

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH) - CONSULTATIVE MEETING

THURSDAY, 24TH JUNE, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, N Buckley, K Dye,
B Gettings, J Heselwood, L Martin,
M Shahzad, N Sharpe, J Taylor and
P Wadsworth

1 **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

2 **Minutes**

RECOMMENDED – That the draft minutes of the meeting held 7th April 2021 be noted.

3 **Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference**

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that presented the Board's terms of reference for information.

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

4 **Performance Update**

The Director of City Development submitted a report, which presents a summary of 2020/21 performance data and provides an update on progress in delivering the relevant priorities in the Best Council Plan.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate
- Martin Farrington, Director of City Development
- Eve Roodhouse, Chief Officer, Culture & Economy
- Martin Elliot, Head of Strategic Planning
- Paul Foster, Transport Planning Manager
- Tim Rollett, Intelligence and Policy Manager
- Chris Shillito, Intelligence and Policy Officer
- Martyn Long, Head of Employment and Skills

Officers in attendance presented the highlights relating to each of the Key Performance Indicators as set out in the report.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *Number of new business start-ups.* In response to a query, members were advised that it is difficult to differentiate between nature of individual start-ups, and in recognition of this, teams in partnership with the University of Leeds are undertaking analysis focused on identifying high potential start-ups. It was confirmed that this information will be circulated to members when available.
- *Vacant positions within the hospitality sector.* Members noted the challenges the hospitality industry are experiencing in Leeds to recruit, and were advised that this is often due to employers not utilising the furlough scheme and previous employees moving to other sectors, as well as employees who are EU citizens leaving the country as a result of Brexit. Members were advised that work is ongoing with organisations across Leeds to upskill and recruit through the employment and skills service, and longer-term plans considered as part of the Talent and Skills Plan refresh.
- *Quality of employment.* Members queried whether data relating to quality of employment in Leeds is available to inform upskilling schemes, and were advised that the employment and skills service has recently secured funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop a targeted programme to reskill people in at risk or poorly paid jobs.
- *Outstanding capacity.* In response to a query, members were advised that the number of developments that have received consent to proceed but have not yet done remains high at approximately 18,000, and that details of the time periods for delay will be circulated following the meeting.
- *Delivery of affordable housing.* Members noted several challenges associated with the delivery of affordable housing across Leeds, and were advised that issues can be addressed through the Local Plan Review, as well as the Board's previous 'Housing Mix' inquiry tracking item scheduled for later in the municipal year.
- *Percentage of working age Leeds' residents with at least a Level 4 qualification.* In response to a query, it was confirmed that the KPI for Level 4 qualifications is not exclusive to residents who have received their Level 4 qualification whilst living in Leeds.
- *Vision Zero Inquiry and KSI figures.* It was suggested that the impact of school streets initiative and active travel neighbourhoods programme be included in the Board's upcoming Vision Zero Inquiry.
- *Bus Patronage.* Members suggested that the pre-pandemic target for bus patronage in Leeds should be reviewed to reflect the changes in travel behaviour due to government restrictions.

RECOMMENDED – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.

5 Connecting Leeds Consultation Update

To consider the report of the Director of City Development that provides a summary of the Connecting Leeds consultation results ahead of further analysis and a full consultation report.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate
- Paul Foster, Transport Planning Manager
- Finn Campbell, Team Leader, City Development

The Team Leader introduced the report, providing an update on the key findings from the recent consultation, and the development of the new Transport strategy and action plan.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *Digital access.* Members recognised the challenge of conducting consultation exercises during a period of government restrictions in the height of the pandemic, however raised concerns around digital access for some groups, which is likely to have limited the representation of the respondents. It was confirmed that the demographic breakdown of respondents would be circulated to members following the meeting. Additionally, members were advised that copies of the Strategy alongside the questionnaire and a freepost return envelope which could be requested by email or dedicated phone line.
- *Better connectivity beyond the city centre.* In response to a query, members were assured that better public transport availability between wards and to local services and amenities will be a key priority of the strategy and reflected within the action plan, including the development of a 'door to door hub service'.

RECOMMENDED – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.

6 Powered Two Wheeler Use of Bus Lanes

The Director of City Development submitted a report updating members on the Scrutiny Board's 2019 recommendation that a trial of motorcycle access to bus lanes be established at a site in Leeds.

The following were in attendance:

- Gillian MacLeod, Transport Services Development Manager
- David O'Donoghue, Principal Transport Planner
- Vivian Elby, Trainee Transport Planning Technician

The Transport Services Development Manager introduced the report, providing an update on the pilot scheme intended to be introduced on the A65 corridor in Kirkstall. Since the Board's recommendation in September 2019,

the pilot scheme had received objections from Kirkstall ward members. In addition, members were advised that there have been some changes to national guidance which limit the number of options for potential sites.

Members recognised and valued the views of local ward members in relation to the A65 route identified but expressed concern regarding the nearing 8-year delay to launching a pilot scheme, and the further delays associated with other potential sites.

RECOMMENDED – That a working group be arranged to consider alternatives to the previously identified A65 corridor site for the powered two-wheeler use of bus lanes pilot scheme.

7 Sources of Work

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report on potential sources of work for the Scrutiny Board.

RECOMMENDED – That the contents of the report be noted.

8 Work Programme

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report detailing the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2021/22 municipal year.

RECOMMENDED – That the draft work schedule for 2021/22 be noted.

9 Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next consultative meeting of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 22 July. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board members at 9.45am.