

SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

MONDAY, 1ST APRIL, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors G Almas, B Anderson,
A Blackburn, S Firth, R Grahame,
D Jenkins, J McKenna, A Smart and
P Wray

77 Late Items

There were no late items.

Supplementary information had been distributed for Agenda Item 10 – Embracing Digital Technology Solutions – Draft Scrutiny Inquiry Report.

78 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

79 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor M Robinson.

Councillor B Anderson was in attendance as substitute.

80 Minutes - 11 February 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

81 New Procurement Strategy 2019-2024

The report of the Chief Officer, Financial Services provided an update and invited comments from the Scrutiny Board on the draft New Procurement Strategy.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
- Neil Evans – Director of Resources & Housing
- Paul Hyde – Head of Commercial (Finance)

It was reported that the new procurement strategy particularly mirrored the national strategy and would be effective from 2019 to 2024. Value for money

and effectiveness would still form a main part of the strategy but there would be more scope on wider issues including social values, local employment, the living wage and working closely with contractors.

Key issues discussed included the following:

- The living wage – the Board felt that information regarding this in the strategy could be strengthened. It was recognised that although the living wage was not statutory, it could be used as a deciding factor when awarding contracts.
- Reference was made to the White Paper Motion made by full Council on 27th March 2019 around declaring a Climate Emergency and therefore felt that environmental protection factors relating to packaging and recycling and the re-use of goods should also be reflected within the new procurement strategy.
- The inclusion of small and medium enterprises and community groups was particularly welcomed by the Board.
- In terms of measuring outcomes and the key performance indicators associated with the new procurement strategy, it was noted that regular performance updates have previously been reported to Scrutiny and will continue to do so, which would include progress against reducing the use of waivers to contract procedure rules.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the content of the draft New Procurement Strategy be noted.
- (2) That the ongoing development of the new Strategy reflects the consultation and views expressed by the Scrutiny Board.
- (3) That the Scrutiny Board receives an update on the New Procurement Strategy in the new municipal year.

82 Maximising the Apprenticeship Levy - Scrutiny working group summary note

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented a summary of the Scrutiny Working Group meeting held on 14 December 2018 around maximising the Apprenticeship Levy.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
- Neil Evans – Director of Resources and Housing
- Alex Watson – Head of Human Resources

The working group had looked at the following main issues:

- How the levy works and how it is spent.
- Progress that had taken place across the Council since the levy was introduced.
- How to further develop processes across the Council.

It was reported that there were now 630 apprentices across the Council in a range of positions and services. The Board was also informed of the recent successful apprenticeship fair that had been held at the arena.

Key issues discussed included the following:

- The Board particularly welcomed that all age groups are now included within the Council's apprenticeship programme and that apprentices did not just include new recruits, but supports existing staff to develop and undertake more senior roles.
- School based apprenticeships - it was acknowledged that since academies are not the responsibility of the Council, there had been no data collated in respect of their own staff undertaking apprenticeship schemes.
- The Board requested further information regarding existing apprentices to give a breakdown of apprenticeship levels and staff positions.

RESOLVED –

(a) That the report and working group summary note be noted.

(b) That the information requested be provided to the Scrutiny Board.

83 Resilience and Emergency Planning - draft Statement of the Scrutiny Board

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented the Board's statement which reflected the findings and conclusions arising from the working group meeting in relation to resilience and emergency planning arrangements.

The Board was asked to consider and formally approve its statement.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
- Neil Evans – Director of Resources & Housing
- Nigel Street – Principal Officer, Resilience & Emergencies Team

It was acknowledged that the scrutiny statement was very positive and reflected the work that had been put into resilience and emergency planning. It was also noted that there was an increased confidence and reassurance with resilience and emergency planning arrangements.

RESOLVED – That the Board's formal statement in relation to the review of existing resilience and emergency planning arrangements be agreed.

84 Embracing Digital Technology Solutions - draft Scrutiny Inquiry Report

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented the Board's draft report following its recent inquiry on 'Embracing Digital Technology Solutions'.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis – Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability
- Neil Evans – Director of Resources & Housing
- Bev Fisher – Deputy Chief Digital and Information Officer

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

- The use of digital technology for dealing with planning applications.
- Being digital ready and the provision of USB chargers/charging points within the Council's buildings and particularly meeting rooms.
- Digital inclusion and the provision of wifi and charging facilities in community hubs.
- The use of apps for smartphones and devices. Whilst acknowledging that some apps were already in use by the Council, it was noted that this area of digital development remains difficult to recruit to but could potentially be developed in collaboration with the local digital industry.

RESOLVED – That the Board's report following its inquiry on 'Embracing Digital Solutions' be agreed.

85 Culture Strategy Delivery Plan - Update

The report of the Director of City Development updated the Board on progress with projects being developed as part of the Leeds Culture Strategy. As one of the projects of the Culture Strategy, it included an update on the development of the Leeds Culture Trust; the organisation set up to deliver Leeds 2023.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Judith Blake – Leader of the Council
- Cluny Macpherson – Chief Officer, Culture and Sport

The following was highlighted:

- Following two years of consultation during the development of the Cultural Strategy, the next stage was the delivery.
- The report had set out the progress made in delivering a range of projects linked to the Strategy, some which had been developed as part of the earlier bid for the European Capital of Culture.
- Particular reference was made to the development of a new Arts & Health Network.
- Update on Leeds 2023 – a particular update was given surrounding the Leeds Culture Trust and it was noted that Ruth Pitt had been appointed as Chair of the Trust.
- Acknowledging the cultural profile of the city which has attracted organisations such as Channel 4 and The British Library.

- The links to economy, job growth, health and education.

Other key issues discussed included the following:

- The work with core cities and across the Leeds City Region and Yorkshire.
- The work undertaken as part of the Pilot Cities programme.
- Funding arrangements for the Leeds Culture Trust.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That progress on the range of projects delivered as part of the Culture Strategy Delivery Plan as set out in the report be noted.
- (2) That progress on Leeds 2023 and the establishment of Leeds Culture Trust be noted.
- (3) That the continuation of the co-produced approach to the Culture Strategy Delivery Plan as set out in the report, including the creation of an open source online platform to host it be endorsed.

86 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support provided Members with the completed work schedule for the year as well as a draft work schedule for 2019/20. Members were invited to recommend proposed areas of work for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. Linked to this, the following key areas were highlighted for the Board to continue monitoring next year:

- Business Rates
- Development of the Yorkshire Devolution Deal

The Chair then thanked all Board Members and officers for their contributions over the course of the year.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Board's completed work schedule for 2018/19 and the proposed work schedule for 2019/20 be noted.
- (2) That the successor Board be recommended to continue monitoring Business Rates and the development of the Yorkshire Devolution Deal.

87 Date and Time of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

(The meeting concluded at 12.35 pm)