

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (CITY DEVELOPMENT)**

**TUESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 2011**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, B Atha, D Atkinson,  
J Elliott, G Harper, J Jarosz, M Lobley,  
R Pryke, M Rafique, M Robinson and  
S Smith

**CO-OPTED: B Woroncow**  
**MEMBER**

### **133 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

It was reported that Agenda Item 16, Implementing Audit Report Recommendations contained information considered to be exempt under Access to Information Rules 10.4 (1,2,4 & 6) and Article 6 Human Rights Act 1998. Members were asked to consider whether to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion of this information.

**RESOLVED** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the aforementioned parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

### **134 Late Items**

In accordance with his powers under Section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair consented to the submission of the following late item of business:

Agenda Item 11 – Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment – the report was not available at the time of agenda despatch.

Members also received a revised report for Item 16 – Implementing Audit Report Recommendations.

### **135 Declaration of Interests**

Councillor J Akhtar declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9, Leeds Bradford International Airport – Provision for Public Hire Taxis, due to his employment as a Private Hire Driver. Minute No. 139 refers.

### **136 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes approved as a correct record at the meeting held on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

**137 Closure of East Leeds Leisure Centre and Middleton Pool and Reduced Opening Hours Garforth Squash and Leisure Centre**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development reminded the Board of the requests for scrutiny and or petitions concerning the closure of East Leeds Leisure Centre and Middleton Pool and also the reduced operating hours at Garforth Squash and Leisure Centre.

A report of the Chief Recreation Officer had also been submitted which set out the facts concerning the budget position of each of the operations and the rationale that had been applied to identify selection for closure or reduced operating hours.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Adam Ogilvie, Executive Member
- Martin Farrington, Acting Director, City Development
- Mark Allman, Head of Sport and Active Recreation

It was reported that the decisions to close centres or reduce operating hours had been taken as part of the Council's need to make overall savings of £90 million. The decisions taken had been influenced by the Vision for Leisure Centres which had recommended the replacement of old and poorly located centres. Further issues affecting the decisions had included the reduced capital spending programme and the loss of PFI funding.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Current losses made by centres did not necessarily mean that those that lost more would close. Geographic and special dimensions were taken into consideration and how these would best meet community needs. These considerations were all taken as part of the budget setting process.
- Concern regarding the ability of current users being able to travel to alternative centres, particularly in areas of deprivation. It was reported that Sport England had done a detailed analysis into swimming provision and this had been one of many factors considered.
- Concern regarding the knock on effects of closures such as health issues, crime and teenage pregnancy.
- Community Asset Transfers – this had been explored regarding provision at Garforth. There had been no expression of interest to do this in East Leeds but any interest would be investigated. There was a discussion of what facilities would be developed as part of new school building in the area and whether these would be made available to the public.

- Executive Board had made an in principle decision for a Community Asset Transfer of facilities in Garforth with the Schools Partnership Trust subject to the submission of a business plan. The dual use with education partners would be interrogated as part of the business case. The business plan would need to finalise the proposal for the operation of the Bodyline gym in the centre.

The Chair expressed concern that not all the facts behind the rationale for the proposed changes were available for consideration of this item.

**RESOLVED** – That this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Board (City Development)

### **138 Request for Scrutiny The Route 5 Cycle Track**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development referred to a request for Scrutiny from Mr Bill McKinnon, Chair of the Friends of Woodhouse Moor concerning the Route 5 Cycle Track.

It was reported that Mr McKinnon was unable to attend the meeting and had requested that the item be deferred.

**RESOLVED** – That the item be deferred to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board (City Development)

### **139 Leeds Bradford International Airport - Provision for Public Hire Taxis**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development referred to the request of the Hackney Carriage trade concerning their request for a hackney carriage stand on Whitehouse Lane. A report of the Director of City Development provided Members with a briefing on the issues surrounding the initial development of a proposal for a taxi rank on Whitehouse Lane adjacent to Leeds Bradford International Airport (LBIA). The report also summarised consultation to date.

The following officers were in attendance for this item:

- Martin Farrington, Acting Director – City Development
- Andrew Hall, City Development

It was reported that the report had been produced following the Board's February meeting where it had been requested to consider proposals for a hackney carriage stand at the airport. Initial consultation had been undertaken with Ward Members and other stakeholders.

The following key issues were highlighted:

- Ward Members were broadly supportive of the proposals.
- The provision of a hackney carriage stand would provide a public service and give customers a choice between the use of hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

- The hackney carriage providers would contribute towards the funding of the proposals.
- There was felt to be a lack of provision for disabled customers that would be rectified with the availability of hackney carriages near the airport.
- Concerns raised by LBIA – these included safety of pedestrians and that the plans may prejudice the future development of the airport.

Members raised concerns and made the following comments in relation to the proposals:

- The reasons given by LBIA against the proposals were weak. Claims that the proposed rank would be too far from the airport should be dismissed as the rank was closer than much of the airport car parking.
- The concerns of pedestrian safety were exaggerated.
- The clearing of luggage trolleys – this was an issue that should be easily resolved between the hackney carriage traders and the airport.
- Concern that LBIA had a vested interest due to the contract with the chosen private hire provider.
- The private hire contractor only had 8 to 10 disabled access vehicles whereas the hackney carriage service had approximately 300.
- Current arrangements for hackney carriages were not appropriate due to having no waiting area.
- Current arrangements did not give passengers choice and hackney carriages could give improved access.
- Provision for people coming from the South East of the city – it had become easier to access Manchester and other airports.
- Had there been anything in the terms and conditions of the sale of the airport regarding hackney carriage provision? – it was reported that Leeds and Bradford Council's retained a golden share in the airport which prevented certain changes but did not include a requirement for hackney carriage provision.
- Concern that the cost of the private hire cars available was prohibitive.
- What would be the cost of providing a hackney carriage rank? – full details of this would be provided to the Board.
- Current arrangements for the private hire cars did not provide a satisfactory service.

In summary, Members unanimously agreed that there should be hackney carriage provision via a rank near the airport on Whitehouse Lane Yeadon and requested that officers pursue this with LBIA and representatives of the hackney carriage trade.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That Executive Board be informed of the unanimous view of the Scrutiny Board (City Development) that provision should be made for a hackney carriage stand at Whitehouse Lane adjacent to Leeds Bradford International Airport.

(2) That the Acting Director of City Development consult further with representatives of Leeds Bradford International Airport to see how a proposal can be delivered in partnership that complements the current and planned surface access arrangements.

## **140 Request for Scrutiny Concerning the Future Library Provision in the City**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development informed the Board of a request for scrutiny from Councillor Matthew Robinson regarding library provision in the city. The reason for the request was concern regarding the future of library provision and the consultation exercise undertaken in relation to 'A new chapter for Leeds libraries' which was to be submitted to Executive Board.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Councillor George Hall, Barwick in Elmet and Scholes Parish Council
- Councillor Robert Dyson, Shadwell Parish Council
- Councillor Ben Hogan, Barwick in Elmet and Scholes Parish Council

Martin Farrington, Acting Director, City Development and Catherine Blanshard, Chief Libraries, Arts and Heritage Officer were also in attendance for this item.

The representatives of the Parish Councils addressed the meeting and outlined their reasons behind the request for scrutiny. Issues raised included the following:

- Concern regarding the consultation undertaken for future library provision. Reference was made to an e-mail that had been inadvertently sent to Parish Councillors and it was felt that this email had undermined the consultation process and further concern was expressed that it was inappropriate for the officer involved to have continued participation in the development of any proposals for future library provision.
- Concern regarding the lack of respect given to the Town and Parish Council Charter with regards to consultation.
- Concern that a member of staff had described some of the mobile library provision as a waste of time.
- Potential loss of facility should library buildings close – these were used by Guides, Scouts, Parish Council and Police surgeries as well as others.
- Concern that new mobile libraries had not been purchased.

Marting Farrington and Catherine Blanshard, Chief Officer – Libraries, Arts and Heritage were in attendance and responded to the concerns. A full and unreserved apology had been made with respect to the e-mail and those concerned were assured that full and meaningful consultation would take place. The Board was informed that the report that would be prepared for

Executive Board would be the report of the Acting Director, City Development and would have input from all officers involved.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Promotion of mobile services – if mobile services were to replace any building based provision there would need to be marketing of services. As part of the consultation, Ward Members and library users would be asked for their views on potential locations.
- Examples of mobile provision being an improvement to building based provision were given.
- Results of the consultation and surveys would be made publicly available.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the report and discussion be noted.
- (2) That no further Scrutiny of this issue is required.

**141 Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)**

The report of the Acting Director of City Development asked the Board to comment on the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) which outlined flood risk that the city faced from local sources. A copy of the PFRA was appended to the report.

The Chair welcomed Peter Davis, Flood Risk Manager to the meeting.

The Board was reminded of recent flooding incidents across the City and the requirement to carry out a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment. It was reported that the Council was the Lead Local Flood Authority for the area and members attention was brought to the draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment.

In response to Members comments and questions, the flowing issues were discussed:

- The need to work closely with other agencies including the Environment Agency.
- The possibility of lowering weirs at Knostrop and Leeds Bridge to reduce flood risk – the viability of this was being investigated. The Board was informed that funding for any major flood alleviation scheme as originally proposed for Leeds was unlikely and the lowering of weirs was seen as a possible cheaper option but needed further work as it could increase the risk of flooding in other places.
- Legislation related to areas that had populations of 30,000 or more. This was monitored carefully in Leeds where areas that were currently under that level could increase.

- The Flood Risk Management team looked at new developments in line with the Local Development Framework and other plans. Planning applications were also scrutinised in areas of flood risk.
- Insurance issues – insurance costs were rising in areas affected by flooding which could be a disincentive to development.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and discussion be noted.

#### **142 New Strategic Plans 2011-15**

The report of the Chief Executive presented proposals for the new set of strategic planning documents for advice and consideration before they went to Executive Board and Council for approval. They included the proposals for the long term partnership strategy for the City, the Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030 and the first set of delivery plans for the first 4 years. These proposals had been developed in light of the current financial situation which meant that priorities had to be more focussed than in previous plans. The proposals also took into account, the results of two recent public consultations on the Vision for Leeds and the Spending Challenge.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting for this item:

- Paul Maney, Head of Strategic Planning, Policy and Performance
- Martin Dean, Head of Leeds Initiative and International Partnerships
- Heather Pinches, Performance Manager - Planning, Policy and Improvement

Members attention was brought to the new City Planning Framework which introduced the City Priority Plans that would replace the Leeds Strategic Plan. Particular attention was given to the vision and outcomes for the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board which had 6 ‘must do’ priorities for the following four years. Attention was also brought to the recent consultation on the Vision for Leeds.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- The priorities were currently at a draft stage and additional or amended priorities could be included.
- Priorities and Action plans would be developed at a partnership level.
- It was suggested that there would be ongoing scrutiny of priorities and action plans.
- There would be opportunity for Elected Members to get involved in target setting.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and discussion be noted.

#### **143 City Development Scrutiny Board Performance Report Quarter 3 2010/11**

The report of the Head of Policy and Performance presented an overview of performance against priority outcomes to demonstrate current performance and highlight areas for action. Information detailed in the report described key actions for the next 6 months along with details of progress.

**RESOLVED –** That the report be noted.

**144 Annual Report 2010/11**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the draft of the Board's contribution to the Scrutiny Boards Annual Report. The report included an introduction from the Chair and details of the work undertaken by the Board during the 2010/11 Municipal Year. The report would be updated to reflect any additional and outstanding work of the Board.

**RESOLVED –** That the Board's contribution to the composite Annual Report for 2010/11 be approved.

**145 Work Programme, Executive Board Minutes and Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development outlined the current work programme for the Board and also included an extract of the Council's Forward Plan relating to the Board's portfolio and a copy of the latest Executive Board minutes.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Executive Board minutes and Forward Plan be noted
- (2) That the Board's Work Programme be agreed.

**146 Implementing Audit Report Recommendations**

The report of the Acting Director of City Development reported on action taken to implement the recommendations of the Audit Report into whistle blowing allegations.

**RESOLVED –** That this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board (City Development)