

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES)**

**MONDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2016**

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, N Buckley,  
C Campbell, C Dobson, R Grahame,  
M Harland, G Hyde, J Illingworth,  
K Maqsood, M Robinson and K Wakefield

### **66 Late Items**

In relation to item 9, the Board received a summary note of the Migration Scrutiny working group meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

### **67 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

### **68 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor N Walshaw. Notification was received that Councillor C Dobson was substituting for Councillor N Walshaw.

### **69 Minutes - 15 February 2016**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2016 be approved as a correct record.

### **70 Contact Centre Performance Update**

The report of the Head of Customer Contact (Contact Centre) presented a further update on the performance of the Contact Centre and addressed a number of key matters raised previously by the Scrutiny Board in September 2015.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer Customer Access
- Adam Quesne, Head of Customer Contact

The key issues raised were as follows:

- Recruitment initiatives – Members discussed an initiative currently being explored with HR to attract students to provide flexible coverage during peak periods and holidays that would be mutually beneficial.

- Career progression – it was noted that the service has reviewed its processes for internal progression opportunities within the Contact Centre following feedback from existing staff.
- MyLeeds portal – Members emphasised the importance of generating greater awareness of the self-serve facility now available. It was noted that digital access remained a key priority for the service moving forward.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and a further update be brought back to Scrutiny in the new municipal year.

## 71 Migration - Scrutiny working group summary note

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting a summary note of the Scrutiny Board's Migration Scrutiny Working Group meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Proposed recommendations stemming from the working group's discussions were also set out in the summary note for the Board's consideration and agreement.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Shaid Mahmood, Chief Officer for Communities
- Anne McMaster, Communities Team, Citizens and Communities

The key issues raised were as follows:

- Members reflected on the original reference made to the growth of 'EU economic migrants' from particular parts of Europe but felt that future references in this regard should be reflecting the general growth of 'EU citizen migration' and asked that the summary note also be amended accordingly.
- The Board acknowledged the benefits of establishing a 'citywide' Migration Strategy Group that would also include other key Leeds partners to provide a strategic and co-ordinated response to migration in Leeds.
- The Board reiterated the pressures faced by schools in supporting in-year admissions and the challenges linked to accessing funding aimed at supporting the education and welfare of migrant children.
- Members acknowledged that frontline staff need to become more knowledgeable of specific migrant support services but also emphasised the importance of frontline staff identifying and signposting all other vulnerable citizens in Leeds to appropriate services too.
- Members discussed the importance of identifying and offering support, where appropriate, to parents of migrant children in terms of accessing local adult learning opportunities and particularly ESOL related provision.
- The Board discussed the importance of local authorities being able to project and address key service demands such as schools places, housing and health and social care provision. Linked to this, Members recognised the need for the Home Office and UK Border Agency to provide more

timely and accurate intelligence surrounding the movement of EU migrant citizens to local authorities.

Reflecting on the above comments, the Board agreed to make changes to some of the proposed recommendations set out within the working group summary note (recommendations 1, 3, and 4) and also identified additional recommendations.

The amended recommendations agreed by the Board are highlighted below:

#### Recommendation 1

That the Executive Board:

- (i) Supports the principle of urgently establishing a citywide Migration Strategy Group, involving other key Leeds partners, to provide a strategic and co-ordinated response to migration in Leeds based on robust local intelligence gathering and data sharing.
- (iii) Tasks the nominated Lead Director and Executive Member to establish absolute clarity in terms of what the Leeds 'support' is to new migrants coming to the city and reports back to the Executive Board in this regard

#### Recommendation 3

That the Director of Public Health works closely with other directorates to identify appropriate measures for disseminating information that will encourage a wider range of frontline staff across the Council to assist in identifying vulnerable migrants, as well as other vulnerable citizens in Leeds, and signposting them to appropriate services including those commissioned through Public Health.

#### Recommendation 4

That the Director of Children's Services engages with local schools and colleges to:

- (i) explore opportunities and share existing good practice for providing alternative learning environments for those migrant children aged 14 and 15 who may be struggling to get a GCSE qualification, particularly when English is not their first language.
- (ii) identify and offer support, where appropriate, to parents of migrant children in terms of accessing local adult learning opportunities and particularly ESOL related provision.

The additional desired outcomes and recommendations agreed by the Board are highlighted below:

Desired Outcome - That the additional government funding provided to schools in supporting the education and welfare of eligible migrant children is accessed immediately and continues to follow the child throughout any school transfers.

#### Recommendation 7

That the Director of Children's Services works with local schools in lobbying the Department for Education to review its existing funding arrangements to ensure that the additional funding available to schools in supporting the education and welfare of eligible migrant children is accessed immediately and continues to follow the child throughout any school transfers.

Desired Outcome – That timely and accurate national intelligence surrounding the movement of EU migrant citizens is shared with local authorities to assist in projecting and addressing key service demands such as schools places, housing and health and social care provision.

#### Recommendation 8

That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works with Migration Yorkshire in lobbying the Home Office and UK Border Agency to provide accurate and timely national intelligence surrounding the movement of EU migrant citizens that can be accessed easily by local authorities to assist in projecting and addressing key service demands such as schools places, housing and health and social care provision.

**RESOLVED** – That the summary note be amended to reflect the above comments and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board and forwarded to the relevant bodies for action.

(Councillor R Grahame arrived at 10.20 am during consideration of this item).

## **72 Role and work of the Communities Board**

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) provided an update on the role and work of the Communities Board, including revised terms of reference and membership.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Shaid Mahmood, Chief Officer for Communities
- Anne McMaster, Communities Team, Citizens and Communities

The key issues raised were as follows:

- Locally focused projects – Members discussed the work of the Communities Board in relation to three ongoing locality projects within East End Park, Holdbeck and Little London.
- Community Development – particular importance was placed on the Communities Board working with partners to identify and agree key principles of community development that would form the basis for future joint investment.
- Links with Neighbourhood Improvement Boards – as well as working closely with Community Committees, the Board also identified the need for

the Communities Board to engage more closely with Neighbourhood Improvement Boards.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**73 work schedule**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the municipal year.

**RESOLVED** – That the work schedule be noted.

**74 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 10.00 am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am).

(The meeting concluded at 11.20 am)