

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 13TH JULY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

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

14 **APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no appeals against refusals of inspection of documents.

15 **Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no items excluded from the public domain.

16 **Late Items**

There were no late items.

17 **Declarations of Interests**

There are no declarations of interest.

18 **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

The following apologies were noted:

- Cllr Coupar, Executive Member (item 8)
- Eve Roodhouse, Chief Officer Culture & Economy (item 7)

19 **Minutes - 15 June 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2022 were approved.

The Chair provided an update in relation to minute 9, noting that a remote working group would be arranged to enable the Scrutiny Board to consider the draft Delivery Partnership Plan ahead of the Executive Board meeting on 21 September. Potential dates will be circulated via the Principal Scrutiny Advisor.

20 **Green Economy Policy Work Update**

The following individuals were in attendance for this item:

Cllr Helen Hayden	- Executive Member
Cllr Jonathan Pryor	- Executive Member
Fiona Bolam	- Head of Economic Policy

Fiona Bolam introduced the item, highlighting the importance of considering the transition to carbon neutrality in the context of the Council's ambition to deliver inclusive growth.

Fiona referenced the appendix to the report, which sets out initial analysis from the Centre for Progressive Policy about the risks and opportunities for Leeds of the transition to net zero. The Council will be commissioning a partner to carry out more detailed sector-based analysis. This will include exploring the support businesses need to transition to net zero, and the impact on the current and future workforce.

The Scrutiny Board was informed that this project aligns with regional work on the green economy, which is being led by WYCA and the final recommendations that emerge from the work will inform the refresh of the Inclusive Growth Strategy next year.

Fiona provided an overview of existing work to increase resilience to climate change and provided information about two regional schemes – Resource Efficient Business (REBiz) and Travel Plan Network. She also noted the success of Leeds City Council's Electric Vehicle Trials with local businesses.

The Board discussed some of the risks identified in the initial analysis from the Centre for Progressive Policy. This included levels of employment in high emitting industries and the concentration of these industries in areas with higher deprivation. Members raised concern about the potential for inequalities to increase if employees in these industries do not have the skills to access emerging jobs in the green economy.

Other matters discussed by the Scrutiny Board included:

- **Transport emissions:** The high level of road transport emissions in Leeds.
- **Political uncertainty:** Uncertainty about policy and funding commitments created by the current political context. It was noted that leading businesses have written to Conservative leadership candidates to urge them to commit to net zero targets.
- **The role of anchor institutions:** Cllr Buckley raised concern about the impact on climate resilience of areas of woodland being sold by Yorkshire Water. Cllr Hayden noted the role of Yorkshire Water as a flood risk management partner and agreed to provide further information for Cllr Buckley about the sales.
- **Electric Vehicle Trials:** the Board discussed learning opportunities including infrastructure requirements in areas of dense housing and the potential for EV chargers to be attached to lamp-posts in future.

The Board sought clarity about the reasons why some businesses decided not to buy or lease a vehicle after the trial.

- **Regional partners:** Reassurance was given that there is strong partnership working between both the Council and WYCA, and the results of the Leeds based exercise will be fed back to regional partners.
- **New Economic Opportunities:** The Scrutiny Board highlighted the implications for skills training/interventions as new sectors emerge and the importance of supporting emerging sectors in order to attract inward investment. The Chair requested more information about modelling from the Local Government Association that shows that Leeds will generate the highest estimated number of jobs in the low-carbon and renewable energy sector of all the English Core Cities.
- **Hydrogen compatible infrastructure:** Further information was requested about local and regional work to develop hydrogen compatible infrastructure.
- **Benchmarking & Sharing of Best Practice:** It was noted that Leeds is often at the forefront of rolling out new technology – e.g. the electric fleet was cited as an example. However, the organisation seeks to look to other cities and European partners to share best practice.
- **Timescales for the project:** The Board requested an update on the findings of the extended analysis once the work has been completed.

RESOLVED::

It was resolved that:

- That report be noted.
- Further information to be provided by the Head of Economic Policy about the basis for the Local Government Association's modelling of the number of jobs that may be generated in the low-carbon and renewable energy sector.
- To explore options, via the Principal Scrutiny Advisor, for more information to come to the Scrutiny Board about the development of hydrogen-related infrastructure in the city and wider region.
- A further update to be provided to the Board once final recommendations have been received from the Council's commissioned partner towards the end of 2022/early 2023.

21 Digital Transformation Update

The following individuals attended for this item:

- Cllr Helen Hayden (Executive Member)
- Stephen Blackburn (Innovation Lead)

The Chair introduced the item, noting that in previous years the Scrutiny Board has received an annual update about 'Smart Cities.' Those reports provided updates on technology-led projects and connectivity roll out (e.g. full fibre) and have previously been received alongside a report from the 100% Digital team. However, the Board has received separate reports due to ongoing changes in IDS.

Stephen Blackburn set out recent changes to the way in which IDS operates and confirmed that in line with recent restructuring the update to the Board will in future focus on broader digital updates, including strategy and innovation.

Stephen outlined the key elements of the report, introducing the new digital strategy which aims to transform how services are delivered and consumed. He also highlighted three digital priorities that have been identified as requiring immediate attention - Core Business Transformation, System Flow and Security Operations Centre.

Stephen underlined the links to the Best City Ambition, including the life stage approach within the Digital Strategy, and the aspiration that the service adopts a 'city' approach to digital rather than just an internally focused approach.

Members considered the detail of the new digital strategy and sought clarification about the timeline for implementation. The Board discussed progress with the Shared Care Record and requested clarification about which providers would be able to access patient health records.

It was noted that Digital Inclusion remains a significant area of focus and the involvement of neighbourhood networks was discussed. The Chair asked the Principal Scrutiny Advisor to circulate the most recent update from the 100% Digital team for the benefit of new board members.

Members considered the extent of the Council's influence over providers of broadband infrastructure. It was noted that the Council-led Full Fibre programme supports the delivery of this infrastructure by enabling the connection of around 1,400 council buildings, schools and healthcare buildings and will provide the backbone to deliver superfast broadband to around 90% of homes and businesses across the city.

Cllr Hayden committed to updating the Board on the outcome of a meeting with digital providers and WYCA about mapping the coverage of full fibre across the region.

The Board sought reassurance about the metrics that will be used to evaluate the successful delivery of the Council's digital ambitions. Stephen Blackburn committed to update members at a future.

Members considered how the Council currently manages, analyses and interprets data it collects. It was agreed that more efficient data analysis could assist with the planning and delivery of public services.

Clarification was sought about the proposal to establish a Digital Academy which will focus on improving the digital skills of council staff, and members discussed the importance of ensuring that young people understand the opportunities the digital sector can offer them.

Stephen confirmed that the Council would be pursuing a 'digital first' but not a digital only approach to transformation and traditional methods of interaction with the Council will remain accessible to citizens.

RESOLVED:

The Scrutiny Board resolved that –

- The report be noted.
- The Scrutiny Board supports the approach being outlined in the digital strategy.
- The Scrutiny Board continues to provide oversight through an annual update in relation to digital infrastructure.
- The PSA circulates the most recent update from the 100% Digital Team
- Cllr Hayden will update members on discussions with broadband providers and WYCA on mapping regional coverage.

22 Inquiry Report: Prevention of Deaths & Serious Injuries on Leeds Roads

The following individuals attended for this item:

- Cllr Helen Hayden (Executive Member)
- Gary Bartlett (Chief Officer, Transportation & Highways)

The Chair introduced the item. He reminded colleagues that a draft version of the inquiry report was provided to Executive Board in February 2022 to support the proposal to begin consulting on adopting a Vision Zero approach to road deaths in Leeds. He reiterated that the inquiry had concluded that road safety should be approached as a public health issue and the adoption of a Vision Zero approach should be warmly welcomed.

The predecessor Board had asked for further discussion of 3 issues (school crossing patrols, pedestrian crossing criteria and school streets), which were considered at a meeting in April 2022. Additional recommendations relating to these items were included in the final report being considered by the Board at this meeting.

Gary Bartlett welcomed the support from members for the draft Vision Zero strategy. He noted the scale of the ambition and the significant change from a traditional approach to road safety.

Gary noted that progress has already been made since some of the recommendations were drafted, including in relation to speed camera criteria. He reiterated that in Leeds partners want to be able more use of average speed camera in locations where it is judged they could have significant impact on driver behaviours.

Gary went on to underline the scale of the challenge and the need for all stakeholders, including the public, to work collectively to make any road deaths unacceptable.

Cllr Hayden urged colleagues to take part and share a Council consultation about establishing a vehicular nuisance public protection order across Leeds. It was agreed the link would be shared with Board members.

The Board discussed the advantages of average speed cameras but sought more clarification about whether the technology also addressed 'spot speeding'. Members were advised that update criteria would seek to reduce the minimum space between cameras to help address sudden increases in speed.

Members sought further information about potential locations for additional speed cameras, noting community concerns about traffic coming off the motorway at speed to avoid congestion in peak periods.

The potential to use average speed cameras as another tool to tackle speeding was welcomed. However, members also acknowledged the importance of education within communities to change driver behaviours.

The Scrutiny Board discussed the challenge of benchmarking performance given different local contexts and the impact of the pandemic on traffic volumes in recent years. The potential impact of a modern public mass transit system on road deaths was noted.

It was agreed that Gary would provide the Principal Scrutiny Advisor with more information about benchmarking to circulate to the Scrutiny Board.

It was agreed it is important for community committees to be engaged on this agenda so they can take proactive action to champion Vision Zero in their localities.

The Scrutiny Board debated the challenge of adapting to new pedestrian crossing technology and confirmed that officers are considering options to put additional educational material online.

It was noted that increasingly in the city centre and localities, the Council is trying to give more priority to pedestrians and cyclists than vehicles.

Cllr Hayden confirmed that crossing times will be extended across the city, in line with changes to the highway code which aim to prioritise pedestrians, followed by cyclists then vehicles. It was noted that there had been very little publication from the Department for Transport on changes to the Highway Code and it is anticipated that behaviour change will take some time.

RESOLVED:

The Scrutiny Board resolved that:

- The final report and the officer responses to recommendations be noted.
- An annual update on progress towards achieving Vision Zero should be received by the Scrutiny Board.
- The link to the draft consultation on establishing a vehicular nuisance public protection order to be shared via the Principal Scrutiny Advisor.
- Additional information about benchmarking to be provided to the PSA for circulation to the Scrutiny Board.

23 Work Schedule

Members noted the work schedule.

24 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 28 September at 10.30am. A pre-meet will take place for Board members at 10.15am.