

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)**

**THURSDAY, 26TH OCTOBER, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, A Garthwaite,  
R Grahame, P Harrand, J McKenna,  
D Nagle, A Smart and E Tunnicliffe

### **30 Late Items**

The following information was provided as supplementary information to Agenda Item 10: Performance Reporting (minute 37 refers):

- Appendix 2 – Leeds City Council response to the Government Apprenticeship Levy.

### **31 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest made at the meeting.

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

The following apologies for absence and notifications of substitute members attending were received at the meeting:

- Councillor A Sobel – Councillor R Grahame attending as a substitute member.
- Councillor R Wood – no substitute member attending.
- Councillor T Wilford – no substitute member attending.

### **33 Minutes - 14 September 2017**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2017 were agreed as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising from the minutes identified or discussed at the meeting.

### **34 Executive Board minutes - 20 September 2017**

The draft minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 20 September 2017 were noted.

### **35 Commissioning - response to the scrutiny inquiry report and recommendations**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report detailing the previous Scrutiny Board's inquiry into Commissioning. The previous Scrutiny Board's statement was appended, alongside a further report from the Director of Adults and Health setting out the response to the previous Scrutiny Board's recommendations.

The following were in attendance to introduce the item and address questions from the Scrutiny Board:

- Cllr James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Cath Roff – Director of Adults and Health
- Julie Staton – Head of Commissioning, Adults and Health

In introducing the report the Executive Member for Strategy and Resources and the Director of Adults and Health welcomed the previous Scrutiny Board's statement and recommendations; and acknowledged the overall desired outcomes.

It was noted that the Council's approach and oversight of commissioning 'people's services' had been shaped by the previous Scrutiny Board's inquiry, which included a more inclusive group of service areas, including Housing and Sport.

The changing landscape of commissioning was also referenced, which included the development of the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Sustainability and Transformation Plan/ Partnership, which may lead to a regional approach to commissioning for some services.

Members of the Scrutiny Board considered the response set out in the report from the Director of Adults and Health.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Scrutiny Board (Adults and Health):

- a) Notes the progress made in responding to the Scrutiny Board recommendations made in its May 2017 report
- b) Notes the change in practice to write to all relevant ward members to ask for their views on a service when it is being recommissioned or reviewed.
- c) Supports the approach whereby Community Committee Champions should be used as the main mechanism for engaging with community committees on strategic people commissioning issues.

### **36 Financial Health Monitoring 2017/18 – Month 5**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report that introduced the Financial Health Monitoring 2017/18 – Month 5 report, considered by the Executive Board at its meeting on 18 October 2017.

The following were in attendance to introduce the item and address questions from the Scrutiny Board:

- Cllr James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Richard Ellis – Head of Finance (Communities & Environment, Resources & Housing, Corporate Finance)

In addressing the Scrutiny Board, the Executive Member and Head of Finance gave a brief overview of the report and the Council's overall position in terms of current spending against the agreed 2017/18 budget and any specific areas of risk.

The Scrutiny Board discussed the report presented and the information provided at the meeting; raising a number of matters, including:

- The shortfall in Housing Benefit overpayments (which was a result of a higher level of accuracy in initial benefit payments);
- The impact of Children's Services overspend on the overall level of Council General Reserves;
- Current Public Health expenditure against the 2017/18 budget;
- Business rates income and the relative position of the 2017 collection fund deficit, compared to 2016.
- The overall impact of the 20% rent discount at Kirkgate Market;
- The risk of reduced Section 278 income as a result of lower levels of development activity and the impact of identified 'trigger points' within planning conditions.

## **RESOLVED**

- a) That details presented in the Financial Monitoring report be noted.
- b) That the following information be provided to members of the Scrutiny Board:
  - i. The relative position of the 2017 business rates collection fund deficit, compared to 2016; and,
  - ii. The overall impact of the 20% rent discount at Kirkgate Market.

## **37 Performance Reporting**

The Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report that set out:

- A proposed timetable for reporting performance across the portfolio areas relevant to the Board's remit; and,
- Details of the Council's response to the Government Apprenticeship Levy and the associated public sector target.

The following were in attendance to introduce the item and address any questions from the Scrutiny Board:

- Cllr James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Neil Evans – Director of Resources and Housing

- Tim Rollett – Senior Risk Management Officer, Intelligence and Policy Service
- Libby Megson – Human Resources Service Manager, Strategy and Housing
- Martyn Long – Head of Projects and Programmes, City Development

In introducing the report, and specifically in relation to the proposed timetable for reporting performance to the Scrutiny Board, the Senior Risk Management Officer advised the Board that it was further proposed that a report around 'Effective Procurement' would be presented to the Scrutiny Board in December 2017 or January 2018.

The Scrutiny Board confirmed this should include details of 'on/off contract spend' and the use of contract waivers.

The Human Resources Service Manager introduced the details associated with the Council's response to the Government Apprenticeship Levy and the associated public sector target, outlined in the report.

The Scrutiny Board considered the information presented in detail and raised a number of matters, including:

- The term 'apprenticeship' was not necessarily the most appropriate terminology to reflect the 16-65 age range covered by the levy and the broad term for describing entry into employment and development of the workforce.
- Application of the levy across the Council's workforce planning activity, particularly in areas of known skill shortages – such as the Digital Information Service (DIS).
- The different sectors currently engaged with the Council.
- The diversity of the Council's current workforce and also across current apprenticeships.
- The level of inclusivity across apprenticeships, for example working aged adults with a mild learning disability.

## **RESOLVED**

- a) That the proposed performance reporting cycle be agreed, subject to the inclusion of 'Effective Procurement' in December 2017.
- b) That the Scrutiny Board's work schedule be updated to reflect the details agreed in (a) above.
- c) That in relation to the apprenticeship levy discussion, the following additional information be provided to members of the Scrutiny Board:
  - Details of the work Jobs and Skills are undertaking with partners, including different business sectors.
  - Current Leeds City Council workforce profile / diversity information.
  - Current apprenticeships profile / diversity information.

### **38 Work Schedule**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report setting out the Scrutiny Board's outline work schedule for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser introduced the report and made reference to the following matters identified elsewhere on the agenda:

- The proposed timetable for reporting performance information to the Scrutiny Board.
- The identified 'inquiry points' set out in the apprenticeship levy paper.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser also outlined progress of the Board's ongoing inquiry in relation to Business Rates.

The Board discussed the information outlined at the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) That the update around the Board inquiry into Business Rates be noted.
- b) That the work schedule be updated to reflect the agreed timetable for reporting performance information to the Scrutiny Board.
- c) That arrangements be made for a working group meeting in early 2018 to review progress against the identified 'inquiry points' set out in the apprenticeship levy paper.

### **39 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Wednesday, 29 November 2017 at 10:30am (pre-meeting for all members of the Scrutiny Board at 10:00am).

The meeting closed at 11:40 a.m.