage people to make positive decisions about their own lives. This includes extending our use of Family Group Conferencing that uses families' own skills, strengths and personal knowledge to resolve difficulties and also restorative practice to improve the way we communicate and engage with each other and with children, young people and families.

The council will continue to offer services that support citizens with a particular focus on our most vulnerable residents. Where the budget pressures mean changes have to be made, we will listen and respond with collaborative solutions. Again, partnerships with all key sectors have a vital role to play to remove inequalities and increase opportunities.

21st century infrastructure

With the dual challenge of increased demand for services and severe financial constraints, we must still make the big decisions that will benefit the city now and for many years to come. Almost two centuries ago, our predecessors transformed Leeds and improved the quality of life for residents by providing clean water, lighting, sewers and public health.

The infrastructure needed for the 21st century is very different but no less important in changing lives. We have a vital role to play in improving the city's physical and digital connection networks.

We will work with partners in both the public and private sectors to enable affordable ultra-fast broadband; low carbon and low cost energy; affordable housing for families, first time buyers and the elderly; and transport that connects communities, cities and regions. We will work with communities to ensure that neighbourhoods are clean, safe and meet local needs, with green spaces, cultural opportunities and places that everyone can enjoy.

Good growth

Creating the right environment for economic growth is a vital part of this picture. For Leeds, good growth means more jobs and homes; improved skills and educational attainment for all; helping people out of financial hardship and into work; and increased inward investment. We need to continue working with and learning from our business community to allow enterprise to thrive and to create sustainable jobs and careers.

Our Core Strategy sets the ambitious target of building 70,000 homes by 2028. We are planning ways to get the best deal for Leeds from high speed rail and to make it easier to cycle in Leeds. We are committed to delivering key developments like Victoria Gate, South Bank, Kirkstall Forge and Thorpe Park.

Devolution and local freedoms

Bringing local business leaders and other partners together to work on jobs and skills has identified solutions that work for Leeds. The value of local knowledge and intelligence is an incredible resource for the city. We need the freedom from central government to allow more decisions to be taken at the right level, using this knowledge and insight.

We are already working collaboratively across the city region to make the most of any devolved powers, and have demonstrated that we are deserving of more powers to make a difference locally. The City Deal brought in a £1 billion investment in transport through a combined transport authority, and a further £400 million for infrastructure modernisation. The Local Enterprise Partnership was the first in the country to establish a coherent economic plan, and has helped SMEs to access £70 million funding through the Regional Growth Fund.

Leeds will continue to be an enthusiastic and committed partner in the region, a loud voice for increased devolved power to cities, and a strong advocate for sharing power at a local level.

Organisational changes

To bring about these changes for the city, we must also change the council significantly. This is already happening – by March 2016 we will have lost 2500 employees in five years – and we will continue to get smaller as an organisation. We plan to make significant savings by changing the way we work: £5.5m through new ways of delivering internal support services; £5.5m through managing our suppliers and contracts differently; and £2.1m through reducing the number of office buildings we have.

To support a more adaptable way of working, we are redefining roles and by 2020, will expect to see council employees working in strong, more flexible teams. This flexibility will extend to our other assets. Council buildings will be multi-use, giving customers quicker and easier access to the things that are important to them. We will work with communities and partners to make decisions and spend money wisely based on effective use of data and tailored information for an accurate picture of needs, demands and impact.

[Text box #4: 5 Council values]

[Section 4] Appendix: Best Council Plan KPIs - set of indicators

These include (sample of full set included here for illustrative purposes):

City KPIs

- Number of people supported into jobs
- Repeat incidence rate of domestic violence and abuse
- Number of delayed hospital discharges per 100,000 population
- Achieve the housing growth target
- Number of children looked after
- Percentage of waste recycled

Organisational KPIs

- Projected over/(under) spend for this financial year
- Council's energy consumption (carbon emissions)
- Number of complaints received about Council services
- Number of compliments received about Council services
- Level of employee engagement

[Section 5] Best Council Plans and supporting plans

For more information, please refer to supporting plans which include:

- Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Adult Social Care Market Position Statement
- Drug & Alcohol Strategy
- Children & Young People's Plan
- Citizens @ Leeds Strategy
- Leeds Growth Strategy
- Integrated Waste Management Strategy
- Leeds Strategy for Sport & Active Lives
- Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan
- West Yorkshire Transport Plan
- Leeds Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Leeds Air Quality Strategy
- Carbon & Water Management Plan
- Leeds Museum & Galleries Strategic Plan

Appendix 2: Proposed new Best Council Plan design

Illustrative example of first part of Foreword with Text Box 1

FOREWORD

From Leader of the Council, Cllr Keith Wakefield
and Chief Executive, Tom Riordan

We have a positive and distinctive vision for the future of Leeds City Council, where the council becomes more enterprising; businesses and partners more civic; and the public more engaged to help Leeds become the best city in the UK.

The last five years have seen major changes across local government and the public sector, with increased demand for services and a significantly decreased central budget. Leeds is no different. What has set us apart is the way we have faced these challenges and continued to deliver real progress for people in the city.

Leeds is the **2nd largest** local authority in England covering an area of **552 km²**

Leeds has a population of **751,500 people** living in **320,600 households** representing a **5% growth** since the 2001 census

Leeds is increasingly diverse with over **140 ethnic groups** representing almost **19%** of the total population compared to 11% in 2001

Leeds is by far the largest centre of economic activity in the region, with the total value of the **economy** estimated at **£18bn** per annum (GVA)

Leeds has over **24,000** VAT registered **businesses**

445,000 people working in the city, a workforce projected to grow by over **10%** in the next decade



Appendix 2 continued – Proposed new Best Council Plan design

Illustrative example of Text Box 1

