

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

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

- 134 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.
- 135 Late Items**  
There were no late items of business submitted to the Board for consideration.
- 136 Declaration of Interests**  
There were no interests declared at the meeting.
- 137 Minutes**  
**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE**

- 138 Levelling Up Fund (LUF) in Leeds**  
Further to Minute No. 4, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021, the Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) including the current position regarding the Council's bids to Government under Round 1 in 2021 and the anticipated approach towards Round 2 in 2022, which was in advance of the formal decision making for any future bid submissions.

By way of introduction, the Executive Member provided an overview of the current position regarding both Round 1 and Round 2 bids, extended her thanks to officers for the work which had been undertaken to date in relation to the formation of bids and also thanked MPs for their continued engagement in the process. In addition, it was noted that the intention was to bring a further report to the 22nd June 2022 Executive Board meeting regarding the proposals for the Round 2 LUF bids ahead of the Government's submission deadline of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Members discussed the progress which was being made in relation to Round 2 bids, with it being suggested that in addition to the planned consideration at the June Executive Board meeting, further Executive Member input be facilitated either via an additional Board meeting, or more informally. In response, it was undertaken that if it was felt that further Executive Member

input was required to help maximise the opportunities presented by the fund, either via an additional Board meeting or by other means, then this would be scheduled at the appropriate time.

Responding to Members' enquiries regarding the restoration of Methley Train Station and whether this could potentially be considered as a Round 2 LUF bid, it was noted that this project was currently the subject of a live funding bid and that there was a lot of local momentum behind looking towards reopening the station.

The Board discussed several of the bids being proposed. Further to this, a Member highlighted that the work being undertaken to get all Leeds bids to the application stage was an investment, and whilst it was hoped that all submitted bids would be successful through the LUF programme, should any be unsuccessful, then that work undertaken could potentially be used to pursue alternative funding streams, where appropriate.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the outcomes of the Round 1 LUF bids, be noted; and that the investment which has been secured for the Pudsey constituency 'Connecting West Leeds' project, be welcomed;
- (b) That further development of, and public consultation for the 'Leeds West: Green, Healthy and Connected' project, to enable its consideration as a Round 2 bid for that constituency, be supported;
- (c) That further development and refinement of the 'Leeds East: Fearnville Wellbeing Centre' project and its potential to be submitted as a Round 2 bid for that constituency, be supported;
- (d) That the need for further work in partnership with constituency MPs and Ward Members in order to define projects, undertake consultations and enable consideration of potential Round 2 bids in the Leeds Central, and Elmet & Rothwell constituencies, be noted;
- (e) That the opportunity to develop an additional city bid, or bids alongside MPs' prioritised constituency schemes, be noted; and that agreement be given for the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate to explore further potential schemes for submission to the LUF, which can be considered at the June 2022 Executive Board for potential submission as necessary;
- (f) That a report be presented to the 22nd June 2022 Executive Board in order to agree which schemes are submitted as Round 2 LUF bids before the 6th July 2022 deadline; and that the comments made during the meeting be noted together with the undertaking that if it was felt that further Executive Member input was required to help maximise the opportunities presented by the fund, either via an additional Board

meeting or by other means, then this would be scheduled at the appropriate time.

## **RESOURCES**

### **139 Financial Health Monitoring 2021/22 - Provisional Outturn (Month 11)**

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report presenting details of the financial health of the Council in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account and in relation to the Provisional Outturn, as at Month 11 of the 2021/22 financial year.

By way of introduction, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the report, with it being noted that an underspend of £0.4m was being forecast for the Authority as at the Provisional Outturn position for 2021/22.

Responding to a Member's enquiries, the Board received further information regarding the actions which were being taken to monitor and mitigate against the current financial risks arising from energy cost pressures and the fluctuating situation surrounding such matters. Further to this it was noted that the Council continued to liaise with other Local Authorities, the Local Government Association and the Government on the issue of energy cost pressures.

A Member made enquiries regarding the current level of void properties within the Council housing stock and the timeframe by which such properties were being made habitable again, with a suggestion that a report be submitted to a future Executive Board regarding such matters. Responding to the Member's enquiries, officers undertook to provide further information should this be required, and the Board received further detail regarding the issues which continued to be experienced in this area as a result of the pandemic. Members also received an update on the range of actions which were in place to address such matters and improve the current position regarding void properties.

### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Local Authority at the Provisional Outturn (Month 11 of the 2021/22 financial year), together with the projected impact of COVID-19 on that position, as presented in the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that for 2021/22 the Authority is forecasting a £0.4m underspend position at the Provisional Outturn.

## **ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS**

### **140 Better Lives Strategy 2022 to 2027**

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report which sought approval of the proposed new Better Lives Strategy for the period 2022-2027, as presented at Appendix 1. The report provided a summary of the consultation

and engagement which had been undertaken to inform the development of the proposed new strategy and it was noted that, subject to approval, the new strategy was scheduled to be launched in the summer of 2022.

The Executive Member introduced the report, highlighting the key consultation which had been undertaken as part of its development process, emphasised that it was a 'whole Council' strategy noting the linkages between this and the Council's other strategies and services, and how its delivery would be overseen by the Better Lives Board.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on the range of metrics against each of the strategy's key themes that could potentially be monitored in order to measure delivery outcomes, with it being noted that the specific metrics deemed most appropriate would be agreed with the Better Lives Board. It was also noted that in relation to the reporting of the Council's delivery against such metrics, this would be reported to the Better Lives Board on a quarterly basis, with relevant information also being included within the Director's 'Local Account' annual report.

Responding to a Member's comment, the importance of clear public communications on matters such as this was emphasised, and the Board noted the role played by the Better Lives Board in ensuring that the Council continued to review its approach on how such wider public communications were best achieved in Leeds.

Members welcomed the development of the strategy as a document by which the standard of services delivered across the Council to people with care and support needs could be measured.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the new Better Lives Strategy for 2022-2027, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That it be noted that the lead officer responsible for the implementation of such matters is the Director of Adults and Health.

**141 Update on Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds**

Further to Minute No. 64, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an update on the 'Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds', presenting information on the work which sat underneath the strategy, including work that had occurred throughout the pandemic. Specifically, the report provided an update on each of the workstreams within the strategy in terms of recent activities, outcomes and proposed next steps.

By way of introduction, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the report, highlighting the current position regarding child poverty levels both locally and nationally, the cross-directorate working which continued to be developed in this area and the partnership work that continued to be undertaken with the third sector.

Members considered a number of issues arising from the report which included the importance of children's access to green space, the continued development of a cross directorate approach towards addressing issues such as child poverty and the measurement of the outcomes being delivered as a result of the actions taken.

In discussing the range of actions being taken by the Council in this area, the Board also acknowledged the scale of the challenge that continued to be faced, considered the trends regarding child poverty levels both locally and nationally and the impact of national policy upon such levels. Linked to this, Members also discussed the impact of the pandemic and the associated lock downs upon children and young people, and whilst it was acknowledged that there was still much to learn on the impact of the pandemic upon children, it was noted that the effects of the pandemic had been exacerbated in those children who were experiencing poverty during this time.

A Member made enquiries regarding the role of Children's Centres as part of the actions being taken in this area, with a suggestion that a report be submitted to a future Executive Board regarding such matters. Responding to the Member's enquiries, officers undertook to provide further information should this be required, whilst the Board received further detail on the continued work of Children's Centres across Leeds.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the strategic framework in place to mitigate the impact of child poverty, together with the work being undertaken by the Council and other partners in the key areas of activity, as outlined within the submitted report, be endorsed;
- (b) That the need to promote the work of the 'Thriving' strategy across the city and in particular in each respective Member's portfolio, in order to highlight the impact of poverty on children and their families, be endorsed;
- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for such matters is the Deputy Director Children and Families.

#### **COMMUNITIES**

##### **142 Leeds Response to the Ukrainian Crisis**

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented an overview and update on the current situation regarding the Ukrainian crisis, outlined the impact with regard to the city of Leeds and the Council and which provided details of the actions being taken to date across the city in response to the crisis.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted the key points within it, with details of the key actions being taken to welcome and support those Ukrainians who were arriving in the city being provided. The Board also

received information on the two separate settlement schemes in operation, and noted the details provided around the co-ordinated approach which continued to be taken both across the Council and with partner organisations across the city and the region, including the Leeds Branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain.

Further to this, the Board received a comprehensive update covering several areas, including:

- the latest numbers who had already arrived, or were scheduled to arrive in the city;
- details of the co-ordinated approach to ensure that appropriate safeguarding checks were being undertaken as part of the settlement schemes' matching process with sponsors, with checks on sponsors' accommodation also being undertaken;
- the range of support and information being provided to those entering the city and their sponsors, initially via the welcome point at Leeds Bradford Airport, but with the Reginald Centre being used as a base for such services;
- an update in respect of the number of visas which had been issued by the Home Office to date;
- the work of the cross-Council strategic partnership working group, and the role of the Council across the city, regionally and in liaison with Government;
- the progress being made by the Leeds Together for Ukraine Appeal.

The Board considered the national position with regard to entry requirements for Ukrainians into the UK, and in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information regarding the arrangements in place to provide free transport for Ukrainians entering the UK to their point of destination.

Members welcomed the update provided, acknowledged the fluidity of the situation, emphasised the 'Team Leeds' approach that these actions embodied and thanked officers and partner organisations for the collaborative approach being taken to support those Ukrainians coming into Leeds and the region.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the submitted update report, be noted; and that the approach being adopted within the Council's strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach towards migration for Leeds, be endorsed;
- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for leading a collaborative, strategic citywide response;
- (c) That it be noted that the Chief Officer for Safer, Stronger Communities is responsible for leading the cross-Council approach towards providing strategic and operational direction for the city;

- (d) That the continued and evolving partnership response to the Ukrainian crisis, which will respond to further guidance and policy development, as it is received from Government, be supported.

## **ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

### **143 UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

The Director of City Development submitted a report which provided an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) based upon the pre-launch information issued by the Government in February 2022 alongside the Levelling Up White Paper. The report also presented contextual information relating to the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) which the UKSPF was intended to replace, and set out the preparations which were now underway ahead of the formal launch of the UKSPF anticipated in late June / early July 2022.

Responding to Members' comments and enquiries, the Board received clarification on the overall levels of UK Shared Prosperity Funding which had been recently announced for West Yorkshire as a whole and for Leeds within that.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the submitted report, including the related processes regarding the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, as detailed, be noted.

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:** FRIDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2022

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN  
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022