

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, L Cunningham,
N Dawson, K Dye, J Goddard, K Maqsood,
M Shahzad, J Taylor and P Wadsworth

55 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

56 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

57 Late Items

There were no late items.

58 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

59 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor A Hussein.

60 Minutes - 18 November 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

61 Financial Health Monitoring

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided Members with information regarding the projected 2020/21 financial health position of those service areas that fall within the Board's remit at Month 7 (October). A copy of the Executive Board Report – Financial Health Monitoring 2020/21 – Month 7 was appended.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member
- Martin Farrington – Director, City Development
- Jill Stuart – Head of Finance

- Phil Evans – Chief Officer, Operations

The Board was informed that Month 7 had broadly shown a continuation of the previously reported projections for City Development with a predicted overspend of approximately £20 million. It was reported that there had been a slight improvement and the Board was informed of areas where there had been a reduction in income across the directorate.

In response to questions, the following was discussed:

- Although there was a delay in reporting, officer processes picked up issues before the financial health reports were produced.
- There would be some compensation received from the Government Income Compensation scheme and this would be reported in the future.
- Figures relating to costs of the Early Leavers Initiative were requested.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

62 Initial Budget Proposals 2021/22

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provide the Board with the Executive Board's initial budget proposals for 2021/22 for consideration, review and to comment on matters and proposals relating to service areas that fell within the Board's remit. A copy of the Executive Board report – Proposed Budget for 2021/22 and Provisional Budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24 were appended to the agenda.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member
- Martin Farrington – Director, City Development
- Jill Stuart – Head of Finance
- Phil Evans – Chief Officer, Operations

The Board had previously received briefings on the savings that were to be proposed across the City Development Directorate. Service Review proposals were currently being considered and would be reported to Executive Board in February.

In response to questions, the following was discussed:

- Centralisation of Property Management – this would involve City Development and Resources & Housing and it was expected that any proposed changes would deliver savings.
- It was proposed that a working group meeting be arranged when further details were known.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

63 Best Council Plan Performance

The report of the Director of City Development, Director of Children & Families and Chief Executive provided the Board with a summary of performance at Quarter 2, 2020/21 against the Best Council Plan 2020-25. Performance against the key performance indicators relevant to the Board was included in the report as well as an update on City Region functions.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Martin Farrington – Director, City Development
- Eve Roodhouse – Chief Officer, Culture & Economy
- Tim Rollett – Intelligence & Policy Manager
- Martyn Long – Head of Employment and Skills
- Gary Bartlett – Chief Officer, Transportation & Highways
- Lynsey McGarvey – Principal Transport Planner
- Chris Shillito – Performance & Improvement Officer

The following was highlighted:

- Supporting people to improve skills – the current target was on track to be met. There had been an impact on the Adult Learning Programme due to the pandemic with a switch to online learning.
- Supporting people into work – there had been a lower number of vacancies due to the pandemic and more challenges due to the nature of remote working.
- NEETs – Figures were currently at 7.2% which was a reduction on the previous year.
- There had been a significant on the number of KSIs due to the pandemic and there was a 34.2% reduction on the previous year.
- There was a 1.35% increase in bus passenger usage in 2019 but this was expected to fall dramatically when figures were available for 2020.
- Flood risk – over 3,200 residential and 500 commercial properties had been taken out of flood risk areas following completion of flood alleviation work.

In response to questions, the following was discussed:

- Work to track NEETs that were not known. It was considered that figures relating to this would improve and methods for tracking NEETs was discussed.
- KSIs – although there had been a decrease in these figures there had been an increase in traffic speeding. Reference was made to Vision Zero and a new approach to road safety which hoped to bring KSI figures down to zero by 2040.
- It was noted that the Board had requested that KSI figures and wider concerns regarding Road Safety be scheduled for further scrutiny by the Board. In order to enable road safety campaigners to participate in that debate at a physical or hybrid meeting it was agreed this should be deferred to the next municipal year.

- KSI information on a ward basis was requested for the current year.
- The pilot scheme to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes. It was recommended that this be trialled on the A65 and it was hoped to commence by the end of the financial year.
- There were no plans to allow the use of electric vehicles on bus lanes as there was a priority need for public transport. In some instances taxis and bicycles were allowed.
- Although the Vision Zero approach to road safety would be different there would still be the requirement for enforcement measures. It was agreed that the Board would receive an update on Vision Zero at a future meeting.
- Review of the Camera Safety Partnership – at a local level the position remained unchanged but there was still work ongoing at a national level and an update could be provided to the Board.
- There would be clear signage and advertising of the changes for the motorcycle trial on the A65 bus lanes.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Best Council Plan Quarter 2 2020/21 performance information be noted.
- (2) That the narrative update on City Region functions be noted.
- (3) That the Best Council Plan 2019/20 performance information be noted.

64 Referral To Scrutiny

The report of the Head of Democratic Services presented details of a referral that fell within the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis
- Councillor Debra Coupar
- Councillor Sam Firth
- Martin Farrington, Director – City Development
- Mark Mills – Head of Asset Management

The referral had been made at the request of Councillor Sam Firth following the decision made at Executive Board regarding the proposed sale at auction of East Lodge, Temple Newsam Estate as part of the Accelerated Capital Receipts and Estate Rationalisation. There was concern that the correct information had not been provided and that sufficient consultation had not been carried out prior to this decision. The Board was asked to consider scrutinising the consultation process. It was reported that the Friends of Temple Newsam had not been consulted regarding the sale until after the Executive Board decision.

Ward Councillors had been in constant engagement with the local community regarding the proposed disposal of East Lodge and there had been many conversations with the Friends of Temple Newsam and there were still ongoing conversations.

The Accelerated Capital Receipt programme budget had been used to help with balancing the Council's budget and to protect front line services. The proposal referred to in the referral was to sell a leasehold to the building, which would enable the Council to retain ownership of the building and ensure that it would be preserved and used appropriately. This would bring in a capital receipt for the building while reducing running costs.

Members were informed that the East and West Lodge building has been part of the Council's social housing stock since the 1960s. East Lodge had become vacant in 2017 when it was removed from the social housing programme due to the costs to achieve decency standards. It had been proposed that East Lodge be included in the Capital Receipts Programme and the disposal date had been brought forward due to the pandemic. As with any property that would be included in the Capital Receipts programme there had been consultation with Ward Councillors.

In response to questions and comments from Members, the following was discussed:

- The leaseholder arrangements that would apply to the sale. The Council would retain rights to request that any leaseholder forfeit the lease should terms of the lease not be followed. There would be clauses within the leases to ensure this protection.
- The normal amount of consultation had been carried out with Ward Councillors.
- The lease would limit the use of the building for residential use only.
- Heritage aspects would be protected as the building was Grade II listed and any proposed alterations would have to go through the normal conservation process. Any leaseholder would be made aware that they could only work within the terms of the lease and the listing of the building.
- Advice was being sought as to whether a clause could be included into the lease that ensured that the building remain occupied.
- Feedback from Ward Councillors had included their discussions with Friends of Temple Newsam and others.
- Estimated costs to bring the property back into use were between £50k and £70k. It was felt that the cost of the investment for the use of social housing would be excessive.
- If the property was part of the social housing programme it could be subject to the right to buy scheme.

In summary, Councillor Firth informed the Board that there had been a 1,250 signature petition against the disposal of East Lodge and over 50 people had written to the Leader of the Council to delay any decision. It was felt that

there should be a scrutiny inquiry into the decision and the Friends of Temple Newsam could be invited to contribute.

A proposal was made that a more detailed report should be brought with further contributors and details regarding any lease and the future of the building. A further proposal was made that no further action be taken.

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED – That no further action be taken.

65 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services asked Members to consider the Board's Work Schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

The work schedule was appended to the report along with recent minutes from meetings of the Executive Board.

RESOLVED – That the report and Work Schedule be noted.

66 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 17 February 2021 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.45 a.m.)