

West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS) - Update

Date: 11 December 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

West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS) provide a number of services, some of which are statutory, on behalf of the five West Yorkshire local authorities Leeds, Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Wakefield.

Statutory services included in their activity are Archaeological Advisory Services, Archives, Ecology Services and Trading Standards along with other services such as Archaeological Services, Asbestos and Calibration Services which provide a commercial resource.

Given that WYJS provide a range of services on behalf of Leeds City Council the Strategy and Resources Board were approached to facilitate an update report to scrutiny on WYJS service provision in Leeds and as a key partner organisation seek to enhance existing working relationships between WYJS and the Council.

A similar process is being replicated across the other West Yorkshire authorities with Wakefield and Kirklees already having considered a similar update item through their respective scrutiny functions.

Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is a briefing note provided by WYJS which provides details on their activity both in Leeds and generally across the region.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) note the content of the report and appendix and consider any future scrutiny actions that could arise from this item.
- b) Note the breadth of work undertaken by WYJS in Leeds and raise any questions related to these services in the city.

What is this report about?

- 1 This item provides an update on the services provided by West Yorkshire Joint Services in Leeds and includes examples of recent activity within the district.
- 2 Due to the variety of services provided by WYJS they impact on the remits of more than just the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board. The remit of the Environment, Housing and Communities Board is impacted by West Yorkshire Trading Standards, Financial Investigation and Analytical Services which includes asbestos related service provision. In addition, the remit of the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board covers Ecology Services and Archaeology Advisory Services which are largely related to that Board's planning remit. As a result, the chairs of those two scrutiny boards have been invited to attend today's meeting.
- 3 Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board remit covers Archive Services from a cultural perspective, Business Hive from a business administration and meetings perspective and Calibration Services which is covered by Residual Responsibility. The Strategy and Resources Board has 'residual responsibility' which is responsibility for functions that are not otherwise allocated to a specific Scrutiny Board.
- 4 In addition, the Leeds appointed members of the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee which comprises of representation from all five West Yorkshire authorities have also been invited to attend to contribute to discussion.
- 5 Attached at Appendix 1 is a detailed briefing note providing information on the services provided by WYJS and case studies of recent activity in Leeds.
- 6 The West Yorkshire Joint Services Vision is to support social and economic prosperity across West Yorkshire and operate as a modern and forward-thinking service. Its mission is to:
 - Encourage a growing economy
 - Support safer, stronger and healthier communities
 - Preserve the past, serve the present and protect the future
 - Promote and conserve the natural and historic environment
- 7 In addition, WYJS focuses on four main interconnected priorities:
 - Business and the economy
 - Environment and heritage
 - Safer, stronger and healthier communities
 - Operating as a modern and forward-thinking service
- 8 This item is brought to the Board to provide an update on the activity of WYJS in Leeds and to raise awareness of the important services that are provided by them.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 9 It is hoped that this item will enhance existing relationships between Leeds City Council and WYJS, raise awareness of the services they provide and highlight the positive work done in Leeds in recent months such as the West Yorkshire Archaeological Services excavation work near Garforth.

10 Should members identify any areas for further work this can be explored through this item as an initial update from WYJS.

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 continue to promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

12 WYJS take account of the strategic priorities of the five constituent West Yorkshire authorities when designing and delivering services and this includes Leeds City Council's Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

13 Following agreement at the WYJS Committee meeting held in March 2023 to liaise with the five constituent authorities in West Yorkshire, contact has been made with the five authorities to provide an update report to their respective scrutiny functions. The Chair of this Board, the Director of Strategy and Resources and the Chief Officer for Human Resources (who is the Council's lead officer on WYJS) have been consulted in advance of this item.

What are the resource implications?

14 There are no specific resource implications associated with this report.

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

15 This report has no specific risk management implications.

What are the legal implications?

16 This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: WYJS Briefing Note providing an update on their aims and objectives and recent activity in Leeds.

Background papers

- None