

Being our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 update

Date: 24th July 2024

Report of: Director of Strategy and Resources

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

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

This plan maintains the focus on our 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.

We have focused this plan 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.

Implementation of this plan will be in line with the officer governance arrangements and the constitution, alongside the various Best Council Team meetings where representatives from all directorates work together on solutions that work for the whole organisation. Monitoring of this plan will be in line with the council's performance framework, including the Annual Corporate Performance report and financial monitoring reports that will cover aspects of the Productivity Plan requirements, as well as the full range of annual reports that feature at Executive Board. The Annual Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 included on this agenda provides progress against our previous Being Our Best plan through the reporting against a range of key organisation measures.

Recommendations

- a) Executive Board is asked to approve the updated Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25, that also responds to the UK Government Productivity Plan requirements.
- b) Note that this report and the Being Our Best publication was considered by Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board at their July 2024 meeting.
- c) Note that graphic design work will be developed prior to publication of the updated Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 around 1st September 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](#).
2. Our first Being Our Best Plan set out our values and behaviours, outlined our change priorities to help modernise and our manager expectations, recognising their crucial role 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. The Annual Performance Report, also being considered on this Executive Board agenda, contains performance information relating to last year's plan.
3. This report provides Executive Board with our updated Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 that sets out our plan to be an efficient, enterprising, healthy and inclusive organisation and provides our organisational response to the Best City Ambition. This plan maintains the focus on our values, manager expectations and main areas for organisational change. A copy of Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.
4. 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.
5. We have focused this updated plan 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.
6. In each section there is an overview of what we mean and a selection of activities we have been undertaking to deliver improvements, as well as examples of our 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. Greater detail describing these activities can be found in relevant Executive Board reports, including the Annual Corporate Performance Report and thematic reports relating to council strategies, for example

Safeguarding; Cost-of-Living; Equality Diversity and Inclusion; Child Poverty; Transport; and Housing.

7. Recognising that this is a transitional year for the council with changing national politics, new government and fiscal context alongside changes at senior levels within the organisation, an annual review of Being Our Best will be undertaken with the updated organisation plan reported to Executive Board in Spring 2025.

What impact will this proposal have?

8. Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25 recognises the council’s role leading the [Best City Ambition](#) and [Team Leeds](#) by convening and enabling our partners and communities. Our services touch everyone who lives here, with our biggest impact often on those struggling the most.
9. The council continues to face significant financial challenges due to prolonged austerity, a changing post-pandemic operating context and the cost-of-living crisis. This is creating more – and indeed more complex - demands on services; increased cost pressures; reduced income from our commercial services; and is placing an additional strain on our workforce.
10. This organisation plan outlines our ongoing work to reset our role and reshape our services to fit the financial envelope available, with a continued focus on high-quality, value-for-money services that make a difference. We do this by working in a Team Leeds way with our partners and communities and crucially by enabling our staff to be the best they can be in line with the values and able to see how they play their part in the bigger picture.
11. Any implications to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration will be considered within the individual change priorities as they are developed and moved forward.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

12. Being Our Best outlines the council’s organisation strategic response to the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

13. 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.
14. This report was considered by Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board in July 2024 to inform the work programme of the Board.

What are the resource implications?

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

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

16. There are no risks directly associated with this report, although not having an organisational plan could result in less good use of resources and not meeting Government requirements 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, included on this agenda.

What are the legal implications?

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

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

18. The Best City Ambition is the city's overarching vision to tackle inequality and improve lives for a better future in Leeds. Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25, whilst not part of the Budget and Policy Framework, sets out the organisational strategic direction and provides our organisation response to the Best City Ambition and the context for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

How will success be measured?

19. Implementation and monitoring of this plan will be in line with the council's performance framework, with regular reporting to Corporate Leadership Team, Directorate Leadership Teams, Scrutiny Boards and Executive Board, including the Annual Corporate Performance report and financial monitoring reports that will cover aspects of the Productivity Plan requirements, as well as the full range of annual reports that are presented to Executive Board.
20. The Annual Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 included on this agenda provides an overall update on the council's performance and provides progress against our previous Being Our Best plan through reporting against a range of key organisation measures. The report highlights performance against the range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) monitored, all of which contribute to ensuring the council continues to work effectively in support of the Best City Ambition.

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

21. 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 Summer 2025.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Being Our Best – our organisation plan 2024/25

Background papers

- None