SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

Councillors P Alderson, N Buckley,
M Foster, J Garvani, S Hamilton,
A Hussain, W Kidger, S Lay, J Lennox,
M Shahzad, N Sharpe and I Wilson

77 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

78 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information on the Agenda.

79 Late Items

There were no late items.

80 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations.

81 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor H Hayden (Agenda Item 8, Flood Risk Management)

82 Minutes - 1 March 2023

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

83 100% Digital Leeds

The report of the Chief Digital and Information Officer provided an update on the 100% Digital Leeds digital inclusion programme since the last update to the Board in April 2022.

The report included examples of work from across the 100% Digital Leeds Programme and illustrated the team's work at a city, regional and national level.

The impact of the 100% Digital Leeds programme was discussed throughout the report and impact was further evidenced by the testimonials from partners and stakeholders that featured throughout.

The report also looked ahead to some of the key initiatives and developments that the 100% Digital Leeds team will prioritise over the coming year.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Jason Tutin, Digital Inclusion Manager
- Amy Hearn, Senior Digital Inclusion Officer

The Board received a presentation. Issues highlighted included the following:

- Digital Inclusion enabled people to be socially included and make informed choices.
- Support for provision of equipment and the understanding and confidence to use online facilities.
- Support for organisations to enable people to become digitally included.
- Community based approach – putting the right support in place to meet specific needs.
- Support available for Digital Inclusion – asset based community development and involvement of external partners.
- Provision of support in the community – support with skills, provision of free sim cards and lending of equipment'
- Further issues highlighted from the report included the following:
  o The Digital Inclusion Team was now a core part of the Integrated Digital Service.
  o The role of the team had expanded beyond community work to support the workforce including health care.
  o The role of Digital Inclusion within other Council strategies.
  o Work with older people, people with disabilities and care homes.

In response to comments and questions from the Board, discussion included the following:

- Impacts due to the cost of living crisis – there had been a noticeable drop particularly in more deprived areas where it may be a choice between paying for wi-fi connectivity or for food and other household bills. Partnership work was ongoing regarding the provision of social tariffs.
- The possibility of exploring funding opportunities from Community Committees and Housing Advisory Panels.
- How Digital Inclusion can tackle isolation.
- Work with older people to tackle issues surrounding people's safety and security concerns of using online facilities. Funding had been made available for this.

- The Digital Inclusion Team was willing to carry out awareness training with any organisation that could benefit.
- The possibility of working with the Police and other public services.
- Work with Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust – there was no funding from LTHT for this but the work would meet shared priorities. There was some funding from the NHS for other support work.
- Work to address the loss of high street services. There had been work with banks and the third sector to provide digital and financial inclusion support. There would be future funding available for financial inclusion work.
- Work with Neighbourhood Networks to enable people to access digital services for healthcare.
- The use of digital services and apps for public transport. There was partnership work ongoing with WYCA and transport providers both at a local and regional level.
- There was no formal mapping process for the Digital Inclusion work but there was contact with local networks and contacts to get an understanding of local needs and organisations.
- Members were asked to give details of any organisations that would benefit from Digital Inclusion work.
- Digital Health Hubs work with Local Care Partnerships.
- It was requested that Elected Members be given details of all organisations involved in the digital inclusion programme and that there was pro-active exploration of council services for funding.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the approval of the 100% Digital Leeds community-based approach to increasing digital inclusion across the city be reaffirmed.
(2) That the achievements of the 100% Digital Leeds programme over the last year be noted and the plans for the continued development of the programme under the leadership of the 100% Digital Leeds team in IDS be endorsed.
(3) That the oversight of the 100% Digital Leeds programme be continued by providing update reports to the Board.

84 Flood Risk Management

The report of the Executive Manager, Flood Risk and Climate Resilience provided the Board with an opportunity to scrutinise the local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The report provided detail on the implementation of the Strategy over the past 12 months and provided a summary of the measures that are set out for the years ahead.

Jonathon Moxon, Executive Manger was in attendance to present the report.

The Board received a presentation. Issues highlighted included the following:

- The impact of climate change and the increased frequency and severity of flooding events.
- Incidents reported to the Flood Risk Management team. Geographical information was displayed.
- As a statutory consultee, responses were made to all planning applications.
- The Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) – projects implemented and in progress.
- The use of natural flood management measures through the landscape rather than engineered measures. Leeds had the biggest natural flood management scheme in the country.
- Successes of completed Flood Alleviation Schemes.
- Examples of the flood resilience schemes undertaken.
- Funding for the FAS and inflationary pressures.
- Phased approach to the Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- Considering carbon emissions when delivering the infrastructure – targets had been set that had also set a standard nationally. Less carbon was used in delivering flood alleviation than in flood recovery.

In response to questions and comments from the Board, discussion included the following:

- Maintenance of flood schemes and how to fund maintenance. Responsibilities for maintenance also fell with the Environment Agency and landowners.
- There had been some initial consultation regarding the Meanwood FAS and an online newsletter had been produced. There were various means of consultation and this applied to all schemes. An update was due on the Meanwood Scheme and all affected residents and Elected Members would be informed.
- There had been a pilot scheme with Yorkshire Water to install sustainable urban drainage. There were proposed changes to legislation in 2024 which would allow further work on this.
- Tree planting had mainly been whip planting due to the volume required. Mature trees would be required by 2039. There would be long term management plans for trees.
- There were Key Performance Indicators which related to the number of homes and businesses that were now better protected from flooding.
- Funding challenges due to unprecedented levels of inflation. There had been some additional funding from central government and there were ongoing discussions with the Environment Agency with regards to rising costs.
- The work of the Flood Management Team in new developments had a big impact on flood prevention.
- There were challenges facing Yorkshire Water. Surface water running into sewage systems was responsible for untreated sewage being released into rivers. The Council was working with Yorkshire Water with the aim of reducing the amount of water going into the sewage

system. It was noted this may be a matter for more detailed consideration by the successor scrutiny board.

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted.

85   End of Year Statement

The report of the Head of Democratic Service presented the Board's End of Year Statement. This provided details of the work programme for the past year and a statement from the Chair reflecting on key priorities for the Board. The 2022/23 Summary for the Board was appended to the report.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the report be noted.
(2) That the End of Year Statement be approved for publication on the Council's Website.

86   Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided a draft work schedule for the successor Board.

The draft work schedule for 2023/24 was appended to the report along with recent Executive Board minutes.

Provisional dates for 2023/34 were also detailed in the report.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the draft dates for 2023/24 be noted.
(2) That the draft work schedule for 2023/24 municipal year is taken forward for consideration by the successor Board.

87   Date and Time of Next Meeting

The first scheduled meeting of the successor Scrutiny Board is scheduled to take place at on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 at 10.30 a.m. A pre-meeting has been provisionally arranged for 10.00 a.m.

88   Closing Remarks

This was Councillor Truswell's final meeting as Chair of the Board before standing down from the Council in May. Members thanked Councillor Truswell and wished him all the best for the future.