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SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor A Marshall-Katung in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, B Flynn, M Foster,
J Garvani, S Hamilton, A Hussain, S Lay,
M Millar, M Shahzad, N Sharpe and
I Wilson

25 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection documents.

26 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items excluded from the public domain.

27 Late Items

There are no late items.

28 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

29 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Cllr Alison Lowe (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime) and Cllr Jonathan Pryor (Executive Member).

30 Minutes - 19 July 2023

The minutes of the 19 July 2023 were approved.

31 Future Talent Plan Update

The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) received an initial update on the development of the Future Talent Plan in September 2022. The 2023/24 Scrutiny Board requested an update on progress made over the last 12 months against actions set out in the plan.

The Chair noted that members of the 2022/23 Scrutiny Board discussed a proposed refresh of the Inclusive Growth Strategy in March 2023, which was subsequently agreed on 20 September 2023. Members were asked to note

the links between the Future Talent Plan and the refreshed Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Eve Roodhouse (Chief Officer, Culture and Economy)
- Martyn Long (Head of Service, Employment and Skills)

Eve Roodhouse and Martyn Long delivered a presentation that covered the following matters:

- The context of the Future Talent Plan
- An overview of the work of the Employment and Skills service
- Service performance for 2022/23
- Four careers events at the First Direct Arena
- Support to young people
- Support for employers
- Sector specific activities with a focus on digital, health and care, financial and professional services sectors
- Activities linked to the journey to net zero.
- Measuring success and next steps
- Data and reporting

The Scrutiny Board considered the acceleration of the adoption of digital technology and the need for digital skills across all sectors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Concern was raised about the increased disadvantage within the labour market for those without digital skills.

Members sought reassurance about the support provided to those who are digitally excluded from the labour market including those experiencing language barriers or without access to IT equipment. In response, officers outlined work with partners across the city that seeks to remove such barriers and to target support towards those farthest from the labour market.

Having considered the anticipated employment and skills demands that may arise from the transition to net zero, members sought clarity about the potential impact on that work of recent government announcements on net zero.

Officers highlighted the importance of providing certainty about the pipeline of net zero projects in the city so that partners including the College of Building can demonstrate future demand for employees with particular skills. The Council is working with the Leeds Anchor Network to provide more certainty about net zero projects that will be delivered in the city.

Further information was requested about the number of people who accessed jobs and support through careers events at the First Direct Arena. It was noted that around 200 people directly secured employment as a result of attending one of the careers events. However, members were asked to note that not all attendees were seeking immediate employment and were instead

looking for information that would inform future decisions about employment opportunities. Officers agreed to share the evaluation of the four events at the First Direct Arena with scrutiny board members.

An update was provided on the approach to supporting new team members, particularly young people in the early stages of their career, given increased hybrid working practices. Reference was made to the strength of the induction programmes within Council services and the success of the Kickstart programme.

In response to a question about the quality of new jobs coming into the city, members were advised that data is not currently available to provide a full picture of the nature of new jobs and the demography of the people securing them. Members were advised that such data could only be provided to the Scrutiny Board if partners were willing to share information about their employees.

Scrutiny Members welcomed the activities targeted towards young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including the SEND Next Choices event at Leeds First Direct Arena.

Reassurance was provided that the Future Talent Plan includes an ambition to support older people to return to the workforce – a partnership with a tech Bootcamp provider was cited as an example of this work.

The Scrutiny Board explored how the Council is working with partners including schools, voluntary, community and third sector groups to support more young people to access further education, training and employment opportunities. The Board was reassured that there is close working between the service and colleagues in Children's Services to target "hard to reach" groups. The diversity of the audience attending the most recent digital careers festival highlighted the progress of this work.

Officers were asked whether they have identified any data that indicates changing attitudes towards university considering increased costs. While officers had not identified any specific data to suggest a shift in attitudes towards university, it was noted that universities are now offering more technical and apprenticeship-style courses which is broadening their offer to students.

Other issues explored by the Board included:

- The retention of students in the city and the draw for employers of a skilled workforce.
- Emerging sectors and opportunities to re-skill employees to ensure they are positioned to access new jobs in sectors such as finance and digital, as well as the green economy.

- Sources of external funding for employment and skills programmes following the UK's exit from the EU.

Members welcomed the progress to date in delivering the Future Talent Plan.

RESOLVED:

- a) Members noted progress made in delivering the collective ambitions set out in the Future Talent Plan.
- b) The Scrutiny Board requested that a further update on progress against the actions of the Future Talent Plan should be provided in 2024/25.

32 Leeds Safe Roads Vision Zero 2040 Annual Progress Report

The Chair introduced this item, noting the Scrutiny Board has had a long-standing interest in the numbers of those killed and seriously injured on Leeds roads.

As a minimum the Scrutiny Board receives updates twice a year on KSI figures as part of its performance monitoring. However, following the 2021/22 Scrutiny Board inquiry into the prevention of deaths and serious injuries on Leeds' roads, members also committed to receive an annual update on progress towards Vision Zero.

For the benefit of any members of public viewing the webcast, the Chair noted the Vision Zero Strategy sets out the ambition that by 2040 no one is killed or seriously injured on the roads in Leeds. Members were asked to note that the report presented at the meeting also included specific updates on the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board in April 2022.

The Chair reminded members that the previous Scrutiny Inquiry highlighted the importance of language when discussing deaths and injuries on Leeds roads – for example, avoiding the term “accident” to describe road traffic collisions.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Helen Hayden – Executive Member
- Gary Bartlett – Chief Officer, Transportation & Highways
- Gillian Macleod – Transport Services Manager and Chair of the Leeds Safer Roads Partnership
- Nick Hunt – Traffic Engineering Manager and Vice Chair of the Safer Roads Partnership
- Rosie Revell – Team Leader – Safe and Sustainable Travel
- Paul Jeffrey – Head of Department, Prosecutions & Casualty Prevention unit, WY Police

- Supt Sareth Humpadge – Roads Policing Unit, West Yorkshire Police
- Cl James Farrah – Roads Policing Unit, West Yorkshire Police
- Ian Greenwood – Parent Campaigner & member of the Vision Zero Board
- Neil Hudson – Policy Manager Vision Zero, West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Cllr Hayden introduced the item, welcoming the comprehensive update report a year after the launch of Vision Zero. She noted that the current number of collisions in the city is high and reflects broader national trends post-pandemic. She reiterated the consequences for families of each collision and the Council's commitment to reduce the number of collisions on Leeds roads.

Members welcomed the work of Nick Hunt and colleagues in West Yorkshire Safety Camera Partnership in securing a change in regulations that has allowed average speed safety cameras to be installed at locations in Leeds for the first time. Members were advised that these will be the first average speed schemes on the urban road network in West Yorkshire following the successful use of this technology on the motorway network.

Clarity was sought about the way in which average speed cameras operate.

Gary Bartlett informed the Scrutiny Board that on average 46 people a month are killed or seriously injured on roads in Leeds, rising to an average of 117 people a month across West Yorkshire. It was noted that most young people killed or seriously injured on the roads are male. He outlined the way in which Vision Zero aims to deliver a partnership approach to improving road safety and influencing behaviour change amongst road users.

The Board noted that the Council may consider drug and drink testing for employees who drive around the city as this is already in place for contractors.

Neil Hudson was invited to update the Scrutiny Board on the timeframes for the development of the West Yorkshire Vision Zero strategy and the outcome of the recent public consultation on Vision Zero. Neil confirmed that the survey responses are currently being analysed. An event on 30 October will bring partners together to consider the response to the survey results.

Members noted the rich conversation at community committees about Vision Zero and thanked Rosie Revell for her work in facilitating this engagement.

The Board noted the "chilling effect" high numbers of 'near misses' can have on public confidence to walk and cycle on certain routes in the city. Concern was expressed about how data about 'near misses' could be captured to inform decision making about potential preventative interventions.

Citing the recent change to a 20mph default speed limit in Wales, members sought clarity about whether the available evidence confirms reduced limits do reduce average speeds.

In response, Gary Bartlett informed members that careless driving rather than speed is the predominant cause of collisions, referring to the “fatal five” behaviours that lead to most fatalities on the road.

Paul Jeffrey outlined the importance of road conditions in influencing driver speeds and highlighted the ways in which signage and traffic calming can create an environment that indicates a lower speed is appropriate for that area.

Board members discussed the purpose of local transport plans and the importance of taking personal responsibility for driving behaviours.

Nick Hunt reminded Board members that in 2018 Leeds City Council committed to make all residential streets 20mph with very few exceptions. This programme is due for completion at the end of 2023 with Harewood the last ward to be completed. He also updated members on the current review of residential roads that seeks to identify roads where changes have not been introduced – for example, on new developments in areas where 20mph speeds had already been implemented on other residential streets.

Gillian MacLeod provided an overview of the work of the Influencing Travel Behaviour Team including offers of road safety education, training and engagement. It was noted that work is underway to develop pedestrian training for adults with learning disabilities.

Members noted technological advances that can assist drivers in improving their own behaviour on the roads – such as adaptive cruise control and speed limiting new cars.

Concern was expressed about driving standards post-pandemic with the Board considering whether driver frustration increased as traffic returned to the roads once restrictions on movement were lifted.

Ian Greenwood emphasised the importance of data driven work to target interventions designed to prevent road deaths, noting there will be a variety of solutions to very different challenges. Influencing behaviour change remains the most difficult challenge in relation to road safety and continuing to highlight that challenge publicly is an important way in which to retain visibility of the issue.

It was agreed that treating road safety as a public health concern is the right approach for the city.

Ian reflected on the lived experience for families of losing a child to road death and the importance of listening to the victims of road death.

Other matters raised by members included:

- The outcome of a pilot on the A65 which allowed motorcyclists access to the bus lane.
- The new mobile SIDs available for community use.
- The importance of reducing speed on roads near to schools and parks.
- A pilot programme to investigate reducing the national speed limit to 50mph in some areas.
- The potential impact of highway code changes on local KSI data.
- Deployments as part of Operation SPARC.
- Operation SNAP and the enforcements that have resulted from engagement by the public.
- Police tactics for tackling anti-social behaviour by people using motor vehicles and electric bikes/scooters.
- Engagement with companies such as Deliveroo about riding behaviours in pedestrianised areas.

It was agreed that Cllr Marshall-Katung, Cllr Hayden and Ian Greenwood would jointly write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport regarding graduated driving licences, along with the Chair of the Transport Committee regarding a promised review of issues relating to young and novice drivers.

RESOLVED:

- a) Members noted the content and progress detailed in the report.
- b) The Scrutiny Board reiterated its support for the Vision Zero approach to road safety in Leeds.
- c) Members requested a further update in the next municipal year.
- d) The Scrutiny Chair, Executive Member and Ian Greenwood will write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport regarding graduated driving licences, along with the Chair of the Transport Committee regarding a promised 2022 review of matters relating to young and novice drivers.

33 Work Schedule

Members were asked to consider the following information:

- The draft 2023/24 work programme.
- The Executive Board minutes from the 26 July 2023.

The Principal Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that that Scrutiny Board had selected three members to represent the Board on a member working group linked to the Community Committee Review – Cllrs Buckley, Hamilton and Wilson.

On behalf of the Scrutiny Board the Chair thanked Carl Barber for his work over many years and wished him a very happy retirement.

34 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place on **1 November 2023** at **10.30am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board members at **10.15am**.

Members were reminded that a call-in meeting would also be taking place at **1.30pm** on **27 September 2023**.