

Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 update

Date: 22 July 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board has had significant interest in organisational strategies and employee matters over the past 18 months having considered items on the 2023/24 Being Our Best Organisational Plan, People Strategy, outcome of the 2023 staff survey, the LGA Peer Review and the approach to workforce equality, diversity and inclusion.

This update of the Being Our Best Organisational Plan therefore seeks to build on that past consideration and offer the scrutiny board further opportunity to comment on the Council's priorities as an organisation. Consideration of these issues is in line with the Board's remit which features the following functions: the Council's corporate planning and policy development services, including co-ordination of the Best City Ambition and setting, supporting and monitoring the council's policies and procedures for performance, organisational planning and service improvement.

The updated Being Our Best - our organisation plan 2024/25 sets out the plan to be an efficient, enterprising, healthy and inclusive organisation and provides an organisational response to the [Best City Ambition](#), which was updated in [February 2024](#).

This plan maintains the focus on values, manager expectations and main areas for organisational change. It has also been enhanced to meet the UK Government's Productivity Plan requirements, which ask councils to outline the transformation of the design and delivery of services to make better use of resources and how councils are taking advantage of technology and data to improve plans to balance council budgets.

Appendix 1 to this report provides the Executive Board report introducing the updated Plan and Appendix 2 provides the Being our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 update both are due to be considered at Executive Board on 24 July 2024. Due to publication deadlines, and the fact that Executive Board takes place two days after the meeting of this board, these appendices will be circulated as a supplementary items once they are published.

Recommendations

- a) Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) is asked to comment on the updated Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25, that also responds to the UK Government Productivity Plan requirements.
- b) Note that the Being Our Best Organisation Plan will be considered by Executive Board on 24 July 2024.
- c) Note that graphic design work will be developed prior to publication of the updated Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 in August 2024, which may include some amendments to wording.

What is this report about?

1. [Being Our Best – our organisation plan for 2023 onwards](#), approved by Executive Board in [June 2023](#), set out the vision for Leeds City Council to be the best Council in the best City and our role as a key partner in the Best City Ambition. In addition, the plan responded to recommendations from the [Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge in 2022](#) which was considered by the Board in both the 2022/23 and 2023/24 municipal years.
2. The first iteration of the Being Our Best Plan set out values and behaviours, outlined change priorities to help modernise the authority and manager expectations, recognising the crucial role they play in valuing staff and improving outcomes, with a commitment to undertake a review of the plan, with feedback from managers, services and scrutiny important to help shape implementation and future refinement.
3. An important new focus in the plan is the response to the Government requirement for local authorities to produce Productivity Plans. As part of the Local Government Settlement 2024/25, the Government introduced a requirement for all local authorities to produce productivity plans. Further guidance received in April 2024 asked that the productivity plans were published on local authority websites by 19th July 2024. Given the planned 2024 update of Being Our Best, rather than producing a separate Productivity Plan, Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 has been enhanced to respond to the Productivity Plan requirements.
4. Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 is focussed on three interlinked themes to enable everyone to understand the role and priorities of the council:
 - **A growing, inclusive city** - describing Local Government's unique and engaging public service leadership role so that the council can make the greatest contribution to our [Best City Ambition](#).
 - **High-quality public services** – describing the continuous improvement we strive to make in the services we deliver or commission, to improve outcomes, customer satisfaction and value-for-money.
 - **Well-run organisation** – describing the importance of good governance in line with our values and behaviours to help us make the most of all the resources and assets we have at our disposal, especially our staff.
5. In each section there is a selection of activities undertaken to deliver improvements, as well as examples of priorities going forward focused mainly on the major things that will affect most or all of the organisation, rather than every change and transformation project that is being delivered.

6. As noted above the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board has had a long standing interest in organisational planning and linked issues associated with the workforce. Therefore, the Board is asked to comment on the Being Our Best Plan, which is presented at Appendix 2.

What impact will this proposal have?

7. Consideration of this item at Scrutiny offers an opportunity for Board members to comment and influence the development of the Being Our Best Organisational Plan both in the shorter term, through this year's version, and potentially in advance of the planned further update in Spring 2025.
8. The role of scrutiny as a critical friend offers an opportunity for wider input into the Council's organisational priorities and an opportunity to comment on the approach being taken to Productivity Plans, in response to the Government requirement.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

9. Being Our Best outlines the Council's strategic response to the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

10. Being Our Best - our organisation plan 2024/25 was developed based on feedback from across the organisation since the first plan was agreed in June 2023 and has been developed through consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team, Chief Officers and the relevant Executive Board member.

What are the resource implications?

11. There are no specific resource implications at this stage. Any subsequent implications will be picked up as part of the regular budget planning, monitoring, and reporting cycle.

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

12. There are no risks directly associated with this report, although having a refreshed and updated organisational plan could result in better use of resources and also meets the Government requirement for Productivity Plans. The key risks that could impact upon delivery of the Best City Ambition and Being Our Best - our organisation plan, and details on how they are managed, are included in the Corporate Risk Management Annual Report, which is also due to be considered at Executive Board on 24 July.

What are the legal implications?

13. There are no specific legal implications arising from the Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25. Any that arise will be picked up as part of progressing the recommendations through the Council's regular governance routes.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

14. This is an update report to scrutiny as such no other options were considered.

How will success be measured?

15. This is an update report to scrutiny as such no specific measures apply. However, further updates to scrutiny, potentially linked to the planned update in Spring 2025, offer an opportunity to monitor and check and challenge progress on the Being Our Best Plan.

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

16. The Director of Strategy and Resources will be responsible for the implementation of this updated organisation plan and the subsequent review, with an updated organisation plan being reported to Executive Board in Spring 2025.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 Executive Board report. (To be published as supplementary item)
- Appendix 2: Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25. (To be published as supplementary item)

Background papers

- None