



SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Thursday, 25th July, 2013 at 9.45 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 9.15 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

- J Akhtar - Hyde Park and Woodhouse;
- J Chapman (Chair) - Weetwood;
- J Elliott - Morley South;
- C Gruen - Bramley and Stanningley;
- A Lamb - Wetherby;
- P Latty - Guiseley and Rawdon;
- K Mitchell - Temple Newsam;
- M Rafique - Chapel Allerton;
- K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood;
- A Sobel - Moortown;
- B Urry - Roundhay;

Co-opted Members (Voting)

- Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)
- Mr A Graham - Church Representative (Church of England)
- Ms A Craven - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
- Ms J Ward - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

- Ms C Foote - Teacher Representative
- Ms C Raftery - Teacher Representative
- Ms S Hutchinson - Early Years Representative
- Ms J Morris-Boam - Young Lives Leeds (0-13 age group)
- Ms T Kayani - Young Lives Leeds (13-19 age group)

Agenda compiled by:
Guy Close
Governance Services
Tel: 24 74356

Principal Scrutiny Advisor:
Sandra Newbould
Tel: 24 74792

Produced on Recycled Paper

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items have been identified on this agenda.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p>DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS</p> <p>To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct.</p>	
5			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.</p>	
6			<p>MINUTES - 28TH JUNE 2013</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2013.</p>	1 - 6
7			<p>REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY - TRANSPORT CONSULTATION AND THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRANSPORT POLICY</p> <p>To consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development in relation to a public request for scrutiny on transport consultation and the proposed changes to the Children's Services Transport Policy.</p>	7 - 102

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
8			<p>DRAFT LSCB ANNUAL REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN LEEDS (JULY 2013)</p> <p>To consider a report from the Independent Chair of Leeds Safeguarding Children Board and the draft Leeds Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report.</p>	103 - 186
9			<p>RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY INQUIRY REPORT - PRIVATE FOSTERING</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services providing a comprehensive progress report as requested in the recommendations detailed in the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry report into Private Fostering.</p>	187 - 218
10			<p>DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE - SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO INCREASING THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services outlining the formal response to the recommendations of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board inquiry into increasing the number of young people in employment, education or training.</p>	219 - 226
11			<p>FINANCIAL HEALTH MONITORING CHILDREN'S SERVICES- BUDGET UPDATE QUARTER 1 2013/14 AND OUTTURN SUMMARY FOR 2012/13</p> <p>To consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development in relation to the Quarter 1 budget information for 2013/14 and the Outturn summary for 2012/13.</p>	227 - 232
12			<p>WORK SCHEDULE</p> <p>To consider the Board's work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.</p>	233 - 254

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
13			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Thursday, 19th September 2013 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds (Pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)</p>	

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Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

FRIDAY, 28TH JUNE, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Elliott, P Grahame, C Gruen,
A Lamb, P Latty, C Macniven, K Mitchell,
M Rafique, K Renshaw and B Urry

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)

Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

1 Late Items

There were no late items.

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors J Akhtar and A Sobel and Co-opted Members, Ms A Craven, Ms C Foote, Ms C Raftery, Ms T Kayani, Ms J Morris-Boam and Ms S Hutchinson. Notification had been received that Councillor P Grahame was to substitute for Councillor J Akhtar and Councillor C MacNiven for Councillor A Sobel.

4 Minutes - 25th April 2013 (Ordinary and Call-in meetings)

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 25th April 2013 (Ordinary and Call-in) be approved as a correct record.

5 Co-opted Members

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the options available with regards the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board.

Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In her presentation the Board was advised that two nominations had been received for the Early Years Representative and that the Board were required to vote on their preferred nomination. It was also recommended that the Board undertook a review of co-opted membership to the Board in preparation for the 2014/15 municipal year to identify any gaps in representation.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 25th July, 2013

In addition the following nominations for statutory voting co-opted members had been received:

- Church of England diocese representative – Mr A Graham
- Roman Catholic diocese representative – Mr E A Britten

Two parent governor representatives were currently in post:

- Amanda Craven (primary) – 08/09/2011 – 07/09/2015
- Jacqueline Ward (secondary) – 21/04/11 – 20/04/2015.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report be received and noted
- (b) That in addition to the statutory voting co-opted members the following be appointed as non-voting co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board for 2013/14:
 - Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
 - Ms C Raftery – Teacher Representative
 - Ms S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative, after consideration of two nominations
 - Ms T Kayani – Young Lives Leeds (13-19 age group)
 - Ms J Morris-Boam – Young Lives Leeds (0-13 age group)
- (c) That a review of co-opted membership be added to the work programme for 2013/14 in preparation for the 2014/15 municipal year.

6 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Scrutiny Boards Terms of Reference.

Appended to the report was the report of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board on the Children's Trust Board.

Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Terms of reference be noted
- b) That the contents of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) report on the Children's Trust Board be noted.

7 Sources of work and areas of priority for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on potential sources of work for the Scrutiny Board.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Children and Young People's Plan 2011- 2015, Refresh 2013
- Best Council Plan 2013- 2017
- The Every Child Matters Survey 2011/12 Analysis Report
- Executive Board Minutes of meeting held on 9th May 2013
- Table of Scrutiny Inquires and Statements Relating to Children and Families.

Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Councillor J Blake, Executive Board Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services.

The Chair invited all Board Members to have an input in relation to their own preferred sources of work for the Scrutiny Board.

In summary, the following sources of work were put forward for consideration:

- Development and Implementation of the Youth Offer for Leeds.
- Developments in reducing the number of Young People who were, or at risk of becoming NEET following the Scrutiny Boards inquiry.
- Government requirement for the delivery of Primary and Secondary Education via non maintained schools, (Academies, free schools etc.)
- Social Care System – post implementation review.
- Review of the Children's Trust Board in accordance with the Board's Terms of Reference.
- The Performance and Accountability of Clusters as recommended by the 2012/13 Scrutiny Board and following the call-in meeting on the 25th April 2013.
- Development of the Leeds offer for Kinship Carers.
- Basic Need - to promote understanding of the challenges ahead and identify areas of concern.
- Integration of SEN Young People into Further Education due to concern regarding partnership arrangements and the withdrawal of facilities.
- Children and Young People's Voice and Influence as there was a perceived lack of influence in local areas and lack of knowledge about the UN convention of the Rights of the Child.

- With regard to child poverty, looking at Free School Meals (FSM) as take up of FSM in Leeds was below national levels.
- 'Coasting Schools' and the challenge for the School Improvement Team to ensure children were not let down due to lack of aspiration in the education system.
- Bullying as the Every Child Matters Survey identified concerning percentages of primary and secondary pupils being subject to bullying in schools.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser informed Members that the Board would receive reports on the budget at the July 2013 and December 2013 Board meeting. Performance reports and recommendation tracking reports would also be scheduled into the annual work programme.

The Board was reminded that there would be ad-hoc issues considered throughout the year and at the next meeting in July the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Board would be presenting their draft annual report which may highlight further areas for Scrutiny work.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted
- (b) That a number of the above issues discussed be part of the Board's work schedule for the forthcoming Municipal Year (Minute 9 also refers)
- (c) That authority be given to the Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Children's and Families), in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

(Councillor C Gruen left the meeting at 11.00am at the conclusion of this item.)

8 2012-13 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services submitted a report summarising the quarter 4 performance data relevant to the Scrutiny Board.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Performance Reports for the 3 City Priority Plan
- Children's Services Directorate Priorities and Indicators
- Children and Young People's Performance Update.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Peter Storrie, Head of Performance and Improvement (Children's Services).

The key areas of discussion were:

- The percentage of children's homes that were rated good or better by Ofsted. Concern was expressed that the indicator had been consistently red for the 4 quarters. *(The Head of Performance and Improvement responded by advising the Board that inspections had been taking place since April 2013 and provisional results had been positive suggesting that 55% would be good or better which would shift the indicator to amber in the next performance report.)*
- The increase in school absence during the autumn period.
- Concern regarding the voice and influence that children and young people had in shaping a child friendly city and how resources were applied to achieve this.
- Staff Appraisals.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the Board notes the quarter 4 performance information and the issues which had been highlighted.
- (c) That Board Members consider if they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year with regard to the performance of Children's Services.

9 Work Schedule

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the current municipal year.

The draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) work schedule for 2013/2014 was appended to the report.

Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services, attended the meeting and responded to Members questions and comments.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That further consultation be undertaken with regard to the scheduling of an August Scrutiny Board meeting.
- (c) That further consultation be undertaken with the Scrutiny Board regarding the priority of the following topics identified for Scrutiny and for those areas deemed to be of the highest priority to be incorporated into the Board's work schedule for the coming year:

- Partnerships facilitating the integration of SEN Young People into main stream education
- Children and Young People's Voice and Influence
- Free School Meals
- 'Coasting' Schools
- Bullying.

(Councillor M Rafique left the meeting at 12.00 noon during discussion of this item.)

10 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 25th July 2013 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.10pm)

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 25th July 2013

Subject: Request for Scrutiny – Transport consultation and the proposed changes to the Children’s Services Transport Policy

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Hyde Park and Woodhouse	<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 type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A request for scrutiny has been received from Mr Tom Casey concerning transport consultation and the proposed changes to the Children’s Services transport policy.
- 1.2 The reasons stated for his request is detailed in appendix A of this report.
- 1.3 A copy of the Executive Board report which was considered at its meeting on 17th July 2013 is attached for reference as appendix B .

2.0 City Development Department

- 2.1 The Chief Officer (Strategy, Commissioning and Performance) has been invited to respond to this request and at the meeting on the 25th of July 2013.

3.0 Options for Investigations and Inquiries

- 3.1 The decision whether or not to further investigate matters raised by a request for scrutiny is the sole responsibility of the Scrutiny Board. As such, any decision in this regard is final and there is no right of appeal.
- 3.2 When considering the request for Scrutiny, the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) may wish to consider:

- If further information is required before considering whether further scrutiny should be undertaken
- If a similar or related issue is already being examined by Scrutiny or has been considered by Scrutiny recently.
- If the matter raised is of sufficient significance and has the potential for scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to tangible improvements.
- The impact on the Board's current workload
- The time available to undertake further scrutiny and
- The level of resources required to carry out further scrutiny.
- Whether an Inquiry should be undertaken
- How the proposed request meets the inquiry selection criteria

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- (i) Consider the request for Scrutiny from Mr Tom Casey
- (ii) Consider the response of the Chief Officer (Strategy, Commissioning and Performance) to the issues raised.
- (iii) Determine if the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) wishes to undertake further scrutiny of this matter.

5.0 Background Papers

None¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Appendix A

Scrutiny Consideration Part 1 - Consultation & Consequences

The consultation process - General Points

- money had been removed from the budget approved in Feb 2013, before the council went to consultation
- the council state (in documents pre-dating the consultation, consultation documents and consultation report) that “all elements” of discretionary funding were consulted on. This is not true.
- Timing of the consultation – created a lot of uncertainty and stress for families who close to the end of the academic year do not know what is happening in September.
- possible bias in the consultation in the wording of the documents
- families of SEN students leaving a special school this month have been told that they will have to transport their children to college themselves for at least the whole of September because the consultation delay meant that transport contracts were not organised in time. They will apparently be reimbursed, but this is not a burden that such vulnerable families need at such a difficult time for them. It is envisaged that some families will then reach a financial crisis point due to cash flow in September and October as they have further cost implications as they access other service essential services.
- The scrutiny panel are asked to consider whether the consultation report sufficiently reflects the content of responses to the consultation and consider the minutes of meetings with stakeholders referred to in the report and whether the report accurately reflects these meeting.

Key stakeholders excluded.

- The review of discretionary school transport funding affected 7,376 pupils but only 1,190 of adult responses to the consultation questionnaire stated that they would be affected by the proposed changes in some way. When compared to the numbers affected and considering that 2,000+ signatures were collected for the petition on one aspect of discretionary transport it would appear that although interest in the issues is high access to the consultation process was inhibited.
- Families affected by the proposed changes were not informed by Council (or Metro, until after the consultation closed) that a review of school transport provision was taking place. Reliance on school notification systems proved to be inadequate as many affected families did not become aware of the consultation until either very late in the process or after it had closed. As all families currently in receipt of assistance received notification from Metro that the consultation *had* taken place after the process had closed it should have been possible for Metro to have contacted these families at the outset of the process instead.

Barriers to access.

- Hard copies of questionnaire were not easily accessible e.g. by download from council webpages. Such provision would have made it possible for schools/individuals to distribute hard copies to interested parties rather than rely on individuals having access to internet facilities or making their own enquiries with the Council by email/telephone. Consultation questionnaire and accompanying documents focused on savings to be made by reductions in funding of discretionary school transport.

Lack of data.

- Inadequate information was provided for respondents to form an opinion as to whether spending on statutory transport was being adequately controlled or used in the most efficient/cost effective manner.

Areas excluded from consultation.

- No review was made of provision of discretionary transport to single-sex schools or for traveller children. No data was presented to respondents in respect of spending in these areas of discretionary school transport.
- No mention was made in the consultation documents of provision in the current policy for free transport on the basis of non-belief to the nearest non-faith school. No data was provided as to spending on this area of discretionary transport.

Bias.

- The exclusion from consideration/lack of information regarding provision of transport assistance on the basis of non-belief could lead to bias in responses as it appears from the documents that provision is made on the basis of faith but not on the basis of non-belief (which would be discriminatory).
- Statements such as “free non-statutory travel for children attending faith schools, could be viewed as being discriminatory” are leading statements without evidence as well as inaccurate. There never has been free travel provided for all children attending faith schools, only those who reside more than the statutory safe walking distance from their nearest faith school have been eligible for assistance in order to travel to that school in recognition of the small number of faith schools serving a large metropolitan area.
- “those holding a desire for a faith school education” on the grounds of their faith are not afforded greater choice than the majority. In practice, they are limited in their choice of school – usually to one faith school for which their child (ren) would be eligible under the admission criteria/catchment area. Failure to gain a place at their preferred faith school would invariably mean they do not have access to another faith school as all faith schools have clearly defined catchment areas and most are oversubscribed. If they have indicated a preference for a faith based education on the grounds of their faith they will have placed the faith school as their first preference and this will have a negative impact on their likelihood of admission to their second and subsequent mainstream preferences especially if there is a shortage of places.

Closed process.

- The consultation documents and questionnaire repeatedly stated that “no change” was not an option. This makes the process closed and implies that decisions have already been made at some level by Children’s Services as to what to cut and how by much.

Insufficient/misleading information.

- Consultation documents provided insufficient information for respondents to have a clear understanding of the implications of the proposed cuts.
- Of our four immediate neighbouring LA’s, two have removed the subsidy for faith school transport and two retained it. In the case of those who have removed the subsidy it has been removed for new entrants to schools but retained for all current participants until they leave that school. No mention was made in the consultation documents to comparisons with other Core Cities.

Issues of equality and diversity:

- Proposals will reduce the diversity of schools across the city (both faith and non-faith)
- Proposals will reduce parental choice for all
- Some families will not be able to exercise their preference for faith based education for financial reasons
- Recommended policy will create an unfair situation where some faiths/ideologies are treated differently to other.
- The consultation recommendation is unfair in respect of not including all community groups for funding consideration equally. It has been pointed out that the removing for some groups should be due to a lifestyle choice, however funding will still remain in place for:
 - a) Romanian traveller groups
 - b) parents who have refused a place at a faith school on grounds of non-belief
 - c) for parents who have requested a single sex school on the grounds of faith
- No Equality Impact Assessment was carried out prior to the consultation and therefore this information was not available to respondents to assess when considering the proposed cuts in funding.

Traffic and Environment:

- Increased congestion
- Unsafe routes for children
- Spaces on buses are not guaranteed – services are being changed to a more commercial system – some services have already been withdrawn
- Current public bus services cannot cope with the possible increased demand
- Increased CO2 emissions
- Possible future implications for planning, development and the economy in the city

- Consultation lacked a Highways impact assessment despite requests for this during the consultation meetings
- No assessment was made of environmental impact prior to the consultation and has not been carried out to date although Children's Services admit there is a genuine risk of parents opting to transport their children by car rather than pay for a school bus.

Economic issues:

- Projected savings are not realistic as there will be unforeseen consequences which will cost the council money such as increased subsidy to Metro as more people take up the concessionary fare pass
- An assessment of consequential costs has not been provided as part of the consultation process. It is unrealistic that there are no consequential costs to the council for implementing a new policy.
- Leeds students not receiving funding will be required to pay an estimated £640 per year. Why is this figure for Leeds nearly double the £380 amount that another council was looking to charge for providing the same service? Has the department responsible achieved best procurement value for money and standards?

Accessibility

- Many families wishing to access a faith based education do not have a faith high school within 3 miles of their home address. Should they wish to avail themselves of their right of **access to a faith based education on the grounds of their faith** (a right protected by the Education Act 2006) they must travel beyond the statutory safe walking distance in order to do so.

Education Quality for Leeds Students:

- In the full council meeting on 1st July 2013 The Lord Mayor of Leeds addressed the chamber to remind the councillors that there are approximately 10,000 pupils attending underperforming schools. Implementation of the proposal will result in students moving from well performing schools to underperforming schools.

Scrutiny Consideration Part 2 - Report to Executive 17 July 2013 and Draft School Transport Policy

Inadequate response to concerns raised.

- Issues raised by respondents to the consultation have not been adequately addressed by outlining proposals to mitigate against these. The concerns are merely "noted" as genuine risks.

False identification of respondents/response.

- The petition is described as having been submitted on behalf of/by "a faith group". This is factually incorrect.
- The petition has been included within the statistical analysis as a single response rather than as representing the views of over 1,400 individuals. This amounts to manipulation of the statistics in relation to the responses received.

Litigation risks.

- "Providing only statutory services would reduce the risk of the Council being faced with future legal challenges with regard to faith transport as it is currently provided in Leeds." Scrutiny should ask to see the evidence (e.g. Legal Counsel's Opinion) that there exists such a continuing risk in light of Court of Appeal Judgments which appear to minimise the future/ongoing risk of legal challenge in this regard.
- Why does the Council believe that the current policy exposes them to a risk of claims of discrimination when statutory free home/school transport for low income families who express a preference for a faith education (Extended Rights Provisions of Education Act 2006) is not deemed to be discriminatory?

Discriminatory policy.

- The draft policy retains provision for free transport on the basis of non-belief where the nearest qualifying school is a faith school and where the nearest qualifying non-faith school is beyond the statutory walking distance whilst removing similar provision for families who express a preference for education at a faith school.
- The draft policy retains provision for free transport for children who need to travel beyond the statutory walking distance from their home to attend the nearest qualifying single-sex school on the basis of their parent's religion or belief whilst removing similar provision for families who express a preference for education at a mixed-sex school on the basis of their religion or belief.

DfE Guidance 5 July 2013.

- Recent amends to DfE guidance and the intention of DfE to bring forward review of guidance to Autumn 2013. It would be prudent to defer removing the current policy and provision in respect of faith school transport until this new guidance has been published.

Disproportionate effects.

- 2600 pupils will be affected by the proposed changes to faith school transport. Current spending on discretionary faith school transport accounts for 7% of total annual spending on pupil transport assistance (excludes Looked After Children and Metro subsidy). Removal of discretionary faith school transport assistance will negatively impact 21% of children currently receiving transport assistance.
- Over the 3 year implementation period the total amount paid by the parents of these children to transport their children to school by bus will be in the region of £1,140,000 (between £1,126,320 and 1,170,520 depending on how individual families choose to pay – per journey, weekly to monthly) against a total saving to the Council budget of £860,000.

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 17th July 2013

Subject: Outcome of the transport consultation and proposed changes to the Children's Services transport policy



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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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. Leeds City Council has a statutory duty to provide free transport to all qualifying students aged 5-16. In addition Leeds has historically provided more than is required in the form of discretionary free transport to qualifying students wishing to attend the following: their nearest designated faith school; an appropriate post 16 mainstream school or college; an appropriate post 16 school or college for students with a statement of special educational need (SEN), and, in some instances, to attend a school that is not the nearest.
2. The current transport policy¹ provides the detail and circumstances under which free transport is currently provided.
3. In February 2013 the Executive Board gave permission to consult on all elements of the delivery of free children's transport but in particular to consider in detail whether any or all of the current discretionary elements should be withdrawn on affordability or other grounds.
4. This report presents the outcome of the consultation and seeks permission to implement the recommendations outlined below by approving the attached draft updated transport policy (Leeds Children's Services Transport Policy) (appendix 1).

¹ The policy for the provision of home to school or college transport for children and students prior to their 19th birthday

Recommendations

The Executive Board is asked to:

- note the extent of the consultation on changes to the current home to school transport policy
- note the specific agreement of key partners (e.g. College Principals, Metro, faith partners and school heads) to work with the LA on the implementation of the new policy over the next two years as it is fully phased in
- note the legal implications and risk management sections of this report
- note the receipt of a petition submitted on behalf of a faith group wishing the authority to retain current provision
- approve the attached new draft 'Leeds Children's Services Transport Policy' – appendix 1 and
- approve the recommendations outlined below.

The following options are recommended for approval by the Executive Board:

Statutory provision

The Executive Board is asked to approve a fundamental remodelling of all statutory provision where it is safe to do so. This would take place following individual assessment of need. There is no intention to make any immediate changes to how statutory services are provided without proper assessment and, where appropriate, liaison with affected parties. Some of the proposed changes, which would continue to meet the Council's statutory obligations, would include:

- introducing more independent travel training opportunities
- replacing, wherever possible, the current automatic provision of taxis with a pass to enable free travel on public transport
- introducing a wider partnership approach to providing transport services
- developing a more flexible approach in partnership with parents/carers

Discretionary provision - post 16 SEN home to school/college

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree that the proposed provisions of the new Children & Families Bill should be kept under review and any implications taken into account in the implementation of a new policy.
- agree to the principle that in the first instance parents/carers not eligible for statutory support should be expected to organise and fund the transporting of their own children to school or college.
- agree to support the proposal that the delivery of statutory low level need should continue to be re-modelled with the appropriate use of independent travel training, and, in order to be more efficient and cost effective, review the delivery method of all intermediate and complex need transport provision over the next twelve months.
- agree that for those post 16-19 SEN students already attending school/college (including those due to start in September 2013) the current offer would remain in place for a further academic year (2013/14).

- agree **in principle** that following a detailed assessment by Children's Services, where it is deemed not possible for the parent or carer to transport their child/young person to school/college, and the provision of a taxi or similar is the only safe, cost-effective and appropriate way of transporting the child/young person, the authority would provide a personalised means-tested budget towards the cost of transportation.
- agree that this budget should be provided on a means-tested basis only from September 2017, but phased in over a three year transitional period from September 2014 for all existing recipients. At this stage it is proposed that the budget could reasonably be set at a maximum of up to £5,000 per annum for all new means-tested applicants once the policy is approved, but this figure, and any proposed transitional arrangements, would first need to be considered and agreed by Executive Board.
- agree that further detailed work should take place during 2013/14 in order to develop an implementation plan and establish robust eligibility criteria. It would be unwise for Executive Board to formally approve the changes to this part of the policy at this stage without detailed planning as it may lead to unintended consequences. Until Executive Board approval, therefore, this aspect of the new policy would remain as it is currently described in the current policy.
- agree that the future proposals should continue to be developed and reported back to Executive Board with the relevant detail. The proposed model has been initially budgeted; the indications are that savings in the region of **£1.25m** in 2014/15 rising cumulatively to **£2m** in 2015/16 and **£2.2m** in 2016/17 would be achievable against the current spend of **£2.6m**.
- agree to preserve the current offer for existing students and new September entrants for a further year. This will allow the necessary planning to take place and also enable further discussion with service leads and strategic partners on the most sensible way of implementing any proposed changes.
- agree that independent travel training would continue to be available during that time, including access to a valid pass for travel on public transport across West Yorkshire, paid for by the local authority.

Discretionary provision - faith transport

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to provide discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for all those currently receiving 100% support.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all discretionary transport provided solely on the basis of religion or belief, would be withdrawn.
- agree that from 1st October 2013 new applicants, who do not meet the requirements of the new policy for local authority support, will only be eligible to travel on the relevant service on a parent-to-pay basis. They would be advised to obtain a Young Person's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare pass).

Discretionary provision - post 16 mainstream home to school/college

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to continue to fund post 16 mainstream discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for students who enrol on either a one or two year course for the academic year 2013/14.
- agree that new applicants from 1st October 2013 would be recommended to obtain a Scholar's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare fare pass) in order to travel on regular service provision at a discounted rate.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all post 16 discretionary mainstream free transport would be withdrawn.

Discretionary provision - not the nearest school

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to provide discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for all those currently receiving 100% support.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all discretionary free transport provided, if it is not the nearest qualifying school, would be withdrawn.
- agree that from 1st October 2013 new applicants, who do not meet the requirements of the new policy for local authority support, will only be eligible to travel on the relevant service on a parent-to-pay basis. They would be advised to obtain a Young Person's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare fare pass).

In summary, the Executive Board is being asked to decide whether or not some or all of the current statutory and discretionary children's transport should be changed or withdrawn and to what extent.

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the outcomes from the recent public consultation on the current transport policy.
- 1.2 To make recommendations to be included in a new policy and for the Executive Board to approve the new draft policy (appendix 1).

1. Background information

- 2.1 Current provisions are described in the current Children's Services Transport Policy (*The policy for the provision of home to school or college transport for children and students prior to their 19th birthday*). This policy was produced following the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to cover the new statutory demands for extended rights to free home to school travel.
- 2.2 A report was submitted to Executive Board in February 2013 requesting permission to consult on the future provision of transport in Leeds for children and young people. This included a proposal to review all elements of both statutory and current discretionary provision. It also proposed exploring how the Council might work better with key partners in order to improve overall provision in support of Leeds' ambition to be a Child Friendly City. It further invited participants to put forward proposals and ideas about how the authority might do things differently in order to improve the quality of the service at the same time as reduce costs.
- 2.3 It was made clear from the outset that, whilst 'no change' was not an option, the authority was nevertheless seeking new and innovative ways of delivering the total children's transport offer, not just that currently provided on a discretionary basis.
- 2.4 The local authority is required to make the necessary arrangements to secure the attendance of children at school who are of statutory school age i.e. aged 5 to 16. The way this is undertaken is laid down in the current policy and is largely discharged on a fixed geographical and low income basis, as stipulated in the current legislation. The approximate projected cost associated with this duty is **£6.32m per annum** and covers both mainstream and SEN provision. This does not include the projected increased demand in 2013/14 of approximately **£770k** for SEN provision. It is anticipated that without active management this demand trend will continue in future years; potentially rising from the current projected level of **£16.63m** to approximately **£25m** per annum.
- 2.5 The discretionary elements currently include transport for:
 - the children of parents who express a preference to attend a faith school (2,600 students - £0.8m)
 - post 16 mainstream school or college (4,245 - £1.36m)
 - post 16 SEN school or college (350 - £2.6m) and
 - attendance at a school that is not the nearest (within 15 miles) where a place cannot be offered at the nearest school (181 - £150k)

These discretionary elements cost **£4.91m per annum** in total.

- 2.6 Most neighbouring local authorities and statistical neighbours have already withdrawn the discretionary elements of both faith and post 16 mainstream transport. Many other local authorities nationally have also done so, or are in the process of undergoing

consultation, although the majority of the Core Cities still retain some elements of discretionary provision (appendix 2).

- 2.7 In respect of school admissions the local authority has a specific statutory responsibility to publish information no later than 12th September in the 'offer year' about how parents can express their school preferences. As part of this the authority must include details of the transport arrangements including, but not restricted to, '*the provision of free transport*'; '*the arrangements for children with special educational needs*' and '*the arrangements in respect of transport for pupils to schools for which a pupil's parent has expressed a preference on the grounds of the parent's religion or belief*' (The School Information (England) Regulations 2008).
- 2.8 Section 509AD of the Education Act (1996) places a duty on local authorities, when exercising their travel functions, to have regard to, amongst other things, any wish of a parent for their child to be educated at a particular school on the grounds of the parent's religion or belief (there is a similar obligation to have regard to the wish of a person of sixth form age). Section 9 of the Education Act further strengthens this obligation by stipulating that local authorities "*shall have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with their parents' wishes, so far as it is compatible with...the avoidance of unreasonable expenditure.*"
- 2.9 It may be considered unreasonable, therefore, to introduce changes to the current transport policy without proper notice, as outlined in the School Information Regulations 2008, where the rules for informing parents of the arrangements for securing the admission of their child to a school are clearly laid out. The information published in the relevant booklet (Starting secondary school in Leeds – a guide for parents and carers 2013 to 2014) states in the introduction to the transport section that '*the transport policy is subject to consultation at any time...*' It goes on to say that '*should there be any changes to the policy, (in relation to free school transport) we will write to parents who are currently applying for school places...in case the changes would affect the preferences you have made*'.
- 2.10 The above reference implies that there would be the option to change preference if the changes materially affected the previous choice. The withdrawal of funding in September 2013 would be a material change and, of course, preferences have been made and at this stage there has been no communication with affected parents. The final relevant section on 'free school transport' states that '*if your child is granted free school transport, this will usually continue throughout their time at school*' and goes on to say that it would be reviewed '*if you or your child move house...or change school*'.
- 2.11 There is also approximately **£2.3m per annum** expenditure incurred supporting approximately 750 looked after children in the city. Much of this support is covered by the council's statutory responsibilities as a corporate parent. There is flexibility, however, in how this support could be provided. It covers some of the costs associated with transport to schools; contact arrangements; short breaks and leisure activities. The authority is currently actively working towards supporting as many looked after children as possible to travel independently based on level of risk, ability and need.
- 2.12 Finally, in terms of total expenditure, the authority currently spends (via Metro) **£3.1m per annum** supporting the provision of the concessionary half-fare for children and young people aged 5-18. Currently young people (aged 11-18) have to pay for the administration costs of a photo ID (£2 each) and provide 2 photographs. Over 100,000

young people are eligible for the PhotoCard, and for each journey made there is a shared cost by the authority and the bus operator. Currently, however, only 40,000 young people access this benefit. A campaign is currently being launched to increase the uptake to as near 100% as possible. The total cost also includes managing the commissioning arrangements for new tenders and the running of a small team.

- 2.13 The total projected local authority expenditure, therefore, on all children's transport is approximately **£16.63m per annum**. The full details are contained in appendix 6.

3. Main issues

General points

- 3.1 An initial period of twenty-eight days consultation on changes to the policy was put in place, but due to the intense level of interest this was subsequently extended for a further twenty-eight days. This was in order to maximise the opportunity for as wide a contribution to the process as possible.
- 3.2 A project team was established to lead on the consultation and was made up of senior officers from Children's Services. This team led on all the business planning processes required to safely manage such a complex consultation process.
- 3.3 A communications plan was developed with the aim of ensuring as many key stakeholders as possible were made aware of the consultation process. A further direct update was provided at the point that the consultation period was extended. This provided an ideal opportunity to raise awareness in the last few weeks of the consultation period. A Consultation Briefing paper was specifically prepared for this purpose (appendix 3).
- 3.4 An executive summary, outlining both the main findings from the survey and the overall consultation process is also attached at appendix 5. It includes a summary of the methodology; the concerns expressed, and a response to those concerns. The full Transport Consultation paper is provided as a background paper.
- 3.5 Executive Board is asked to note that the proposed policy will continue to ensure that children and young people who are eligible under the extended statutory eligibility criteria for low income families and geographical criteria will continue to receive home to school transport paid for by the local authority. This includes providing transport free of charge to children aged 11-16 from qualifying low income families on the grounds of religion or belief between 2 and 15 miles from home. This support is grant-funded by central government.

Post 16 SEN

- 3.6 The option for post 16 SEN includes the phasing out of 100% subsidised provision over the next 12 months (by Sept 2014) and the full introduction of a means-tested arrangement compatible with the current approach by adult services by 2017. There was a high level of support, however, throughout the consultation for the continuation of some levels of discretionary funding subject to a thorough assessment. There was also widespread support for the rapid expansion of independent travel training (ITT).
- 3.7 The current discretionary service, therefore, would be retained as part of a 3 year transition arrangement whilst more fundamental reviews are undertaken on how it is

currently provided. It will also allow the authority to take into account the provisions of the new Children & Families Bill when enacted. In particular the introduction of a means-tested contribution would significantly mitigate the current costs. There was some support for this as a principle during the consultation.

- 3.8 This option would generate savings of approximately **£1.25m** in 2014/15 and cumulatively **£2.0m** in 2015/16. There would be a residual cost of **£200k** in 2016/17 for students completing their studies and a longer term annual commitment in the region of **£400k** compared to the current projected spend of **£2.6m**.
- 3.9 A new service, based on the Access Bus model, would also be made available using a range of local pick-up points on a payment basis.
- 3.10 Consideration was given to removing eligibility from the age of 19 or 21 but in all likelihood this would simply mean that the cost would transfer to Adult Social Care as the service currently provided to adults is means-tested. Thus, providing an annual, personalised, means-tested budget of up to £5,000 per academic year, to all 16-25 SEN students, based on a detailed assessment would fully mitigate this risk.
- 3.11 Children's Services meet with the principals from the Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) on a regular basis and they have committed themselves to working in partnership to achieve the best quality offer at an affordable level.

Faith

- 3.12 A petition has been received from a faith group containing 1,460 signatures of residents, students and workers. The contents of the petition have been included in the overall analysis of the Consultation. The petition was as follows:

to retain free transport to/from home and school for children attending their nearest faith school on the basis of their denomination or faith.

- 3.13 The recommended option, for faith or belief travel, would protect all existing recipients of 100% subsidised provision for a further 2 years, or until the child left the current school or moved house. Consideration was given to a longer period of phasing but this is not recommended as the financial pressure of continuation is too great.
- 3.14 The proposal would incrementally reduce the expenditure until 2015 and would mean that bus operators would be able to wholly mitigate any currently estimated extra cost to the authority.
- 3.15 This level of phasing would be fully compliant with current DfE guidance on providing sufficient notice of changes.
- 3.16 Some faith communities have raised concerns about the changes, and how they are being implemented, but at the same time both Catholic and Church of England diocesan representatives have recognised the significant financial challenges faced by the authority and have committed to working in partnership with the authority to achieve a shared way forward. Two faith high schools in Harrogate have also expressed a wish to work with the authority to implement any changes. This invitation will be extended to all Leeds and other neighbouring authorities where children attend faith schools.

Post 16 mainstream

- 3.17 This option, for post 16 mainstream travel, would protect all existing recipients of 100% subsidised provision until the young person left the current school/college or moved house. Consideration was given to a longer period of phasing but this is not recommended as the financial pressure of continuation is too great.
- 3.18 This option would have the benefit of honouring existing preferences/choices and allow the full introduction of the half-fare concessionary passes free of charge.
- 3.19 There would be on-going discussions with Metro and their contracted operators during the coming year to mitigate the longer term impact and seek more imaginative pricing of fares for children and young people.
- 3.20 The authority meets with the College Principals in Leeds on a regular basis. They have welcomed the opportunity to work with the authority to reach a sustainable solution for post 16 discretionary support throughout the city.
- 3.21 Metro has also offered advice on the operational and commercial implications and has endorsed the overall proposed recommendations as a practical and achievable way forward. Metro is one of the authority's key strategic partners, which organises and manages mainstream home to school transport on behalf of the Council in addition to their wider responsibilities as the Integrated Transport Authority.

Not the nearest school

- 3.22 This recommended option, providing travel support to not the nearest school, would protect all existing recipients of 100% subsidised provision for a further two years, or until the child left the current school or moved house.
- 3.23 Consideration was given to a longer period of phasing but this is not recommended as the financial pressure of continuation is too great.
- 3.24 The proposal would incrementally reduce the expenditure until 2015 and would mean that bus and taxi operators would be able to wholly mitigate any currently estimated extra cost to the authority.
- 3.25 This level of phasing would be fully compliant with current DfE guidance on providing sufficient notice of changes.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Although a variety of methods were used there were three key elements to the consultation process. These were as follows:
- an on-line 'Talking Point' survey for adults (1,601 surveys were wholly or partly completed)
 - an on-line Talking Point survey for children (271 completed) and
 - a range of focus groups with adults, children and young people attended by over 400 people.

- 4.1.2 An offer was made at the outset to all school heads in Leeds (and neighbouring authorities where our children currently attend one of their schools); governors; principals and other key stakeholders, to attend any pre-planned or specific meetings arranged with the purpose of discussing the proposals. In total sixteen meetings were attended by over 400 people. These included specifically arranged meetings at four faith schools; meetings with parents, students and teachers at schools and colleges for children and young people with special educational needs; governors meetings; parent meetings and open evenings.
- 4.1.3 An email box was also set up for the duration of the consultation period, and in total eighty-one emails or letters were received. These ranged from requests for information and meetings to specific queries regarding how to respond to the survey. It also included sixteen responses stating views on the proposed changes; all received a personal reply. Some enquiries came via the Chief Executive and Director and from a wide range of members; others came direct to the advertised email address.
- 4.1.4 In addition to the above the following meetings were specifically organised as part of routine on-going strategic discussions with key partners. These included:
- the Youth Council (approximately 40 members)
 - representatives of the National Youth Parliament
 - Metro
 - representatives of the Dioceses of Ripon and Leeds
 - SILC (Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre) Principals and
 - mainstream college principals.
- 4.1.5 Recognising that not all parties would have time to arrange specific meetings, an outcome based accountability workshop was also run. All key stakeholders were represented at the workshop including: school heads, governors, college principals, transport groups, parents and faith groups.
- 4.1.6 The primary focus of this part of the workshop was to develop longer term plans and solutions on how the authority could best provide transport for the children of Leeds in a safe and affordable way. Over seventy partners were invited; forty actually attended representing twenty-four separate agencies.

4.2 Equality and Diversity/Cohesion and Integration (EDCI)

- 4.2.1 Immediately prior to the consultation period commencing an equality impact screening tool was completed. This indicated strongly that a full EDCI impact assessment should be undertaken. A decision was made at that point to defer completion until after the outcome of the consultation was known so that the views expressed through the surveys could be fully taken into account.
- 4.2.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty outlined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that local authorities have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (such as disability or religion/belief), and for those who do not by, for example, removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by those who have a specific protected characteristic. “Due regard” has been taken by the courts as requiring the decision-maker to be aware of the obligation to have due regard; that the duty should be fulfilled at the time the decision is considered and the duty must be exercised in substance with rigour and an open mind.

4.2.3 As part of the analysis of the findings two full equality, diversity, cohesion and integration (EDCI) impact assessments were undertaken (appendices 4a & 4b); one on post 16 SEN and a further on post 16 mainstream and faith travel. Both processes considered the actual consultation process and the extent to which it had achieved the goal of including all who may be affected by any of the changes outlined in this report. Specific options were outlined making it clear, however, that 'no change' was not an option that would be considered. The process also looked at how the potential changes may affect the respective equality groups if the recommendation to implement a phased approach was approved.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The withdrawal of part or all of the current funding provided on a discretionary basis may have an impact on the local environment where our schools and colleges are located. For example, some parents and carers may choose to drive their children to school/college rather than pay for the bus or train fare. If this happens it may have a negative impact on the environment with increased carbon emissions and at the same time affect Leeds' sustainability aspirations.
- 4.3.2 There is a possibility that a change in policy will directly and disproportionately affect those parents who jointly or independently earn enough to make them ineligible for free transport on the grounds of low income. A proportion of these parents may find that it is no longer economically viable to work and pay for the additional cost of transport for their children. The cost of paying for a child to travel on the current service would be in the region of nine pounds per week for services operating within West Yorkshire.
- 4.3.3 Some communities on the outskirts of Leeds are not as well served by public transport; moving east to west and vice versa. This may raise concerns about the type and length of journeys children and young people may have to make, in particular during the early years of their secondary schooling. This has been largely mitigated, however, through partnership working with Metro.
- 4.3.4 It is important that sufficient time is given to consider the impact any changes might have on the decisions parents/carers make. It is also important to ensure that every avenue is explored to mitigate the risk of increased traffic, and that, along with our key strategic partners (particularly schools, colleges and Metro), alternative solutions are thoroughly explored.
- 4.3.5 Young people have actively and directly been involved throughout the consultation. In particular they have had strategic input via school councils and the Leeds Youth Council. They have also had the opportunity to complete the on-line survey and to take part in focus groups. Some of these groups have included young people with a disability. A follow up session will be held with the Leeds representatives of the national Youth Parliament who have expressed a particular interest in children's transport. This will discuss how we can work closely with them to implement some of the proposed changes to ensure they fit with their values and principles.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The overall 2013/14 Children's Services budget strategy included savings of **£8m** across the looked after children budgets. At this stage in the financial year the projection is that these savings will largely be achieved but with some slippage around reducing the number of externally provided placements (**£300k**) and the delivery of the

procurement efficiencies (£700k). There is, as outlined in this report, continuing demand pressures (£800k) in respect of the provision of home to school transport for children and young people with special needs although these are forecast to be mitigated by efficiency savings across the wider transport budgets (£500k). The projected income shortfall of £3.4m mainly reflects forecast underspends across services which are funded by the Central Schools Budget and a potential shortfall on partner funding in respect of externally provided placements.

- 4.4.2 The Children's Services budget for 2013/14 included anticipated savings of £2.8m in relation to the review of all aspects of home to school transport. The financial implications of the recommendations in this paper, namely to phase the implementation of any changes, would mean an additional pressure of £2.6m in 2013/14 with significant savings thereafter in 2014/15 and 2015/16. For 2013/14, the £2.6m additional pressure is on top of the £300k forecast variation on the transport budget which is already recognised in the Directorate's first quarter position and would therefore increase the Directorate's forecast overall overspend to £3.7m.
- 4.4.3 A table is provided at appendix 6 summarising the total projected and actual budgeted expenditure on children's transport for the next three years. It outlines the potential savings that could be generated (approximately £7m) if a phased withdrawal of discretionary transport is approved together with a remodelling of how some statutory services are provided.
- 4.4.4 A reduction in expenditure over time will assist in managing any potential negative impact or unintended consequences of withdrawing a specific area of funding or introducing new ways of working and introducing new and untested ways of delivering these services.
- 4.4.5 There are clear plans in place to maximise efficiencies across the whole of children's transport expenditure not just those areas currently classified as discretionary; in particular, in respect of current provision for looked after children.
- 4.4.6 Current concessionary half-fare passes for 11-18 year olds are under-used, but with the introduction of 'smart' technology by Metro it will be possible to know where and how often children and young people travel. This will in turn inform better route planning and potentially lead to even greater efficiencies through wider commercial opportunities being made clearer to operators.
- 4.4.7 In summary the proposed cumulative savings are as follows: year 1: in the region of £1.2m (based on the original projected spend of £16.63m); year 2: in the region of £4.0m; year 3: in the region of £6-7m. The relatively modest saving projected against the actual budget in year one is largely due to the legal implications and risks associated with immediate implementation, together with a half-year effect.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 The current transport policy was the subject of legal challenge in relation to the provision of transport to faith schools on the grounds that it was discriminatory. Providing only statutory services would reduce the risk of the Council being faced with future legal challenges with regard to faith transport as it is currently provided in Leeds.
- 4.5.2 There would be the risk of legal challenge if any services were withdrawn in September 2013 as it would run contrary to the guidance contained in the Schools Information

Regulations (2008) and previous DfES Guidance on Home to School Transport (2007). A phased introduction would seek to mitigate this particular risk.

4.5.3 This report is subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 When considering changes to transport arrangements for vulnerable young people, appropriate risk assessments need to be completed before moving towards more independent travel. Making the option of travel on public transport available to young people with learning difficulties or disabilities, and to those in public care, must be undertaken on an individual basis, fully considering the needs, vulnerabilities and ability of the young person.
- 4.6.2 The city's increasing birth rate is recognised as an inevitable driver for change. By maintaining the existing policy spending would increase as greater numbers of children move through the school system. In 2001 the annual birth rate was 7,500; by 2013 it had risen to approximately 10,400. An increasing number of these young people have highly complex needs which will add to the financial implications of continuing to deliver these services without change.
- 4.6.3 The provisions currently being contemplated in the forthcoming Children's & Families Bill may impact on any proposal to amend eligibility to free home to school SEN transport. A phased approach, therefore, would enable the authority to take full account of the impact of the new legislation whilst at the same time modelling new ways of delivering both statutory and discretionary provision.
- 4.6.4 Final guidance has not yet been published but at this stage the Bill proposes the introduction of personalised budgets backed up by individual Education, Health and Care Plans from 2014. As further detail and guidance becomes available, the full statutory implications contained in this legislation will need to be incorporated into any new policy. The premature full withdrawal of current discretionary support, or introduction of new delivery methods, could run contrary to the intentions of the proposed new legislation in relation to the personalisation agenda.
- 4.6.5 At a time of intense pressure on council budgets attention is inevitably drawn towards areas of high expenditure especially where there would appear to be the possibility of double-funding as is potentially the case with post 16 SEN transport.
- 4.6.6 The gradual introduction of a means-tested personalised budget, as part of a proposed phased transition, may help to mitigate the impact of the reduction in support, whilst acknowledging the reality that this area of transport expenditure - despite the clear need - is nevertheless entirely discretionary.
- 4.6.7 Due to the size and scale of the risks involved the authority needs to balance the relative merits of the need for immediate savings, and the wish to protect vulnerable children and young people, with the need to mitigate the impact of a protracted legal challenge.

5. Negotiated improvements/efficiencies already under way

- 5.1 Outline business case approval has been given to double the resources within the independent travel training team. This is on the basis that, in addition to the savings and

cost avoidance already achieved, (in the region of **£300k**) a focused re-assessment of all current special need transport provision; more creative work with the looked after children population, and focused work with children during their transition to high school will generate additional total savings in the region of over **£3m over the next 2 years** and more savings thereafter. It is essential, however, that appropriate processes are immediately put in place to enable delivery. Immediate changes to some budgetary accountability and prompt recruitment will also be required to enable these savings to be achieved. Some of the specific activities are summarised below.

- 5.2 From October 2013 it is proposed to introduce a new service in partnership with Metro. The Leeds Access Bus service is currently commissioned by Metro to enable primarily elderly people, and rural communities, to access shopping centres. They are now willing to make up to 13 vehicles available in the first instance to use as part of the future transport arrangements for schools and colleges for young people with a mild to moderate disability. The vehicles are fully equipped to take up to two wheelchair users. It would be also be a useful addition to the independent travel training programme as a stepping stone to greater independence for some more dependent students.
- 5.3 From September 2013 it is the intention of Children's Services, and our local authority partners Passenger Transport, to explore a radical and new way of delivering an integrated service for children with special needs in the longer term. This will initially be undertaken in partnership with a view to establishing a business case for a school to deliver its own service from September 2014. This will save in the region of **£60k** in the first full academic year of operation.
- 5.4 Children's Services have also been working in partnership with the BESD (behaviour, emotional, social difficulties) SILC Principal to change the current provision of individual taxis to students attending their school. A project was established earlier this year to use a combination of independent travel; bus passes and a shuttle bus from the city centre to transport students. This was against the background of very high expense, as all taxis used to carry only one pupil. Of the 103 children on roll, only 21 now require taxis (those identified by the school as being high need/high risk pupils) and the majority are now travelling independently on public transport using passes funded by the local authority. If sustained, the continuation of this approach, and the introduction of a range of additional travel/attendance incentives, would lead to projected annual savings in the region of **£100k per annum**.
- 5.5 The projected saving, arising from replacing the current universal offer with a means-tested personalised budget for post 16 SEN students, would provide savings in the region of **£2m over the next 2 years**.
- 5.6 Discussions have already taken place with Metro that will enable us to secure the continuation of important services, even if it is on a parent-to-pay basis. Some (e.g. Pudsey to Menston) will become a commercial service route from September 2013 at a significantly reduced cost. All parents, including those currently using this service on a pay to travel basis, will benefit directly. The full fare from September 2013 will be £9.25 per week per student using a SchoolPlus Metro Card, which enables unlimited travel seven days a week across West Yorkshire. This compares to an individual cost this academic year of approximately £8 per student just for home to school travel. Thus, for an extra £1.25 per week, the student will receive the added benefit of being able to use the card anytime. The new arrangements will save the authority approximately **£150k**

during the next academic year but thereafter will be an on-going saving achieved directly for parents who are required to pay.

- 5.7 Focused activity on the travel requirements of looked after children is anticipated to generate savings of **£1.25m over 2 years** but robust controls will be required if this saving is to be realised.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This has been a complex consultation process with wide ranging implications for children, young people and their families. The interest shown and views expressed have been both passionate and considered.
- 6.2 The recommendations to change the current policy have followed a process of detailed review and careful listening to the views expressed by partners, children and young people and their parents. The proposed changes have considered the overall budgetary context; the vulnerabilities of certain groups, and the need to improve the overall quality of services delivered.
- 6.3 The authority believes that some phasing of changes to the current policy will assist in mitigating the potential impact of any unintended consequences and impact. This is particularly so when considering the viability of existing valued bus routes; traffic flow; parents' preference for a continuing faith education or not, and reducing the cost of existing services by improved processes and assessment.
- 6.4 Young people have had several opportunities throughout the consultation process to make their views known. This will continue as any changes are implemented.
- 6.5 The consultation process generated a very good response with over 2,200 adults, children and young people being directly involved. This is a clear representative sample with a response rate of 26% by those totally unaffected by any changes.
- 6.6 There are major budget implications if no change in policy is agreed in readiness for 2013/14 as, not only will savings be unachievable in this financial year, it will also leave a legacy of uncontrollable expenditure for many years to come. It is estimated at this stage that based on population growth; increased fuel costs and increased high needs, no change to current arrangements would lead to an increase in expenditure over 5 years from **£16.63m** to approximately **£25m**.
- 6.7 If the recommendations contained in this report are approved an inclusive Implementation Group will be established, which will report directly to the Children's Trust Board on progress.

7. Summary of Options

- 7.1 Overall the Executive Board is asked to approve the core principle that opportunities for efficiencies should continue to be explored in all areas of transport expenditure; statutory as well as discretionary. Progress has already been outlined in section five of this report but this activity now needs to be sustained over a number of years with a commitment by all senior leaders and managers to a cultural shift in how services are provided in the future.

- 7.2 The consultation process has shown that, whilst parents; children and young people, and wider partners are concerned about the risks surrounding the withdrawal of current support, there was also an implicit acknowledgement that the authority had a duty to ensure expenditure was brought under control and to explore new ways of working.
- 7.3 It appears to be accepted by a sizeable proportion of those consulted that this will inevitably involve some changes to the future delivery of current discretionary provision, but should also include a cultural shift in the way all children are supported to travel safely. There was also a firm view that this should also include those with special needs as part of supporting them in their successful transition into adulthood.
- 7.4 There is, for example, a strong case to be made for supporting the proposal that the delivery of statutory low level SEN transport need should continue to be permanently remodelled with the appropriate use of independent travel training. The lessons learned are very powerful from the recent pilot with the BESD SILC. This approach can easily be expanded for use with other cohorts on an assessed risk and need basis. As parents see the benefits it would reassure them that their children are safe and gaining valuable life skills in the process.
- 7.5 In order to be more efficient and cost effective, it is also proposed that an immediate review is undertaken of the delivery method of all intermediate and complex need provision so that the right service is being provided to the right children at the right time, whilst keeping under review the proposed provisions of the new Children & Families Bill.
- 7.6 The specific options below were considered:

No change

- 7.6.1 A reasonably common request made during the consultation was that the authority should not make any changes to any of the current discretionary provision as the current system worked well and was highly valued.
- 7.6.2 It was made clear from the outset of the consultation, however, that due to severe financial constraints 'no change' was not an option that could be considered. This option would not provide any savings and would leave the authority in the position of continuing to operate a policy that is insufficiently flexible and responsive in a modern city. It would also leave a residual risk of legal challenge against the current policy of free transport being provided on the basis of religion or belief.
- 7.6.4 Children's Services would also be left with a high risk that the budget will be overspent in this area of business for many years to come due to the uncontrollable nature of some of the expenditure. The projected increase is estimated at **£8.5m over 5 years**.

For these reasons this option is not recommended for consideration.

The immediate withdrawal of all discretionary provision from September 2013

- 7.6.5 Whilst this option would generate immediate pro-rata savings of **£4.91m**, and would secure longer term savings, it would not take into account the strength of feelings expressed throughout the consultation process, and would place too much emphasis on specific areas of delivery to the exclusion of others; namely discretionary over delivering more efficiencies from statutory provision.

- 7.6.6 It has been the view of Children's Services throughout that all transport provided, including statutory, and the way it is delivered, should be reviewed. It has already been demonstrated that there are plans in place to change the way some of the statutory and discretionary services are currently provided.
- 7.6.7 An initial cost analysis by Metro of the impact of immediately withdrawing faith and post 16 mainstream transport has shown that, whilst immediate savings could be made, there would be a short-term impact that could cost the authority in the region of up to **£1.1m** in the first year of implementation. The analysis has concluded that this cost could not be mitigated. Furthermore it would also mean that the savings recently negotiated with providers, as part of the commercialisation of some routes, would not be realised. In addition, due to the change only being introduced half way through the year, the savings would only be approximately 50% of current expenditure in 13/14. The projected approximate net saving in 2013/14, therefore, is in the region of **£500k to £1m**. The full saving of **£4.91m**, however, would be realised in year 2.
- 7.6.8 There would be a high risk of legal challenge if any services were withdrawn in September 2013 as it would run contrary to the guidance contained in the Schools Information Regulations (2008) and Previous DfES Guidance on Home to School Transport (2007).
- 7.6.9 Statutory guidance on admissions requires that Travel Arrangements are clearly explained in the prospectus for admissions in the following academic year. Whilst parents are notified that current policy provision cannot be guaranteed, the fact that parents have already expressed their preferences for school places whilst the current policy was in place means there is a legitimate expectation that the terms of the current policy would apply at least for 2013/14. The authority is also required to write to every parent potentially affected. This has not taken place due to the need to complete this process.

For these reasons this option is not recommended for consideration.

- 7.7 The only other detailed option considered was a period of phasing.
- 7.8 The impact of phasing over three years is illustrated in detail at appendix 6. The specific recommended option, for each category of provision, is outlined in full in the next section.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Executive Board is asked to:

- note the extent of the consultation on changes to the current home to school transport policy
- note the legal implications and risk management sections of this report
- note the specific agreement of key partners (e.g. College Principals, Metro, faith partners, and school heads) to work with the LA on the implementation of the new policy over the next two years as it is fully phased in
- note the receipt of a petition submitted on behalf of a faith group wishing the authority to retain current provision
- approve the attached draft policy – 'Leeds Children's Services Transport Policy' (appendix 1) and

- approve the recommendations outlined below.

The following specific options are recommended for approval by the Executive Board in respect of all the current areas of children's transport funding:

Statutory provision

The Executive Board is asked to approve a fundamental remodelling of all statutory provision where it is safe to do so. This would take place following individual assessment of need. There is no intention to make any immediate changes to how statutory services are provided without proper assessment and, where appropriate, liaison with affected parties. Some of the proposed changes, however, include:

- introducing more independent travel training opportunities
- replacing, wherever possible, the current automatic provision of taxis with a pass to enable free travel on public transport
- introducing a wider partnership approach to providing transport services
- developing a more flexible approach in partnership with parents/carers

Discretionary provision - post 16 SEN home to school/college

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree that the proposed provisions of the new Children & Families Bill should be kept under review and any implications taken into account in the implementation of a new policy.
- agree to the principle that in the first instance parents/carers not eligible for statutory support should be expected to organise and fund the transporting of their own children to school or college.
- agree to support the proposal that the delivery of statutory low level need should continue to be re-modelled with the appropriate use of independent travel training, and, in order to be more efficient and cost effective, review the delivery method of all intermediate and complex need transport provision over the next twelve months.
- agree that for those post 16-19 SEN students already attending school/college (including those due to start in September 2013) the current offer would remain in place for a further academic year (2013/14).
- agree **in principle** that following a detailed assessment by the council, where it is deemed not possible for the parent or carer to transport their child/young person to school/college, and the provision of a taxi or similar is the only safe, cost-effective and appropriate way of transporting the child/young person, the authority would provide a personalised means-tested budget towards the cost of transportation.
- agree that this budget should be provided on a means-tested basis only from September 2017, but phased in over a three year transitional period from September 2014 for all existing recipients. At this stage it is proposed that the budget could reasonably be set at a maximum of up to £5,000 per annum for

all new means-tested applicants once the policy is approved, but this figure, and any proposed transitional arrangements, would first need to be considered and agreed by Executive Board.

- agree that further detailed work should take place during 2013/14 in order to develop an implementation plan and establish robust eligibility criteria. It would be unwise for Executive Board to formally approve the changes to this part of the policy at this stage without detailed planning as it may lead to unintended consequences. Until Executive Board approval, therefore, this aspect of the new policy would remain as it is currently described in the current policy.
- agree that the future proposals should continue to be developed and reported back to Executive Board with the relevant detail. The proposed model has been initially budgeted; the indications are that savings in the region of **£1.25m** in 2014/15 rising cumulatively to **£2m** in 2015/16 and **£2.2m** in 2016/17 would be achievable against the current spend of **£2.6m**.
- agree to preserve the current offer for existing students and new September entrants for a further year. This will allow the necessary planning to take place and also enable further discussion with service leads and strategic partners on the most sensible way of implementing any proposed changes.
- agree that independent travel training would continue to be available during that time, including access to a valid pass for travel on public transport across West Yorkshire, paid for by the local authority.

Discretionary provision - faith transport

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to provide discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for all those currently receiving 100% support.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all discretionary transport provided solely on the basis of religion or belief, would be withdrawn.
- agree that from 1st October 2013 new applicants, who do not meet the requirements of the new policy for local authority support, will only be eligible to travel on the relevant service on a parent-to-pay basis. They would be advised to obtain a Young Person's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare fare pass).

Discretionary provision - post 16 mainstream home to school/college

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to continue to fund post 16 mainstream discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for students who enrol on either a one or two year course for the academic year 2013/14.

Appendix B

- agree that new applicants from 1st October 2013 would be recommended to obtain a Scholar's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare fare pass) in order to travel on regular service provision at a discounted rate.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all post 16 discretionary mainstream free transport would be withdrawn.

Discretionary provision - not the nearest school

In relation to this recommended option the Executive Board is asked to:

- agree to provide discretionary transport for a further two years, until 31st August 2015, for all those currently receiving 100% support.
- agree that from 1st September 2015 all discretionary free transport provided, if it is not the nearest qualifying school, would be withdrawn.
- agree that from 1st October 2013 new applicants, who do not meet the requirements of the new policy for local authority support, will only be eligible to travel on the relevant service on a parent-to-pay basis. They would be advised to obtain a Young Person's PhotoCard (often referred to as a half-fare pass).

8.2 In summary, the Executive Board is asked to decide whether or not some or all of the current statutory and discretionary children's transport should be changed or withdrawn and to what extent.

9. Background documents²

9.1 Transport Consultation Paper V1.3 (09/05/2013)

² The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Leeds Children's Services Transport Policy

The policy set out in this document applies to all new applications for assistance with home to school travel commencing on or after the 1 October 2013, and also defines the transitional arrangements agreed by Leeds City Council (the Council) for qualifying learners under its previous policy, where these apply.

This document lays out the Council's policy on the provision of transport support from home to a state-funded school or college of further education for children and students who are permanently resident within the boundary of the Leeds administrative area, and whose parents (also taken to mean legal guardians) pay their Council Tax to Leeds City Council.

The type of transport support provided will be determined following assessment by the Council as to what best meets the needs of the child or student, provides value for money, and is as sustainable as possible. The Council reserves the right to withdraw the provision of any transport support, either for a temporary period, or permanently for more serious or persistent cases of misbehaviour.

In accordance with the views expressed by the Secretary of State, the Council will continue to consider the particular circumstances of individual children and students even where they fall outside the Council's policy.

Section 1 - Free transport for eligible children of compulsory school age

- 1.1 Free transport will be provided for children who meet **one** of the following criteria:
- (a) Children under the age of eight who travel two miles or more from their permanent home address to their nearest qualifying school, measured along the shortest available walking route (the relevant statutory walking distance).
 - (b) Children aged between eight and 16 years (or children up to Year 11) who travel three miles or more from their permanent home address to their nearest qualifying school, measured along the shortest available walking route.
 - (c) **Until 31 August 2015** children of compulsory school age who attend the nearest qualifying school with an available place that is more than the statutory walking distance (two or three miles away, according to age) up to a maximum of 15 miles because the relevant admissions authority was unable to provide a place at a nearer school within the statutory walking distance. All free transport provided under this provision will cease on 31 August 2015.

- (d) Children aged over eight, but under age 11, who are entitled to free school meals, or whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, and who travel two miles or more from their permanent home address to their nearest qualifying school, measured along the shortest available walking route.
- (e) Children aged between 11 and 16, who are entitled to free school meals, or whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, and who attend a qualifying school, more than two miles, but not more than six miles from their permanent home address (as long as there are not three or more nearer suitable qualifying schools)
- (f) Children under the age of eight who would travel less than two miles from their permanent home address to their nearest qualifying school and children aged between eight and 16 years (or children up to Year 11) who travel less than three miles from their permanent home address to their nearest qualifying school, measured according to the statutory walking distance where the nature of that route is such that a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk (accompanied as necessary) in reasonable safety.

1.2 Free transport will be provided for children who attend a school on the grounds of their parent's religion or belief and who meet one of the following criteria.

- (a) Children aged between 11 and 16, who are entitled to free school meals, or whose families are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit, if they attend the nearest qualifying faith school compatible with the parent's religion or belief and that school is more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.
- (b) Until 31 August 2015 children up to the age of eight years if they currently attend the nearest qualifying faith school compatible with the parent's religion or belief, and that school is more than two miles but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address. All free transport provided under this clause will cease on 31 August 2015.
- (c) Until 31 August 2015 children between eight and sixteen if they currently attend the nearest qualifying faith school compatible with the parent's religion or belief and that school is more than three miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address. All free transport provided under this clause will cease on 31 August 2015.
- (d) From 1 October 2013 all new applicants, including children who change school or address, who do not meet the requirements of the new policy for local authority support, will only be eligible to travel on the relevant service on a parent-to-pay basis.

1.3 Free transport will be provided for children who attend a school on the grounds of their parent's non-belief and who meet one of the following criteria:

- (a) In cases where parents of children under the age of eight years are opposed to their children's attendance at a faith school for reasons of non-belief, and where the nearest qualifying school is a faith school, free travel will be granted to the next nearest qualifying non-faith school where that school is more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.
- (b) In cases where parents of children aged between eight and 16 are opposed to their children's attendance at a faith school for reasons of non-belief, and where the nearest qualifying school is a faith school, free travel will be granted to the next nearest qualifying non-faith school where that school is more than three miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.
- (c) Children aged between eight and 16, who are entitled to free school meals, or whose families are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit, if they attend the nearest qualifying non-faith school because of the parent's non-belief and that school is more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.

1.4 Free transport will be provided for children who attend a single-sex school on the basis of their parent's religion or belief and who meet one of the following criteria

- (a) Children under the age of eight years who attend the nearest qualifying single-sex school, where that school is more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.
- (b) Children aged between eight and 16 who attend the nearest qualifying single-sex school where that school is more than three miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.
- (c) Children aged between eight and 16, who are entitled to free school meals, or whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, if they attend the nearest qualifying single-sex school and that school is more than two miles, but not more than 15 miles from their permanent home address.

Section 2 - Free transport for children of compulsory school age with special needs

2.1 Children who have Statements of Special Educational Needs

- (a) Transport support will be provided free of charge for children living less than the statutory walking distance from school if:
 - (i) he or she is the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs; **and**
 - (ii) assistance with transport is specified in the Statement; **and**
 - (iii) the child is attending the nearest qualifying school as named in the Statement.
- (b) Where a parent requests that a child should attend a school other than the nearest qualifying school named in the Statement, assistance will be provided on the express condition that the parent agrees to pay any additional costs incurred by the local authority as a consequence of that request. Those additional costs will be calculated on the basis of the additional mileage incurred.

2.2 Assistance on medical grounds

- (a) Children who attend a qualifying school that is within the statutory walking distance for their age and have a disability, mobility problem, a congenital or permanent medical condition (for example arthritis, cystic fibrosis etc), which means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school will be provided with assistance if:
 - (i) they are not the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs;
 - (ii) they are able to avail themselves of all or most of the education available in school;
 - (iii) their application is supported by written information from a qualified medical practitioner; **and**
 - (iv) the parent is unable to provide their own transport.
- (b) Children who suffer a temporary disability such as a broken leg that impedes normal independent travel to school, but which does not prevent the child from benefiting from education, will be provided with assistance if:
 - (i) they are able to avail themselves of all or most of the education available in school;

- (ii) their application is supported by a written report from a doctor or other qualified medical practitioner giving details of the temporary disability and how long it is likely to last;
- (iii) the school provides written details of their timetable commitments;
and
- (iv) the parent is unable to provide their own transport.

All arrangements made on medical grounds will be reviewed on a termly or annual basis depending on the nature of the disability.

2.3 Disabled parents and carers

Children whose parents are disabled and are, as a result of their condition, unable to accompany their children on the walking route to their nearest qualifying school may apply to Children's Services for assistance. Any application must be supported by a written report from a doctor or other qualified medical practitioner.

Assistance may involve the provision of an escort or guide who would accompany such children on the journey to school in order for the walking route to be considered safe. Only in very exceptional circumstances would this assistance extend to the provision of taxi transport.

All arrangements would be reviewed on a half-termly basis and transport assistance would be withdrawn in the event that the parent's incapacity had ended.

Please note the following:

During 2013-2014 the Council intends to publish a new section to this policy for students with a statement of special educational need. This will describe the support provisions and relevant protections (and limitations) which will be available from September 2014 for all SEN students. This will also take into account the provisions of the new Children and Families Act due to be enacted in 2013 and implemented in 2014.

Explanatory notes for Sections 1 and 2

Note 1 'Permanent home address' is deemed to be the address where the child habitually resides with their parent or guardians. Proof of address may be requested in the form of a recent utility or Council Tax bill, a tenancy agreement, evidence of registration on the electoral roll or other valid evidence.

Note 2 The Department for Education (DfE) states that, 'Qualifying schools' are:

- community, foundation or voluntary schools;
- community or foundation special schools;
- non-maintained special schools;
- pupil referral units;
- maintained nursery schools; or
- city technology colleges, city colleges for the technology of the arts or Academies.

Free Schools have now been added as Qualifying Schools

References to "nearest qualifying school" are to be taken to mean the nearest qualifying school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age ability and aptitude of the child and any special educational needs that the child may have.

Note 3 The statutory walking distance is two miles for children aged under eight, and three miles for children aged eight and over. It is measured according to the 'nearest available walking route', which is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. It is the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety and may include footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. This means that a route will be 'available' even if the child would need to be accompanied along it by his or her parent, as long as such accompaniment is reasonably practicable from a road safety perspective.

Note 4 Assessments of the comparative safety of a route will involve such factors as the age of the child; the width of any roads travelled along and the existence of pavements; the volume and speed of traffic travelling along any roads; and whether or not any potential risks might be mitigated if the child were accompanied by an adult.

Note 5 When assessing the distance between a child's permanent home address and a qualifying school, measurements of up to three miles will be made on the basis of the nearest available walking route. Distances of more than three miles will be measured along road routes and will not include any route or parts of routes which would not be passable using a suitable motorised vehicle.

Note 6 The definition of 'religion' includes those religions widely recognised in this country such as Baha'is, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jains, Judaism, Rastafarianism, Sikhism and Zoroastrians.

Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered as a religion or religious belief, such as Catholicism or Protestantism within Christianity. The limitation on what constitutes a 'religion' is that it must have a clear structure and belief. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes Humanism and Atheism.

Note 7 'Beliefs' must be genuinely held with the parent bearing a heavy burden of showing that it is the real reason for making a particular choice of school. In order to demonstrate such conviction, any application for free travel to a particular faith school will be considered by making reference to the reasons given by the parent on the Common Preference Form (or Transfer Request Form, where applicable) for making that their school of choice. In this respect, the basis of the decision made by the school's governing body to accept the child into the school may be an important factor in determining eligibility to free travel.

Note 8 Where parents have chosen a school because of its single sex-status, free travel will only be granted if it is clear that this is the overriding motivation for such a choice. This motivation should therefore have been made clear on the Common Preference Form (or Transfer Request Form, where applicable).

Note 9 Entitlement to free transport for children whose parents move house will be re-assessed according to Section 1 of this policy. However, free transport may be provided to the original school if:

- the child is in his or her final year (Year 6) before transfer; **or**
- he or she is following a course of study leading to a major public examination (Years 10 and 11 inclusive).

Summary table of eligibility contained in Sections 1 and 2 of this policy

Child	Eligibility Notes
Children aged under 5 years – see notes	None
Children aged from 5 to 8 (Reception to Year 4)	Free transport to the nearest qualifying school if it is more than two miles walking distance from home
Children aged from 11 up to 16 (Years 7 to 11)	Free transport to the nearest qualifying school if it is more than three miles walking distance from home
Children from low income families (eligible for free school meals or family is in receipt of their maximum Working Tax Credit) aged 8 to 11 in primary schools	Free transport to the nearest qualifying school if it is more than two miles walking distance from home
Children from low income families (eligible for free school meals or family is in receipt of their maximum Working tax credit) aged 11 up to 16 (years 7 to 11)	Free transport to one of the three nearest qualifying schools if it is more than two miles by the shortest available walking route and up to six miles away, or the nearest school preferred by reason of a parent/carer’s religion or belief if it is more than two miles by the shortest available walking route and not more than 15 miles away
Children living within the statutory walking distance but who are unable to walk in safety to school because of their Special Educational Needs, physical disability or mobility problems	Free transport support to the nearest qualifying school as determined by the Council.
Children living within the statutory walking distance but who are unable to walk to school in reasonable safety even when accompanied because of the nature of the route	Free transport to the nearest qualifying school as determined by the Council.

Section 3 - Full-time students who have reached the age of sixteen

3.1 No new applications for support under this policy will be considered for the academic year 2014 to 2015 or beyond. Assistance with travel costs will be continued, however, for full-time students who were aged 16 and under 19 at the start of a course of further education and were granted free travel under the Council's previous policy on a discretionary basis. This protection of eligibility will end on the 31 August 2015 for such existing and qualifying students enrolled in school sixth forms and at colleges of further education before the 30 September 2013 where they:

- (a) attend school or college for at least twelve hours of guided learning per week; **and**
- (b) qualified for assistance when they were in their compulsory years of secondary education, remain at the same school to undertake sixth-form studies and live more than three miles from the school, measured by the nearest available walking route; **or**
- (c) change school in order to access a particular course of study, but attend the nearest appropriate sixth form offering that course and have to travel more than three miles to the school, when measured by the nearest available walking route; **or**
- (d) attend the nearest government-funded college of further education in Leeds or a neighbouring local authority that offers the course of their choice and live more than three miles from that college, when measured by the nearest available walking route. The maximum level of assistance with transport costs in cases of attendance at colleges outside the Metro (WYPTE) operating area will be limited to the notional equivalent cost to Education Leeds of providing that student with a Metro SchoolCard.

3.2 Students with recognised learning difficulties and/or disabilities

- (a) Where necessary (and following a detailed assessment) the Council will agree to continue to provide post 16 (up to 25) transport support in accordance with its previous policy up to 31 August 2014.
- (b) It is intended that from 1 September 2014 a new section to this policy will provide detail of the support that will be available for post 16 SEN students

Please note the following:

During 2013-2014 the Council intends to publish a new section to this policy for students with a statement of special educational need. This will describe the support provisions and relevant protections (and limitations) which will be available from September 2014 for all SEN students. This will also take into account the provisions of the new Children and Families Act due to be enacted in 2013 and implemented in 2014.

Section 4 - Arrangements for children who are in the care of Leeds City Council (Looked After Children)

- 4.1 The majority of looked after children will attend a local school, particularly when a placement is identified as the child/ young person's long term placement or is expected to last for more than a six month period. This enables a child/young person to access local facilities, build social relationships with their peers and participate in local activities.
- 4.2 The aim of this policy is to establish stable yet flexible transport arrangements that meet the needs of looked after children, to ensure that transport arrangements are non-intrusive and do not set the child apart from other children, by using the same arrangements as would be made for any child.
- 4.3 Therefore looked after child of primary school age would normally be escorted to school by a carer, whether this be by walking, use of public transport or the use of carer's own transport . Possible exceptions to this would be foster carers who have a number of children in placement, attending different schools. Foster carer allowances include an allocation for transport. Additional financial assistance may be provided where transport costs are in excess of this.
- 4.4 The local authority has a responsibility to promote appropriate independence skills for looked after children and young people who will be supported and encouraged to use independent travel to school, including public transport, usually from year 7, or when it is assessed as safe for them to do so.
- 4.5 Taxis and private hire vehicles will only be used for looked after children's school/home transport in exceptional circumstances after all other options have been explored.
- 4.6 When a child first becomes looked after, or is subject to care proceedings, the local authority has a commitment to retaining a child's attendance at their original school where this is judged to be beneficial to the child for reasons of stability and continuity. However, children should transfer to a school local to their placement at the end of the care proceedings, or following the move to the long-term placement. Exceptions to this expectation would be the need to provide continuity for those in year 6 of primary school, or young people undertaking examination syllabuses in years 10 and 11.
- 4.7 All transport assistance for looked after children will be reviewed on a regular basis, at a minimum of six monthly intervals.

Section 5 – The right of appeal

- 5.1 Parents have the right of appeal if support with the cost of home to school transport is refused. The Council will in this regard adopt the official guidance issued by the Department for Education in March 2013 as outlined below.
- 5.2 If a complainant considers that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules, or if there are any other irregularities in the way an appeal was handled, there is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. If a complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, a complainant may apply for a judicial review.
- 5.3 Parents have the right to challenge a decision about:
- The transport arrangements offered
 - Their child’s eligibility
 - The distance measurement
 - The safety of the route
- 5.4 Stage one: The Review
- (a) Following receipt of a letter refusing support with home to school travel costs a parent has 20 working days to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.
- (b) Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent’s written request a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written outcome setting out:
- i. the nature of the decision reached;
 - ii. how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB guidelines);
 - iii. information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
 - iv. what factors were considered;
 - v. the rationale for the decision reached **and**
 - vi. information about escalation to stage two (if appropriate).
- 5.5 Stage two: The Appeal
- (a) Parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority’s stage one decision to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.
- (b) Within 40 working days an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from the parent and officers and gives a detailed written outcome setting out:
- i. the nature of the decision reached;
 - ii. how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB);
 - iii. information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;

- iv. what factors were considered;
- v. the rationale for the decision reached;
- vi. information about escalation to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below);
- vii. The independent appeal panel members should be independent of the process to date and suitably experienced, to ensure a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of parents and the local authority, and that road safety requirements are complied with;
- viii. Local Government Ombudsman – It is recommended that as part of this process, local authorities should make it clear that there is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal was handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may apply for judicial review.

5.6 Stage 2 appeals will normally be considered by a panel of senior Council officials who are unconnected with the administration or management of the transport team and have no prior involvement in the original decision(s). Appeal forms and further details of the procedures may be requested from:

Education Transport (Appeals),
Contracting & Strategic Investment,
Floor 10 West,
Merrion House,
110 Merrion Centre,
Leeds
LS2 8DT.

Analysis of current school/college transport provision by other Local Authorities – 2013/14

Neighbouring authorities							
Authority	Faith School	Comments	Post 16 Mainstream School or College	Comments	Post 16 SEN	Comments	
Bradford	✓	Post 16 phased out from 2012	*	Metro concessionary fare only	✓	16+ full offer provided	
Calderdale	*	From Sept 2014 phased out for new applications	*	Metro concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 19, based on assessment	
Kingston upon Hull	*	From Sept 2014 phased out for new applications	*	Bursary only. Local authority has limited funding for young people who cannot access other funding. Subject to assessment.	✓	Subject to assessment and to age 25	
Kirklees	✓	Consultation proposed	*	Metro concessionary fare only;	✓	Contribution required £1.36 per day	
Lancashire	✓	Free travel for awards before Sept 2011; from Sept 2011 contribution of £380pa required	*	No support whatsoever	✓	Subject to assessment and to age 25. Provision of taxi/minibus/escort	
Wakefield	*	From Sept 2013 phased out for new applications	*	Metro concessionary fare only	✓	Contribution required; equivalent to School Plus MetroCard	
North Yorkshire	*	From Sept 2012 phased out for new applications	✓	Contribution of £350 pa required	✓	16+ full offer provided	
North Lincolnshire	*	Phased out from c.2008	✓	Contribution of £30pa required towards cost of pass to nearest sixth form or college, as per assessment	✓	Contribution of £30pa required. Full offer to 25	
City of York	*	From Sept 2013 phased out for new applications	✓	Means tested	✓	Subject to assessment	

Core Cities						
Authority	Faith School	Comments	Post 16 Mainstream School/ College	Comments	Post 16 SEN	Comments
Birmingham	x	From Sept 2013 phased out for new applications	x	Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 19. Contribution required - £600 pa; £300 for low income
Bristol	x	From Sept 2012 phased out for new applications	✓	Assessed on case by case basis	✓	Up to age 19 for max 3 years. Contribution possibly required & DLA taken into account
Liverpool	✓	No plans to withdraw	x	Withdrawn from 2012	✓	16+ based on assessment
Manchester	✓	No plans to withdraw	✓	Based on assessment	✓	Up to age 19. Based on assessment
Newcastle	x	From Sept 2014 phased out for new applications	x	Concessionary fares only	✓	Subject to assessment. Support only provided to establishments in the Newcastle area.
Nottingham	✓	Primary schools only. Secondary provision withdrawn from September 2013	x	Concessionary fares only	✓	Subject to assessment
Sheffield	x	Phased out by Sept 2015	✓	Means tested	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment
Statistical neighbours						
Authority	Faith School	Comments	Post 16 Mainstream School/ College	Comments	Post 16 SEN	Comments
Bolton	x	From Sept 2012 phased out for new applications	x	Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment
Calderdale	See above – neighbouring authority					
Darlington	x	Information not available	✓	Flat rate grant of £180 to all f/t students	✓	Up to age 24. Based on assessment

Derby	*	Phased out "some time ago", before 2011	*		Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment
Kirklees	See above - neighbouring authority						
Milton Keynes	*	From Sept 2012 phased out for new applications	*		Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment. Contribution required
North Tyneside	✓	No plans to withdraw	*		Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment. Contribution required.
St Helens	✓	No plans to withdraw	*		Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment
Stockton-on-Tees	✓	No plans to withdraw	*		Concessionary fare only	✓	Up to age 25. Based on assessment

Notes:

1. A '✓' signifies that an offer is currently made in this area of discretionary transport delivery. They are not all the same but have similar features
2. A 'x' signifies that the service has either been completely withdrawn or is in the process of being phased out over a period of time. This differs by authority

Summary:

- 3 out of 5 of our neighbouring authorities have withdrawn non-statutory free travel to faith schools ("faith transport")
- 4 out of 6 of the Core Cities have retained faith transport
- All but one of our statistical neighbours have withdrawn faith transport
- There is a consistency of approach throughout all comparators that post 16 support is limited to the basic availability of any wider concessionary fare scheme, which is either available to all young people or just those in learning
- All 16 – 19 year old students may be able to access bursary funding administered locally by their school or college
- No local authority has withdrawn post 16 SEN transport but a significant number request a fixed contribution ranging from £30 to £600pa
- Many of the comparators fund SEN transport up to age 25

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Leeds City Council - consultation briefing paper on the redevelopment of the Children's Services transport policy and strategy

Purpose of consultation

Leeds City Council wishes to consult on the current transport policy which provides, in certain circumstances, free transport to enable children and young people to get to school or college. The overall purpose of this consultation is to consider broad options for all current transport provision for children and young people and other ways to save money. Some of these options are about services we could decide to stop providing immediately. We want your views on how far you agree or disagree with any changes we might introduce.

We want to look at two things in particular. Firstly, to consider the level of support that we offer with the cost of home to school and college travel arrangements and see if there is a better way to make that universally available. Secondly, to consider whether or not the council should continue to make available all discretionary free transport currently provided. This is support that the council chooses to provide over and above what it must provide by law. The Council's Executive Board paper outlining the proposed consultation can be found [here](#) or by cutting and pasting the following link into your web browser:

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s90056/School%20Transport%20Cover%20Report%20050213.pdf>

Why are we consulting now?

Councils throughout the country are facing financial pressures on the services they provide. This means that they must make choices about what they can continue to offer and how it is delivered. We know that we cannot afford to continue to deliver the current services in the way we do now, so 'no change' is not an option.

We do not have the option to keep children's transport expenditure at the current level; we have to do things differently. This consultation paper is about how you think we should provide appropriate travel arrangements for the children of Leeds in the future to help them to get to school or college. We want to listen to your views to help us make these decisions. In particular, on the extent to which you think things should be changed and how quickly. The review of the policy also aims to make it much clearer, in the future, who is eligible for subsidised travel and why.

What do we do now in Leeds?

Every Local Authority has a duty to make arrangements for children who qualify to travel to school free of charge. This includes young people who live more than a certain distance from their nearest school or for those where transport is required as part of their Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Leeds City Council has also for many years been able to offer much more than required by law. For example most of our neighbouring authorities no longer provide this level of support having gradually withdrawn both faith and post 16 support over the last few years. The total cost of providing both statutory and discretionary school transport to our Leeds families is currently in excess of **£16 million** per year.

Views of Young People

Young people, locally and nationally, have put access to good quality affordable transport for all young people at the top of their wish list when it comes to seeking improvements. We are actively working with children and young people in Leeds so that we fully understand their needs. Some of the things young people have already suggested are outlined below:

- § a young person's day rider ticket that is recognised by all operators across the city;
 - § young person friendly route planning and pricing;
 - § reduced fares for 5 -10 year olds accompanied by an adult;
 - § a multi-purpose 'youth card' for use on buses that can also be used to obtain discounts with high street retailers, building on the *Breeze* brand;
- We understand young people's wishes to have safe and affordable transport and will continue to work with all our partners to achieve this goal, especially the Youth Council.

How will this contribute towards Leeds becoming a Child Friendly City?

We are actively working with a range of partners across the city to help them understand the possible implications of any changes to the current policy so that they can consider how they can best help in these times of austerity. Some of these partners include: Metro; Schools; Colleges; Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) and Health Services.

The government has also asked bus operators in their own right to consider offering travel discounts to all children under 18, not just those who attend school or college. In addition we are in active discussion with Health Services and Adult Social Care about how we might share costs to become more efficient in the use of our respective resources.

We understand young people's wishes to have safe, flexible and affordable transport for all children and young people and will continue to work with all partners to try to achieve this goal.

Facts and figures

The details in the table at Appendix 1 give you some facts about the current provision to help you form a view. Some elements of current provision must be provided by law (statutory) but we could deliver it in different ways; the remaining elements are discretionary and do not have to be provided and could be stopped altogether or could also be delivered in different ways. The current projected total statutory expenditure is **£6.32m** and the expenditure on discretionary is approximately **£4.91m**. A further **£2.3m** is spent on looked after children's transport and **£3.1m** on concessionary half-fares via Metro for all children aged 11-18 in full time education. This represents a total annual expenditure in the region of **£16.63m**.

Other important information and facts

You may also want to know that:

- children under the age of five travel free on public transport when travelling with a full fare passenger;
- there are currently approximately **108,000** young people in Leeds (aged 11 – 18) who are eligible for a concessionary half-fare pass;
- half price concessionary fares are available to all children and young people in Leeds who are in full time education, including those in sixth form;
- Leeds City Council currently contributes **£3.1million** every year to Metro's cost of providing concessionary fares;
- this currently enables approximately **40,000** young people in Leeds to travel anywhere in West Yorkshire. It is proposed that this arrangement will continue but we clearly need to review the value for money and take up of this benefit to ensure its continuing cost-effectiveness;
- Independent Travel Training (ITT) has recently been introduced in Leeds. This is a service that currently works primarily with young people with SEN. It is designed to help individual children to learn how to travel as independently as they can. This quality service has proved very popular and efficient both in improving children's confidence and saving money;
- it can help some young people move away from using a taxi every day to school or college, which is very expensive, and become more confident and able to use public

transport, perhaps with the help of a 'travel buddy'. One young person, who has recently benefited, said: "*I (now) feel more confident...I have really enjoyed doing this and would give the training 10 out of 10...*";

- for some young people, however, independent travel is not a possibility. This means that we will always need to consider the individually assessed circumstances of each child;
- in **2012/13** (to date) approximately **£125k** has been saved either by not spending money in the first place or by transferring **70** children on to less costly transport;
- an outline business case has recently been approved to extend this service to work with more children with SEN; looked after children, and children in year 6 who are in transition to high school. This approach to focussing primarily on improving the quality of what we do will continue, but in the process it is estimated that we will save a further **£500k** net in **2013/14**.

Why does it all cost this much?

There are several reasons; the population of Leeds is growing - in 2000 the annual birth rate was 7,500, it is now over 10,400 per year and rising. More children are going to school and college, and the cost of fuel and other over-heads have increased significantly over the past 10 years. Nevertheless, we also know that in order to save more money we could still do things better and more imaginatively. We are already trying new ways of working (such as ITT), and we intend to continue, but would like your ideas on other things you think we should consider.

What options are open to the council?

- We could stop providing some, or all, of the existing discretionary free transport that we currently choose to make available. Ending all discretionary travel would save £4.91m per year depending on when any changes were introduced. No change would lead to increased costs in line with the increase in population and needs;
- we could offer discretionary free transport only to families on a qualifying low income. This would generate substantial savings compared to current expenditure;
- we could protect those families currently receiving discretionary free transport until their child leaves school or for a fixed period. For example a 2 year period of protection would cost £2.89m in year 1 and £1.82m in year 2;
- we could change the way we deliver some of our current statutory provision. For example we could do other things similar to Independent Travel Training in order to save more money. We would like your ideas on how you think we could make more savings;
- we could ask all parents of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, as a matter of course, to make their own arrangements to transport their own child to school and provide instead an appropriate personal budget for them to choose how to use the money. This may mean we would only provide support with transport by exception, in the most cost effective way, and only when it was absolutely necessary.

How do I share my views?

- The consultation will run from 27th February to 24th April 2013;
- You are encouraged wherever possible to respond on line by accessing the survey via www.leeds.gov.uk/schooltransport
- You can also access a survey pack in the following alternative ways:
 - You can email a request to transpolicy.consult@leeds.gov.uk
 - You can ask for a hard copy to be sent to you by post by either ringing 0113 247 5593 or by writing to:

Children's Services Transport
10th floor west
Merrion House
110 Merrion Centre
Leeds
LS2 8DT

- If you are a member of a group and would like a senior officer to come to a planned meeting during the consultation period to talk to you about these possible changes please either ring 0113 247 5593 or email transpolicy.consult@leeds.gov.uk

What happens after the consultation period ends?

- After the consultation period ends all responses will be summarised and a report prepared for Children's Services Leadership Team;
- Any recommended changes to the current policy would then require final approval by the Executive Board who will then decide whether to proceed with the recommended options;
- These options will be based on a full analysis of your views with all comments, whether given in writing, verbally or at a public meeting, being treated equally. So it is very important that you have told us what you think;
- The earliest that a decision can be made is **19th June 2013**.

Statutory children’s school transport – this must be provided by law

Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year	Comments
Mainstream schools (5-16)	2.54m	4,203	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These numbers and costs are rising year on year and does not include a projected increase in costs of £770k in 13/14 • The individual cost varies depending on the assessed need
SEN (5 -16)	3.78m	650	
Sub-total statutory	6.32m	4,853	

Discretionary school transport – we can choose to provide this or not

Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year	Comments
Children who choose to attend a school on the basis of faith	800k	2,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law only requires Leeds City Council to fund transport to faith schools for families on low income • 55 children are currently in receipt of free travel to Catholic Primary schools; the remainder attend the four Catholic High schools and one Church of England school in Leeds • Some of these attend six different church schools outside the Leeds boundary as it is their nearest faith school • Most of our neighbouring local authorities no longer fund transport to faith schools on a discretionary basis • Families who have a qualifying low income are entitled to free transport to a faith school and so would not be affected by any changes • We would like your views on whether we should continue to provide this support here in Leeds.
Post 16 transport to mainstream schools and colleges	1.36m	4,245	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law does not require Leeds City Council to meet the cost of home to school/college transport for young people over the age of 16 • We currently provide this for those who attend the nearest school or college that offers the course combination they have chosen to follow (where that is more than three miles away) • Our neighbouring local authorities do not make free transport available to their families for this group of young people • Over half of these students will finish their studies in June 2013 • We would like your views on whether we should continue to provide this support here in Leeds.
Post 16 transport for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN)	2.6m	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people with a statement of SEN often qualify for funded transport • The current policy in Leeds also provides funded transport for young people <u>over</u> 16 up to the age of 25

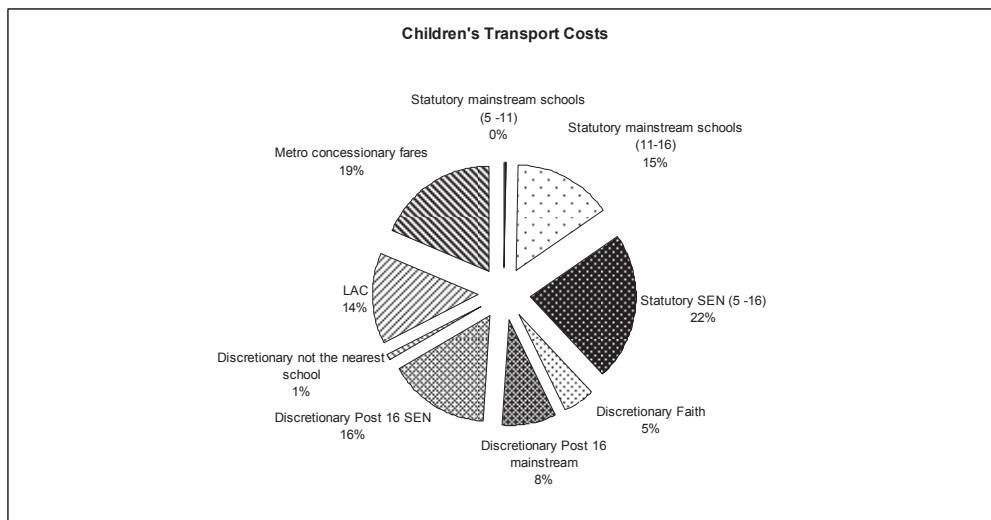
Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year	Comments
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes this will be in a taxi or minibus, other times a parent will want to take their child to school/college themselves and we pay them a mileage allowance • Due sometimes to a child's more complex needs a child may have to attend specialist provision to meet their particular needs, and this involves a much longer journey to school than other children This can often include the need to provide an escort, which increases the cost • The transport may also be provided in the form of a bus pass but more often involves individual taxis which means the costs are much higher for those requiring greater support • Often a parent has their own transport but will still be provided with a taxi for their child. This may be important so that they can take their other children to school • The cost of providing taxi based transport on a daily basis per student ranges from £15 to £150 per day depending on the child's needs • Most local authorities continue to make some free transport available for young people with SEN who attend learning. Some make charges and the amount of support available varies • We would like to hear your views on whether we should continue all or some of the current discretionary provision and any other alternatives you think we should consider.
Free travel to a school that is not the nearest appropriate school	150k	181	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes we are unable to provide a place at a school within 3 miles of the child's home address • In these circumstances the present policy allows free travel to a school of the parent's choice rather than the nearest appropriate school with an available place, provided it is within a reasonable distance • If the policy was changed the children would still qualify for free transport, but only if they were attending their nearest school and it was more than 3 miles away • The majority of children currently affected live in Bramhope, who choose Otley Prince Henrys, and children living in North East Leeds, who choose to go to Tadcaster • If this was ended a child would not qualify for free transport unless they were attending their nearest school and it was more than 3 miles away.

Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year	Comments
Sub total - discretionary	4.91m	7,376	
Sub total statutory	6.32m	4,853	
Total children's school transport costs	11.23m	12,229	These total figures vary on a weekly basis

In addition to the above there are two other key areas of expenditure on children's transport; some of this is discretionary.

Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of children per year	Comments
Support for looked after children	2.3m	750	Much of this support is covered by the council's statutory responsibilities as a corporate parent. There is some flexibility, however, in how this support could be provided. It covers some costs of transport to schools; contact arrangements; short breaks and leisure activities. We are currently actively working towards supporting all looked after children to travel independently based on ability and need;
Metro, Service Level Agreement	3.1m	40,000	This pays for concessionary half-fare for young people aged 11-18. Currently young people have to pay for the administration costs of a photo ID (£2). Over 100,000 young people are eligible and for each journey made there is a shared cost by the authority and the bus operator. We are working with Metro to improve this offer. This figure also includes the cost of managing the commissioning arrangements for new tenders and the running of a small team.
Grand Total	16.63m	N/A	Plus approximately £770k projected additional costs in 13/14

The graph below shows the distribution of costs:



Definitions

‘Appropriate personal budget’	money to support a child getting to school or college in the cheapest way possible that meets their needs
‘Appropriate school’	this means the right school for a child based on educational needs age and home address
‘Assessed need’	a consistent formal process that records what a child needs
‘Children who qualify’	this refers to children who are entitled to free travel
‘Concessionary’	this means cheaper fares as a result of Leeds City Council contributing money to the cost of running the buses
‘Consultation’	a process by which you can obtain the views of other people on a particular subject or issue
‘Discretionary’	this means something you don’t have to do by law. Something that the authority can choose to do or not
‘Executive Board’	this is the main decision-making body of the council
‘Faith school’	in practice in Leeds this currently means a Jewish, Catholic or Church of England school
‘Independent Travel Training’	this involves supporting children to help them travel to school or college on the bus or by walking
‘Looked After Child’	a child who is in the care of the local authority
‘Qualifying low income’	this is defined by law and can trigger free transport
‘Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)’	schools for children with a special educational need
‘Statement of Special Educational Need’	this refers to an assessment that is done at a specific time in a child’s life if they are considered to have specific needs to help them access education and any additional support
‘Statutory’	something you have to do by law
‘Subsidised’	this means not having to pay the full fare
‘Universal subsidy’	every young person is entitled to this reduced fare if they are in full-time education and below a certain age

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Children's Services	Service area: Contracting and Strategic Investment
Lead person: Gerry Hudson	Contact number: 224 3635
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 23 rd May 2013	

<p>1. Title: The redevelopment of the Children's Services transport policy and strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 16 SEN transport
<p>Is this a:</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy /Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>If other, please specify</p>

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Gerry Hudson	Leeds City Council	Service lead
Allan Hudson	Leeds City Council	Manager of service
Rachael Davison	Leeds City Council	Project manager
Viv Buckland	Leeds City Council	Head of service
Alice Fox	Leeds City Council	Senior policy & performance officer
Barry Jones	Leeds City Council	Complex needs area lead

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

Arising from the Council's budget proposals, in February 2013 permission was granted by Executive Board to move to a phase of public consultation on the current transport policy. This included consideration of the continuance, amendment or removal of the discretionary elements within the current Leeds Children's Services Transport policy and alternative ways of delivering current statutory provision. Thus the review focused on all school transport expenditure, not just discretionary elements as there is an acknowledgement that efficiencies and savings could be made across the service as a whole.

The consultation period opened on 27th February and closed on 24th April 2013. For further information on projected school transport expenditure, please see Appendix 6 of the Executive Board report (Consultation Briefing paper).

This review does not in itself affect eligibility to statutory transport, although a range of new ways of working are already being implemented and considered as part of the fundamental shift in the way all children's transport is provided.

There are, however, currently only four main discretionary elements within the current policy. These are represented by the availability of non-statutory free home to school travel to faith schools; post 16 mainstream transport to school or college, post 16 (up to age 25) home to school/college transport for young people with special educational needs (SEN) and free travel to a school that is not the nearest (up to 15 miles), if there is no place at the nearest school. These are the only home to school transport services (in significant financial terms) which the council do not have a legal obligation to provide. There are some elements of transport services provided for looked after children (not in the current policy) that are also discretionary and these are also in the process of being reviewed for efficiencies.

The withdrawal or amendment of some or all discretionary elements presents an opportunity for Executive Board to consider using savings to meet its targets and maintain essential services for those greatest in need. Should the Council seek to remove all current discretionary elements there are potential savings of up to **£4.91m**. Discretionary transport provided for post 16 SEN students equates to **£2.6m**. The consultation outlined that the options available included immediate withdrawal of provision in September 2013; elements of phasing out the provision over time and remodelling current statutory provision.

This Equality Impact Assessment considers discretionary transport for post 16 (up to age 25) home to school/college transport for young people with special educational needs. It has been separated from the other discretionary elements of the transport policy due to the specific needs of the students, where additional consideration of individuals need is required.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

(complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail:	
The review focused on all the school transport policy not just discretionary elements	

4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail:	
Assistance is provided to qualifying learners in order to support them with their home to school/college journeys.	

<p>5. Fact finding – what do we already know</p> <p>Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.</p> <p>(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)</p> <p>Current transport policy</p> <p>The review of the policy has involved looking at alternative or revised methods of delivery to ensure the efficiency and best value of the services including the Council's statutory obligations.</p> <p>In particular, the review has examined continued affordability to ensure that existing discretionary policies remain fit for purpose, delivering value and equitable services to Leeds residents. The table below provides details of the SEN transport services that have been reviewed.</p>
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Type of provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year
Discretionary transport for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) post 16 years	2.6 m	350

Discretionary SEN transport for young people post 16 years

- Children and young people with a statement of SEN often qualify for funded transport
- The current policy in Leeds also provides funded transport for young people over 16 up to the age of 25.
- Sometimes this will be in a taxi or minibus, other times a parent will want to take their child to school/college themselves and we pay them a mileage allowance
- Due sometimes to a child's more complex needs a child may have to attend specialist provision to meet their particular needs, and this involves a much longer journey to school than other children This can often include the need to provide an escort, which increases the cost.
- The transport may also be provided in the form of a bus pass but more often involves individual taxis, which means the costs are much higher for those requiring greater support.
- Often a parent has their own transport but will still be provided with a taxi for their child. This may be important so that they can take their other children to school.
- The cost of providing taxi based transport on a daily basis per student ranges from £15 to £150 per day depending on the child's needs.
- Most local authorities continue to make some free transport available for young people with SEN who attend learning. Some make charges and the amount of support available varies.

Geographical Information

The educational provisions these students attend are often not within their local area and involve making long journeys to opposite sides of the city. The setting a student attends will depend on their individual needs and will be the most suitable care and learning environment for them.

If any changes were made to the current transport policy it would involve young people aged 16-25 years with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and their families from across the whole city.

Independent Travel Training

Independent Travel Training (ITT) has recently been introduced in Leeds. This is a service that currently works primarily with young people with SEN. It is designed to help individual children to learn how to travel as independently as they can. This quality service has proved very popular and efficient both in improving children's confidence and saving money. It can help some young people move away from using a taxi every day to school or college and become able to use public transport sometimes with the help of a 'travel buddy'. ITT is not, however, suitable for all young people with SEN.

An outline business case approval has now been given for the doubling of the Independent Travel Training Team (ITT).

Consultation Process– (See appendix 3; Consultation Briefing paper; Background document Transport Consultation Paper v1.3 and appendix 5 Transport Consultation - Executive Summary)

A communications plan was drawn up identifying key stakeholders and the ways in which we planned to communicate in order seek their views. The plan was supported by the Voice and Influence Team who took a lead in communicating with their networks to ensure maximum engagement of parents and carers and children and young people.

The plan involved contacting all key stakeholders such as Head Teachers, Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) Principals; Elected Members; Diocesan Leads; Heads of Service, and voluntary sector groups. They were directed to the consultation webpage and asked to comment themselves but also encouraged to cascade information to their networks, service users and people who would be directly affected by any changes to the policy including current recipients of discretionary services.

The survey was also promoted to all LCC employees and the citizen's panel to attract responses from people who may not be directly affected in order to gather a balanced viewpoint.

A dedicated webpage was set up which included a copy of the current transport policy and a briefing paper which was written to accompany the survey. The briefing and survey clarified that a review of the full service was necessary in order both to make service improvements and make savings and efficiencies.

The main element of the consultation was in the form of a survey, also adapted into a children and young people version. Both were available electronically or as a hard copy.

Other methods of consultation included public meetings, attendance at meetings for specific groups, an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) workshop and an email inbox for direct communication.

The consultation invited the submission of suggested options ranging from a blanket withdrawal of discretionary services to the remodelling of existing provisions. These options were clearly laid out within the Consultation Briefing paper (appendix 3) so it was clear from the outset that all options would be open for consideration by the Executive Board.

After consultation closedown the data was analysed and all responses and comments have been incorporated into a consultation report and used as a strategy for mitigating any adverse impacts arising.

Equality Monitoring

The adult consultation survey included an equality monitoring section. These were collated for the consultation report. The full demography analysis can be found in section 7 of the consultation appendix.

The respondents equality profiling has been compared to the population of Leeds. This data was taken from the Leeds Observatory. The Leeds Observatory is a website that provides data and information about communities and geographies in Leeds.

From the analysis of the adult survey it can be seen that the respondent's ethnicity profile reflected that of the city as a whole.

The religious profiling of the respondents was also comparable to the makeup of the city's population.

There were 184 respondents that said they had a child or young person in their family that had a disability. This is considered to be a good representation of service users.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information

Please provide detail:

No

Action required: None

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

A full city wide consultation exercise has taken place; this included current recipients of free discretionary provision. Appendix 5 provides an executive summary of the analysis of the consultation exercise. In this document further detailed information is provided on the potential negative impact of implementing the recommended changes to the current policy and the proposed mitigation. Responses were received from a wide range of participants; some affected by the changes and others not.

In total over 2,200 adults, children and young people participated directly in the consultation. 1,601 respondents answered the adult survey. The children and young people's survey was completed by 271 respondents, 24 of these were group responses. A further 400 plus people attended consultation sessions which were in the form of focus groups, parents meetings and information sessions. These included specific faith, post 16 mainstream and SEN meetings. These were held in schools and colleges with head teachers, principals and governors.

The adult survey asked the question 'Which service directly affects you?' Below is a breakdown of how people responded.

	Count of Responses	% of respondents*
Transport for children who choose to attend a school on the basis of faith or beliefs	780	49.06%
Post 16 transport to mainstream schools and colleges	310	19.50%
Post 16 transport for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN)	180	11.32%
Free travel to a school which is not the nearest appropriate school	220	13.84%
I am not affected by any service	411	25.85%

*Respondents could provide more than one response so % will not total 100%

Source: Adult Transport Survey

To ensure the participation of children and young people an alternative version of the survey was made available and promoted through child friendly websites e.g. Breeze and GenerationM. An informal information session was also organised with the Youth Council and information was shared in a quiz style format.

In order to cater for anyone with communication difficulties the information was sent to head teachers, college principals and service leads and asked that they cascade the information relating to the consultation. It was envisaged that they would communicate this by the same methods in which they regularly communicate messages to their service users.

The consultation meetings gave an opportunity for people to voice their comments or concerns as an alternative to completing the survey.

In one SILC the staff set up a morning sessions to support parents on a 1:1 basis in completing the consultation survey in order to meet their individual needs.

Planned workshops with pupils and students with additional needs took place in the South SILC provisions and at the Leeds City College, Thomas Danby site. These were planned carefully to ensure full engagement in the consultation process. Group activities and a further version of the survey were developed to capture their views. This feedback was analysed and included in the consultation report.

Group submissions of the survey were encouraged so that people did not have to respond as an individual.

The timescales for the consultation were extended to maximise the number of respondents and took into account the Easter holidays.

Action required: None

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment | <input type="checkbox"/> Race | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other - Income | | |

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify:

Stakeholders

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify | | |

Potential barriers.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Built environment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer care |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function | |

Please specify

With impending legislative changes in the forthcoming Children and Families Bill, children and young people with additional needs may receive a personal budget, or transport may later become a mandatory service to be provided by the council. In order to take full account of the bill a transition period has been recommended for the current SEN provision in Leeds. Subject to Executive Board approval this will be developed in more detail with a formal proposal, including detail, returned to Executive Board for approval within 3 months. The consultation findings will still be current and so will inform the final recommendations.

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

The review of the council's current transport policy has raised the following positive impact:

- An increase in Independent Travel Training (ITT) will encourage independence, promote self-advocacy and build confidence and self-esteem. An increase in students travelling independently could generate some savings. However it is acknowledged that ITT is not a possibility for some students with SEN.
- If the recommendation to phase in personalised budgets/charges is approved, the transition period will enable parents to adjust to the terms of the new policy and enable them to budget accordingly.
- There would be long term savings for the Council allowing for funding to meet targets and the ability to maintain essential services. This would create an opportunity to retarget resources to those most in need by replacing blanket provision with an assessed consideration of individual needs.
- The consultation process has raised awareness of the costs of transport to the wider public.
- The process has also stimulated new and innovative ideas for a broader range of services which could be provided to meet individual needs.
- There has been an increase in partnership working and an appreciation of the full costs of providing this support.

Action required: None

8b. Negative impact:

The consultation executive summary (appendix 5) provides additional detail of the potential negative impacts and any mitigation. Some of these are highlighted in the summary below. Any changes to the current transport policy for post 16 SEN transport could potentially result in the following negative consequences, which need to be considered:

Negative impact on families

- Transport for SEN students can be very high in cost depending on the complexity in needs of the young person.
- There could be potential logistical pressures for families having to balance drop off and

pick up times with home life, work patterns, childcare, children at different schools and other practical issues.

- Dependant on their additional need, some young people need routine and familiarity. This may be uncertain if the policy changes.
- Some families may be influenced in their choice of school/provision for financial reasons.
- Families may feel they need to choose provision nearer to home rather than provision which is most appropriate for their child's specialised needs.
- The young person may not be able to further their education if they cannot afford transport.

Negative impact on schools/colleges

- If this discretionary element is withdrawn, fewer students with SEN may choose to attend further education. This could affect the viability of the provision and courses.
- Attendance and Children Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – may be impacted upon if young people with SEN no longer have access to free transport.
- The demography could change if schools/provisions are only attended by those who can afford transport costs.
- Safety concerns at specific sites may be raised due to increased traffic at drop off and pick up times.

Negative impact on the council

- There could be a reputational impact if changes to the transport policy were not carefully explained both to those affected as well as to the wider community.
- Any changes could be seen to contradict the council's aim to be a child friendly city. Children and young people have said that affordable transport and feeling safe on public transport were important to them.
- More vehicles may be on the road if parents/carers decide to transport their children. This could lead to an increase in congestion and be contrary to the Council's green policies.
- There may be an increase in the number of transport appeals.

Action required:

If the review results in changes to the current transport policy for post 16 SEN, as recommended, the actions below may help to mitigate the negative impacts. They are also reflected on in more detail in appendix 5:

Negative impact on families

- A well thought out and planned communication strategy will be needed so any changes to the policy are clearly explained in a timely and accessible way.
- Families will need to be given prior notice before transport provision is amended to help mitigate the impact.
- Information explaining the eligibility criteria for free transport will need to be available and families will have to be given plenty of time to apply.
- The service lead officers will continue to establish whether schools and colleges could fund transport through bursaries for individual cases.
- Transport contracted to provide a service will continue to be available for families; therefore parents will not have to transport their own children and this will mitigate any logistical home-life pressures.
- An appeal process, compliant with DfE guidelines will be retained, which includes the option to award discretionary provision based on the grounds of exceptional

hardship.

Negative impact on schools/colleges

- Monitor the impact any policy changes have on NEET and attendance.
- Transport contracted to provide a service will continue to be available therefore parents will not have to transport their own children so an increase in traffic and congestion will be minimal.

Negative impact on the council

- Some press coverage has already taken place during the consultation. A planned strategy is in place to effectively communicate the decisions made by Executive Board.
- On-going work with Metro to improve the offer of child friendly transport including driver training and concessionary fares.
- Transport contracted to provide a service will continue to be available therefore parents will not have to transport their own children so an increase in traffic and congestion will be minimised.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail: Not applicable

Action required: None

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

An increase of young people with SEN using public transport through ITT will result in this group being more visible in the community.

Action required: None

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required: None

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan (insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)			
Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
<p>City wide consultation (Full consultation plan available) Online survey (adult and CYP version) Promotion of consultation through ebulletins etc Consultation meetings by request Workshops with CYP OBA Workshop</p>	<p>27th February -27th March EXTENDED to 24th April</p>	<p>Full Analysis on feedback to assess potential impact.</p>	<p>Gerry Hudson</p>
<p>The communication strategy includes a round of communication to notify people of the decisions made by exec board.</p>	<p>After July exec board. Likely to take place through August 2013</p>	<p>All young people with SEN and their families would be aware of any approved changes.</p>	<p>Gerry Hudson</p>
<p>Continue to invest and develop Independent Travel Training where appropriate</p>	<p>Ongoing work. Full strategy planned for roll out. Team to be doubled in the future.</p>	<p>An increase in the numbers of students travelling independently.</p>	<p>Allan Hudson</p>

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Sarah Sinclair	Chief Officer, Strategy, Performance and Commissioning	8 th July 2013

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

This Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this impact assessment relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment's should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date screening completed

If relates to a Key Decision – **date sent to Corporate Governance**

8th July 2013

Any other decision – **date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)**

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Appendix 4b

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Children's Services	Service area: Contracting and Strategic Investment
Lead person: Gerry Hudson	Contact number: 224 3635
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 23 rd May 2013	

<p>1. Title: The redevelopment of the Children's Services transport policy and strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who choose to attend a school on the basis of faith • Post 16 transport to mainstream schools and colleges • Free travel to a school that is not the nearest appropriate school
<p>Is this a:</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy /Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>If other, please specify</p>

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Gerry Hudson	Leeds City Council	Service Lead
Allan Hudson	Leeds City Council	Manager of Service
Rachael Davison	Leeds City Council	Project Manager
Viv Buckland	Leeds City Council	Head of Service
Alice Fox	Leeds City Council	Specialist

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

Arising from the Council's budget proposals, in February 2013 permission was granted by Executive Board to move to a phase of public consultation on the current transport policy. This included consideration of the continuance, amendment or removal of the discretionary elements within the current Leeds Children's Services Transport policy and alternative ways of delivering current statutory provision. Thus the review focused on all school transport expenditure, not just discretionary elements as there is an acknowledgement that efficiencies and savings could be made across the service as a whole.

The consultation period opened on 27th February and closed on 24th April 2013. For further information on projected school transport expenditure, please see Appendix 6 of the Executive Board report (Consultation Briefing paper).

This review does not affect eligibility to statutory transport, although a range of new ways of working are being implemented and considered as part of the fundamental shift in the way all children's transport is provided.

There are, however, currently only four main discretionary elements within the current policy. These are represented by the availability of non-statutory free home to school travel to faith schools; post 16 mainstream transport to school or college, post 16 (up to age 25) home to school/college transport for young people with special educational needs (SEN) and free travel to a school that is not the nearest (up to 15 miles), if there is no place at the nearest school. These are the only home to school transport services (in significant financial terms) which the council do not have a legal obligation to provide. There are some elements of transport services provided for looked after children (not in the current policy) that are also discretionary and these are also in the process of being reviewed for efficiencies.

The withdrawal or amendment of some or all of these discretionary elements presents an opportunity for Executive Board to consider using savings to meet its targets and maintain essential services for those greatest in need. Should the Council seek to remove all of these current discretionary elements there are potential savings of up to **£4.91m**. Of this amount faith school transport amounts to **£0.8m**, Post 16 mainstream transport **£1.36m** and travel to not the nearest school **£0.15m**. The remainder is transport provided for post 16 SEN travel which equates to **£2.6m**. The consultation outlined that the options available included immediate withdrawal of provision in September 2013; elements of phasing out the provision over time and remodelling current statutory provision.

It has been decided to complete a separate equality, diversity, cohesion and integration (EDCI) impact assessment for discretionary transport for post 16 (up to age 25) home to school/college transport for young people with special educational needs (SEN). It has been separated from the other discretionary elements of the transport policy due to the specific needs of the students where additional consideration of individuals needs is required.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan (please tick the appropriate box below)	
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail: The review focused on all the school transport policy not just discretionary elements	

4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail: Assistance is provided to qualifying learners in order to support them with their home to school/college journeys.	

5. Fact finding – what do we already know Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback. (priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)
Current Home to School/College Transport Policy The review of the policy has involved looking at alternative or revised methods of delivery to ensure the efficiency and best value of the services including the Council's statutory obligations In particular, the review has examined continued affordability to ensure that existing discretionary policies remain fit for purpose, delivering value and equitable services to Leeds residents. The table that follows provides details of the discretionary transport services that have been reviewed.

Type of discretionary provision	Cost per year £	Number of pupils per year
Children who choose to attend a school on the basis of faith	800k	2,600
Post 16 transport to mainstream schools and colleges	1.36m	4,245
Free travel to a school that is not the nearest appropriate school	150k	181

Children who choose to attend a school on the basis of faith

- The law only requires Leeds City Council to have regard to parents' preferences for a faith-based education but only to fund transport to faith schools for families on qualifying low income
- 55 children are currently in receipt of free travel to Catholic Primary schools; the remainder attend the four Catholic High schools and one Church of England school in Leeds
- Some of these attend six different church schools outside the Leeds boundary as it is their nearest faith school
- Most of our neighbouring local authorities no longer fund transport to faith schools on a discretionary basis

Post 16 transport to mainstream schools and colleges

- The law does not require Leeds City Council to meet the cost of home to school/college transport for young people over the age of 16
- We currently provide this for those who attend the nearest school or college that offers the course combination they have chosen to follow (where that is more than three miles away)
- Most of our neighbouring local authorities do not make free transport available to their families for this group of young people

Free travel to a school that is not the nearest appropriate school

- Sometimes we are unable to provide a place at a school within 3 miles of the child's home address
- In these circumstances the present policy allows free travel to a school of the parent's choice rather than the nearest appropriate school with an available place, provided it is within a reasonable distance
- If the policy was changed the children would still qualify for free transport, but only if they were attending their nearest school and it was more than 3 miles away
- The majority of children currently affected live in Bramhope, who choose Otley Prince Henry's, and children living in North East Leeds, who choose to go to Tadcaster
- If this was ended a child would not qualify for free transport unless they were attending their nearest school and it was more than 3 miles away.

Geographical information

If any changes were made to the current transport policy it would involve children and young people and their families from across the whole city. Some discretionary elements of the policy do however have geographical implications.

With regards to faith education, those children attending faith schools come from wider and more distant geographical areas. There are fewer faith schools in the city therefore an

element of travel is often necessary in order to receive a faith-based education.

Financial impact

If the discretionary funding is removed or amended then those children from low income families will still continue to get free transport through the statutory element within the Transport Policy. For 2012 to 2013, ten zero fare passes were funded for primary-aged children and approximately 420 for secondary aged children solely on the basis of extended rights for low income families.

Consultation Process– *(See appendix 3; Consultation Briefing paper; background document Transport Consultation Paper v1.3 and appendix 5; Transport Consultation – Executive Summary)*

A communications plan was drawn up identifying key stakeholders and the ways in which we planned to communicate in order seek their views. The plan was supported by the Voice and Influence Team who took a lead in communicating with their networks to ensure maximum engagement of parents and carers and children and young people.

The plan involved contacting all key stakeholders such as Head Teachers, Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) Principals, Elected Members, Diocesan Leads, Heads of Service, and voluntary sector groups. They were directed to the consultation webpage and asked to comment themselves but also encouraged to cascade information to their networks, service users and people who would be directly affected by any changes to the policy including current recipients of discretionary services.

The survey was also promoted to all LCC employees and the citizen's panel to attract responses from people who may not be directly affected in order to gather a balanced viewpoint.

A dedicated webpage was set up which included a copy of the current transport policy and a briefing paper which was written to accompany the survey. The briefing and survey clarified that a review of the full service was necessary in order both to make service improvements and make savings and efficiencies.

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Other methods of consultation included public meetings, attendance at meetings for specific groups, an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) workshop and an email inbox for direct communication.

The consultation invited the submission of suggested options ranging from a blanket withdrawal of discretionary services to the remodelling of existing provisions. These options were clearly laid out within the Consultation Briefing paper (appendix 3) so it was clear from the outset that all options would be open for consideration by the Executive Board except the option of 'no change'.

After consultation closedown the data was analysed and all responses and comments have been incorporated into a consultation report and used as a strategy for mitigating any adverse impacts arising.

Equality monitoring

The adult consultation survey included an equality monitoring section. These were collated for the consultation report. The full demography analysis can be found in section 7 of the consultation appendix.

The respondents equality profiling has been compared to the population of Leeds. This data was taken from the Leeds Observatory. The Leeds Observatory is a website that provides data and information about communities and geographies in Leeds.

From the analysis of the adult survey it can be seen that the respondent's ethnicity profile reflected that of the city as a whole.

The religious profiling of the respondents was also comparable to the makeup of the city's population.

There were 184 respondents that said they had a child or young person in their family that had a disability. This is considered to be a good representation of service users.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information

Please provide detail:

None

Action required: None

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

A full city wide consultation exercise has taken place; this included current recipients of free discretionary provision. Appendix 5 provides an executive summary of the analysis of the consultation exercise. In this document further detailed information is provided on the potential negative impact of implementing the recommended changes to the current policy and the proposed mitigation. Responses were received from a wide range of participants; some affected by the changes and others not.

In total over 2,200 adults, children and young people participated directly in the consultation. 1,601 respondents answered the adult survey. The children and young people's survey was completed by 271 respondents, 24 of these were group responses. A further 400 plus people attended consultation sessions which were in the form of focus groups, parents meetings and information sessions. These included specific faith, post 16 mainstream and SEN meetings. These were held in schools and colleges with head teachers, principals and governors.

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*Respondents could provide more than one response so % will not total 100%

Source: Adult Transport Survey

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In order to cater for anyone with communication difficulties the information was sent to head teachers, college principals and service leads and asked that they cascade the information relating to the consultation. It was envisaged that they would communicate this by the same methods in which they regularly communicate messages to their service users.

The consultations meetings gave an opportunity for people to voice their comments or concerns as an alternative to completing the survey. Submissions of the survey were also encouraged as a group so that people did not have to respond just as an individual. Some groups (a faith based group) took the opportunity to run their own petition and submitted it as part of their contribution to the consultation. The findings were taken into account as part of the overall analysis.

The timescales for the consultation were extended to maximise the number of respondents and took into account the Easter holidays.

Action required: None

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

Age

Carers

Disability

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment | <input type="checkbox"/> Race | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - Income | | |

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify:

Any changes to the policy may affect families that don't fall into the statutory element which provides transport for those families on low income. This offer will remain unchanged.

Stakeholders

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users | <input type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify | | |

Potential barriers.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Built environment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information and communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer care |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function | |

Please specify

The Government is increasing the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

<p>8. Positive and negative impact</p> <p>Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers</p>
<p>8a. Positive impact:</p>
<p>The review of the council's current transport policy has raised the following positive impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a decision is made to make changes to the policy, low income families would still continue to have an extended right to free transport as proscribed in the Education and Inspection Act (2006). • If the recommendation to phase out the provision of discretionary elements over 2 years is approved, rather than an immediate withdrawal from Sept 2013, it will give sufficient time for parents to adjust to the new policy and budget accordingly. • There would be long term savings for the Council allowing for funding to meet targets and the ability to maintain essential services. This would create an opportunity to retarget resources to those most in need by replacing blanket provision with an assessed consideration of individual need. • An increase in Independent Travel Training will encourage independence, promote self-advocacy and build confidence and self-esteem for young people with SEN. (SEN transport is addressed in a separate EDCI impact assessment). • The consultation process has raised awareness of the costs of transport to the wider public. • The process has also stimulated new and innovative ideas for a broader range of services which could be provided to meet individual needs. • There has been an increase in partnership working and an appreciation of the full costs of providing this support.
<p>Action required:</p>
<p>Promote the eligibility criteria for low income families using a range of methods that will make the information accessible to all families</p>

<p>8b. Negative impact:</p>
<p>The consultation executive summary (appendix 5) provides additional detail of the potential negative impacts and any mitigation. Some of these are highlighted in summary below. Any changes to the current transport policy in respect of current discretionary provision could potentially result in the following negative consequences, which need to be considered:</p>
<p>Negative impact on families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If free transport is no longer provided it is possible that middle income families would be more likely to be impacted on financially. • There could be potential logistical pressures for families having to balance drop off and pick up times with home life, work patterns, childcare, children at different schools and other practical issues. • There could be potential safeguarding issues for children walking or travelling on more than one bus in order to get to school or college. • If transport was no longer free then some young people and families may not select their first choice preference due to the cost of transport.

Negative impact on schools/colleges

- School educational places may not be available if families decide to change schools due to any amendments to the transport policy.
- Attendance and Children Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) may be impacted upon if children and young people no longer have access to free transport
- The demography within schools could change if schools are only attended by those who can afford transport costs or have an extended right to free travel.
- Safety concerns at specific sites may be raised due to increased traffic at drop-off and pick-up times.
- There is a concern that attainment may be affected if the review results in children having to use normal service public transport only and are therefore making longer journeys at both ends of the day.

Negative impact on the council

- There could be a reputational impact if any changes to the transport policy are not carefully explained both to those affected as well as to the wider community
- Any changes could be seen to contradict the councils aim to be a child friendly city. Children and young people have said that affordable transport and feeling safe on public transport were important to them.
- More vehicles may be on the road if parents/carers decide to transport their children. This could lead to an increase in congestion and be contrary to the Council's green policies
- There may be an increase in the number of transport appeals.

Action required:

If the review results in changes to the current transport policy, as recommended, the actions below may help to mitigate the negative impacts. They are also reflected on in more detail in appendix 5:

Negative impact on families

- A well thought out and planned communication strategy will be needed so any changes to the policy are clearly explained in a timely and accessible way.
- Families will need to be given prior notice before transport provision is amended to help mitigate the impact.
- Information explaining the eligibility criteria for free transport will need to be available and families will have to be given plenty of time to apply.
- The service lead officers will continue to establish whether schools and colleges could fund transport through bursaries for individual cases.
- Dedicated bus services will continue to be available for families; therefore parents would not have to transport their own children and this will mitigate any logistical home-life pressures.
- An appeal process, compliant with DfE guidelines will be retained, which includes the option to award discretionary provision based on the grounds of exceptional hardship.

Negative impact on schools/colleges

- Teams working on the Basic Need strategy will need to be informed of any changes to the policy which may create an additional pressure on places if families opt to use more local schools.
- Monitor the impact any policy changes have on NEET and attendance.
- Dedicated bus services will continue to be available therefore parents will not have to transport their own children so an increase in traffic and congestion will be minimal and

journeys will largely remain the same.

Negative Impact on the Council

- Some press coverage has already taken place during the consultation. A planned strategy is in place to effectively communicate the decisions made by Executive Board.
- On-going work with Metro to improve the offer of child friendly transport including driver training and concessionary fares. Metro to continue route planning and analysis of capacity on school service buses to ensure greater efficiencies and savings.
- Dedicated bus services will continue to be available therefore parents will not have to transport their own children so an increase in traffic and congestion will be minimal.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail: Not applicable

Action required: None

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The diversity make up of local schools may change

Action required:

This could be evidenced by monitoring within schools/colleges to assess any changes to demographics over time.

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

With the current transport policy as it stands, some families are seen as benefitting over others.

Action required: None

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan
(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
<p>City wide consultation (Full consultation plan available) Online survey (adult and CYP version) Promotion of consultation through ebulletins etc Consultation meetings by request Workshops with CYP OBA Workshop</p>	<p>27th February -27th March EXTENDED to 24th April</p>	<p>Full Analysis on feedback to assess potential impact.</p>	<p>Gerry Hudson</p>
<p>The communication strategy includes a round of communication to notify people of the decisions made by exec board.</p>	<p>After July exec board. Likely to take place through August 2013</p>	<p>All children, young people and their families would be made aware of any approved changes.</p>	<p>Gerry Hudson</p>
<p>Continue to build on the Diocesan partnership. Explore whether any financial support can be provided if there is a change to the policy.</p>	<p>On-going partnership work through scheduled meetings etc.</p>	<p>Positive working partnerships with a shared outcome. Establish whether any financial assistance could be provided to students most in need.</p>	<p>Paul Brennan & Gerry Hudson</p>
<p>Continue to build on School</p>	<p>On-going partnership work</p>	<p>Positive working partnerships</p>	<p>Paul Brennan & Gerry Hudson</p>

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
<p>and college partnerships.</p> <p>Explore whether any funding can be made available through school's budgets or College Bursaries if there is a change to the policy</p>	<p>through scheduled meetings etc.</p>	<p>with a shared outcome.</p> <p>Establish whether any financial assistance could be provided to students most in need.</p>	
<p>Continue close working with Metro around any future proposals.</p> <p>Promote child friendly public transport, concessionary fares, Driver training etc</p>	<p>On-going partnership work through scheduled meetings etc.</p>	<p>Positive working partnerships with a shared outcome.</p>	<p>Gerry Hudson & Allan Hudson</p>
<p>If changes are made to the transport policy the impact could be monitored on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in NEET, attainment and poor attendance • Increase in instances of bullying due to religion or belief • Increase in demand for more local schools creating greater pressure around Basic Need 	<p>On going work over a number of years with relevant partners.</p>	<p>Monitor relevant data looking for any trending which could be attributed to changes to the transport policy.</p>	<p>Allan Hudson</p>

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Sarah Sinclair	Chief Officer, Strategy, Performance and Commissioning	8 th July 2013

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

This Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this impact assessment relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment's should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date screening completed

If relates to a Key Decision – **date sent to Corporate Governance**

8th July 2013

Any other decision – **date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)**

Transport Consultation - Executive Summary

- Over 2,200 children young people and adults in total participated in the consultation with over 400 adults, children and young people participating in direct face-to-face meetings.
- The consultation sought views on a number of proposed changes to providing funding for the transport for children and young people to their place of education; statutory as well as discretionary.
- Views were, nevertheless specifically sought where the funding is currently discretionary. These areas are: transport to faith schools; post 16 transport to mainstream schools/colleges; post 16 transport for students with SEN (a statement of special educational need) and transport to not the nearest school.
- The consultation used a wide range of different engagement processes including: an online survey, a children's survey; a focus groups for SEN pupils and their parents and school staff; several Q&A sessions open to all interested parties; an email address to submit comments and recommendations; a specific session with the Leeds Youth Council and an OBA (outcome based accountability) event.
- In addition a petition was received from a faith group containing 1,460 signatures of residents, students and workers. This was formally acknowledged in writing to the sender with the proposal that the content would be taken into account in the overall analysis of the consultation. The petition was as follows *"to retain free transport to/from home and school for children attending their nearest faith school on the basis of their denomination or faith.*
- Of the 1,601 adult survey responses:
 - 80% **agreed or strongly agreed** that post 16 discretionary transport for SEN should continue, and 8% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that this funding should continue
 - 70% **agreed or strongly agreed** that post 16 discretionary transport to mainstream schools and colleges should continue to be funded, and 19% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that this funding should continue
 - 67% **agreed or strongly agreed** that funding of transport to faith schools should continue, and 25% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that this funding should continue
 - 64% **agreed or strongly agreed** that the council should continue to fund discretionary travel to a school which is not the nearest appropriate school, and 18% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that this funding should continue.
- Of the 26% respondents that stated that they would **not** be affected at all by any of the proposed transport changes:
 - 73% **agreed or strongly agreed** that post 16 discretionary transport for SEN should continue to be funded, and 13% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that that this funding should continue
 - 51% **agreed or strongly agreed** that post 16 discretionary transport to mainstream schools and colleges should continue to be funded, and 36% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that that this funding should continue
 - 35% **agreed or strongly agreed** that funding of transport to faith schools should continue, and 54% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that this funding should continue.

- 49% **agreed or strongly agreed** that discretionary transport to a school which is not the nearest should continue to be funded and 32% **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that that this funding should continue
- When comparing the 'not affected' group to the whole survey cohort the only statement which showed similar levels of support across both groups was the continuation of post 16 SEN (a difference of less than 10% between the two groups). In both groups the continuation of SEN provision was the most commonly supported option.
- Support for continuation of transport provision to faith schools differed most between the two groups with 32% less support for this to continue from the 'not affected' group compared to the whole cohort.
- Support for the continuation of post 16 transport to mainstream provision was supported less by the 'not affected' group compared to the whole cohort (19% difference).
- Support for the continuation of transport to not the nearest provision was supported less by the 'not affected' group compared to the whole cohort (15% difference).
- The most favoured options to provide transport for 5-16 year olds with SEN were: 'where absolutely necessary provide taxi/place or minibus for all journeys between home and school', followed by 'provide independent travel training', and the least favoured option was 'parents make their own arrangements'.
- Children and young people participating in the SEN focus groups felt that changes to their transport provision would have the following impacts:
 - no longer able to attend provision
 - it would affect their independence
 - they would feel less safe and
 - it would make transport more complicated
- Responses to the children's survey mirrored the concerns mentioned in the SEN focus groups but also highlighted that children were concerned about financial implications, lack of closer appropriate schools and safety of public transport.
- Consultation respondents felt that the proposed changes would have the following impacts:
 - pressure on family finance;
 - difficulties around working patterns and childcare
 - impact on the safety
 - independence and wellbeing of children (e.g. stress of more complicated journey, potential move of school, parental concern about safety)
 - cause attendance issues
 - lead to increased cars on the road
 - impact on admission processes and
 - not help us achieved the ambition of being a child friendly city
- The most common first choice of services that should continue were transport to faith schools (42%) and post 16 transport for SEN (32%). The response that was most commonly ranked lowest (i.e. least preferred option) was to stop providing any of the discretionary transport services that have been considered by this consultation.
- Across all consultation approaches respondents were asked to provide recommendations on how these services could be improved. Common responses included:
 - do not change current funding arrangements
 - make processes/transport more cost efficient

- introduce some level of charging – possible means testing or subsidising based on income
- review all other possible transport options (including bus passes) that could be provided
- cut others services across the council to enable funding for these transport services to continue
- any changes should be phased
- current service could be offered to parents at cost price
- provide reduced cost public transport for children
- Recommendations that were unique to the SEN focus groups included:
 - need for familiarity in set routes and consistent support
 - involvement in Independent Travel Training (ITT) scheme assessment and training from year 9
 - better assessments to identify and review suitable transport options
 - better disability awareness and training for bus drivers, commercial and private, and more consultation with young people directly to inform any changes.

Summary of concerns consistently expressed throughout the consultation

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
1	Pressure on family finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some respondents felt that it was unreasonable to expect parents to pay for transport now that the children were in their preferred school. Others felt strongly that if changes were necessary these should be phased in so that those currently in receipt of support could finish their schooling at the school of their original preference. Others felt equally strongly that they were being discriminated against on the basis of their faith or their child's learning need (special need), especially if they had more than one child attending the particular school, and so felt the funding should remain as it is. Some respondents also felt that the estimated savings were not real as they did not take into account other hidden cost factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendation to phase the changes in over a period of time will allow families to plan for any future additional expense. The proposed phasing period would also enable bus operators to take full account of the impact of the changes and thereby mitigate any additional costs to families and the authority. The full cost of the transport will also be mitigated in the future by automatic free access to a half-fare pass during the transition from primary to high school. The cost of this pass is currently £2 per child on application plus the cost of purchasing passport photographs. Metro have started issuing the Young Person's Photocard as a smartcard as the next step in the roll-out of smartcard ticketing. This card provides the young person with an entitlement to travel at half fare on bus services and to purchase SchoolPlus weekly and monthly discounted tickets. The card is now issued free to new applicants. Future developments will include smart versions of weekly and monthly tickets and the ability to use the card to pay for individual journeys. Metro and Leeds City Council are working towards an automatic issue of Photocards to students entering year 7 from September 2014 onwards at no charge to the student.

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In total (when all eligible children access the pass) it would represent a total one-off saving, <u>directly by parents</u>, in the region of £500k. • Metro also issue a Scholar's PhotoCard to 16 to 18 year old students in full-time education, This card provides the young person with an entitlement to travel at half fare on bus services and to purchase SchoolPlus weekly and monthly discounted tickets. • Metro are rolling out the integrated transport "M Card" smartcard and, from September 2014 will be issuing all Scholars cards as M Cards. The cards will assist post 16 students get the best deal for their journey to college. • Metro are planning, resources permitting, to provide an introductory offer of free journeys to incentivise young person's travel on smart ScholarCards at the start of the 2014/15 academic year. • Officers from the respective Authorities are also collaborating to exploit opportunities to integrate Breeze and other cards issued to customers by the Council with the emerging transport smartcard being developed by Metro. • It is acknowledged that there may be unintended consequences and short-term costs of withdrawing funding, but these risks have been identified and will be actively managed and mitigated during the proposed two year phasing period across all areas of current

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
		<p>discretionary funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new policy will still contain the option to award fully subsidised transport to a non-qualifying school on a discretionary basis. This will be at the discretion of an appeal panel on the grounds of exceptional hardship or other relevant factors such as avoiding the risk of a child becoming looked after.
<p>2 Difficulties with working patterns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many parents both work and so transporting their children to school, sometimes more than one school at the same time, can be difficult. For others they could do so but would need to negotiate (if possible) a permanent change in working pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intention is to keep the current arrangements in place (for mainstream school and college) for those who are currently in the system, including those who will start school or college in September 2013, until September 2015. Thus the authority will continue to support families with discretionary transport for up to a further 2 years. If any changes to existing arrangements and routes are necessary during this period these will be undertaken in close liaison with the schools or colleges affected in order to mitigate the impact. This will allow parents the time to plan any changes. The intention is also to develop new routes in partnership in order to improve the overall offer. Parents will be informed of the new policy as part of the school admissions process, and so those who express a preference for a school that is not the nearest will be aware that from September 2014 they will be fully responsible for the transport costs, unless their child qualifies on the grounds of qualifying low income.

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there is a continuing demand for travel routes Metro is committed to ensuring bus routes are maintained in the future even if this is on a parent-to-pay basis.
<p>3</p> <p>Difficulties with childcare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents said that they would experience difficulty getting children to different schools or looking after pre-school children if transport was not available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As indicated above, there is no intention to remove any of the current bus services where there is a continuing demand. However, it is important to note that parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that appropriate and safe arrangements are in place to look after their pre-school children, and to ensure their older children get to school safely and on time. It may be that in some instances parents will be able to access support with child care based on qualifying income.
<p>4</p> <p>Impact on the safety of the children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This concern was largely connected to the perceived potential that direct bus routes could be withdrawn, if they became uneconomical, resulting in current direct routes not being available. Children may then have to take longer routes on regular service routes. If this was so there was also a perceived increase in risk from other bus users especially for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no intention in the short term to change any of the current arrangements. The full impact of the changes will be known when the first cohort of parents make their preferences from 2014/15 onwards based on the knowledge that they will be responsible from that point to cover the full cost of transport. This will mean that the bus operators will have sufficient time to adjust their operation thus mitigating the overall impact. Any route changes required in the future will be properly

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
	the younger age groups when moving from the junior schools.	planned and have a sufficient lead in time to enable full consideration of the implications of any unidentified risks.
5 Independence and well-being of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents expressed concern about the stress of their children potentially undertaking more complicated journeys; potential move of school if cost was an issue and general parental concern about safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no intention in the immediate to medium term to substantially the network. If future changes are necessary these will be undertaken in liaison with parents and schools It is acknowledged that cost may become an issue for new cohorts starting school in September 2014 when the phasing commences
6 Impact on attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A change in policy may have an effect on one of Leeds' corporate priorities, namely reducing the number of young people NEET (not in education employment or training). It may also have a marginal impact on attendance of children arriving late at school or college. Some parents felt that in some instances there would be a greater temptation on the part of older children to miss school if they were changing buses rather than travelling direct on one bus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many children currently travel independently and safely on regular service buses and get to school on time. During the same period attendance levels have improved whilst use of regular bus services to travel has either been maintained at the current level or increased. This suggests that the reasons for previous poor attendance were much more complex and largely unrelated to the type of transport used. There is little evidence, therefore, to sustain the view that travelling by bus will in itself have an impact on levels of attendance. The skills learned, and the benefits of providing greater levels of independence and freedom, are things that young people consistently tell us that they value.

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
<p>7</p> <p>Increased traffic on the roads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents may choose to transport their children to school if bus routes are withdrawn on the dual, or separate, grounds of safety and cost. • Some of these routes are already heavily congested and in some instances parking near the school is extremely limited. • It is possible that the withdrawal of free travel in some areas of the city could have the effect of rendering some current bus routes not economically viable leading the operator to withdraw the route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a clear area of concern and one shared by the authority. The Council already has in place a Sustainable Education Travel Strategy (SETS). The services and assistance provided in the existing Children's Services Transport Policy are designed to respect and complement the measures detailed in SETS. This relationship will need to be maintained in any future transport policy. • The plan to ensure, wherever possible, that 'socially necessary' routes are maintained, and to review the proposed withdrawal of any routes on commercial grounds jointly with Metro in advance, should provide reassurance that all mitigating factors will be taken into account in advance. • The real impact of any changes will only be revealed over time when parents and children start to make real choices about whether they can afford to pay for transport that was previously provided free of charge and how to make the respective journeys. • The estimated cost of immediate implementation without phasing has been put at approximately £1.1m. This is a high estimate based on the fact that the impact is really not fully known at this stage. • If changes were phased in over a period of time it would allow the authority to work with our strategic partner (Metro) to mitigate the impact so that this cost is fully absorbed by the bus operators.

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
8	Impact on admissions to local schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If parents, who can currently preference a faith or not the nearest school, are required to pay for the transport costs they may choose to preference a nearest school on the basis of affordability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is acknowledged that in some areas of the city there are pressures on the availability of school places and any changes along the lines proposed, depending on the numbers, may simply serve to increase that pressure. The reality of this as a risk, however, will not be tested until any changes are implemented. The proposal to phase the changes in over a period of 2 years will allow the admissions team to assess the impact and demand for places in the more local schools. A comprehensive analysis has been undertaken of the schools that may be affected by an increase in parents identifying their local school as a first preference. The proposed phasing will enable the admissions team to monitor the impact over time and take the appropriate action.
9	Reducing eligibility is not child friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing access to subsidised transport is contrary to Leeds' goal of becoming a Child Friendly City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This concern is understood; the authority can see that the changes seem contrary to contributing to the goal of Leeds becoming the first Child Friendly City in the UK. It is believed, however, that making the proposed changes now will make the overall transport offer more sustainable over the longer term. Leeds cannot afford to continue to pay for services that are currently completely uncontrollable and unsustainable. The current policy is out of date and reflects a period when funding for such services was manageable and affordable

Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
		<p>without having an impact elsewhere. This is no longer the case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the current eligibility criteria are not changed, in order to make the offer more equitable, there is little chance of using what funding the authority has available to make services more child and young person friendly and universally affordable and fair to all. • Whilst funding is focused on smaller specific groups it leaves it open to challenge from other groups who do not benefit, especially if it is not means tested or based on assessed need. • As part of Metro's on-going commitment to supporting Leeds' ambition to become a Child Friendly City all children, as they make the transition from primary to high school will, from September 2014, automatically receive free of charge a half-fare concessionary fare pass. This will enable half-fare bus travel across the whole of West Yorkshire. This is a major step forward by our strategic partner in making transport more accessible and affordable.
Young people's specific concerns		
<p>10 No longer able to attend provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people have told us that they want to be able to attend the course most suited to meet their learning needs and style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From September 2013 no child or young person in years 7 to 11 (mainstream) and up to 19 with SEN will be affected by the proposed changes for up to 2 years. This gives young people starting Years 7 and 12 in September 2014 the opportunity to plan for any additional costs at the end

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
			<p>of the phasing period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The free half-fare pass will reduce the impact of this additional cost if the college course is the preferred route rather than a more local offer. The Leeds College Principals have committed themselves to working in partnership with the authority to mitigate the impact of the changes The new 'smartcard' technology will enable Metro to identify actual travel patterns and target improvements accordingly. The authority will also work to extend the current offer over time for use on local trains. The authority will continue to work with the colleges and Metro to ensure that young people are able to choose a suitable learning offer on the basis of what meets their need rather than on the basis of affordability.
11	It would affect their independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people value the freedom afforded by the current arrangements. Some are concerned that it will force them into choices they wouldn't otherwise make or that finances will mean they need to get support from parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is acknowledged that children and young people enjoy and appreciate the freedom currently provided by the zero cost associated with travelling to school or college, which the current policy affords them. Very few other comparable local authorities provide subsidised travel to this extent with most limiting it to a concessionary amount and just to the place of learning. The proposed arrangement will enable the young person to travel anywhere in West Yorkshire by bus for educational, social and leisure purposes.

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The authority's continuing support for the concessionary fare system, therefore, and the proposed improvements, will ensure young people are able to continue to access their preferred learning option at an affordable level with a view to making further improvements as the technology improves.
12	<p>They would feel less safe and it would make transport more complicated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some young people feel that their safety may be compromised. Others say that their journey to school and/or college could become very difficult if current routes are withdrawn and they have to travel by regular service routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The authority is working directly with Metro and the bus operators to ensure that, as part of our joint agreement with them all services, operators and drivers take the safeguarding of children and young people seriously, not just the ones commissioned to provide bespoke services for children. Training programmes address this specifically for employees working routinely with children and young people; especially those with SEN. Wherever possible the authority will work directly with Metro in order to influence operators to provide direct routes where the demand clearly demonstrates there is a commercial case. If a route is deemed socially necessary the authority will use its influence to maintain the route based on a clear impact assessment.

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
	Concerns unique to students with special educational needs (SEN)		
13	<p>Need for familiarity in set routes and consistent support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the specific needs of some children and young people with SEN they need consistency and a familiar pattern of delivery. • There is a concern that future changes in routes will upset children as they will lose familiar buses and drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This need is very well understood and is why any long term changes will be kept to a minimum until the full impact of the Children and Families Bill is known. • In the short term the major change that will be made is that parents will be asked to make a contribution to the running of services that will continue to be provided • Any changes in future delivery method will be fully shared and planned with a good lead in time. This will ensure children and parents feel safe, well informed and confident that their needs will be met. • New ways of delivering post 16 SEN transport are continually being explored in order to both maximise efficiencies and provide better quality and more consistent delivery.
14	<p>More involvement in the Independent Travel Training (ITT) scheme assessment and training from year 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current service sometimes starts to help children too late. They need a longer time to get used to travelling more independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is already planned; the current team will be doubled in size during this financial year (13/14) to focus on a reassessment of the transport needs of all children with a statement in receipt of supported travel. • This will also include reassessment of statutory pupils so that we can be sure the most appropriate type of support is currently being offered; where appropriate they will be assessed for ITT as soon as possible to give a better led in time to independence

	Concern expressed	Impact	Response/mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service will also be expanded, as appropriate, to support looked after children and in helping students to make a smoother transition from primary to high school
15	Better assessments needed to identify and review suitable transport options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This needs to fit the individual as not all children can cope with independent travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See also Concern 14
16	Better disability awareness and training needed for bus drivers commercial and private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some regular service drivers treat young people with SEN as though they can cope as well as mainstream children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See also concerns 12 & 13.
17	More consultation needed directly with young people to inform any changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people often feel that the consultation is meaningless as the decision has already been made They would like to be involved sooner in the process so that they can share their views and truly influence the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would be welcomed. A session was held with the Leeds Youth Council as part of the consultation. An offer to provide an update on any changes has been taken up and will be organised as soon as the decision on the future make up of services has been made. This will enable them to influence how the changes are implemented. The Leeds members of the national youth parliament have also requested a meeting.

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Table showing the three year effect of recommended children's transport policy changes

Appendix 6

Type of provision	Impact in 2013/14	Original Projected Outturn 2012/13 £m	Actual Outturn 2012/13 £m	Agreed Budget 2013/14 £m	Projected spend 2013/14 £m	Impact in 2014/15	Projected Spend 2014/15 £m	Impact in 2015/16	Projected Spend 2015/16 £m
Statutory mainstream	Anticipated savings from commercialisation of routes	1.82	1.81	1.82	1.77	Further anticipated savings from ITT & commercialisation of routes	1.63	Further potential for savings unclear at this stage	1.63
Statutory SEN	This does not include projected increase of £770k in 13/14 (from £4.44mm in 12/13) due to continuing demand offset by savings from independent travel training Includes costs and savings of the new ITT staff	4.50	4.44	3.78	3.85	Full impact of increase in travel training Includes part year costs for new ITT staff	3.41	On-going savings from ITT and reassessment of SEN transport needs	2.70
Looked after children transport	Reduction in budget now projected in 2013/14 Due to individual assessment of continuing need for taxis and use of ITT	2.30	2.32	2.50	2.00	Implementation of ITT and other efficiencies	1.25	On-going implementation of ITT and other efficiencies	1.00
Discretionary post 16 SEN	No change ¹ Includes savings from alternative methods of providing services	2.60	2.85	1.09	2.44	16-18 year olds no change ² 19-25 year olds - introduction of means tested charge or personal budget	0.98	Chargeable or personalised budget for all means-tested students introduced	0.15
Discretionary post 16 mainstream	No change ¹	1.36	1.37	0.57	1.36	No change for existing students ⁴ New students will pay fares ⁴	0.80	All pupils will pay fares ⁴	0.26

Type of provision	Impact in 2013/14	Original Projected Outturn 2012/13	Actual Outturn 2012/13	Agreed Budget 2013/14	Projected spend 2013/14	Impact in 2014/15	Projected Spend 2014/15	Impact in 2015/16	Projected Spend 2015/16
Discretionary faith school	No change ¹	0.80	0.80	0.33	0.80	No change for existing pupils New pupils will pay fares ⁴	0.57	All pupils will pay fares ⁴	0.17
Discretionary not the nearest school	No change ¹	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	No change for existing pupils New pupils will pay fares ⁴	0.11	All pupils will pay fares ⁴	0.03
Independent Transport Authority (Metro) levy	No change	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10		3.10		3.10
Sub-total		16.63	16.84	13.34	15.47		11.85		9.04
	Budget pressure in 2013/14 for SEN provision				0.77				
Total		16.63	16.84	13.34	16.24		11.85		9.04

Note 1 This will enable parents, children and young people to plan effectively for the impending policy changes and budget accordingly.

Note 2 All new Post 16 SEN students in 2014-15 will receive the means-tested personal budget or be charged as appropriate.

Note 3 All new Post 16 SEN students in 2014-15 will receive the means-tested personal budget or be charged as appropriate.

Note 4 Concessionary fares, representing half the normal adult fare will be available along with bus operators discounted pre-paid tickets and Metro's pre-paid ticket SchoolPlus MetroCard offering unlimited West Yorkshire bus travel currently costing £9.25 per week or £34.00 per month.

N.B. The figures in the table above are based on the original total projected expenditure of **£16.63m** in 2013/14. The projected expenditure/savings are shown based on the recommendation that all changes are phased in over a minimum period of 2 years

Report of Jane Held, Independent Chair Leeds Safeguarding Children Board

Report to Children and Families Scrutiny Board

Date: 25 July 2013

Subject: Draft LSCB Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements for Children and Young people in Leeds (July 2013)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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 cover report introduces the attached draft LSCB Annual Report prior to its consideration by the LSCB on 19 July 2013. The final version will be presented to the Council's Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Health and wellbeing Board. It will be published on the LSCB website at the end of August.
2. The draft LSCB Annual Report includes a summary of progress made to ensure that the safeguarding needs are met of children and young people who are privately fostered in Leeds.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board is asked to:

1. Receive and comment on the content of the draft LSCB Annual Report.
2. Note the challenges for 2013/14, including those accepted by the Children's Trust Board.

3. Consider the progress being made to safeguard children and young people who are privately fostered.

Purpose of this report

To update Children and Families Scrutiny Board on the progress being made by and through the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board to improve safeguarding children practice in Leeds.

Background information

It is a statutory requirement under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 for the LSCB to publish an annual report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people (C&YP) in the local area.

The LSCB Annual *Performance* Report, including challenges for 2013/14, was received and accepted by the Children's Trust Board (CTB) on 27.06.13. The Annual Report will be presented to the CTB on 05.09.13.

The CTB must take account of the report in preparing and refreshing the Children & Young people's Plan.

Main issues

Effectiveness of the LSCB:

The report indicates that the LSCB has made good progress in addressing the challenges it set for itself in 2012/13.

The over-arching challenge it is setting itself for 2013/14 is to 'step up a gear'; to build on progress made in 2012/13 in order to more fully understand the effectiveness of the safeguarding system in Leeds and better lead the partnership in developing services and multi-agency working in order to improve outcomes for C&YP.

Private Fostering

The Scrutiny Inquiry Report on Private Fostering published on 17.01.13. recommended '*that the LSCB advises the Scrutiny Board in July 2013 of the progress made by Children's Services against the updated action plan*'.

The LSCB, at its meeting on 28 June 2013 received the Annual Private Fostering Report from Children's Services. A summary of its contents is included in the LSCB Annual Report at (8.2.5).

The Private Fostering Report identifies that progress is being made in:

- Raising professional awareness about the need to identify and respond to private fostering arrangements
- Updating the Communications Strategy

- Establishing a private fostering service to support the work of social workers, undertake assessments and provide training / advice across the partnership.

An audit of case files was undertaken in January 2013 indicating that although progress had been made in ensuring that statutory visits were undertaken, improvements were still required in the timely completion of assessments and undertaking police checks.

A further audit will take place in November 2013. This will provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact that current developments are having on responding to children and young people who are privately fostered.

Performance against challenges to CTB for 2012/13:

The overarching challenge to the CTB remained to 'rebalance the safeguarding system' to reduce the need for statutory intervention to safeguard C&YP.

Evidence of progress made in the year is provided by:

- The gradual reduction in the number of children and young people who need to be looked after
- The establishment of a CSWS Duty and Advice Team and revised arrangements for responding to contacts and referrals from partner agencies
- The continued investment in Early Help Services.

Summary of the Effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements:

Ensuring that risk is being managed appropriately and safely is a crucial factor at all times; but particularly so during a period of 'whole system re-orientation' as is currently the circumstances in Leeds. It is important that the LSCB is able to be satisfied that risk is being managed safely and appropriately in individual cases.

The evidence that will be considered by the LSCB on 19.07.13 includes:

- The reduction in the number of looked after children and young people is gradual and is being actively managed. The reduction is due to a combination of fewer receptions into care (with alternative, more appropriate, options being rigorously explored) and improved permanency planning.
- Although the number and make-up of the cohort of children and young people who are subject to child protection plans requires further investigation and improvements are required in the effectiveness of plans, it is notable that the LSCB audit confirmed the Ofsted findings of 2011 that children and young people are not being left in unsafe situations.
- Concerns remain about the high rate of re-referral to Children's Social Work Services with the implication that some children and young people may not be receiving a timely and effective response. Nevertheless, the introduction of the new Duty and Advice

Team has impacted positively on these figures and the trend is expected to continue in 2013/14 as the new arrangements bed in.

- Considerable audit and review activity is being undertaken to better understand the working of the safeguarding system as a whole and the performance of its component parts.

Challenges for 2013/14:

The LSCB, in response to changes in guidance (Working Together 2013), will need to evidence it has increased the rigour of its challenge to partners and more explicitly driven (and understood) improvements in outcomes for C&YP.

At the same time it needs to seek to work more collaboratively with the Safeguarding Adult Board and the Community Safety Partnership to identify things we can do better together and support each other with.

Challenges accepted by the CTB for 2012/13 include the following:

- To continue to progress the 'rebalancing' of the safeguarding system in Leeds in order to promote a more preventative approach (C&YP receiving 'the right service at the right time') and reduce the need for statutory intervention. Key components of this approach are:

To reduce the number of C&YP who need to be 'looked after.'

To support more effective multi-agency engagement in the oversight and implementation of child protection plans.

To develop and extend the comprehensive, multi-agency, Early Help offer, supported and facilitated by a common approach to assessment.

- To ensure that during this period of transition within the system, risk is managed appropriately and safely in individual cases.
- To ensure that the rebalancing of the system is supported by the development of a partnership approach to shared professional values, attitudes and behaviours and common principles of supervision.
- To continue to promote a restorative approach to working with C&YP and their families that will more consistently result in 'the voice of the child' being included in all interventions and which promotes the principles established by the CTB:

The default behaviour of Children's Trust and Local Government partners in all their dealings with local citizens/partners/organisations should be a restorative one - high support with high challenge.

Children's Trust and Local Government partners should ensure that families, whose children might otherwise be removed from their homes, are supported to meet and develop a safe alternative plan before such action is taken.

For all other families where a plan or decision needs to be made to help safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or children the family should be supported to help decide what needs to happen. Children's Trust and Local Government partners must create the conditions where families can be helped to help themselves - this would represent a fundamental renegotiation of the relationship between Local Government and local citizens - from doing things to and for families to doing things with them.

Children's Trust and Local government partners must see all local schools as community assets and have a clear role in holding those institutions - no matter what the governance arrangements - to account for the contribution they make to the well-being of the local population.

- To work with partners who commission services for C&YP to:
 - Build into their commissioning processes a requirement of compliance with s(11) of the Children Act 2004 / s(175) Education Act 2002
 - Establish a common performance management framework which is compatible with the LSCB framework.
- To review access and availability of services for families who have suffered a child / young person bereavement.
- In the light of work being undertaken by the LSCB, LSAB & SL, to review the provision of services to address situations where C&YP are living in the context of compromised parenting (domestic violence, parental substance mis-use, parental mental ill health).
- As a better understanding of the scale of CSE is established, to review the provision of services to (i) reduce the number of Young People at risk / suffering from sexual exploitation and (ii) respond to young people who have become victims.
- To develop and co-ordinate improved services for vulnerable 16 – 21 year olds.

Corporate Considerations

Consultation and Engagement

Active interest from CLT and Corporate Leaders in the work of the LSCB has made a significant contribution to the improvement journey. There is a shared expectation within the Council that a Child Friendly City also has to be a Safe City. This enables the LSCB to take some assurance about the direction of travel.

Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

The work of the Board contributes to improved community cohesion. Over the next year part of the public engagement work the Board plans will be to use the new LSCB website to increase community engagement with the work of the Board.

Council Policies and City Priorities

The work of the LSCB is central to the Council's priorities and policies for children and young people.

Resources and Value for Money

A Funding and Value for Money Review identified the need to maintain the current level of Base Budget expenditure for the LSCB and requested partners to increase their contributions to ensure 'in year' financial viability and maintain an appropriate level of strategic reserve. A revised funding formula was agreed amongst existing contributing partners to ensure that the agreed expenditure for the Base Budget of £521,000 was fully funded for 2013/14 and that a small commissioning budget would be available to be used to address emerging themes and challenges.

Out-turn figures at the end of March 2013 indicated that an in year shortfall in funding of £21,000 was mitigated by an underspend of £32,000. This enabled a strategic reserve of £50,000 to be carried forward into 2013/14 and a commissioning budget to be established of £35,000.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

No specific implications

Risk Management

The Board is currently completing its Annual Review focusing on how well we work together to improve outcomes for vulnerable C&YP. The 'Effective Governance' scorecard in the Performance Management System indicates that progress continues to be made to tighten governance and system wide processes.

Conclusions

The draft Annual Report of the LSCB concludes that considerable progress is being made to make the necessary changes to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people. It identifies where more progress needs to be made and where we need to better understand problems and issues faced by children and young people in Leeds.

Challenges are set for the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board to address in 2013/14 which promote a direction of travel which encompasses an increasing focus on:

- The quality of services rather than on the timeliness of processes

- The LSCB operating more like an 'Improvement Board'

- The frontline and community engagement

- The voice of children and young people

- The use of research and evidence based practice.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- 1) Receive and comment on the content of the draft LSCB Annual Report.
- 2) Note the challenges for 2013/14, including those accepted by the Children's Trust Board.
- 3) Consider the progress being made to safeguard children and young people who are privately fostered.

Background documents

Leeds Safeguarding Children Board draft Annual Report (2012/13)

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Leeds
Safeguarding
Children Board

DRAFT (2) 11.07.13.

Report of Jane Held, Independent Chair

Report originator Bryan Gocke, LSCB Manager

LSCB Annual Report 2012/13

This draft of the report to be received by the LSCB at its Annual Review Meeting on 19 July 2013.

The LSCB Executive will receive the final draft at its meeting on 16.08.13.

An introduction from the LSCB Chair will be added to the final version.

The final version will be published on the LSCB website at the end of August 2013.

1.0 Executive Summary

This Annual Report of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) evaluates the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Leeds in 2012/13 and sets out how the Board's work will be developed and strengthened in 2013/14. It is drawn from a wide range of sources from across the children's partnership and reflects the continuation of an 'improvement journey' that has involved a high degree of multi-agency co-operation and collaboration.

We are seeking to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Leeds by ensuring that they receive 'the right services at the right time' in order to address emerging issues and problems quickly and effectively. This has required a commitment by the children's partnership to develop preventative early help family support services that will, over time reduce the number of children and young people whose problems have developed to the point where statutory intervention (through a child protection plan or becoming 'looked after' by the Local Authority) has become necessary.

Context

The report notes the considerable impact of policy developments from Central Government and sets the work of the partnership and individual agencies within the Leeds context.

The Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements in Leeds

A comprehensive review of performance, quality assurance and audit findings clearly outlines the breadth and depth of work being undertaken to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people in Leeds. Engaging children and young people about safeguarding matters and their own care is being progressed and good use is being made of external expertise to shape the planning and development of services. Significant service restructuring has and is taking place to respond to the changing circumstances of the public sector and to promote more effective ways of working with children, young people and their families. More quantitative and qualitative information is being collated to help analyse:

- Where progress is being made
- What outcomes are being achieved
- What difference this is making
- Where more improvement is required
- What requires further investigation and understanding.

There are positive indications that the improvement journey has sound foundations:

- There is a clear, coherent strategic direction which is focused on increasing the availability and effectiveness of Early Help preventative services and reducing the need for statutory intervention. This is formalised in the Children and Young People's Plan and supported through the challenges from the LSCB to 'rebalance the safeguarding system'.
- A shared partnership culture is developing underpinned by a restorative approach to working with children, young people and

their families that seeks to 'never do nothing' and to provide the right service at the right time with 'high support and high challenge'.

There is evidence of good progress being made in the aims and objectives set by the partnership:

- The reduction in the number of children and young people who need to be looked after
- The quality of services being provided for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority
- The establishment of revised Children's Services 'Front Door' arrangements which have supported:
 - An increase in conversations between partners about how best to respond to children and young people about whom concerns have been raised
 - A reduction in the number of referrals accepted by Children's Social Work Service
 - An improved understanding of the nature and scale of patterns of domestic violence across the city
- Continuing the investment in and co-ordination of Early Help services.

Emerging challenges are identified which have contributed to those set for the LSCB and Children's Trust Board in 2013/14:

- A greater understanding is required of:
 - The trends and composition of the number of children and young people who are subject to child protection plans
 - The full nature and extent of multi-agency Early Help and preventative activity being undertaken
 - How the development of a single assessment framework across the partnership and the continuum of 'risk' and 'need' can enhance the planning of Early Help interventions
- Areas identified for improvement include:
 - The timeliness of child protection processes
 - The effectiveness of child protection plans
 - The provision of services for children and young people at risk of or suffering sexual exploitation
- Areas identified for development include:
 - The agreement to a single assessment framework and process which is robust and straightforward to use
 - The updating of the Leeds 'Think family Protocol' to improve multi-agency responses to children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting'.

- The exploration of a partnership approach to establishing a Young People's Service (16 – 25 yrs) that would cater for vulnerable young people, including care leavers.

During a period of 'whole system re-orientation' it is particularly important that the Board has that risk in individual cases is being managed appropriately and safely. The report provides the following information to inform that judgment:

- The reduction in the number of looked after children and young people is gradual and is being actively managed. The reduction is due to a combination of fewer receptions into care (with alternative, more appropriate, options being rigorously explored) and improved permanency planning.
- Although the number and make-up of the cohort of children and young people who are subject to child protection plans requires further investigation and improvements are required in the effectiveness of plans, it is notable that the LSCB audit confirmed the Ofsted findings of 2011 that children and young people are not being left in unsafe situations.
- Concerns remain about the high rate of re-referral to Children's Social Work Services with the implication that some children and young people may not be receiving a timely and effective response. Nevertheless, the introduction of the new Duty and Advice Team has impacted positively on these figures and the trend is expected to continue in 2013/14 as the new arrangements bed in.
- Considerable audit and review activity is being undertaken to better understand the working of the safeguarding system as a whole and the performance of its component parts.

The Effectiveness of the LSCB

Through its annual review process the LSCB evaluates the work it has undertaken through the previous year, identifying progress made, emerging challenges and the impact it has had on the work to improve safeguarding services and outcomes for children and young people.

Good progress was made on all the tasks set in the Business plan for 2012/13 and outstanding actions have been included in the Business Plan for 2013/14.

Within the framework of the Strategic Plan progress has been made in the following areas:

- Lead, Listen and Advise
 - The production of an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in Leeds and identifying challenges for the coming year

- Improved dissemination of safeguarding messages across the partnership
- Establishing Lay Member and children and young people's input to the Board
- Know the Story; Challenge the Practice
 - The development and expansion of the LSCB Performance Management System
 - Learning lessons from Local and Single Agency Reviews
 - Undertaking safeguarding seminars with cluster leaders
- Learn and Improve
 - The establishment of a Framework for Learning and Improvement to promote a culture of continuous improvement
 - Improved dissemination of lessons from Reviews
 - Continued co-ordination and development of the LSCB Training programme

More progress needs to be made in:

- Increasing community engagement through the development of the LSCB website, the role of the Lay Members and input from the Voice and Influence sub group
- Receiving performance and audit information from across the partnership
- Increasing our understanding of the quality of practice delivered at the front-line and contributing to its improvement.

Challenges for the LSCB to address in 2013/14 have been identified:

- To maintain and increase the momentum of the current work programme to support continuing improvement in services for children and young people
- To continue to monitor the management of risk within the safeguarding system
- To lead the partnership in addressing issues posed by children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting'
- To build on progress being made to collaborate more effectively with other strategic bodies
- To further implement the LSCB Communications strategy using the new website
- To encourage all partners to more fully engage in the work of the LSCB through its sub group structure.

The LSCB is having an impact on the work of the wider partnership through:

- The development and revision of policies and procedures which impact directly on how frontline work is undertaken. In 2012/13 this has supported work with children and young people who are missing / at risk of sexual exploitation / exhibiting self harm

and suicidal behaviours.

- Raising awareness across the partnership of key safeguarding issues, lessons from Reviews and findings from audits
- Participants on training courses subsequently indicating that there had been an impact on their practice
- Findings from multi-agency audits being used to inform partners' in house audit programmes and the development of action plans to implement improvements in services
- Regular Performance reporting has identified issues that need further investigation (eg the child protection system) and have contributed to decisions made to undertake specific audits.
- Lessons from Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews informing the development of new initiatives (eg exploration of a Young People's Service) and the updating of existing arrangements (eg the Leeds Think Family Protocol).
- Improved understanding of the circumstances of child deaths has resulted in support for a number of public health campaigns (eg the dangers of co-sleeping)

Conclusions

The report concludes that considerable progress that is being made to make the necessary changes to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people. It identifies where more progress needs to be made and where we need to better understand problems and issues faced by children and young people in Leeds.

Challenges are set for the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board to address in 2013/14 which promote a direction of travel which encompasses an increasing focus on:

- The quality of services rather than on the timeliness of processes
- The LSCB operating more like an 'Improvement Board'
- The frontline and community engagement
- The voice of children and young people
- The use of research and evidence based practice.

2.0 Introduction

This report reflects work undertaken in 2012/13 by organisations and agencies in Leeds to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and sets out how this will be developed and strengthened in 2013/14. It is the continuation of an 'improvement journey' that was begun in 2009 and has involved a high degree of multi-agency co-operation and collaboration

(partnership working) in order to:

- Identify problems in the way the safeguarding system was operating
- Develop a coherent and sustainable strategic plan to address the issues identified
- Restructure key services to meet new aims and objectives
- Implement changes in how services are delivered and how agencies work together and with children, young people and their families.

The underlying driver in this work has been to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Leeds by ensuring that they receive 'the right services at the right time' in order to address emerging issues and problems quickly and effectively. This has required a commitment by the children's partnership to develop preventative early help family support services that will, over time reduce the number of children and young people whose problems have developed to the point where statutory intervention (through a child protection plan or becoming 'looked after' by the Local Authority) has become necessary.

This report charts the considerable progress that is being made to make the necessary changes to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people. It identifies where more progress needs to be made and where we need to better understand problems and issues faced by children and young people in Leeds. It sets out how plans are being taken forward to ensure that the gains of the improvement journey are consolidated and embedded and that the pace of change is maintained and enhanced.

In producing this report the LSCB is asking three main questions:

- How effectively are children and young people being safeguarded in Leeds?
- How well is the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board undertaking their roles?
- What plans are in place for 2013/14 to ensure that the improvement journey continues?

The report also includes information about the context in which safeguarding work is undertaken and the work of the LSCB and of the Children's Trust Board, which is the strategic partnership body leading the development of services for children and young people in Leeds.

3.0 Contents of the Report

1.0 Executive Summary

2.0 Introduction

3.0 Contents of the report

4.0 The LSCB and its statutory responsibilities

5.0 LSCB Vision, Values and Principles

6.0 The national safeguarding context

7.0 The local safeguarding context

8.0 The effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Leeds

9.0 The work of the Children's Trust Board

10.0 Assessment of the extent to which LSCB functions are being effectively discharged

11.0 Challenges for 2013/14

4.0 The LSCB and its Statutory Responsibilities

Leeds Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired and consists of senior representatives of all the principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in the City. The Board's membership for 2012/13 is set out in Appendix 1.

Its statutory objectives are to:

- Co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

- To ensure the effectiveness of that work

The full Board currently meets bi-monthly and an Executive Group meets on the alternate months in order to maintain the momentum that completion of the Board's significant workload requires. The Board has a series of sub-groups, each with its own business plan, focused on key elements of the Board's work. The Board Manager is supported by a Business Unit which supports the varied elements of the Board's work. (See Appendix 2, Structure of the LSCB)

Working Together (2013) requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Local Authority, reflecting that accountability for the safety and welfare of children and young people must be led by them. It should also be sent to the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Well Being Board. There is also a local agreement to submit it to Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board for Children and Families and to the governance bodies of all partner organisations to support their governance of safeguarding practice in Leeds.

The guidance states that the Annual Report 'should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action'. The Report should:

- Recognise achievements and progress made as well as identifying challenges
- Demonstrate the extent to which the functions of the LSCB are being effectively discharged
- Include an account of progress made in implementing actions from Serious Case Reviews
- Provide robust challenge to the work of the Children's Trust Board (CTB).

The LSCB works closely with the Children's Trust Board which is specifically accountable in Leeds for overseeing the development and delivery of the Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP). This Report identifies challenges for both the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board. The Children's Trust Board considers the report in preparing and refreshing the Children & Young People's Plan. The Health and Well-being Board considers the report in completing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

5.0 LSCB Vision, Values and Principles

Children, their welfare, protection and the promotion of their best interests are at the heart of everything the LSCB does. The existence and continued prominence of what the Board stands for and the commitment to how it carries out its work remains crucial and Leeds, as a Child Friendly City, values the Board's work and supports it strongly.

The following was agreed by the LSCB members working together at development sessions as part of the creation of the LSCB Strategic Plan 2011-15 and is refreshed annually.

Our Vision

Is for Leeds to be a child friendly city in which children and young people are safe from harm in their families, their communities and their neighbourhoods.

Our Values

We will promote these values in order to influence our behaviours jointly with the Children's Trust Board

- *Celebrating diversity*
- *Engaging citizens locally*
- *Being open and honest*
- *Working as a team for Leeds*
- *Spending money wisely*

Our principles

We are as a Board:

- **Committed** to putting the child / young person at the centre of all that we do
- **Focused** on getting safeguarding right for children, young people and their families
- **Clear** about what we expect of safeguarding services
- **Informed** about how well protected children and young people are in Leeds
- **Open** about what we do and why
- **Co-operative and collaborative** with each other
- **Challenging** of each other and of the safeguarding services each partner provides
- **Effective** and providing value for money
- **Accountable** to the people of Leeds for how we invest our resources
- **Accessible** to and informed by children, young people and their families, the communities they live in, the staff in our organisations that serve them, and the priorities of the Children's Trust

- **Learning** from everything we do and changing as a result
- **Improving practice and outcomes for children and young people**

All our work is underpinned by an agreed set of approaches, shared with the Children's Trust Board, so that we all work together to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people –

- *The child IS the client*
- *Talking a common language*
- *Using 'outcomes based accountability' to improve outcomes in each locality across Leeds*
- *Doing things WITH children and families, not TO or FOR them*
- *Doing the simple things better – never doing nothing*
- *Supporting strong schools, settings, families and communities*
- *Involving everyone who has a part to play – a whole city approach*
- *Improving assessment and intervention*
- *Targeting resources to make the biggest impact on our priorities*

The vision of the LSCB is translated into action through the Strategic Plan (2011 – 15) and a more detailed business plan, both of which are also refreshed annually. The Strategic Plan is based on three priorities:

Strategic Priority 1: Lead, Listen, Advise

- Exercise strategic leadership across all stakeholders: to support a child friendly city
- Support the professional community to keep children and young people safe
- Engage with and influence the wider community to keep children and young people safe
- Ensure transparency and public accountability

Strategic Priority 2: Know the Story; Challenge the Practice

- How do we know how efficient and effective the local safeguarding system is?
- How do we know the quality of interventions with children and young people?
- How are we learning and implementing lessons from child deaths, serious child care incidents and examples of good practice?

Strategic Priority 3: Learn and Improve; using what we learn to change practice

- Develop a culture of continuous learning and improvement
- Promote effective multi-agency working and professional practice.

Each year's business plan sets out objectives and tasks within the three strategic priorities, identifying which sub groups will take the lead and timescales for completion. The business plan is reviewed regularly to ensure that emerging issues and themes can be included and to monitor the progress being made. See appendix 3 for the completed plan for 2012/13.

4.0 The National Safeguarding Context

Agencies working together in Leeds to safeguard and promote the welfare of children do so in the context of national legislation, guidance and reviews of emerging issues and concerns. These need to be taken account of when evaluating local services and arrangements and planning changes and improvements. The LSCB is responding to a number of national developments from 2012/13.

In November 2012 the interim report of The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups was published, identifying this organized abuse as a significant national problem. A number of high profile court appearances and convictions have occurred across the country alongside reviews of the multi-agency responses to the needs of children and young people at risk or suffering sexual exploitation. The report highlighted the need to raise professional awareness about the issues and challenges to be addressed to ensure a better understanding of the scale and nature of the abuse in all areas and to improve the identification responses to victims and those at risk. In June 2013 the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee published its second report on Child sexual exploitation and the response to localised grooming. This area of work has received significant attention in Leeds in the last year and is a priority area for sustained activity.

A review of services and outcomes for children living in the context of parental mental health and / or substance mis-use problems was published by Ofsted in March 2013 ('What about the Children?'). It requires LSCBs to audit the quality of joint working between Adult and Children's Services and put in place structures for joint training and supervision in order to drive improvements in services and outcomes for this vulnerable group. The LSCB has identified as a priority for 2013/14 the need to review and revise the Leeds 'Think Family Protocol' in conjunction with the Leeds Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Partnership to respond to children and young people living in the context of compromised parenting.

- 4.1 Central Government had long made it clear that it intended to simplify the guidance to professionals working with vulnerable children and young people and held a consultation exercise on its outline proposals during 2012/13. In March 2013 new guidance was issued; Working Together to Safeguard Children which introduces a much less prescriptive approach to multi-agency working with vulnerable children and young people. Its philosophy promotes the 'child's voice and experience' as central to working to improve outcomes for children and young people and challenges professionals to ask themselves whether 'this action or work is going to have a positive

impact on the life of this child ... and what is going to happen if nothing changes.’ The changes incorporate a new definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people which makes it clear action needs to be taken to ensure **all** children have the best outcomes across the whole system; thus underlining the importance of effective Early Help Services as well as Family Support, Child in Needs and Child Protection services. As well as the specific implications for Local Safeguarding Children Boards, the consideration and implementation of this guidance will be central to the work of the LSCB in 2013/14 and beyond as it leads the development of a new professional culture and new systems and protocols on behalf of the partnership.

4.2 At the same time the Government published the Accountability and Assurance Framework for the NHS which provides clear guidance on the responsibilities of each of the key players for safeguarding in the new NHS arrangements. It is complementary to the Working Together guidance and re-iterates the requirement to work in partnership to safeguard children and young people at risk of abuse at both strategic and operational levels. It requires each NHS organization to have appropriate governance and assurance systems in place.

4.5 Earlier in the year (August 2012) Local Safeguarding Children Boards developed a national profile through the establishment of the Association of Independent LSCB Chairs, with a remit of improving the effectiveness of Local Safeguarding Children Boards in England through:

- Shared learning
- Professional development
- Responding to consultations and policy proposals
- Working in partnership with other bodies committed to safeguarding children and young people
- Securing and strengthening the identity of Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Enhancing the contribution of independence in the Chairing of Local safeguarding Children Boards.

An immediate benefit of the Association has been the setting up of a peer review process for decision making by chairs as to whether the circumstances surrounding serious child care incidents meet the criteria for undertaking Serious Case Reviews. This will support more consistent decision making about the types of reviews that are undertaken at a time when national guidance has changed significantly in this area.

5.0 The Local Safeguarding Context

The most immediate context for work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Leeds is to be found in the city itself (the makeup of its population, the degree of deprivation experienced, levels of crime etc) and the strategic response to the

issues and themes identified. This section provides a brief overview of the circumstances in which children and young people live in Leeds, the response of the partnership through the Children and Young People's Plan and the particular challenges and developments for the individual agencies which collectively make up the children's partnership.

5.1 **The City of Leeds**

Leeds is the second largest city council in England. The population of the city has increased rapidly in recent years. The latest population estimate is 798,800 representing a 12% increase over the last 10 years, which is higher than the average regionally and nationally. The population of children and young people aged 0-19 is just over 180,000. Within this, the number of very young children (0-4 year olds) has increased faster with over 10,000 children born in Leeds in 2009/10. Leeds has a significantly higher proportion of 15–25 year olds compared to both the regional and national averages, with a total population of 289,000 0-25 year olds living in the city.

Leeds is a very diverse city, with over 130 nationalities included in a minority ethnic population of just less than 17.4%. The proportion of pupils in Leeds schools that are of minority ethnic heritage has increased by more than six percentage points since 2005 to 22.5% of pupils in 2011. A higher proportion of primary than secondary pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. Some 14% of pupils have English as an additional language and over 170 languages are recorded as spoken in Leeds schools. The largest minority ethnic groups in the city are the Indian and Pakistani communities but more recently there has also been a significant increase in economic migration, mainly from Eastern Europe.

The local authority area includes some rural communities, as well as densely populated inner city areas where people can face multiple challenges. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation indicate that 19%, or over 150,000 people in Leeds, live in areas that are ranked amongst the most deprived 10% nationally. Around 30,000 children and young people, 23% of all those aged 0-16, live in poverty.

Leeds is a large, urban city with many features associated with traditionally high levels of crime. Whilst the re-offending rate for children and young people in Leeds is higher than that in England and Wales as a whole, two of the core cities have substantially higher rates. The number of young people re-offending in Leeds has reduced by 61% over the last five years compared with 49% nationally.

5.2 **The Children and Young People's Plan**

In consultation with stakeholders (including the LSCB) the Children's Trust Board has developed The Children and Young People's Plan (2011-15) which is designed to provide an over-arching strategic direction to the development of services across the city. This is made up of five outcomes, one of which is co-sponsored by the LSCB Chair:

- That Children and Young People are safe from harm, which involves
 - Helping children and young people to live in safe and supportive families
 - Ensuring that the most vulnerable are protected.

In order to provide a focus on key issues three 'obsessions' have been agreed. One is to reduce the number of children and young people who need to be 'looked after', which reflects the partnership commitment to reducing the need for statutory intervention by providing children and young people with 'the right service at the right time' through the development of effective Early Help preventative services. This approach has been supported by the LSCB, through its Annual Reports in 2011 and 2012, challenging the Children's Trust Board to 'rebalance the safeguarding system' accordingly.

5.3 **Issues and developments for Partner Agencies**

The scale and pace of change in, and re-organisation of, public sector services are factors that are increasingly having to be taken into account when planning services for children and young people and in ensuring that they are effective and safe. In their contributions to this annual report partner agencies have identified the key challenges and changes that they are facing and the steps that they are taking to respond.

Children's Services:

During 2011/12 a new Directorate within Leeds City Council was created for services to children and young people. This created a structure based on two service areas; Learning, Skills and Universal Services and Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services; complemented by Partnership Development and Business Support; and Strategy, Performance and Commissioning.

During 2012/13 changes to the way in which services for children and young people are delivered have been progressed and embedded based on a move to locality working on a 'cluster model' and the creation of a specialist approach to children and young people who are 'looked after' and 'care leavers.' The implementation of revised Children's Services 'Front Door' arrangements is having a significant impact on patterns of requests for services and referrals accepted.

The Learning Skills and Universal Services Directorate faces continuing challenge to maintain its commitment to support all Leeds children and young people in learning in the context of schools receiving an increasing budget share and being made responsible for functions and activities which were previously the remit of the local authority. Maintaining a focus on safeguarding is a priority in this period of change.

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service:

Cafcass is a non-departmental public body accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and operates in the region on a West Yorkshire basis. In line with the changing focus of Local Authorities in the region it experienced a reduction in public law applications over 2012/13 (in comparison with an increasing trend nationally) but an increase in private law applications (against a reducing rate nationally). A key challenge for 2013/14 is implementation of the revised Public Law Outline and delivery against the key recommendations of the Family Justice Review.

NHS:

The national restructuring of the NHS has culminated in the establishment of three Clinical Commissioning Groups in Leeds at the beginning of 2013/14. Using the NHS Accountability and Assurance Framework work is ongoing to draw up a memorandum of understanding between the groups and the LSCB and to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to oversee safeguarding activity across the whole of the NHS structure in Leeds.

Leeds Community Healthcare has raised the profile and priority given to safeguarding during the year. It has integrated its Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children Teams resulting in pooled knowledge and experiences, the streamlining of systems and processes and more efficient use of resources. The introduction of a new electronic recording system has improved awareness within the unit when a child or young person is subject to a child protection plan. The Looked After Children Health Team achieved the GP Clinical Team of the Year Award in 2012 for their innovative approach to practice.

In February 2012 Leeds Partnership NHS Foundation Trust merged with mental health and learning disability services from NHS North Yorkshire and York, becoming Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The Trust has direct involvement with Children and young people through the Leeds perinatal / mother and baby unit, the Leeds Addiction Unit pregnancy and parenting team and the Child and adolescent mental health service in York.

Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust:

In addition to the normal business of the Trust, there have been a number of issues that have required an additional focus, namely the Savile Inquiry, the National Safe and Sustainable Review of Paediatric Cardiac Services and the Francis Report.

Savile Inquiry :

Following the allegations of abuse committed by the late Sir Jimmy Savile, the Secretary of State for Health launched an investigation involving the NHS sites where abuse by the celebrity had been cited, Leeds Teaching Hospitals was one of those.

An independent investigation team led by Professor Sue Proctor, Diocesan Secretary for the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds (former SHA Chief Nurse), was established and investigations commenced under the oversight of Kate Lampard, appointed by the Secretary of State for Health to oversee the 3 NHS investigations.

In addition to the historical investigation, the work has focussed on ensuring that similar incidences could not happen today; therefore audits have been conducted of a number of Trust policies including the Safeguarding and Human Resources policies, these are being strengthened where required.

A "Speaking Out" month facilitated by the investigation team was run in February 2013 to encourage staff and patients to come forward.

The independent investigation team are expected to report their findings during 2013.

Paediatric Cardiac Service :

The Secretary of State for Health had launched a review into Paediatric Cardiac Surgery with a view to reducing the number of centres that provided this service nationally. The aim being to ensure there were sufficient numbers of surgeons in each centre with enough children being treated in each to enable the surgeons to treat the wide variety of complex defects in numbers that would maintain their competence.

This review reported in 2012 and suggested that Leeds was one of the centres to close. This decision was challenged in a number of arenas and the outcome judged unlawful. Therefore NHS England have been asked by the Secretary of State for Health to develop a fair mechanism for achieving the desired outcome.

During the period of the challenge Leeds Teaching Hospitals temporarily suspended Paediatric Cardiac Surgery amid allegations that the mortality data was showing higher death rates than its' peer hospitals. This was found not to be the case and surgery resumed after a week and continues to provide a full service to the population of Yorkshire and the Humber.

The service underwent a thorough review from independent teams and a number of recommendations relating to governance and the handling of complaints have been made.

The Francis Report :

The public inquiry, chaired by Sir Robert Francis into the failings in care that occurred in the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust reported in February 2013 with a long list of recommendations for a number of national organisations, health professions and Hospital Trusts.

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals is developing a plan to address the themes of the report. This will be implemented through 2013.

Public Health:

Following the publication of “Healthy Lives, Healthy People”, the Government’s Strategy for Public Health (Nov 2011), a new national public health system has been established. At national level, Public Health England has been established, whilst at local level, public health responsibilities transferred to Local Authorities on 1st April 2013. Local Authorities have now taken on a leadership role in: tackling the causes of ill health and reducing health inequalities; promoting and protecting health; and promoting social justice and safer communities. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Health and Wellbeing Boards were established as a forum where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities. The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board, chaired by the Lead Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, has been meeting formally since April 2013. Under the Act, a range of mandatory services (which must be commissioned or provided), may be prescribed by the Secretary of State. In 2013-14, these mandatory services are:

- appropriate access to sexual health services;
- a duty to ensure that there are plans in place to protect the health of the population;
- provision of public health advice to NHS commissioners;
- delivery of the National Child Measurement Programme;
- and delivery of the NHS Health Check.

In addition, a range of commissioning responsibilities have transferred to Local Authorities from 1st April 2013, funded through the Public Health grant. These responsibilities included the commissioning of the School Nursing Service, a core universal health service contributing to the safeguarding of children and young people. Responsibility for the commissioning of Health Visiting Services and the Family Nurse Partnership transferred to NHS England for a period of 2 years, pending transfer of these commissioning responsibilities to Local Authorities in April 2015.

West Yorkshire Police:

In April 2012, West Yorkshire police combined the Leeds Child and Public Protection Unit with the three area based Safeguarding Teams in the City. The creation of one District Safeguarding Unit co-located resources under one management structure, bringing all victim centred non investigative functions together with an enhanced ability to investigate all child abuse, sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, forced marriage and honour based violence allegations.

At the same time a regional safeguarding Governance Unit was established to ensure local compliance with national and West Yorkshire safeguarding policies.

Leeds Youth Offending Service:

The significant reduction in the rate of re-offending in Leeds means that the service now works with young people who are more likely to re-offend. The change in legislation that gave young people who were remanded in custody the status of 'looked after' children has resulted in a joint protocol with Children's Social work Service to ensure that this results in the appropriate entitlements for this vulnerable group. The introduction of a new case management system will enable performance data to be used to monitor compliance with national standards.

The Service is working with the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner to remodel and improve services in alignment with the Police and Crime Plan for West Yorkshire and to provide more targeted support to young people at risk of involvement in crime, substance mis-use and poor educational outcomes. This remodeling will be taking place in the context of changing national policy agendas and reduced income from partners over the coming years.

Leeds City College:

The College, which delivers courses to around 10,000 young people (16 – 18 yr old) has appointed a Governor who champions safeguarding and chairs a safeguarding strategy group once a term. Around 50 child protection / designated officers are available across the campuses to respond to safeguarding concerns from staff or students. Communication between the College and schools has improved following a request to Head Teachers (supported by the LSCB chair) to share safeguarding information when students transfer from school to college.

HMP & Young Offender Institution Wetherby:

A new safeguarding team with a wider monitoring remit has been established and will be developing its role during 2013/14.

In 2012/13 the catchment area of the Institution increased following the closure of Carstington in the North East. Two of Wetherby's wings are national resources and thus accept young people from across the country. The identified challenge for 2013/14 will be to maintain current standards in the light of a national benchmarking process and proposed financial cuts to the service.

The Third Sector:

There are currently 903 Third Sector agencies in Leeds who are registered with the Charities Commission (which estimates that this represents approximately a quarter of all agencies). Around 400 are linked into Young Lives Leeds and 31 engaged directly with the LSCB in 2012/13 in order to complete their audit of compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements. Fuller engagement across the sector remains a priority for the LSCB and will be supported by the new website which will be introduced in 2013/14.

8.0 Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements

This section addresses one of the key questions posed in the introduction to this report: 'How effectively are children and young people being safeguarded in Leeds?' It provides an overall picture of the progress being made to improve services and outcomes for children and young people across the whole safeguarding system (from universal services through early help to statutory intervention) and identifies where more needs to be done.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in Leeds evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources and is arranged in the following format:

- Engagement with and involvement of children and young people
 - The views and experience of children and young people
 - Listening to children and young people
- Monitoring and Reviewing
 - Inspections and Reviews

- Serious case reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews
- Allegations against professionals
- Private Fostering provision
- Safeguarding in secure settings
- Performance Management and Quality Assurance of safeguarding services
 - Partner compliance with required safeguarding arrangements
 - Performance data
 - Quality Assurance and Audit
- External input to the development of services
- Summary and Whole System analysis

8.1 **The Engagement and Involvement of Children and Young People**

8.1.1* **The Views of and Experience of Children and Young People**

One of the key commitments made by the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board is to put the 'voice of the child' at the centre of all we do; an aspiration which is underlined in the new Working Together (2013) guidance. Engaging with children and young people is well established in Leeds and has been given further impetus in recent years by the establishment of the Child Friendly City initiative. The LSCB is seeking to particularly understand the views of children and young people in relation to safeguarding issues. This section summarises feedback received and ongoing initiatives to work with children and young people.

Growing in up in Leeds survey 2011-12

The survey, based on the Every Child Matters outcomes, was presented to the Children' Trust Board in May 2013 and is drawn from responses from a sample of primary and secondary pupils. Findings in the 'Stay Safe' section include:

The extent to which children and young people feel safe:

- The vast majority felt safest at home, followed by at school during lessons
- 39% did not feel safe where they live after dark

- 21% did not feel safe in their local park

Experiences of bullying:

- 35% thought that bullying was a problem in their school and 60% felt that their school was good at dealing with it.
- 28% said they had been bullied a few times during the year
- 6% said they were bullied most days or every day.

These figures for bullying are similar to those presented for the previous year.

Partner engagement with children and young people

The Youth and Skills Service in liaison with the Youth Council uses a range of evaluation, questionnaires and direct feedback from users to inform programme development. Youth Engagement and Peer Inspection groups are being developed in the cluster localities. Schools and Leeds City College promote 'pupil voice' as a vital component of their own quality assurance processes (and contribution to inspection preparation). There are student representatives on Leeds City College committees and involvement in staff recruitment.

In Wetherby Young Offender Institution, systems are well embedded for young people to voice complaints and receive feedback. These contribute to improvements in practice and the development of services.

Through a partnership with User Voice, the Leeds Youth Offending Service regularly engages in consultation exercises with service users to ensure that young people are engaged in shaping services for their local communities.

The Cafcass Family Justice Children & Young People's Board has been involved locally in open days, recruitment and selection, the development of focus groups and office inspections.

LSCB Voice & Influence Group

The LSCB, in conjunction with Leeds City College, has identified and is working with a group of young people to implement the LSCB Voice and Influence Strategy. To date the group have been involved in supporting the LSCB Annual Conference 'Let me speak – will you Listen?' and in interviewing for the post of the LSCB chair. The group is developing proposals for how it links into the main Board and progresses its status as a formal reference group.

Work planned for 2013/14 includes contributing to the development of the new LSCB website and providing consultation to partners who are working to engage children and young people in the planning and development of their services as part of their s(11) action plan.

8.1.2 Listening to Children and how their Views are Influencing Practice

Alongside incorporating the views of children and young people in the design and planning of services is the need to take more account of their views and experiences when working with them to improve outcomes; a point that is emphatically made in the revised Working Together (2013) guidance. There is evidence of good progress being made in Leeds in the context of a partnership commitment to a restorative approach to working *with* children, young people and their families, rather than providing services *for* them or *to* them.

More than 80% of children and young people who are looked after participate in their statutory reviews and a toolkit is being developed to improve the quality of this input. The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 introduced a new requirement for Independent Reviewing Officers to speak with children and young people separately as part of the reviewing process and this has resulted in an increasing number of such consultations and observations completed (65% in 2011/12, 79% in 2012/13).

A survey has been commissioned from the Barnardo's Children's Rights Service to consider the impact of these pre review visits and the extent to which they facilitate the building of a relationship that enables children and young people to participate more fully in their reviews.

The adoption of the Strengthening Families Framework is intended to increase family member and children and young people's participation in child protection conferences, which has been historically low in Leeds. Whilst being clear that 'attendance' does not necessarily equal 'participation', all children over the age of 10 are invited to conferences where this is felt to be appropriate. On average children and young people attend 10% of conferences and the response from professionals has been positive. Recording of children and young people's views has improved, both within conferences and in the minutes.

A multi-agency audit of the effectiveness of child protection processes co-ordinated by the LSCB (see below) reiterated that the voice of the child needs to be more clearly included and evidenced in conferences and core group meetings..

A pilot project was undertaken between December 2012 and April 2013 looking specifically at the efficacy of child protection conference chairs having contact with children and young people prior to a conference. This is being evaluated by the Children's Service Voice and Influence Team and the outcome and recommendations will be reported in 2013/14.

The Leeds Children's Rights and Advocacy Service is being re-commissioned with the intention that the current service being provided

for looked after children and young people and care leavers will be broadened to include those within child protection processes, family group conferencing, child in need meetings and complaints. Funding has been agreed to provide a pilot advocacy service for children aged 10 years and older who are the subject of initial child protection conferences. This service will be initially offered to 15 families.

8.2 **Monitoring and Reviewing**

Many key processes and specific services are subject to independent monitoring and reviewing which provides a useful external measure of how well safeguarding is being carried out in Leeds.. This section considers the evidence provided from a number of sources.

8.2.1 **External Inspection**

External inspections and reviews give a crucial objective view of the quality of services being provided, the impact on children and young people, and where improvements need to be made. Although there was no 'whole system' inspection in 2012/13, the findings of previous Ofsted inspections of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have proved crucial in (i) initiating the current Leeds Improvement Journey, and (ii) providing assurance that progress is being made.

Ofsted Inspections of multi-agency arrangements

In 2009 an announced Ofsted inspection judged safeguarding services in Leeds to be 'inadequate' and the authority was subsequently made the subject of a statutory improvement notice. Since this point the partnership has viewed itself as being on an 'improvement journey' based on political and professional co-operation and generating a coherent and sustainable strategic plan to improve multi-agency working and services and to improve outcomes for children and young people.

In October 2011 Ofsted published its report of the outcome of their announced re-inspection of Safeguarding in Leeds. The Report recognised significant improvements made across the city. Overall, five of the nine categories that Ofsted assessed were rated as 'good' and four were rated as 'adequate' - there were no categories rated as inadequate. The key judgments of 'overall effectiveness' of Safeguarding in the City were rated as 'adequate' and the 'capacity to improve' was rated as 'good'. Taken together with their unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements in January 2011 - when Ofsted noted 'remarkable and impressive improvements' - this provided strong endorsement of the progress being made in Leeds.

The report supported the view that developments in Safeguarding were making a significant difference to the well-being and safety of children in Leeds. The inspection found that 'arrangements to ensure children are safeguarded are now secure' and highlighted 'significant progress in improving outcomes'. The inspectors did not identify any children left at potential risk of harm, and none of the

cases reviewed were deemed to be inadequate.

Amongst the other areas that the inspectors highlighted were:

- The development of more child centred approaches, for example through the way that children are increasingly involved in child protection conferences so that their wishes and views are fully taken into account.
- Improvements in the way partnership between different services to safeguard children works, especially in terms of shared responsibility, vision and priorities, and the overall understanding that in Leeds, 'safeguarding is everyone's business'.
- That the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board is much improved.

The Report noted areas in which further development needs to take place:

- To improve the electronic social care record system (ESCR) – used by the Children's Social Work Service.
- To continue to improve the timescales for initial children protection conferences.
- To improve the quality of assessments to help achieve a consistent standard across the service.
- To support information sharing between partner agencies in relation to domestic violence.

As a result of the significant amount of progress made the Government removed the Improvement Notice.

Inspections of Partners

Many partners have been the subject of inspections by their regulatory bodies in 2012/13 which either focused on safeguarding or included it in a wider remit. The findings highlight much that is positive in the development of services and provide a further degree of assurance that good progress is being made.

Children's services:

Three inspections have taken place in relation to Looked After Children's Services:

- An Ofsted thematic inspection of Independent Reviewing Officer services in January 2013 provided very positive feedback including that:
 - The service is independent of the Children's Social Work Service but has a strong link
 - Dispute resolution and quality assurance processes are well understood

- The service is child focused and engages well with young people
 - Independent reviewing Officers are involved in quality assurance and case auditing, which is used to inform practice development
 - There was evidence of good communication between Reviewing Officers and Social Workers
 - There were good links with Cafcass.
 - The approach to peer and management observation of practice was an example of good practice.
- In February 2013 Ofsted tested their proposed methodology for the inspection of Looked After Children's services. Headline messages were that:
 - No cases were found where a child was unsafe or where there were concerns about practice
 - Services for looked after children and care leavers were improving
 - Front line practitioners knew and understood the strategic direction and objectives of the service
 - There was a clear emphasis on supporting children to achieve permanence
 - Leeds demonstrated high ambitions for looked after children and care leavers and for services to support them
 - Areas identified for improvement included:
 - § Care Plans were not always Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely
 - § Many Pathway Plans and Personal Education Plans did not evidence involvement of children and young people
 - § Not all plans had a contingency plan
 - § Some inconsistencies evident in the way supervision was used challenge practice and drive care planning
 - Also in February a LILAC inspection took place (Leading Improvements for Looked After Children), undertaken by young people with experience of being in care. Leeds was felt to have met all seven standards of the inspection and comments from the team were very positive about the commitment to involve children and young people in improving their care and lives. Specific comments included:
 - 'I was happy to see the council realizing their role as the parent, often something forgotten about in other Local Authorities'.
 - 'Overall I was confident Leeds was moving in the correct direction with a lot of progress made'.
 - 'We feel that Leeds were deserving of all 7 Standards with some very enthusiastic members of staff which was encouraging'.
 - Inspections carried out by Ofsted over the year of Local Authority Children's Homes revealed that no Leeds children's home is rated as 'inadequate'. Five of the twelve (42%) are rated 'good' or better, with the remaining seven (58%) rated 'satisfactory / adequate'. Recent interim inspection reports suggest that eight homes (67%) are currently making good or better progress.

Early Start Service:

No Ofsted inspection judgments of Children's Centres in 2012/13 questioned safeguarding practice and the vast majority make very positive reference to the effectiveness of policy and practice. Of 57 Children's Centres across the city Ofsted judged 82% to be 'good' or 'outstanding'.

NHS:

In February 2013 Leeds Community Healthcare took part in a pilot with Ofsted and CQC inspectors to test their methodology for implementing proposed Looked After and Care Leavers inspection standards. Whilst no judgment was given, positive feedback from the inspectors indicated that the health needs of looked after children and young people are viewed as a priority and that individual Health Needs assessments are of a very high standard.

Ofsted inspections of Eastmoor Secure Children's Centre highlighted health delivery as a strength, with the appointment of a Nurse Manager as being instrumental in key quality improvements.

Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust were judged by Ofsted as being 'satisfactory with good capacity to improve.'

West Yorkshire Police:

In July 2012 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary conducted a review of the Force's recording of serious sexual offences, identifying. Some inconsistencies were identified in the rationales provided for deciding whether a crime should be recorded, which resulted in a streamlining of processes and the introduction of additional supervisory checks.,

The Secure Estate:

Although Wetherby Young Offender Institution was not formally inspected in 2012/13 it was reviewed and received IMB and Advocacy Annual Reports which highlighted areas of good practice and good interaction between staff and young people. Scrutiny visits by the Youth Justice Board and Young People's Group highlighted themes that are currently being addressed, including: violence reduction, searches at reception and responding to young people shouting out of cell windows.

8.2.3 Serious Case Reviews and Learning Lessons Reviews

One of the key functions of the LSCB is to ensure that lessons are learnt from the circumstances of serious child care incidents that will improve future practice and reduce the risk of such incidents re-occurring.

The LSCB is responsible for initiating a Serious Case Review (SCR) in circumstances where there has been a death of a child and abuse or neglect is known or suspected, or where there has been a serious injury and there are concerns about interagency working. The purpose of such a review is to:

- Establish whether there are any lessons to be learnt from the case and from the way in which local professionals and organisations worked together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Identify clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted on, what is expected to change as a result and within what timescale *and*
- as a consequence, improve inter-agency working to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children

During 2012/13 the standing SCR sub-committee received 3 completed Local Learning Lessons Reviews (LLLRs) and 2 Single Agency Reviews. These generated 12 recommendations for action by the LSCB, 5 of which have been completely implemented and the remainder are on-going and being monitored. Key learning themes from these Reviews include:

- The importance of early intervention and preventative service provision underpinned by use of the Common Assessment Framework
- Keeping the child at the centre of practice;
- The need for effective intra-agency and interagency communication
- To improve professional recognition and response to disguised compliance
- Adult mental health assessments to consider the safeguarding implications for children
- The need for health visitors to be aware of safeguarding issues through good record keeping and its transfer when children change areas
- Greater rigour required around analysis of 'risk' and 'need' within a more child focused approach.
- There should be less reliance on adult self-reporting and the adoption of a 'respectful uncertainty' approach to assessment.
- Greater management oversight and scrutiny of assessments.

- The need for robust and consistent system of quality assurance of assessments
- To ensure the continued safety and well-being of children who are 'de-escalated' from a Child Protection Plan and made the subject of a Child in Need Plan.
- To ensure that CSWS staff are aware of their statutory obligations in relation to housing and safeguarding when working with 16 to 17 year old young people.
- The LCC Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate to ensure the timely completion of the comprehensive review of services for sixteen to twenty two year old young people "Children and Young Person's Housing Plan".

As well as generating recommendations for the LSCB these themes reflect recommendations for action for the individual agencies involved and have been incorporated into business planning for 2013/14 (eg the review and revision of the Think Family Protocol' to underpin multi-agency working with children and young people living in the context of compromised parenting and the developing proposals for a Young Person's Service (16 – 25 yr old).

No Serious Case Reviews were initiated in 2012/13 but 2 Local Learning Lessons Reviews were commissioned and are on-going.

In addition, the Leeds Youth Offending Service undertook and shared with the LSCB a review of 6 serious incidents in 2012/13 identifying and progressing the following lessons:

- Learning together with partners, particularly regarding information sharing and professional challenge
- Learning about best practice regarding domestic violence
- Learning about the needs of looked after children and young people in out of area placements
- Learning about managing vulnerability
- Recognising excellent practice.

8.2.4 **Managing Allegations Against Professionals**

One of the LSCB's functions is to ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place to investigate and respond to allegations of abusive behavior made by children and young people against professionals. The Board receives an annual report from the Local Authority Designated officer summarising the allegations that have been made over the year and how they have been managed.

Dealing with allegations made against professionals is the role of an employing agency. However, the Local Authority is required to

provide a coordinating role through the provision of a Local Authority Designated Officer, or 'LADO'. Individual agencies are required to notify the LADO of any allegations made. The role of the LADO is to provide advice and guidance to employers, to liaise with the police and other agencies and to monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

An annual report has been provided to the LSCB on activity by the LADO during 2012/13. This report provides statistical information for the period, development work this year and plans for future development for the year 2013/14.

There were 267 referrals to the LADO in 2012/13 (179 about specific children and young people and 87 about concerns about professionals arising out of the work place eg within their families). Since a full time officer has been in post the average annual referral rate is around 300. A breakdown of these referrals indicates a similar pattern to previous years:

- 33% from Education
- 20% about foster carers
- A small but significant number from the Secure Estate (Regional Secure Children's Centre and Wetherby Young Offender Institution)

The largest group of allegations involved physical abuse, although a significant number involved emotional abuse by professionals (bullying or derogatory comments). Half of all referrals resulted in holding inter-agency allegations management strategy meetings, which alongside considering the risk posed by the professional also considers the impact on the child or young person. 37% of allegations about specific children involved those who were 'looked after' and 13% of allegations resulted in Police investigations.

With the recent appointment of a second full time LADO it will be possible in 2013/14 to develop the service further:

- To provide a more consistently timely response to allegations and effect the quicker completion of processes.
- To develop information leaflets and feedback forms for children and young people
- To better understand the pattern of referrals and to test out whether all agencies are dealing with allegations appropriately
- To deliver a one day national conference exploring the links between the LADO role and the Secure Estate
- To provide in the annual report for 2013/14 information about outcomes of investigations and a consideration of the wellbeing of all involved when allegations are made.

8.2.5 Private Fostering

Children and young people who go to live with adults outside of their immediate family are 'privately fostered' and are viewed as being potentially vulnerable. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 set out a policy and procedural function for the LSCB in relation to private fostering. The LSCB role includes monitoring and quality assurance, and to ensure that public awareness is raised about private fostering.

It is the duty of local authorities to promote public awareness of the requirement for those considering undertaking private fostering arrangements to notify the local authority. The local authority has a duty to satisfy itself that the welfare of children or young people who may be privately fostered within their area will be satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted. It is a requirement of the Private Fostering Regulations, 2005 that an annual report is presented to the LSCB.

Private fostering arrangements in Leeds were inspected in September 2008 and were judged to be inadequate. In January 2011, the service was independently reviewed and a further action plan developed. Some progress was made in all aspects of the plan. However, further internal auditing of the service indicated a significant lack of compliance with requirements. There was also a continuation of a low rate of reporting of private fostering arrangements albeit with year on year increase.

Following the Annual Report to the LSCB in June 2012 privately fostered children and young people were identified as an LSCB priority vulnerable group for 2012/13. A Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board Inquiry also took place in 2012/13 and has asked for an update on progress in July 2013.

The LSCB received the Annual Private Fostering Report in June 2013 which indicated:

- There has been a modest increase over the past 3 years in the number of children and young people known to be privately fostered in Leeds (12 at the end of 2012/13). The number of children and young people who have moved out of such arrangements or reached their 16th birthday (32) has been offset by a significant increase in notifications received (28 in 2012/13). This indicates that efforts over the past 3 years to increase professional awareness about the need to identify and respond to private fostering arrangements are bearing fruit.
- The Private Fostering Communications Strategy has been revised and updated for 2013/14.
- An internal audit of files in January 2013 indicated that progress was being made in ensuring that statutory visits to privately fostered children and young people were taking place, although improvements were still required in the completion of assessments within the required timescales and the timely obtaining of police checks.
- Since January 2013 changes to staffing arrangements have been consolidated, with temporary posts made permanent and the appointment of a worker with considerable knowledge and experience of the requirements of private fostering.

- The next audit of files is to take place in November 2013.

8.2.6 **Safeguarding in Secure Settings**

Another group of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable are those who have been remanded or sentenced to a secure residential setting for criminal activity.

Leeds has two secure establishments for children and young people; Wetherby Young Offender Institution (16 – 17 yrs) and East Moor Secure Children's Centre (10 – 17 yrs, with an average age of 15). With the exception of a small number of 'welfare beds' at East Moor, the population is made up of those remanded or sentenced for criminal matters.

The LSCB is required to report annually to the Youth Justice Board on the use of 'restraint' in secure units its area and has chosen to commission an independent specialist in youth justice and looked after children to undertake this task. Findings from the 2012/13 report are:

- That both units are to be commended for a continuing trend of less use of restraint. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is in the context of reduced occupancy rates, there is a consensus that the complexity of the needs and challenging behaviour of the children and young people in their care has increased.
- That changes in policy, practice and data recording of restraint in both parts of the secure estate in recent years have made it difficult to progress recommendations from reports in previous years; which proposed that common definitions about restraint, injuries, length of incidents etc be developed so as to provide a basis for comparison and a common approach to minimization.
- Wetherby is currently in the process of undertaking an extensive programme to train staff in a new package 'Minimising and Managing Physical Restraint'.
- Eastmoor's scheduled external review of its Restraint Minimization Strategy has been delayed and will now take place later in 2013/14.

The report concludes that with the changes to the methodologies of restraint due to be completed this year it should be possible to generate a consistent shared data base to monitor incidents, their duration and their impact in 2014/15.

8.2.7 **Safeguarding in Education Establishments**

Schools and colleges have contact with the vast majority of children and young people in the city and provide support for many who are vulnerable. Education establishments play a key role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and are closely monitored and regulated.

There was a 98% response rate from Education establishments to the annual self audit of safeguarding arrangements (s175 /157 Education Act 2002). This involved 211 schools and the Leeds City College. In response to the findings the following actions have been taken by the Integrated Safeguarding Unit:

- Where gaps have been identified the Chair of Governors for each establishment has been notified.
- All designated staff that are due to undertake 2 yearly refresher training have been sent a letter reminding them
- All schools that are due to undertake whole staff refresher training have been contacted and reminded.

Ofsted inspections undertaken between September 2011 – March 2012 found 17% of Leeds schools to be 'Outstanding' and 64% to be 'Good' for safeguarding standards, which compares well with the national average. No school received an inadequate judgment for safeguarding standards.

Leeds City College was inspected in May 2012 and received Grade 1 (Outstanding) across all campuses and sites in the City for:

- How well the college promotes and ensures safeguarding arrangements
- How safe students feel

Managing and responding to school non attendance is now predominantly the responsibility of locality clusters. This has resulted in a 50% increase in referrals for children and young people missing education and prompted the development of revised procedures for schools and training for staff responsible for attendance and child protection matters.

Performance monitoring in 2010/11 had identified that a significant number of Initial Child Protection Conferences were delayed during school holiday periods due to the lack of availability of education staff. This issue was raised with the Head Teacher's Forum and more consistent arrangements were put in place with the LCC Integrated Safeguarding Unit. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the increase of education staff representation to 78% during the 2012 summer holiday period, with no conferences being cancelled due to lack of education representation.

The LSCB will be increasing its engagement with education establishments in 2013/14 through the newly formed Education Safeguarding Forum. This LSCB reference group will facilitate two way communication between the Board and the sector, ensuring that key safeguarding messages are disseminated and that feedback about issues and concerns is received.

8.3 Performance Management and Quality Assurance of Safeguarding Services

Ensuring the effectiveness of multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of C&YP is the second of the LSCB core functions. This requires the LSCB to develop its own comprehensive overview of the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of multi-agency practice which is facilitated through the LSCB Performance Management System and is made up of three components:

- 1) Monitoring partner compliance with the statutory requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place
- 2) A Performance Management Framework based on the strategic priorities of the Board and including measures from the national Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework.
- 3) A multi-agency Quality Assurance and Audit Programme

This system complements and feeds into the Leeds Framework for Learning and Improvement which helps to promote a culture of continuous improvement across the partnership.

8.3.1 'Section 11 Duty to Safeguard' Compliance

The Annual Partner Audit of compliance with the statutory requirements of s(11) of the Children Act 2004 indicates that safeguarding arrangements remain strong across the nine standards. The main areas identified as requiring review or improvement by organisations include:

- A clear statement of the organisations responsibilities towards children is available for staff and volunteers
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on the safeguarding of children
- Developments within the organization to take account of the need to safeguard children and to be informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
- Training on the safeguarding of children for staff and volunteers working with or, depending on the organisation's responsibilities, in contact with children and families
- Staff are aware of the information sharing procedure for their organisation
- Ensuring that children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse.

Progress on action plans by partners to address the improvements required will be monitored in 2013/14 along with the introduction of a range of audit and peer challenge processes to cross check standards. Information about the extent of partnership engagement in the process is provided in 10.2.6 (below).

In 2013/14 the LSCB programme to ensure compliance with s(11) responsibilities will take account of the extended scope to include all

private, voluntary and independent sector agencies as set out in Working together 2013.

8.3.2 **The LSCB Performance Management Framework**

A key component of the LSCB Performance Management System is the 'Performance Management Framework' which collates data from across the partnership about safeguarding activity. Established in 2011 and refreshed to include measures from the national Children's Safeguarding Information Performance Framework, it is based on an 'Outcomes Based Accountability' approach, asking three questions: How much did we do?; How well did we do it?; Did it make a difference?

Within the framework are 4 scorecards which collate performance information about operational processes and the safeguarding of priority vulnerable groups of children and young people:

The child's journey through the safeguarding system

This reviews information about how the safeguarding system responds when concerns are identified and raised about vulnerable children and young people. It throws light on how children and young people become the subject of statutory intervention and the extent to which Early Help, preventative services are employed to reduce that need.

The restructured Children's Social Work Service Duty and Advice Team has had a significant impact on the nature and patterns of referrals from across the partnership. 2012/13 saw:

- A 6% increase in the number of requests for service (31,000 to 33,000), indicating that more conversations are taking place between agencies about how best to respond to children and young people about whom there are concerns
- Referrals accepted by Children's Social Work Service for consideration of statutory intervention has fallen from 14,000 in 2011/12 to 11,000 in 2012/13 and as a percentage of request for service made (46% to 34%), indicating that the conversations are resulting in improvements in the quality of referrals received and a refocusing on alternative, preventative approaches where appropriate.
- A reduction in the number of children and young people who are re-referred to Children's Social Work Service within a 12 month period (which may reflect the extent to which services were not provided 'at the right time') from 36% at the beginning of the year to 30% at its end. Although this latter figure remains high, and a cause for concern, the trend is clearly positive and expected to improve further in 2013/14. The Duty and Advice Team has demonstrated increasing consistency in decision making through a weekly multi-agency review meeting which considers contacts from partners which did not result in referrals being accepted.

Of the 11,000 referrals accepted by Children's Social Work Service, 1682 resulted in child abuse investigations and, following assessments, 1458 initial child protection conferences were held. Reviewing performance data about the efficiency of the this process

identifies that:

- The timeliness of core assessments within statutory guidance fluctuated throughout the year between 64 – 90%, representing an overall fall in performance compared with 2011/12.
- The timeliness of initial child protection conferences within statutory guidance also fluctuated throughout the year between 34 – 88%, although overall there was a significant improvement compared with 2011/12. A marked dip in performance occurred between December 2012 and January 2013 which coincided with a high level of staff sickness and a focus on the pilot to more fully engage children and young people in the conference process (above).

The number of Common Assessments initiated in 2012/13 (867) remains relatively low, albeit representing an 11% increase on the previous year. Conversations between partners and the Duty and Advice Team include consideration of when a Common Assessment may be appropriate. Between December 2012 and March 2013 advice was given that 471 children and young people (from 246 families) should be considered for a CAF, of which 52% have been progressed.

The provision and effectiveness of Early Help

The development of Early Help services is an essential part of the aspiration to reduce the need for statutory intervention by providing the 'right service at the right time and the partnership continues to make a significant investment in this approach. The Children's Services Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy underpins this commitment to tackle emerging problems as soon as possible by working with children, young people and their families in a restorative way that is supportive and empowering.

There are a number of components to the strategy:

- The embedding and further development of locality cluster working
- Maintaining Children's Centres in Leeds
- The establishment of Early Start Teams which bring Health Visitors and Children's Centre staff together (working closely with the Family Nurse Partnership) to provide joined up services for families from pre-birth to 5 years old. It is planned to create 4,500 places for 2 year olds by 2014.
- The implementation of a Top 100 methodology to identify children and families in localities who are vulnerable, have multiple needs and who require additional support from partners. Each family will have a shared assessment, a team with a shared intervention plan and a lead practitioner.
- De-escalation support from specialist intervention to less intensive based cluster care and support is being developed to reduce dependency on specialist services and avoid vulnerable children and young people failing to maintain the gains that such intervention can provide once it is withdrawn.

- The expansion of the Family Group Conferencing Service that allows families to consider the difficulties experienced by vulnerable children and be supported in finding ways to manage and improve the situation in a safe and appropriate manner before statutory intervention is considered.
- Increasing the number of 'conversations' between the Children Social Work Service Duty and Advice Team and professionals who have concerns about children and young people with a view to exploring, where safe and appropriate, preventative early help options.

The Leeds Youth Offending Services provides a good example of collaboration with partners to support Early Help Services:

- Working with young people at risk of offending who are referred from Children's Services, West Yorkshire Police and other partners. Between April and December 2012 the first time entry figure for the Youth Justice System in Leeds was 665 per 10,000 of the 10 – 17 year old population, which represents a 14% reduction on the previous year.
- Working closely with the Families First programme in the city, linking with Targeted service Leaders in each cluster and supporting the use of the Top 100 Methodology. Youth Offending staff operate as lead practitioners for families in a significant number of cases.

It is evident that much preventative multi-agency work is being undertaken through these services but it remains difficult to establish the full scale and scope of such work. Despite assurances given by Dr Mark Peel at the LSCB Annual Review Meeting in July 2012 that Leeds compared favourably with other cities, it is concerning that the number of multi-agency Common Assessments undertaken has not increased significantly over the year, particularly given the simplification of the process undertaken in 2011/12,. In December 2012 the LSCB hosted a series of safeguarding seminars for cluster leaders to consider the use of CAF in the City; which identified a number of factors:

- Barriers to progressing and embedding CAF:
 - Lack of staff confidence / competence across the partnership
 - Capacity in partner agencies
 - Inconsistent agency ownership / cluster engagement
 - Professional / Cultural attitudes which maintain a 'silo' approach
 - Tension between adult / family / child focused approaches
- Opportunities / Areas for Improvement:
 - To more effectively promote the benefits of CAF and the need for professional / cultural change
 - To ensure that strategic sign up by partners results in operational progress at practitioner and 1st line manager levels
 - To ensure that commissioning processes embed the requirement to engage, and lead, CAF processes
 - To provide a more sophisticated analysis of the 'CAF gap' to identify the likely number of CAFs that should be

- undertaken
- For Clusters to develop 'CAF Forums'
- To launch the newly developed 'Family CAF' with appropriate training

A clear challenge for 2013/14 is to capture and evaluate all the multi-agency Early Help activity being undertaken across the City; a task that will be helped by the introduction in the Autumn of a new Children's Services Electronic Recording System. The development and introduction of the single multi-agency assessment framework, protocols and processes across the whole safeguarding system (Working Together 2013) will provide an opportunity to review the continued centrality of CAF in these processes and to explore further the current uneven commitment to it at an operational level across the partnership.

Children and young people subject to a child protection plan

Children and young people are made subject to a child protection plan when it is assessed at a child protection conference that they have suffered or are likely to suffer 'significant harm.' Whilst the circumstances of each case is dealt with carefully and comprehensively, the overall number of children subject to a plan and a comparison with statistical neighbours can give an indication of the effectiveness of the safeguarding system as a whole (and in particular the efficacy of Early Help preventative services).

Following the Ofsted inspection in 2009, when concerns were raised that Leeds was not initiating a sufficient number of statutory child protection interventions, the number of children and young people subject to a child protection rose steadily from 511 to a peak in August 2011 of 1171. The introduction of the Strengthening Families approach helped to stabilize this rise and manage a gradual reduction in overall numbers to 870 in April 2012. During 2012/13 the numbers have steadily increased to 993 at the year end. This represents a rate of 59 per 10,000, which is a third higher than for statistical neighbours in 2011/12 (39 / 10,000) but is slightly less than for 'core cities' (64 / 10,000).

Work is being undertaken by the Children's Social Work Service and the Children's Services Integrated Safeguarding Unit to better understand the reasons for these trends. This includes reviewing de-escalation processes (from child protection plans to children in need plans) and the development of the new assessment process to include a second review point to consider whether safe alternatives to an initial child protection conference could be pursued.

Within the cohort of children and young people subject to plans are two groups requiring further investigation:

- The number who have been subject to plans for more than 2 years. This has fluctuated over the first 7 months of 2012/13 but has then risen from 29 to 56 by the year end and raises questions about the effectiveness of the plans in reducing the risks identified and whether alternative approaches should be considered.

- The number who have become the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time. This has risen steadily over 2012/13 from 153 in April 2012 to 217 in March 2013, a 42% increase. This raises questions not only about the effectiveness of the previous child protection plan and the sustainability of progress made but also about the decision to remove the child or young person from the previous plan.

The cases identified are being audited by the Integrated Safeguarding Unit to gain a better understanding of the issues involved and the implications for the system as a whole. It is already clear that many of them involve long term 'neglect' and children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting' (domestic violence, parental substance mis-use and parental mental health problems).

Children and Young People who are Looked After

The number of looked after children in Leeds had been steadily increasing since 2005, with the most significant rise coming between November 2009 and November 2010 when the numbers rose from 1370 to 1434. This placed significant pressure on the budgets of agencies working with looked after children. In addition there is a significant body of research highlighting that looked after children have poorer outcomes than other children and young people in the community and that reducing the numbers of looked after children and improving their outcomes requires a coordinated effort from agencies working with children, young people and families.

For these reasons, safely and appropriately reducing the numbers of children and young people who need to be 'looked after' is a priority for the partnership. Reducing the number of looked after children in Leeds have been accepted as one of the three 'obsessions' by the Children's Trust Board.

There has been a steady reduction in the number of children becoming looked after over the year. In March 2013 there were 1377 looked after which is a reduction of 98 children from the same period last year. This is an encouraging trend, although there is more progress to make as the current rate of 88.9 per 10,000 remains significantly higher than for statutory neighbours (74 / 10,000).

This progress has been made by a combination of:

- A 10% reduction in the number of receptions into care (the result of a more rigorous approach to exploring safe alternative options), with the average age of this group falling significantly (suggesting that for individual children 0 – 5 years old, intervention is being offered in a more timely and potentially effective manner).
- A 16% increase in the number leaving care (the result of improved permanency planning, with more children and young people being returned to their families and an increase in adoption and special guardianship orders).

Alongside these headline figures is evidence of that this group of vulnerable children and young people are being provided with high quality services:

- Improving placement stability. The proportion experiencing 3 or more moves in 2012/13 has reduced from 10% (151) to 7% (103).
- All have statutory reviews, with 98% being within statutory timescales and, on average 85% participate in those reviews.
- All have an allocated social worker.
- 94% have a health needs assessment (85% within statutory timescales) and a health plan
- 96% are up to date with their schedule of immunisations
- 80% under 1yr old and 92% over 1 yr old have had a dental check within the last year

An important area for development in 2013/14 will be to engage with the full range of private and voluntary children's homes and foster care agencies in Leeds to seek assurance that the children and young people in their care are appropriately safeguarded.

Children and Young People who go 'Missing' / at risk of Sexual Exploitation

In recent years there has been an increased appreciation of the vulnerability of young people who go missing from home or care and the link between this and the risk of becoming sexually exploited. The LSCB has identified these young people as a priority vulnerable group requiring a concerted and co-ordinated multi-agency response.

The term 'missing' refers to children and young people up to the age of 18 who have run away from their home or care placement or whose whereabouts is unknown. Many of these young people stay with friends or family members, but there are some who do not have access to these networks of support and end up in harmful situations such as sleeping rough or at risk of child sexual exploitation. The LSCB, in conjunction with partners in West Yorkshire has developed a protocol that applies to all children and young people that go absent without permission from their parents, carers, residential carers or foster carers. It defines the roles and responsibilities of the Police, Children's Social Care, and carers and sets out how return home interviews should be conducted.

During 2012/13 there were 1133 missing episodes in Leeds involving 455 children and young people. 54% of these were 11 – 15 yrs old and 40% were 16 – 18 yrs old.

Child sexual exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender,

intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Ascertaining the prevalence of child sexual exploitation has been identified nationally as a challenge. In Leeds systems are being developed to more accurately capture the scale of the problem locally. The data for the city which is currently available indicates that in 2012/13 103 children and young people were identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation and that this cohort was made up of:

- 14 looked after by the Local Authority
- 83% female, 17% male
- 67% were between the ages of 15 – 16 yrs old , with 12% under 10 years old
- 55% were White British, 13% White Other, 8% Dual Heritage, 5% Asian British.

The LSCB is developing a multi-agency strategy to tackle the issue of CSE in Leeds. A new post was developed through Leeds Children's Services to lead on CSE and Missing children and a lead officer was appointed in January 2013. West Yorkshire Protocols and Guidance for professionals were updated in March 2013. In order to better lead and co-ordinate a strategic approach a new LSCB sub group has been established, with links to various operational groups and partners.

Developments so far include:

- Raising awareness through training amongst professionals to help in the early identification of CSE.
- The development of a practitioner forum.
- Improving understanding by developing a comprehensive data-base to map the scale of the issue within Leeds.
- Piloting a new Risk Assessment Matrix
- Developing closer links with the Safer Leeds Partnership and Third Sector organisations.
- Considering how the victims of exploitation can be appropriately supported.
- Developing a Perpetrator Risk Assessment tool
- Planning the delivery of 'Missing' briefing sessions
- Ensuring all children and young people that go missing will have 'return to home' interview carried out.

8.3.3 **Evidence from Single and Multi-agency Auditing Activity.**

Having established a performance framework in 2011 which collates and enables the analysis of quantitative information about safeguarding activity (how many / how much / in what timescale did we complete safeguarding tasks etc) the LSCB initiated a Quality

Assurance and Audit programme in 2012 designed to provide much more information about the quality of the work being undertaken and its impact on outcomes for individual children and young people.

The LSCB multi-agency Quality Assurance and Audit Programme progressed 5 strands of work in 2012/13. Of these one was completed and two reported findings at the yearend:

Strand (1): The Effectiveness of Child Protection Plans

25 cases were audited by a pool of multi-agency auditors during 2012/13. From these 1 (4%) case was judged as good, 15 (60%) adequate and 9 (36%) inadequate. No child or young person was judged to be suffering or at risk of suffering immediate significant harm.

Areas of good practice identified include the following:

- Good attendance by agencies at conferences and core groups
- High level of support available
- Good professional communication
- High quality of reports provided for conferences
- Evidence of parents / carers being engaged in the process.

Nevertheless, the audit identified inconsistency in the overall quality in the planning, implementation and reviewing of child protection plans. Areas identified for improvement focus on the operation of multi-agency core groups and include:

- Child Protection Plans need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) in order to reduce the potential for drift and delay.
- Children, young people and families need to know exactly what is expected of them
- Members to be more effective in challenging the work and progress made by core groups
- Core groups to be more responsive to changing circumstances / insufficient progress in addressing identified risks and amend child protection plans accordingly
- The voice of the child to be more clearly included and evidenced.

The findings have been disseminated across the partnership and a process put in place for all core groups to review their practice in the light of them.

In response to emerging findings earlier in the year Leeds Community Healthcare set a target of 100% attendance at child protection

conferences for Health Visitors and School Nurses. In 2012/13 attendance was recorded at 97.5%.

The audit continues in 2013/14.

Strand 2: To receive the views of professionals involved in multi-agency child protection plans

In order to gain a greater understanding of the emerging findings of the Strand (1) audit, a pilot survey was carried out engaging a small number of professionals involved in the core groups audited. Practitioners stated that:

- Sufficient time was given to read and take in written reports provided for conferences
- Decisions and recommendations from the conferences are sent out within timescales
- Core groups meet at least every six weeks, or as agreed if sooner
- Core group minutes were not always recorded and sent out in a timely manner.

This survey will be repeated in 2013/14 following work undertaken by core groups to consider the findings of the Strand (1) audit.

Strand 5: To evaluate the effectiveness of revised care and control policies in Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres

This audit set out to evaluate the implementation of an action in response to a recommendation in a Serious case Review which had been completed in June 2010. The actions had included:

- Reviewing and revising the existing care and control policy
- Issuing a revised model policy (following consultation) to the Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres.

The Audit found that although a revised model policy had been produced and issued it did not meet statutory guidance.

Subsequently the model policy was further revised in order to fully meet statutory guidance and the 5 Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres required to adapt their own procedures accordingly. A follow up audit is to take place in 2013/14 to ensure that procedures are now fully compliant.

Although the circumstances of this case involved one agency, which is no longer in existence, the audit raised more general concerns about the robustness of processes used to ensure that agreed actions from Serious Case Reviews were completely implemented. All Partners were required to review their processes and provide assurance to the LSCB chair that they were fit for purpose and effective.

LSCB Chair Audit Activity

Over the course of 2012/13 the LSCB Chair has visited six partner agencies in order to review case files and discuss issues with staff.

Partner Agency Audits

The LSCB Quality Assurance and Audit Programme complements extensive auditing by partner agencies. For example:

Cafcass:

A national audit programme of closed cases found 83% to have met the required standards / good and none with any safeguarding concerns.

Early Start Service:

The Service has established an ongoing audit of case files undertaken by managers from different children's centres to provide assurance that recording meets the required standard.

NHS:

Leeds Community Healthcare have undertaken the following safeguarding related audits in 2012/13:

- Analysis of enquiries to the Safeguarding Team
- Quality of child protection supervision (which indicated 94% compliance with standards).
- SUDIC process 2008 – 2012
- Ongoing audit of assessments for statutory looked after reviews (35 per month)

Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust have undertaken an audit of cases where service users transfer between services and will be monitoring standards of record keeping in 2013/14.

Leeds Youth Offending Service:

The Service operates to Quality Assurance processes: a sample audit of cases is undertaken by managers on a quarterly basis and a questionnaire is completed on a sample of cases facilitating 360 degree feedback on from all involved, including the young person and their parent / carer.

Through the further development of the Leeds Framework for Learning and Improvement, the LSCB will be requesting partners to provide summaries of their audit findings and actions taken in 2013/14 in order to contribute to the overall understanding of the quality of safeguarding services across the partnership.

8.4 **Implementing Learning from Research into Practice**

An important part of the Leeds Improvement Journey is the harnessing of expertise, research findings and external challenge in order to ensure that services are designed and planned on a solid evidence base. There are a number of initiatives currently being facilitated through Children's Services.

In 2011 the LSCB and Children's Services jointly commissioned an updated review of processes and decisions made in response to requests for service and referrals made to the 'front door' duty system for children and young people and their families. Professor Thorpe's research identified a significant increase in investigative and assessment work undertaken by, the then, Children and Young People's Social Care in response to 'requests for service' and referrals from across the partnership. However, this increase in workload was not matched by a proportionate increase in the level of support services provided to children and young people and their families. Moreover, the research identified a number of procedural and professional issues in the operation of the Council's Contact Centre and Children's Services Duty Room.

In April 2012 a restructured Children's Social Work Service Duty and Advice Team was established which, during the course of the year, has already had a significant impact on patterns and quality of referrals. Further research is being commissioned in 2013/14 for Professor Thorpe to review the patterns and outcomes of domestic violence referrals.

In August 2011 a 'Strengthening Family' approach was introduced to child protection conferences with a focus on risk analysis, shared responsibility for the child protection planning process and timely improvement in outcomes for children and young people. Further investigation of aspects of child protection processes is being undertaken in 2013/14 and the approach is being considered for statutory reviews of children and young people who are looked after.

Work has been undertaken with Mark Friedman to embed his Outcomes Based Accountability approach to understanding and using performance data to plan service development and assess its impact on outcomes for children and young people. This has underpinned the production of the Children and Young People's Plan and the LSCB's own Performance Management System.

In May 2012 a more flexible and streamlined Common assessment framework was introduced following work with Dr Mark Peel of the University of Leicester. This allows partner agencies to fit elements of the assessment into their own 'in house' processes.

Professors Mike Stein and Nina Biehal (University of York) are working with the Children's Social Work Service to review the quality of care planning for children and young people who are 'looked after'. From this four ongoing work strands have been identified:

- Quality of assessment
- Kinship care and special guardianship
- Young people leaving care
- Permanence.

Complementing this work is a research project being undertaken by Emily Munro (Institute of Education) which is reviewing practice in regard to care leavers and will report in September 2013. This work links with issues identified through Local Lessons Reviews undertaken by the LSCB and the challenge accepted by the Children's Trust Board 'to develop and co-ordinate improved services for vulnerable 16 – 21 year olds'.

In addition to academic input Children's services have engaged leading practitioners from the UK and abroad to advise, support and challenge the development of the following:

- Family Group Conferencing Service
- Children's Services 'Front Door' arrangements
- Fostering policies and procedures
- Performance management and Quality Assurance functions.

8.5 Summary and Whole System Analysis

Section (8) of this report clearly outlines the breadth and depth of work and initiatives being undertaken to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people in Leeds. Engaging children and young people about safeguarding matters and their own care is being progressed and good use is being made of external expertise to shape the planning and development of services. Significant service restructuring has and is taking place to respond to the changing circumstances of the public sector and to promote more effective ways of working with children, young people and their families. More quantitative and qualitative information is being collated to help analyse:

- Where progress is being made
- What outcomes are being achieved
- What difference is this making

- Where more improvement is required
- What requires further investigation and understanding.

For the LSCB, in discharging its responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding activity in the city, a series of questions must be answered:

1) Are we doing the right things?

Whilst the answer to this rests ultimately on whether outcomes for children and young people improve consistently over time, there are positive indications in the development of:

- A clear, coherent strategic direction since 2009 which is focused on increasing the availability and effectiveness of Early Help preventative services and reducing the need for statutory intervention. This is formalized in the Children and Young People's Plan and supported through the challenges from the LSCB to 'rebalance the safeguarding system'.
- A shared partnership culture underpinned by a restorative approach to working with children, young people and their families that seeks to 'never do nothing' and to provide the right service at the right time with 'high support and high challenge'.

2) Are we making sufficient progress?

There is evidence of good progress being made in the aims and objectives we have set ourselves in:

- The reduction in the number of children and young people who need to be looked after
- The quality of services being provided for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority
- The establishment of revised Children's Services 'Front Door' arrangements which have supported:
 - An increase in conversations between partners about how best to respond to children and young people about whom concerns have been raised
 - A reduction in the number of referrals accepted by Children's Social Work Service
 - An improved understanding of the nature and scale of patterns of domestic violence across the city
- Continuing the investment in and co-ordination of Early Help services.

3) What are the emerging challenges?

A greater understanding is required of:

- The trends and composition of the number of children and young people who are subject to child protection plans
- The full nature and extent of multi-agency Early Help and preventative activity being undertaken
- How the development of a single assessment framework across the partnership and the continuum of 'risk' and 'need' can enhance the planning of Early Help interventions

Areas identified for improvement include:

- The timeliness of child protection processes
- The effectiveness of child protection plans
- The provision of services for children and young people at risk of or suffering sexual exploitation

Areas identified for development include:

- The agreement to a single assessment framework and process which is robust and straightforward to use
- The updating of the Leeds 'Think family Protocol' to improve multi-agency responses to children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting'.
- The exploration of a partnership approach to establishing a Young People's Service (16 – 25 yrs) that would cater for vulnerable young people, including care leavers.

The issues identified in this sub section have contributed to the development of challenges for the LSCB and Children's Trust Board for 2013/14.

4) Are we managing risk appropriately and safely?

This is a crucial factor at all times; but particularly so during a period of 'whole system re-orientation' as is currently the circumstances in Leeds. It is important that the LSCB is able to be satisfied that risk is being managed safely and appropriately in individual cases.

The evidence includes:

- The reduction in the number of looked after children and young people is gradual and is being actively managed. The reduction is due to a combination of fewer receptions into care (with alternative, more appropriate, options being rigorously explored) and improved permanency planning enabling more to leave.
- Although the number and make-up of the cohort of children and young people who are subject to child protection plans requires further investigation and improvements are required in the effectiveness of plans, it is notable that the LSCB audit

- confirmed the Ofsted findings of 2011 that children and young people are not being left in unsafe situations.
- Concerns remain about the high rate of re-referral to Children's Social Work Services with the implication that some children and young people may not be receiving a timely and effective response. Nevertheless, the introduction of the new Duty and Advice Team has impacted positively on these figures and the trend is expected to continue in 2013/14 as the new arrangements bed in.
- Considerable audit and review activity is being undertaken to better understand the working of the safeguarding system as a whole and the performance of its component parts.

9.0 Review of Challenges to the Children's Trust Board for 2012/13

In the presentation of the Annual Report in June 2012 the LSCB set a series of challenges to the Children's Trust Board for 2012/13. Progress against these challenges is considered here:

(1) To embed changes being implemented to the safeguarding system and be able to evidence the development of a more 'balanced' system (towards earlier intervention) with improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

The Children's Trust Board wants to ensure that any vulnerable child in Leeds receives the right support at the right time in the right way. The Board has maintained a focus on develop a range of services that enable interventions to take place early in the life of a problem.

The Board has supported the roll out of Targeted Service Leaders in all clusters. As a result more vulnerable children and families are having their needs met through joined up local services. Referrals to social care are reducing. Local services are becoming more confident and able to meet needs locally. Support through the Common Assessment Framework meets the majority of needs. Feedback from parents and carers is very positive.

Children's Centres and health visiting services have merged to create the 'Early Start' service to create a more joined up support for families. The Early Start Centres provide strong support for young children and their families. 82% of Leeds' Children's Centres are rated as good or outstanding.

The Board has continued to support improvements to the Children's Social Work Service 'Front Door'. The development of a dedicated phone line for professionals, which is answered by a qualified and experienced social worker has resulted in a better referral processes and better referrals. As a result the number of 'contacts' that is conversations between professionals about children have increased. However the number of these conversations that require a referral to the Children's Social Work Service has decreased. The number of referrals receiving an initial assessment and the number of children receiving a service following an initial assessment have increased. This indicates that the service is now more focused on those children who require the support of a social work practitioner. All referrals

are quality assured weekly by a multi-agency group of senior officers. External academic researchers and local partners have provided positive feedback on our new arrangements for managing referrals to social work services. Decision-making is improved, supported by clearer referrals, with more referrals progressing to assessments.

(2) To ensure that high quality services are provided to C&YP within the statutory system (C&YP subject to CP Plans and LAC)

Looked after children are one of the Children's Trust Boards three obsessions. The Board receives regular reports from the Children's Social Work Service on progress on safely and appropriately reducing the number of looked after children. The report provides an overview of the actions taken by the Children's Social Work Service and key partners to reduce the need for children to become looked after through early intervention and effective safeguarding services and the quality of care provided to children looked after by Leeds City Council.

The Board received the last report in May 2013. This highlighted that all looked after children and children subject to a child protection plan are allocated to a qualified social worker and that robust arrangements are in place through the Integrated Safeguarding Unit to provide robust challenge and support on plans for these children.

The Board receives regular performance reports on safeguarding and looked after children's services. These reports are presented to the Board by the Director and Deputy Director of Children's Services who are questioned about the story behind the figures.

In February Children's Services Independent Reviewing Officer Service was subject to an external review by Ofsted. The feedback from inspectors was positive and no cases were referred back to the service. Positive feedback was also received from inspectors who piloted some of the tools for the new inspection framework for looked after children.

(3) To ensure that risk is appropriately considered as services delivery is developed in response to the Munro Review of Child Protection, so that children's safety is not jeopardised as a result.

The Board receives regular reports from the Director of Children's Services. The Board has been informed of the work being undertaken with Professors Mike Stein and Nina Beihal from York University to improve the quality of assessment and care planning. This work will support the implementation of the new social work recording system *frameworki*. The implementation of the system is also being monitored by the Board.

(4) To lead the development within partner agencies of complementary quality assurance frameworks consistent with the 'The

Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework' published by the Government in June 2012.

The Board receives regular performance information. This has been informed by the The Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework'.

(5) To ensure that the potential risks to safe practice, such as changes to how Health Services are provided are implemented, are kept under consideration.

The CTB has responded to the changes in health services by reviewing the membership of the Boards. A representative from the CCGs has been attending CTB since Nov 2012 and the CTB formally agreed two places for CCG representative at the meeting on 10 May 2013. The representatives are Jane Mischenko and Dr Helen Hayward.

Public Health colleagues are now co-located with Children's Services colleagues in Merrion House. This arrangement will enhance current partnership working relationships and enable new relationships to be developed.

In December 2012 the Health and Wellbeing Board Chair attended the CTB to present the draft H&WB Strategy for information and comment and a report outlining the engagement process. The Strategy was formally adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board in May 2013. The Chair of the CTB and the Director of Children's Services are members of the Health and Wellbeing Board. We are currently planning a joint event of both Boards to be held in the Autumn 2013.

Partners are willing to make changes together and explore new ways of working. This has been demonstrated by the new 'front door' arrangements at social care offices, where health and police professionals work alongside social care officers and are available to give advice and support to service users and professionals

10.0 **Assessment of the Extent to which LSCB Functions are being Effectively Discharged**

This section of the Report reviews the way in which the LSCB has carried out its functions and responsibilities during the year and met its statutory requirements. It begins with a summary of the outcomes from the Annual Review Meeting held in July 2012 before considering:

- How the LSCB has undertaken its work
- How it has promoted a shared culture of continuous improvement
- How effective it has been

10.1 LSCB Annual Review July 2012

The Annual Review offers an opportunity for the Board to step outside of its busy schedule of business meetings in order to consider the findings of the Annual Report Evaluating the Effectiveness of Safeguarding in Leeds for the previous year and to reflect on how well it is working to provide strategic leadership for the partnership. The LSCB Annual Review undertaken in July 2012 included:

A self-assessment exercise

This considered:

- Governance and Mandate, with a consensus that there is clarity in this area through documentation and on-going discussion.
- Infrastructure and Capacity:
 - The Business Support Unit and sub group structure viewed as working effectively.
 - There is a positive attitude to implementation of the implications of the revised 'Working Together' framework
 - Issues raised re admin support to the Child death Overview Panel have been included in current business planning.
 - Concerns were raised about sustaining LSCB budget contributions in the future.
 - Recognition was given of the progress made in further developing the Quality assurance framework, and the importance of continuing to prioritise this.
- Delivery and Outputs:
 - The positive performance of the Training Programme.
 - There are high aspirations for the different components of the communications strategy (includes engagement of children and appointment of lay members).
 - Recognition was given of improved Serious case Review processes.
 - There is an emphasis on the importance of progressing the Audit strategy in order to provide evidence of quality of services
- Outcomes:
 - Acknowledgement was given of major changes in processes but a continuing lack of evidence of the impact on individual children. This needs to be seen as a priority.

A 360° Review of the LSCB Chair:

- There was a unanimous view that the Chair carries out the role responsibilities effectively.
- Members appreciate the Chair's experience, her clear leadership and inclusivity.
- Board members are positive about the Chair's style of leadership.
- All felt the Chair is approachable and that 1-1 meetings arranged when she took up her post had been very helpful in securing engagement and there would be value in repeating these at intervals.
- It was suggested that an area for increased attention was the time and focus that the business of the LSCB gets at the CTB and other strategic forums.

A review of the functioning of the Board identified:

- Successes:
 - The development of the Performance Management System (processes, structure and framework)
 - The Board is becoming more closely connected to practice, but needs further extending to include the 'front line', children, young people and families.
 - The Business Unit is better resourced
 - The sub group structure is more effective.
- Challenges:
 - The development of the Communications Strategy for a wider variety of audiences.
 - Promoting wider ownership of the CAF process.
 - Ensuring we are focusing on the right 'vulnerable groups' of C&YP.
 - Participation and engagement of C&YP.
 - Promoting a professional culture across the partnership of 'high support and high challenge.'
 - Clarity about our expectations of Lay Members.
 - Ensuring the right balance of quality / quantity of paperwork received by the Board.
 - The adequate representation of all sectors across the partnership.
 - Maintaining timely progress against Business Plan objectives and tasks.
 - Reviewing funding arrangements for 2013/14 and beyond.

10.1.4 Following the LSCB Annual Review in July 2012 the following actions were implemented:

- The LSCB Chair has held an additional round of 1:1 appraisal meetings with Board Members
- A funding and Value for Money Review was undertaken to inform future financial planning, from which the need to review Business Unit admin arrangements was identified
- A programme of reporting to strategic forums has been initiated
- Amendments and additions to the LSCB Business Plan 2012/13 were made
- Planning was undertaken to establish an 'Education Forum' which will be fully operational in 2013/14
- A tracker system has been introduced to ensure the timely progression of actions agreed at Board meetings.

10.2 How the LSCB has undertaken its work

The LSCB, in meeting its statutory requirements and progressing an ambitious business plan needs to be well organised and the efforts of its members effectively co-ordinated. This section considers how this has been undertaken in 2012/13.

10.2.1 Membership and Meetings

During 2012/13 there have been 6 Board meetings and 6 meetings of the Executive Group. The LSCB Annual Review Meeting took place in July 2012 in order to sign off the Annual Report and review the effectiveness of LSCB structures and ways of working. A workshop was held in December 2012 to consider and develop proposals for the LSCB Voice and Influence Strategy as part of the Board improving its links with the wider community.

Attendance at LSCB Board meetings has averaged at 77% which is an increase from the 2011/12 average of 71%.

New members to the Board have an induction session and all members undergo an annual appraisal session with the LSCB Chair. During 2012/13 a process was undertaken to recruit and select two Lay Members, who subsequently took up post at the Board meeting on 17 May 2013.

The work of the LSCB is largely undertaken through the sub / reference / task group structure. Sub, reference and task groups have met on a regular basis throughout the year to monitor and progress their components of the Business Plan. Summaries of work undertaken and decisions made are provided for each Board meeting. A decision was made in the Autumn 2012 to consolidate the strategic overview of work to address Child Sexual Exploitation by creating a formal sub group of the LSCB.

In order to directly evaluate the effectiveness of the sub / task / reference group structure and the support provided to it from the Business Support Unit, chairs and vice chairs were asked to complete a short questionnaire evaluating the support the groups received. Returns provided a picture across all of the LSCB constituent groups indicating that the support was viewed in very positive light. Overall the Business Unit was viewed as providing value for money.

10.2.2 **Supporting the work of the Board**

Progressing the work plan of the LSCB is heavily reliant on the input of staff from all partner agencies through sub groups, the training pool, undertaking Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews and engagement in the Quality assurance and Audit programme. The commitment shown by agencies and their staff is testament to the seriousness with which the LSCB is viewed and the shared intent across the partnership to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people.

A Funding and Value for Money Review identified the need to maintain the current level of Base Budget expenditure for the LSCB and requested partners to increase their contributions to ensure 'in year' financial viability and maintain an appropriate level of strategic reserve. A revised funding formula was agreed amongst existing contributing partners to ensure that the agreed expenditure for the Base Budget of £521,000 was fully funded for 2013/14 and that a small commissioning budget would be available to be used to address emerging themes and challenges. Out-turn figures at the end of March 2013 indicated that an in year shortfall in funding of £21,000 was mitigated by an underspend of £32,000. This enabled a strategic reserve of £50,000 to be carried forward into 2013/14 and a commissioning budget to be established of £35,000. A financial statement is provided in appendix 4.

An outline review of Business Unit administration identified the need for increased flexibility within a clearer management structure. A subsequent detailed review has been initiated and will report in 2013/14.

10.2.3 **Development of Effective partnership working:**

Progress on the challenges set for 2011/12 and emerging Challenges for 2012/13 from the LSCB Annual Review Process were presented to and accepted by the Children's Trust Board in June 2012, with the final Annual Report being received in September. The LSCB Chair or her representative has attended all CTB meetings in 2012/13, ensuring an input into the monitoring of the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan and the refreshing of the Plan for 2013/14. The Annual Report was presented to:

- The LA Chief Executive through the LA Corporate Leadership Team
- The Children and Families Scrutiny Board.
- The Assistant Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police.

Liaison during 2012/13 with the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Partnership (Safer Leeds) culminated in a joint Board development session in June 2013 from which common work streams have been identified to be progressed in 2013/14.

In addition to work undertaken in Leeds, the Board has been involved with regional initiatives through Regional LSCB Chairs and Managers meetings. A particular focus in 2012/13 has been to ensure consistency in approach to addressing children and young people who are at risk, or suffering, Sexual Exploitation. All five LSCBs in West Yorkshire are supporting a community campaign led by West Yorkshire Police in the summer of 2013 to raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Leeds LSCB continues to be an active member of the West Yorkshire Consortium, which ensures a common set of overarching multi-agency safeguarding procedures is available for practitioners and managers across the region. A particular challenge for 2013/14 will be ensuring regional consistency in the response to Working Together 2013.

Examples of partnership working between partner agencies

Leeds Community Health Care and Children's Services (Education) have collaborated to develop a supervision pathway for the Early Start Service.

Looked After Children Nurses are collaborating with Children's Rights Workers to establish the health information young people want to receive within their Leaving Care Health Needs Assessment.

Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust has delivered briefings to staff on their engagement with revised Common Assessment processes and ratified the MARAC information sharing agreement.

Wetherby Young Offender Institution operates a multi-agency approach to provide interventions for young people to address offending behaviour.

Leeds Youth Offending Service's comprehensive set of safeguarding arrangements is based on working in partnership with other statutory and non-statutory bodies. Central to these are:

- Multi-agency risk management panels to review young people assessed as highly vulnerable or posing a serious risk of harm to others and to ensure appropriate interventions are in place.
- An early intervention project involving the co-location of staff in a single police custody suite at Stainbeck Police Station for young people arrested in Leeds. This allows for joint decision making regarding bail, charge and diversion, liaison with

- appropriate agencies regarding immediate welfare needs and the sharing of information around risk or safeguarding concerns.
- The integration of services at a neighbourhood level to contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan objectives of reducing the number requiring to be 'looked after', those not in education, employment or training and improving attendance at school.
- Collaboration with the Probation Trust to improve the transition process for young people moving from child to adult services.

Development of multi-agency Front Door Arrangements.

Representatives from Health and West Yorkshire Police are engaged in a pilot to explore the potential for co-location of staff within the Children's Social Work Service Duty and Advice Team. Representatives are involved in the weekly meetings to review referrals and decisions made about the most appropriate response (Statutory Intervention / Early Help Services).

Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership

The Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership was re-established in January 2013 in order to provide a clear strategic overview of services to this vulnerable group to ensure they contribute to reducing vulnerability, improving outcomes and respond flexibly to the changing needs of looked after children and young people and care leavers. Five sub groups are being established:

- Education, Employment and Training
- Children 0 -5 entering care
- Looked after children and young people and offending
- Care Leavers
- Health Commissioning

LSCB multi-agency training pool

The LSCB continues to have a substantial and well resourced multi-agency training pool to support the delivery of its safeguarding training programme. At the end of 2012/13 there were 92 regular trainers in the pool.

10.2.4 Maintaining focus on the Strategic Plan and Carrying Out the Annual Business Plan

Progress on the objectives and tasks within the LSCB Business Plan are monitored through Executive Group meetings and reported on a regular basis to the Board. At year end 82% of tasks had been completed or were being progressed within timescale and 18%, whilst subject to delays, were being progressed. A significant contributory factor to delays incurred was the late publication of updated

guidance in Working Together in March 2013. A review of progress against the Business Plan was conducted at the end of 2012/13 with consideration given to which outstanding / on-going tasks should be included in work planning for 2013/14. Work continued on on-going tasks and identified priorities during the first quarter of 2013/14 while the Business Plan for the year was developed to be accepted and signed off at the Annual Review Meeting.

10.2.5 **Development of Effective Inter-Agency Procedures**

An important contribution to the first of the LSCB's objectives; to co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, is made through the development of policies and procedures for use by professionals across the partnership. The Policy and Procedures sub group leads this work, in collaboration with the West Yorkshire Consortium, which ensures that a set of consistent regional procedures are maintained. This is particularly important for partners who work across the region and for working with vulnerable children and young people who move from area to area.

The following policies and procedures have been developed during 2012/13:

- Dispute resolution procedure
- Updating procedures for responding to children and young people who go missing / are at risk of sexual exploitation
- Policy for out of hours forensic medical examinations
- Protocol for police attendance at child protection conferences
- Suicide Prevention Strategy – including a Self Harm and Suicide booklet for professionals.

Work has been undertaken with the Children's Trust Board Workforce Reform sub group to develop

- A common set of professional values, attitudes and behaviours to support a restorative approach to working with children, young people and their families
- Common principles for supervision across the partnership

Challenges for 2013/14 include:

- Developing local procedures in the light of Working Together 2013 that are consistent with regional procedures.
- Revising and re-launching the Think Family Protocol.

10.2.6 Holding partners to account for safeguarding arrangements and practice

Ensuring the effectiveness of multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of C&YP is the second of the LSCB core functions. This requires the LSCB to have a comprehensive overview of the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of multi-agency practice. This is provided through the LSCB Performance Management System, which is made up of three components:

- 1) A Performance Management Framework based on the strategic priorities of the Board and including measures from the national Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework.
- 2) A Quality Assurance and Audit Programme
- 3) Monitoring partner compliance with the statutory requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place.

The Performance Management sub group receives and collates performance information on a quarterly basis, providing a report to the LSCB which identifies trends, analyses progress and highlights areas that require further investigation. Findings from audits are presented to the LSCB as they are completed, or annually for those which are on-going.

An Annual Performance Report, collating and analysing information from all three components of the Performance Management System is presented to the LSCB and Children's Trust Board in June of each year, forming the basis for the Annual Report and identifying emerging challenges for both boards.

The Performance Management Framework, established in 2011 and refreshed for 2012/13 comprises 8 score cards: 3 LSCB Strategic Priorities, 1 Business priority, 1 tracking the journey of a child through the safeguarding system and 3 monitoring performance and outcomes for 3 priority vulnerable groups (children & young people who are subject to child protection plans / 'looked after' / missing / at risk of sexual exploitation).

The LSCB multi-agency Quality Assurance and Audit programme has 6 strands of work. In 2012/13 five were initiated and 1 has been completed:

- Strand 1- To quality assure and audit the impact and outcomes for children and young people subject to child protection plans
- Strand 2 – To receive the views of professionals involved in child protection plan processes.
- Strand 3 - To quality assure and audit the impact and outcomes of Child Care Plans for Looked After Children, including the quality of participation in LAC Reviews.
- Strand 4 - To audit the effectiveness of the practice against policy on safeguarding outcomes for the children of teenage parents who have been referred to the Leeds Teenage and Pregnancy Pathway.

- Stand 5 - The effectiveness of revised care and control policies in Special Inclusion Learning Centres (SILCs)
- Strand 6 -To audit the extent to which the views of children and families inform agencies' service development regarding the safeguarding and promotion of children and young people's welfare.

A programme of self-assessment audits involving 21 Statutory, 31 Third Sector partners and 211 schools and the Leeds City College has been undertaken to evaluate compliance with s(11) and s(175) safeguarding requirements. A total of 65 agencies were asked to complete s(11) audits. There was a 100% return from statutory agencies and 78% from those in the Third sector. Ensuring that all agencies have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place is an important requirement of Working Together 2013 and will underline the LSCB's work in this area in 2013/14.

The development and further implementation of the LSCB Performance Management System has provided a more comprehensive and informed overview of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, processes and practice through 2012/13. This has enabled monitoring of the implementation of the 'Children and Young People are safe from harm outcome of the CYPP and the Children's Trust Board's 'obsession' to reduce the number of C&YP who need to be in care. Overall assurance has been received that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place across the partnership and success is evident in the plan to 'rebalance' the safeguarding system away from a focus on statutory intervention to a more preventative, Early Help approach.

The LSCB has agreed to broaden and increase the pace of its Quality Assurance and Audit Programme in 2013/14, whilst continuing to increase the contributions of data from partners to further enhance the Performance Management Framework.

10.3 **Promoting a shared culture of Continuous Improvement**

The Vision, Values and Principles set out in section 5 (above) require the LSCB to actively lead the partnership in identifying areas of safeguarding working and practice that need to be improved and to ensure that action is taken as a result.

Following the consultation exercise for the revision of Working Together, the LSCB developed an outline Framework for Learning and Improvement in November 2012 (see appendix 5). It is designed to underpin and facilitate the development of a culture of continuous improvement involving the whole partnership. Its key elements are:

- A partnership approach to learning and improving
- Transparency and public accountability
- Responsibilities of partners
- Learning methodologies
- Planning and implementing improvements

- Disseminating lessons learnt and changes required
- Monitoring the impact of changes made.

The framework is being used to identify how learning is being used and the impact it is having on improving multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people.

The development of a clear understanding of partner responsibilities will be undertaken at the Annual Review Meeting in July 2013 as part of the strategy for the LSCB to 'step up a gear' in 2013/14.

10.3.1 **Responding to Child Deaths**

The death of any child is tragic with far reaching consequences for families and friends. The LSCB has a responsibility to ensure that the circumstances of all deaths are carefully considered in order to identify any lessons that may contribute to reducing similar deaths occurring in the future.

The Child Death Overview Panel

The Panel reviews the deaths of all Leeds Children. Its Annual Report (2012/13) is attached as appendix 6.

Since its implementation in April 2008 the Panel has reviewed 228 child deaths (74% of the total number of deaths). This compares favourably with the national rate of 71% for this period.

Themes emerging from 2012/13 include:

- Two thirds of deaths involve babies under 1 year old
- Babies of African and Asian ethnicity are more vulnerable to early deaths (in line with national findings)
- For young babies the majority of deaths relate to complications of pregnancy and child birth and the data highlights known risk factors (eg smoking in pregnancy and the higher risk for twin pregnancies).
- 11 babies died unexpectedly in their sleep, 8 of whom were sharing beds / sofas with an adult. Frequently smoking, alcohol or drugs were also present.
- Among the older age range, children of Pakistani origin are significantly over represented, with the biggest single category being 'chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies.' The report highlights the importance of 'cousin marriage' which contributes to around 8% of child deaths in Leeds.
- 13 children and young people died in road traffic accidents.

The Annual Report also reviewed progress against recommendations made in previous years. Of 16 recommendations, 11 have been implemented with significant progress made in the remaining 5. Further recommendations are made in the current report including addressing:

- Co-sleeping
- Support for evolving national policy on minimum alcohol pricing
- Reducing smoking in pregnancy
- Raising awareness of the relationship between cousin marriage and genetic disorders

Responding to deaths which are unexpected

Where the death of a child is unexpected (not anticipated as a significant possibility 24 hours earlier) a multi-agency response is co-ordinated by a team in Leeds Community Health to investigate the circumstances of the death and to provide support to the bereaved family. The Sudden Unexpected Death In Childhood Annual Report (June 2011 – May 2012) highlighted that:

- 74% of cases received a home visit from the rapid response team
- 52% of these visits were within 24 hours (the current contract does not cover weekends)
- 31% of the cases were concluded within the 12 week recommended time frame. Delays are often experienced in receiving the final post mortem report.

A number of recommendations for action were made:

- To ensure the team is provided with adequate support through supervision
- To review the protocol and establish a steering group
- To ensure that the final post mortem report is available before the assessment is undertaken at 12 weeks
- To explore the possibility of extending the availability of the team to weekends and Bank Holidays
- To consult with professionals involved in the process to determine their views and to consider a similar piece of work with families.

An Independent Review of Sudden Unexpected Death In Childhood arrangements was undertaken in 2012/13, identifying a number of areas for improvement, including:

- Operational Practice
- Profiling and networking
- Policies, Procedures and Protocols
- Partnership working and LSCB leadership
- Involvement and support of parents (including signposting bereavement services)
- Monitoring performance and effectiveness

Recommendations from the Review have been accepted and actions included in work planning for the LSCB in 2013/4.

10.3.2 **Undertaking Serious Case Reviews**

Serious child care incidents where abuse or neglect is known or suspected or where there are concerns about the way in which agencies worked together require careful consideration to ensure accountability for practice and to identify lessons that could help improve services for children and young people in the future.

In 2012/13 the Executive Group, sitting as the standing SCR subcommittee, has considered and made recommendations to the LSCB chair as to whether the circumstances of 6 Serious Child Care Incidents that were notified to Ofsted met the criteria for undertaking a Serious Case Review. In the light of these recommendations the Chair made the following decisions:

- 3 Local Learning Lessons Reviews were initiated
- 1 Single Agency Review was commissioned
- 1 resulted in no further action being taken
- 1 remains outstanding; awaiting further action.

During 2012/13 3 Local Learning Lessons and 2 Single Agency Reviews were monitored to completion, generating recommendations for the agencies involved and the partnership as a whole. The subsequent action plans are being monitored through the Business Support Unit and updates on progress are provided regularly to the subcommittee.

Three previously completed Serious Case Reviews have been published on the LSCB website.

As the revised Working Together was not published until March 2013 it was not possible to amend local Serious Case Review processes and procedures within 2012/13, although piloting different methodologies through Local Learning Lessons Reviews ensured that planning for changes commenced. Revising these processes is a priority in the Business Plan for 2013/14.

The subcommittee has refined its decision making processes to ensure that proportionate responses are made to serious child care incidents which seeks to capture key learning in a timely and effective way. A better 'grip' has been established on monitoring the progress of reviews and on the implementation of action plans. The sub group has requested that the Performance Management sub group follow up its audit of the embedding of action plans from a previous Serious case review with the inclusion of an annual such audit as part of the Quality Assurance and Audit programme.

10.3.3 **Communicating and Raising Awareness**

A central part of the leadership role of the LSCB is to ensure that key safeguarding messages and emerging lessons from its activity is disseminated quickly and effectively across the partnership so that front-line staff can act on them and develop their practice accordingly.

The newly established Communications and Engagement task group has implemented and progressed the LSCB Communications Strategy through:

- The publication of 3 Serious case reviews on the LSCB website and the development of a media handling strategy for the partnership for each of them.
- Supporting the LSCB Chair in developing media handling strategies for serious child care incidents.
- The introduction of an e-bulletin as a method of disseminating messages from the LSCB quickly and efficiently across the partnership.
- Progressing the agreement of a Voice and Influence Strategy for the LSCB and then liaising with the Leeds City Council Voice and Influence Team and Leeds City College.
- Providing feedback to West Yorkshire Police in their development of a public campaign for 2013/14 to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation.

There have been unforeseen delays in procuring a new, more interactive website for the LSCB. These have now been resolved and the process is going ahead in 2013/14. The new website is viewed as crucial in enabling the LSCB to be a more effective communicator of

key safeguarding messages across the partnership and the wider community.

Regular Third Sector reference group meetings and the link with the Young Lives Leeds Forum have helped to maintain engagement and support of agencies across the sector around safeguarding issues. The group supports:

- The contribution the sector makes to the LSCB Trainers Pool and the delivery of the multi-agency training programme.
- Agencies undertaking s(11) 'duty to safeguard' audits
- Developing relationships with sports organisations
- Input into the work of other LSCB sub groups (Policy and Procedure sub group and the Front Door Reference Group)

There is a recognition that the reference group only engages with a small fraction of the Third Sector agencies in Leeds and a review of functioning is being undertaken in 2013/14 to address how this can be more effectively undertaken. Factors already identified include:

- The commissioning of the new LSCB website
- Work with a local university to identify umbrella organisations that will facilitate improved access to faith groups.

10.3.4 **Assessment of Single and Multi-Agency Training**

Ensuring that the workforce and volunteers across the partnership are suitably knowledgeable and competent in undertaking safeguarding tasks is a significant contributory factor in children and young people receiving timely, high quality effective services that keep them safe and improve outcomes for them. Learning and Development / training events are central to developing skills, ensuring up to date knowledge of policies, procedures and guidance, and incorporating lessons learnt from reviews and audits into practice.

The Learning and Development sub group presented its Annual Review to the LSCB in May 2013. It highlighted that in 2012/13:

- The LSCB safeguarding training programme had delivered
 - 118 training sessions with 2302 participants
 - A series of city wide and regional events:
 - § Safeguarding seminars for cluster leaders
 - § City wide Conference
 - § Yorkshire and Humberside regional conference
 - § Two West Yorkshire master classes

- Evaluations of the training continued to be positive:
 - 90% of responses received at the end of sessions indicated that the training had been a positive and useful experience
 - Post course impact evaluations (3 months after the event), although with a lower response rate, indicated that 76% felt that there had been a positive impact on their practice.

Alongside evaluations from participants, quality assurance is maintained by reviewing the content of partner agency level 1 safeguarding training and will be augmented in 2013/14 by a pilot of direct observation of the delivery of sessions within the LSCB programme.

Examples of safeguarding training delivered by partner agencies

Early Start Sector:

An evaluation of 569 responses from the children's centre workforce indicated a significant impact on practice from attending safeguarding training, identifying improved confidence in the recognition of abuse and neglect and highlighting the need for further training on parental substance mis-use and mental health problems.

Education:

5,232 education staff from 179 establishments and 415 staff from children's centres accessed safeguarding training from the Education and Early Start Team. Leeds City College uses a matrix to set out mandatory and recommended training for all staff and governors.

NHS:

Leeds Community Healthcare has developed a safeguarding training strategy to identify mandatory training for staff in contact with adults / children at risk. Compliance with a requirement for attending multi-agency safeguarding training (Level 1 & 2) is currently 87% (with a target set for 90% in 2013/14).

Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust are promoting basic safeguarding training for staff to improve upon the current uptake of 69%.

Leeds Youth Offending Service:

The Service currently has Investors in People status and is committed to an in house training programme. It commissions a small

number of specialist courses (in 2012/13 this included Family Group Conferencing, adolescent to parent violence, young women affected by sexual exploitation and gangs).

West Yorkshire Police:

The newly formed Safeguarding Central Governance Unit is responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate number of appropriately trained and accredited personnel in the area of child abuse investigation and management of registered sexual offenders.

All police officers receive basis child safeguarding training aimed at recognizing signs of abuse, vulnerability and awareness of interventions available to support children and young people.

Cafcass:

The Service has a mandatory core training programme supplemented by themed local area workshops. Uptake of LSCB multi-agency training is identified as a priority for 2013/14.

10.3.5 **Summary of lessons learnt, actions taken and impact on outcomes**

Lessons that may help to improve the quality of response to, and practice with, children and young people arise from across the whole of the work undertaken by the LSCB. In recent years there has been a recognition that identifying lessons learnt is only the start of a process that should result in improvements to practice and outcomes for children and young people. This typically involves the production of action plans, whose implementation must be monitored, followed by checks to ensure that changes have been embedded into practice and then an evaluation undertaken of the impact on children and young people.

The LSCB is developing its Framework for Learning and Improvement to capture key learning and summarise the impact that this has had on services for children and young people to ensure that a focus is maintained on 'making a difference'. The Summary Framework is attached (as appendix 7) and asks 3 questions:

- What lessons have we learnt?
- What responses / actions did we take?
- What impact did these have on:
 - Practice
 - Multi-agency working
 - Outcomes for children and young people.

Examples lessons identified and progressed in 2012/13 include:

What have we learnt?	What have we done?	What impact did this have?
'Disguised compliance' by parents / carers when engaging with professionals not addressed within procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leeds policies updated ○ Amendments being made to West Yorkshire Procedures 	Training courses updated
Lessons from Serious Case Reviews not being effectively disseminated across the partnership	Format for city wide briefing sessions changed to be more interactive	Feedback from participants is that the approach facilitates dissemination at team meetings.
Restraint policies and procedures in had not been updated in line with national guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Model procedures developed ○ Review of implementation set up for 2013/14 	Governing Bodies requested to implement new procedures
An action from a Serious Case review was not fully implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action taken to fully implement recommendation ○ Partners requested to provide assurance that their monitoring of action plans was appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partners are reviewing the robustness of their governance arrangements re SCR action plans ○ LSCB Audit Programme to include a dip sample of implementation in 2013/14
Child Protection Plans are not consistently effective in reducing risk and improving outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disseminated the findings of the audit across the partnership ○ Planning a programme that will support core groups discussing the implications for their practice 	Impact to be judged through the continuing child protection plan audit in 2013/14

10.4 **Summary: the Effectiveness of the LSCB**

10.4.1 **Review of progress against challenges the LSCB set itself for 2012/13**

The LSCB set itself 27 specific challenges within the framework of its Strategic Plan for 2012/13. A full summary of the progress made can be found in appendix 8.

Progress has been made against all the challenges set, with some ongoing work being included in business planning for 2013/14. Notable achievements include:

- The development of the LSCB Voice and Influence Strategy
- The appointment of Lay Members to the Board
- The establishment of new LSCB groups:
 - The Education Forum
 - The Child Sexual Exploitation strategic sub group
 - The Front Door reference group
- The development of the LSCB Quality Assurance and Audit Programme
- The increased input of partners into the Annual Review process
- Holding a successful city wide conference 'Seeing the world through children's lives' in May 2012.

10.4.2 **Overall Effectiveness**

Section 10 of this report has detailed the considerable amount of work undertaken by the LSCB, its constituent groups and partners during 2012/13 to lead and support the safeguarding of children and young people in Leeds and to hold agencies to account for their performance and practice.

In order to evaluate its effectiveness in discharging its statutory responsibilities and undertaking its core functions three questions need to be asked:

1) Are we making sufficient progress?

Good progress was made on all the tasks set in the Business plan for 2012/13. Many of the delays were the result of factors outside of the control of the LSCB and all outstanding actions have been included in the Business Plan for 2013/13.

Within the framework of the Strategic Plan progress has been made in the following areas:

- Lead, Listen and Advise
 - The production of an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in Leeds and identifying challenges for the coming year
 - Improved dissemination of safeguarding messages across the partnership
 - Establishing Lay Member and children and young people's input
- Know the Story; Challenge the Practice
 - The development and expansion of the LSCB Performance Management System
 - Learning lessons from Local and Single Agency Reviews
 - Undertaking safeguarding seminars with cluster leaders
- Learn and Improve
 - The establishment of a Framework for Learning and Improvement
 - Improved dissemination of lessons from Reviews
 - Continued co-ordination and development of the LSCB Training programme

More progress needs to be made in:

- Increasing community engagement through the development of the LSCB website, the role of the Lay Members and input from the Voice and Influence sub group
- Receiving performance and audit information from across the partnership
- Increasing our understanding of the quality of practice delivered at the front-line and contributing to its improvement.

2) What are the emerging challenges?

Challenges for the LSCB have been identified through the annual review process and are formalised in section 11 (below). Key themes identified are:

- To maintain and increase the momentum of the current work programme to support continuing improvement in services for children and young people

- To continue to monitor the management of risk within the safeguarding system
- To lead the partnership in addressing issues posed by children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting'
- To build on progress being made to collaborate more effectively with other strategic bodies
- To further implement the LSCB Communications strategy using the new website
- To encourage all partners to more fully engage in the work of the LSCB through its sub group structure.

3) What impact is the LSCB having?

Currently, indications of impact can be seen in:

- The development and revision of policies and procedures which impact directly on how frontline work is undertaken. In 2012/13 this has supported work with children and young people who are missing / at risk of sexual exploitation / exhibiting self harm and suicidal behaviours.
- Raising awareness across the partnership of key safeguarding issues, lessons from Reviews and findings from audits
- Participants on training courses subsequently indicating that there had been an impact on their practice
- Findings from multi-agency audits being used to inform partners' in house audit programmes and the development of action plans to implement improvements in services
- Regular Performance reporting has identified issues that need further investigation (eg the child protection system) and have contributed to decisions made to undertake specific audits.
- Lessons from Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews informing the development of new initiatives (eg exploration of a Young People's Service) and the updating of existing arrangements (eg the Leeds Think Family Protocol).
- Improved understanding of the circumstances of child deaths has resulted in support for a number of public health campaigns (eg the dangers of co-sleeping)

Now that an established work plan is being delivered which addresses the full range of LSCB strategic priorities it will be important to evaluate the impact that this work is having on the safeguarding system as a whole, the work of partners within it and the drive to improve outcomes for children and young people.

11.0 Challenges for 2013/14

From the Annual Review Process and the Annual Performance Report the LSCB has identified a series of challenges for itself and for the Children's Trust Board to be addressed in 2013/14. These are designed to maintain and increase the momentum for positive change in the development and delivery of services to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

11.1 Challenges to the CTB for 2013/14

The following challenges for 2013/14 were presented to and accepted by the Children's Trust Board on 27 June 2013:

1. To continue to progress the 'rebalancing' of the safeguarding system in Leeds in order to promote a more preventative approach (C&YP receiving 'the right service at the right time') and reduce the need for statutory intervention. Key components of this approach are:

- To reduce the number of C&YP who need to be 'looked after.'
- To support more effective multi-agency engagement in the oversight and implementation of child protection plans.
- To develop and extend the comprehensive, multi-agency, Early Help offer, supported and facilitated by a common approach to assessment.

2. To ensure that during this period of transition within the system, risk is managed appropriately and safely in individual cases.

3. To ensure that the rebalancing of the system is supported by the development of a partnership approach to shared professional values, attitudes and behaviours and common principles of supervision.

4. To continue to promote a restorative approach to working with C&YP and their families that will more consistently result in 'the voice of the child' being included in all interventions and which promotes the principles established by the CTB:

- The default behaviour of Children's Trust and Local Government partners in all their dealings with local citizens/partners/organisations should be a restorative one - high support with high challenge.
- Children's Trust and Local Government partners should ensure that families, whose children might otherwise be removed from their homes, are supported to meet and develop a safe alternative plan before such action is taken.
- For all other families where a plan or decision needs to be made to help safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or children the family should be supported to help decide what needs to happen. Children's Trust and Local Government partners must create the conditions where families can be helped to help themselves - this would represent a fundamental renegotiation of the relationship between Local Government and local citizens - from doing things to and for families to doing things with them.
- Children's Trust and Local government partners must see all local schools as community assets and have a clear role in holding those institutions - no matter what the governance arrangements - to account for the contribution they make to the well-being of the local population.

5. To work with partners who commission services for C&YP to:
 - Build into their commissioning processes a requirement of compliance with s(11) of the Children Act 2004 / s(175) Education Act 2002
 - Establish a common performance management framework which is compatible with the LSCB framework.
6. To review access and availability of services for families who have suffered a child / young person bereavement.
7. In the light of work being undertaken by the LSCB, LSAB & SL, to review the provision of services to address situations where C&YP are living in the context of compromised parenting (domestic violence, parental substance mis-use, parental mental ill health).
8. As a better understanding of the scale of CSE is established, to review the provision of services to (i) reduce the number of Young People at risk / suffering from sexual exploitation and (ii) respond to young people who have become victims.
9. To develop and co-ordinate improved services for vulnerable 16 – 21 year olds.

11.2 **Challenges the LSCB is setting itself for 2013/14**

Emerging challenges for 2013/14 were identified by the LSCB on 28.06.13. for discussion at the Annual Review meeting on 19.07.13.

OVERALL

To 'step up a gear' in 2013/14; to build on progress made in 2012/13 in order to more fully understand the effectiveness of the safeguarding system in Leeds and better lead the partnership in developing services and multi-agency working in order to improve outcomes for C&YP.

- 1.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITY (1): LEAD, LISTEN & ADVISE
- 1.1 To fully implement the Learning & Improvement Framework to ensure clarity about partner responsibilities in contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.
- 1.2 To co-ordinate a partnership approach to the implementation of Working Together 2013 which is consistent with the overall approach being undertaken across West Yorkshire.

- 1.3 To continue to support the embedding of effective Children's Services 'Front Door' arrangements and monitor the management of risk.
- 1.4 To collaborate with other strategic bodies to revise and relaunch the 'Think Family Protocol' – to support multi-agency working with C&YP who are living in the context of compromised parenting.
- 1.5 To use the redesigned LSCB website to:
 - Engage more fully with:
 - § Faith Groups
 - § Community (and non-commissioned) groups
 - § GPs
 - Increase understanding of compliance across the partnership with s(11) requirements.
- 1.6 To further develop the relationship with the education sector (through the LSCB Education Forum)
- 1.7 To ensure that the LSCB is sufficiently resourced to discharge its statutory responsibilities and progress the agreed Business plan.
- 2.0 KNOW THE STORY; CHALLENGE THE PRACTICE
- 2.1 To more fully understand the effectiveness of practice at the 'front line' through the development of a broader range of monitoring methods and the implementation of the enhanced QA & Audit Programme.
- 2.2 To continue to monitor the effectiveness of services provided for priority vulnerable groups; in particular C&YP who are at risk / suffering Sexual Exploitation.
- 3.0 LEARN & IMPROVE
- 3.1 To broaden the LSCB Learning & Development / Training offer across the partnership and to monitor the impact of this on practice.

Appendices

- 1) LSCB Membership 2012/13
- 2) Structure of the LSCB
- 3) Business Plan 2012/13
- 4) Financial Statement
- 5) Framework for Learning & Improvement
- 6) Annual Report of the Child Death Overview Panel
- 7) Learning & Improvement Summary
- 8) Progress against challenges 2012/13

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Report of the Director of Children’s Services

Report to Children’s Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 25th July 2013

Subject: Response to Scrutiny Inquiry Report – Private Fostering

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report provides an update to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on the actions taken to strengthen local arrangements as a result of their inquiry into Private Fostering, published on the 17th of January 2013.

2 Background information

2.1 The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) identified Private Fostering arrangements as an area for scrutiny at its programme planning meeting on the 20th of June 2012.

2.2 The Board was concerned that long term private foster care arrangements could be in place without the knowledge of the Local Authority; and that this could mean that some children and carers did not have access to adequate support. The Board was also concerned that unregulated arrangements could place children at risk exploitation.

2.3 The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) inquiry on 23rd August 2012 gathered and evaluated a wide range of evidence including written reports and verbal evidence from external experts. The inquiry considered:

- Communication about private fostering arrangements
- Regulation of private foster carers
- Safeguarding vulnerable children and young people

and made three recommendations to the Director of Children's Services to strengthen these arrangements.

2.4 The Director of Children's Services welcomed the report and accepted the recommendations of the Board that relates to Children's Services on the 14th March 2013.

2.5 This report provides an update to the Board on key actions.

3 Main issues

3.1 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on the 17th January 2013 the Board asked for an update on actions taken in relation to three key recommendations:

3.2 That the Director of Children's Services commissions and implements a more extensive Private Fostering communication, training and education plan aimed at statutory, voluntary and commissioned services who come into contact with children. This should aim to deliver the necessary skills required to identify a private fostering arrangement, provide knowledge about their statutory responsibilities and referral routes in order to report a private fostering arrangement. An update of progress is required by the Scrutiny Board at the July 2013 meeting.

3.3 The Private Fostering communications strategy 2013/14 has been completed jointly by the Service, Corporate Communications and with assistance from the LSCB Communications Team. A copy is attached with this report (Appendix 1). This is a comprehensive document drawing together aims and objectives, key messages, stakeholders and communication channels. The Strategy is supported by a detailed Marketing and Communications Plan as well as a detailed Communications Action Plan to address the scrutiny board enquiry and recommendations. (see attached Strategy for full details). The plan is a rolling programme of training and publicity events as well as rebranding all the publicity materials and more specific one off actions.

3.4 New leaflets and posters are being prepared, which will be made available to a wide range of organisations as well as on line, posted on the web page dedicated to Private Fostering. The Child Friendly City Leeds logo and "Somebody Else's Child" strap line are being used as key messages.

3.5 As under reporting continues to be a concern for the local authority the strengthened communications strategy identifies a wide range of key stakeholders who will be targeted and advice and training for these key groups will be provided. The development of a multi-agency approach to private fostering and improved communication with professional groups will facilitate improved recognition and reporting of private fostering arrangements.

3.6 It has recently been Private Fostering week and as part of this week, the service has used the Council's Insite carousel to publicise Private Fostering; a press release was sent out using an example of a successful private fostering placement

to illustrate what private fostering is. This involved the young person directly along with his carer. The story was posted on the Foster4Leeds Website face book and Twitter account, which in turn was picked up by BAAF and shared with all their followers. A question and answer forum was set up using the Twitter account and this in turn was tweeted to an estimated 30,000 followers.

- 3.7 That the Director of Children’s Services investigates how the information regarding private fostering can be disseminated effectively to young people in Leeds. This information should also advise them who they can speak to if they need help and support. An update of progress is required by the Scrutiny Board at the July 2013 meeting.**
- 3.8 The Private fostering worker has been working directly with one young person who is privately fostered in order to get ideas of how best to communicate with young people who are privately fostered. (see above for details). His story may be also be used by the Breeze website as well as the LSCB communications team in order to access a much wider network linked directly to young people. A meeting is being arranged with the Children’s Voice and Influence team to develop further how we can best communicate directly with children who are privately fostered.
- 3.9 That the Director of Children’s Services strengthen networks and lines of communication with religious leaders and community representatives in order to raise awareness about private fostering and the statutory requirement to notify the Local Authority. An update of progress is required by the Scrutiny Board at the July 2013 meeting.**
- 3.10 The Service has been working closely with the department’s Consultation Involvement officer to ensure the new publicity leaflets on private fostering are circulated to a wide range of community organisations and faith groups. Community organisations have been identified who do not have links to the internet and the new publicity leaflets have been sent out to 90 such organisations and a further 100 organisations have received the leaflets electronically through the Leeds Community Forum. Work will continue in this area and follow up meetings and briefings will be offered by the service as part of the communications plan.
- 3.11 The Private fostering communication plan will be regularly monitored and with an additional member of staff to be recruited imminently to work on private fostering it is anticipated that Private Fostering will achieve much greater visibility in Leeds so that all children who are privately fostered in Leeds are brought to the attention of the Leeds Social Work Service.
- 4 Corporate considerations**
- 4.1 Consultation and engagement**
- 4.1.1 The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) consulted widely as part of their review.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Equality and diversity screening was not required as a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) recommendations. These issues will be considered in the report to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) at their meeting in July 2013.

4.3 Council policies and city priorities

- 4.3.1 There are no immediate implications for council policy and governance.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The recommendations will be resourced from within existing Children's Services staffing and budgets.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information and call in

- 4.5.1 None

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The risks associated with the recommendations are managed by the Looked After Children Programme Group which is chaired by the Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) inquiry into Private Fostering has identified some significant issues in relation to how the welfare of children in these arrangements can be safeguarded and promoted. This report provides an update to the Board on the actions taken to strengthen local arrangements.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are requested to approve the proposed responses as outlined in this report.

7 Background documents

- 7.1 Report of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) inquiry into Private Fostering



Photograph poses by models

Private fostering Communications strategy 2013/14

in partnership with Leeds safeguarding children's board



Directorate	Children's Services/Corporate Communications
Authors:	Isobel Smith/Val Hales
Date:	January 2013
Project Title:	Private Fostering Communication Strategy
Document Version:	Version 4
Current Status:	<i>DRAFT</i>

1 DOCUMENT CONTROL

1.1 Revision History

Version	Status	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Author
1.0	DRAFT			Isobel Smith/Val Hales
2.0	DRAFT		Val Hales Comments and Action Plan updates	Sara Hyman
3.0	Draft		Val/Sara amends	Sara/Val
4.0	Draft		Steve Walker's amends	Sara

1.2 Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue
Valerie Hales		Private Fostering Manager	
Leeds Safeguarding Children's Board			
Steve Walker		Deputy Director, Safeguarding	

1.3 Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Val Hales		January	Draft
Brenda Dring		May	Draft
Susan Collier		January	Draft

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7. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

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COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

2 INTRODUCTION

The Children Act 1989 places a requirement on local authorities to record and monitor details of private fostering arrangements. The Children (Private arrangements for Fostering) Regulations came into force in 2005.

Many private fostering arrangements are not known by the council, often because parents, prospective private foster carers, professionals working with children and anyone else aware of or involved in arranging for a child to be privately fostered are not aware of their responsibility to notify the local authority.

Private fostering is very different from the care provided by the council through approved foster carers. It occurs when a child under 16 (under 18 if disabled) is looked after for more than 28 days by an adult that is not a close relative and is a private arrangement between the parent and carer.

People become private foster carers for a variety of reasons. This arrangement could be due to factors such as children living with a friend's family after a separation, divorce or arguments at home, children coming from abroad to access education and health systems or teenagers living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend. Children on weekend or holiday visits with family and friends are not privately fostered unless the arrangement lasts more than 28 days .

The children and young people in private fostering arrangements are a diverse and potentially vulnerable group and often there is no one to safeguard them.

The current situation in Leeds

The table below shows that since 2009 there has been a small increase in the number of known private fostering arrangements. We recognise that there are likely to be far more children who are currently privately fostered in Leeds and that we need to do more work to raise awareness of the issue and help identify children who are currently in private arrangements.

Date	Number of private fostering arrangements	
	National	Leeds
31-03-2008	1330	7
31-03-2009	1530	7
31-03-2010	1590	10
31-03-2011	1649	10
31-03-2012	1780	14

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the private fostering communication strategy is to illustrate how we will undertake a planned, consistent and sustained approach to ensure that private fostering is positively and publicly promoted across our target audience with a specific emphasis on targeting professionals working or coming into contact with children.

The foundation of the strategy is to capture key developmental areas for improving communications, awareness raising and will provide a platform for future communication activity.

The most effective awareness raising initiatives are on-going and provide a steady stream of information to professionals working with children, particularly those in children's social care. The strategy will develop an approach that engages people so they recognise private fostering situations and why it is important to notify the local authority of such arrangements.

It is acknowledged that the term private fostering often causes confusion and there is a general lack of understanding of the legal requirements surrounding private fostering.

The strategy will set out the aims, objectives, key messages, audiences and the channels used to deliver the messages to all interested parties.

For successful implementation, the strategy must be endorsed by the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Board, with an explicit dedication from these members/agencies in order to make it work.

A delivery action plan is attached as Appendix A and will be used to implement the strategy over the next two years. The action plan will also consider how we will conduct testing in order to minimise risk and measure the success of any communication activity.

The communications strategy will ensure that all interested parties recognise the importance of notifying the LA about private fostering situations and respond in line with regulations, guidance and procedures. It will also provide an opportunity for those involved to develop closer and more effective working relationships.

The initial focus of the campaign is to raise awareness of private fostering. It is essential that our key messages are communicated successfully and appropriately with the various groups. Well executed marketing and communications are paramount in ensuring the messages are received and understood.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIMS

- To identify effective methods to raise awareness of private fostering.
- To implement processes amongst practitioners to ensure they recognise private fostering situations and respond in line with regulations, guidance and procedures.
- To encourage carers, parents and professionals involved in private fostering arrangements to contact the LA and register their details.
- To communicate the legal duty to notify the LA of a private fostering arrangement.
- Communicate to children and young people in private fostering arrangements the support available to them.
- To ensure everyone who works for LCC Children's Services are aware of the private fostering notification requirements and how to handle enquiries.
- Safeguard our children and young people who are privately fostered, from harm.
- Establish links with all key partners and pro-actively manage communications/messages about private fostering.
- To educate and build a positive image of private fostering amongst our target audience.
- Using existing, or where necessary, creating new marketing and communication mechanisms to deliver/impart our key messages to all interested parties.

OBJECTIVES

- To raise awareness of the regulations among professionals to increase the number of new notifications by 25% in 2013/2014 and by 50% in 2014/15. This will be monitored through the annual return to Central Government.

- To provide advice and support to private foster carers when required, balancing the need for minimal state interference into what is essentially a private arrangement and the need to safeguard and support children who are privately fostered.
- To improve the notifications received through education. This will be monitored by ensuring all new referrals for private fostering include a referral location.

4 STAKEHOLDERS/TARGET AUDIENCE/MESSAGES

- **Professionals working with children**
 - Social care staff
 - Housing officers
 - Education staff - teachers, admissions and support staff – receptionists
 - Language schools
 - Health services - GPs, surgeries, health centres, hospitals
 - Police and probation services
 - Refugee and asylum services/organisations
 - Citizen's Advice Bureau
 - LCC staff
 - Children and community centres
 - Youth offending teams/ASBU
 - Local voluntary and community organisations
 - One stops shops and centres
 - Faith groups – churches, places of worship
 - Drug and alcohol projects
 - Youth centres and groups
 - Sports academies
- **Private foster carers**
 - Recognition they are in a private fostering situation and the help, support and advice available to them and how to access it from universal or targeted services
- **Parents of children being privately fostered**
 - To understand their responsibilities' to their child/children and their legal responsibilities to financially maintain their children and to ensure contact is maintained with their child wherever possible
- **Children and young people living in a private fostering arrangement**

- That they are safeguarded and know how to access advice and support available to them and to understand what it means to be privately fostered

5 KEY MESSAGES

- Don't place your child at risk – notifying the local authority of a private fostering arrangement helps keep children safe.
- Private foster carers may be eligible for free advice and support – don't miss out.
- Did you know - if you are looking after someone else's child, for 28 days or more you could be a private foster carer and you need to notify the local authority.
- Remember it's an offence not to notify the local authority of a private fostering arrangement, failure to do so is an offence - don't risk a fine?.
- You must keep your local authority informed of any significant changes in your circumstances and inform them if you plan to move house or another adult moves into to live in your house.
- We want to ensure our children and young people are safe, remain in education and receive any support they need.
- If you suspect a private fostering arrangement – contact us on the kinship foster care telephone number 0113 2474654.

7. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS/RECOMMENDATIONS

See also, supporting marketing and communication delivery plan.

The awareness raising campaign will include a mix of direct marketing, advertising and promotion.

Branding

Consistent use of the branding, look and feel for anything that refers to private fostering. This will be important in developing a recognisable link to the service and LCC. We must develop a strong and positive reputation through consistent use of the brand, attract positive attention to promote the work taking place and the positive changes/impact this is having. It is essential that when our target audience sees the branding they make the links to the service we offer and confirms our credibility, only achieved through them having a positive experience when dealing with our service. The child friendly Leeds logo will be used at all times.

- **Recommendation** – Agree the branding/identity. It is recommended that the child friendly Leeds branding is applied throughout our communication tactics and supported by the “are you looking after someone else’s child” strapline. The branding should be applied consistently across all internal and external communications.

Direct E-Mail

Direct e-mail is one of the most flexible, quickest and cost effective ways to promote private fostering; we can also tailor our messages through relevant well targeted e-mails. Blanket e-mails with lots of irrelevant, jargon filled, lengthy content will be ignored and it is essential that we move away from this approach.

- **Recommendation** – Develop a database of key contacts which indicates a preferred communication route. Ensure the e-mail is structured and provides a clear call to action or outlines the benefits to the recipient; otherwise the messages will be ignored. Most recipients will have someone to filter their e-mails so it is essential that the e-mail does not bombard them with confusing and lengthy messages. The e-mail could be an invitation to attend an event, session or workshop.
- Consider using the strapline ‘Caring for somebody else’s child’ on all e-mail correspondence from the Kinship Team, in order to highlight private fostering to other professionals we communicate with in our daily work.

Direct Engagement

Using this tactic will give us the opportunity to engage with individuals face to face and to inform in more depth what private fostering is and the requirements around it. Direct engagement has a high impact but is heavily resource dependant. Private fostering however needs some really strong face to face engagement and visibility.

- **Recommendation** – Ensure the private fostering service representatives have a presence at as many scheduled forums, briefings, and meetings as appropriate. Working closely with communications colleagues to identify opportunities as they arise and develop a schedule of planned activity. Holding surgeries and having a presence at road shows, head teacher forums, meetings, briefings to do some really good engagement with users.
- In conjunction with the communications team linked to the LSCB, develop a programme of stakeholder awareness raising sessions

LSCB Engagement

Using all our stakeholders to inform their organisation of the requirements and duties in relation to private fostering

- **Recommendation** – Develop a stakeholder programme of contact. In particular, establish links with key stakeholders that are in a position to disseminate our key messages. Develop a programme of stakeholder awareness raising, prioritising face-to-face briefings with those teams and colleagues who regularly engage with our target groups.
- Use LSCB to cascade training to other professional groups so that the responsibility for training and educating is shared

Internal Communications

- **Recommendation** – use of Insite Carousel, Essentials message, automatic e-mail message from CS staff.

Induction and Training

Introducing private fostering within the induction arrangements (for new staff or professionals moving into new roles) will ensure that we capture individuals when they are receptive to receiving new information and are open to training.

- **Recommendation** – Incorporate private fostering messages into existing arrangements/induction programmes for new staff and staff moving roles. If these do not exist then ensure steps are taken to implement them.
- Embed within the appraisal process as a key training/awareness objective for internal staff and use existing networks (namely LSCB) to encourage the same process is applied for all professionals
- Training programme to be developed to support the appraisal process.

Website Presence

Use the website as an active and interactive means of communicating the message about private fostering.

- **Recommendation** – refresh the website information and upload new information. Ensure pages signpost interested parties to relevant information sources, useful information (FAQs) and other websites such as the BAAF website on Private Fostering. Allow visitors to download targeted literature about Private Fostering. Include
 - Leaflets as downloads
 - Case Studies
 - Links to useful sites
 - Contact Info
 - How to register
 - Information on notification requirements
 - Checklists
 - Fact sheets
 - Safeguarding

Social Media

- **Recommendation** - Impart messages through the child friendly Leeds twitter account.
- Blogs/case studies from children that are in a private fostering situation that we can share – aimed specifically at young people.

Newsletters/Newspaper

- **Recommendation** – work with the communications team to ensure printed media is utilised effectively.
- Place adverts in
 - Governors Newsletter
 - Essentials
 - Council Tenant Newsletters
 - Community Newsletters
 - About Leeds (all Leeds residents)

Printed Material

- **Recommendation** – Create a suite of simple but factual leaflets targeted the different audiences (parents/carers and professionals) and distributed through our own channels and partners existing communication channels. The leaflets can also be downloaded from LCC and partner websites.

Create posters that can be displayed in LCC buildings and public buildings that are visited by young people, parents, carers (children’s centres, leisure facilities, libraries, housing offices, one stop centres, community centres etc) providing basic awareness raising, factual information and promoting website for further information. Consider wider circulation budget dependant.

Consider the creation of information packs for professionals working with young people providing basic facts and information about PF.

Electronic resource pack of key messages for different groups

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Number of private foster carers and privately fostered children in Leeds

Number of new notifications received

Number and nature of enquiries received

Number of assessments undertaken

Details of outcomes of assessments and any further action

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION TEAM DELIVERY PLAN

Recommendations as outlined above for more detail – supported by the Private Fostering Team work programme

Activity/Action	Timescale	Intended Outcome	Intended Audience	Responsibility	Work Needed/Progress to date
Production of Communications Strategy and supporting delivery plan	January 2013	The strategy will ensure that all interested parties recognise the importance and benefits of PF and what this means to them.	Internal	Corporate Communications Team and Private Fostering Colleagues	Completed: Strategy produced, circulated and shared with PF colleagues. NB - the strategy and delivery plan is a working document and will be regularly reviewed and updated by the PF and comms team.)
Production of Communications Delivery Plan	Feb – March – for comment from service	The plan will define the planned communication activities, how communications will be managed and by who and will advise on progress made.	Internal	Corporate Communications Team and Private Fostering Colleagues	Completed: Workshop style meeting to be arranged to populate the plan, assign responsibilities and timetable future activity. NB - the strategy and delivery plan is a working document and will be regularly reviewed and updated by the PF and comms team.
General communication to all internal colleagues using the appropriate communication channels	July (on-going)	To inform colleagues and raise awareness of the legal requirements and to ensure they impart messages through their own communication forums/meetings to support PF	All internal Colleagues	Corporate Communications Team and Private Fostering Colleagues	Essentials/Need to Know Messages to key contacts throughout the service. Focus on Private Fostering Awareness week, 8th July: Insite and Leeds.gov carousel adverts, staff e-mail, Steve Walker's message, press release for local media.
Create a suite of simple but factual leaflets targeted to the different audiences	Leaflets already prepared. CC comment and for service approval	Will provide easy, clear, consistent and reliable information on PF	Parents/Carers Professionals	Corporate Communications Team and Private Fostering Colleagues	Completed: Leaflets have been shared with the service for comment, available end of June/July.
Create posters that can	July	Providing basic awareness	Buildings	Corporate	Agreement on the messages and images

Activity/Action	Timescale	Intended Outcome	Intended Audience	Responsibility	Work Needed/Progress to date
be displayed in LCC buildings and public buildings		raising, factual information and promoting website for further information.	(children's centres, leisure facilities, libraries, housing offices, one stop centres, community centres etc	Communications Team and Private Fostering Colleagues – this will need programming into our creative services work schedule.	
Create a web presence to support PF	January	To signpost interested parties to relevant information sources, useful information and other websites (i.e. BAAF). Visitors can also download targeted literature about PF.	ALL	Private Fostering Team for publication – support for copy from CC	Completed
Induction and Training	On going	That staff receive factual information as they take new/move jobs	Professionals within all children's services		Develop a training programme that enables us to tap into existing arrangements and allows us to disseminate information through to other organisations that recruit professionals that are likely to come into contact with PF arrangements.
Social Media	On-going	Raise awareness with professionals , young people and parents and carers to recognise a PF situation, understand the importance and legalities and what to do to report it.	ALL		Liaise with Voice and Influence team and Child Friendly Leeds to investigate potential use of twitter and website presence and obtain advice on how best to reach young people.
Stakeholder Analysis to be developed	July/August 2013	Determine who is involved and how we can establish		Corporate Communications	Stakeholder Analysis Template developed and to be an item on the agenda at the next

Activity/Action	Timescale	Intended Outcome	Intended Audience	Responsibility	Work Needed/Progress to date
		key links in order to disseminate information and impart key messages.		Team and Private Fostering Colleagues	private fostering communications meeting.

SCRUTINY BOARD ENQUIRY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

<u>Private Fostering - Scrutiny Board Enquiry and Recommendations</u>				
<u>Communication Action Plan 4th Feb 2013</u>				
Development	Specific Action	Who	Timescale	Comments
<u>Recommendation 1 The LSCB advises the Scrutiny board in July 2013 of the progress made by Children's Social work Services against the updated action plan</u>				
<u>Recommendation 2 Commission and Implement a more extensive Communication, training and education plan aimed at organisations who come into contact with children.</u>				
Update and rebrand all publicity materials in line with the "Child friendly Leeds" logo and BAAF's "Somebody Else's Child" logo.	Corporate Communications team (CCT) and LSCB Communications sub group to take forward the rebrand and updates.	Sarah Hyman (SH) comms team) Lucy Chadwick (LC) LSCB Sub Team	Completed: June 2013	
Update website in line with rebrand and with Focus on both Child / Adult. Accessibility to information.	Comms team to discuss requirements with web design team. Kinship Care team to provide the text.	SH to arrange with Web team. Brenda Dring (BH) to provide text	Completed: Apr-13	

Training opportunities to be explored in the following new areas:	Check with Safeguarding training service for dates to be included in the calendar, twice yearly.	LC, BD / Sue Collier(SC)	Ongoing	
1. Annual safeguarding training programme	BD to discuss with CSDM for implementation twice yearly.		A/A	
2. Cluster training programme	BD to discuss with CSDM for implementation twice yearly.	A/A	A/A	
3. Leeds Children Hospital training programme		A/A	A/A	
4. Sports academies	To offer benefits and publicity materials to Leeds United / Leeds Rugby	A/A		
5. School Nurses and Health visitors	This may be accessed through safeguarding training			
6. Housing				
7. Travellers' workers team	Arrange briefings / send literature to the teams	BD/SC	July/Aug 13	
8. Provide information posters to GP surgeries	Posters and leaflets to be made available once publicity materials updated	DP	July/Aug-13	
		LC & SH LSBC and Comms team		

privately fostered	and FOX communications, for advice on the website			
Recommendation 4 Strengthen networks of line of communication with religious leaders and community representatives to raise awareness of PF and need for reporting	Obtain information from ESCR reporting on most common groups of ethnic minorities Discuss with Equality officers and local cluster groups to identify outreach workers who provide support to relevant groups. Inform community leaders and representative from mosques, temples, synagogues and churches.	SC SC/BD	July/Aug 2013	
Launch presentation at Civic Hall		BD	September 2013	
Revise Procedures to ensure compliant with current practice		VH	Completed: March 2013	

PRIVATE FOSTERING TEAM WORK PROGRAMME - Promotion of the awareness of Private Fostering 2013/2014					
Activity/Action	Timescale	Intended outcome	Intended Audience	Responsibility	Work needed and progress to date
Nominate a designated manager and worker who have a key function in promoting private fostering	Apr-13	Kinship Care Team restructure will identify these roles.	Point of reference for all child care professionals and potential private foster carers.	Val Hales	Completed: Brenda Dring - Team Manager and Sue Collier Supervising Social Worker are the identified leads regarding the promotion of Private Fostering.
Attend and present a Private Fostering awareness stall at EPIC road show event at Elland Road	Mar-13	Monitor the level of awareness that other child care professionals have of the concept of Private Fostering.	Child Care Professionals, Parents, Carers	Sue Collier and Debra Panwar	Completed March 2013
		Offer advice and promotional leaflets regarding Private Fostering			
		Target audience is childcare professionals and parent/carer members of the public			
Publicise PF to all East Social Work Teams	Oct-13	Monitor how many PF referrals are received from East area of the city. Posters in all area team offices.	Children's Social Work colleagues	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed	
Publicise PF to all WNW Social	Dec-13	Monitor how many PF referrals are	Children's Social	Sue Collier +	

Work Teams		received from WNW area of the city. Posters in all area team offices.	Work colleagues	identified PF colleague when appointed	
Publicise PF to all South Social Work Teams	Mar-14	Monitor how many PF referrals are received from South area of the city. Posters in all area team offices.	Children's Social Work colleagues	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed	
Publicise PF to UK Border Agency - Waterside Court	Oct-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public. Poster to be displayed at Waterside Court.	UK Border Agency staff who work directly with members of the public regarding immigration issues.	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to all Day Nurseries in Leeds	Nov-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public.	Nursery staff working directly with members of the public.	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to all GP surgeries/Health Centres in Leeds	Oct-13	Send posters for display in all GP surgeries/Health Centres plus professional leaflets and offer to attend management meeting for dissemination of information.	GPs and health care staff. Members of the public.	Sue Collier	

Publicise PF to the Health Visiting Service	Sep-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public. Offer information leaflets for professionals and carers.	Health visitors	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to School Nursing Teams	Sep-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public.	School Nursing Team	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to Leeds Metropolitan University	Nov-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public. Offer workshop. Poster to be displayed in Social Work Department and student union.	Staff/students who may be private foster carers or privately fostered children	Sue Collier and Brenda Dring	

		Liaise with local social work courses with the aim of ensuring that newly qualified social workers are equipped with knowledge of private fostering			
Publicise PF to representatives of the Jewish community in Leeds.	Nov-13	Meet with influential members of the community with request for them to cascade information re. PF.	Members of the Jewish community	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to representatives of the Asian communities in Leeds.	Dec-13	Meet with influential members of the community with request for them to cascade information re. PF.	Members of the various Asian communities	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to representatives of the top three identified cultural communities in Leeds.	Dec-13	Meet with influential members of the community with request for them to cascade information re. PF.	Members of the identified communities	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed	
Publicise PF to Education and complete schools audit in November to identify any private fostering arrangements	June and November /2013	Offer workshops to schools. Posters in all schools. Identify any individual private fostering arrangements	All staff in Leeds Schools who work directly with members of the community.	Sue Collier and Brenda Dring	

Publicise PF to Park Lane College Sites	Jun-13	Send posters and leaflets for display. Offer to attend management meeting for dissemination of information.	Staff/students who may be private foster carers or privately fostered children	Sue Collier	
Publicise PF to Child Minders	Jul-13	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public.	Child Minders	Sue Collier	
Ensure PF information is available to the public via the internet Kinshipcareadmin@leeds.gov.uk	W/C 1 July 2013	Posters, leaflets for Professionals, Carers and parents to be available. Access to PF Procedures.	Members of the public.	Communications Team	The ability to effect this awaits the completion of the publicity materials by the Communications Team
Take part in Private Fostering Awareness Week	W/C 8 July 2013	Email to all Leeds city council staff with links to website and publicity materials	LCC staff	Sue Collier and Brenda Dring	The ability to effect this awaits the completion of the publicity materials by the Communications Team
Promote PF at the Celebrating Social Work Conference 2013	28-Nov-13	Attend Celebrating Social Work Conference. Promotional Table with leaflets and 'Someone Else's Child' DVD playing. Offer advice and information.	Social Work colleagues	Sue Collier + designated colleague	

Promote PF on the Family Information Service Website	Jan-14	Posters, leaflets for Professionals, Carers and parents to be available. Access to PF Procedures.	Members of the public.	Communications Team	The ability to effect this awaits the completion of the publicity materials by the Communications Team
Promote PF to the CAF team	Jan-14	Attend Management Team Meeting to ensure information is cascaded to all staff working with members of the public.	Members of the CAF team who have direct access with members of the public.	Sue Collier	
Engage a privately fostered young person to assist in developing a meaningful and informative leaflet for privately fostered children so that they recognise their PF status and know where to access means of support	Aug-13	Young person to help identify what information and advice would be most helpful to a privately fostered child. What images would be most appealing on the leaflet.	Privately fostered children	Sue Collier Ruth Carr + identified young person	
Use of a Private Fostering Strap line with link to the website at base of emails by everyone in the Fostering Service/CSWS?	Feb-14	Design strap line message. Obtain permission for use by all staff in the fostering service/other CSWS staff?	Email recipients.	Val Hales Brenda Dring Sue Collier Communications Team	
Publicity re. PF to all job centres	Mar-14	Poster and leaflets for parents, carers and professionals to be displayed. Offer to attend staff meeting to promote greater awareness of responsibility to notify LA of a PF arrangement.	Job Centre staff and members of the public.	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed + admin support	

Publicity re. PF to all One Stop Shops	Mar-14	Poster and leaflets for parents, carers and professionals to be displayed. Offer to attend staff meeting to promote greater awareness of responsibility to notify LA of a PF arrangement.	One Stop Shop staff and members of the public.	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed + admin support	
Publicity re. PF to all Housing Offices	Mar-14	Poster and leaflets for parents, carers and professionals to be displayed. Offer to attend staff meeting to promote greater awareness of responsibility to notify LA of a PF arrangement.	Housing staff and members of the public.	Sue Collier + identified PF colleague when appointed + admin support	

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Report of Director of Children’s Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 25th July 2013

Subject: Directors Response – Scrutiny Inquiry into Increasing the Number of Young People in Employment, Education or Training

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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. The Children and Families Scrutiny Board conducted an investigation into the support available in Leeds in order to reduce the risk of young people not accessing appropriate employment, education or training, also referred to as NEET.
2. NEET was selected as one of the obsessions and consequently the subject of the inquiry as the failure of young people to make a successful transition from school to further learning or employment is likely to have major consequences for economic wellbeing in their adult life.
3. The Board conducted its inquiry over three sessions involving a range of key stakeholders and two visits to speak to young people undertaking courses provided by igen and Leeds City College.
4. Members of the Board hope that the findings will contribute to providing better outcomes for young people and to achieve the aspiration of becoming a NEET free city.

Recommendations

5. The Board are requested to note the responses to the recommendations, based on their findings.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the formal response of the Director of Children's Services to the recommendations of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board inquiry into increasing the number of young people in employment, education or training.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Board was tasked with carrying out a piece of work on each of the three Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) obsessions. The third of these related to reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or Training (NEET).
- 2.2 The focus of the inquiry was on the support available in Leeds in order to reduce the risk of young people aged 16 to 19 years old becoming NEET and help them access appropriate employment, education or training.
- 2.3 During the course of the three sessions the inquiry received written and verbal evidence from a range of key stakeholders involved in supporting young people including council services, schools, FE colleges and igen. This was supported by two visits to speak to young people undertaking courses provided by igen and Leeds City College.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The response to each of the recommendations of the Board is set out below.
- 3.2 **Recommendation 1 – That the Director of Children's Services incorporates destination measure information for Leeds as part of the performance monitoring information. This information to be provided to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on an annual basis.**
- 3.3 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children's Services. Destination measures will be incorporated into the annual standards reports and progress against the destinations measures will be closely monitored by the 11-19 (25) Learning and Support partnership sub-group of the Children's Trust Board. The Department for Education (DfE) has recently released destination data for 2010-11 that shows Leeds slightly below the national average for destinations of 16 year olds, but above the national average for destinations of 19 Year olds. We are expecting more recent data in due course.
- 3.4 **Recommendation 2 – That the Director of Children's Services defines and implements a clear cross sector city wide strategy for tracking the destinations of young people and engaging with those who fall into the 'Not Known' category to ensure that appropriate support can be provided. A progress report to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) is required in October 2013.**
- 3.5 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children's Services. There has been considerable progress in recent months in bringing down the level of 'Not Known' and it now stands at an all time low of 5.9% (May 2013). The

reduction of 'Not Known' has been incorporated as a key element of the Targeted Information Advice and Guidance contract that igen were successful in securing. The contract includes an element of payment by results based on reducing the level of 'Not Known'. igen are taking a lead role in coordinating activity across a wide range of partners and have introduced a number of initiatives that should continue to bring down 'Not Known' levels. Progress on reducing the 'Not Known' level will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

3.6 **Recommendation 3 – That the Director of Children’s Services provides a report to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013 which explains how Youth Contract funding has been utilised and the direct impact this funding has had on creating EET opportunities for young people.**

3.7 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. The Youth Contract in Leeds has got off to an excellent start with 342 young people starting on the programme (between September 2012 and March 2013) and 228 progressing to employment, education or training, giving a progression rate of 67%. This compares very favourably to the national average progression rate of only 27%. A detailed report on the success of the first year of the Youth Contract will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

3.8 **That the Director of Children’s Services works in partnership with the Clusters to ensure that area based NEET data is analysed to identify those that are at risk of being NEET and sustained NEET to facilitate efficient targeting of resources. Progress should be reported to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**

3.9 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. Reports showing NEET data at a local level are now regularly distributed to Cluster and Areas. This data is central to informing the use of Youth Contract Cluster Innovation Funding and Area NEET plans. A detailed report will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

3.10 **Recommendation 5 – That the Director of Children’s Services undertakes a review of the IAG support provided by Schools since September 2012 and reports the outcomes to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**

3.11 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. A preliminary survey was undertaken earlier in the year with schools (including Academies, Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres and Pupil Referral Units) to establish what arrangements they are putting into place to meet their new statutory duties. A number of different approaches are emerging including, purchasing services from careers guidance suppliers through the list developed by the Council and internal arrangements where schools are either employing a trained careers/personal advisers or retaining an existing member of staff to deliver careers guidance.

3.12 We did not receive a response from a number of schools and we also know that the majority of schools are currently reviewing their arrangements now the new

centrally commissioned Targeted Information, Advice and Guidance service are up and running. We have therefore decided to support schools to complete a detailed self assessment in the Autumn that we will use to produce a clear position statement with regard to IAG arrangements in all schools. We will report on progress around this area of work to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

- 3.13 **Recommendation 6 – That the Director of Children’s Services works with Clusters across the City to share good practice and establish programmes in primary schools which reduce the risk of NEET, such as the concept of ‘World of work Wednesdays’. Such programmes should also be adapted to suit the needs of young people in secondary education. The Director is required to provide a progress report to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**
- 3.14 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. The Council’s Education Business Partnership are currently reviewing and enhancing their offer to both primary and secondary schools. Details of the new offer to schools will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.
- 3.15 **Recommendation 7 – That the Director of Children’s Services investigates with secondary schools and employers how the curriculum/education system in Leeds can be enhanced in order to better prepare and equip young people with the skills they need for the work opportunities that are here today and will exist in the future. A progress update is required by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**
- 3.16 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. We are addressing this matter in a number of ways. One of these is to ensure schools and colleges have easy access to the latest labour market information around future employment opportunities to inform their development of the curriculum. We have approached this through a significant investment in the information that is available through Leeds Pathways. It is also central to the review of the Education Business Partnership offer to schools.
- 3.17 Other ways we are addressing the issue include; as part of the detailed discussions we are currently having with schools and colleges around the future of post 16 provision in the city and through the menu of activities available through the Apprenticeship School Engagement Programme. A progress report on all these areas of activity will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013
- 3.18 **Recommendation 8 – That the Director of Children’s Services investigates how opportunities can be brokered between all schools and businesses to provide opportunities for young people to meet inspirational role models, raise awareness about career prospects and raise aspirations. A progress update is required by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**
- 3.19 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. The Education Business Partnership (EBP) current offers an extensive range of opportunities for young people to engage with people from businesses. These includes presentations by business leaders to raise aspirations and understanding

of particular career opportunities, structured visits to local businesses, and staff from business undertaking mock interview of pupils and acting as mentors to young people. One of the limiting factors is around the engagement of some schools with the offer. This is partly due to the fact that through necessity these opportunities are offered as a traded service. To assist with this issue of cost we are using Leeds Pathways as a vehicle to support the free transfer of knowledge and information from business people to young people. Local business people have also been very generous with their time to be involved with video interviews that are now included on Leeds Pathways. Details around the take up of the EBP offer by schools will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013

3.20 **Recommendation 9 – That the Director of Children’s Services reports back to the Scrutiny Board in October 2013 on the success of the Learning for Parents pilot and the future provision of this support across the city.**

3.21 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. The Learning for Parents pilot has proved a success and is likely to be repeated subject to the outcome of the current commissioning round. A report on the pilot will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013 as requested.

3.22 **Recommendation 10 –That the Director of Children’s Services investigates how support can be expanded to raise the aspirations of parents and equip them with the skills to support their children to achieve from foundation years onwards. A progress report is required in October 2013.**

3.23 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. There is a need to obtain a clear picture of what work is already taking place through Children’s Centres and Schools and look at how this good practice can be disseminated across the city and investigate what further support can be given to parents. A report on progress around this area of work will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

3.24 **Recommendation 11 –That the Director of Children’s Services investigates how improvements can be made to ensure parents/carers are equipped with sufficient information to help their young people to make the right education, employment or training choices. A progress update is required by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**

3.25 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children’s Services. The approach taken to this issue has been to develop a parents and careers section on Leeds Pathways - www.leedspathways.org.uk . This provides information to support parents/carers in helping their son/daughter to make informed career choices. It has been visited by around 700 parents/carers since 1 September 2012. We are currently working on plans to promote this resource and increase its use by parents/carers. A progress report will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

3.26 **Recommendation 12 –That the Director of Children’s Services works in partnership with other Council departments, schools, voluntary organisations, businesses and partners to determine a model and strategy which will mobilise the city to reduce the number of young people who are**

NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. A progress update is required by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.

- 3.27 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children's Services. Work is underway to capture on one side of A3 a clear picture of all the work that is taking place across the city to reduce NEET and show how it all links together. We will use this to inform discussions with partners to ensure we have a comprehensive, clear and coherent model and strategy to reduce NEET across Leeds. A progress report on this area of work will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.
- 3.28 **Recommendation 13 – That the Director of Children's Services facilitates the provision of data and information for organisations to rapidly identify those whose NEET status is 'not known' or those who are at risk of becoming NEET in order to secure appropriate education employment or training destinations for young people. A progress update is required by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in October 2013.**
- 3.29 This recommendation is accepted by the Director of Children's Services. A NEET Data Board has been established between the council and key strategic partners to progress this area of work. There has been some progress with regard to the collection of participation data from partners, but ensuring the efficient and timely collection, uploading and dissemination of NEET data remains a priority and work will continue to further improve these processes during the coming year.
- 3.30 We have also included the reduction of the 'Not Known' as a key element of the Targeted Information, Advice and Guidance contract secured by igen and linked it to payment by results. A progress report around the collection and sharing of NEET/'Not Known' data will be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The scrutiny process underpinning this report meant that members were able to have face to face consultation with schools, FE colleges, IAG providers, council services and young people. The recommendations are based on their engagement in this process.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Some young people are statistically more likely to be NEET such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities, care leavers, young offenders, poor school attenders, those attending the BESD SILC, PRUs or off-site learning, young parents, young carers, pregnant young women, homeless young people and those living away from their family. NEET rates vary significantly in different areas of the city, with the areas of highest NEET levels closely correlating with the areas of greatest deprivation. The purpose of all the strategic and operational activity associated with increasing participation in employment, education or training is to reduce the inequalities that prevent young people from making a successful transition from school.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 NEET is one of the three Children's Services obsessions. It is a multi-faceted issue that in some way links to almost every aspect of partnership activity across the city including the work of all five high level boards of the Leeds Initiative, not least the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board. It also relates directly to the partnership work at a Leeds City Region level, particularly around employment and skills, and business development and innovation.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The investment on increasing the number of young people in employment, education and training is partly a spend to save model, as it will lead to a reduction in future welfare spending. It will also have a positive impact on the economy leading to a consequent increase in council income.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no relevant legal implications to this response to the inquiry.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 Increasing participation employment, education and training is vital to the economic and social success of the city. Failure to delivery on this priority would have serious consequences for the economic prosperity and social fabric of the city.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Increasing the number of young people in Education, Employment or Training is the most powerful indicator of our overall success in educating and supporting young people. If young people fail to make a successful transition to further learning, employment and adult life, it is likely to have major consequences for their future economic wellbeing. To successfully address NEET and achieve our ambition to become a child friendly NEET free city we must tackle a range of complex inter-related issues affecting the most vulnerable. Our work with young people around the development of the Child Friendly City, our review of post-16 provision, the development of the Leeds Youth Offer and the major programmes that are now underway around the Youth Contract and Families First initiatives are coming together to provide a once in a lifetime opportunity to achieve our ambition for all young people aged 16-19 to be productively engaged in education, employment or training.
- 5.2 There is clear evidence that we have started to turn the curve with regard to increasing participation/reducing NEET, but there is still a long way to go if we are to deliver on our ambition to become a NEET free city. The scrutiny process has been useful in bringing a fresh perspective to the issues we face and has highlighted the need for further work around a number of key areas of activity.
- 5.3 We look forward to reporting on the success of the wide range of initiatives and activity to increase participation in employment, education and training to Scrutiny Board in October 2013.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Board are requested to note the responses to the recommendations, based on their findings

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.



Report author: Sandra Pentelow
Tel: 24 74792

Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 25th July 2013

Subject: Financial Health Monitoring Children's Services- Budget Update Quarter 1 2013/14 and Outturn summary for 2012/13

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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. The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) resolved to consider the budget of Children's Services at appropriate intervals. This is reflected in the work programme of the Scrutiny Board 2013/14. The purpose of this report is to provide Board Members with information with regard to the financial health of Children's Services for the first quarter of the financial year 2013/14 (appendix A).

2. Also attached for the information of the Scrutiny Board is an outturn summary for the financial year 2012/13 which provides information relating to the budget provision and actual spend during 2012/13. (appendix B)

3. The directorate's Head of Finance have been invited to present the attached information and address any further questions from the Board.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to:

- (a) note the quarter 1 financial report for Children's for the financial year 2013/14.
- (b) note the outturn summary for the financial year 2012/13.
- (c) make recommendations as deemed appropriate.

Background documents

5. None¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Appendix B CHILDREN'S SERVICES: 2012/13 OUTTURN

1. 2012/13 Outturn v 2012/13 Budget

- 1.1 **Overall** - the outturn variation for the Children's Services Directorate was an underspend of £2.3m against the net managed budget of £132m. The £2.3m underspend is gross of proposals to carry-forward £0.6m via earmarked reserves in respect of funding to support the in-house residential provision and other funding in relation to essential premises works.
- 1.2 **Looked after Children** - the 2012/13 budget strategy recognised the strategic obsession around reducing the need for children to be in care. At outturn, the Directorate has over-achieved against the turning the curve financial model with the externally provided placement budgets (including residential, fostering and secure placements) underspending by £2m, or 7% on the £28m budget. The £2m underspend on the externally provided placement numbers was mitigated in part by an overspend of £0.7m for the in-house fostering service which reflected the sustained in-house placement numbers as well as increases in the 0-4 allowances (from April 2012) and level 2 fees (from January 2013). In addition, there were cost pressures across the budgets that support Care Leavers [£57k], Adoptions and Special Guardianships [£920k] and Direct Payments [£167k].
- 1.3 **Staffing** - overall, there was an underspend of £4.06m across the employee budgets which was spread across the general fund, grant funded and central schools budgets. The underspend on the £97m basic staffing budget was £9.8m which reflected the number of vacant posts across the Directorate throughout the year. The final spend on agency staffing was £7.5m, which represented a £5.7m overspend with the majority of the agency staff deployed in the social care fieldwork teams, the complex need teams and across children's centre provision. The spend on overtime was £1.4m which was £0.3m above the budget and was due in the main to the need to maintain 24/7 cover for vacancies and sickness across the residential and secure settings.
- 1.4 **Home to School Transport** – in 2012/13 there was an overspend of £1.1m on the internal charges is due in the main to additional costs around SEN home to school transport [+£1.3m] and SEN home to college transport [+£0.1m] which were due to both increasing journey numbers and journey prices. These pressures were mitigated by savings on the transport for looked after children [-£0.1m] and savings on mainstream transport provision [-£0.2m].
- 1.5 **Income** – overall, there was a £0.7m adverse variation across the income and grant funding budgets which related in the main to the proposal to carry-forward Troubled Families funding. This is in line with the strategy and spending plan for the Families First (Leeds) programme and also the grant funding criteria. This is mitigated by reduced dedicated schools grant funding which reflects underspends across the central school functions. The income from nursery fees was £4.4m which was £0.24m less than the budget although this was offset by additional nursery education grant funding for targeted 2, 3 and 4 year old early learning/childcare places.
- 1.6 **Appropriations** - in line with the funding criteria, £2.8m of grant-funding was carried-forward from 2012/13 to 2013/14 relating to the Families First (Leeds) programme [£1.9m], Social Worker Improvement Funding [£0.7m] and the Youth Contract [£0.24m].

2. 2012/13 Outturn v 2011/12 Outturn

- 2.1 **Employees** – overall £2.3m reduction in staffing budgets mainly due to reduced agency costs [-£1.3m], reduced severance payments [-£0.7m] and funded pension adjustments [-£0.3m]. At £72m, spend on basic pay in 2012/13 was more or less in line with the spend in 2011/12. Spend on overtime in 2012/13 was £1.4m which was in line with the spend in the previous year.
- 2.2 **Supplies** – overall £2.1m reduction in spend from previous year due in the main to coding changes in respect of the provision of short-breaks for disabled children [-£0.51m] and charges from schools [-£1.8m].
- 2.3 **Recharges** – overall £2.1m increase in spend from previous year due in the main to changes in coding for charges from schools [+£1.8m] and equal pay & assets borrowing [+£0.9m]. In addition, there was a reduction in legal costs (both in-house and disbursements) totalling £0.4m.
- 2.4 **Agency Payments** – overall minor increase in spend from 2011/12 [+£70k]. Due to the work on the LAC strategic obsession, this includes reduced spend on externally provided residential placements [-£1.4m] and also reduced spend [£2.1m] on other externally provided placements (secure welfare, family assessment, etc). Offsetting these reductions are increased spend on Independent Fostering Agencies [+£1.5m], supported lodgings for Care Leavers [+£0.3m], Special Guardianship Orders [+£0.3m] and adoption allowances and inter-agency adoption fees [+£0.6m]. The spend on the in-house fostering agency remained more or less in line with the previous year.
- 2.5 **Income** – overall £3.3m additional income. Mainly due to funding increase in respect of Troubled Families (Families First Leeds) programme [+£2.7m] of which £1.9m is to be carried-forward to 2013/14. In addition, new funding stream for the Youth Contract for which Leeds is the lead authority (working with Bradford and Wakefield). No overall effect on income but changing income streams [£0.7m] from internal income from schools to income from academies. Nursery fee income to Children's Centres remained stable at £4.4m and there was additional health transformation income of £1m which was in-line with the budget strategy. Reduction in income from Education Leeds [£1.9m] which reflected the one-off repayment of surplus in 2011/12.

Neil Warren
Head of Finance (Children's Services)
14th June 2013

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 25th July 2013

Subject: Work Schedule

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

2 Main Issues

2.1 A draft work schedule is attached as appendix 1. The work programme has been provisionally completed pending on going discussions with the Board. The work schedule will be subject to change throughout the municipal year.

2.2 Also attached as appendix 2 is the minutes of Executive Board for 19th June 2013.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Consider the draft work schedule and make amendments as appropriate.
- b) Note the Executive Board minutes

4. Background papers¹ - None used

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2012/2013 Municipal Year

Area of review	Schedule of meetings/visits during 2013/14		
	June	July	August
Inquiries		<u>Directors Response</u> NEET Inquiry	
Annual work programme setting - Board initiated pieces of Scrutiny work (if applicable)	Consider potential areas of review		
Budget		Budget Update 2013/14	
Exec Board Request for Scrutiny – Youth Offer		Working group - With Scrutiny Board, Sustainable Economy and Culture	
Policy Review		Public request for Scrutiny Transport Policy	
Recommendation Tracking		Comprehensive Progress Report – Private Fostering Inquiry, LSCB and Director of CS	
Performance Monitoring	Quarter 4 Performance Report	Leeds Safeguarding Children – Draft Annual Report	
Working Groups		<i>Youth Offer Working Group</i>	<i>5)SEN/SILC working group (including TOR)</i>

Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2012/2013 Municipal Year

Schedule of meetings/visits during 2013/14			
Area of review	September	October	November
Inquiries	<p><u>Agree scope of review for **</u></p> <p>1) Cluster Inquiry 2) Free School Meals 3) Staying Safe - Bullying</p> <p><u>Board Agree Reports*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Best Start – providing good foundations in early life for children to succeed. • Supporting Children to achieve in Maths and English <p><u>CTB Response</u> <u>Partnership Inquiry</u></p>	<p><u>Evidence Gathering</u> 2) Free School Meals</p>	<p><u>Evidence Gathering</u> 1) Cluster Inquiry</p> <p><u>Directors Response</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Best Start – providing good foundations in early life for children to succeed. • Supporting Children to achieve in Maths and English
Recommendation Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Care Homes Inquiry – Recommendation including report on the Residential Home Charter. 	<p>Comprehensive Progress Report – NEET Inquiry</p>	
Policy Review	<p>Basic Need – (Exec Board July)</p>	<p>FSM Inquiry - (Child Poverty Update and Recommendation Tracking)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Leeds Offer for Kinship Carers • New Government requirements for Education (Academies, Free Schools....) <p>Ref resolution meeting Dec 12</p>
Performance Monitoring			<p>Progress on Supporting Children and Families, Strengthening Social Care, 9 point plan including Social Services Care System update and impact report.</p>
Working Groups		<p>2) FSM – Visits/meeting young people</p>	<p>3) <i>Staying Safe - Bullying</i></p>

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* Prepared by S Pentelow

Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2012/2013 Municipal Year

Area of review	Schedule of meetings/visits during 2013/14		
	December	January	February
Inquiries	<u>Evidence Gathering</u> 1) Cluster Inquiry <u>Agree scope of review for **</u> 4) Voice and Influence	<u>Evidence Gathering</u> 1) Cluster Inquiry <u>Board Agree Reports*</u> 2) Free School Meals	<u>Evidence Gathering</u> 4) Voice and Influence – Single item agenda
Budget	Initial Budget Proposals 2014/15 and Budget Update		
Exec Board Request for Scrutiny – Youth Offer			
Recommendation Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Inquiry • Young Carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Placement Inquiry • Service Redesign Inquiry 	
Performance Monitoring	Quarter 2 performance report		
Working Groups	<i>Youth Offer Working Group</i>	<i>3) Staying Safe - Bullying</i>	<i>3) Staying Safe – Bullying – meeting young people.</i>

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* Prepared by S Pentelow

Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2012/2013 Municipal Year

Area of review	Schedule of meetings/visits during 2013/14		
	March	April	May
Inquiries	<u>Evidence Gathering</u> 4) Voice and Influence	<u>Board Agree Reports*</u> 3) Staying Safe – Bullying <u>Directors Response</u> 2) Free School Meals	
Partnership Review - Children's Trust Board	Partnership Review - To review the performance of the Children's Trust Board		
Budget and Policy Framework?			
Recommendation Tracking			
Performance Monitoring	Quarter 3 performance report		
Working Groups	<i>4) Voice and Influence – meeting young people</i>		

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Need to schedule any Ofsted inspection information

Last Updated -16th July 2013

Key: SB – Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Meeting

WG – Working Group Meeting

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 19TH JUNE, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor K Wakefield in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, S Golton, J Blake,
M Dobson, P Gruen, R Lewis, L Mulherin,
A Ogilvie and L Yeadon

- 1 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**
RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-

- (a) Appendices B, C and E of the report entitled, ‘Support to the Leeds Rail Growth Package – Agreement of Terms and Conditions’ referred to in Minute No. 18 is exempt in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council and its partners in the scheme. It is considered that the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council’s commercial interests, as well as those of its partners, in relation to the development of the proposals and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time. It is therefore considered that these elements of the report should be treated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3).
- (b) Appendix 1 of the report entitled, ‘St George House, 42 Great George Street, Leeds LS1’ referred to in Minute No. 22 is exempt in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular company and of the Council. Such information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of certain companies. It is considered that since this information relates to a financial offer that the Council has submitted to purchase the property in a competitive best and final bid process, then it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this point in time. Also, the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council’s commercial interests in relation to any similar future transactions. Consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time. It is therefore considered that this element of the report should be treated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3).

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 17th July, 2013

With regard to (b) above, as it had not been possible to make available 28 clear days ahead of the meeting a notice detailing the intention to consider the exempt part of the report in private, then in line with Regulation 5 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, prior agreement had been obtained from the relevant Scrutiny Board Chair that the consideration of the matter was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred to the next meeting).

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting however the Board noted the following relevant statements which Members felt were in the public interest

Councillor Yeadon – in respect of the item entitled “Support to Leeds Rail Growth Package”, Councillor Yeadon highlighted her role as Chair of the Kirkstall Forge Liaison Group, which had acted as liaison between the developer and local community in the past (minutes 18 refers)

Councillor A Carter – in respect of the item entitled “NGT : Deputation from the A660 Joint Council” Councillor Carter reported his membership of the Integrated Transport Authority Board (minute 5 refers)

3 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2013 be approved as a correct record

DEVELOPMENT AND THE ECONOMY

4 West Park Centre Options Appraisal and Response to West Park Centre Campaign Group Deputation to Full Council

RESOLVED – That this item be deferred and be presented to the Board meeting scheduled for 17th July 2013

5 New Generation Transport (NGT) : Deputation from the A660 Joint Council

The Director of City Development submitted a report in response to the deputation presented to Council on 8th May 2013 by the A660 Joint Council regarding the New Generation Transport (NGT) proposals. The report set out the background to the NGT proposals, noting that the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded Programme Entry status to NGT in July 2012. The submission of a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) application scheduled for September 2013, followed by a Public Inquiry into the scheme in Spring 2014 were anticipated as the next major milestones in the development of the scheme.

A copy of the verbatim speech presented to Council by the A660 Joint Council was included within the report.

The Board commented upon the significant amount of public engagement and consultation which had already taken place, concentrating on those

communities directly along the entire route in order to mitigate concerns wherever possible and inform the ongoing design process.

Members were keen to ensure that dialogue continued with residents, particularly recognising the concerns raised by residents of Holt Park over the loss of connectivity with the city centre.

RESOLVED – That the responses to the key points made by the deputation from the A660 Joint Council be noted

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

6 Annual Reports of the Fostering and Adoption Service and annual updates of the respective Statements of Purpose

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report providing the Board with the Annual Reports of the Fostering and Adoption Services and the Statements of Purpose in respect of each Service. The report highlighted that the presentation and approval of the Report and Statements were required as part of the national minimum standard in order to be able to provide those services.

In response to a query regarding support for foster carers returning to the employ of the Council, the Board was provided with information on the streamlined and proportionate approach taken by the Department. A comment in respect of the increased number of children requiring local authority care, particularly children under the age of two; was noted and it was agreed that a report be presented in due course seeking to identify the causes of the increase. Finally, Members expressed their thanks to officers for the work undertaken to improve the service provision and support offered to young people and their carers which was reflected in the Annual Reports

RESOLVED –

- a) That approval be given to the Statements of Purpose for both the Fostering and Adoption Services for Leeds City Council.
- b) That, having reviewed the Annual Fostering and Adoption report, Executive Board confirms that it continues to support the work of the Adoption and Fostering Service to ensure children receive the best possible support.
- c) That a further report examining the causes of the increase in the number of looked after children be presented to the Executive Board in due course

7 School Easter Holiday Consultation

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report outlining the recent consultation on the Leeds school Easter break, and setting out the proposed Easter holiday pattern to be adopted from 2014-15 onwards for approval

In response to a query in respect of the consultation undertaken with faith schools the Board received assurance that no contentious issues had been raised. Officers undertook to provide the detail of the responses directly to the Member in question.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the outcome of the school Easter holiday consultation carried out from January to April 2013 be noted
- b) That, having regard to the preferred option of the Children’s Services Leadership Team in making a decision regarding the Leeds Easter break for schools, approval be given for the Easter break to continue to be fixed as the first two weeks of April regardless of when the Easter bank holidays fall.
- c) That approval be given to the proposed school calendar for the 2014-15 academic year as set out in appendix 1 of the submitted report

8 Design and Cost Report for Allerton Church of England Primary and Beeston Primary (Phase 2) Basic Need Projects : New Build Accommodation to facilitate School Expansion

The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report setting out the background and detail on proposals to expand both Beeston Primary School and Allerton Church of England Primary School. In recognition of the need to increase the admission limit at both schools due to the rapidly increasing birth rate in Leeds, both schools will be expanded under the Basic Need Programme, which aims to ensure the Council meets its statutory duty to provide a school place for every child in the city with the projects being delivered by Children’s Services in partnership with NPS Leeds.

Authority was sought to spend £829,600 and to tender work to provide additional teaching spaces at Beeston Primary School and to spend £550,700 and authority to tender work to provide additional accommodation at Allerton CofE Primary School.

RESOLVED -

- a) That Executive Board authorise expenditure of £829,600 from capital scheme number 16505/BEE/000 and approve authority to tender for the construction of a new two storey extension at Beeston Primary.
- b) That Executive Board authorise expenditure of £550,700 from capital scheme number 16505/ALP and approve authority to tender for the construction of a single storey, two classroom extension at Allerton CofE Primary.

LEADER OF COUNCIL’S PORTFOLIO

9 Financial Performance - Outturn Financial Year Ended 31st March 2013

The Board considered the report of the Director of Resources setting out the Council’s financial outturn position for 2012/13 for both revenue and capital and including the Housing Revenue Account. In addition, the report addressed major variations on the revenue account and reported on the final position in respect of Schools and the ALMOs. Finally, the report highlighted the position regarding other key financial health indicators including Council Tax and NNDR collection statistics, Sundry income and prompt payments.

RESOLVED – That the Executive Board note the outturn position and approve the creation and delegated release of earmarked reserves as detailed in paragraph 2.5 of the submitted report

10 Welfare, Benefits and Poverty

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customers and Communities) and the Director of City Development submitted a joint report providing an update on the proposals being developed to help deal with poverty and deprivation in the city and providing information on the impact of the reforms on families with dependent children. The report contained specific proposals for a significant programme of work required to prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit along with a set of proposals for a campaign to tackle high cost lenders in the most deprived areas of the city.

Finally, the report included the response of the Council to the issues raised by the deputation to full Council on 14th November 2012 regarding Payday Loan Companies.

The Board discussed the increasing pressures on the city having regard to the impact of the national welfare reform programme and current economic climate and noted the growing prevalence of high cost money lenders in the City. Members broadly welcomed the moves to re-organise and reconfigure services in order to meet the demand from residents for support and advice. Additionally, the Executive Member, Health and Wellbeing, highlighted that the proposals tied into the Health and Wellbeing priorities for the city and the opportunities to work with health partners should be explored.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the proposals contained within the submitted report which aim to provide a new focus on the welfare, benefits and poverty agenda be endorsed.
- b) That the contents of Appendix 1 on the activities of the Illegal Money Lending Team be noted.
- c) That the proposals to prepare for Universal Credit as set out in the submitted report and in Appendix 4 of the report be endorsed
- d) That the proposals and initiatives developed in conjunction with members of the deputation to tackle high cost lenders as set out in the report and summarised in Appendix 5 of the submitted report be endorsed
- e) That the continuing support and promotion of Leeds City Credit Union (LCCU) be noted and that the proposal for officers to explore further ways to help build extra credit union capacity and the expansion of services be endorsed.
- f) To note that Headrow Money Line, the newly established Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) has commenced trading and is providing services to financially excluded residents as outlined in the report.
- g) That a further report be requested to be presented in Autumn 2013 with a particular focus on service accessibility and integration; improved access to financial advice and support and employment and training opportunities; and, the development of an anti-poverty strategy

11 Best Council Plan 2013-17

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report presenting a new Best Council Plan 2013-17 to replace the current Council Business Plan 2011- 15, for approval prior to going to Full Council. The report highlighted the need for the Council's strategic plans to remain up-to-date and fit for purpose; relevant to the changing financial context and continued to reflect the main challenges. In light of this, the strategic plans must also include the right level of ambition for the people of Leeds.

A copy of the draft Best Council Plan was included as Appendix 1 of the report. The Board noted the involvement of the Scrutiny process in the development of the document and considered whether all Scrutiny Boards should receive and consider the Plan. Members noted the response which highlighted the key priorities against the backdrop of changing local government finance and service provision; and the need to meet the challenges as soon as possible.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the Best Council Plan 2013-17 be approved and be recommended to Full Council for approval at the meeting on 1st July 2013;
- b) That Members of Full Council be recommended to authorise Executive Board to make "in-year" amendments to these plans as may be required;
- c) That the revisions to the Equality Improvement Priorities, as set out in Appendix 3 of the submitted report be approved; and
- d) That the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to complete the plans with any outstanding information prior to their submission for approval to Full Council on 1st July 2013.

(The resolutions referred to within this minute were not eligible for Call In, as the Council Business Plan 2011-15 (now Best Council Plan) forms part of the Budgetary and Policy Framework and the provisions of Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 state that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

12 2012/13 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report presenting a summary of the year end performance data for 2012/13 which provides an update on progress in delivering the Council Business Plan 2011-15 and City Priority Plan 2011-15. In addition, the report highlighted key performance issues.

RESOLVED – That the progress made in delivering the Council's priorities as well as the on-going performance issues identified be noted

13 Design and Cost Report for the City Region Revolving Investment Fund

The Chief Officer, Public Private Partnerships and Procurement Unit submitted a report seeking approval to enter into a limited partnership with partner local authorities to establish a Leeds City Region Revolving Investment Fund (RIF), and seeking authority to invest £6,440,000 in accordance with capital scheme number 16500RIF, as the Leeds City Council agreed contribution to the setup of the Fund.

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The Board noted the report set out the following key issues:

- The strategic context for the RIF
- The First Phase Launch
- How the Fund will operate
- The requirements of Founder Member Authorities
- Capital Investment from Leeds City Council

The Board noted comments highlighting the need to ensure the RIF included clear governance arrangements with a strong decision making model which included continued monitoring of decisions. The Board was advised that, with the establishment of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (which appeared as a separate item later on the agenda) the RIF would fit into the governance model being developed for the WYCA which had the support of all relevant authorities

RESOLVED –

- a) That authority be given to invest the £6.440m in the RIF, in accordance with capital scheme number 16500 RIF
- b) That the Director of Resources be authorised to take any necessary further action to establish a Leeds City Region Revolving Investment Fund including the approval of any necessary agreements (in accordance with the Principles as defined in paragraph 3.1 of the report), and any necessary decision making arrangements in relation to the making of investments by the RIF, to enable Leeds City Council to become a Founder Member of the Fund
- c) That authority be given for Leeds City Council to act as administrator of the RIF (including, if necessary, the establishment of a “General Partner” for the RIF).

ENVIRONMENT

14 Response to Deputation to Council - Wyke Beck Valley Community Forum Regarding The Post Of Wyke Beck Valley Ranger And 5 Local Nature Reserves In Wyke Beck Valley

The Chief Officer (Parks and Countryside) submitted a report responding to the matters arising from the deputation to Council on the 8th May 2013 by the Wyke Beck Valley Community Forum. In particular the report considered the role of the Wyke Beck Valley Ranger and the potential to designate identified sites in the valley as Local Nature Reserves. A copy of the verbatim speech presented to Council was appended to the report.

The Executive Member for Environment reported receipt of a representation from the Group and on the progress of the Arthur’s Rein and Halton Moor Beck sites, noting that several issues still required further work with Natural England, however the Board was reassured that these outstanding issues could be addressed and the designation of all the sites progressed

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report in response to the Deputation be noted and that Executive Board support the view stated in paragraph 3.3.3

of the report on Local Nature Reserve designation for the sites referred to in the delegation - those being:

- Wykebeck Woods.
- Arthur's Rein
- Killingbeck Fields.
- Primrose Valley (Halton Dene)
- Halton Moor Beck Fields.

15 Mercury Abatement - Cottingley Crematorium

Further to minute 68 of the meeting held 25th August 2010, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report advising of the current position with regard to achieving the statutory 50% abatement of mercury emissions from the authority's crematoria and seeking approval for the installation of cremators with mercury filtration equipment at Cottingley crematorium. In addition, the report advised of the expenditure of fees up to £90,000 to allow the tendering of the works contract on a design and build basis, and management of the subsequent contract, to be funded from existing budget provision.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the works planned for Cottingley Crematorium be noted and approved
- b) That the expenditure of up to £90,000 on fees for the design and development of the specification for Cottingley and management of the subsequent design and build contract to be funded from the £2.9m injected into the capital scheme in August 2010 and paid for from prudential borrowing and a continuing surcharge on cremations be noted
- c) That Executive Board request that a Design and Cost Report be brought back to the Board once a more detailed cost estimate for the Cottingley works has been developed

16 Review of City Centre Car Parking

Further to minute 75 of the meeting held 5th September 2012, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods and the Director of City Development submitted a further report providing an update on various issues relating to city centre car parking. The report referred to a consultation exercise undertaken in relation to Sunday and evening charges which brought forward a recommendation that charges be introduced. Information was also provided in respect of Woodhouse Lane multi storey car park, the on-going development of both retail and leisure opportunities within the city centre and the intention to continue to monitor car parking pricing and provision.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Environment outlined the comparable level of charging proposed, which was less than private parking provision; and was intended to promote a greater turnover of parking in the city centre thus making more spaces available for use and encouraging visitors to take up the increased city centre offer.

The Board noted the concerns expressed in respect of future charges which could be levied, the impact of the proposals on city centre evening business and the draw to out-of-town shopping facilities with free parking.

RESOLVED -

- a) That approval to the introduction of a £5 tariff for parking in Woodhouse Lane for Arena events
- b) That approval be given to the introduction of 24hr car parking at Woodhouse, with the availability of longer term tariffs.
- c) That approval be given to the introduction of a £2 evening charge from 6-10 for on street parking
- d) That approval be given to the introduction of £1 charge for up to 4 hours and £4 for all day between 10am and 6pm on a Sunday for on street parking.

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors A Carter and Golton required it to be recorded that they voted against the matters included within this minute

DEVELOPMENT AND THE ECONOMY

17 Parking Permit Charges

The Director of City Development submitted a report outlining the work undertaken to develop proposals for the introduction of a charge for Residents Parking Permits as identified in the annual budget report. The report also detailed the basis under which a charge could be made, should permission be given to proceed with such a proposal

The report outlined the findings of a Scrutiny Board review into Resident Permit Parking, conducted in 2008, which recommended that the introduction of a charge be considered further, although this was not pursued at that time. However, with increasing pressure on Council budgets an external review of City Development Directorate funding and budgets was conducted which included considering the potential to offset the cost of some of its services by raising additional income. The study identified the potential for charges for RPP to contribute towards budget pressures. A review of comparable authorities had also been undertaken which revealed that the majority of the Core Cities make some form of charge for RPPS tailored to local circumstances. A list of charges from Core and other cities was included at Appendix 1 of the report.

Members commented on the possible impact of the proposals on those permit schemes already in operation. Having regard to residents' ability to pay for permits, discussions also covered the likely drop-out rate from the scheme and subsequent impact on the resources supporting the scheme

RESOLVED -

- a) That the content of the report and work undertaken to prepare proposals and consult on the introduction of a charge for Residents Parking Permits as included within the annual budget report be noted;

- b) That the initial proposals for establishing a charge for Residents Parking Permits as the basis for consultation be agreed;
- c) That authority be given to the further development of detailed proposals for charging for Residents Parking Permits as contained within the Council's approved 2013 -14 revenue budget; and
- d) That Executive Board receive a report setting out the final proposals in due course.

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors A Carter and Golton required it to be recorded that they voted against the matters included within this minute

18 Support to the Leeds Rail Growth Package - Agreement of Terms and Conditions

Further to minute 92 of the meeting held 17th October 2012, the Director of City Development and the Director of Resources submitted a joint report providing an update on the progress of the establishment of the Leeds Rail Growth Package, including information on the proposed terms and conditions of financial support and security that would be provided by the Council and, subject to finalisation of legal contracts, the report recommending that financial support is provided.

The report updated the Board on the discussions held with a variety of stakeholders to maintain and secure support. It was reported that the Growing Places Fund, administered by the Leeds Local Enterprise Partnership, had agreed to provide support to the construction of the rail halts within the package, but in order for the scheme to be progressed it was proposed that the Council undertake the associated highway infrastructure works.

The Board recognised the opportunities encompassed in the development of the former Kirkstall Forge site, with the delivery of the two rail stations being key to regeneration and employment in the area.

Following consideration of Appendices B, C and E of the report, designated as exempt under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3), which were considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- a) That approval be given to the Council assisting GMV Twelve, on the terms and conditions detailed in exempt Appendix C, subject to the finalisation of legal documentation between the various parties, with approval of the terms of those documents being delegated to the Directors of City Development and of Resources and the City Solicitor.
- b) That approval be given to the Council committing to invest and expend a total of £9.993m for the highway infrastructure works required for the development and professional costs to be met by borrowing and to delegate the formal authority to spend to the Director of City Development.
- c) That approval be given for any changes to the costs of the highway works to be updated in the capital programme, to be fully funded by GMV Twelve over the period of the agreement.

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19 Energy Saving Measures for Street Lighting - Consultation Outcome and Further Proposals

The Director of City Development submitted a report summarising the outcome of consultation on the proposal to implement a selective part-night switch-off of street lights and to seeking approval to inject £376,643 into the capital programme to proceed with the design and installation of a selective part-night street lighting scheme

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Development and the Economy highlighted the complex responses received to the consultation on the proposals (and included in Section 4.1 of the report) which broadly demonstrated support for the proposals. Discussion followed on issues related to public safety and crime. In response; Members were informed that representatives of West Yorkshire Police and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service had contributed to the work to draw up the scheme and that following implementation; the scheme would continue to be monitored.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the outcome of consultation on the proposal to implement selective part-night switching of street lights be noted and;
- b) That approval be given for the injection of £376,643 into the capital programme to proceed with the design and installation of selective part-night street lighting in accordance with the criteria set out within the submitted report.

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillors A Carter and Golton required it to be recorded that they abstained from voting on the matters included within this minute

20 West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Further to minute 90 of the meeting held 12th October 2012, the Director of City Development submitted a report on the outcome of the consultation undertaken in respect of the review of governance arrangements in West Yorkshire. The report invited the Board to recommend to full Council that consideration be given to becoming a member of a Combined Authority for the area of West Yorkshire.

The proposed Scheme for the Combined Authority, which would form the basis for the creation of the new body was presented as part of the considerations with a request that a recommendation is made to full Council that the Scheme be submitted to Government by July 2013, with a view to creating a Combined Authority for the area of West Yorkshire by April 2014, in line with Leeds City Deal Implementation Plan.

RESOLVED – That the following be recommended to full Council on 1st July 2013:

- a) The findings of the Review of governance arrangements relating to transport, economic development and regeneration, pursuant to Section 108 of the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and Section 82 of the Local Transport Act 2008

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(as set out at in Appendix A of the submitted report) together with the results of the consultation exercise conducted (included within Section 4.1 of the report)

- b) For the reasons set out in the Review document, to agree that the establishment of a Combined Authority for the area of West Yorkshire would be likely to improve:
 - the exercise of statutory functions relating to economic development, regeneration and transport in the area;
 - the effectiveness and efficiency of transport in the area; and
 - the economic conditions in the area.
- c) To endorse the Final Scheme (in the form set out at Annex B to this report) including the proposal that the West Yorkshire ITA is dissolved, and that the West Yorkshire PTE is also dissolved and that all their individual functions, property, rights, liabilities and staff are transferred to the Combined Authority.
- d) To agree to publish the Scheme pursuant to section 109(2) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
- e) To consent to the inclusion of Leeds City Council in the area of the Combined Authority.
- f) To agree that the City of York Council and the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership should be invited to join the Combined Authority for the area of West Yorkshire as non-constituent members.
- g) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and with the other West Yorkshire Authorities to undertake such steps as are necessary to facilitate the submission of the Scheme and the preparation of the draft Order.

The resolutions detailed within this minute were exempted from the Call In process under the provisions of paragraph 5.1.3 of the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules due to the urgency for the Council to consider submitting a Final Combined Authority Scheme to the Secretary of State by July 2013

21 Roundhay Road, Highway Improvements

The Director of City Development submitted a report seeking authority to proceed with the preparation of the detailed design and construction of the works as proposed. Additionally, authority was required for the revocation of the relevant items currently in force in an existing Waiting Restriction Traffic Regulation Order together with the provision of both a new Waiting/Loading Restriction Order and a Movement Restriction Order. The total estimated cost of the proposed scheme is £550,000.

RESOLVED -

- a) That, subject to Traffic Regulation Orders, the proposed highway works as outlined in Section 3.1 of the submitted report and indicated on drawing referenced: HDC-716738-TRO-03, at an estimated cost of £550,000 be noted and approved
- b) That authority be given to incur expenditure of £458,000 works costs, £90,000 staff costs and £2,000 Legal costs, to be funded from the LTP Transport Policy Capital Programme.
- c) That the City Solicitor be instructed to revoke relevant items currently in force in an existing waiting restriction Traffic Regulation Order and to

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advertise draft Traffic Regulation Orders in relation to various waiting and loading restrictions, Movement Restriction Order for the three proposed one-way streets; and a peak time outbound bus/cycle/taxi lane, as indicated on drawings referenced HDC-716738-TRO-03 & Oakwood/TRO/002 and, if no valid objections are received then make, seal and implement the orders.

22 St George House, 42 Great George Street, Leeds, LS1

The Director of City Development submitted a report seeking approval for the Council to purchase the head tenant's leasehold interest in the St George House property, on the terms set out in the exempt appendix. The report also sought approval to a formal Deed of Surrender of this Lease.

Acquisition of the head tenants leasehold interest would be financially beneficial and give the Council outright ownership, thus providing greater flexibility in respect of the future management of, and plans for, the building.

Following consideration of Appendix 1 of the report, designated as exempt under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED -

- a) That the terms to the purchase of the head tenants leasehold interest be approved
- b) That approval be given to the completion of a formal "Deed of Surrender" of the existing leasehold interest on the terms outlined in the exempt appendix;
- c) That approval be given to the injection of the sum identified in the exempt appendix into the capital programme and give authority to spend the monies required

The resolutions referred to within this minute were exempted from the Call In process under the provisions of paragraph 5.1.3 of the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules due to the fact that any delay would prejudice this transaction which may not then proceed to completion

NEIGHBOURHOODS, PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

23 Draft Safer Leeds Strategy 2013-2014

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report seeking consideration of; and support for the draft Safer Leeds Strategy 2013/14; prior to submission of the Strategy to full Council in July 2013 for approval.

The report outlined the statutory requirement for the Safer Leeds Executive, as the city's Community Safety Partnership, to prepare and implement a local Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, referred to locally as the 'Safer Leeds Strategy' a copy of which was included within the report at Appendix 1. The strategy formed part of the council's budget and policy framework, and would be submitted to full Council on 1st July 2013.

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In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods Planning and Support Services, indicated that the version of the Strategy to be presented to full Council contained a number of revisions in respect of terminology. Discussion followed on the priorities contained within the Strategy and a comment in respect of the measurement of the priority for tackling child exploitation was noted. The Board noted the response that the Children's Safeguarding Board included a sub group established to tackle child exploitation having regard to the Strategy and would develop targets for the future.

Finally, noting additional comments in respect of the Families First programme, the Executive Member for Children's Service's indicated that a further report could be presented to the Board to provide detail on the issues and relevant criteria

RESOLVED – That Executive Board support the draft Safer Leeds Strategy, as the city's Crime and Disorder Strategy for 2013-14, prior to its submission to full Council for approval on 1st July 2013.

(The resolution referred to within this minute was not eligible for Call In, as the Safer Leeds Strategy forms part of the Budgetary and Policy Framework and Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

24 Review of ALMOs and Housing Management Arrangements

Further to minute 155 of the meeting held January 2013, the Assistant Chief Executive (Customers and Communities) and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a joint report detailing the outcome of the review of housing management services in Leeds. The report presented recommendations on the future delivery of housing management in the city, whilst also setting out implementation arrangements.

In January 2013, following a recommendation from the housing management review team, Executive Board approved a period of consultation with tenants and other key stakeholders, on two options for the future of council housing management in Leeds:

1. Move to a single company model (e.g. a single ALMO) with a retained locality delivery structure and strengthened governance arrangements;
or
2. Move to all services being integrated within direct council management with a retained locality delivery structure and strengthened governance arrangements to include tenants and independent members.

In presenting the report the Executive Member for Planning, Neighbourhoods and Support Services, highlighted the outcome of the consultation undertaken on the options, with 61% of tenants stating a preference for council housing to be managed by Leeds City Council, compared 21% stating a preference for a single ALMO and 18% stating no preference. Taking this outcome into

consideration, along with performance, financial and other issues, the review team were recommending implementation of Option 2.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the results of the consultation exercise be noted
- b) That the recommendation to progress with option 2, as outlined above, be supported
- c) To agree to receive a further paper at the July meeting detailing implementation and governance arrangements.
- d) That approval be given to the commencement of the winding up process for the existing companies as noted in section 10.5 of the submitted report
- e) That approval be given to the renaming of the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate to 'Environment and Housing'.

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5 Councillor A Carter required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the matters included within this minute.

DATE OF PUBLICATION 21ST JUNE 2013

LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS 28TH JUNE 2013 (5.00PM)

(Scrutiny Support will notify Directors of any items called in by 12.00 noon on 1ST JULY 2013)

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