

SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

MONDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor K Groves in the Chair

Councillors D Cohen, H Hayden,
J McKenna, D Nagle, A Sobel,
E Tunnicliffe, T Wilford and R Wood

1 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

2 Late Items

There were no late items.

3 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors S Bentley and S McKenna. Notification had been received that Councillor R Grahame was to substitute for Councillor S McKenna.

4 Minutes - 21 March 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

5 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the Board's terms of reference as agreed by Council on 19 May 2016.

RESOLVED – That the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference be noted.

6 Co-opted Members

The report of the head of Scrutiny and Member Development sought the Board's formal consideration for the appointment of Co-opted members.

The Board was informed that they could appoint the following:

- Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual meeting of Council; and/or
- Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.

The Board discussed the options for appointing co-opted members, including that 'co-option would normally only be appropriate where the co-opted member has some specialist skill or knowledge, which would be of assistance to the Scrutiny Board'. As part of this discussion, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser also outlined other options, including the use of 'expert witnesses', to broaden input into any of the Board's agreed areas of inquiry.

RESOLVED – To appoint co-opted members on an ad-hoc basis for any inquiries where it was deemed appropriate.

7 Sources of work for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided information and guidance on potential sources of work to be developed within the Board's Work programme for 2016/17.

Appended to the report was a copy of the Vision for Scrutiny at Leeds, the Best Council Plan update for 2016/17 and details of work previously carried out by the Scrutiny Board.

Councillor James Lewis, Executive Member, Resources and Strategy and Doug Meeson, Chief Officer (Financial Services) attended the meeting and gave a summary of the financial and organisational issues facing the Council.

In summary the main areas of discussion were:

- The governments 'four year settlement offer' 2016/17 to 2019/2020;
- The associated timetable to consider the offer and associated risks in accepting the offer;
- The role of Scrutiny in reviewing efficiency plans;
- The importance of fees and charges within the context of a reducing budget;
- The role of 'smart cities' in helping deliver efficiencies;
- Business rates and the future of local government finance;
- Retail developments in the City and the consequences for footfall patterns, and how these might impact on business rates;
- The management of the Children's services budget particularly around compensating overspends in demand led areas with efficiencies in working practices;
- The use of asset sales to support the budget;
- Strategic commissioning, the role of partners across the city and the 'Leeds Pound'.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To thank the Executive Member (Resources and Strategy) and the Chief Officer (Financial Services) for their attendance.

- (ii) To use the information gathered to inform the Board's work programme.

8 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report detailing a draft work schedule for the 2016/17 municipal year.

The following list of work was identified;

- Commissioning
- Smart cities and ICT
- Budget strategy
- Fees and Charges update

RESOLVED – To authorise the Chair and Scrutiny offer to consult with the relevant Director(s) and Executive Board Member regarding the work schedule and report back to the next meeting with an updated work schedule.

9 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 18 July 2016 at 10.00am (pre meeting for all Board Members at 9.30am).