



Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: September 11th 2007

Subject: Consultation on Leeds Strategic Plan

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

This report briefly outlines the implications for Scrutiny as a result of the approval by Executive Board to introduce a new corporate planning framework. The report specifically focuses on the Scrutiny role in relation to the introduction of the major change concerning the introduction of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11. It recommends that Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree one of three options about how Scrutiny might consult on the policy content of this Plan as well as providing overall feedback on the full draft document.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The key purpose of this report is to seek views on the appropriate approach for Scrutiny to consult on the policy content of the Leeds Strategic Plan and the overall draft plan.

2.0 Background Information

2.1. On July 4th 2007, the Executive Board agreed to adopt a new corporate planning framework for the Council. This is attached at Appendix 1. A major change introduced is the merger of the Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Plan into a single document called the 'Leeds Strategic Plan' to cover the period 2008-11. This will be supported by a separate Council Business Plan to guide business development, transformation and financial planning activity.

2.2. The introduction of a Leeds Strategic Plan reflects the need to respond to greater expectations from citizens and new policy requirements. These are briefly summarized below:

- **Outcome based approach** - better results are being sought for Leeds citizens and stakeholders through the development of an outcome based approach to prioritise our improvement activity.
- **Local Government as a Strategic Leader and Place Shaper** - the draft Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill emphasises the legitimate leadership

role of local authorities, providing the vision and leadership for the local partnership and their communities. The 'new' Leeds Strategic Plan reflects this by focusing on both what the local authority is "either doing on its own" or "in partnership with others".

- **Scrutiny Involvement** - the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill will give new powers to Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise the actions of key named partners. This means that the contributions and accountability of partners will now be clearly identified in plans at the strategic level.

- 2.3. The Leeds Strategic Plan and the Council Business Plan will form part of the Budget and Policy Framework and must be formulated and approved in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. These rules require that once the plan / policy has been formulated there must be consultation with Scrutiny, prior to consideration by Members of the Executive Board and final approval by Members of full Council.

3.0. Main Issues

- 3.1. The Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 – 11 will set out the overall strategic outcomes and key improvement priorities to be delivered either by the Council on its own or in partnership with others. This plan will incorporate the requirements of the Council's duty to consult with named partners to draw up improvement priorities for the Leeds as outlined in the draft Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill due to gain Royal Assent in autumn 2007. The Leeds Strategic Plan will elevate the role of the current Corporate Plan to a broader level in the city and so replace the existing plan.

- 3.2. Consultation with Scrutiny on the Leeds Strategic Plan can take place at two main stages: the first is to comment on the formulation of the policy content of the plan; the second is to comment on the overall draft plan. These two stages are treated separately below.

3.3. Consultation on Policy Content

- 3.3.1. Draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities are currently being developed based on evidence about which aspects of the eight themes of the Vision for Leeds have not yet been fully met either in terms of the City's ambition related to 'Going up a League' or in addressing disadvantage with regard to 'Narrowing the Gap'. The draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities focus on the areas of activity delivered by the Council on its own or in partnership with others.

- 3.3.2. It is intended that the consultation will take the form of seeking views on whether the right priorities have been highlighted; to identify any gaps and to explore views on how delivery can be best achieved over next three years.

- 3.3.3. Key stakeholder representatives to be engaged in the consultation are:

- Elected Members
- Statutory Partners (designated by the draft Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill)
- Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector
- Leeds Initiative Going Up a League and Narrowing the Gap Executives and Strategy and Development Groups
- Equality Groups
- Leeds City Council Trade Unions
- Citizen Focus Groups (as appropriate)

- 3.3.4. Consultation with Scrutiny could take a number of forms. The options are outlined below:

- 1) Overview and Scrutiny Committee could provide feedback on the draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities on behalf of all Scrutiny Committees.
- 2) Specific Scrutiny Boards could provide feedback on draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities relevant to their remit.
- 3) Overall feedback could be sought from Overview and Scrutiny Committee and on specific draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities from relevant Scrutiny Committees.

If Option 2 is pursued, it would need to be presented to all Scrutiny Boards in the October cycle of meetings.

3.4. Consultation on draft Leeds Strategic Plan

- 3.4.1. Overview and Scrutiny feedback on the full draft version of the Leeds Strategic Plan will be required in the January 08 cycle of meetings prior to the consideration by Members of the Executive Board at their February 08 meeting and final approval by Members of full Council at the April 08 meeting

4.0. Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1. The Budget and Policy Framework forms Article 4 of the Constitution which is a key part of Leeds City Council's governance arrangements. Leeds Strategic Plan must be formulated and approved in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules that require consultation with Scrutiny, prior to consideration by Members of the Executive Board and final approval by Members of full Council.

5.0. Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1. The Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) keeps under review any legislative changes which may impact on the Constitution generally.
- 5.2. There are no significant resource implications to the selection of the different consultation options by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6.0. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
 - i) Select the appropriate option for consultation on the policy content of the Leeds Strategic Plan as outlined in 3.3.4. to be enacted in the September/October 07 cycle of meetings.
 - ii) Agree to providing feedback on the overall draft Leeds Strategic Plan at its January 08 meeting.