

## SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Monday, 27th March, 2023 at 10.00 am

*(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 9.45 a.m.)*

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### MEMBERSHIP

#### Councillors

G Almass	-	Beeston and Holbeck;
S Burke	-	Middleton Park;
P Carlill	-	Calverley and Farsley;
D Chapman	-	Rothwell;
R Finnigan	-	Morley North
S Firth	-	Harewood;
B Flynn	-	Adel and Wharfedale;
M France-Mir	-	Moortown;
C Gruen	-	Bramley and Stanningley;
K Ritchie	-	Bramley and Stanningley;
A Scopes (Chair)	-	Beeston and Holbeck;

Please do not attend the meeting in person if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and please follow current public health advice to avoid passing the virus onto other people.

**Note to observers of the meeting:** To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'View the Meeting Recording' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Council and democracy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk)

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**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:**  
**Rob Clayton**  
**Tel: 37 88790**

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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b> That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p><b>No exempt items have been identified.</b></p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b></p> <p>To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.</p>	
5			<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.</p>	
6			<p><b>MINUTES - 20 FEBRUARY 2023</b></p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2023</p>	7 - 18
7			<p><b>ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Chief Officer Human Resources setting out the current position, trends and benchmarking in relation to Attendance Management at the Council. The report also covers recent corporate interventions on this issue along with staff well-being responses and next steps.</p>	19 - 26
8			<p><b>EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) FOLLOW UP</b></p> <p>To Consider a report from the Head of Democratic Services on the Council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. This follows an item in December 2022 and provides a further update to the Board on the Council's organisational values and behaviours which are aimed at helping everyone to be their best in the workplace and the commitment to treat people fairly.</p>	27 - 40

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
9			<p><b>ELECTORAL SERVICES UPDATE - VOTER ID</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Communities, Environment and Housing which is part of a series of regular updates received by the Board in recent years from Electoral Services. This item provides an update on the progress and preparation relating to the introduction of photographic identification in polling stations from 4 May 2023.</p>	41 - 48
10			<p><b>END OF YEAR STATEMENT</b></p> <p>Members are asked to note the appended 2022/23 end-of-year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) and, subject to any agreed amendments, approve its publication.</p>	49 - 60
11			<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>To consider the Scrutiny Board's Work Programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.</p>	61 - 88
12			<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>Subject to the provisional 2023/24 committee dates being approved at the Annual Council Meeting in May, the next public meeting of the successor Scrutiny Board will take place on <b>19 June 2023 at 10.00am</b>. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at <b>9.45am</b>.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
			<p><b>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</b></p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.</li> <li>b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.</li> </ul>	

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## SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

MONDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Scopes in the Chair

Councillors G Almass, B Anderson,  
S Burke, D Chapman, B Flynn, M France-  
Mir, C Gruen and K Ritchie

### 84 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal on inspection of documents.

### 85 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

**RESOLVED** – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public or press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public or press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-

(A) That appendix 5 to the report entitled, 'Procurement and Commercial Services Update', referred to in Minute No. be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A (3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and considered in private on the grounds that this appendix contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council. It is considered that the release of such information would, or would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial interests. It is therefore considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time.

### 86 Late Items

There are no late items.

### 87 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interests were made at the meeting.

### 88 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Councillors S Firth and P Carlill.

Councillor Barry Anderson attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor Firth.

### 89 Minutes - 16 January 2023

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 27th March, 2023

**RESOLVED** – To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, as a correct record.

**90 Matters arising**

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser provided the following updates:

Minute 78 - Consultation and Mass Communication

Annual report on consultation and Team Planner a potential work item for 2023/24. Members requested further information on how the Voice and Influence Team communicate with children, parents and carers – information now provided by email.

Minute 81 - Proposed Budget for 2023/24 and Provisional Budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26

Composite budget report from scrutiny now published and discussed at Executive Board. This will be part of the papers considered at full Council on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

Minute 82 – Work Programme

Still trying to arrange an EDI Working group date suitable for board members and an update will be provided later in the week.

**91 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge**

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report for Members' consideration on the Scrutiny approach to LGA Corporate Peer Challenge.

In December 2022 the Executive Board, as part of its consideration of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge findings, recommended that the Peer Challenge report and its recommendations should be referred to scrutiny for further consideration, this report is designed to initiate that process.

Whilst the findings from the Peer Challenge are relevant to all scrutiny boards it is the remit of Strategy and Resources Board that covers the Council's corporate planning and policy development services and is therefore considered to be the most appropriate for this work item. However, to ensure that all Boards are represented the Chairs from the four other Scrutiny Boards had been invited to attend the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Judith Hurcombe, the LGA Peer Challenge Team Manager to the meeting.

In attendance for this item were:

- Neil Evans - Director of Resources
- Mariana Pexton - Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement (soon to be new Director of Resources)
- Alex McEwan-Hannant - Head of Corporate Support
- Judith Hurcombe - LGA Peer Challenge Team Manager
- Cllr James Lewis - Leader of Council
- Cllr Coupar - Executive Member for Resources



- Cllr Barry Anderson - Chair of Scrutiny Board Environment, Housing and Communities
- Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung - Chair of Scrutiny Board Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles

Judith Hurcombe addressed the Scrutiny Board and provided the following information:

- LGA Peer Challenges happen every 4 to 5 years. They are at a time chosen by the council with the process being the same for all councils. A timetable is developed, position statements provided by the Council, and these along with the inspection visit itself are used to make an assessment against the LGA Framework.
- Early in November, the team arrived on the Monday evening with the team being formally welcomed and left on the Friday morning. The team speak to Members, officers, stakeholders and partners. The team then provide feedback on their findings and quickly produce a report which is published. An action plan is produced in response to recommendations and was provided to members as part of the agenda pack.
- The team had noted that the council's values are lived and breathed by the Council and recognised by its partners. High level objectives are delivered on the ground which is good for partner organisations who are contributing to shared goals and ambitions.
- The Council was found to benefit from a stable political leadership. Initiatives such as Child Friendly City and Net Zero by 2030 were obvious and visible priorities that can be seen throughout the organisation.
- The Council was found to have good working relationships with partner organisations and the work with anchor organisations is particularly valuable. It was noted there was more work that could be done in relation to locality working.
- The budget gap and funding reductions were also noted as a challenge felt both in Leeds and across the local government sector.

Cllr Lewis, Leader of Council said that the work undertaken by the LGA was appreciated. The City had shown it could face challenges in its response to Covid and through changes such as the new Mayoral West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). It was acknowledged that Cllr Coupar reports to Executive Board on a monthly basis to ensure that Members are kept up to date on the Council's budget which is a process that is not done by all local authorities. Cross-party working groups and having a cross-party Executive Board membership ensure there is openness and transparency within the Council. The Council recognised that there was work required to strengthen locality working and the actions for this were set out in the action plan. The action plan would be progressed through strategic and budget planning, with monitoring and reporting done through existing channels so as not to create additional processes and pressure on colleagues.

Responding to questions from the Scrutiny Board, Members were given the following information:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 27th March, 2023

- It was recognised that across the council and other public sector organisations there was an issue with 'staff burnout' having responded well to the pressures of Covid. However, it was the view that the council was coping relatively well under the increased demands for services and fewer staff. It was acknowledged that the Council was supporting staff and had made a good start on addressing issues of 'burnout'. Colleagues were supporting each other, with staff feeling valued and supported with a good wellbeing offer but did feel the pressure, but those spoken to felt good about working for the Council. This issue will be picked up in the March meeting in the focus on the attendance. Members also raised the issue of 'Councillor burnout' and it was noted that it had not been mentioned during the LGA review, but it was a good point as Councillors are on the frontline dealing with pressures in the community. The point was made about the action on Member Development.
- It was acknowledged that more work was required to look at how the Council and partner organisations worked across ward boundaries. A key point being the need to look at aligning services within boundaries, where possible, to enhance coherence, remove duplication and improve the strategic overview and local service delivery and consider how different communities in the city access services.
- It was noted that the LGA Team had spoken to 160 people during their time in Leeds. It was acknowledged that this was a snapshot of what was happening, and the people spoken to were from a range across the Council and had included Elected Members including Executive Board Members and Scrutiny Board Chairs, frontline staff, and the voluntary sector. It was the view that a good range of people had been selected for the process.
- It was noted that there is to be further scrutiny work on locality working and Local Area Plans with a discussion about Community Committees already developing with the Executive Member for Communities and the Head of Locality Partnerships. Members welcomed the focus on locality working and were of the view that consultation with ward members and communities was important as they know what is required for the area. It was also noted that further delegation of services and budgets to community committees could be considered as part of a review of locality working, a good recent example of this being delegation of Youth Activity Funding to the local level.
- It was the view that the action plan was good but might also benefit from more details in some areas and clear steps as to how to achieve the objectives will be delivered. It was acknowledged that locality working should be based on indices of deprivation as no two wards in the city were the same. The Scrutiny Board were encouraged that this action plan was produced by the council following on from the recommendations received from the LGA Peer Review. It was the view that the council needs to think about the evidence base and data to support decision making.
- It was acknowledged that the council was performing well in relation to staff networks following comments from a previous review undertaken in 2016 and work undertaken by this Board in the past two municipal

years. However, there were still areas which needed to be addressed such as Carers where more structure and support could be developed given the volume of staff who provide care in their wider lives.

- The Scrutiny Board were advised that the Procurement Peer Review was a separate piece of work and had not been looked at as part of this LGA review, as nobody on the Peer Review team was a specialist in this specific area.
- It was recognised that the Council was one of the largest in the country and it could be difficult to share learning and best practice regionally, but Leeds is in a good position and has the leadership strength to lead on that and could do more in this area in the future.
- In relation to the net zero projects the Board were informed that progress on the District Heating System was continuing and was the biggest in the country, however, more funding was required.
- It was noted that the term BAME had been used in the report and the LGA Team Manager welcomed the feedback and challenge and noted that the LGA is working on how it approaches EDI and will take the comments back on use of the terminology.

The Chair thanked Judith Hurcombe for her attendance at the meeting and it was appreciated the work that had been undertaken to produce the report.

**RESOLVED - To:**

- a) Note the contents of the report and provide comments on the LGA Peer Challenge and how scrutiny can have input into the action plan that is being developed in response.
- b) Note that any comments or recommendation arising from this item will be used to shape the peer challenge response as appropriate.
- c) Consider how the Peer Challenge recommendations could feature in work programming discussions for municipal year 2023/24.

**92 Civic Enterprise Leeds Update**

The report of the Director of Resources provided Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board with an introduction and update on Civic Enterprise Leeds (CEL) outlining its activities and key areas of focus along with its journey so far on its road to commercialisation.

Attending the meeting for this item were:

- Neil Evans - Director of Resources
- Mariana Pexton - Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement
- Mandy Snaith - Deputy CO CEL & Head of Catering & Fleet
- Richard Jackson - Head of Passengers, Cleaning and Facilities Management
- Craig Simpson - Head of Leeds Building Services
- Mohammed Afzal - Commercial Operational Manager
- Cllr Coupar - Executive Member for Resources

The Chair welcomed the officers to this Scrutiny Board noting that they had recently moved into the remit of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.

The Scrutiny Board were provided with the following information:

- Civic Enterprise Leeds (CEL) sits within the Resources Directorate with a head count of 3,496 and is comprised of the following services:
  - Cleaning and Facilities Management
  - Corporate Property Management
  - Passenger Transport
  - Catering
  - Fleet Services
  - Leeds Building Services
- CEL has a total staffing budget of £69.5 million for the year 2021/22 and total staffing costs at the year-end were £66 million. It has a gross expenditure budget of £147.8 million and income budget of £141.2 million leaving a net managed budget of £6.6 million.
- During the pandemic the vast majority of CEL staff were needed to carry out their frontline roles such as transporting vulnerable children to schools, cleaning of schools and care homes, Meals at Home Deliveries, Fire Safety Checks in flats, and repairs in council houses. During this time CEL also delivered other vital services to keep the city safe, some beyond what would normally be expected such as building a temporary mortuary, managing the PPE Hub facility, carry out Covid response cleans in LCC buildings and schools.
- Members were provided with a brief overview of all the service areas provided by CEL which included staffing and services they provide and was set out in the submitted report.
- CEL have been successful in tendering work for services such as window cleaning in Doncaster, Barnsley and for the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and to homeowners through the PRESTO service.

Responding to questions from Members the Board was provided with the following information:

- It was noted that whilst the use of routing technology had increased but it was still difficult to deliver services as efficiently as they would like. The routing technology could be used to track jobs to allow smarter dispatch to ensure health and safety and increase productivity. However, negotiations were still ongoing with trade unions about the use of this technology. Key issues that the technology could address include speeding, idling, harsh braking, productivity and location of missing vehicles with a focus on measures that would save the authority money. The Board noted the possibility of a further update on this at a future meeting.
- CEL would like to use more SMEs for their services which would generate better value for the council and enhance local supply chains in areas such as construction. However, they had to comply with procurement regulations which in some cases caused a potential barrier. A flexible approach to procurement of SME services would be helpful to the service while also being mindful of the procedure rules, and relevant colleagues are working on the best approach to this.

- Members recognised the work carried out by staff in CEL during the pandemic, and it was noted on more than one occasion that they were called the 'jewel in the crown of the Council'.
- It was noted that CEL had a gross expenditure budget of over a £148 million alongside a total income of £141 million which got them back to the net managed budget of £6.6 million. In terms of a snapshot for some of the services an example was provided. It was suggested that information on expenditure and income be circulated to Board Members following the meeting.
- In response to question on school meal delivery, CEL would like to work with more high schools to provide catering services. It has been realised that older children preferred different options and a different offer for their lunch compared to primary age, so CEL had put chefs into schools in return for a management fee. The changes from local authority controlled high schools to academies changed how they operated with many Schools opting to provide their own meals service, and the catering provision had fallen away as a result. However, CEL do work with Wetherby and the Technical College, they do bid for more high schools, but they get wrapped up with academy packages and it is difficult to win on price, but they continue to try and expand in this area. Cllr Coupar highlighted that CEL pay the living wage and often staff working in private catering are not given the same benefits. She also questioned the quality of the food provided by some academies, based on feedback to her, as not being as good as that offered by CEL.
- In relation to information provided at Table One of the report, Members were advised that monitoring was carried out in accordance with national standards which had to be complied with. It was acknowledged that CEL had a diverse and dispersed workforce and ensuring quality of services was difficult especially in services such as cleaning and catering which were often part-time positions so there was always room for improvement.
- CEL currently have 40 apprentices and there is a commitment to continue with this and expand the programme.
- Members noted the positive work with SME's and acknowledged the challenges faced particularly in procurement and vetting processes.
- It was noted that a number of staff had been part of TUPE processes in Leeds Building Services and work was ongoing to get them on to CEL terms and conditions. Members requested numbers of TUPE to be circulated to the Board.
- The Board were advised that where adaptations were no longer required in council housing if requested these were removed and stored for future use. For private housing the process is done different through a differently service area within the Communities, Housing and Environment Directorate. An example of where a stairlift had been installed and was no longer required was provided by Cllr Chapman and it was noted that the Council could be losing money on this. The Chair advised that this concern would be passed to the relevant Scrutiny Board.

- There was recognition that Building Services were currently dealing with the issue of damp and mould, and this was a high priority for the service.
- In relation to PRESTO hiring of market stalls It was the view that these might not have been available for local events as there were being used for the city centre market, but a conversation would be had, and information provided.

The Director of Resources said that Covid had a profound impact on this area of work and staff absence had been a big issue for the service. However, the service was now in a period of recovery and was indeed one of the jewels in the crown of the Council especially through the pandemic in keeping the city going.

The Chair passed on the Board's thank you to CEL.

**RESOLVED** - To note:

- a) The Services provided by Civic Enterprise Leeds and the key areas of focus for 22/24.
- b) The progress to date of the commercialisation and traded activities of the Service.

### **93 Procurement and Commercial Services Update**

The report of the Director of Resources provided an update as to progress made in relation to the P2P Review and delivering the P2P Action Plan. A copy of the P2P Action Plan and summary of progress to date in relation to all elements was attached at Appendix 1 of the submitted report. The report also brought to Members' attention the work underway to develop a Council-wide best practice approach to contract management, proposals to further develop opportunities for delivery of additional social value in procurement and examples of savings/avoided costs in relation to external spend.

In attendance for this item were:

- Neil Evans - Director of Resources
- Cllr Coupar - Executive Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton - Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement
- Kieron Dennett - Head of Procurement and Commercial Services
- Tony Bailey - Group Procurement Manager

The Head of procurement and Commercial Services presented this report which provided an update on the progress to delivery of the P2P Action Plan. The Action Plan was developed as part of the Core Transformation Programme which is looking at improving efficiencies across all the Councils processes and systems related to the procurement lifecycle.

It was noted that there was a summary in the appendix of all P2P actions and the progress made.

The report highlighted the progress made on the best council approach to contract management, proposals to embed and maximise additional social

value through procurement, there was also some examples where services had delivered savings in the last twelve months. The report also provided information on the Fair Tax Mark and the Fair Tax Declaration.

In response to questions from Members the Scrutiny Board were provided with the following information:

- Two areas of flexibility in the council's procurement arrangements which would be beneficial to CEL:
  1. Where trading commercially to react quickly to purchase goods there was a flexibility built into the Contract Procedure Rules when they were reviewed in September 2022.
  2. A meeting later in the week will discuss CEL business with SME's and how the Council can use them more flexibly. It was noted that the Contract Procedure Rules were in place to ensure delivering best value and that the Council has good governance and control in place, but that there is a balance in low value spend to allow for the use of SME's and more work was required in this area.
- In relation to contract management and delivering additional training to staff. It was noted there was a contract management module which had been developed to assist in managing contracts over £10,000 which are registered on the Council procurement platform. This had only been introduced in the last year and there was a need to train people in its use and the benefits of the system. The Board were advised that those who were using the module had given positive feedback.
- The Governance and control through the Contract Procedure Rules provides best practice which had been noted by the LGA Peer Review on procurement a few years ago. It was believed that savings are delivered through procurement, however it was difficult to evidence through the data that the Council has currently. The performance information and invoicing systems need tying together to provide more accurate information. It is proposed that through the Core Business Transformation Programme procurement processes and systems will be improved and be fit for purpose as opposed to the current situation where the existing finance system is approaching 'end of life'. Members were informed that there is currently over 400 people involved in contract management looking at different levels of contracts and there was a need for training for the different levels and this was currently taking place. Members were also informed that steps were being taken to ensure that local partnerships embed best practice. The Management Contract Module is the best tool to take this forward. The Board was of the view that contract management needs to be robust to deliver value for money in the context of the ongoing financial challenge. Enhanced training of staff who manage contracts was seen as a driver for that.
- For contracts under £100,000 there is approximately £4-5 million of spend annually. There are 162 suppliers with whom the Council spend £1 million pounds or more and there was a need to ensure that the Council was getting value for money for these services which is a priority. There was a need for user friendly systems and processes so that services can manage spend.

- In relation to the Social Value Engine and how it would be benchmarked an explanation was provided in how contracts over £100k would be measured using Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOM's) criteria. It was advised that this Board or any successor Board should keep this on its work programme.
- Members were advised that training for those involved in procurement was not mandatory. However, there was training available including a foundation level module which required an exam at the end of it. It was noted that this training was free, and everyone involved in contract management was encouraged to undertake it. Members were informed that the eighteen people mentioned within the report and covered in the chart were on professional training for procurement management which aimed to give a professional qualification at the end. This was aimed at staff who had significant involvement with contract management, and more were due to start the training in March. The Board requested that it be kept up to date on progress of training. Members also requested the number of staff who had gained a professional qualification in contract management to be circulated to the Board both in terms of those who are 'professional' contract managers and those staff who manage contracts as well as carrying out other roles.
- Members were advised that the Council are unable at present to use the Fair Tax Mark in procurement and the reasons were set out in the report. The Chair believed there were ways around the challenges to using some kind of fair tax check and it was noted that discussions on this would continue given the interest in it from this Board and more widely in the Council.

Following consideration of Appendix 5 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

**RESOLVED - To:**

1. Note the contents of this report; and
2. Endorse the work underway to develop a Council-wide best practice approach to contract management.

**94 Freedom of Information (FOI), Performance and Processes - Update**

The report of the Director of Resources provided the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board with an update on the measures currently underway to improve performance against the council's statutory obligations in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) information rights requests.

In attendance for this item were:

- Neil Evans - Director of Resources
- Cllr Coupar - Executive Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton - Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement
- Aaron Linden - Head of Information Management and Governance

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 27th March, 2023



The Head of Information Management and Governance presented the report highlighting the following key issues:

- The pandemic affected all the local government sector in responding to requests for information. As a result, a restructure of the service had taken place. It was noted that it had been a challenge to bring together new and different ways of working following the restructure, sometimes using legacy systems and the need to train 40 people.
- As a result of process changes performance had improved in relation to the previous year. The first phase of changes went live on the 1 July 2022, and in Q2 performance was 89.62% just short of the Council's KPI of 90%.
- The use of e-Discovery and Microsoft Power Apps will aim to make a more consistent approach for responses to requests and further improve performance.
- With support from CLT the team are aiming to raise the importance of information requests by ensuring that Chief Officers are involved in this key statutory duty.

Responding to a question from the Chair the Board were provided with the following information:

- Progress in relation to automation from an information perspective, the team are currently waiting to get into the Power App 'sprints', however there is a delay in the 'Current Sprint' in relation to the data protection impact assessment. The team will start work on this as soon as possible, work is already progressing on what the team want from the automation and where it wants to be in the future.

The Chair thanked the officer for attending.

**RESOLVED - To:**

- a) consider the contents of this report and note the council evolving approach to information management and governance with specific regard to FOI and EIR requests, and that the implemented and future planned arrangements are and will improve the performance of the council's responses to these requests through a dedicated programme of work.
- b) Note that a review and update are taking place of the full Elected Members Information Governance (IG) Resource Document which will be completed before the end of the financial year 2022/23. This will then be provided to all Members. The Resource Document includes guidance on Members' Access to Information which has already been updated – see Appendix 3 of the submitted report.

**95 Work Programme**

The report of the Head of Democratic Services set out the 2022/23 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) and is reflective of board member discussions to date.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser presented the report and provided the following information:

- In March a staff absence update report has been added to the programme to reflect discussion at the January meeting where members expressed interest in the recent performance statistics on staff absence and the planned savings to be made in the 2023/24 budget through reductions in absence.
- An item has also been added on Voter ID to provide an update position on preparations for the requirement for ID at polling stations in May 2023.
- The planned Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group likely to be a March date.

**RESOLVED:** -To consider and discuss the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2022/23 municipal year.

**96 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

To note the meeting of Scrutiny Board Strategy and Resources will be on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 10:00am (With a pre-meet for all Board Members at 9:45am)

**CHAIRS CLOSING COMMENTS**

It was noted that this would be last meeting for the Director of Resources as he was due to retire. The Chair thanked him on behalf of the Scrutiny Board for listening to the Board and providing a direct and honest approach in his responses to the Board.

He wished him well for the future and thanked him for his many years of service.

## Attendance Management Update

Date: 27 March 2023

Report of: Chief HR Officer

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The report provides an update regarding the current position in relation to attendance management and the support we offer to managers and employees in relation to health and wellbeing.

Whilst absence levels remain above the pre pandemic levels, the interventions that have been in place since August 2022 are having a positive effect, resulting in a 11.6% reduction of days lost per FTE and a 23% reduction of long-term sick cases.

The targeted interventions involved: a) renewed and robust management reporting of attendance management to leadership teams b) the prioritisation of HR support to thirteen service areas that experienced higher levels of absence; c) specific focus on the management of long term sickness cases; d) renewed effort on addressing the primary reasons for ill-health in the workplace, particularly mental and emotional wellbeing; e) building manager capacity and capability in this area and f) continued effort on building the overarching staff health & wellbeing offer (under the brand of #BeWell).

### Recommendations

Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- a) Note the content of the report and the ongoing work and progress to reduce the level of absence including the further development of the #teamleedsbewell offer.
- b) Identify any actions arising from scrutiny's consideration of this report.

## What is this report about?

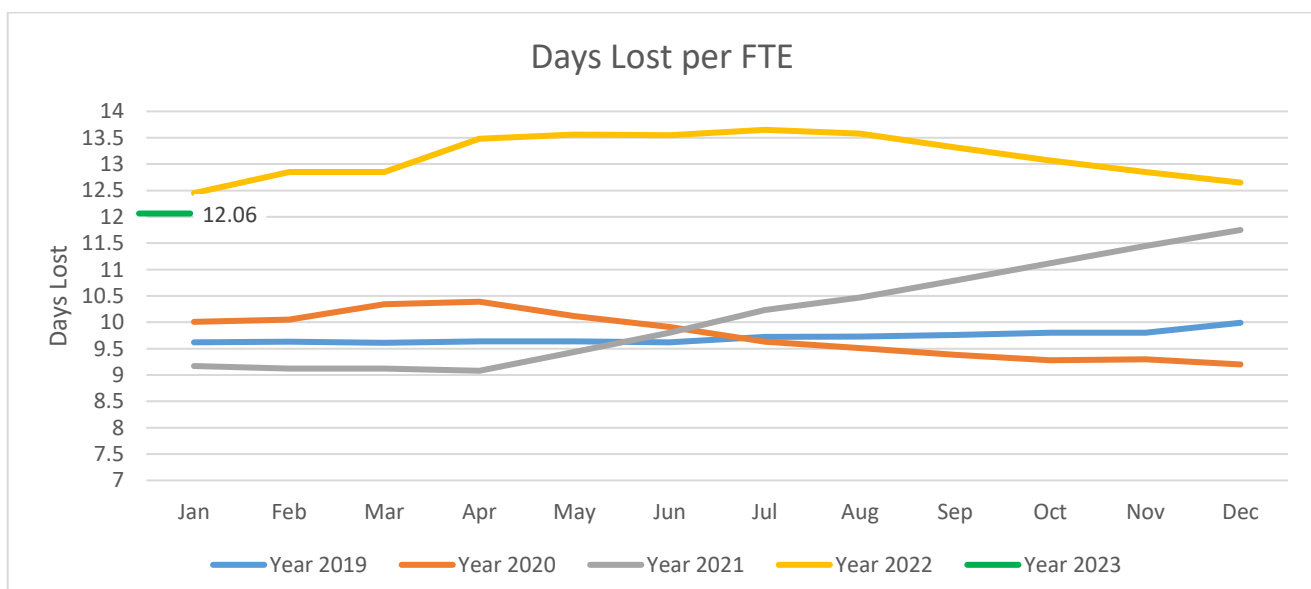
- 1 The report provides an update regarding the current position in relation to workforce attendance. This includes an outline of the level of sickness absence across the Council, highlights 13 priority service areas that have been identified for additional support from the HR Business Partnering Team and provides an overview and update of the Health and Wellbeing offer that is already in place and has previously been reported to Scrutiny.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 This item will allow further scrutiny of the Council's approach to managing attendance and supporting the health and wellbeing of our employees. This work also contributes to the recommendations made in the Peer Challenge in relation to supporting staff health and wellbeing particularly in relation to areas that are experiencing workload pressures.
- 3 Managing attendance is a key priority for the organisation as we have seen an increase in sickness absence since the pandemic. Initially this was due to Covid, temporary changes in our approach to managing attendance, the on-going effects of Covid and then high instances of other infections and increasing reports of mental health related illness. This picture largely mirrors the position in other large and peer group organisations.

## Overview of absence level across the Council

- 4 In July 2022 we saw a peak in sickness absence across the organisation at 13.65 days lost per FTE. Since planned interventions have taken place the level of sickness has now reduced by 11.6% to 12.06 days lost per FTE in January 2023. All directorates have seen a reduction.
- 5 In addition to the overall days lost per FTE, we have also worked to reduce the number of long-term sick cases (absence of more than 28 days consecutively) and have achieved a 23% reduction.
- 6 In 2022 we experienced the highest number of days lost in comparison to the previous four years. However, days lost per FTE has been reducing since August 2022 which reflects the additional support that has been in place both through HR and locally within services. Comparing sickness to pre pandemic levels, we can see in January 2023 days lost per FTE (12.06) was 2.43 days higher than 2019.



- 7 In 2020 we can see that sickness started to increase between February – April 2020 (the start of the pandemic). After this, changes were made to how we recorded Covid related illness (it did not count toward triggers as part of the Attendance Management Process). Those that would have been able to work normally, as they felt well, but had to isolate due to Government Covid Guidance would be recorded as special leave. Therefore, resulting in sickness being lower (this accounts for the downward trend). From April 2021 when testing became more widespread, and guidance changed resulting in people returning to work and an increase in socialising, we can see an increase in sickness levels through 2021. Following the 'living with Covid guidance' with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 the recording for absence reverted to the original rules and all sickness including Covid began to count towards triggers. The special leave element was removed other than for frontline workers that were unable to attend work even if they felt well.
- 8 When looking at the number of sick days per FTE this is now at the lowest levels this year from a peak of 1.44 days in March 2022, there has been a steady decrease since July and is now down to 0.99 sick days per FTE in January 2023.

### **Main Interventions: Reporting**

- 9 The targeted interventions involved refreshing our management reporting of attendance management to leadership teams at a corporate, directorate and local level. The quantitative reporting and qualitative narrative support leaders and managers to review and respond to the management of attendance, pursuant to our policy, good practice, and values. Progress is reported through the line management route and presented in formal performance management KPIs.
- 10 From week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the BSC will send an early intervention letter to all managers of employees who have been off ill for two weeks. The letter provides information on support services for both employees and managers to help facilitate early discussions, and subsequently enable earlier returns to work.

### **Main Interventions: Targeted Service Support**

- 11 Analysis over the summer of 2022 identified that a few specific service areas experienced notably higher levels of sickness. As a result, manager and HR support was re-prioritised to specifically support these thirteen services. The service areas are set out in Table 1

**Table 1 – Thirteen priority service areas identified for additional support – detailing the percentage decrease in days lost per FTE**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Percentage reduction in days lost per FTE since August</b>
Cleaning/ FM	-10%
Catering	-7%
Fleet	-10%
LBS	-24%
Passengers	-14%
Contact centre	-11%

Housing	-5%
Environmental Services	-15%
Parks	-8%
Customer Access and Welfare	-11%
Looked After Children	-11%
Care Delivery (OPS, MH, PI)	-1%
Assessment / Provisions	-7%
Total overall reduction	-10%

12 Table 1 shows that progress has been made in all areas with positive reductions in the level of sickness absence since targeted work first began in August 2022. Since August 2022 there has been a 10% reduction in the number of days lost per FTE. Across the thirteen areas we have also seen a 23% reduction in long-term sickness cases.

13 The most significant impact has been within Leeds Building Services (LBS) where there has been a 24% reduction since August 2022. This has been achieved through collaborative working between colleagues within HR and senior management within the service on long term sickness cases, to ensure that managers are proactively progressing cases through the Managing Attendance Policy. Further success has been achieved via early intervention and proactive conversations being undertaken with colleagues as soon as a period of absence occurs reducing the overall number of days sickness absence that otherwise may have been taken.

14 The additional support wrapped around these services has predominately come from the HR Business Partnering Teams (that are already aligned to each directorate). To ensure that the support is directed to where it is needed most, resource has been pivoted to help drive the improvements. The best results have been seen where services have also invested time and resource locally to support staff back to work. This has been joint team effort to build capability and capacity within services to manage attendance locally. A couple of examples have been highlighted below as examples of proactive interventions that services have put in place.

15 Civic Enterprise Leeds have recruited three Attendance Co-ordinators who are supporting managers with overdue cases, reviews stages and long-term sickness absence. The Co-ordinators commenced in role in January 2023, and we are hopeful that this will result in further improvements. Environmental Services have also benefited from a new Wellbeing and Welfare Advisor role based at Newmarket House, that is providing support to individuals including signposting towards appropriate assistance and being proactive by arranging various wellbeing collective and group activities. Housing have also engaged with staff through a staff wellbeing survey and are working with staff to co-produce solutions where needed. These initiatives have been shared with the Extended Best Council Leadership Team to encourage others to consider these approaches and encourage others to share learning and wellbeing initiatives they have tried.

### **Main Intervention: Long Term Sickness Cases**

16 The HR team continue to prioritise supporting these service areas with regards to absence management for both long and short-term absences. Identifying trends, working closely with the

Occupational Health Service, and supporting managers to use the stages and support available through the Improving Attendance Policy.

- 17 When analysing the job roles impacted by Long Term Sick (LTS), we can see that the top 11 roles impacted by LTS in February accounted for 31% of all long-term sick. Most of these roles fall within the top thirteen target service areas that are receiving additional support, therefore there is an expectation that as work continues there will be a reduction of sickness levels within these roles. Emphasis has been focused on supporting managers to review and address LTS cases, with appropriate referral to and support from the Occupational Health Service. HR are supporting managers to build their confidence in dealing with such cases and closely supporting managers with complex cases.
- 18 Progressing individuals through the stages of the Managing Attendance Policy ensures that individuals are receiving the right support with an aim to supporting people back to work. For some this may involve reasonable adjustment in the role or being redeployed in an alternative position. Where staff are unable to fulfil the contractual requirements in any role individuals may exit the organisations through either dismissal or ill-health retirement.

### **Main Interventions: Reasons for Ill-health**

19 Over the last year mental and emotional ill-health has been the main reason for sickness absence. The second highest reason was Covid with a peak in January 2022 in line with the Omicron peak. From November 2022 Covid is no longer in the top three, this has been replaced by viral infections. Mental Health covers an extensive list of sickness reasons that includes but is not exclusive to acute stress, depression, addiction, eating disorder, nervous debility, post-natal depression, panic attacks and dementia. The existing BeWell offer has recently been augmented to specifically prioritise support for staff with mental and emotional ill-health. The response is focussed on the delivery of three key headings:

- **Promotion** (Driving organisation-wide change towards a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing)
- **Prevention** (Getting the basics right by increasing confidence and capability)
- **Support** (Supporting those who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, from poor mental health).

20 The Council also continues to maintain its status as an active MindfulEmployer and our hundreds of Mental Health First Aiders continue to offer vital support to those that need it. Our Healthy Minds Group is very active and new topics continue to be added to our extensive list of wellbeing support sessions. Sessions include topics like “Let’s talk wellbeing through change,” “Let’s talk stress,” “Let’s talk supporting staff at work” and ‘listening ear’ sessions for frontline colleagues. Workplace Wellbeing Champions also continue to play a critical role in signposting employees to support, raising awareness, and holding wellbeing events in their local areas.

### **Main Interventions: Building Manager Capability & Support**

21 The launch last year of the Be Your Best leadership and management development offer has enabled us to build capability, confidence, and support for managers in managing staff

wellbeing and ill-health. Support being offered currently includes but is not limited to: “Be Your Best” core management training programmes, flexibly delivered let’s talk sessions on a range of topics including stress, our “supporting staff at work” package and specific health-related sessions, “listening ear” sessions facilitated by our team of Mental Health First Aiders and team wellbeing assessments designed to put practical steps in place to manage issues raised by teams. Our Occupational Health and Wellbeing Service is also currently consulting on proposals to extend our on-site counselling offer, offer targeted physiotherapy, implement health checks (similar to those carried out by the NHS) and to implement a rehabilitation programme which will help employees return to work after an illness or disability and help employees with chronic health conditions to stay in work.

## **Main Interventions: Embedding the #BeWell Offer**

- 22 Our #TeamLeedsBeWell" wellbeing brand is becoming increasingly recognised across the organisation and provides a wealth of information and guidance to support both managers and individuals with all wellbeing needs. Over recent months two of the Extended BCLT sessions have dedicated time to further developed the offer, helping raise awareness and increase visibility of all the support available. The focus has been to ensure leaders are supported, engaged, and well informed to support their teams.
- 23 Whilst we continue to promote the offer, it is recognised that the #TeamLeedsBeWell offer is not embedded across all parts of our frontline workforce. As such the HR team are working with frontline representatives to enhance communications. A wellbeing roadshow is being developed to highlight parts of the offer that will make the most difference to those working in frontline roles. The roadshow will visit frontline work bases across the city with the aim of making our wellbeing offer more visible and accessible.
- 24 Work also continues to support employees around financial wellbeing. For example, our Money Awareness Week will take place from 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023. We recognise that the cost-of-living crisis is affecting everybody and can have a significant impact on individual wellbeing. We have continued to commit to paying the Real Living Wage with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 of £10.90. In addition, last year we launched a new Staff Benefits Portal/App that enabled staff to access a range of salary sacrifice schemes, retail discounts and easy access to a wealth of guidance to help staff spend money wisely.
- 25 We will continue to undertake further benchmarking and good practice analysis, working with partner and Anchor organisations on city-wide wellbeing initiatives, including those relating to the emerging Fair Work Charter. The Fair Work Charter is a West Yorkshire Mayor led initiative; more information will follow once the framework is available. The Staff Survey will also be an important opportunity to assess the wellbeing of our workforce, with the results (due mid May 2023) helping us to identify priority areas and resource focus for the coming year.

## **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 26 The interventions and support offer detailed in this report enable key elements of the People Strategy particularly, ‘Being Our Best – you are supported to be well at work’ but extends



across manager expectations and strengthening our organisational culture and values by providing holistic health and wellbeing programmes.

27 This will therefore support and enable the delivery of the Organisational Plan and Best City Ambitions.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

28 Consultation and engagement are ongoing with the Chief Executive, CLT, BCLT, Extended BCLT, Cabinet and Lead Member for Resources regarding the actions and initiatives taking place.

### **What are the resource implications?**

29 There are no specific resource implications contained in this report. However, delivery requires the on-going input from managers and the HR team to provide support, develop interventions and promote Health and Wellbeing initiatives from existing resource.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

30 The risk to the organisation of increased levels of sickness absence, is the lost productivity and potential increased costs where services need to secure additional cover to maintain service delivery. There is also a potential risk that staff in work then experience additional pressure if the capacity in the team is reduced.

31 This report details the response to reducing the current levels of absence which will mitigate the above-mentioned risks.

### **What are the legal implications?**

32 This report has no specific legal implications.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

33 Various options are being considered in relation to our response to managing attendance as detailed within the report. The reasons for sickness are multifaceted and therefore require a range of interventions which we will continue to develop to respond to matters that are impacting on attendance.

### **How will success be measured?**

34 Success will be measured through the monitoring of the managing attendance data that records details in terms of the level of sickness across the Council, including any trends and patterns.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

- 35 Managing attendance is an on-going process that will always be in place. The intensive support that is currently in place will be maintain to support local managers to build the capacity and capability for the on-going management of attendance locally.
- 36 Whilst HR will continue to support services, the accountability of team and service performance remains the responsibility of local management teams. Regular management information will continue to be provided as part of the framework mentioned above.

### **Appendices**

- None

### **Background papers**

- None

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Follow Up

Date: 27 March 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Scrutiny Board Strategy & Resources has received a number of reports on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) dating back to 2020.

The work of the Board has mirrored ongoing work on EDI being undertaken corporately linked to the Council's organisational values and behaviours which are aimed at helping everyone to be their best in the workplace and the commitment to treat people fairly.

The Board's interest in EDI has evolved to also include receiving direct feedback from the Council's staff networks to hear about their lived experiences working for the Council. This led to reports being brought to the Board in January and December 2022 through which the networks were able to focus on challenges, successes and the future in respect of their areas of focus.

The December 2022 report contained a key focus on the journey being undertaken corporately by the Council to improve the approach to EDI by the Council. This item presents a follow up to that aspect of the report and should enable board members to focus on the corporate approach to EDI that has seen significant work and progress in recent years.

### Recommendations

Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- a) Note the progress and ongoing work on equality, diversity and inclusion and the focus on embedding EDI within the council's values and behaviours.
- b) Identify any further scrutiny actions that could arise following consideration of this report.

## What is this report about?

- 1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as an organisational priority has been given a clear focus in 2022/23 both in terms of resources and the development of a clear plan to continue development and progress in this area. Since January 2022, a concerted effort has been made to bring about positive change on this agenda for the organisation, across workforce and organisational priorities.
- 2 At the December 2022 meeting of the Board a report was brought setting out the Council's corporate approach to EDI and to highlight recent developments in this area, included as Appendix 1 to this report. This included developing and setting out a vision for EDI, establishment of five workforce priorities and actions to take those forward, work on recruitment and initial welcome of new staff, training for staff and managers, development of zero tolerance approaches, staff progression, appointment of a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and enhanced use of data and monitoring to evidence the impact of the organisation's efforts on EDI. The minute for this item are available [here](#) at minute 66).
- 3 In addition, three staff networks also made presentations on their ongoing priorities and challenges. Due to the size of the agenda item, there was limited time for full consideration of the Council's corporate approach to EDI and this has resulted in this item being brought back for further consideration to enable additional questions and discussion from Board members on a key area of work from this and previous municipal years.
- 4 All of the Council's staff networks have now attended the Board meeting and taken the opportunity to provide feedback on progress, challenges and future priorities and to pass on their lived experiences in working for the Council. This has included the Race Equality, Dawn, Carers, Women's Voice, Early Careers, LGBT+ and Healthy Minds networks.
- 5 Appendix 1 to this report provides the December 2022 report for background information. A presentation will be made at the meeting from HR providing additional information and context on the Council's EDI approach and future ambitions.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 This item will allow further scrutiny of the Council's approach to EDI and follow up on an agenda item considered at the December 2022 meeting. Furthermore, following the Corporate Peer Challenge of Leeds City Council and subsequent consideration of the issue at Scrutiny in February this will enable the Board to continue to focus on the recommendations made in the Peer Challenge. In terms of EDI the Peer Challenge focussed on; 'Build on the success of the EDI champions network and strengthen corporate champions at the senior level to support the further development and embedding of EDI in the Council.'
- 7 Scrutiny has been considering the EDI agenda for approaching 3 years and has already added value by emphasising that the term 'BAME' is no longer appropriate terminology and should cease to be used by the Council and partners. It is hoped that additional consideration by Scrutiny will add further value to the approach taken by the Council on this agenda.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 8 Ensuring that staff from all backgrounds are treated fairly is a key and ongoing ambition of the Council. Having a content and productive workforce where staff feel valued and can bring their whole selves to work will contribute to the Council's approach to the Best City Ambition and the three pillars.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

9 Consultation and engagement are ongoing with the Chief Executive, CLT and Council Leader in terms of development of EDI activity.

### **What are the resource implications?**

10 There are no specific resource implications contained in this report.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

11 This report has no specific risk management implications.

### **What are the legal implications?**

12 This report has no specific legal implications.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

13 Consideration was given to holding a private working group to enable further consideration of this issue by way of follow up to the December 2022 agenda item. On balance and given existing diary commitments bringing this to a formal meeting of the Board was considered to be the best option.

### **How will success be measured?**

14 EDI is a collective council ambition that is a priority for development and progression across the authority as a whole.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

15 Not applicable

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update and Staff Networks – report considered by Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 12 December 2022.

## **Background papers**

- None

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## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update and Staff Networks**

Date: 12 December 2022

Report of: Director of Resources

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

### **What is this report about?**

#### **Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions**

- Scrutiny Board Strategy & Resources has received a number of reports on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) over the past 2 years. This initially focussed on improving the experiences and outcomes of ethnically diverse colleagues working for the Council following the issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement and consideration of the Race Equality Action Plan 2021-23.
- The work of the Board has mirrored ongoing work on EDI being undertaken corporately linked to the Council's organisational values and behaviours which are aimed at helping everyone to be their best in the workplace. These include a firm commitment to treating people fairly and ensuring they are valued for who they are, and that respect is given to all with a pledge to root out inequality and discrimination.
- The Board's interest in EDI has evolved to also include receiving direct feedback from the Council's staff networks to hear about their lived experiences working for the Council. As a result an item was considered in January 2022 that presented the Disability and Carers Equality Action Plan 2021-23 along with contributions from the DAWN, Race Equality, Working Carers and Healthy Minds staff networks.
- At the January meeting of the Board an area of focus for Board members was on facility time and funding. This has now been progressed, for facility time Chairs are entitled to 4 days per month (29.6 hours) to focus on network activity, Vice Chairs /Steering Group members 2 days per month (14.8 hours) and network members involved in task and finish work 1 day per month (7.4 hours). In terms of funding £1,500 per network has been allocated to support staff network activity in the Council which is a total budget of circa £10,000.
- This report provides the board with a further update on corporate EDI activity in the current year and also includes contributions from the LGBT+, Women's Voice and Early Careers staff networks.
- The Board's continuing focus on EDI contributes to the Council's aim to be the best place to work and along with supporting the Council's organisational values and People Strategy 2020-2025, is aimed at understanding lived experiences of staff and supports the corporate aims of ensuring all staff can 'be your best' in the workplace.

### **Recommendations**

- Board members are asked to note the content of the report and appendices and are also asked to highlight any future areas of scrutiny work should any arise during discussion of this item.
- Board members are asked to consider the next steps for this work having received reports on EDI related issues since early 2021 and heard direct contributions from the Council's staff networks. One option is to produce a scrutiny statement that would enable initial findings to be made whilst also continuing to consider EDI related agenda items in the future.

### Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as an organisational priority has been given a clear focus in 2022 both in terms of resources and the development of a clear plan to continue development and progress in this area. Activities on EDI have always been part of the important workplan of the Council's Human Resources service, set within the organisational development team. Since January 2022, a concerted effort has been made to bring about positive change on this agenda for the organisation, across workforce and organisational priorities.
- 2 In embedding EDI as the golden thread through the authority's organisational activity, there has been, and continues to be, strong corporate leadership and alignment on this agenda. The central theme of the annual Leadership conference in 2022 was EDI, where managers, chief officers and leadership teams attended the session which focused on our general approach, confirmation of what has been achieved this year and the future concrete steps being taken to empower and support leaders in the organisation to take forward the EDI agenda with their teams. Consequently, the Executive Board Member for Resources launched the mandatory 5 step EDI training programme for all appraising managers in the organisation which kicked off this month. EDI sessions have also been held with all leadership teams in the organisation with regular cascading of EDI priorities and messages through Best Council Leadership teams and management communication bulletins.
- 3 Alongside the Council's organisational values, the [People Strategy 2020-2025](#) sets out the vision to be the best place to work. This translates into ensuring every employee is supported to have a lived experience of "BEING YOUR BEST", where each colleague:
  - feels like they count
  - are supported to be well at work
  - are valued for who they are

### The Vision

- 4 Work in 2022 leveraged a joint approach across the organisation to set out what is meant by Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. This took the form of detailed collaboration to derive an overall vision on EDI for the organisation. This was set out as follows:

### Leeds Vision for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion:

'We want Leeds to be a city that is fair and just, that recognises and embraces people's different needs, situations and ambitions. The barriers that limit what people can do and can be, will be removed, and everyone will be enabled to be their best.

**For this to happen, we all need to take responsibility for our actions and behaviours'.**



- 5 The vision as written, is to be formally ratified by the Council’s Executive board but has been broadly accepted as a statement that delineates the approach as a city and an organisation. Consequently, the ambition brings together the “trinity” of EDI focus to lay across the organisation, service delivery and community as a cohesive and interdependent agenda. Below sets out the 3 tranches in question.



- 6 The focus of this EDI update is the third element of “The Council as an employer” and its work to date on the workforce priorities area. From the beginning of the year, the Council has been clear in devising an approach on workforce priorities that determined key priorities.
- 7 These were centred around 5 workforce themes that had been developed after working with colleagues in the organisation, staff networks and representative bodies. The five themes are as follows:



- 8 These formed the areas to which a work plan was developed to deliver outcomes that centred on Equality, Diversity & inclusion. Several actions were drawn up under each theme to become the focus of planned activity, to drive outcomes on EDI.

## Progress Update

- 9 In April 2022 a Head of Service from City Development was seconded into the HR service to help take forward specific actions in relation to the 5 priorities set out in the developed action plan. The table below sets out those various actions under each theme, the secondment responsibility was for specific elements within the plan, given the limited resources and timeline of 12 months to March 2023.

# Our 5 Workforce Priorities

Recruitment and initial welcome	Progression	Training for staff and managers	Speaking Up and Zero tolerance	Data and monitoring
Make our approaches more inclusive.	Support more people to progress	Get the offer right and ensure everyone engages	Tackle discrimination and unacceptable behaviour	Be clear about the difference we are making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice review in selected areas</li> <li>Challenge ourselves at each stage of the process</li> <li>Diverse panels</li> <li>Anonymous shortlisting</li> <li>Quality feedback to unsuccessful candidates</li> <li>Feedback on overall experience</li> <li>Welcome when people join</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Update @OCT 2022</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better career development options for underrepresented groups.</li> <li>How work is allocated, acting ups and honorariums</li> <li>Positive action and support, including coaching and mentoring</li> <li>Uptake of mainstream training and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review what we currently have, and look to improve.</li> <li>Agree what should be mandatory.</li> <li>Agree best roll out model</li> <li>More regular reporting of uptake.</li> <li>Align with our Leadership and Management offer and embedding values work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role</li> <li>Conduct a Grievance practice review</li> <li>Set out our approach to zero tolerance in practice</li> <li>Improve consistency of local responses– all issues and concerns acted on, early and fairly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree what measures and why?</li> <li>Improve our analysis and understanding, with more granular reporting</li> <li>More frequent reporting to a wider audience</li> <li>More visible benchmarking against others</li> <li>Better communication about progress and challenges</li> </ul>

**GREEN - COMPLETED   AMBER – ONGOING   BLACK – TO BE STARTED**

## Recruitment and Initial Welcome

- A recruitment review is in progress, reviewing pre-selection, selection, and onboarding approaches in the organisation. This includes advertising, where we recruit, Job descriptions, interview processes and application forms and entry points to the organisation.
- An EDI Task & Finish project group formed (15 members) made up of staff network leads, Deputy Director, Heads of Service and several other staff and chaired by the seconded Head of HR Projects (EDI) is in place conducting an EDI review of the recruitment policy statement, diversity of panels, and EDI principles of recruitment.
- A report has been commissioned and completed and delivered by a graduate employee on EDI best practice which provides comparative details across other public sector organisations and external approaches from which the authority could learn.
- Approaches have now been trialled in HR of different types of recruitment tools to make appointments.

## Training For Staff & Managers

- A new Leadership & Management offer has been launched with EDI embedded in its core as part of the development programme for managers – 1,658 managers have been trained already, out of a total of 2,200.
- A new mandatory EDI 5-step training for all managers has been launched and will be delivered to all 2,200 managers in LCC who will go through the training and then pick up with their teams separately.
- In addition to this training, the organisation has built in a section in the “Be Your Best” training module that covers EDI as a central topic within the generic management training modules.

It also features in the newly revised corporate induction sessions for starters and newly promoted colleagues. Accountability and measuring impact of all of these sits in the appraisal process which will have a stronger emphasis on EDI activities led by managers.

## **Speaking Up & Zero Tolerance**

- 17 In July 2022, Leeds City Council became the first council in the UK to appoint a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (FTSUG). In line with the council values of being 'open, honest & trusted' as well as 'treating people fairly' the purpose of the role is to enable all council employees to raise their voice, and have their voice heard in a forum that can respond, and affect positive change where needed.
- 18 The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian is a person who employees can approach to raise any concerns or suggestions they may have about the workplace. The Guardian works independently and impartially across the Council. They are not connected to HR, line management or trade unions. Employees can contact the Guardian openly (where they are happy for their identity to be known to others), confidentially (where the guardian does not disclose their identity without the person's consent) or anonymously.
- 19 The Guardian has a direct link to the Chief Executive of the Council and meets with him regularly to discuss the general themes and lessons learned from what people have spoken up about. The Guardian also has a link to elected members whose portfolio covers equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the workplace.
- 20 Members of staff can speak up about anything that is getting in the way of them doing a good job and bringing their whole selves to work, including where they or others feel that they are not being treated fairly, where they feel the quality of service provided to customers is falling short or where they feel that the Council is not acting in accordance with its values.
- 21 The role of the FTSUG is an important one in the context of the Council's refreshed approaches to EDI within the workforce. A recent staff survey (2019) indicated that disabled colleagues are some of the most dissatisfied members of staff within the Council. The recent Grievance Practice Review Report also highlights that members of staff from a diverse ethnic background are disproportionately over-represented in the grievance process. It is important that the Council is able listen to voices in the workforce to identify what may be driving such issues. The role of the Freedom to Speak up Guardian aims to reach all Council employees, including those who identify with one or more protected characteristic so that their voice can be heard, and the organisation can listen, respond and make changes to improve their experience of working for the Council. This also aligns with the Council's organisational plan. To support the Council's work around EDI, it is the intention that the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian will collect equalities monitoring data from those who have spoken up to enable the organisation to see who in the organisation is speaking up and identify and themes, trends or gaps in this data.
- 22 It will not be uncommon for the FTSUG to mention HR or other roles in the organisation that have responsibility for workforce wellbeing. The defined and clear separation of duties from HR and other functional/representative roles from those of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian in the organisation means that the Guardian role has a trusted platform from which to work. This enables the freedom, latitude and trust to engage with colleagues as necessary and to maintain a healthy professional distance from corporate services. From time to time, speaking up matters may require engagement with HR. This is only done by agreement with the colleague who has spoken up, ensuring the independence of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian role and their professional input.

- 23 As the role is an innovative one within a council setting there is continual reflection on Freedom to Speak Up processes and practices within the organisation. It is expected that as the role develops and becomes further embedded into the Council ways of working, the way in which the freedom to speak up within the organisation is facilitated will change over time. As such, the processes and the framework that supports the Freedom to speak Up Guardian's working practices within the council will be regularly reviewed.
- 24 In terms of zero tolerance, the Chief Executive and Leader of Council issued a joint, strong directive to all staff in 2022 setting out the zero-tolerance approach, the absolute ambition to deliver on this and the clear leadership message that this approach is non-negotiable. This statement is included as Appendix 4 to this report.
- 25 A significant review of the organisation's grievance practice has since been completed, which was a key EDI objective for 2022. This involved detailed listening interview sessions with 157 staff including staff networks, unions, HR colleagues, conflict mediators, senior managers, legal employment tribunal colleagues and colleagues who had gone through or were going through a grievance. The review culminated in a detailed report setting out 17 executive summary findings and 15 recommendations coalesced around 4 main themes:
- Timeliness – Acting quicker and earlier with urgency, to resolve conflict and reduce time taken to complete the process.
  - Accountability – Actively demonstrate, evidence and report on positive change, taking ownership of outcomes.
  - Behaviours – Managers need to provide stronger leadership at service and local levels to tackle behaviours in a timely manner.
  - Consistency of approach (Application) – Ensure consistency of approach across the organisation in discharging our duty of care as well ensuring due process.
- 26 The review also interpreted data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 on recorded grievance to ascertain the areas where trends created an opportunity for further improvement.

## **Data and Monitoring**

- 27 Understanding data and carrying out monitoring of the plan to measure the impact of the approach on the organisation's efforts on EDI is a key area of development. It will demonstrate, or otherwise, how effective the plan is at delivering success on EDI. As a result a data working group has been successfully established, this will review the available data, bring together all data owners and build a dashboard on a range of EDI outputs and measures that will frequently be shared to measure progress. The working group is currently determining the necessary data to incorporate into a corporate dashboard on EDI.
- 28 The Leeds Data Analytics centre is also involved to help 'deep dive' into equality data and work with their data scientists and analysts will be undertaken to further explore what the data is saying and how best to maximise or fill the gaps, as well as making use of opportunities that may otherwise be missed.
- 29 Qualitative data is also being developed such as more bespoke surveys to improve understanding of how colleagues feel the organisation can do better on the EDI agenda, particularly around inclusion, which can be harder to pin down as a quantitative measure.

## **Progression**

- 30 The final strand of EDI action plan revolves around progression actions. This needs to determine what can be done on positive action to support protected characteristics representation. This is under development, and work is being done to determine what the legal options are on positive action approaches.

## **Staff Networks**

- 31 The voice of colleagues in the organisation forms a key plank of delivering relevant EDI progress. Protected characteristics and their representation across the organisation are a demonstration of how well EDI is embedded within organisational culture. Therefore the seconded head of HR projects (EDI) took on a link role to support and enable the staff networks to function as effectively as possible, by offering corporate support as needed and ensuring that the networks had access to relevant strategic developments around staff voice. This has included:

- Setting up 1-2-1 meetings with all staff network leads and steering teams who chose to take up the opportunity.
- Concluding a protected time allocation report for staff networks to carry out necessary work in this area by pulling together agreed time allocation and enabling sign off by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). This has ensured that voluntary work by colleagues in the staff networks was formally approved by the organisation.
- Concluded the establishment of a budget cost centre and funds to enable staff networks to have access to operational funding needed to accomplish their activities.
- Worked with staff networks on the grievance practice review to capture their input.
- Staff network leads are part of the membership of the task & finish EDI review project team.
- Coordinated the Diversity Staff Forum where all network leads meet with the Director of Resources on a 6 weekly cycle to ensure they continue to have access to corporate support and audience with a member of CLT.

- 32 To support this work with the staff networks and to hear feedback directly from them, the LGBT+, Women's Voice and Early Careers networks have provided a summary of their priorities, ongoing challenges and the successes achieved through the additional focus placed on EDI by the organisation in recent years. Each of the networks have provided a written statement which are included as appendices to this report and the networks will be represented by their chairs/leads at the meeting.

## **Future Plans**

- 33 Delivery and implementation of the Mandatory EDI training to all 2,220 managers is a significant undertaking and will be the immediate focus of EDI work.
- 34 There is also the pending implementation of the 15 recommendations, referred to above, which have been approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

35 Overhaul of recruitment practice is underway and is a priority.

36 The 5 themes of the workforce action plan all have ongoing work streams which require delivery.

**What impact will this proposal have?**

<b>Wards Affected:</b> All
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

37 Continuing scrutiny of the Council’s activity on EDI will contribute to the Council’s ambitions in this area and lead to enhanced productivity and satisfaction in the workplace. Through critical friend challenge the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board will be able to set out its views on the latest update on corporate EDI activity and also hear directly from staff networks in a public committee setting.

**What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

38 Consultation and engagement are ongoing with the Chief Executive, CLT and Council Leader in terms of development of EDI activity.

**What are the resource implications?**

39 There are no specific resource implications contained in this report

**What are the legal implications?**

40 This report has no specific legal implications.

**What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

41 This report has no specific risk management implications.

**Does this proposal support the council’s 3 Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth      Health and Wellbeing      Climate Emergency

42 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards continue to promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

43 The ongoing EDI activity supports the Council’s organisational values and contributes to all staff feeling valued and being treated fairly in the workplace enabling them to be themselves at work and to operate in positive working environment.

**Appendices**

44 Appendix 1 – Early Careers staff network feedback on their priorities, successes and future challenges faced by the Council

45 Appendix 2 – Women’s Voice staff network feedback on their priorities, successes and future challenges faced by the Council

46 Appendix 3 – LGBT+ staff network feedback on their priorities, successes and future challenges faced by the Council

47 Appendix 4 – CLT and Race Equality network joint statement on zero tolerance

**Background papers**

48 None

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## Electoral Services Update

Date: 27 March 2023

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

### What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the City's and council's ambitions

- To update and inform the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on:
  - Voter identification implementation.
- The information in this report is for information only, no proposals are being made.

### Recommendations

- a) Members of Scrutiny Board should note the content of the report

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 This report is for information only. No proposals are being put forward at this time.
- 2 A request was made for a report to update on the progress and preparation relating to the introduction of photographic identification in polling stations from 4 May 2023.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 The [Elections Act 2022](#) introduced a requirement to for electors to show photographic identification when voting in person at polling stations. The [Voter Identification Regulations 2022](#) and [Voter Identification \(Principal Area, Parish and Greater London Authority Elections\) \(Amendment\) Rules 2022](#) set out the specific regulations for this requirement.
- 3.2 Voters will be required to show photographic identification in polling stations from 4 May 2023. In Leeds, this will be for the local and parish/town council elections.
- 3.3 It will also be a requirement at Parliamentary elections from October 2023, however, should a Parliamentary by-election occur before that date, voter ID will be required.
- 3.4 This requirement will not apply to postal voters. In Leeds 30% of the electorate are registered for a postal vote.
- 3.5 It is expected that an identity check for all existing and new postal voters will be introduced before the elections in May 2024. The detail and timing of this is not yet confirmed.
- 3.6 Research carried out by the Government, Electoral Commission and others, estimates between 2% - 8% of registered of electors will not have an [accepted form of ID](#). Anyone who doesn't have their own ID can apply for a free [Voter Authority Certificate](#) (VAC).
- 3.7 The deadline to apply for a VAC to use in a polling station on 4 May is 25 April at 5pm.
- 3.8 Electors registered anonymously are only able to show a form of ID supplied by the Electoral Registration Officer. This is called an Anonymous Electors Document (AED). The document will contain a photo of the elector and their elector number only, therefore not disclosing any details about the elector which may be on their own forms of ID.
- 3.9 Anonymous electors will also still need to take their poll card to the polling station.
- 3.10 Electors who miss the VAC deadline will have the opportunity to appoint a proxy under a new emergency proxy category of having no ID. This arrangement can be put into place up to 5pm on polling day.
- 3.11 In Leeds our in-person electorate is approximately 400,000, however only around 80,000 of these voted at the elections in May 2022.
- 3.12 Based on the entire in person electorate applying, we could expect between 8,000 and 32,000 applications for a VAC. However, based on the number of electors who voted, a more realistic number is between 2,000 and 7,000 applications. It is anticipated this would increase significantly in the event of a Parliamentary election.
- 3.13 As of 1 March, the Electoral Registration Officer in Leeds has received just under 600 applications for a VAC.
- 3.14 At the time of writing, there had been no significant increase in postal vote applications that could be attributed to electors choosing that method of voting to bypass the identification requirement.

### 4 Communications

- 4.1 As the lead organisation for the campaign, the Electoral Commission began a promotional campaign at a national level from Monday 9 January 2022.
- 4.2 The campaign, entitled 'Note to self,' features advertising and messages around a reminder post-it note to advise people of the need to have ID if they wish to vote in person at this year's local elections. Their campaign utilises a range of advertising and messaging channels and platforms including the following:
- Television advert on ITV, Channel 4, and Sky channels
  - Video on demand – ITVX, 4, and YouTube
  - Regional radio including Greatest Hits Radio and Capital Yorkshire
  - Spotify adverts (including on podcasts)
  - Billboards, bus stop posters and on buses
  - Regional newspaper print adverts
  - Digital display website banners
  - Electoral Commission press release issued to all national and regional media
  - Social media messaging – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
  - Mobile gaming
  - Google search
- 4.3 All local authorities were asked by the Electoral Commission to help support and enhance the campaign, by sharing the national messaging and use available resources and assets to help raise awareness at a local community level.
- 4.4 A range of activities have been undertaken in Leeds and will continue to be active until the final deadline for voter ID applications on Tuesday 25 April. This began with sharing the national Electoral Commission messaging across the council social media platforms during January.
- 4.5 On 2 February, the local aspect of the Leeds campaign began. This included details of the support available across the city, with residents able to receive help in applying for a VAC, including having their photo taken for free at community hubs and libraries across the city. A [press release](#) was issued by the council's communications team that day to all local and regional media.
- 4.6 Social media messaging reinforcing the national campaign, and sharing the details of local support available, have been carried out on the Councils' Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and next-door accounts, as well as on council assets at local and community forum levels.
- 4.7 Further social media messages are planned across all the platforms listed over the coming weeks. In addition to this, targeted advertising has been undertaken on Facebook and Instagram across locations in Leeds (inner areas and outer areas) as well as by age (18 to 50 and those over 50) across the city.
- 4.8 The local voter ID information can be seen as a featured item on the [homepage](#) of the council's website as well as on the intranet for all council officers to see on Insite.
- 4.9 An advert for voter ID is included in the annual council tax bills letter being issued to every household in the city (approximately 340,000 households) in the coming weeks, to help raise awareness.
- 4.10 Voter ID information can currently be seen running as a footer message on all internal and external emails sent from council accounts.

- 4.11 Information about voter ID was emailed directly to over 250,000 residents for whom the Electoral Registration Officer has an email address, on 25 January. This was sent by the Electoral Services Team.
- 4.12 Further messaging was also emailed to over 100,000 subscribers on the Council's main contact list of residents and stakeholders by the Communications and Marketing Team on Friday 10 February.
- 4.13 A back page advert on voter ID and supporting article in Northside magazine is in the February edition. This is delivered free of charge to over 29,000 homes and businesses in the north Leeds area and is also viewed online by more than 170,000 people each month.
- 4.14 2,000 voter ID posters have been circulated in more than 1,100 community locations across the city, including community hubs and centres, doctors, dentists, cafes, leisure centres, libraries, supermarkets, religious and faith buildings, gyms, pubs and clubs, nursing homes, and parish councils.
- 4.15 A message about voter ID and the local support available was issued by the Leader of the Council, Councillor James Lewis, to all Leeds MPs partners and stakeholders on Friday 3 February.
- 4.16 Tom Riordan, who is the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for Leeds, included references to voter ID in his weekly all staff messages on 27 January and again on 3 February. The latter included information on the help available at community hubs and libraries across the city.
- 4.17 Voter ID will also be one of the topics being discussed by Tom Riordan on his next Vlog for all staff.
- 4.18 Tom Riordan was interviewed about voter ID live on BBC Radio Leeds breakfast show on Monday 6 February. It can be heard at [Rima Ahmed - 06/02/2023 - BBC Sounds](#) and begins at 1:34:40 in the recording.
- 4.19 Local adverts on voter ID are running on Greatest Hits Radio Yorkshire and Capital Yorkshire, including a DAX digital radio campaign connecting with local audiences across Leeds on their favourite radio, music, and podcasts.
- 4.20 The national voter ID television advert is showing on the big screen on Millennium square and will continue to be shown up to the application deadline of 25 April and Election Day of 4 May.
- 4.21 Versions of the national television advert are also showing on screens in all community hubs and libraries in the city which have screens.
- 4.22 Clear text information on voter ID requirements has been included on the envelope to be issued with polling cards to all 400,000 voters in Leeds who are currently registered as wishing to vote in person. In accordance with national electoral legislation the poll cards will be posted to residents from 27 March.
- 4.23 Static and digital backlit six-sheet screens and printed four-sheet posters are on display in key locations across the city, aimed at high footfall inner city areas, the city centre, and arterial routes.
- 4.24 In the coming weeks we will be focusing on getting the message out to hard-to-reach groups and communities.
- 4.25 Assets have now been received from the Electoral Commission with the voter ID national information translated into Urdu, Punjabi, Romanian and Polish, as well as specific resources for hard-to-reach groups including people experiencing

homelessness, Gypsy Roma and travellers, older people, trans and non-binary, blind and partially sighted, British Sign Language, easy-to-read text and those registered to vote anonymously.

- 4.26 The Communications and Marketing Team is working with Electoral Services and localities colleagues on the most effective ways of sharing the information with these communities and residents in the city.

## **5 Electoral Services Core Team**

- 5.1 It is a concern nationally, and has been reported in the media, that electoral administrators will struggle to cope with the additional workload of voter ID implementation in the short time scale provided.
- 5.2 Despite the late provision of guidance and legislation in relation to the introduction of voter identification, Electoral Services have been able to recruit an experienced Electoral Administrator from a neighbouring local authority, and 4 casual electoral registration assistants who will focus on the processing of voter authority certificate applications.
- 5.3 Spikes in the number of applications for voter authority certificates are expected and have been planned for. Working with colleagues from HR, a contingency pool of staff is being identified and those who can assist will be trained to carry out the processing of applications if called upon.

## **6 Election preparation**

- 6.1 Preparations for the local and parish/town council elections are well underway and have not been delayed by the additional workload from Voter ID implementation.
- 6.2 Over 330 polling stations have been booked, with the data for poll cards being sent to printers on 11 March.
- 6.3 Staffing for polling stations, postal vote opening, and the count is complete, with only 2 vacancies at present from 1810 positions.
- 6.4 Over 100 additional poll clerks have been added to busy polling stations, and to those stations where it has been identified electors are less likely to have an accepted form of ID, or are more likely to require use of the privacy booth. The recommended ratio of poll clerks per electors has been amended by the Electoral Commission to ensure adequate staffing is available to support the new processes, and staffing in every polling station was evaluated and adjusted accordingly.
- 6.5 Maximum polling station electorate ratios suggested by the Electoral Commission have been reduced to 2,250, to reduce footfall on polling day and allow more time for Voter ID procedures. All our polling stations have been reviewed, and amendments made where necessary, to comply with the new recommendation.
- 6.6 Wherever possible, there will be a female member of staff in each polling station to undertake checking of Voter ID, with electors who need to remove a face covering in a private area and would not feel comfortable with a male member of staff carrying out this process.
- 6.7 All stations currently have a female member of staff appointed, however late staffing cancellations and availability of reserves may mean some stations do not have a female staff member. In these cases, a female Polling Station Inspector will attend the station if required. If a late cancellation occurs in an area where it has been identified that ID checks in private are likely, we will move a female member of staff from a nearby polling station.

- 6.8 All polling station staff are given training prior to polling day. This has been updated to provide comprehensive training on the Voter ID requirements.
- 6.9 In addition to this, Presiding Officers and Polling Station Inspectors will also be required to attend an online briefing from the Head of Electoral Services during the week of the election, which will focus specifically on Voter ID.

## **7 Polling day**

- 7.1 The Head of Electoral Services has been working closely with WY Police to ensure adequate Police presence and support is in place on polling day. This is in preparation to deal with any potential unrest in polling stations, because of electors being turned away if they do not have the correct photographic identification and are refused a ballot paper.
- 7.2 The number of Polling Station Inspectors available to assist polling station staff with issues on polling day has been increased. There will now be 2 Inspectors per ward, previously 1 per ward.
- 7.3 Every polling station will have a specially designed polling booth that can be reconfigured into a privacy booth as and when required.
- 7.4 The voting process will have an additional step, after the polling station staff have located the elector on the polling station register, they will then ask to see their identification.
- 7.5 If the polling station staff are satisfied the ID is acceptable, ballot paper(s) will then be issued in the usual way.
- 7.6 However, regulations state a Presiding Officer must refuse a ballot paper if an ID document raises reasonable doubt as to whether the voter is the elector they claim to be, or they reasonably suspect the document to be a forged document.
- 7.7 Presiding Officers in Leeds will be instructed to contact Electoral Services for advice before refusing a ballot paper for either of these reasons. It is likely that a Polling Station Inspector would attend the station to make a final decision. This process is still being developed.
- 7.8 To maintain a record of refusals, polling station staff will be required to complete a new form called a 'ballot paper refusal list' (BPRL). This is a form prescribed in legislation.
- 7.9 The form is to keep a record of ballot papers refused for:
- reasonably doubt the voter is who they say they are
  - reasonably suspect the ID is forged
  - failure to answer the prescribed questions
- 7.10 The Presiding Officer must record the name of the voter, their electoral number, and the reason a ballot paper has been refused. If a proxy was voting on an elector's behalf, they must also record the details of the proxy.
- 7.11 The elector or their proxy are still able to return to the polling station with valid ID. If they do return, the BPRL must be updated to reflect this.
- 7.12 The BPRL is not used to record instances where electors attend the polling station without ID. This will be recorded on a separate form called a voter identification evaluation form (VIDEF).
- 7.13 The purpose of the VIDEF, is to collect statistical information including the number of voters who:

- use a VAC
- use an AED
- request the use of a private area to have their ID checked
- are refused ballot papers based on ID presented (as per BPRL)
- are unable to vote as they have ID that is not on the prescribed list
- are unable to vote as they do not have ID with them
- return to the polling station and successfully vote after initially being declined

## 8 Cost

- 8.1 The Government has applied the [new burdens doctrine](#) to the implementation of Voter ID.
- 8.2 Under the new burdens doctrine, any policy or initiative which increases the cost of providing local authority services is classed a new burden and the government department introducing the policy, in this case the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, must meet this cost.
- 8.3 The introduction of the [Voter Identification Regulations 2022](#) as part of the [Elections Act 2022](#), creates new burdens, as the policies add additional responsibilities to local authorities when delivering elections and electoral registration activities.
- 8.4 There are restrictions on what local authorities can claim, and Electoral Services are managing spend to ensure all cost can and will be reimbursed.
- 8.5 An initial grant funding payment was made to the authority in November 2022. A further payment will be made in April 2023. The new burdens claim process commences in June 2023.

### What impact will this proposal have?

#### Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted?      Yes      No

- 9 All wards are affected. The Head of Electoral Services has provided a briefing on the implementation of voter identification to each of the Council's political Groups.

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 10 This report is for information only. No consultation has taken place.

### What are the resource implications?

- 11 The resource implications are mentioned in section 5. above.

### What are the legal implications?

- 12 The Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer are statutorily obliged to implement the new requirements.

### What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 13 The key risks include insufficient capacity within the Electoral Services Team, and electors being unable to vote on polling day.
- 14 These risks are being managed as outline in 4. and 5. above, as well as being part of the wider elections risk register, reviewed regularly at meetings of the Elections and Elections Act Project Board, chaired by the Chief Officer, Elections and Regulatory.

**Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth                       Health and Wellbeing                       Climate Emergency

- 15 Not applicable - no proposal is being made at this time.

**Options, timescales and measuring success**

**a) What other options were considered?**

- 16 Not applicable.

**b) How will success be measured?**

- 17 Evaluation of electors unable to vote due to lack of ID after the elections on 4 May, using the information collected on the VIDEF form.

**c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

- 18 Implementation commenced on 16 January and will come into effect on 4 May.

**Background papers**

- 19 None.





## 2022/23 Scrutiny Board Summary

Date: 27 March 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Article 6 of Leeds City Council's Constitution states that the Head of Democratic Services, as designated Scrutiny Officer, will provide an annual report to Council setting out how the authority has carried out its overview and scrutiny functions during the preceding twelve-month period. As such this year's Annual Report will collate highlights of the work of all five Scrutiny Boards over 2022/23.

To complement the Annual Report, each Scrutiny Board also produces an end of year statement. This provides details of the full work programme for each Scrutiny Board for the last municipal year, with links to the associated agenda packs, minutes and webcast recordings. The document also includes a statement from the relevant Scrutiny Chair reflecting on the key priorities for the Scrutiny Board over the last year.

The 2022/23 summary for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) is appended to this report. Once it has been approved by members it will be published on the Council's website.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to note the appended 2022/23 end of year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) and, subject to any agreed amendments, approve its publication.

## What is this report about?

- 1 The appended report summarises the 2022/23 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources), providing links to the associated agenda packs, minutes and webcasts. It also includes a statement from the Scrutiny Chair, which highlights the issues that have been priorities for the Scrutiny Board over the last municipal year.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 It is intended that the detail in the appended summary will complement the Annual Report to Council, which will bring together highlights from all five Scrutiny Boards during 2022/23.
- 3 The appended statement illustrates how the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) has operated within its Terms of Reference and in the context of the [Vision for Scrutiny](#) to add value to the organisation.
- 4 Items reflected in the work programme illustrate how the Scrutiny Board has assisted with the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, monitored progress against key performance indicators, analysed proposed Council policy, and provided 'critical friend' challenge to decision makers. The work programme further reflects engagement with Executive Members, senior Leeds City Council officers and representatives from partner organisations.
- 5 Where the Scrutiny Board has made recommendations to the Executive Board, Council and/or other committees these can be accessed via the links included in the schedule. In line with the requirements of the Budget and Policy Framework, this has included a contribution to the composite Scrutiny Statement on the Budget, as provided to Executive Board in February 2023.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 6 All Scrutiny Boards aim to ensure that they add value through engagement in programmes of activity that reflect the three pillars of the Best City Ambition. Within this context the appended report sets out the items of business conducted by the Board in 2022/23.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 7 During 2022/23 the Board has aimed to add value through a member led process of examination and review, involving engagement with a range of stakeholders. The nature of such engagement has varied depending upon the issue under consideration – full details are available via the links in the appended statement.

## What are the resource implications?

- 8 There are no resource implications associated with this report.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 9 The appended report provides a summary of work already undertaken and therefore presents no risks that require management.

### **What are the legal implications?**

10 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

11 It has previously been agreed with Scrutiny Chairs that an end of year statement will be produced for individual Scrutiny Boards to complement the publication of the Annual Report to Council.

#### **How will success be measured?**

12 The appended report summarises the activity of the Scrutiny Board during 2022/23.

#### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

13 All five Scrutiny Boards will be asked to approve their respective end of year statements at the final public meetings of the 2022/23 municipal year.

14 Once the five statements have been approved, they will be published on the [Leeds City Council website](#).

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - End of Year Statement – Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)

### **Background papers**

- None

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# Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)

Year End Summary: 2022/23



# Scrutiny at Leeds City Council



## Purpose

Scrutiny is nationally recognised as an integral part of the improvement landscape for local government and forms part of governance arrangements for councils and some other local statutory bodies.

## Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference that are applied to all Scrutiny Boards are set out in Leeds City Council's Constitution. The variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with any special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the Constitution.

Article 6 also sets out the Council's agreed 'Vision for Scrutiny'.

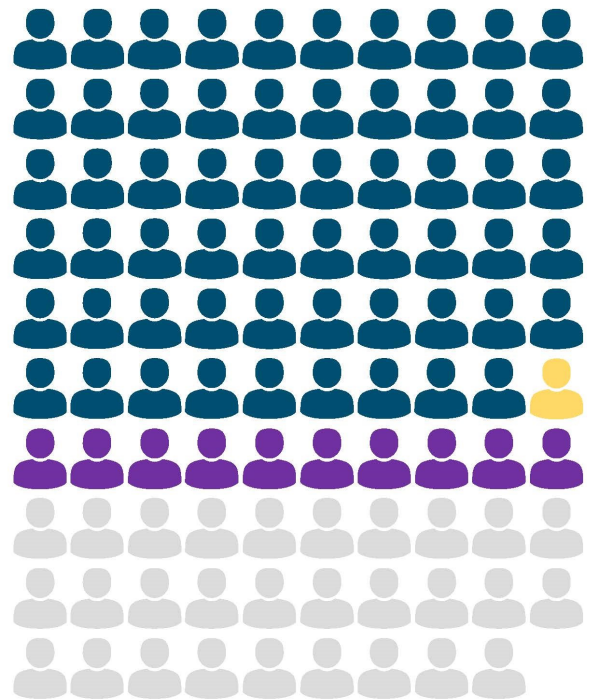
## Transparency & Accountability

Scrutiny Boards usually meet in public, holding key decision makers to account, as well as providing 'critical friend' challenge and support for public service improvement and policy development.

## Membership

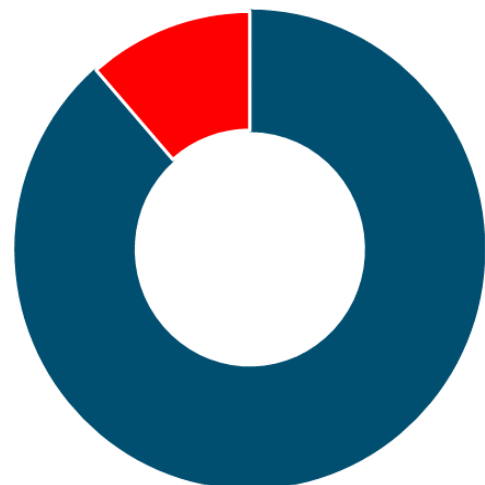
Membership of all Scrutiny Boards broadly reflects the political balance of the Council and cannot include members of the Council's Executive.

There is provision for Scrutiny Boards to appoint additional Co-opted Members.



Councillors who are members of a Scrutiny Board

## Scrutiny Board Membership



■ LCC Councillor ■ Co-Opted

# Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board

## 2022/23



Cllr Gohar Almass



Cllr Sharon Burke



Cllr Peter Carlill



Cllr Dianne Chapman



Cllr Robert Finnigan



Cllr Sam Firth



Cllr Billy Flynn



Cllr Mahalia France-Mir



Cllr Caroline Gruen



Cllr Kevin Ritchie



Cllr Andrew Scopes

### **Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board**

*Focusing on the council's central strategic and regulatory functions, including financial services, human resources, digital and information services, elections, registrars, licensing, local land charges and council tax processing. The Board will also oversee cultural related activities to deliver the city's cultural ambitions.*

### **Completed Work Schedule for the 2022/23 Municipal Year**

Each Scrutiny Board schedules eight formal meetings throughout the course of a municipal year. The Local Government Act 1972 requires formal meetings to be held in person to enable members of the public to be admitted as observers wherever the meeting is being held. To further promote access and engagement, formal meetings are also webcast.

In addition, the Scrutiny Board may choose to carry out additional work using alternative methods including site visits, working groups and remote consultative meetings (consultative sessions do not constitute formal meetings but do enable public access via a webcast).

The completed work schedule of the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) for the 2022/23 municipal year has been provided as part of this summary. This presents an overview of all meetings held throughout the year and the work items considered at each meeting. The work schedule also includes links to the agenda papers, minutes and webcast recordings of the Scrutiny Board's publicly accessible meetings.



# Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board

## Statement from the Chair



In municipal Year 2022/23 we have focused on core areas within our remit, Human Resources, staff well-being, attendance management and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Finance, procurement, budget management and financial challenge, Digital Services and digital change, Culture and the Leeds 2023 Year of Culture, our relationship with the Mayoral Combined Authority, LGA Peer Challenge and wider corporate planning and how we communicate and consult with Leeds residents both proactively and reactively.

Continuing to deliver essential services against the backdrop of ongoing financial challenge features in much of our work and we have considered in detail the impact of funding reductions on the budget and the knock-on impact this has had on staffing levels and the possible impact on staff well-being over an extended period of time. Our work on procurement, budgets and financial health monitoring has looked to deliver both value for money and a continuing focus on robust financial planning and we have been keen to ensure that council staff are treated fairly through a focus on EDI and staff well-being. Gaining a better understanding of the authority's interactions with Leeds residents through our interest in Contact Centre performance, FOI performance and how we communicate and consult with residents is a developing area of interest and Leeds 2023 and the exciting Year of Culture plans, that are now becoming reality across the city, have also been high on our agenda. We continue to receive updates from Electoral Services to better understand voter behaviour and the plans to introduce voter ID in May 2023 and we have reviewed the recommendations made in the Corporate Peer Challenge with a view to using those recommendations to inform our work and the wider work of the scrutiny in the future.

The scrutiny function has a variety of roles in terms of performance monitoring, conducting pre-decision scrutiny and policy and service reviews but our overall aim is to provide critical friend challenge to the Executive. Our work on the 2023/24 budget highlights this with our challenge on resourcing of the Contact Centre responded to and additional funding put in to ensure that the service provided to residents during a period of service change remains up to standard. It is this effective relationship between scrutiny and the executive that works in Leeds and adds value to our services.

As a board we are committed to hearing as many voices as possible and sometimes it is better to hear opinion and challenge from outside of our organisation. We did this through our consideration of the Peer Challenge, and I remain committed to inviting partners and external participants to scrutiny where appropriate and where value can be added.

The Board would not be as effective without the support of officers, Executive Board Members and key partners and I would like to put on record the Board's thanks for their regular contributions.

Lastly, I would like to thank my fellow Board members who have been committed to our work programme and made telling contributions to our work. It has been a real pleasure to chair the Board and I am proud of the work we have delivered.

Councillor Andrew Scopes

Scrutiny Chair





# Strategy & Resources

## Scrutiny Board

### Work Schedule 2022/23

June	July	September
<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 20 June 2022 at 10.30 am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 25 July 2022 at 10.30 am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 26 September 2022 at 10.30 am</u></a>
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference / Sources of Work (DB) / Co-opted members reports  Performance Update  Financial Outturn  Procurement update: contracts, T&Cs and monitoring of those T&Cs.	Digital Strategy Update  Agile Working and Estate Realisation  Recruitment and Retention  Area based income assessment (council tax and business rates)	Electoral Services Update  Annual Corporate Risk Management Report  Customer Contact
<b>Additional Sessions</b>		
October	November	December
<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 7 October 2022 at 10.30am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 7 November 2022 at 10.30 am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 12 December 2022 at 10.30am</u></a>
Call In Meeting—Taxi Suitability Policy (minor motoring convictions)	Leeds 2023 including update on Community Committee / ward member engagement  Financial Health Monitoring & Impact of Inflation and Medium term financial strategy  The UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Devolution Update (PM)  Staff Inclusion: to include staff network representation (PM)  Core Business Transformation (PSR)
<b>Additional Sessions</b>		
		<b>Working Group:</b> 2023/24 Initial Budget Proposals: 15 December 2022



# Strategy & Resources

## Scrutiny Board

### Work Schedule 2022/23

January	February	March
<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 16 January 2023 at 10.30 am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 20 February 2023 at 10.30 am</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Agenda for 27 March 2023 at 10.30 am</u></a>
Consultation & Communication Best City Ambition Update/ Performance Report Financial Health Monitoring 2023/24 Initial Budget Proposals	LGA Peer Review Civic Enterprise Leeds – Update Report Procurement update FOI: progress on performance, potential for automation	Staff Absence – update report Equality Diversity and Inclusion Follow Up Elections Update – Voter ID End of Year Summary Statement
<b>Additional Sessions</b>		

**More information about Leeds City Council's Scrutiny Service, along with the activity and membership of individual Scrutiny Boards, can be found on the Council's committee webpages.**

**You can also follow @ScrutinyLeeds on twitter.**



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## Work Programme

Date: 27 March 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The report sets out the 2022/23 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) and is reflective of board member discussions to date.

All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year. In doing so, the work programme should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year.

Members will be invited to review and discuss the work programme at each public Scrutiny Board meeting that takes place during the 2022/23 municipal year. This is the final Work Programme report of municipal year 2022/23 and members are also asked to consider any work items they wish to pass over to the successor Board in municipal year 2023/24.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to consider the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.
- b) This is the Board's final work programming item for the municipal year and therefore members are asked to suggest items that should be passed on for future work in municipal year 2023/24.

## What is this report about?

- 1 A draft work programme for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in it are known items of scrutiny activity, including performance and budget monitoring, identified Budget and Policy Framework items and recommendation tracking.
- 2 Members should also note the following provisional dates for Board meetings in 2023/24, these are preliminary at this stage subject to confirmation at the Annual Council Meeting on 24 May:

Month	Date	Public Meeting	Pre-Meeting for Board Members
June	19 June 2023	10.00am	9.45am
July	17 July 2023	10.00am	9.45am
August	<b>No public meeting</b>		
September	18 September 2023	10.00am	9.45am
October	16 October 2023	10.00am	9.45am
November	<b>No public meeting</b>		
December	11 December 2023	10.00am	9.45am
January	15 January 2024	10.00am	9.45am
February	19 February 2024	10.00am	9.45am
March	25 March 2024	10.00am	9.45am

- 3 The Board has considered a range of issues in the current municipal year and with this being the final formal meeting of the municipal year Board members are asked to comment on and suggest work items that can be passed on to the successor board in 2023/24. Key areas of focus that are under consideration for potential further work in 2023/24 include; procurement and contract management, Leeds 2023 evaluation, Corporate Peer Challenge performance against recommendations, staff wellbeing, attendance and performance management, equality, diversity and inclusion, taxi licensing and driver well-being, Contact Centre performance and consultation and mass communication. All of these follow initial and ongoing work in the current municipal year.
- 4 In addition to this the Council's financial health and financial management will continue to be a focus both in terms of financial health monitoring reports and consideration of the Budget for 2024/25 in line with the Board's remit and the Council's budget and policy framework.
- 5 As noted in the February Work Programme report the minutes of the Executive Board for February were not available at the time of publication of the meeting agenda. These are now provided at Appendix 2. The March Executive Board minutes are also unfortunately not available at time of publication, and these will be brought to the June meeting in the new municipal year. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and identify any matter where specific scrutiny activity may be warranted, and therefore subsequently incorporated into the work programme or handed over to the successor board in 2023/24.
- 6 For information, the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include a review of 'how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme.'

## Changes to the Work Programme since the last meeting

- 7 As the work of the Board evolves changes to the Work Programme become necessary to prioritise and fit agenda items in at appropriate times.
- 8 Since the last meeting there have been some adjustments to the planned programme. The December meeting of the Board considered an item on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) that was to be the subject of a follow up session in a private working group. However, this will now feature as an agenda item at today's meeting due to difficulties in finding an appropriate date for a standalone working group.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 9 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year.
- 10 The draft work programme is reflective of the requests to date from members of the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 11 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 12 To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to establish and maintain an effective dialogue with relevant Directors and Executive Board Members.
- 13 The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 14 Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time.
- 15 The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.
- 16 Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:
  - Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;

- Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

17 This report has no specific risk management implications.

### **What are the legal implications?**

18 This report has no specific legal implications.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

19 The work programme is reflective of the requests of the Scrutiny Board members to date and will be reviewed by the Scrutiny Board at each meeting of the municipal year.

### **How will success be measured?**

20 The work of all Scrutiny Boards will be reviewed and summarised in an Annual Report, which is presented for consideration by Council during the next municipal year.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

21 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year. In doing so, the work programme should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Draft work programme 2022/23
- Appendix 2 – Executive Board Minutes from 8 February 2023

## **Background papers**

- None





## Appendix 1 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2022/23 Municipal Year

June	July	August
<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 20 June 2022</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 25 July 2022</u></a>	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference / Sources of Work (DB) / Co-opted members reports  Performance Update (PM)  Financial Outturn (PM)  Procurement update: contracts, T&Cs and monitoring of those T&Cs (PM)	Digital Strategy Update (PSR)  Agile Working and Estate Realisation (PSR)  Recruitment and Retention (PM)  Area based income assessment (council tax and business rates) (PM)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
	4/7/22 – remote session: budget assumptions & impact of external factors such as inflation	
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



## Appendix 1 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2022/23 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 26 September 2022</u></a>	No meetings	<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 7 November 2022</u></a>
Electoral Services Update (PM) Annual Corporate Risk Management Report (PM) Customer Contact (PDS)		Leeds 2023 including update on Community Committee / ward member engagement (PM) Financial Health Monitoring & Impact of Inflation and Medium term financial strategy (PM) The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (PM)
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



## Appendix 1 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2022/23 Municipal Year

December	January	February
<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda 12 December 2022</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 16 January 2023</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Meeting Agenda for 20 February 2023</u></a>
Devolution Update (PM)  Staff Inclusion: to include staff network representation (PSR)  Core Business Transformation (PSR)	Consultation & Communication (PSR)  Best City Ambition Update/ Performance Report (PSR/PM)  Financial Health Monitoring (PM)  2023/24 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS)	LGA Peer Review (PDS)  Civic Enterprise Leeds – Update Report (PM)  Procurement update (PM)  FOI: progress on performance, potential for automation (PSR)
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
Budget Working Group – 15 December 2022, 10.30AM		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
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## Appendix 1 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2022/23 Municipal Year

PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response
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March	April	Notes
Meeting Agenda for 27 March 2023	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.	Items to be scheduled
Staff Absence – update report (PM) Equality Diversity and Inclusion Follow Up (PSR) Elections Update – Voter ID (PM) End of Year Summary Statement		
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



**Appendix 1**  
**Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)**  
**Work Schedule for 2022/23 Municipal Year**

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## EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, A Carter, D Coupar,  
S Golton, M Harland, H Hayden, J Pryor,  
M Rafique and F Venner

- 100 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**  
**RESOLVED** – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-
- (A) That appendix B to the report entitled, ‘Capital Receipts Programme Update’, referred to in Minute No. 107 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and considered in private on the grounds that this appendix contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council. It is considered that the release of such information would, or would be likely to prejudice the Council’s commercial interests in relation to property transactions. It is therefore considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time.
- 101 Late Items**  
There were no late items of business submitted to the Board for consideration.
- 102 Declaration of Interests**  
There were no interests declared at the meeting.
- 103 Minutes**  
**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 be approved as a correct record.
- 104 Director of Adults and Health**  
At the commencement of the meeting, the Chair, on behalf of the Board paid tribute to Cath Roff, Director of Adults and Health, given that this marked her final Executive Board meeting in her role as Director.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Wednesday, 15th March, 2023

## **RESOURCES**

### **105 Safer Leeds Executive Annual Report 2021/22**

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report presenting the Annual Report of the Safer Leeds Executive (SLE) for 2021/22 and which provided an update on the progress being made in relation to the Safer Leeds Executive's current 3 year plan and the 9 key priorities within it regarding the promotion of community safety in Leeds.

By way of introduction to the annual report, the Executive Member for Resources highlighted that this was the first Safer Leeds Executive annual report to be submitted to the Board and that the intention was to submit a report to Executive Board on an annual basis moving forward. As part of the introductory comments, Members received an overview of the SLE's key areas of work and achievements to date, whilst the importance of continued partnership working in this area was emphasised in order to ensure that progress continued.

Members welcomed Chief Superintendent Steve Dodds, West Yorkshire Police to the meeting, who provided the Board with information regarding key trends and challenges being experienced from a Police perspective across the city and a summary of the actions being taken to prioritise and address such challenges.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) levels in the city, the Board received further detail on how such incidents were recorded and the approach taken to tackle the issue of ASB in communities. In addition, assurance was provided that addressing ASB remained a priority in Leeds.

Also in response to Members' enquiries, emphasis was placed upon West Yorkshire Police's commitment to neighbourhood policing and as part of that, the provision of PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers), given the key role that they played in this area. Separately, it was noted that the resourcing of neighbourhood policing continued to be a priority.

Further to this, and in response to specific enquiries, the Board received updates and reassurance from a West Yorkshire Police perspective on the effective processes in place regarding the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board and the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Regarding the Leeds Festival, assurance was provided on the Police's role in ensuring that the festival was delivered in line with all relevant requirements, with the multi-agency approach that continued to be taken in relation to such matters also being noted.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Board, the Chair extended his thanks to Chief Superintendent Dodds and the West Yorkshire Police for the service they provided across the city.



**RESOLVED** – That the content of the Safer Leeds Executive Annual Report for 2021/22, as appended to the submitted report, be noted.

**106 Core Business Transformation Programme Phase 2: HR and Payroll Technology**

Further to Minute No. 65, 19 October 2022, the Director of Resources submitted a report which sought the Board's agreement to proceed with Phase 2 of the Core Business Transformation (CBT) programme, together with the necessary approvals required to facilitate this.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received information on how the CBT programme would not only establish new technology, but would also look to ensure the effective delivery of the new processes and that the benefits from them were maximised by the Council.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, reassurance was provided that in procuring the solution, the issue of security and the mitigation of risk from cyber attacks would be taken into account, with further explanation being given that systems were being replaced on a regular basis to ensure that they remained secure.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That approval be given for the Core Business Transformation Programme to proceed with Phase 2 of delivery requiring additional Authority to Spend of £8.0m funded from Capital Receipts in accordance with the Government's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts statutory guidance (updated August 2022) and issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003, with this forming part of a wider programme of works estimated to cost a total of £18.5m (Phase 1 of which (£10.48m) was approved by the Executive Board on 19th October 2022, Minute No. 65 refers);
- (b) That it be noted that Phase 2 of the programme will initially replace the Council's core HR and Payroll systems, followed by the replacement of related Health and Safety, Learning and Development, Occupational Health and Job Search, Recruitment, Selection, On-Boarding and Induction applications;
- (c) That authority be given to procure the new core HR and Payroll system(s) via an open procedure process, providing the award remains within the margins of the indicative costs; and also to waive Contract Procedure Rule (CPR) 15.2(c) in respect of the minimum points for price, with the evaluation criteria being: 60% quality, 30% price and 10% social value;
- (d) That it be noted that subsequent procurement and implementation of the related Health and Safety, Learning and Development, Occupational Health, Job Search, Recruitment, Selection, Onboarding and Induction applications will be undertaken by the Director of Resources, the Chief Officer Human Resources and Chief Officer

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 15th March, 2023

Strategy and Policy, with the project sponsor being the Chief Officer Financial Services.

**107 Capital Receipts Programme Update**

Further to Minute No. 113, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the Director of City Development submitted a report presenting an update and overview of the Council's Capital Receipt Programme and which recommended to the Board a number of related approvals with regard to the programme.

It was noted that a footnote, as referenced in Appendices A and B, relating to Otley Lido had been included in error and therefore should be disregarded, with it being noted that the current position in relation to Otley Lido remained as reported to the Board in the Capital Receipts Programme report last year.

Following consideration of Appendix B to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That subject to the correction regarding Otley Lido as detailed above, the contents of the submitted report, together with the details of the previous Key Decisions which have been taken in relation to the disposal of assets, as set out at paragraph 4, be noted;
- (b) That the progress which has been made and the successes achieved since Executive Board considered the last report on 9 February 2022, be noted;
- (c) That those assets identified in Appendix A and exempt Appendix B to the submitted report as "Proposed for Inclusion" be declared as surplus and that approval be given to the disposal of those assets; with approval also being given to their addition to the Council's Capital Receipts Programme of surplus properties for disposal;
- (d) That the withdrawal of properties from the Capital Receipts Programme, as set out in Appendix A and exempt Appendix B to the submitted report, be approved, with such matters being implemented by the Director of City Development.

**108 Financial Health Monitoring 2022/23 – Month 9 (December 2022)**

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting an update on the financial health of the Authority in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account, as at the end of Month 9 of the 2022/23 financial year.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Resources provided an overview of the key information within it, which included reference to the fact that an overspend of £13.4m was projected for the Authority's General Fund services, as at month 9 of 2022/23.

In noting that the intention was to utilise the Council's strategic contingency reserve to deliver a balanced budget, a Member highlighted the impact that this would have on the Council's strategic contingency reserve levels, and emphasised the need for that to be taken into consideration as part of any budget preparation processes moving forward.

Also, responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received an update on the reasons for the improved position regarding the projected overspend, when compared to the previous month's financial health monitoring report.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That it be noted that at Month 9 of the financial year (December 2022) the Authority's General Fund services are forecasting an overspend of £13.4m and that the Housing Revenue Account is forecasting a balanced position;
- (b) That it be noted, that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, are required to present action plans to mitigate their reported pressures, in line with the Revenue Principles agreed by Executive Board in 2019; with it also being noted that proposals received to date are included in the submitted report, as at Appendix 4, and that further action plans will be received at the March 2023 meeting of Executive Board;
- (c) That it be noted that known increased inflation and known impacts of the rising cost of living, including the agreed 2022/23 pay award, have been incorporated into this reported financial position, with it also being noted that these pressures will continue to be assessed, with the latest position being incorporated into future reports to be received by Executive Board.

#### **ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS**

##### **109 Annual Report of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board for 2021-22**

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report that presented the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board's (LSAB) Annual Report for 2021/22, which summarised the Board's achievements and ongoing areas of work over the relevant 12 month period and provided an update on the intended plans moving forward, in line with the Board's strategic plan.

By way of introduction to the annual report, the Executive Member highlighted the key areas which had been focussed upon during 2021/22, including the launch of a cross-cutting strategy to tackle the issue of self-neglect and promoting the accessibility of safeguarding across the diverse communities of Leeds.

The Board welcomed Richard Jones CBE, Independent Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board to the meeting, who was in attendance in order to introduce the key points of the annual report, the objectives of the Board and

to highlight key priorities moving forward. Concluding, the Independent Chair extended his thanks to his Board colleagues, all frontline staff for their contribution in this area and also to the Director of Adults and Health, given that this was her final Board meeting.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on the role of the LSAB and its sub group in considering safeguarding concerns raised, and the process and criteria by which a Safeguarding Adult Review, arising from such a concern, could be initiated. Further to this discussion, it was suggested that future LSAB annual reports could make reference to such matters moving forward, including the number of concerns considered and the resulting actions taken.

In acknowledging the challenges that continued to be faced in the area of safeguarding, the importance of the partnership approach being taken was emphasised, together with the focus that the LSAB was placing upon equality and diversity.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for 2021/22, as appended to the submitted report, together with the comments made during the discussion, be noted;
- (b) That the strategic aims and ambitions of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board, as set out in the accompanying Strategic Plan, as appended and linked to the submitted report, be supported;
- (c) That it be noted that the Safeguarding Board will develop an action plan in response to the Peer Challenge which will be set out in the Annual Report for 2022/23.

(Councillor Coupar left the meeting at the conclusion of this agenda item)

**LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

**110 2023/24 Revenue Budget and Council Tax report including reports on the Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy**

Further to Minute No. 91, 14th December 2022, the Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a suite of reports regarding: proposals for the City Council's Revenue Budget for 2023/24 and the Leeds element of the Council Tax to be levied during the same period; proposals regarding an updated Capital Programme for 2023 – 2027 and also a proposed updated Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24.

The Board was advised that the budget proposals as detailed within the submitted report were based upon the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. However, it was noted that following the publication of the submitted agenda papers, the final Local Government Finance Settlement had been received, which was consistent with the initial Settlement in all but two areas:

- 1) Regarding the Services Grant, it was noted that the Council would be in receipt of a further £253,000 in 2023/24, and that the intention was for this sum be allocated to the Strategic Contingency Reserve balance; and
- 2) Regarding the surplus on the Business Rates Levy Account, it was noted that the surplus was to be allocated to Local Authorities, and as a result, Leeds would receive £1.3m in the current financial year which would therefore contribute towards the currently projected overspend. It was also noted that the next financial health monitoring report would reflect the updated position.

In addition, it was noted that a correction was required within the submitted 2023/24 Revenue Budget and Council Tax cover report, specifically section 3(j) (page 241 of the agenda pack) should read: *'Looking ahead, Appendix 1 presents Provisional Revenue Budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26. These update the position set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy received in September 2022, with latest forecast gaps of £43.0m in 2024/25 and £28.7m in 2025/26'*.

**(A) 2023/24 Revenue Budget and Council Tax**

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Council be recommended to note the recommendation of the Council's statutory officer (the Chief Officer – Financial Services) that the Budget proposals for 2023/24 are robust and that the proposed level of reserves is adequate, as set out at Part 7 of Appendix 1 to the submitted report;
- (b) That, subject to the inclusion of the updated position and correction as referenced above, the Council be recommend to adopt the following:-
  - (i) That the revenue budget for 2023/24 totalling £573.4m be approved. This means that the Leeds element of Council Tax for 2023/24 will increase by 2.99% plus the Adult Social Care precept of 2.00%. This excludes the police and fire precepts which will be incorporated into the Council Tax report to be submitted to Council on 22nd February 2023;
  - (ii) That approval be given to grants totalling £69.6k to be allocated to parishes, as shown at Appendix 5 to the submitted report;
  - (iii) That approval be given to the strategy at Appendix 9 of the submitted report in respect of the flexible use of capital receipts - specifically the additional planned use in 2022/23 of £2.7m and planned use in 2023/24 of £19.0m;
  - (iv) That in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, the budget be approved with:-
    - An increase of 7% in dwelling rents;
    - An increase of 7% in garage and travellers site rent;
    - An increase of 12.6% (RPI) for the standing charges in district heating schemes and the district heating unit rate will increase to 10p per kwh;

- A 30% increase in heat consumption charges in sheltered complexes;
  - An increase in service charges for low/medium rise flats to £4.83 per week and for multi-storey flats £11.40 per week;
  - A decrease in the charge for tenants who benefit from the sheltered support service to £8.51 per week;
  - An increase in the Retirement Life charge for the provision of additional community facilities to £11.40 per week for services within complexes and £4.83 per week where they are within a standalone community centre;
  - An increase in the service charges for Wharfedale extra care scheme to £47.41 per week, in addition the support charge will increase by 9%.
- (v) That in respect of the Schools' Budget, the High Needs Block budget for 2023/24, as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the Schools' Budget Report at Appendix 8 to the submitted report, be approved, with specific reference to the table at paragraph 4.4.6 of the submitted report;
- (c) That Executive Board approval be given to the updated Revenue and Capital Principles, as detailed at Appendix 11 to the submitted report;
- (d) That Executive Board's thanks be conveyed to Scrutiny Boards and all those who took part in the public consultation for their comments and the observations made in consideration of the Council's Proposed Budget for 2023/24.

**(B) Capital Programme Update 2023 – 2027**

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That Executive Board recommends to Council:-
- (i) the approval of the Capital Programme for 2023-2027, totalling £1,978.5m, including the revised projected position for 2022/23, as presented in Appendix A to the submitted report;
  - (ii) the approval of the MRP policy statements for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report; and
  - (iii) the approval of the Capital and Investment Strategy, as set out in Appendix D to the submitted report; with it being noted that as part of the Capital and Investment Strategy, the Council is required to set prudential limits for the total value of its non-treasury investments and, specifically, limits for the total value of service investments and the total value of commercial investments that it holds; and as such, Council be recommended to approve, as detailed within Appendix D, that:-
    - the prudential limit for service investments be set at £80m; and
    - that a limit of £200m should be set for the carrying value of assets which are classed as commercial investments.

(b) That Executive Board approval be given to the following net injections totalling £420.7m into the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A(iii) to the submitted report:-

- £95.6m of Corporate Borrowing to address Capital Programme Review budget pressures as listed at Appendix A(iv) to the submitted report;
- £92.5m of annual programme injections (£45.4m of Corporate Borrowing, £11.9m of Flexible Use of Capital Receipts and £35.2m of External Funding) as listed at Appendix A(v) to the submitted report;
- £9.8m of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategic Fund monies;
- £7.8m of Flexible Use of Capital Receipts injection for the Core Business Transformation Programme; and
- £215.0m of other injections, primarily relating to the roll forward of the HRA Programme, annual capital grant allocations and other secured external grant funding.

(c) That it be noted that the above resolutions to inject funding of £420.7m will be implemented by the Chief Officer (Financial Services).

**(C) Treasury Management Strategy 2022/2023**

Thanks was extended to those in the Treasury Management team for the effective way in which such matters continued to be managed.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Treasury Strategy for 2023/24, as set out in Section 8.5 of the submitted report, be approved by Executive Board and that the review of the 2022/23 strategy and operations, as set out in Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That full Council be recommended to approve that the borrowing limits for the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 be confirmed as set in February 2022; and that new limits for 2025/26 be approved at £3,200m for Borrowing and £530m for other Long term liabilities for the Authorised limit. For 2025/26, full Council be recommended to approve that the Operational Boundary be set at £2,950m for Borrowing and £510m for Other Long-term Liabilities, as detailed at Section 8.6 of the submitted report;
- (c) That full Council be recommended to approve the Treasury Management indicator for the maturity structure of the Council's borrowing as detailed in Section 8.7 and Appendix B to the submitted report; with the only change to this Indicator being to increase the maximum percentage of debt maturing within 12 months from the previous 15% to 25% in response to the change required to the underlying calculation of this indicator from fixed rate debt only to include all debt including short term and variable rate debt;

- (d) That full Council be recommended to set the investment limits for periods greater than 364 days for 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 at £150m, and that a new limit for 2025/26 be set at £150m. Also, full Council be recommended to approve that the limit of £15m which can be placed with the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) be removed. (The DMADF is an arm of the Debt Management office of HM Treasury). Finally, full Council be recommended to agree that all other Investment limits remain as set in February 2022, which are explained in Section 8.8.9 of the submitted report;
- (e) That full Council be recommended to approve that the Treasury Management Policy Statement be updated in line with the revised codes of practice, as shown at Appendix E to the submitted report; and that full Council be recommended to note that updated Treasury Management Practices and new Investment Management Practices (a new requirement, relating to non-treasury management investments), which are detailed operational documents, will be approved before the start of the 2023/24 financial year by the Chief Officer Financial Services, as required under the CIPFA Codes.

(The matters referred to in Minute Nos. 110 (A)(a) – 110(A)(b)(v) and 110 (A)(d) (Revenue Budget and Council Tax); 110(B)(a)(i) – 110(B)(a)(iii) (Capital Programme) and 110(C)(b) – 110(C)(e) (Treasury Management Strategy), given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In)

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors Carter and Golton required it to be recorded that they both respectively abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

#### **111 Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge – Initial Action Plan**

Further to Minute No. 90, 14 December 2022, the Chief Executive submitted a report presenting for consideration the initial Action Plan which had been drawn up in response to the findings and recommendations arising from recent the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge which took place in November 2022.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the progress made in developing the LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan (as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report) in response to the findings and recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the initial Action Plan, alongside the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge final report will be considered by Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board at their February 2023 meeting, in line with the Executive Board resolution of 14 December 2022 (Minute No. 90(c) refers);



- (c) That it be noted that the Peer Challenge Action Plan will inform organisational and financial planning as well as the Best City Ambition refresh, and that monitoring and reporting will be undertaken through existing routes, such as the Annual Performance Report.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE**

### **112 Initial Public Consultation on the Proposed Scope of the Leeds Local Plan 2040**

The Director of City Development submitted a report which set out the proposed consultation material regarding the update to the Leeds Local Plan. Specifically, the report sought approval to the proposed initial scope of the Leeds Local Plan 2040, to the commencement of a consultation exercise for a period of six weeks and to refer the consultation documentation to the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board for consideration as part of such consultation.

A Member highlighted the importance of ensuring that the consultation was comprehensive and that the level of response was monitored, with a request that action be taken to ensure an appropriate level of response was achieved, if necessary. In response, assurance was provided that the consultation response would be monitored to ensure that the process was consistent with the established Statement of Community Involvement.

The Board acknowledged a Member's comments regarding the need to ensure that the approach being taken in relation to the role of town and local centres was widened to consider social, cultural and wellbeing aspects, with it being undertaken that such matters would be taken into consideration as the consultation process progressed.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the proposed initial scope of the Leeds Local Plan 2040 be agreed as follows:-
- Update by deleting, creating or amending policies within the Local Plan for Leeds (namely the Adopted Leeds Core Strategy (amended 2019), the Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan (2013), Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (2017), Site Allocations Plan (2019) and Unitary Development Plan (2006)) that relate to the spatial strategy, housing, economic development, the role of centres, minerals and waste, transport and accessibility and 'other' topics areas (including heritage, landscape, rural development, community facilities, contaminated land and hazardous substances, and open land and green corridors in urban areas);
- (b) That the commencement of a consultation exercise on the scope, as presented to the Board, for a period of six weeks using supporting topic paper (as detailed at appendix 1 to the submitted report), be agreed;

- (c) That the consultation documentation (as detailed at appendix 1 to the submitted report) be referred to the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board for consultation in accordance with the requirements of the Budget and Policy Framework;
- (d) That the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (as detailed at Appendix 2 to the submitted report) be published for comment as part of the consultation;
- (e) That it be noted that a 'Call for Sites' will be undertaken alongside the consultation process;
- (f) That the necessary authority be provided to the Chief Planning Officer, in order to enable the Chief Planning Officer, in liaison with the Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate, to approve any amendments to the consultation material in advance of public consultation;
- (g) That it be noted that the Chief Planning Officer is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions above.

(The matters referred to within this minute, given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In, as Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

### **113 Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy - Action Plan Annual Update 2022**

The Director of City Development submitted a report which outlined the annual progress which continued to be made in relation to the Connecting Leeds, Transport Strategy Action Plan, following the Board's approval of the Action Plan in October 2021.

In presenting the report, the challenges that continued to be faced in relation to longer term planning and ambitions in this area were highlighted, with the Executive Member emphasising the impact of the current national funding model on such matters.

In response to a Member's comments regarding the impact of development works whilst they were being carried out, the Board was advised that whilst works were planned as much in advance as possible and in a co-ordinated a way as possible, there were a number of external factors, such as the timeframe by which funding needed to be spent and emergency utility works, that often influenced the approach taken.

Members received an update on footfall statistics for the city centre together with bus and rail patronage levels, with it being noted that current levels in Leeds were approaching, or in some cases equal to that of 2019. It was also

noted that the rate of the increase being experienced in Leeds was faster than in a number of other areas in the country.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received an update regarding the '20 Minute Neighbourhood' initiative and how that connected with such matters, with it being noted that there was expected to be further reference to the provision of '20 Minute Neighbourhoods' in next year's annual update report.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy annual progress report, together with the associated Action Plan 2021-2024, as presented, be noted;
- (b) That the progress made and successes achieved against the key measures outlined in the Action Plan and the submitted report, be noted, together with how these impact on the wider context of the Leeds City Council Best City Ambition;
- (c) That the progress made against the interim datasets and associated key performance indicators which are used to develop the Connecting Leeds Action Plan that support the aims and objectives of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy, be noted.

**114 Connecting Leeds - Public Transport Investment Programme - Completion Update**

The Director of City Development submitted a report presenting an update on the progress made in relation to the Connecting Leeds, Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP), which covered the period between the last update presented to the Board in November 2020 up to the completion of the majority of all construction and project delivery, as at November 2022.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member extended her thanks to all of those involved in the delivery of this very significant programme of works, which it was noted was undertaken within a very challenging timescale. The Executive Member also provided an overview of the programme's key achievements.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiry questioning the reference in the report on the undertaking of schemes to improve neighbourhood transport hubs at Rothwell and Robin Hood, it was undertaken that such references would be checked with a response being provided to the Member in question.

There was a discussion regarding the recent scheme inflation review which had been undertaken by the Combined Authority and, in response to Members' enquiries, a brief update was provided on the latest position of a scheme within a specific Member's area.

## **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the completion of the majority of construction/project delivery work undertaken on the Connecting Leeds Programme (Bus Infrastructure, Rail and Bus Delivery packages) to ensure the realisation of the outcomes, as set out in the strategic outline business case to the Department for Transport (DfT), be noted;
- (b) That the latest financial position of the programme, be noted; and that agreement be given for the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate, to make any further residual movements within budget, which are needed on completion of the programme between packages and taking account of all the additional external funding opportunities secured since the last update report.

## **COMMUNITIES**

### **115 A Refreshed Approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment and the Director of Resources submitted a joint report which presented a refreshed approach towards Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including a Vision Statement and Action Plan for consideration and adoption.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member emphasised the partnership approach which had been taken in compiling this refreshed approach and thanked those who had been involved in the engagement process. In addition, the 5 priorities across each of the 3 strands were highlighted, with it being noted that the refreshed approach would support rather than replace existing arrangements.

Members supported the proposals detailed within the submitted report.

## **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Action Plan for 2023 – 2025, as appended to the submitted report, be adopted;
- (b) That the proposals for new performance reporting against the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment and the Director of Resources are responsible for leading this work through the Council's Safer Stronger Communities and Human Resources teams.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING**

### **116 Damp and Mould**

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report providing an update and assurances to the Board regarding the current position in respect of damp and mould within Council managed homes,

together with the approach being taken to tackle such matters and ensure that robust measures were in place. The report also provided an update on the actions being taken by the Council with regard to the private rented sector.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding a press release from the Housing Ombudsman, the Board received further information and context in relation to that specific case, with it being noted that the Ombudsman's findings had been accepted, that the Council had apologised to the individual concerned and that lessons had been learned and were being acted upon.

Also in response to a Member's enquiries and concerns, assurance was provided on the actions that were being taken to address this issue within the level of resource and regulatory framework available to the Authority. It was noted that this included the widening of training across a range of teams in the service, increased communications with residents, the provision of increased resource specifically to address this issue and working with energy suppliers to help tenants heat their homes more effectively. In addition, the Board received an update on the proactive work which was taking place in the private rented sector and in terms of housing associations.

Members received clarification on the resourcing of inspection works carried out by the Council within the private rented sector.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the measures which have been put in place to reduce damp and mould in tenants' homes and to improve how reports of damp and mould in tenants' homes are managed, be supported.

#### **ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

##### **117 Leeds Kirkgate Open Market Future Opportunities - Consultation Response and Next Steps**

Further to Minute No. 96, 14 December 2022, the Director of City Development submitted a report which presented the findings from the consultation exercise undertaken on the potential introduction of a new container food, beverage and entertainment offer on part of the Open Market at Leeds Kirkgate Market and which set out a series of proposed 'next steps' for consideration.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the support which had been provided to the market in recent years, with it being highlighted that the aim of the submitted proposals was to secure the long term future of the market. Members also received an overview of the findings from the consultation exercise, with it being noted that there had been over 2,000 responses to the online survey with 71.5% being generally supportive of the proposals. Finally, it was noted that assurance had been provided to traders that where detail on the proposals was yet to be confirmed, this would be undertaken in consultation with traders.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted that whilst he thought there had been a lack of response to the consultation from traders, he was supportive of the proposals.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the findings from the approved consultation exercise regarding the introduction of a new container food, beverage and entertainment offer on part of the Open Market at Leeds Kirkgate Market, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That in noting the outcome of the agreed consultation exercise, it be noted that the overall findings can be broadly categorised as:-
- Trader Consultation Outcome;
  - Public/Shopper Outcome;
  - Partner/Stakeholder Outcome.
- (c) That in taking into account resolutions (a) and (b) above, the following next steps be approved:-
- To continue to engage with market traders around the concerns some of them have with the proposal, specifically around the need for any development to be as complementary as possible to the market;
  - To delegate approval to the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of Council and Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education, to market the site as a suitable location for a potential container led food, beverage and entertainment offer;
  - To delegate approval to the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of Council and Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education, for the selection of a potential operator;
  - To progress the potential delivery of the proposal in accordance with the Council's standard processes for a land and property transaction.
- (d) That it be noted that the Director of City Development is responsible for the implementation of such matters.

**118 Determination of School Admission Arrangements for 2024/25**

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought approval of the proposed Leeds City Council admission arrangements (admission policy) for September 2024, with it being noted that the admission policy applied to all Leeds community and voluntary controlled maintained schools (100 schools) in the city.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted that, in response to the reduced birth rate in Leeds, the submitted report did contain proposals to reduce the published admission number (PAN) in 3 primary schools, with it

being noted that each of the Governing Bodies had given majority support for the proposals concerning their school.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That in determining the school admissions arrangements for the academic year 2024/25, the admissions policies for the Leeds Community and Voluntary Controlled maintained Primary and Secondary schools (as detailed at Appendices A, B and C to the submitted report), be approved;
- (b) That the resolutions within this minute be exempted from Call In for the reasons of urgency, as set out in paragraphs 46 and 47 of the submitted report;
- (c) That the necessary authority be provided to the Lead for Admissions and Family Information Service, to enable that officer to take any actions should there be a need to revise these arrangements after they have been determined, where this revision is necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement of the Admission Code, admissions law, a determination of the Schools Adjudicator or any misprint in the admission arrangements, under regulation 19 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012;
- (d) That the following be noted:-
  - (i) The Coordinated scheme for admissions arrangements for entry in September 2024 (as detailed in Appendix D to the submitted report) has been set;
  - (ii) That the officer responsible for this work is the Lead for Admissions and Family Information Service;
  - (iii) That the statutory date for implementation (i.e. determination of the policies) is no later than 28 February 2023, with the arrangements being published by 15 March 2023.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (b) above, and for the reasons as detailed above and as set out within sections 46 - 47 of the submitted report)

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:** FRIDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 15th March, 2023

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