

Community Committees Annual Report 2023/24

Date: 11th September 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Council

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

The city's ten Community Committees provide the infrastructure through which the council executes one of its democratic functions and community engagement ambitions. Together, the committees create an invaluable city-wide network, through which communities are encouraged to engage and influence how the Council and its partners delivers its business functions.

Community Committees were set up in June 2014 to improve the way the council works locally. They form part of our commitment to involving our residents more closely with the priorities for their local area and decision-making on funding and services, contributing towards the Best City Ambition and the council's overall aim of creating safer and stronger communities: [Best City Ambition](#).

The Annual Report looks at the progress made over the last 12 months. It outlines the changes which have taken place during 2023 to 2024 and gives examples of some of the work the Community Committees have carried out within their communities to improve the lives of local people of all ages and backgrounds. The report also looks at Wellbeing and Youth Activities Funding and the impact it makes, as well as the role the Community Committees undertake in bringing communities together.

As well as looking back over the last twelve months, the report looks forward and mentions the challenges & next steps for the committees. In particular it sets the scene for the Community Committee Review that will take place over the coming months. The review will also support the actions identified through the Local Government Association Peer Review and will consider how the committee infrastructure can improve community engagement and empower people so that they can become more involved in their local community and influence how services are delivered.

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

The report continues to cover the commitment to locality-based working, demonstrated over the last 12 months in the range of projects the committees have funded, spending over £1.6 million in 2023/24, totalling 458 separate grants that were provided to local grass root organisations, voluntary groups and charities. The Spending Money Locally section also shows the added value that projects provide to local communities in Leeds, not just in terms of financial match funding but also volunteer hours for projects funded by the committees.

It also references wherever possible, Leeds City Council's Best City Ambition and the three key strategic pillars; Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and Zero Carbon, by linking projects funded through the committees to the strategies: [Best City Ambition](#).

It is clear that strong, effective partnerships have continued to develop through the work of the committees and this is referenced throughout the report. These partnerships have flourished in our diverse communities and in many cases are continuing to progress, with some now offering wider support to meet local needs, contributing towards the Best Council Plan and the council's overall aim of creating safe, strong communities.

Recommendations

Members of council are asked to:

- a) receive the annual report; and
- b) note the work now being progressed to further improve the effectiveness, community engagement role and improvement work of the Community Committees, via the Community Committee Review.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

Members of council are asked to:

- receive the annual report; and
- note the work now being progressed to further improve the effectiveness, community engagement role and improvement work of the Community Committees, via the Community Committee Review.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Community Committee Chairs have been consulted on their respective Community Committee story contained with the Annual Report. The full report was also circulated to Community Committee Chairs for any feedback/comments on the 12th August 2024.

What are the resource implications?

Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

What are the legal implications?

There are no legal implications or access to information issues. This report is not subject to call in.

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

Risk implications and mitigation are considered on all funding applications. Projects are assessed to ensure that applicants are able to deliver the intended benefits.

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

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Zero Carbon

Projects submitted to the Community Committee for funding are assessed to ensure that they are in line with Council and City priorities as set out in the following documents:

1. Vision for Leeds 2011 – 30
2. Best City Plan
3. Health and Wellbeing City Priorities Plan
4. Children and Young People's Plan
5. Safer Stronger Communities Community Safety Strategy 2024-27
6. Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy
7. Climate Emergency

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

All projects that are funded by the Community Committees are measured for outcomes, in accordance with localised priorities that have been agreed with each individual committee. Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to address local priorities helps to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

Feedback and monitoring information is gathered upon completion of each project that is funded by the committees and this is provided as updates to Elected Members in their respective Community Committee meetings. Case studies are also regularly obtained from partners in various service meetings.

This report is meant as an update in relation to the work of the Community Committees over the last 12 months.

How will success be measured?

With the Indices of Multiple Deprivation data only published sporadically, we have previously struggled to measure the impact of local intervention. However, with the publication of the Social Progress Index for Leeds, this has changed. The Social Progress Index is a tool that helps measure how well Leeds is doing in terms of Inclusive Growth. It helps us understand what's happening in different areas of the city, on a ward-by-ward basis and by looking at multiple indicators, it offers a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city: [The Leeds Social Progress Index | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#)

The SPI compliments the IMD data, allowing us to compare each ward against its peers, as well as allowing us to track change over time. The SPI is made of three main parts: Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing and Opportunity. The various indicators measure specific outcomes, with the scores of each area showing on a scale from 0-100. This makes it easier to understand how well the city is doing and where our strengths and weaknesses lie.

In addition to this, each year the Community Committees produce an Annual Report. By listening to their local communities, the report has in the past, stated that the committees were able to allocate resources and funding where it was most needed; helping to protect the most vulnerable, helping to keep people safe from harm, assisting people with financial hardship and helping tackle social isolation and inequality. It also references wherever possible, Leeds City Council's Best City Ambition and the three key strategic pillars; Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and Zero Carbon, by linking projects funded through the committees to the strategies: [Best City Ambition](#).

What is the timetable for implementation?

Each year an Annual Report is produced that outlines the work and progress of the Community Committees.

The Community Committee Review will take place over the coming months, with approved recommendations from the review, being implemented in June 2025, in readiness for the summer cycle of committees.

Appendices

Attached at appendix 1 is a copy of the Community Committees Annual Report 2023/24, associated with this paper.

Background papers

There are no background documents associated with this paper.