

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)**

**MONDAY, 18TH JUNE, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors G Almass, A Blackburn, S Firth,  
D Jenkins, J McKenna, D Ragan,  
M Robinson, A Smart and P Wray

### **1 Chairs opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed all to the first meeting of the Scrutiny Board – Strategy and Resources.

The Chair welcomed both new and returning Board Members and also took the opportunity to thank former Board Members for their contribution to the work of the Scrutiny Board.

### **2 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

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

There were no exempt items.

### **4 Late Items**

There were no late items.

### **5 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

### **6 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Goddard. Notification had been received that Councillor Ragan was to substitute for Councillor Goddard.

### **7 Minutes - 22nd March 2018**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018 be approved as a correct record.

### **8 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented the terms of reference for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) for Members information.

**RESOLVED** – To note the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference.

### **9 Co-opted Members**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support provided guidance to the Scrutiny Board when seeking to appoint co-opted members.

The Board was informed of the following options for the appointment of co-opted members:

- Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual meeting of council; and/or
- Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) To note the information presented and options available for the appointment of co-opted members.
- (b) To consider the appointment of co-opted members on an ad-hoc basis for any inquiries where it was deemed appropriate.

**10 Sources of work for the Scrutiny Board**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which provided information and guidance on potential sources of work to assist the Board in determining its work schedule for 2018/19.

Appended to the report was a copy of the Vision for Scrutiny at Leeds, Best Council Plan update for 2018/19 – 2020/21 and Leeds City Council 2018/19 Budget Report – Resources and Housing, Strategic Central Accounts and Communities and Environment.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Neil Evans, Director of Resources and Housing
- Doug Meeson, Chief Officer Financial Services
- Cluny MacPherson, Chief Officer Culture and Sport
- Tim Rollett, Senior Risk Management Officer

Those in attendance gave a summary of their areas of responsibility, including priority areas and some of the financial and organisational issues facing the Council. Members of the Scrutiny Board also shared their views on potential areas of Scrutiny work.

In summary, the following key areas were raised:

- Exploring how the Council can achieve efficiencies through the digitalisation of services used by the public and staff.
- Apprenticeships and how the Council is maximising the Apprenticeship Levy in terms of its own workforce development.
- Monitoring of the gender pay gap within the Council;

- Exploring greater opportunities for income generating trading services;
- Emergency planning and the Council's position in light of recent national reviews, such as the Kerslake Review following the Manchester Arena terrorist attack.
- Monitoring of Business Rates appeals and the Council's application to extend the term of the 100% Business Rates Retention scheme;
- Understanding and monitoring the Council's debt levels;
- Monitoring the Leeds Culture Strategy and specifically the Leeds 2023 developments following the decision last October by the European Commission to cancel the European Capital of Culture competition for UK cities.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and discussion be noted and used to inform the Board's work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

(Councillor Almas entered the meeting at 10:55 am during the consideration of this item)

(Councillor McKenna left the meeting at 11:40 am during consideration of this item).

## **11 Performance Update**

The report of the Director of Resources and Housing provided Members with information to help identify key areas for future scrutiny work to support improvement across council outcomes, priorities and values. The report was also used by Members to determine the level and frequency of performance information they wanted to receive during the year.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Resources and Housing
- Doug Meeson, Chief Officer Financial Services
- Cluny MacPherson, Chief Officer Culture and Sport
- Tim Rollett, Senior Risk Management Officer

In consideration of the report, the following key issues were raised:

- Staff sickness levels – the Board requested that future performance reports separate out the data relating to school staff.
- Council tax – the Board requested more regular and detailed performance information relating to Council Tax that is both raised and collected and preferably on a Ward level too.
- Devolution – whilst acknowledging the difficulty of assigning performance indicators linked to the Council's approach towards devolution, the Board agreed to maintain a watching brief of progress.
- Service area performance updates – the Board agreed to adopt a similar approach undertaken last year and schedule performance update reports during the year relating to specific service areas.

Linked to this, particular reference was made to HR and receiving an update surrounding staff engagement results and appraisals.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and the above requests for information be provided to the Board.

**12 Work Schedule**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support requested Members give consideration to the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the forthcoming year.

A draft work schedule was attached to the submitted report. Included within the draft work schedule were traditional items of scrutiny work in relation to tracking of work previously undertaken by this Board; performance monitoring reports and any Budget and Policy Framework Plans.

In relation to the Board's September meeting, it was noted that the Board would also be receiving details of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Risk Management Report.

Reflecting on the Board's discussion during the meeting, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser was requested to work with the Chair to incorporate the areas of work agreed by the Scrutiny Board into its work schedule for the forthcoming year.

**RESOLVED –**

(a) That the draft work schedule be noted.

(b) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser works with the Chair to incorporate the areas of work agreed by the Scrutiny Board into its work schedule for the forthcoming year.

**13 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board – Strategy and Resources to be on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 10:30am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 10:00am).

(The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm)