

## Amendments to Constitution – Best City Ambition

Date: 10 November 2021

Report of: Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement

Report to: Full Council

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### What is this report about?

#### Including how it contributes to the city and council ambitions

- This report sets out the recommendations of General Purposes Committee in relation to proposed amendments to Part 2, Article 4.1 (ii) of the council's constitution to specify the Best City Ambition as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.
- On 25 October 2021 GPC resolved to recommend the above amendments to Full Council, following a resolution of the Executive Board made on 20 October to agree in principle to replace the Best Council Plan with a more externally facing Best City Ambition.
- The Best City Ambition, which is currently in development, is scheduled to be received by Full Council for consideration in February 2022. Should Full Council resolve to adopt the Best City Ambition, the City Solicitor will at that stage make further amendments to the Budget and Policy Framework to remove the Best Council Plan.

### Recommendations

Full Council is recommended to:

- a) Accept the recommendations of General Purposes Committee to make the amendments set out in Appendix 1 to the Budget and Policy Framework in Part 2, Article 4.1 (ii) of the council's constitution.
- b) Agree to receive a further report in February 2022 detailing the full proposals for the adoption of the Best City Ambition.

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Amendments are proposed to Part 2, Article 4.1 (ii) of the council's constitution as set out in Appendix 1 as tracked changes. The amendments would insert the Best City Ambition as a plan included within the council's Budget and Policy Framework (B&PF).
- 2 These amendments are a recommendation of General Purposes Committee (GPC) following the resolution of Executive Board that the Best Council Plan (BCP) should be replaced by a more outward-looking and partnership focused Best City Ambition. They are required as the council has previously determined, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, that the BCP was of such significance that it should be included within the B&PF and be subject to adoption by Full Council. It is intended that the same determination be made of the Best City Ambition.
- 3 Proposals to amend the B&PF are a matter for Full Council following consideration by GPC.

## What impact will this proposal have?

**Wards affected:** All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 4 The recommendations of this report will ensure the council's constitution remains up-to-date and ensure the Best City Ambition is subject to the same procedures at the BCP before it. Following adoption of the Best City Ambition, the reference to the BCP will be deleted from the B&PF. This can be undertaken by the City Solicitor pursuant to delegated authority.
- 5 Subject to approval of the recommendations of this report, the Best City Ambition will be prepared in accordance with the B&PF Procedure Rules, which includes referral of the draft Best City Ambition to Scrutiny and public consultation.
- 6 More broadly, the adoption of a Best City Ambition will add value to the work the council and partners are doing in the city – helping to bring agendas together, maximise the impact of limited resources through effective alignment between partners, and build momentum behind shared priorities. It is not intended to be a detailed delivery plan which duplicates what is in place elsewhere, nor simply an additional level of visions and priorities which are not anchored in work on the ground. Instead, the Ambition will provide a clear direction of travel, a high-level strategic intent, shared by the council and its key partners and around which people and organisations can come together with everyone playing their part in achieving the city's ambitions.
- 7 There are several key areas the adoption of the Best City Ambition can deliver a positive impact.
  - a) **Advancing the Three Pillars approach** – to better articulate the complex and inter-related nature of these three key agendas and how they affect the lives of people in Leeds. Increasingly agencies and organisations in the city are recognising the need to tackle wider determinants in achieving their core ambitions, whether that be the impact of education on health, or of housing on crime. The Ambition can help to communicate this approach and support everyone to understand the part they can play in the city overall, alongside their more specific individual and organisational aims.
  - b) **Priority setting at a 'place' level** – recognising that across Leeds there are hugely diverse communities with complex identities, strengths and needs. Focusing on the city means understanding this and reflecting it in the Ambition. Continuing and further developing efforts to embrace the locality working approach will be a key enabler in this respect, connecting services to geographical as well as population-based communities.

- c) **Embedding strength-based and asset-based approaches across all priorities** – recognising the hugely important role that individuals and communities already play in the success and resilience of the city and considering how we can continue to empower people to maintain independence and support one another, while making the best use of the assets we have across partners in driving forward shared ambitions. Leeds benefits from examples of national best practice in this space, and the Ambition provides an opportunity to take that learning and set out how the principles behind it can apply across the range of what the council and partners do. Naturally these efforts will be central to the future relationship between the council, other anchor organisations, voluntary and community organisations in the city, and the public.
- d) **Building on the Anchors partnership** – further embedding the importance of anchor organisations – both city wide and community-based – coming together to harness their collective strength in pursuit of shared city ambitions. Within this there continue to be opportunities to make the ‘Leeds Pound’ work harder for the city, both in terms of keeping money in the local economy and investing in local people through skills development, employment opportunities etc.
- e) **Establishing clear commitments to the city** – taking account of the levers and resources already within the city’s control, the Ambition should set out clearly what the council and partners are committed to delivering, irrespective of external factors, in line with key agendas. Alongside this, it should also include more aspirational ambitions and the specific asks of Government and others which would be required to deliver on them. This approach will create a strong foundation to bid for additional funding and investment, demonstrating the wider vision funded projects would be part of and the impact they could have.
- f) **Positioning the city to attract investment** – linked to e) above, a shared statement of the city’s ambitions which is clear about the ability to act now and also about what more is required to go further will put the city in a strong position to take advantage of funding streams as they become available. It will be important to consider this in a regional as well as national context, given the progress now made on West Yorkshire devolution.
- g) **Simplifying the message** – the Ambition offers the chance to communicate the headline vision and ambitions for Leeds more clearly to citizens, wider partners, potential investors, Government, and others. Through development of the Ambition, more innovative ways to achieve this will be considered including the potential of mission-based approaches. Adopting a shorter, sharper Ambition will better equip elected members, colleagues and partners to advocate for the city over the coming years.
- h) **Improving measures of impact** – through the adoption of the Social Progress Index (SPI) as the key measurement tool underpinning the Ambition. The SPI will help us to understand the difference the council and partners are making over the long term through a more deliberate examination of key strategic indicators – considering the basic needs of the Leeds population, the foundations of wellbeing, and opportunity for everyone. A Leeds version of the index is currently in development, working with the Social Progress Imperative, which will include metrics relevant to the city and our shared ambitions.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

- 8 The recommendations in this report are made following consideration by GPC at the request of Executive Board.
- 9 A wider range of consultation and engagement has taken place, with more planned, about the move towards a Best City Ambition more generally. This has included consulting with ward members through community committees. Further detail on this engagement will be contained within the February 2022 report proposed in the recommendations.

### **What are the resource implications?**

10 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

### **What are the legal implications?**

11 Paragraphs 2-5 detail the legal and good governance reasons for the recommendations in this report.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

12 There are no risk implications arising from this report.

### **Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

13 The Best City Ambition will support all three of the key pillars, developing the way they are embedded into the council's and city's strategic ambitions.

14 Recognising the inter-related nature of these three agendas is increasingly important in making the progress the council and partners wish to see, so strengthening these connections with the citizen at the centre is a primary driver of this proposal.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

15 Not adding the Best City Ambition to the council's Budget and Policy Framework was considered, but as it will act as a replacement for the Best Council Plan this option was discounted as it would not promote good governance.

#### **How will success be measured?**

16 The recommendations of this report will enable the Best City Ambition and associated governance requirements to progress. The Best City Ambition will be added to the Budget and Policy Framework upon Full Council's approval of the amendments in Appendix 1.

#### **What is the timetable for implementation?**

17 Should Full Council agree the recommendations of this report, the Best City Ambition will be prepared in accordance with the B&PF Procedure Rules. The next step will see Executive Board receive initial proposals in December 2021. Should progress continue as intended, including following consideration by Scrutiny and public consultation, Full Council will receive the Best City Ambition in full in February 2022 for consideration.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – proposed amendments to the constitution.

### **Background papers**

None.