LEEDS STRATEGIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY PLAN – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This plan is a framework for a response and recovery to the coronavirus (COVID-19) incidents, enabling the council and city to be as prepared as possible given the rapidly changing context and the resources and information available. This Plan seeks to complement the existing established governance structure of the multi-agency response to the cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) strain in Leeds, primarily led by government, the health and care system with links to the West Yorkshire Health Resilience Partnership (WYHRP) and West Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (WYLRF).

It is focused on recovery as well as response in order ensure the Council is proactive in dealing with the challenges which arise, whilst recognising the response phase of this incident will be prolonged. It will be delivered within the context of the council's emergency management arrangements.

Aims and objectives of this plan:

- Minimise the effect of the outbreak on the health and wellbeing of the city, especially the most vulnerable.
- To monitor, mitigate or minimise any relevant risks to the council and city from the Coronavirus outbreak to ensure business continuity where possible.
- Provide what support we can to individuals, families and communities and businesses affected, and encourage communities to provide support.
- Follow national guidance and signpost people to relevant advice.
- Recognise the impact on service delivery, particularly the NHS and social care, but also other critical services, if the spread of the virus continues.

CURRENT POSITION AS AT MARCH 2020

- The new strain of coronavirus (COVID-19) was first identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019 and has since spread with the number of cases varying across the world. On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern"
- On 2 March 2020, the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the government emergency COBR committee on the coronavirus outbreak. Following this meeting, the government published the Coronavirus Action Plan on 3 March 2020, containing a detailed set of countermeasures taken by the health and care system across the UK to respond to the Coronavirus outbreak. This Action Plan can be found here.
- On 11 March, the Budget announced funding for coronavirus, including for businesses and individuals as well as the NHS. On 11 March the World Health Organisation announced the global COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. On 12 March, the Prime Minister announced a move into the "Delay" phase with immediate new guidance about self-isolation, with more refreshed guidance to follow.
- The numbers of cases are being updated daily on COVID-19 cases by local authority (upper tier or unitary). Across the UK, as at 15 March, there are 1391 confirmed cases, with 35 deaths. Leeds has 19 confirmed COVID-19 cases as at 15 March 2020.
- Reporting arrangements to Executive Board established, with emerging governance in place across the system that is well connected to West Yorkshire and national command and control arrangements. Regular rhythm of communications established with public, councillors, staff and partners.

Each action has a named lead officer within Leeds City Council. These individuals will liaise with other internal colleagues, partner organisations and others as required in order to provide the assurance needed on progress.

Item no.	Action	Officer lead(s)	Status / Comments
1. Health			
1.1	Ensuring effective liaison and support between the Council, Local NHS Partners and the West Yorkshire Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP), to provide an effective, co-ordinated multi-agency response to Coronavirus (COVID-19).	**Victoria Eaton**	• COVID Oversight, Assurance and Coordination group (COAC) established for health and care, chaired by DPH, meeting weekly, good engagement from across the system. • Health and Care outbreak planning group (Chaired by NHS Leeds CCG) coordinating NHS services to deliver NHSE '7 asks' including community swabbing, operating effectively. • Liaison with Public Health England (PHE) and West Yorkshire Health Resilience Partnership (HRP) • Refreshed the Leeds H&C Partnership Pandemic Plan and due for sign off by H&C partners this week.
2. Infrastructure and supplies impact			
2.1	Work with relevant authorities and agencies to assess and respond to disruption to key infrastructure such as public transport.	**Gary Bartlett**	• Liaison with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) to ensure Bus and Rail operations assessment of business continuity and issuing advice to bus and rail passengers.
2.2	Assess the possible impact on key supply chains and required actions e.g. Catering Services (e.g. school meals), Cleaning services, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) etc.	**Sarah Martin**	• Plans in place and continued liaison with services. No major issues identified at this stage but continually being reviewed.
3. Business and economic impact			
3.1	Ensure effective liaison with business, specifically representative bodies to understand impact on local economy (including business confidence) and provide relevant advice or support where possible, including access to government grants.	**Eve Roodhouse**	• Brexit roundtable planned for March 2020 which will discuss assessment of impact of coronavirus as well as Brexit. • Stakeholder communications issued and awaiting feedback about impact and solutions. • Aim to collate information on specific areas of business and the economy, including, visitor economy, manufacturing, footfall data in the city centre (where possible), the market etc. • Work with relevant colleagues to promote and potentially administer grant schemes once guidance is available from government

4. Citizens and communities impact			
4.1	Assess the impact on key services and plans for events (e.g. related to areas below) to understand implications for service delivery and plan/communicate accordingly e.g. Schools, Care homes, Commissioned services, Community Hubs, Leisure centres, Waste services.	**Mariana Pexton/ All Chief Officers**	• Guidance issued to managers about following national guidance specific to relevant areas such as DfE guidance for schools and DHSC for health etc. • Business Continuity Plans currently being refreshed as new information emerges and key issues being gathered and clarified with relevant government department. • Ensuring that communications are consistent and following government approach, with the public aware of the potential impact on services.
4.2	Monitor community tensions and providing community reassurance through regular channels e.g. faith and community leaders, responding appropriately when required.	**Shaid Mahmood**	• Partnership arrangements in place to promote messages of reassurance and to be aware and respond to any issues which may arise.
4.3	Ensure effective liaison with the third sector (VCFS organisations) to understand impact and provide advice and support to ensure a coordinated and safe approach to the use of community capacity.	**Cath Roff/Shaid Mahmood**	• Guidance shared with third sector representatives. • Rapid work being done to organise community effort to maximise offers of assistance but ensure this is done safely, especially with the most vulnerable. • Categorisation of type of support and clarification of pathway being worked through in advance of more formal approach to launching and promoting this additional mobilisation of community capacity both formal and informal. • Liaison with Leeds Community Foundation about launching and administering a scheme to support those in need. • Coordination of work on financial inclusion.
4.4	Recognising the community understanding role of Councillors, ensure appropriate information is provided to elected members to enable them to support the community in their wards.	**Shaid Mahmood/Mariana Pexton**	• Regular communication issued to all councillors with relevant guidance and information related to local impact including cases in Leeds, recognising the importance of patient confidentiality and signposting to national guidance and advice.
5. Organisational impact			
5.1	Ensure joined-up cross-departmental approach to Coronavirus (COVID-19) response within the council, within the context of the emergency management arrangements.	**Neil Evans**	• Overall Response and Recovery Plan developed to ensure coherence and consistency as well as compliance with national guidance.

			• Cross Council working group established as council Silver to ensure coordination and to connect to arrangements in health and social care. • Continuous assessment of resource and capacity required to progress this work to ensure that the best possible response is delivered.
5.2	Ongoing assessment of business continuity plans for the council's critical and non-critical services to understand the implications of the relevant scenarios and options for maintaining services.	**Mariana Pexton/all chief officers**	• In line with expectations of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, the framework is being utilised for Business Continuity Planning. • Services are refreshing Plans and continually assessing options for maintaining services. • Services where arrangements to work remotely from home is possible, will be encouraged at the most appropriate time. Assessment of some services, where working from home is not an option, and this is where we will focus the bulk of the effort to coordinate across services. This remains a very live and dynamic piece of work subject to continued reviews as the situation develops. • Focus particularly on front line services such as care and housing, services which require visiting and those which keep the city moving and working e.g. waste management, street cleansing, highways, housing repairs, passenger transport and catering. • Managing expectations of the level of delivery if a significant proportion of the council's workforce is affected (e.g. because of self-isolation or illness or school closures) is a key issue of consideration.
5.3	Identify council service budgets which may require additional financial investment or underwriting as a result of reduced income or increased expenditure. Consider requesting additional funding from government and the most effective use of funding from central government.	**Victoria Bradshaw**	• Systems are being established to capture the impact/potential issues so that these can be reflected in evidence for additional funding requests e.g. business grants, hardship schemes, social care funding etc.

5.4	Ensure regular engagement with council contractors and suppliers to identify any potential impact or risks to contractor performance.	**Dean Backhouse/ Commissioners**	• Liaison across services taking place with contractors and providers so that issues can be captured and responded to.
5.5	Track impact on council workforce affected by Coronavirus (COVID-19), including a period of staff absence, staff welfare, workplace conditions, intervening and issuing regular up to date guidance as required, so that managers can support individual members of staff.	**Andy Dodman**	• New categories for reporting established and a flexible resourcing plan being developed to help respond to business continuity issues. • Liaison with trade union representatives and extensive advice to workforce from a health and safety and general employment perspective.
5.6	Assess the potential impact on the council's Digital and Information Service (DIS) and respond as required – particularly: • Prioritise use of available resources to maintaining the availability of critical communication and IT systems • To make infrastructure changes and arrangements to enable remote working for large numbers (tbd) of staff • Protect the Council and partners from opportunistic cyber attack	**Dylan Roberts**	• Planning is underway to identify resources that DIS could redirect to undertake support work and thereby protect provision of communication/IT systems and to deal with incidents which occur. • Work has been completed to increase capacity on VPN connections to 10,000 workers although performance at the upper end of use may be slow • Encouraging staff to practice working from home so that devices are tested and readiness assured. • A set of guidance notes are being created in relation to : - supporting people in using their equipment to work at home - helping those in the office to use Skype meeting room facilities - providing tips and guidance to get the most out of their connection speeds - reminding people of their obligations around protecting information - general H&S guidance around DSE and avoiding social isolation • Encouraging staff to practice working from home so that devices are tested and readiness assured.
5.7	Assess the impact on events planning and management to understand implications	**Mariana Pexton**	• Strategic Safety Advisory Group will be used as the forum for this, within the context of national guidance. Meeting in March 2020. • Calendar of events in the city being considered and complex issues worked through.

5.8	Ensure other emergency plans are refreshed and invoked as appropriate for the circumstances or refreshed recognising the current context/situation e.g. unexpected deaths, rest centre plan etc.	**Mariana Pexton**	• Work in hand and issues will be raised and resolved as the situation develops.
5.9	Ensure that governance issues are considered and adapted for a range of scenarios for continuing member and officer business during the outbreak whilst also ensuring good governance.	**Andy Hodson**	• All upcoming council meetings being considered, along with surgeries, in order to give advice. • Sub delegation schemes being adapted with an emergency clause to enable alternative officers to make decisions if required • Consideration of urgency provisions for executive decision making • IT for members being adapted to ensure they can conduct council business remotely, with appropriate kit and with training being delivered.
6. Media and communications			
6.1	Capture the scale of enquiries, activity and impact through communications channels. Respond to media enquiries, referring to lead body/organisation where appropriate.	**Sara Hyman**	• All initial enquiries dealt with by Public Health England. • Local media enquiries and FOI requests beginning to increase and responded to accordingly.
6.2	Effective liaison and engagement with Public Health to promote communication and information sharing with key services (such as, Schools, Waste services, Higher/further education institutions, Health sector, Social care, Third sector, Faith organisations/leaders etc), the public and workforce.	**Sara Hyman**	• Range of communications issued and specifically advising reference to continually updated national guidance e.g. for schools etc seeking to ensure coherence and consistency on guidance from government.
6.3	Regularly update key stakeholders across the council and city, in particular, elected members and MPs, CLT, BCLT, COVID-19 (Coronavirus) response working group, schools, updates to Executive Board, stakeholders/partners, workforce etc.	**Mariana Pexton**	• Regular councillor and MP emails being sent, currently on a weekly basis, with guidance and reporting Leeds specific cases. • Regular all staff emails, and FAQs issued (refreshed when new national guidance is produced). • Messages to schools being issued, in line with DfE guidance, from the DCS • Leader and Chief Executive monthly communications used to reach broader stakeholders.

			• Leeds Alert being used to engage city partners as well as email communications.