

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, D Coupar, S Golton,
J Pryor, M Rafique, F Venner, S Arif and
M Harland

44 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no information contained within the agenda which was designated as being exempt from publication.

45 Late Items

There were no formal late items of business considered by the Board, however, regarding agenda items 9 (Outcome of Statutory Notice on a Proposal to Permanently Increase Learning Places at St. Edward's Catholic Primary School from September 2022) and 10 (Outcome of Statutory Notice on a Proposal to Permanently Increase Learning Places at Allerton High School from September 2022), prior to the meeting Board Members had received the full (redacted) versions of the representations received as part of the Statutory Notice process, which was in addition to the summaries as detailed within the submitted cover reports. (Minute Nos. 51 and 52 refer).

46 Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

47 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

COMMUNITIES

48 Leeds City Listening Project - Update 2021

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report providing an update on the Leeds City Listening project. In April 2019 the Council was successful in its bid for funding for the Leeds City Listening Project, and the programme of work from that looked to engage with marginalised women in communities facing multiple barriers to achieving their potential. The report highlighted the collaborative working undertaken with the West Yorkshire Mayor's office and provided details of the overall outcomes from the project and the work which continued in this area.

Members welcomed the submitted report.

In response to a Member's enquiry regarding how the women involved in sex work within the Managed Approach in Holbeck were being supported and engaged as part of this initiative, further detail was provided regarding the relevant organisations which were involved in the City Listening Project.

Also, responding to a specific enquiry about knife crime in the community, it was undertaken that a response would be provided to the Member in question around the approach being taken towards addressing such issues.

Members also received further information on how actions arising from the specific conversations had as part of the project would be progressed and monitored.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the City Listening Project update report, as submitted, be approved;
- (b) That actions continue to be taken to ensure that the voice of women is heard in key Council work, for example initiatives such as;
 - Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Working Group;
 - City Centre violence Against Women and Girls Thematic Working Group;
 - Period poverty;
 - Forgotten Women Project;
 - Women Friendly City.
- (c) That the work which is currently ongoing in collaboration between the West Yorkshire Mayor's office and Leeds City Council in regard to Violence Against Women and Girls, be supported;
- (d) That the partnership working taking place between Leeds City Council and Women's Lives Leeds, be continued; and
- (e) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for the implementation of decisions made by Executive Board in respect of this report.

ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

49 Future trends and opportunities in our city and local centres

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the work which had been undertaken to date regarding the future of the city and local centres moving forward, and how the city and local centres respond to people's changing routines and the implications arising from the pandemic, with the report outlining proposed next steps in order to support and progress this agenda.

In considering the report, Members highlighted the importance of acknowledging the individuality of each local centre and welcomed the fact that bidding processes for external funding streams would be undertaken for appropriate schemes across the city. It was also noted that the actions being taken to progress this agenda including the Board's consideration of this report would help to ensure that the Council had a firm basis on which to maximise its opportunities to successfully bid for such funding.

With regard to the provision of 'Changing Places' toilet facilities, the Board received an update regarding the current position in Leeds, and it was undertaken that a further written update would be provided to the Member in question regarding any funding being sought for further provision across the city. Members also discussed the role of the Council in ensuring that developers delivered such facilities in new developments in instances where prior agreement to do so had been reached.

Responding to a Member's comments regarding the proposed approach detailed in the report, it was emphasised that given the financial challenge that continued to be faced the Council was heavily reliant upon external funding streams to deliver the proposals outlined. Members also noted that the overall aim of this agenda was to improve the local and city centre economies whilst also developing sustainable and inclusive growth. Further to this, a Member highlighted the importance of robust consultation taking place with affected communities when considering proposals for local centres, suggesting the involvement of the Council's Communities Team in such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the work which has been undertaken as detailed in the submitted report looking at the future of Leeds' city and local centres, be noted;
- (b) That the recommendations for next steps, as outlined in the submitted report and as listed below, be approved; and that agreement be given that they are the right areas of focus to take forward at this stage with the resources the Council has available; that the potential for additional resources through successful Government funding bids be noted; and that such matters be delegated to the Director of City Development:
 - (i) We will continue to identify and deliver transformational projects across the city, linked to external funding streams.
 - (ii) We will explore how we can facilitate flexible workspaces and co-working spaces in areas outside of the city centre.
 - (iii) We will work to capitalise on the role of Culture for the future of our centres, including the opportunities presented through Leeds2023.
 - (iv) We will continue to support our local centres as we recognise their importance in providing services, employment and social opportunities to local people.
 - (v) We will continue to support businesses across the whole city and we will continue to support people who are seeking employment.
 - (vi) We will continue to encourage collaboration and experimentation to connect activity across centres of innovation, now and in the future.
 - (vii) We will explore how we can create a long-term, sustainable way of collecting local data and intelligence for each of our centres.
 - (viii) We will continue to drive this work and these recommendations for next steps forward, both externally across the city and internally within the Council.
- (c) That it be noted that this work will inform the development of and be reflected within the new City Plan for Leeds which is currently

underway, and that it be noted that Executive Board will be kept informed of work to develop the City Plan as this progresses.

50 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report on the decision relating to Summer Born school admission

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which informed Executive Board of the findings from a recent Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report and which provided details on the actions taken by the Council in response to that report.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further clarification on the actions which had been taken by the Council in response to the report, including the fact that all other similar requests regarding summer born admissions had been reviewed, and it was confirmed that there were no further outstanding cases.

RESOLVED –

(a) That the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report and the recommendations for improvement, as appended to the submitted report, be noted;

(b) That it be noted that the responsible officer for this matter is the Head of Learning Systems.

51 Outcome of statutory notice on a proposal to permanently increase learning places at St Edward's Catholic Primary School from September 2022

Further to Minute No. 11, 23 June 2021, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report detailing a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. Specifically, the submitted report presented a proposal to expand St. Edward's Catholic Primary School to permanently increase the number of places offered at the school in Reception from 20 to 30 places from September 2022. The submitted report summarised the representations received during the statutory notice period and which sought a final decision on the proposal.

Prior to the meeting, Board Members had received for their consideration the full (redacted) versions of the representations received as part of the Statutory Notice process, which was in addition to the summaries as detailed within the submitted cover report.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted that the matter had been considered by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, with it being noted that the statement and recommendations of the Scrutiny Board arising from such consideration were appended to the report. The Executive Member confirmed that he was happy to accept all of the Scrutiny Board recommendations, and specifically regarding the recommendation that all consultation responses be shared in full with Executive Board Members, it was suggested that these be handled as 'Background Documents' which would be published alongside the agenda papers, but not form part of the formal agenda, so that Board Members had access to such information.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the importance of ensuring that any agreed actions arising from consultation with Ward Members, specifically in response to transport, highways or access issues were not delayed, but implemented during the relevant construction period, with it being undertaken that any specific concern that a Member had would be investigated.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposal to expand St. Edward’s Catholic Primary School to permanently increase the number of places offered at the school in Reception from 20 to 30 places with effect from September 2022, be approved;
- (b) That the recommendation to exempt the decisions arising from this report from the Call In process, for the reasons as set out in paragraph 23 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems;
- (d) That the conclusions and recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) arising from its consideration of the proposal to increase learning places at St. Edward’s Catholic Primary School, as appended to the submitted report, be noted and accepted.

(The Council’s Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council’s or the public’s interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (b) above, and for the reasons as detailed within paragraph 23 of the submitted report)

52 Outcome of statutory notice on a proposal to permanently increase learning places at Allerton High School from September 2022

Further to Minute No. 10, 23 June 2021, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report detailing a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority’s duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. Specifically, the submitted report detailed a proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton High School from a capacity of 1100 to 1400 pupils by increasing the admission number in Year 7 from 220 to 280, with effect from September 2022. The submitted report summarised the representations received during the statutory notice period and which sought a final decision on the proposal.

Prior to the meeting, Board Members had received for their consideration the full (redacted) versions of the representations received as part of the Statutory Notice process, which was in addition to the summaries as detailed within the submitted cover report.

In considering the report, assurance was provided that relevant Ward Members would continue to be kept informed on the progress of agreed actions being taken in response to any concerns raised around transport and highways issues.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton High School from a capacity of 1100 to 1400 pupils by increasing the admission number in Year 7 from 220 to 280, with effect from September 2022, be approved;
- (b) That the recommendation to exempt the decisions arising from this report from the Call In process, for the reasons set out in paragraph 24 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (b) above, and for the reasons as detailed within paragraph 24 of the submitted report)

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

53 Update on Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic – Response and Recovery Plan

Further to Minute No. 36, 21 July 2021, the Chief Executive submitted a report providing the latest details of the wide ranging activity being undertaken across the multi-agency partnership as part of the response to, and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Key information in the report included details of the work undertaken to increase vaccination uptake, recover backlogs on services, control the number of cases across the city, as well as encouraging continued testing, tracing and isolating within the context of most restrictions being removed and living with the virus.

The Board received an update on the progress being made on the continued vaccination roll out across the city. Also, responding to an enquiry, information was provided on the actions being taken to monitor the relevant data and promote vaccinations in communities where hesitancy remained.

Regarding Members' comments on a number of issues, the Board received further information on the actions being taken to progress the response and recovery from the pandemic as set out in the appended plan, with particular discussion around the scale of the challenge faced, the ongoing resumption of services, the establishment of new ways of working and the aim of ensuring that services were delivered in the most effective way. The Board also received further information on the challenges and pressures being faced

during the recovery process, not only in Local Government, but across all sectors.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding officer attendance at site visits, reassurance was provided that where appropriate, such visits would be made, with it being undertaken that any specific concerns that the Member in question had on this issue could be addressed separately. More generally, it was noted that such matters would be considered by the Council's Silver Group to ensure that a consistent approach was being taken across directorates.

Specifically with regard to the Council's Planning Service, Members highlighted their willingness for further consideration to be given to the making of representations to Government about providing Local Authorities with greater powers around the setting of planning fees.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updated Response & Recovery Plan, as detailed at Annex A to the submitted report, which is the summary plan for the period ahead and which also details ongoing response, risks, recovery and service recovery efforts, be noted;
- (b) That the updated Local Outbreak Management Plan for Leeds, as detailed at Annex B to the submitted report, which the report highlights is in-line with the Government's current Contain Framework, be noted;
- (c) That a summary of national developments since the last meeting of Executive Board (Annex C) and the latest Covid-19 Dashboard detailing information across the seven key themes (Annex D), be noted;
- (d) That it be noted that there are national announcements anticipated which will influence local plans, with it also being noted that the next full update to Executive Board will be in December 2021, with regular Member updates continuing to be provided.

RESOURCES

54 West Yorkshire Pension Fund - Divestment from Fossil Fuels

Further to Minute No. 52 of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) meeting held on 18th January 2021, the Director of Resources submitted a report which presented for the Board's consideration the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee's recommendation to the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) regarding the divestment from fossil fuels.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted that although the Council had no direct decision making powers over WYPF, it was appropriate to raise the issue of investment in fossil fuels with the Pension Fund in response to the Climate Emergency, and the prospect of such investments losing value.

The Board discussed this matter in detail and acknowledged that the WYPF Board members had a duty to act in the best financial interests of its members. Also, Executive Board considered the role of the Council in this process and that of WYPF Board members. Members also highlighted how the consideration of the report raised people's awareness of the issue of climate change. At the same time it was acknowledged that the recommendation of CEAC to divest from fossil fuels within three years was not supported due to the financial risks involved. The Council would look to receive information from WYPF regarding progress on divesting from fossil fuels at the appropriate time and in a way that minimised the risk of any losses being incurred.

RESOLVED – That the West Yorkshire Pension Fund be requested to:-

- (i) be explicit about acknowledging the Climate Emergency and the need to divest from fossil fuels;
- (ii) actively look to divest into alternative, cleaner investments with comparable returns; and
- (iii) report annually against the progress on divestment, specifically against the region's declared net zero target.

55 Gambling Act 2005 - Public Consultation on Policy

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented to the Board details of the triennial review of the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy, and which sought the Board's approval to refer the matter to the relevant Scrutiny Board in accordance with the Budgetary and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the submitted report, including the outcomes from the related statutory consultation exercise undertaken, be noted; and that the matter be referred to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) for consideration in line with the Council's Budgetary and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

(The matters referred to within this minute, given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In, as Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

56 Taxi and private hire licensing - Proposed new criterion in Suitability (Convictions) Policy

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which sought the Board's approval to undertake a consultation exercise upon proposed new criterion for minor motoring convictions for determining the suitability of applicants and licensees as drivers in taxi and private hire licensing.

In introducing the report and in outlining the proposed process moving forward, the Executive Member highlighted the following corrections proposed to be made to the submitted report:

- That the outcomes of the consultation would be considered by Licensing Committee followed by Executive Board, and not the other way around as detailed within the report; and
- That the consultation period be scheduled for 6 weeks duration, rather than the 4 weeks, as detailed within the report.

In considering the report, Members discussed several matters including the importance of continuing to ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures remained in place, the timing of the proposed consultation process, the impact suffered by the taxi trade during the pandemic, the actions being taken to simplify the consultation process for stakeholders and make it as accessible as possible, the actions being taken to provide wider support for drivers as part of the recovery from the pandemic, and addressing the issue of wider harmonisation across neighbouring Authorities.

With regard to the wider harmonisation of the taxi and private hire trade across neighbouring Authorities, it was noted that work continued in this area, with the aim that further detail would be presented to the Board at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report, subject to the inclusion of the corrections detailed above, be noted;
- (b) That a consultation exercise on the new criterion in the Suitability Policy, as presented within the submitted report/appendices, but subject to the inclusion of the corrections detailed above, be approved;
- (c) That a further report be submitted to the Board outlining the findings of the consultation and making final proposals on the policy to be adopted.

57 Revenue Savings Proposals for 2022/23 to 2024/25

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which outlined details of proposed savings over the next three years to meet the financial challenge which continued to be faced by the Council. The proposals were categorised as either ‘Business as Usual’ or ‘Service Reviews’.

Members acknowledged that a number of assumptions have had to be made in respect of the current position, whilst further detail on announcements such as the Government’s Spending Review were awaited.

The Board noted the work which was underway, with specific reference being made to the review being undertaken into procurement services. In considering such matters, Members noted the intention to submit further reports and proposals to the November and December Executive Board meetings.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the financial position for 2022/23 to 2024/25, as outlined in the submitted report, be noted, and that it also be noted that further

savings are required to deliver a balanced budget position for 2022/23 and to close the projected gaps in the years 2023/24 and 2024/25;

- (b) That the 'Business as Usual' savings, as outlined, be noted, with it also being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions);
- (c) That it be agreed that consultation commences where required with regard to the 'Service Review' proposals, as detailed in the submitted report, with it being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer, following any consultation period, in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions).

58 The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 - 2026/27

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which provided an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27, with the report highlighting how the strategy aimed to deliver a robust and sustainable approach towards establishing and maintaining a stable and prudent financial basis upon which the Council's services were delivered.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, officers undertook to provide the Member in question with the latest information on the Council's level of Reserves.

RESOLVED – That the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted.

59 Financial Health Monitoring 2021/22 – Month 4 (July)

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which provided an update on the financial health of the Authority in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account, as at month 4 (July) of the financial year.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information regarding the current budget position of the refuse collection service, and the reasons for that position.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received an update on the work which continued around ensuring the Council was 'energy secure' moving forward, with specific reference being made to the continued roll out of the District Heating scheme in the city. Members highlighted that this was an area of work which was particularly significant at present, given the considerable price increases being experienced in gas and electricity.

With regard to the collection of food waste and the associated anaerobic digestion process, Members received an update regarding national developments in this area which would continue to be monitored.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Authority, as at Month 4 of the financial year, be noted, with the projected impact of COVID-19 on that position also being noted;
- (b) That for 2021/22, it be noted that the Authority is forecasting an overspend of £0.4m;
- (c) That it be noted that the position as detailed within the submitted report does not reflect the potential effects of any further local or national lockdown arrangements on the financial projections, or any potential additional costs arising from the current 2021/22 pay negotiations.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER 2021

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY, 1ST OCTOBER 2021