

# Public Document Pack

EXECUTIVE BOARD

4<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012

LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

- PAGES 1-32: REPORT ENTITLED, 'LETTER FROM THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGARDING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT NOTICE'
- PAGES 33-40: REPORT ENTITLED, 'EAST LEEDS REGENERATION BOARD'.

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Report author: Adam Hewitt

Tel: 24 76940

## Report of the Director of Children's Services

### Report to Executive Board

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012

**Subject: Letter from the Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton regarding the Children's Services Improvement Notice**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. This report presents Executive Board with a letter from the Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Wakefield. The letter is attached at appendix D. The letter assesses current performance in Children's Services based on feedback from the review meeting that the Department for Education (DfE) held with the Council in November 2011 and feedback provided by the Independent Chair of the Children's Services Improvement Board, Bill McCarthy.
2. On the basis of this assessment the Minister has determined that the Improvement Notice that was served on Children's Services in March 2010 should be lifted with immediate effect. The letter also sets out key issues for the city to address moving forward.
3. This decision is as a result of the improvements reported this year in the unannounced and announced Ofsted inspections and the Annual Performance Assessment, which have already been reported to Executive Board. As such it strengthens the position

from which the service can now move forward and work to deliver the ambitions for children and young people in the city.

### **Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that Executive Board note the removal of the Improvement Notice from Children's Services in Leeds and acknowledge that this is an important milestone for the ongoing improvement journey.
  
5. It is also recommended that Executive Board formally acknowledge the important role that the Improvement Board has played in supporting the improvements made and in particular thank the Independent Chair Bill McCarthy and the Support and Challenge Advisor Penny Thompson for their key contributions, and the partner agencies on the Board.
  
6. It is further recommended that Executive Board thank the workforce of the Council and its partners for achieving this significant milestone and continue their support for rising to the outstanding performance challenges.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report presents members of the Executive Board with a letter from the Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton, to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Wakefield. The letter is attached at appendix D. The letter confirms that the Improvement Notice placed on Leeds Children's Services in March 2010 has been lifted with immediate effect.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 During 2009 a range of performance information and in particular the outcomes of the unannounced and announced Ofsted inspections relating to safeguarding and looked after children's services, highlighted significant performance challenges. As a result of the concerns highlighted and in response to the shared improvement aspirations of the local authority, partners across the city and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the DfE) a number of measures were put in place that aimed to underpin significant and rapid improvement in Children's Services.
- 2.2 Foremost amongst these measures, the Department issued an Improvement Notice setting targets for the level and nature of improvement expected of Leeds in order to sufficiently strengthen services for children and young people. These targets were set for completion with an 18 month timescale, with clear interim monitoring and reporting arrangements. The original Improvement Notice is attached at appendix A.
- 2.3 Leeds developed a detailed Improvement Plan setting out how it would work to address these targets. An Improvement Board, with an Independent Chair, Bill McCarthy and representatives from key partners across the city, was established to monitor and challenge progress.
- 2.4 Since these measures were put in place the Improvement Board has met approximately once a month to review the improvement work taking place across Children's Services. The information considered and issues discussed at these meetings have been fed back regularly to Executive Board and Scrutiny meetings. The Chair of the Board has written regularly to the appropriate Government Minister with an update on progress.
- 2.5 There have been a number of developments during 2011 that have highlighted the progress being made. The unannounced Ofsted inspection in January 2011, the announced inspection in September 2011, other services inspections (such as the fostering and adoption services, the Youth Offending Service and Children's Centres) and the Annual Performance Assessment published in November 2011, all noted significant progress. More broadly the service has been undertaking an ambitious reorganisation to put a new, integrated structure in place, the Leeds Education Challenge has been launched, city partnership arrangements have been strengthened and there is a clear vision in place for what Children's Services is aiming to achieve and how it will do this.

### **3 Main issues**

3.1 In view of the progress mentioned in 2.5 above, and the original timescale set out in the Improvement Notice, during the last quarter of 2011 work has been taking place to enable Minsters and the DfE to take a view on the position in Leeds and the approach to ensuring further improvement in the future. There have been two particularly critical elements to this. Firstly, a review meeting held in November between officers, the Executive Member and partner organisations from Leeds, with DfE representatives, in which the progress made against the Improvement Notice was reviewed in detail, a summary is attached at appendix B. Secondly, the latest letter from the Chair of the Improvement Board, Bill McCarthy, to the Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton, sent on 8<sup>th</sup> December and attached at appendix C. In this letter Bill McCarthy states that:

‘To their credit, the council has placed children’s services right at the top of their priorities, with continuous leadership focus from the new Chief Executive and Director as well as from political leadership across all groups... My view is that the council has reached the point... where the Improvement Notice and Improvement Board arrangements can safely be removed’.

3.2 In light of the review meeting, the letter from Bill McCarthy and a range of wider performance and contextual information the Minister for Children and Families wrote to the Leader of the Council on 21<sup>st</sup> December and detailed his assessment of the progress made in Leeds and the position moving forward. This letter is attached at appendix D.

3.3 The Minister decision that the Improvement Notice for Leeds should be lifted with immediate effect is another positive endorsement for the progress being made across the city. Following from the unannounced and announced inspection outcomes this year it highlights the greater confidence now in place that Leeds has the self awareness and ‘grip’ to take forward its own improvement agenda, using external support and challenge on an ongoing basis.

3.4 The Minister’s letter does highlight areas where particular focus needs to continue, specifically to maintain the momentum around safeguarding and especially to address some key issues around education. The DfE have asked to meet with Leeds in March 2012 to monitor our progress. Plans are in place in each of the areas highlighted. A report to Executive Board in November 2011 highlighted the plans to take forward the Leeds Education Challenge which recognises the increased autonomy being given to schools, but also sets out how an ongoing partnership approach will be the best way to achieve rapid and sustainable improvements in education standards.

### **4 Corporate Considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 There are no specific issues under this heading.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 There are no specific issues under this heading.

## **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 Improvements in Children's Services across Leeds are a priority for the city. Significant partnership focus has been addressed to this over the last two years, so this decision is an important and positive further development. Along with the inspection outcomes discussed in this report, this provides the foundations from which the service can move forward towards realising our bigger ambitions in terms of what we want to achieve for children and young people in Leeds, as set out in the City Priority Plan.

## **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 There are no specific issues under this heading.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 There are no specific issues under this heading.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no specific issues under this heading.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The decision to lift the Improvement Notice with immediate effect illustrates the progress made across the city over the last two years and provides a further basis on which the pace and ambitions for future improvement can continue.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that Executive Board note the removal of the Improvement Notice from Children's Services in Leeds and acknowledge that this is an important milestone for the ongoing improvement journey.

6.2 It is also recommended that Executive Board formally acknowledge the important role that the Improvement Board has played in supporting the improvements made and in particular thank the Independent Chair Bill McCarthy and the Support and Challenge Advisor Penny Thompson for their key contributions, and the partner agencies on the Board.

6.3 It is further recommended that Executive Board thank the workforce of the Council and its partners for achieving this significant milestone and continue their support for rising to the outstanding performance challenges.

## **7 Background documents**

7.1 Report to Executive Board 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – Children's Services Improvement Arrangements

- 7.2 Report to Executive Board 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011 - Ofsted Annual Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements in Children's Services
- 7.3 Report to Executive Board 12<sup>th</sup> October 2011 - Findings of the Announced Ofsted Re-inspection of Safeguarding Services for Children and Young People in Leeds
- 7.4 Report to Executive Board 14<sup>th</sup> December 2011 - The Ofsted Annual Assessment of Children's Services in Leeds



# Improvement Notice

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To: Name LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

Address Civic Hall, Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 1UR

**This Improvement Notice is being issued due to poor performance in:**

Children's services

**on the basis of evidence contained in:**

Ofsted's August 2009 unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements.

Ofsted's annual assessment 2009, which judged Leeds' children's services to be "performing poorly".

Ofsted's January 2010 inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services which judged Leeds' overall effectiveness of safeguarding services to be "inadequate".

**The duration of the Improvement Notice will be:**

From date of issue until the final review of progress relating to October 2011 is delivered. The Secretary of State may, at his discretion, choose to lift the Improvement Notice at an earlier date if he is satisfied that the necessary improvements have been made and are sustainable.

**The following measure(s) are needed for you to comply with this Improvement Notice:**

The Council must take action to:

- a. improve areas of weakness identified in the reports from the above inspections and assessments,
- b. improve performance against key indicators in the areas concerned; and
- c. put in place robust and sustainable arrangements to sustain and build on the improvements secured. In particular:

## **Safeguarding children**

Developing services and front-line practice:

- The Council is expected to improve the response to child protection referrals to meet statutory guidelines, and ensure discussions with the police and other agencies take place in a timely manner in all relevant circumstances, as set out in *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'*

- The Council must have clear multi-agency thresholds in place, shared with and understood by partners, in order for children and young people to access appropriate services and to ensure consistent and high quality referrals from other agencies.
- The Council needs to ensure that it has effective information management arrangements in place, ensuring that records for all children and young people are up-to-date and that assessment reports are routinely shared with parents as appropriate.
- The Council needs to ensure that it has effective quality assurance arrangements in place to monitor the quality of contact, referral and assessment services and ensure that assessments are of a consistently high standard.
- The Council must further embed the use of the CAF in practice across children's services so that it is effectively used to inform early intervention.
- The Council must demonstrate improvements in staff satisfaction (measured through the Council's corporate staff survey and the local social worker survey) and in the satisfaction of children and families (measured through various service specific surveys) throughout the term of the Improvement Notice.
- The Council must establish clear and agreed processes with partners in the Children's Trust and LSCB to ensure effective scrutiny and training takes place so that the quality of contacts, referrals and assessments improve.

Demonstrate clear evidence of improvement in outcomes, evidenced by improvements in the following performance indicators:

- NI 59 - whilst maintaining high quality, increase the percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within timescale to 72% for the month of June 2010, to 80% for the month of October 2010 and to 80% for the cumulative period October 2010 to March 2011
- NI 60 - whilst maintaining high quality, increase the percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement to 80% for the month of June 2010, to 84% for the month of October 2010 and to 85% for the cumulative period October 2010 to March 2011

### **Other areas of concern**

The Council must:

- Working with the National Challenge Board and any other government agencies as appropriate, effectively deliver the National Challenge

Programme, implement the Council's agreed plan for Schools Vulnerable to the National Challenge and ensure agreed targets are met.

- Deliver improvements in the following outcomes:
  - NI 78 - reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths to no schools in the 2011 examinations, with plans in place and demonstrable progress towards that goal by September 2010
  - NI 79 – increase achievement of Level 2 qualifications by the age of 19 to 75.2% in the 2009/10 academic year.
  - NI 102 - narrow the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a 5 ppts reduction at Key Stage 4 in the 2010 examinations
  - NI 108 - achieve a sustained upward trend in the achievement of black and mixed heritage pupils by the end of the academic year 2010/11
  - NI 117 – reduce the number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) to 6.8% in 2010/11
- Working with DCSF, GOYH, National Strategies and other government agencies as appropriate, the Council is expected to demonstrate overall improvements in LAA indicators relating to children's services and statutory attainment targets through the period of this Improvement Notice.

### **Building capacity and capability to deliver and sustain improvements**

The Council, working with its partners must ensure robust leadership and implementation of an effective improvement programme covering all staff and elected members and engaging partners, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, particularly in relation to safeguarding. It must:

- Cooperate with the independent chair to establish an Improvement Board and support the Board in providing effective challenge across the partnership to drive swift and sustainable progress through a robust improvement plan. The Council must provide the Improvement Board with robust evidence of both quantitative outcomes and qualitative processes as required. The Council must take full account of the advice and recommendations of the Improvement Board to deliver improvements in its children's services, and to continue to improve partnership arrangements.
- Prepare a robust Improvement Plan to be agreed with the Improvement Board for delivering improvements across children and young people's services, addressing all areas of weaknesses highlighted in Ofsted inspections, the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment and other areas of concern as appropriate.

- Monitor improvement in children's social care, by establishing rigorous performance management and quality assurance systems which deliver regular monitoring, scrutiny and quality assurance of social care performance.
- Increase capacity within children's social care, in particular at team manager and social worker levels, by ensuring that there is an effective senior management team responsible for social care.
- Review social workers' responsibilities and workloads to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and tightly defined, and that no staff carry too wide a range of work. This will need to involve consideration of whether a restructure of children's social care services is necessary to deliver high quality services.
- Develop a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff so that they have the skills to complete high quality and timely assessments

**Improvement against the above measures will be assessed as follows:**

The Improvement Board will receive regular updates on performance against the above measures. The Chair of the Improvement Board will report to the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Leeds City Council on a bi-monthly basis.

This will be supplemented by interim reviews in regard to performance at:

- The end of March 2010 (reported in May 2010)
- The end of September 2010 (reported in November 2010)
- The end of March 2011 (reported in May 2011)

as well as a final review at the end of October 2011. The Secretary of State may exceptionally require additional reports in light of these scheduled reviews.

**by:**

The Department for Children, Schools, and Families, who will, on the basis of measurable progress towards the targets outlined above, advise Ministers on any necessary follow-up action, taking account of reports from the Improvement Board and Leeds City Council.

**Failure to comply with this Improvement Notice by the assessment dates may lead to:**

The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families using statutory powers of intervention (s497A Education Act 1996) to direct the Council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the necessary and rapid improvements required in children's services.

Signed: *Jaan Prasad* Date: ..... 2 March 2010.....

## **LEEDS CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT NOTICE NOVEMBER 2011 UPDATE**

### **Purpose**

1. This is a consolidated update against all the areas in the Improvement Notice as at the end of the Improvement Notice period (insofar as is possible given availability of validated data). It follows the same format used for the interim update reports and is written within the context of all the detailed reports provided to Improvement Board on a monthly basis throughout the life of the Improvement Notice so far.

### **Background**

2. We have had an Improvement Notice in place since March 2010, with an Improvement Board meeting each month since January 2010 to provide monitoring and challenge. Once the detailed Improvement Plan was agreed in March 2010, we provided very rigorous monthly monitoring reports to the Improvement Board. Additionally, we have provided interim reports to DfE in May and October 2010, and in May 2011, which formed the basis of progress review meetings with DfE. Bill McCarthy, chair of the Improvement Board, has also provided regular reports to the Minister of State, from his perspective as chair of the Improvement Board. We have used all of this monitoring information to provide detailed quarterly updates to the Council's Executive Board, Scrutiny Board, and a Cross Party Member Reference Group. Latterly, we have also provided update reports to the Children's Trust Board and to the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Main Points**

3. Many areas of the Improvement Notice have been achieved in full, eg targets for Initial and Core Assessments. Some of the 'process' areas of the Improvement Notice are well on the way to being achieved, but will be a journey of continuous improvement, eg the quality and consistency of practice. A few areas of the Improvement Notice have not been met, eg the very challenging NEET targets.
4. Overall, significant progress has been made in all areas, and has been recognised in a number of Ofsted reports, including the recent Safeguarding Inspection report and the draft Annual Assessment Letter. Improvement Board have also recognised significant improvements in a number of areas. The Children's Trust Board is operating well and has an ambitious, and widely owned Children and Young People's Plan, which includes areas where there are significant outstanding challenges in terms of outcomes for children and young people in the city. The Leeds Education Challenge sits alongside the Children and Young People's Plan as an ambitious plan to improve learning in

the city, given the performance challenges in that area. The leadership and governance arrangements for the Leeds Education Challenge are part of the Children's Trust Board's remit, and also include a broader group of relevant stakeholders and external challenge from leading national experts. Extensive discussions are taking place with relevant DfE colleagues and with the Schools Commissioner about the plans for improvement in the city.

5. We are in the process of developing a new improvement plan, which is appropriate for the current stage of development. Subject to the outcome of the Progress Review meeting with the DfE, and ministerial considerations of the Leeds position, we would expect that the Children's Trust Board would own and drive this improvement plan. We expect that this improvement plan will include:
  - a. outstanding areas from the current Improvement Notice. Eg ICPC performance and quality and consistency
  - b. Ofsted recommendations eg CAF, ICT system, quality of recording
  - c. issues contained within the Annual Assessment letter eg educational performance and quality of residential provision
  - d. relevant work from the CYPP and the Leeds Education Challenge.
6. The work we are currently doing is to ensure that this approach has widespread ownership, sufficient depth and rigour to be effective, but that it doesn't duplicate other plans. The Children's Trust Board will want to ensure some appropriate external challenge to the ongoing improvement journey in order to maintain what has been effective through the Improvement Board, but without necessarily the frequency and detailed monitoring that has taken place so far.

## **Conclusion**

7. All the evidence is that we have made significant progress against the Improvement Notice and that we have ambitious and well owned plans in place for the key areas of outstanding challenge. The leadership and governance that wasn't in place when the Improvement Notice was issued is now in place and effectively driving improvement.

## **Recommendations**

8. DfE colleagues are asked to consider the papers this report, the other papers in this pack, and all the information that has been considered by the Improvement Board, as they consider the next steps in the DfE intervention process and as they advise ministers.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT NOTICE NOVEMBER 2011 UPDATE

<p>NI 59 - whilst maintaining high quality, increase the percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within timescale to 72% for the month of June 2010, to 80% for the month of October 2010 and to 80% for the cumulative period October 2010 to March 2011</p>
<p>As reported in May, the cumulative target from March 2010 to October 2010 of 80% for initial assessments being completed within timescales was met with a performance of 80.1%. Performance remains above the 80% target set in the improvement plan. The August performance (80.5%) is higher than the same period 12 months ago (78.3%) in spite of a 42% increase in the total number of initial assessments carried out. Intensive work continues to ensure the timeliness of initial assessments in spite of the continuing rise in the volume of assessments.</p> <p>Work has continued to ensure improvements to the quality of recording practice and this has reduced the amount of out of date and incomplete recording. A program of file auditing is in place with corrective actions being addressed in a timely manner. Iperformer continues to be used at all levels to manage performance, as has been reported in previous updates.</p>
<p>NI 60 - whilst maintaining high quality, increase the percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement to 80% for the month of June 2010, to 84% for the month of October 2010 and to 85% for the cumulative period October 2010 to March 2011</p>
<p>As reported in May, the cumulative target from March 2010 to October 2010 of 85% for core assessments being completed within timescales was met with a performance of 90.1%. Performance on core assessments continues to be strong in 2011/12 and exceeds the 85% target set in the improvement plan. The August performance (90.2%) is higher than the same period 12 months ago (81.4%) in spite of a 64% increase in the total number of core assessments carried out.</p> <p>Work has continued to ensure improvements to the quality of recording practice and this has reduced the amount of out of date and incomplete recording. A program of file auditing is in place with corrective actions being addressed in a timely manner. Iperformer continues to be used at all levels to manage performance, as has been reported in previous updates.</p>
<p>NI 78 - reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths to no schools in the 2011 examinations, with plans in place and demonstrable progress towards that goal by September 2010</p>
<p>Confirmed school level results for academic year 2010/11 will not be available until January 2012 however provisional results indicate that three schools are below the threshold of 30% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and maths. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Primrose, which has now re-opened as The Co-operative Academy; a sponsored academy that will specialise in Enterprise. Results have improved in 2011 to 28.9%, with a possibility that confirmed results will be at or nearer 30%.</li> <li>○ South Leeds Academy is part of a successful academy chain (Schools Partnership Trust) that has its own school improvement capacity. Current provisional reports available to the local authority suggest 25.4% of pupils reached the national level</li> </ul>



but the school has indicated that confirmed results may be higher.

- City of Leeds provisional results are currently 18.3%. An executive headteacher is now in place who has substantial experience of school improvement within Leeds. The school is also receiving significant support around leadership, curriculum, HR and financial issues. It is acknowledged that these results are not good enough and discussions about different structural solutions are underway with the school.

Given provisional information may change there is the potential for between 1 and 3 Leeds secondary schools will be below the 30% target level for 2011. Swallow Hill which was below in 2010 is now above the 30% level, academy proposals are progressing with this school.

There are ongoing reductions in the number of schools below the current and future floor standards. With the current floor standard of 35% provisional results for 2011 show four schools were below this level; an improvement from seven below in 2010. David Young Academy, John Smeaton and Parklands have all achieved results above the floor standard. In anticipation of the floor standard rising, there are five schools below 40% on this measure (10 in 2010); 11 below 45% (15 in 2010); and 15 below 50% (20 in 2010). Four schools improved by more than 10 percentage points. 60% of Leeds schools improved against this measure. These results are provisional and do not include consideration of progress measures.

Schools below 35% achieving 5A\*-C including English and maths in 2009

2009		2010		2011 - provisional	
Parklands	33%	Rodillian	48%	Rodillian	64%
Rodillian	33%	Farnley Park	45%	Farnley Park	47%
Farnley Park	32%	Leeds West Ac.	37%	David Young Ac	47%
Intake (closed)	30%	(Intake)	35%	Leeds West Ac. (Intake)	44%
David Young Ac.	29%	Carr Manor	32%	Carr Manor	41%
Carr Manor	27%	City of Leeds	32%	*Parklands Ac	38%
West Leeds	24%	Parklands	31%	Swallow Hill (Wort/W Lds)	31%
(closed) Primrose	16%	David Young Ac.	29%	*Co-operative Ac	29%
South Leeds	16%	South Leeds Ac	25%	(Primrose)	25%
(closed)	15%	Primrose	24%	South Leeds Ac	18%
Wortley (closed)	12%	Swallow Hill (Wort/W Lds)		City of Leeds	
City of Leeds					

Source: Performance tables 2009 and 2010, EPAS 2011

\* Academies from September 2011

A fundamentally new approach to school improvement in the context of an integrated Children's Service is now set out in the Leeds Education Challenge. Initially produced in response to the Secretary of State's request in March 2011 for plans to tackle primary and secondary schools performing below floor standard, the Leeds Education Challenge now goes beyond this remit by describing an ambitious city-wide commitment to a child-friendly city that drives school improvement. This policy will not tolerate under-performance and will seek to use all powers of the local authority to support, monitor, challenge and intervene as appropriate. The Children's Trust Board recently agreed the leadership structure for the Leeds Education Challenge, which embraces partnership working and includes advice and challenge from nationally renowned experts.

NI 79 – increase achievement of Level 2 qualifications by the age of 19 to 75.2% in the 2009/10 academic year.

The target of 75.2% for the 2009/10 academic year was not achieved with 73.7% reaching this level. This represented an increase of 2.6 %pts of Leeds young people reaching this level. We can be more confident about 2011 results based on the

position at age 18 of the cohort, that will be 19 in 2011. 76.1%, of this group had already reached level 2 by age 18. This is 6 %pts more than the 2010 cohort (who at the equivalent point achieved 70.1%) and the rate of improvement is twice the national rate. Ongoing improvement is being sustained with 70.8% of the cohort who will be 19 in 2011/12 already having reached level 2 by academic age 17. (DFE SFR04/2011)

2011 Key Stage 4 provisional data provides further confidence of ongoing improvement. Among the 2011 Year 11 cohort in Leeds (the cohort that will be 19 in 2013/14), 80.8% of young people have achieved level 2, which is the second year in a row that performance in Leeds has been above national for this indicator and Leeds is in the top half of local authorities for performance nationally. This accepts the methodologies for calculating achievement of the level 2 threshold are not directly comparable between the Key Stage 4 performance tables and the Level 2 and 3 attainment at 19 SFR.

NI 102 - narrow the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a 5 ppts reduction at Key Stage 4 in the 2010 examinations

In May we reported that improvements in attainment in 2010 had been greater for pupils eligible for free school meals than those who were not eligible and as a result the gaps had narrowed, but by differing degrees for different indicators. Provisional 2011 results show good progress in narrowing performance gaps at lower qualification levels but while more young people entitled to FSM are now reaching the 5+A\*-C including English and maths level a sizeable gap remains to the overall cohort. This is a key focus in developing the Leeds Education Challenge and in implementing an integrated approach to meet the needs of children, especially those with the greatest needs.

Provisional data for 2011 indicates that, since 2009 the rate of improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving **5 A\*-C GCSEs** has been almost twice as high for FSM pupils as pupils who are not eligible for FSM, increasing by 21%pts compared to 12%pts. The gap for this indicator has decreased from 34% pts in 2009 to 25%pts in 2011.

For the **5 A\*-C including English and maths indicator**, despite the gap between FSM and non FSM pupils narrowing slightly in 2010, over the period of the Improvement Notice (2009-2011) the gap has remained the same with both sets of pupils improving by 7%pts over the two years. The provisional gap between FSM and non FSM in 2011 is 35%pts.

The gap between FSM and non FSM pupils has narrowed for attainment of **5 A\*-G** since 2009 with the attainment of FSM pupils increasing 8%pts compared to a 1%pt increase for non FSM pupils.

Between 2009 and 2010 the rate of improvement for pupils eligible for free school meals was greater than the national improvement for FSM eligible pupils for 5A\*-C, 5A\*-C including English and maths and 5 A\*-G. National data is not yet available for 2011.

There is evidence from the data above that improvements are being made but this is not yet showing sufficient improvement in the key indicator of 5A\*-C including English and maths. Children and young people entitled to Free School Meals are a key vulnerable group being prioritised within the Leeds Education Challenge. This strand of the Leeds Education Challenge will be crucial to secure embedded improvement in

the city.

NI 108 - achieve a sustained upward trend in the achievement of black and mixed heritage pupils by the end of the academic year 2010/11

Provisional 2011 KS4 results indicate that BME cohorts of Black and Mixed heritage pupils are achieving improved results at a faster rate than the Leeds and national comparative averages. The improvement in the 5+A\*-C (inc E&M) indicator for Black groups in Leeds is 9.5 percentage points over 3 years the equivalent figure for Mixed groups is 7.3 percentage points while the overall total improvement for Leeds is 6.9 percentage points.

The most recent available national data for BME outcomes (2010) also indicates that the improvements seen in Leeds for Black and Mixed groups are faster than those seen for the same groups nationally. The improvements in Leeds from 2009 to 2010 for Black and Mixed groups were 10 percentage points and 4 percentage points respectively, compared to national improvements of 4 percentage points and 3 percentage points. It is accepted that gaps to both national and local averages need to continue to be narrowed, and as with FSM entitled pupils, the strand on vulnerable groups within the Leeds Education Challenge will continue to address and embed improvement.

The most recent available RAISEonline Attainment Analyses (2010) indicates that there were significantly fewer BME groups performing significantly below average. In 2009 all 5 Mixed / Black BME groups were judged as significantly below average. In 2010 only 1 group (Mixed White & Black Caribbean) was judged to be significantly below.

Ofsted analysis of 2010 results for 5+A\*-C (inc E&M) showed Leeds attainment for the Black cohort was above the statistical neighbour average. Additionally amongst our neighbours Leeds had the smallest gap between the Black cohort and the overall local authority result. For young people of mixed heritage Leeds compares less well with statistical neighbours having the third widest gap of the 8 authorities included.

Provisional 2011 Fisher Family Trust (FFT) Value Added (non-contextualised) analyses indicate that on the 5+A\*-C (inc E&M) measure all Asian groups made progress which was broadly in line with, or significantly above expectations. The Black African cohort (the fastest growing BME group in Leeds) made progress which was significantly above expectations however the progress of the Black Caribbean cohort continued to make progress which was below expectation.

Despite some improvement trends the attainment for various ethnic minority groups in all phases of education is still too variable and with gaps both to the Leeds average and to national peer groups that need to be closed.

Through the Leeds Education Challenge a more coherent approach is being used to tackle some of the more complex issues surrounding ethnic minority achievement. Through the use of individual pupil data there has been an increased understanding of the interplay of issues such as ethnicity, levels of deprivation, gender and in some cases special educational needs coming together to impact on standards of attainment of groups of young people. This approach is particularly evident when reviewing the number of schools below floor standards as a high number of these schools are concentrated in areas of the city where there are higher levels of deprivation than the average for the city and have much higher proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language. We do not however take deprivation as an excuse for underperformance and will continue to support schools to identify pupils for particular intervention and support.

NI 117 – reduce the number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) to 6.8% in 2010/11

The January 2011 target of 6.8% presented a significant challenge for the city. The level of NEET for the November 10 – January 11 period was 8.3%, remaining in-line with the reduced figure of 8.2% achieved the previous year. Leeds has achieved a significant reduction in the number of young people whose status is Not Known over the past year. This reduction can be attributed to the work done by the Connexions Service to improve tracking processes and recording practice. The Not Known figure was 4.8% in January 2011, compared to 10.9% the previous year.

With the changing of the NEET definition in April 2011 Leeds now has around 400 extra young people in the NEET cohort. Leeds continues to have a higher NEET rate than national levels, although it is slightly below the current average rate for statistical neighbours, with 5 neighbours with higher rates and 5 with lower rates. Based on the most recent comparative data (July 2011) Leeds has a lower rate of young people whose status is not known (7.8%), compared to national (10.4%) and statistical neighbour levels (9.3%). The percentage of Leeds young people in learning (77.8%) is above national (76.4%).

To ensure further improvement NEET has been identified as a city priority being driven through our Children's Trust Board arrangements as one of the partnerships three "obsessions". As part of this improvement, partnership activity is taking place within localities (clusters) to determine how partners and communities can best address NEET related issues in their localities.

City- wide actions to reduce NEET over the coming year include:

- Work to increase numbers of young people in apprenticeships, including the development of a mentoring scheme to support new apprenticeships, particularly at the point of transition from school.
- Strengthening and development of enterprise and employability skills in pre and post 16 provision, supported by business, through the Education Business Partnership.
- Work with schools to ensure they provide good careers guidance support to young people under their new duties.
- Ensure IAG and careers guidance within schools and other learning providers links to future job prospects to raise aspirations;
- Implementation of the IAG targeted service review to commission quality services to enable vulnerable young people to participate in learning
- Improve the progression information and advice available to parents / carers.
- Work with post 16 learning providers, including the West Yorkshire Colleges Consortium, to ensure learners facing financial hardship in accessing learning receive appropriate financial support.
- Develop a city wide strategic action plan that joins up the work of children's and adult services with 14 to 19 year olds. This will focus on placing NEET in the context of city-wide issues such the raising of the participation age as youth employment, apprenticeships, jobs and skills, and changes to the provision of IAG.
- Use of systematic process in all schools to identify a learning pathway and progression route for every young person.
- Analysis of young people NEET and their needs to improve the recruitment of young people to available programmes.
- Investing in long term solutions by raising aspirations at an early age through

development of resources and training for primary schools on the careers curriculum, including systems for work across primary and secondary schools

National changes to the provision of careers education and information, advice and guidance; and reductions in financial support to young people in learning combined with the ongoing economic context provide a challenging background for improvement.

The Council is expected to improve the response to child protection referrals to meet statutory guidelines, and ensure discussions with the police and other agencies take place in a timely manner in all relevant circumstances, as set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

The timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences and response to referrals continues to improve against a backdrop of considerably increased workloads. A great deal of work around improving attendance, systems, procedures and processes and staffing is now starting to come to fruition.

- The improvement trend of the timeliness of ICPC's being reported in May has continued and the stand alone figure for ICPC's held within 15 days for August was 68.9%. There has also been a reduction in the number of overdue conferences with the majority taking place within 20 days (in the last 11 months 10 of these months have achieved 50% or higher ICPC's completed within 20 working days). There has also been a reduction in the number of cancelled conferences.
- As a result of an agreement reached between schools and Education Services, there was education input to 100% of ICPCs and core groups which took place during the school summer holidays.
- The number of conference chairs has been significantly increased to 10 established posts plus two additional posts to meet the demand for conferences.
- The service has recently introduced a duty system of conference chairs to provide additional challenge at the point of ICPC booking or cancellation.
- A new system for overseeing child protection core group meetings has been put in place which will provide greater consistency of approach as well as better analysis of agency attendance.
- The LSCB has now established an initial baseline for ICPC performance and will continue to monitor and further refine suitable interventions aimed at achieving continuing improvement in attendance at ICPCs and outcomes for children.

The Council must have clear multi-agency thresholds in place, shared with and understood by partners, in order for children and young people to access appropriate services and to ensure consistent and high quality referrals from other agencies.

In May, it was reported that the January 2011 unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment had identified that there had been considerable progress in this area since the last inspection. In particular the inspection noted that senior managers provide strong leadership for Children's Services and this has resulted in a remarkable and impressive improvement in the quality of the services and the safety of children in the city. This has been confirmed in the recent Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding.

Having clear multi agency thresholds in place that are shared with and understood by partners continues to be recognised as an important issue. Examples to demonstrate this include:

- The screening team in the Contact Centre has been increased. The team now includes two managers, an advanced practitioner, two social work staff and administrative support.
- The screening team are continuing to ensure the thresholds are adhered to and this is demonstrated through the rise in the percentage of referrals which lead to

an initial assessment (formerly NI 68). Since the screening team started in May 2010, the percentage of referrals that lead to an initial assessment has maintained its performance of 70% since March 2011 which is a considerable increase on previous year end figures (54.6% in 08/09 and 60.7% in 09/10).

- To ensure appropriate thresholds are applied, the domestic violence protocol is being revised and shared with relevant partners.
- Work is being undertaken to explore options for the co-location of C&YPSC and Police resources to provide the appropriate filter and signposting of DV notifications

The Council needs to ensure that it has effective information management arrangements in place, ensuring that records for all children and young people are up-to-date and that assessment reports are routinely shared with parents as appropriate.

In May it was reported that funding had been agreed for a replacement for the ESCR system. The Practice Standards manual had been finalised and is available online and the practice improvement programme had been undertaken. Work continues to replace ESCR specifically:

- There is extensive engagement of practitioners in the whole design and procurement of the new system, to ensure that the ICT supports practice.
- The first phase of the tender process, pre-qualification questionnaire assessment, has been completed resulting in seven suppliers being short listed to submit tenders detailing how their systems meet LCC user requirements.
- Before the suppliers can submit their tender proposals LCC are to issue a Statement of Requirements Specification (SoR). The SoR has been released to suppliers in October 2011.
- Suppliers will submit their responses in November 2011. System demonstrations will take place in January, site visits in February with a final decision in relation to the preferred supplier being made in May 2012.
- Running in parallel to the procurement, significant pre-implementation work has also been initiated to a) review processes, templates and forms in readiness to build and configure the system and b) map all the data, both paper and electronic, and undertake a data cleansing exercise in preparation for the migration to the new system.

The service is also updating the practice standards manual sections on recording practice with an emphasis on avoiding delays in completed work being placed on the ESCR. Additionally, significant improvements have been made to the current system that have made for a better user experience.

The Council needs to ensure that it has effective quality assurance arrangements in place to monitor the quality of contact, referral and assessment services and ensure that assessments are of a consistently high standard.

- In May it was reported that the unannounced inspection of January 2011 validated the changes made to monitor the quality of the contact, referral, and assessment service. These changes have been embedded further and the quality assurance of case files continues to be a key element of service delivery. Ofsted recently said "Cases referred to the social care services receive prompt attention, those that result in assessment are allocated promptly and the progress of assessments is closely monitored by managers."

Examples that demonstrate how this is being achieved include:

- Monthly auditing on children's social care case files is now established as part of the Casefile Audit Framework which is now in its third month of operation. Key themes are being drawn from the audit work and corrective actions are being put

<p>into place. The continued number of Advanced Practitioners across the teams also contributes significantly to improvements in the quality of assessments and to risk analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has been carried out to address areas of weak recording practices which resulted in significant improvements in addressing the volume of out of date and incomplete recording. The momentum of this intensive work is being carried forward with ongoing challenge and support to staff across all teams in order to ensure that progress is maintained and improved upon.</li> <li>• The LSCB has developed a performance management system and is now receiving regular performance reports of quarterly available information. Professor David Thorpe has been commissioned jointly by the LSCB and CTB to work on an updated evaluation of contacts, referrals and assessments.</li> </ul>
<p>The Council must further embed the use of the CAF in practice across children's services so that it is effectively used to inform early intervention.</p>
<p>Common assessment (CAF) practice has gained in momentum during 2011 in terms of fewer CAFs being abandoned, more multi agency meetings are taking place and the process is timelier with a larger proportion of meetings being held within agreed timescales. The majority of CAFs are closed with needs met. Parents' ratings are very good, and parent evaluation suggests that common assessments are helpful and supportive.</p> <p>However as reflected in the recent Safeguarding Inspection, we need to significantly increase the usage of CAF. The 2010/11 period shows a reduction in CAFs initiated (958) compared to 2009/10 (1063) and rates are yet to pick up to desired levels for 2011/12. To address this improving the use of CAF is a partnership priority, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A renewed communication strategy being launched to promote the use of CAF.</li> <li>• Local Authority Partners (senior council staff) will act as advocates for CAFs within each of our local cluster partnership arrangements.</li> <li>• Pilot clusters have Target Service Leaders embedded to coordinate responses to local need including better application of the CAF.</li> <li>• Changes to the CAF process to emphasise the partnership approach and to minimise the paperwork.</li> <li>• More regular performance management information is being produced for services and clusters.</li> <li>• Clear expectations about the number of CAF's a service will be required to undertake.</li> <li>• Links to the roll out of restorative practice as a way of working with families locally.</li> </ul> <p>Leeds is currently working towards a permanent electronic solution through the national eCAF trial. The trial in Leeds began successfully with a number of participants in West Leeds. A consultation ended on 30th September and we are awaiting the final outcomes to determine our next steps. We continue updating and improving the current system and input our learning into the work around the new social care system.</p>
<p>The Council must demonstrate improvements in staff satisfaction (measured through the Council's corporate staff survey and the local social worker survey) and in the satisfaction of children and families (measured through various service specific surveys) throughout the term of the Improvement Notice.</p>
<p>Staff satisfaction and the satisfaction of children, young people and families continue to be gathered across the directorate and is considered critical to improving service provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 17<sup>th</sup> October the council opened its new employee engagement survey. Staff will be able to complete the survey up until 11<sup>th</sup> November. The survey is different</li> </ul>

from previous surveys in that is shorter and looks at the simple things that affect the way staff feel about their jobs. The survey will collect information from as many staff as possible to build an understanding of how engaged staff are with the jobs they do and with the council. The results will be shared with staff in December. The survey will be repeated regularly throughout the year with samples of staff. By carrying out regular surveys throughout the year the authority will be able to take regular action on the answers obtained and see what's improved. Staff will also get more feedback on a more regular basis about how their views are being used.

- The results of the Parent and Carers Survey were presented to Social Care SLT on 21<sup>st</sup> July. CYPSC has recommenced carrying out the survey from July. Methods of consulting with parents for whom completion of a written survey is not appropriate are being explored and recommendations will be discussed with CYPSC SLT once the various options have been identified and investigated.
- The new case conference system has been running since mid August. The parental questionnaire about conferences continues to be undertaken. Early analysis indicates that parents are in favour of the new conference system. Verbal feedback on the new system has also been very positive.
- The 2010/11 ECM Survey has been undertaken and the report of findings will be published in November. Early analysis confirms that children and young people in Leeds continue to report that they feel safe, and that bullying levels are comparatively low.
- There is extensive work with children and young people through the approach to child friendly city, that is ensuring that there is a stronger voice being heard, and crucially that this is being responded to.

During their recent inspection, Ofsted noted 'User engagement and participation are good. The participation of children, young people and families in service planning and review is given a high priority in children's services. A wide range of consultation groups and forums are used to gather the views of service users.'

The Council must establish clear and agreed processes with partners in the Children's Trust and LSCB to ensure effective scrutiny and training takes place so that the quality of contacts, referrals and assessments improve.

In May it was reported that strong new partnership arrangements had been developed in Children's Services over the last year despite considerable change for many partners and significant shifts in government policy. Both the Leeds Children's Trust Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board were fully constituted and meeting effectively on a regular basis. In November 2011 these partnership arrangements have embedded further, resulting in an increasingly productive working relationship between the LSCB and CTB.

The LSCB has developed a performance management system and is now receiving regular performance reports of quarterly available information. Professor David Thorpe has been commissioned jointly by the LSCB and CTB to work on an updated evaluation of contacts, referrals and assessments. The LSCB is developing its Multi Agency Audit Programme. An audit of the effectiveness of Child Protection Plans will be initiated in Feb 2012.

Implementation of the performance management framework is progressing significantly, with very regular data being produced in all the key areas, and at a range of geographic levels. Dashboards are being considered by the CTB, clusters and the leadership team, in a much more active way to ensure the relentless focus on impact. The consistent use of Outcomes based accountability at all levels, with trained facilitators supporting this, is making a big difference.



The recent Ofsted inspection noted that:

- "The LSCB is adequate and meets its statutory responsibilities. It has an independent chair who provides effective leadership. She has worked to secure the effective engagement of all members and is beginning to challenge agencies on their contribution to safeguarding."
- "The LSCB has reviewed and improved its multi-agency training programme and access to this high quality training is good. It has secured resources to establish new posts to support the business of the board in 2011-12 and will use these to improve communication, consultation, quality assurance, performance monitoring and the participation of children and young people."
- "The CTB has established strong performance management arrangements and key performance measures are reported by senior managers on a monthly basis."

Working with the National Challenge Board and any other government agencies as appropriate, effectively deliver the National Challenge Programme, implement the Council's agreed plan for Schools Vulnerable to the National Challenge and ensure agreed targets are met.

A refreshed approach to school improvement in the context of an integrated Children's Service is now set out in the Leeds Education Challenge. Initially produced in response to the Secretary of State's request in March 2011 for plans to tackle primary and secondary schools performing below floor standard, the Leeds Education Challenge now goes beyond this remit by describing an ambitious city-wide commitment to a child-friendly city that drives school improvement. The Children's Trust Board recently agreed the leadership structure for the Leeds Education Challenge, which embraces partnership working and includes advice from nationally renowned experts.

In addition we continue to work with national colleagues to address underperformance. The number of secondary sponsored academies is continuing to increase and discussions are progressing on how best the development of primary academies in Leeds can be applied as a school improvement solution. Including converter academies there are likely to be at least 14 secondary academies by the end of 2011/12

There are ongoing reductions in the number of schools below the current and future floor standards. The current floor standard is 35% of pupils achieving 5 good GCSEs including English and maths GCSE. In 2011 four schools were below this level; an improvement from seven below in 2010. David Young Academy, John Smeaton and Parklands have all achieved results above the floor standard. In anticipation of the floor standard rising, there are five schools below 40% on this measure (10 in 2010); 11 below 45% (15 in 2010); and 15 below 50% (20 in 2010). Four schools improved by more than 10 percentage points. 60% of Leeds schools improved against this measure. These results are provisional and do not include consideration of progress measures.

Working with DCSF, GOYH, National Strategies and other government agencies as appropriate, the Council is expected to demonstrate overall improvements in LAA indicators relating to children's services and statutory attainment targets through the period of this Improvement Notice.

The Leeds Strategic Plan and associated indicators came to an end in March 2011. They have been replaced by five City Priority Plans including the CYPP in Children's Services. A robust performance management approach is in place and this was ratified by the recent announced inspection of safeguarding which judged the performance management and quality assurance to be good, a significant improvement on the inadequate judgement received last time. Outcome based accountability is being used across the partnerships in the city as a working method to

<p>help drive collective action on priority areas and to understand what makes a difference.</p>
<p>Cooperate with the independent chair to establish an Improvement Board and support the Board in providing effective challenge across the partnership to drive swift and sustainable progress through a robust improvement plan. The Council must provide the Improvement Board with robust evidence of both quantitative outcomes and qualitative processes as required. The Council must take full account of the advice and recommendations of the Improvement Board to deliver improvements in its children's services, and to continue to improve partnership arrangements.</p>
<p>The Improvement Board continues to meet on a monthly basis. Regular updates against the Improvement Plan are provided to the Board along with other themed reports and detailed performance information. The Improvement Board Chair has effective communications through to the Council's Chief Executive, leader of the Council and Children's Services Scrutiny.</p>
<p>Prepare a robust Improvement Plan to be agreed with the Improvement Board for delivering improvements across children and young people's services, addressing all areas of weaknesses highlighted in Ofsted inspections, the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment and other areas of concern as appropriate.</p>
<p>A robust monthly monitoring and evaluation process continues to be in place which ensures continued accountability by services responsible for delivery against recommendations.</p> <p>The areas for development identified in the recent re-inspection of safeguarding have been developed into a 'Inspection Recommendation Action Plan' which will be regularly monitored by the social care senior leadership team and CSLT.</p> <p>To oversee the performance improvement work being undertaken across services and with partners, an improvement plan is being developed for CSLT and the CTB. This action plan will reference and signpost to ongoing improvement work such as the Inspection Recommendation Action Plan, remaining Improvement Plan actions, the priorities of the Education Leeds Challenge; CYP Obsession Action Plans and Key Priority Indicator Report Cards as well as Blocks A, B and C of the Ofsted Profile used to determine the annual assessment judgement of Children's Services.</p>
<p>Monitor improvement in children's social care, by establishing rigorous performance management and quality assurance systems which deliver regular monitoring, scrutiny and quality assurance of social care performance.</p>
<p>The recent re-inspection of safeguarding resulted in the category 'Performance management and quality assurance' move up two grades from inadequate to good. The inspection report states "the robust approach taken to quality assurance is driving up standards. This has made a significant contribution to the improvements achieved in the overall effectiveness of safeguarding and the distance travelled since the last full safeguarding inspection in 2009."</p> <p>Quality assurance continues to be a key driver for improving performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 110 audits of child protection and LAC cases were undertaken in July as part of a thematic audit of CYPSC files. 90.9% were judged to evidence an overall acceptable level of practice. No cases were deemed to fall within either the poorest practice standards category (overall score of 1) or the highest practice standards category (overall score of 5).</li> <li>• 134 audits were carried out in August and the corrective actions identified in these are being addressed.</li> <li>• The case file audit framework is currently being further developed to include methodologies which will ensure that standards are applied consistently across</li> </ul>

<p>audits and that corrective actions identified as being needed are completed appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new case conference system has been running since mid August. The parental questionnaire about conferences continues to be undertaken. Early analysis indicates that parents are in favour of the new conference system. Initial verbal feedback on the new system has also been very positive.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase capacity within children's social care, in particular at team manager and social worker levels, by ensuring that there is an effective senior management team responsible for social care.</p>
<p>The service redesign in social care is based on social work teams working to much smaller geographic localities ensuring that relationships between professionals in clusters are much stronger. At the 'front door', the screening team has been expanded, and work is now underway with Professor David Thorpe to implement plans which will lead to social workers being more directly involved in calls at the outset. This will ensure that children's needs are more effectively identified and the most appropriate service is offered to families through early intervention and targeted services. These approaches are aimed at reducing the demand for social work services by intervening effectively at an earlier stage with families by offering the appropriate support and intervention.</p> <p>As part of the service redesign in Children's Social Care, caseload targets were set in order to inform the capacity required to ensure effective service delivery. It was agreed that social workers in child protection and children in need teams would carry an average caseload of 20, and in looked after children's teams 22.</p> <p>The initial target of recruiting 24 Advanced Practitioners has been met. Recruitment will continue towards a higher number of 56 Advanced Practitioners in the service redesign.</p> <p>The senior leadership team has been significantly enhanced with new Head of Service posts and a new Assistant Chief Officer role.</p> <p>The recent inspection concluded "Significant financial investment has been made by the local authority to increase the number of employed social workers and considerable investment has been made to train and develop staff – through the practise improvement programme (PIP), the creation of advanced practitioner posts and relevant, good quality training."</p>
<p>Review social workers' responsibilities and workloads to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and tightly defined, and that no staff carry too wide a range of work. This will need to involve consideration of whether a restructure of children's social care services is necessary to deliver high quality services.</p>
<p>The service redesign in social care is based on social work teams working to much smaller geographic localities ensuring that relationships between professionals in clusters are much stronger. At the 'front door', the screening team has been expanded, and work is now underway with Professor David Thorpe to implement plans which will lead to social workers being more directly involved in calls at the outset.</p> <p>The average caseload figure in June 2011 was 23 and reflects an improvement from 2009. The average caseload figure as at 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011 is 21. For the cohort of newly qualified social workers who started in March 2011, the average caseload stands at 17, as at 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011, with more complex cases co-worked or supported by Advanced Practitioners.</p> <p>There remains some variation in terms of the actual numbers each social worker has at</p>

any given time. This is impacted upon by the current structure of assessment and care management teams, where numbers of open cases in assessment teams fluctuate with the turnover of work associated with the cycle of teams responding to their duty arrangements.

As a result of this demand led dynamic social workers in assessment teams have a level of fluctuation in their caseloads. This is monitored closely and adjustments made to duty arrangements to respond to particular pressures in teams where the numbers of cases is high. Caseloads can be actively monitored at all times through the workload manager element of iperformer on ESCR. Senior managers monitor where individual caseloads exceed 25, and commission reports to explain the reasons for this and the actions taking place to reduce caseloads.

Front line staff have reported that they feel things are better with regard to capacity and the plans outlined above are aimed at ensuring the capacity developed is sustainable and outcomes for children in Leeds continue to improve.

Develop a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff so that they have the skills to complete high quality and timely assessments.

Leeds continues to provide a wide range of training and development to meet the needs of social care staff. We have recently;

- Rolled out action learning sets to all Team Managers and Advanced Practitioners
- Reviewed and improved the NQSW programme
- Piloted practical workshops on Section 47 / Core Assessments, Chairing Meetings, Direct Work – use of resources and Risk Assessment to enhance current skills and pre-empt training needs arising from the restructure. Further workshops are to be rolled out prior to January 2012
- Organised briefings on ‘Child Participation in Child Protection Conferences’ for social care staff from November – January 2012
- Put in place a comprehensive training programme within residential children homes to meet the DfE minimum standards and OFSTED requirements

Leeds has also started to review our current approach to social work development in line with the recent Social Work Reform Board’s proposals for a Continuous Professional Development framework and overarching professional capabilities. Within this programme of work the authority is part of a national working group on the implementation of the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) from September 2012.

The Children’s Services Directorate workforce development plan is complete, and includes relevant areas of professional development as well as organisational development. The wider partnership workforce development plan is work in progress, and the CYPP is clear on three ‘ways of working’ that will inform this plan – restorative practice, outcomes based accountability and voice and influence. Building the confidence of the widest possible workforce in dealing with safeguarding issues effectively will be an ongoing priority for the city.

The Improvement Board will receive regular updates on performance against the above measures. The Chair of the Improvement Board will report to the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Leeds City Council on a bi-monthly basis.

The Improvement Board continues to meet on a monthly basis. Regular updates against the Improvement Plan are provided to the Board along with other reports and detailed performance information.

An interim improvement update, tracking progress against the Improvement Notice was discussed by the Improvement Board on 9 May. This was submitted to the DfE and informed the Progress Review Meeting with DfE on 20 May.

The chair of the Improvement Board has submitted regular reports to the Minister of State, based on the work of the Improvement Board.

In terms of reporting progress to the council, a detailed improvement update report was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The most recent update was considered on 2 November.

Rm 1W09  
Quarry House  
Quarry Hill  
Leeds LS2 7UE

Tel: 0113 254 5842

8 December 2011

Tim Loughton  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3BT

Dear Minister

LEEDS CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BOARD

I am writing to update you on progress with the work of the Leeds Children's Services Improvement Board.

The Improvement Board first met in January 2010 and I have submitted regular reports to Ministers since then.

As set out in the Improvement Notice, Children's Services in Leeds have had a great deal of work to do and ground to make up to achieve the aims of giving every child in the city a safe environment and the best chance of achieving their potential. I am pleased that the unannounced and announced safeguarding inspections undertaken this calendar year and the overall performance assessment by OFSTED have confirmed that significant improvement has been made – services are now judged to be adequate with good prospects for the future. The announced inspection of safeguarding saw measurable improvements in six of the nine categories, with five now good including ambition, capacity to improve, leadership and performance. This is very encouraging. But we should not underestimate the distance still to travel to achieve consistent excellence.

Since I started chairing the Improvement Board, I have been looking for evidence of self-generated momentum and sustainability of change. Three factors are, in my view, essential:

- an open outlook, benchmarking Leeds against other areas and searching out the very best practice to adopt;
- a culture of performance with a rigorous and unrelenting focus on key measures and indicators of impact on children and young people's outcomes;
- strong leadership.

At its inception, the Improvement Board needed to compensate for weaknesses in each of these critical areas – we brought an expert, external perspective to the work of the council and its partners; we required the improvement plans to be monitored rigorously and ensured that members and council leadership fora had progress reported regularly; we gave support and direction to two interim Directors and advised on leadership arrangements.

I am satisfied that capability and focus is now very different. To their credit, the council has placed children’s services right at the top of their priorities, with continuous leadership focus from the new Chief Executive and Director as well as from political leadership across all groups. Through his own initiative, the new Director has brought national and international expert advisers to the development of services; and is proposing to establish a twice-yearly reference event to take external advice. Partnership arrangements across the city are much improved and characterised by shared commitment and responsibility. A fully-refreshed leadership team has been recruited, and I have been assured that a granular and hard-headed approach to implementing and sustaining improvement plans will be maintained and hard-wired into the council’s own corporate performance governance arrangements and the Children’s Trust Board.

Our judgement is now how best to accelerate improvement into the future. I am confident that leaders in the city are honest and fully aware of the work still to be done. The language of ambition and obsession for young people in the city is an authentic reflection of the developing culture.

My view is that the council has reached the point, on the basis of the steps outlined in the paragraphs above, where the Improvement Notice and Improvement Board arrangements can safely be removed. Indeed, I believe this would reinforce local momentum and commitment as well as being a fair response to the progress made.

I hope this is a helpful summary and recommendation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill McCarthy  
Managing Director – NHS Commissioning Board Authority  
Independent Chair for Leeds Children’s Services Improvement Board



**Tim Loughton MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT  
tel: 0370 0012345 ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk

Councillor Keith Wakefield  
Leader of Leeds City Council  
Civic Hall  
Calverley Street  
Leeds  
LS1 1UR

21 December 2011

*Dear Councillor Wakefield,*

I am writing regarding the Improvement Notice given to Leeds City Council by the Department for Education on 2 March 2010. This was given to the Council because of concerns about poor performance in delivering Children's Services in Leeds.

Officials from the Department met your Executive Member for Children's Services, the Chief Executive, the Director of Children's Services and other key officers on 7 November to review progress against the requirements of the Improvement Notice and the recommendations made by Ofsted following its inspection of safeguarding in September.

I have now heard from my officials following this review and I have read with interest the report from your independent Improvement Board Chair, Bill McCarthy and your plans to sustain improvement. I was pleased to hear of the significant improvements you have achieved to date and your commitment and clear plans to achieve a continued focus on safeguarding of children and young people in the City. In particular, it was good to learn about your plans for the "Leeds Children's Services Challenge and Support Panel". I see strong self awareness and expert and peer challenge as crucial to sustaining and building on improvements.

I wanted to acknowledge the hard work of Council staff and its partner organisations in bringing about this marked improvement and in the constructive way the Council has engaged with my officials.



Whilst all the reports acknowledge the strong progress you have made, they do also note some further areas for improvement, including:

- improving the Council's electronic social care record system;
- improving attendance, quality and timescales for initial children protection conferences;
- improving the quality of assessments to help achieve a consistent standard across the service;
- ensuring better information sharing between partner agencies in relation to domestic violence; and
- ensuring the common assessment framework (CAF) is used more effectively by all agencies.

I know that you have an ongoing improvement plan already in place to address these particular issues, which I welcome. I would like my officials to meet your officers again in March 2012, to hear about progress with this and to provide me with final reassurance that achievements have been embedded and sustained.

Whilst I recognise the good progress Leeds has made on safeguarding, I remain concerned about the pace of progress on improving education standards, both at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. Progress has not been as good as we would like to have seen through the lifetime of the Improvement Notice.

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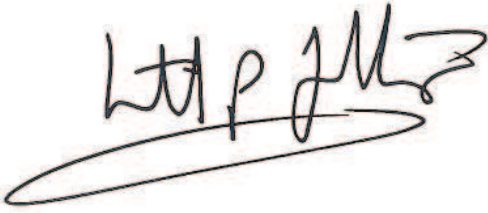
Since March 2010 when the Improvement Notice was given to the Council there has been a change of Government and consequently education policy has changed. I am aware that education standards in Leeds need to improve further and in particular the progress in converting underperforming schools to sponsored Academies has been slow. The Secretary of State believes that in schools where there has been consistent underperformance over a number of years, conversion to Academy status will be the catalyst for rapid progress and transformation. I am therefore expecting to see a commitment from the Council to working with my officials to address the issue of the Council's underperforming schools and for the Council to actively engage in developing Academy solutions for its worst performing schools.

Overall, in light of the commitment Leeds City Council has shown, the improvements made to date and Ofsted's judgement that safeguarding services in Leeds are now adequate with some good elements, and the progress in some of the, focussed aspects of educational attainment identified in the Improvement Notice, I am confirming that I no longer consider the Improvement Notice to be necessary, and am lifting this with immediate effect.

I congratulate you on the progress made with safeguarding to date, and hope to hear that this is supported by further improvements in Education Standards across the City, to raise the life chances of all young people in Leeds.

I am copying this letter to: Councillor Judith Blake - Executive Member for Children's Services, Tom Riordan - Chief Executive, Nigel Richardson –

Director of Children's Services and Mariana Pexton - Deputy Director of Children's Services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LTP JMS', with a large, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the signature.

**TIM LOUGHTON MP**

**Report of Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Subject: East Leeds Regeneration Board**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burmantofts &amp; Richmond Hill</li> <li>• Cross Gates &amp; Whinmoor</li> <li>• Garforth &amp; Swillington</li> <li>• Gipton &amp; Harehills</li> <li>• Harewood</li> <li>• Killingbeck &amp; Seacroft</li> <li>• Temple Newsham</li> </ul>		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

**Summary of main issues**

1. Provides Executive Board with clarification on the governance arrangements relating to the East Leeds Regeneration Board, a proposed sub board of the Leeds Initiative's Housing and Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board.

**Recommendations**

2. Members are asked to approve the arrangements set out in this report.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To establish the governance arrangements for the East Leeds Regeneration Board and seek Executive Board approval to these.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011 Executive Board considered the proposed working arrangements to support the five Strategic Partnership Boards established under the new Leeds Initiative Board. Members agreed that it would be appropriate to establish sub-boards to these partnerships, based on the overarching principle that they should be simple, strategic, focussed, inclusive, powerful and decisive.
- 2.2 To establish these working arrangements Executive Board agreed that:
  - sub-boards should be formed or closed through a minuted decision of the Leeds initiative Board or one of the Strategic Partnership Boards;
  - the sub-board is added to the terms of reference of the Leeds Initiative Board or one of the Strategic Partnership Boards that has overarching responsibility for the new sub-board;
  - in urgent cases the sub-board can commence or close on request of the chair of the Leeds Initiative Board or the relevant Strategic Partnership Board, such decision to be reported to the next available meeting of the appropriate board.
- 2.3 In respect of the Housing & Regeneration Strategic Priority Board it was agreed that the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods would be responsible for convening sub-boards and making the necessary arrangements for support.
- 2.4 It was additionally recommended that a report be submitted to a future Executive Board meeting in order to provide clarity on the specific arrangements proposed for the East Leeds Regeneration Board, a proposed sub-board of the Housing & Regeneration Strategic Priority Board.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the Leeds Initiative's Housing & Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board considered the Director's proposal to establish regeneration sub-boards covering East, South and West Leeds. It also considered specific proposals for Terms of Reference for the East Leeds Regeneration Board, as discussions on this have been further advanced than for other areas.
- 3.2 The Partnership Board approved the formation of the regeneration sub-boards. It also approved the Terms of Reference for East Leeds, subject to the further approval of Executive Board. These Terms are attached at Appendix 1, together with a plan showing the area of reference and relationship to adjoining regeneration programme areas.
- 3.3 Further details on the sub-boards for South and West Leeds will be brought to future meetings of the Executive Board.

- 3.4 The Housing and Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board co-ordinates the city's response to the City Priority Plan, focussing on priorities to:
- maximise regeneration investment to increase housing choice and affordability within sustainable neighbourhoods;
  - enable growth of the City whilst minimising the impact on the environment and the distinctive green character of Leeds; and
  - improve housing conditions and energy efficiency.
- 3.5 The East Leeds Regeneration Board is proposed to oversee, guide and monitor the delivery of these priorities as part of a regeneration programme for this area. This recognises the scale of regeneration needs in this part of the city and the potential for positive changes to contribute to both local improvements and the achievement of wider city outcomes. This strategic approach to regeneration will ensure that:
- the growth of the city is sustainable and provides long-term benefits for all;
  - regeneration activity is creating the right physical environment for the delivery of vibrant and sustainable communities;
  - a range of housing types, sizes and tenures exist that can meet the full range of residents' needs in a growing city; and local people benefit from regeneration investment
- 3.6 It should be noted that the sub-board will be an advisory body only in relation to regeneration work within the area of east Leeds, providing a forum through which regeneration activity, proposed or underway in East Leeds is co-ordinated.
- 3.7 The sub-board will need to offer a clear and transparent route for communication with third party and private sector investment interests, as it is clear that for the foreseeable future these will be the principal means through which investment in the city's neighbourhoods will be delivered, unless there is further significant government or other public funding. The East Leeds Regeneration Board should therefore have the ability to influence the investment decisions of private partners and third parties such that these derive benefit to residents and businesses in the area.
- 3.8 However it should be recognised that the private sector lead on investment in regeneration brings with it the need for careful management of commercial interests and potential conflicts between these and other public and partner interests. It is therefore proposed that a dedicated 'investors forum' is formed, where land owners and/or investors are able to discuss commercial and operational matters, the outcomes of which are reported into the East Leeds Regeneration Board. This will have no commercial or contractual relationship with any business, land or investment interests.
- 3.9 The geographical coverage and scope of regeneration in East Leeds warrants close involvement from ward members; it would be appropriate to have cross-party representation on the sub-board, though the appointment of members to the sub-board will need to be considered by Member Management Committee.
- 3.10 The proposed membership of the sub-board is set out below:

- 1 x Member from each relevant Council ward:
  - Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
  - Crossgates & Whinmoor
  - Garforth & Swillington
  - Gipton & Harehills
  - Harewood
  - Killingbeck & Seacroft
  - Temple Newsham
- Member of Parliament for Leeds East
- Member of Parliament for Elmet & Rothwell
- Metro (West Yorkshire PTE)
- Homes and Communities Agency
- 2 x private sector representatives
- 1 x third sector representative

3.11 A Member from each of the principal opposition parties will be drawn from wards covered by the sub board where not already allocated.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 The Housing & Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board has considered and approved the establishment of sub-boards focussing on area regeneration in East, South and West Leeds. It has also approved Terms of Reference for East Leeds.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 The Terms of Reference confirm the requirement to have due regard to equality and diversity.

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The Leeds Initiative partnerships (and its sub-boards) have a key role in the delivery of the city's priorities, as outlined in the Vision for Leeds 2030 and City Priority Plan.

### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 There are no resource implications associated with this report. The regeneration sub-boards will be supported as part of exiting programme management arrangements through the Regeneration Programmes Division in the Department of Environment & Neighbourhoods.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 None

## 4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 These proposals support transparent and open governance and seek to ensure effective partnerships arrangements are in place to deliver the City Priority Plan for Housing & Regeneration.

## 5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The proposal for regeneration sub-boards has been brought forward in accordance with the framework previously agreed by Executive Board. The proposals for an East Leeds Regeneration Board seek to establish a transparent and practical way of co-ordinating delivery of the Housing & Regeneration City Priority Plan as it applies to that part of the city and to ensure there is an appropriate forum through which the investment decisions of all sectors can be influenced.
- 5.2 Detailed proposals for South and West Leeds will be brought a future meeting of the Executive Board

## 6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the proposal to establish area regeneration sub-boards and to endorse the arrangements for the East Leeds Regeneration Board.

## 7 Background documents

- 7.1 Report to Executive Board in November 2011.

# East Leeds Regeneration Board

## Terms of Reference and Working Arrangements

### Aim of the Board

The Board will agree, oversee, deliver and monitor an area based regeneration programme to contribute to the city's strategic regeneration aims and assist delivery of the City Priority Plan for Housing and Regeneration.

The Board will receive direction from the city-wide Housing and Regeneration Board and report to it in respect of strategic targets. The East Leeds Regeneration Board will agree its own local priorities and determine targets to define and monitor these.

### Functions of the Board

The Board will be an advisory body in relation to regeneration work within the area of east Leeds<sup>1</sup>. Specifically the Board will;

1. Advise or make representations to the Housing and Regeneration Board, the Council's Executive Board or relevant Area Committees, in relation to programmes of regeneration, project activities (and the prioritisation of those activities) and the arrangements for delivery of regeneration programmes;
2. Provide a mechanism through which regeneration activity, proposed or underway in east Leeds is co-ordinated.

In so doing the Board will:

3. Offer public, private and third sector stakeholders opportunities to present investment and development proposals and co-ordinate these interests to deliver the regeneration programme.
4. Comment on the use of stakeholders' land, assets, services and developments as they relate to the delivery of the regeneration programme.
5. Consider and advise on the use of new partnership delivery models to support housing-led regeneration.
6. Ensure that partners undertake the following to support the regeneration of East Leeds:
  - a) plan effectively to meet current and future housing need;
  - b) secure housing and complementary investment and make sure this meets identified needs;
  - c) seek the highest possible standards of environmental sustainability for development;
  - d) protect and improve local amenity and environmental quality;

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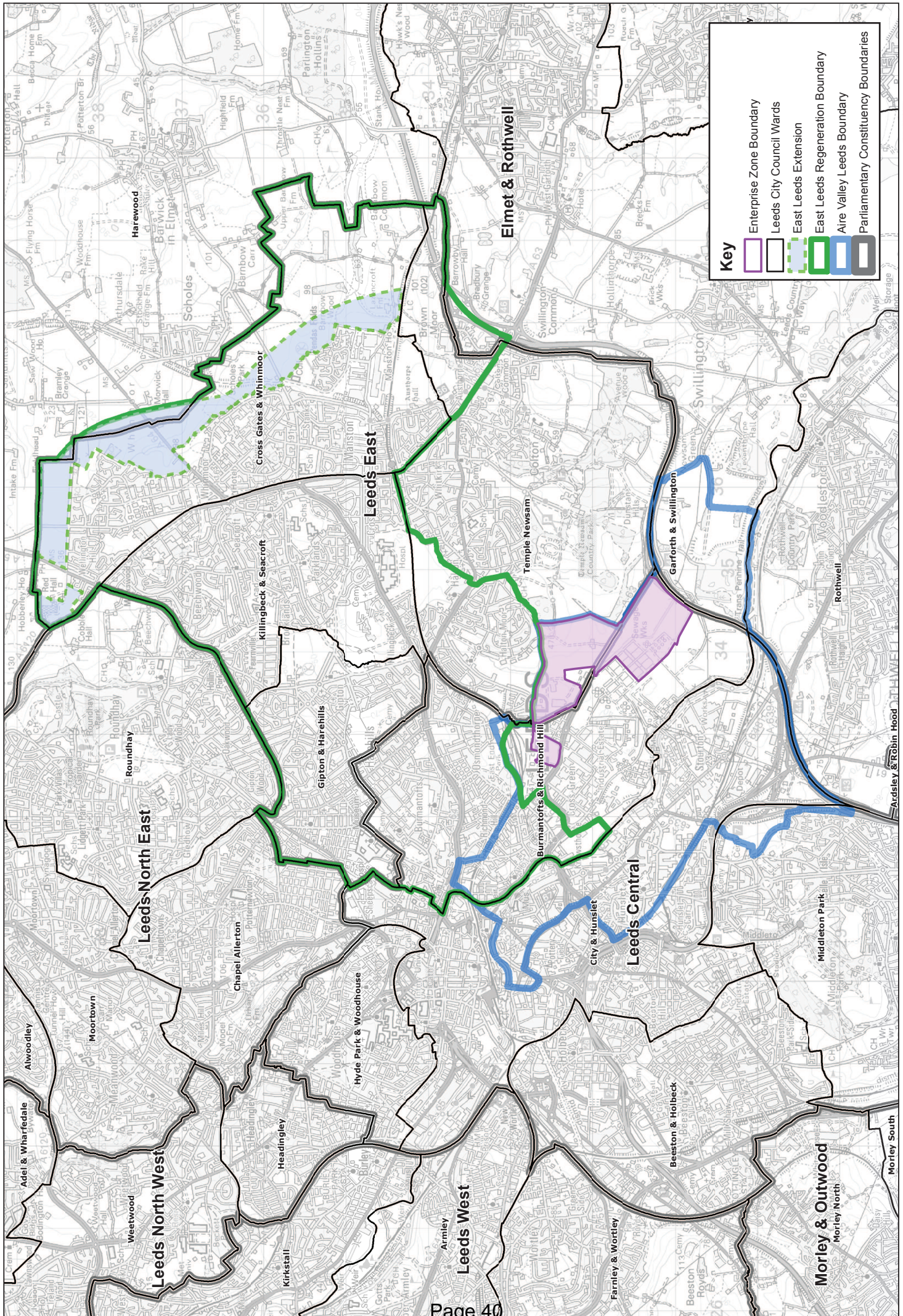
<sup>1</sup> A map detailing this area is attached as an appendix to these terms of reference.



- e) influence investment in and adjoining the area (including the city centre and Aire Valley) to maximise employment and training opportunities for local people;
- f) provide greater certainty and transparency for the future of east Leeds' communities and neighbourhoods;
- g) have due regard to equality in all decisions and activities;
- h) communicate and engage effectively with all stakeholders.

### **Board Procedures**

1. The Board will operate in accordance with the overall governance arrangements established to support the delivery of the City Priority Plans;
2. The Board will produce and agree a regular highlight report to the City Housing and Regeneration Board, to cover progress against CPP priorities and other locally agreed priorities;
3. The Board will meet [quarterly] (usually on a Friday or Monday morning to accommodate parliamentary schedules);
4. The Board will elect a chair and vice-chair for an initial period of [XX] years and subsequent periods to be agreed by the Board;
5. The Board will have no direct budget and shall not replace the decision making powers of individual member bodies. It will not constitute a separate legal entity;
6. Board members will nominate deputies for attendance in their absence;
7. Board meetings will not be open to the public but papers, agendas and minutes will be published on the Leeds Initiative website promptly. A forward plan of meetings will be published on the Leeds Initiative website.



**Key**

- Enterprise Zone Boundary
- Leeds City Council Wards
- East Leeds Extension
- East Leeds Regeneration Boundary
- Aire Valley Leeds Boundary
- Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries