



## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Thursday, 21st March, 2024 at 10.30 am

A pre-meeting will take place for all Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Cllr J Akhtar	- Little London and Woodhouse
Cllr B Anderson	- Adel and Wharfedale
Cllr S Golton (Chair)	- Rothwell
Cllr P Grahame	- Cross Gates and Whinmoor
Cllr A Hannan	- Headingley and Hyde Park
Cllr N Harrington	- Wetherby
Cllr A Khan	- Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
Cllr A Maloney	- Beeston and Holbeck
Cllr A McCluskey	- Farnley and Wortley
Cllr A Rontree	- Kirkstall
Cllr S Seary	- Pudsey
Cllr P Stables	- Wetherby
Cllr J Tudor	- Killingbeck and Seacroft
Vacancy	
Vacancy	

**To Note:** Please do not attend the meeting in person if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and please follow current public health advice to avoid passing the virus onto other people.

**Note to observers of the meeting:** We strive to ensure our public committee meetings are inclusive and accessible for all. If you are intending to observe a public meeting in-person, please advise us in advance by email ([FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk)) of any specific access requirements, or if you have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) that we need to take into account. Please state the name, date and start time of the committee meeting you will be observing and include your full name and contact details'.

To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'To View Meeting' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Scrutiny Board \(Environment, Housing & Communities\) - 21 March 2024](#)

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**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:**  
**Rebecca Atherton**  
**Tel: (0113) 37 88642**

# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></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><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</li> <li>3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</li> </ol> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – 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><b>No exempt items have been identified.</b></p>	

3

**LATE ITEMS**

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)

4

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

**MINUTES - 22 FEBRUARY 2024**

5 - 12

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2024.

7

**COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REVIEW**

13 - 40

To receive an update from the Director of Communities, Housing & Environment on the Community Committee Review.

8

**PARKS & GREEN SPACES STRATEGY - ANNUAL UPDATE**

41 - 74

To receive an update from the Chief Officer (Climate, Energy & Green Spaces) on progress with delivering the actions set out in the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

9

**END OF YEAR STATEMENT**

75 - 84

To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services which presents the 2023/24 end of year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) for consideration and approval.

10

**WORK SCHEDULE**

85 -  
92

To consider the draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

11

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year will take place on **Thursday 20 June 2024** at **10.30am**. There will be a pre meeting at **10.00am**.

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Golton in the Chair

Councillors P Stables, B Anderson,  
J Akhtar, J Tudor, A Hannan, A McCluskey,  
A Rontree, S Seary, A Khan and  
N Harrington

### **81 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against refusals of inspection of documents.

### **82 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no exempt items.

### **83 Late Items**

There were no late items.

### **84 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

However, Cllr N Harrington requested that it be noted she is a trustee of Wetherby in Support of the Elderly (WiSE) and Cllr S Golton asked that it be noted he is appointed as a Council representative to Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL).

### **85 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Grahame and A Maloney.

### **86 Minutes - 25 January 2024**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the 25 January 2024 were approved.

### **87 Matters Arising**

Regarding minutes 76 and 77, it was noted that the response of all five scrutiny boards to the budget proposals was submitted to the Executive Board on 7 February 2024. The report was also included in the document pack submitted to Council on 21 February 2024.

The Chair also confirmed that he had attended the Executive Board meeting on 7 February 2024 to make representations relating to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations regarding the accessibility and safety of parks and greenspaces.

## **88 Housing Activity Update**

The Chair introduced the item noting that the accompanying report updates the Scrutiny Board on key areas of Housing Leeds activity during 2023/24 – including housing rent collection, council housing voids, housing repairs and maintenance, complaints and damp, mould and condensation.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Dennis Moody (Chair, Tenant Scrutiny Board)
- Cllr Jess Lennox (Executive Member for Housing)
- James Rogers (Director, Communities, Housing & Environment)
- Mandy Sawyer (Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services)
- Adam Crampton (Head of Property Management)
- Kerrie Murray (Head of Homelessness)
- Craig Simpson (Head of Leeds Building Services)

Mandy Sawyer provided introductory comments, noting that the report reflects improvements in relation to several key performance indicators for Housing Leeds.

She highlighted the ongoing prioritisation of tenant concerns about damp, mould and condensation. She advised the Scrutiny Board that further improvements to advice and support services are being introduced following the recommendations of Leeds Tenant Scrutiny Board - this includes providing access to a practical awareness video.

Dennis Moody welcomed the fact that the Council accepted the recommendations of the Tenant Scrutiny Board about damp and mould.

Members sought clarity about the process that is followed in instances where damp, mould or condensation are reported. Adam Crampton set out the assessment process, along with timescales for dealing with the hazard in the first instance while the root cause is being established.

Concern was expressed about increased pressure on homelessness services. Board members were informed that there is a particular increase in the number of households who are unable to remain with family members, which may be attributable the cost-of-living crisis.

As a consequence of increased pressure, it was noted that there are more households living in temporary accommodation than the last time figures were reported to the Scrutiny Board. Kerrie Murray informed the Board that there is an increase of around 15 families a quarter moving into temporary accommodation.

Kerrie provided an overview of work to increase provision for both families and single households. 1500 people contact the service each week and around 150 of those are seeking temporary accommodation. The service continues to adopt a preventative approach to homelessness and therefore intervenes in cases very early. This approach was supported by Scrutiny Board members.

Members were reminded that consultation on changes to the local lettings policy is underway in response to pressure on the housing register. It was noted that Scrutiny Board members attended a working group in January 2024 on this process.

Mandy assured members that the Council would provide a robust response to the new requirements of the 2023 Social Housing (Regulation) Act, which is being overseen by the Regulator of Social Housing.

Clarity was sought about the procedures that are followed in instances where a tenant cannot pay their rent. Mandy provided an overview of the support that is provided to tenants and underlined the importance of engaging with the tenant before initiating a formal process.

She informed members that over 3,600 households have been supported to make some payment against rent arrears in 2023/24. This supportive approach has also resulted in more income being collected by the Council.

At the request of members, Mandy also set out the formal process for informing tenants that they are at risk of losing their home and outlined the steps that could lead to court proceedings. Mandy reiterated that there had been very few evictions in recent years.

Members queried whether refurbished garages could be let at higher rents to generate additional income. It was confirmed by Adam Crampton that a broad strategy for dealing with garages is in development. Opportunities to invest in sites that could deliver increased income may be explored as part of such a strategy. It was confirmed that in such cases ward members would be consulted about sites in their communities.

Members requested further detail about the number of garages in each ward, categorised by those that are let, those that are void and those that are unable to be let due to being in a state of disrepair.

It was confirmed that at the end of December 2023 700 properties were void, representing 1.35% of housing stock. This has reduced further since that time. It was confirmed that the target for voids remains 1%.

Cllr Lennox reiterated that it is desirable to have some void properties to enable people to 'move through the system.' However, she welcomed the overall trend of reduction in the level of voids.

Members requested a breakdown by ward of void properties and the reasons why those properties are void. There was particular interest in properties that have been void for over six months.

Consideration was given to the challenge of car ownership amongst tenants of high-rise buildings where there are limited parking spaces.

At the request of members, Adam Crampton provided an overview of how large or complex repairs are co-ordinated, highlighting an approach that draws on project management skills with the service.

Members were informed that high value repairs have increased over the last 6-9 months but changes to the process of managing these cases has improved efficiency.

It was noted that a need to improve communication associated with repairs is a recurring theme in tenant satisfaction surveys. Improvements have been made to the way in which teams engage with tenants.

Craig Simpson set out how Leeds Building Services (LBS) has strengthened communication with tenants. He noted the importance of developing strong relationships with housing managers, councillors and tenants. He provided an overview of the complaints process within LBS and the approach taken to larger works involving multiple visits to a property and several trades. Members welcomed the imminent introduction of 'on the way' texts. However, they also recommended introducing the means through which tenants could also respond to such messages.

Adam Crampton confirmed that 85% of appointments to carry out repairs are kept. He acknowledged the need to improve further but welcomed the positive trajectory.

Members sought clarity about whether there is the potential for the Council to dispose of a freehold where the associated properties have been purchased under the 'right to buy' mechanism. Adam Crampton confirmed that this issue is being explored.

Other matters raised by members of the Scrutiny Board included:

- It was confirmed that the 2023/24 HRA Capital Programme is on track to deliver £29.2m of major decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects.
- Opportunities to invest in environmental enhancements around Council owned assets will be considered within the context of financial constraints..
- The process of annual investment in the repair and replacement of lifts in high rise blocks.



- Concerns about the condition of signage to indicate where residents with disabilities can park.
- Progress with the Renters Reform Bill. Cllr Lennox noted she would be writing to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up to advocate for the abolition of Section 21 evictions.
- The process for rehousing people with complex needs.
- Mandy confirmed that the service is on track to ensure compliance with the Building Safety Act once the requirements go live.
- Progress to rehouse the residents of 11 high rise blocks identified for demolition.

**RESOLVED:** The Scrutiny Board noted and commented upon the update in relation to housing activity during 2023/24.

## **89 Ensuring the Resilience of the Third Sector in Leeds**

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Mary Harland (Executive Member)
- James Rogers (Director, Communities, Housing & Environment)
- Paul Money (Chief Officer, Safer, Stronger Communities)
- Samantha Powell (3<sup>rd</sup> Sector & Migration Partner Manager)
- Hannah Bailey (Chief Officer, Voluntary Action Leeds)
- Pip Goff (Director, Volition part of Forum Central)

The Chair introduced the item, reiterating the value of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector in Leeds and its integral role in supporting sustainable communities.

Cllr Harland reflected upon the diverse benefits the third sector delivers for the city and its citizens. She acknowledged the challenge of the third sector being asked to meet increased demand at a time of increased financial constraints.

Pip Goff thanked Samantha Powell for the collaborative approach to developing the accompanying report. She reiterated the huge challenges for the sector with multiple costs pressures facing organisations of all sizes. She noted that the third sector is now working in spaces that may have been occupied by local authority or health partners in previous years and she stressed the importance of identifying ways in which to work collaboratively in future.

Hannah Bailey echoed Pip Goff's comments, noting that the challenges facing the third sector are reflective of national trends. She highlighted that cost pressures facing organisations are compounded by increased demand from citizens who are themselves facing a 'cost of living crisis.'

The Scrutiny Board was provided with examples of successful collaboration between the third sector and public partners – for example Voluntary Action Leeds and Forum Central working with the Council to deliver the most recent Welcome Spaces Programme in the city. However, members were also asked to note that there has been a 25% reduction in the number of volunteers in the city and a reduction in the number of small and medium sized organisations.

Hannah went on to welcome the development of Leeds Third Sector Strategy 2023 – 2028 and the launch of Leeds Volunteer Strategy - as key documents produced for the sector with wide support from strategic partners.

It was agreed that there is a challenge for city partners in retaining the vibrancy of the third sector in Leeds at a time when the role of public organisations is reducing. It was acknowledged that this poses a significant challenge but also provides opportunities for bold, creative solutions.

The Scrutiny Board welcomed the report and noted the valuable role the third sector plays in supporting some of the city's most vulnerable citizens, as well as supporting minority communities.

The Board noted that the State of The Third Sector reports reflects the resilience of the sector. However, members recognised the need for greater long term planning to promote stability and sustainability. Pip highlighted the challenge for many third sector organisations of having to engage in short term contracts.

The Board questioned whether there would be value in the Council supporting the third sector to produce further information about the sector's performance, potentially through a visible, regular 'health check' on the sector. The potential value of introducing Key Performance Indicators was explored, along with ways in which to reflect practical challenges such as declining number of volunteers and "red tape" associated with commissioning processes.

The Scrutiny Board queried whether there is a future role for the Board in examining some of these issues in more detail with stakeholders.

Hannah Bailey expressed reservations about whether a single suite of KPIs could adequately capture the complex nature of the third sector in Leeds, which has over 3,000 organisations of varying sizes. However, she agreed that the public sector has an important role to play in creating the conditions to enable the sector and communities to thrive beyond commissioning services. Council investment in third sector infrastructure was seen as important in helping to create the right conditions for third sector groups to come together and deliver services effectively.

Pip Goff and Paul Money reiterated that the accompanying report demonstrates the importance of collaboration and co-production, and that there is support in the sector for this approach.

Members examined some of the barriers reported by third sector organisations including access to community assets and ways in which third sector organisations can share their knowledge to strengthen decision making at a neighbourhood level.

Reference was made to current research by the University of Leeds into urban co-production for disused land in Leeds.

Members recommended that consideration be given as to how the third sector might be engaged in the Council's ongoing community committee review.

Consideration was given to increased knowledge sharing amongst third sector organisations and a "generous approach to leadership" in the sector, particularly since the pandemic.

In response to member queries further information was provided in relation to the Leeds Community Anchors network.

Members recommended further consideration be given to how funding at a West Yorkshire level complements that being provided at a Leeds level.

The Chair thanked Pip and Hannah for their attendance, and their work within the sector. He reiterated that the Board would be happy to engage with the third sector in any areas where there is scope to add value.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the content of the report and recommended that further engagement in the next municipal year.

*12.16pm Cllr Anderson left the meeting.  
12.21pm Cllr Hannan left the meeting.*

## **90 Work Schedule**

Members considered the draft work programme for 2023/24.

The Executive Board minutes from the meeting on 7 February 2024 were also appended to this item for consideration so far as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board.

Members were asked to note the arrangements for a remote working group which will consider the Regulation of Social Landlords.

**RESOLVED:** The Scrutiny Board noted the draft 2023/24 work programme.

## **91 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next public meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) will take place on **21 March 2024** at **10.30am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at **10.00am**.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 21st March, 2024

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## Community Committee Review Update

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Community Committees were established in June 2014 to improve the way the council works locally. They form a part of the Council's Constitution and play a key role to give local people a greater say in Council affairs. All of the City's 99 Councillors sit on one of the 10 Community Committees, which operate across a geography covering 3 or 4 wards, covering inner and outer parts of the city.

The Committees provide the infrastructure through which the council executes one of its democratic functions and community engagement ambitions. As formal council meetings held in public, they are one of the few structures through which the council has delegated its decision-making powers to the local level, and they play a key role in helping to address a range of locally identified priorities that help to improve the places where people live.

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.

In June 2023, the Council's Executive Board supported a recommendation to undertake a full review of Community Committees involving all 99 Councillors, facilitated through the Council's Scrutiny structures. This report gives the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board an update on the progress of the review, to date

### Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to note the content of the report and:

- a) Support the review of Community Committees and their constitutional role in helping to shape and influence place.
- b) Provide their endorsement of the recommendations and accompanying work programme, as set out in appendix 1.

## What is this report about?

1. This report gives the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board an update on the progress of the Community Committee Review as agreed by the Council's Executive Board in June 2023.
2. Further reports to the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board in July and December 2023 set out in more detail the work aligned to the review from September 2023, in which five specific workstreams were identified:

✓ **Executive Delegated functions:**

[S3Da Community Committee Executive Delegation - Issue 1 Last amended on 26th May 2022.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#), currently:

- Well Being; covers a range of delegated budgets
- Community Centres
- CCTV
- Neighbourhood Management and Coordination
- Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services
- Community parks, cemeteries, closed churchyards, recreation grounds, urban woodland, natural areas, maintenance of roundabouts, other floral features and local green space
- Community Infrastructure Levy; Neighbourhood Fund

✓ **Delegated budgets:** Wellbeing Fund and Youth Activity Fund.

✓ **Community engagement and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD):** linked to the Local Government Association Peer Review and Member Development.

✓ **Community Committee Champions:** review of current themes, with a proposal to change Jobs & Skills to Cost of Living, or link to Inclusive Growth.

✓ **Governance and Meeting Structure:** review of reports and agenda structure and review of links to other related locality working arrangements e.g., Local Care Partnerships and School Clusters.

3. This report updates specifically on the progress made on the three workshops that have taken place so far: Community Committee Champions Role, Delegated Budgets and Community Engagement & Empowerment. It also provides next steps following these workshops, as well as providing an update to the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board on proposals for Workshop 4: Delegated Functions.

4. In addition, the report clarifies timescales for implementation of all new committee arrangements for the Community Committee Review, following detailed work taking place on review workstreams, via Task & Finish Groups (made up of Elected Members & council officers).

### **Elected Member Working Group**

5. The fourth meeting of the Member Working Group took place on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024. At this meeting, 'draft' recommendations were supported, which are attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

## **Member Workshops**

6. Following on from Full Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and the conversation regarding the Community Committee Review, the themed workshops in relation to specific workstreams aimed to engage and seek feedback and ideas from Elected Members.
7. All Councillors have had the opportunity to attend and participate at the workshops, which have taken place at the Civic Hall, Committee Room 6 & 7, before Full Council (exception is the Community Committee Champions session which was restricted to members who currently hold themed Champion positions for their committee).
8. Each workshop was organised and facilitated by the Communities Team and included input from the Executive Member for Communities, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles and Leader of Council. Highlighted below are some headlines that have emerged from workshop sessions. These comments have been fed into the Member Working Group for consideration and further investigation.

## **Community Committee Champions Workshop**

9. The Community Committee Champions Workshop was held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023, with 30 Elected Members participating = 60% participation rate (only Champions were invited to the session). The themed table discussions were led by the relevant Executive Member, supported by senior Officers from the theme service (Children and Families, Environments, Community Safety and Health and Wellbeing). The feedback from the workshop and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:
  - ✓ Review of the Champion role profiles.
  - ✓ Review the Champion themes of work.
  - ✓ Review the themed sub-groups.
  - ✓ Review the learning and development available for Champions.

## **Delegated Budget Workshop**

10. The Delegated Budgets Workshop was held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023, with 40 Elected Members participating = 40.40% participation rate. The feedback from the workshop, conversations with Elected Members and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:
  - ✓ A need to review the customer experience in applying for funding and support from Community Committees.
  - ✓ To consider the possibility of some delegated budgets, namely Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), taking place at ward level.
  - ✓ Develop and strengthen links with other external funders.
  - ✓ Consider the implications of merging the Youth Activity and Wellbeing Funds.
  - ✓ Consider how Community Committees can influence other Council funding streams.
  - ✓ Consider how Community Committees can income generate within wards.

## **Community Engagement & Empowerment Workshop**

11. The Community Engagement & Empowerment Workshop was held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024, with 45 Elected Members participating = 45.45% participation rate. Key themes included:
  - ✓ Need to be clear from a community committee perspective, what the engagement 'offer' is to local communities and how can we support them to feel more empowered locally. There

was an acknowledgement that we need to listen to our communities & support residents to do the things that interest them. In doing this, we need to consider what the current barriers are which may restrict or prevent local involvement and engagement.

- ✓ Acknowledgement that engagement comes in many different forms & committee meetings are just one aspect of engagement with our communities. Some basic principles for engagement to be developed, so that Elected Members can determine which engagement approach is best suited to their committee. It will never be 'one size fits all', as Leeds is a diverse city, with many different communities.
  - ✓ The structure of Community Committee meetings should be reviewed, with the potential for the 'Open Forum' at Community Committee meetings to be changed. Participants felt that the formality of committees can 'put some people off'.
  - ✓ Community Committee reports to be redesigned, in particular the Update Report. Review the use of language for the reports (use plain English, with no technical jargon), with better use of pictures & social media to promote, as well as sharing success/good news stories.
  - ✓ Consensus that priority setting with committees will assist with 'forward planning' and the funding of projects throughout the financial/municipal year.
  - ✓ Better use of technology to increase engagement with the committees i.e., webcasting of meetings, 'hybrid' meetings, as well as use of the SMART Survey technology, as a potential wider engagement platform with our communities in Leeds.
  - ✓ ABCD is being used in some parts of the city already, however not all. Some Elected Members are not aware of ABCD, so if we are serious about the ABCD model/approach being used across the city, we need to invest in Member Development. There was an acknowledgement however that 'true ABCD' has its challenges, particularly when working in the public sector.
  - ✓ Consideration to be given to developing a Chairs Role profile (along the lines of the Champions Role profile). The Chairs role is a key leadership role, so Chairs need to know that they have responsibilities. Member development/training is a key element of this.
12. The feedback from the workshop, conversations with Elected Members and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:
- ✓ Create some clear engagement principles for Community Committees.
  - ✓ Consider how the current format of the Community Committee could alter to allow more flexibility and meaningful community conversations to take place.
  - ✓ Consider the current agendas for Community Committees and the relevance and importance of the reports presented.
  - ✓ Create a role profile for Community Committee Chairs.
  - ✓ Provide ABCD training for all Elected Members and relevant frontline Council services.
  - ✓ Hold an annual Community Committee Summit for all Elected Members.

### **Delegated Functions Workshop**

13. The Delegated Functions workshop was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 with good attendance from Elected Members numbers to be confirmed. Key themes included.
- ✓ Improved communication and engagement with key services at an earlier stage when looking at a particular issues or service improvement.



- ✓ Services particularly Planning to have an officer resource dedicated to each Community Committee to improve links and a single point of contact.
- ✓ Following the Housing Advice Panels being disbanded there needs to be a place for Elected Members, Housing and residents to continue to work together to continue to support and improve communities.
- ✓ S106 funding discussion felt the rules around spend to be too prescriptive and not flexible enough to respond to changing local needs.
- ✓ All current Community Committee delegations need to be reviewed and if no longer relevant be removed.
- ✓ All delegations should be robust and accurately reflect the scope of influence of the Community Committee
- ✓ Lettings for Community Centres could be better managed at a local level with more opportunity for advertising and promotion.
- ✓ CCTV costs are increasingly significant when viewed in relation to a reduced budget, How can Community Committees better understand the impact of the cameras and how they might be resourced.
- ✓ Where services are funded jointly both internally and by Town and Parish Councils to deliver key services i.e., bin collections how can this be done more cost effectively.
- ✓ How can services ensure the right conversations are happening at a local level before the implementation of a new initiative or strategic change to delivery, working with the Community Committee.

14. The feedback from the Delegated Functions Workshop will reviewed in more detail to present to the Member Working Group for their consideration and comment then to agree some key recommendations for the Community Committee Review.

### **Feedback/comments regarding the Community Committees**

1. The workshop sessions have been well attended and Elected Members have provided excellent feedback on how they have been engaged and listened to throughout the review process. Further opportunities to comment through ward and specific briefings with officers have been offered to those members who were not able to attend the scheduled workshop sessions.
2. Elected Members have also fed back that they have welcomed and enjoyed the opportunity to get together with other Elected Members from other Community Committees and share good practice, as well as the opportunity to listen to new ideas and different approaches.
3. In the interests of being open, honest & transparent, all comments/feedback regarding the Community Committee Review (over 574), have been recorded from workshop sessions, emails to [communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk](mailto:communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk), as well as other meetings and these have been shared with the Member Working Group.
4. Over and above the forward work programme outlined in appendix 1, which will help to modernise many of the committee's current processes, systems and practice, feedback from the 3 workshops has highlighted a strong desire for the committees to work differently.

A summary of verbal member feedback includes:

- Community Committee agendas should be focused on local issues
- The current structure of Community Committees does not encourage resident participation, and the formality of the meetings is not always engaging for local people.
- Housing Advisory Panels - Members feel that committees may have a role to play to engage with Council tenants.
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) – Members feel that ABCD could be a focus for committees, but more work is required to ensure that the relevant Council services adopt these principles and ways of working.
- Leadership – Members want to provide greater local leadership and be better engaged. Many highlighted that they do not feel that services fully engage with them on local issues which can result in missed opportunities to deliver better local services and support better use of local resources.
- Community Committee Chairs – Committee Chairs are keen to see the meetings operate differently but recognise that more training and support is required to enable them to step in to a new leadership role.
- Delegations – Members want meaningful delegations given to committees where they can add value, and which better uses their local knowledge.

### **Draft Recommendations**

5. Draft recommendations are attached as Appendix 1 with this report. These recommendations have been agreed with the Member Working Group on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024, (recommendations have also discussed with Community Committee Chairs on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024).
6. Agreement has enabled further work to be undertaken via Task & Finish Groups, so that a detailed plan of change can commence. The proposal is that these changes will be brought back for discussion and approval in the next municipal year.

### **Workshop 4: Delegated Functions**

7. At the Member Working Group meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024, it was agreed that the date of the Delegated Functions Workshop would change to avoid a clash with full council which took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024, as Elected Members would be discussing annual council budget/s. The session was rearranged for the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 1.30 – 3pm.
8. The Member Working Group agreed to a Phase 1 (workshops 1, 2 & 3) outcomes to be reported and recommendations made to support the delivery of some operational changes to the way that the committees function. Phase 2, workshop 4 will enable more detailed work to take place with services to identify and work through what service/function-based delegations can be meaningfully brought forward to support a more detailed conversation with Elected Members in the next municipal year.

### **Next Steps**

9. Proposed next steps for the Community Committee Review, which have been discussed with the Member Working Group are as follows:
  - ✓ Agree draft recommendations.
  - ✓ Form 'Task & Finish Groups' with Elected Members and council officers to work through the recommendations from each workshop.

- ✓ Agree a forward work programme with timeline to agree recommendations, seek relevant approvals and plan implementation.
- ✓ Member development opportunities to be discussed with Governance.
- ✓ Organise an annual summit for the Community Committees to meet and discuss topics of interest.

### Forward Plan

10. A Forward Plan for this municipal year, 2023/24, is attached as Appendix 2 with this report.
11. A Forward Plan for the next municipal year, 2024/25, is attached as Appendix 3 with this report.

### Other Considerations

12. The Community Committees provides an infrastructure through which the council executes its democratic renewal ambitions, by bringing Elected Members and service providers closer to residents, to help shape and influence the places they live.
13. They are formal council meetings held in public and form a key element of the council's constitution and hold devolved powers from the council's Executive Board. Public attendance however at committee meetings in some areas is low and there is a danger that opportunities are being missed to fully engage with the public about the issues that matter most to them, in the areas where they live and work.
14. The review will need to consider therefore how the Community Committee infrastructure can improve community engagement and better empower local people, so that they can become more involved in their community and influence how services are delivered at a local level.
15. Elected Members will be fully aware that the council is under increasing pressures due to a range of factors. This includes the ongoing financial challenge, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the current cost of living crisis, as well as demographic changes which bring increased demands upon local services. The Community Committee Review must also consider effective use of public resources to deliver better outcomes for the residents of Leeds.
16. For any Elected Member that has been unable to attend any of the workshops, there have been other opportunities to engage with the Community Committee Review. The Safer Stronger Communities Team have offered individual briefing sessions to all Elected Members and a dedicated email address has been set up to capture feedback and thoughts regarding the review: [communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk](mailto:communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk)
17. The review will support the delivery of actions identified through the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review, specifically:

**Theme**

**Locality and Community Working**  
Supporting our city ambition to tackle poverty and inequality

**Recommendation**

Use the Peer Review recommendation to take stock of Locality and Community approaches with a focus on People, Assets and Governance, using this as the primary vehicle for delivering the Best City Ambition right across the city.

- Consider how to further strengthen place-based networks.
- In this context, review and develop the community committees and draw on the work of the Social Progress Index to measure progress.
- Invest in member development on strengths-based community development. Councillors' ambitions for their communities are clear but as the council's resources reduce members have an important role to play in supporting communities to be able to do more for themselves.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

18. Community Committees play an important role in understanding and addressing issues of concern to local people. One of the many ways they do this is by funding projects that address local priorities. In 2021/22, this was once again apparent as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect Leeds. With it came some very specific and immediate needs for our communities; challenges that the Community Committees addressed by funding much needed projects that tackled the immediate effects of the pandemic in each of the 33 wards in the city.
19. The commitment to locality-based working continues to be demonstrated in the broad range of projects that the Community Committees fund, spending nearly £1.8 million in 2021/22, totalling just under 500 separate grants that were provided to local grass-root organisations, voluntary groups and charities, to tackle the immediate and specific needs of our communities.
20. The work that takes place through our Community Committee structures proves invaluable in making sure our approach is tailored to meet the direct needs of our local communities in a responsive and effective way, therefore the review will need to take into consideration any impact that changes may have.
21. In addition to this, as the Community Committees have an engagement function, the review will need to consider how any changes will affect local communities in Leeds. The Community Committee Facebook pages and the social media activity that takes place through the Community Committee structures, ensure we reach a large number of residents every month through local stories and conversations.
22. During the pandemic our Community Committees played an essential role in providing a responsive information service to all our diverse communities in the city, by being a key source of reliable and up to date information. The Coronavirus Help Facebook Groups were set up as a way of promoting services, supporting communities and cascading information in an attempt to tackle the pandemic. The pages were also there to generate discussion and debate but also facilitate conversations around being neighbourly during the national pandemic and assist in some of the volunteering efforts in the city.
23. A universal approach continues to be delivered using the city-wide Community Committee infrastructure, to ensure that all parts of the city continue to benefit from the learning, experience and improvements delivered through the model of Locality Working. As such, a new Communities Team structure is now in place, providing a more integrated and flexible

approach to Locality Working around the citywide, targeted and seasonal and responsive work strands.

### How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

24. The Best Council Ambition reflects the current post COVID-19 and cost of living context, while maintaining the three pillar priorities of inclusive growth; health and wellbeing; and climate change, under the overarching priority of tackling poverty and inequalities. These nationally significant issues continue to have a huge impact on all areas of the Best Council Ambition, with the economy, employment, education, community resilience and health and wellbeing all detrimentally affected by the pandemic, which will undoubtedly limit progress towards our ambitions.
25. Community Committees will be a key factor in guiding the response to the multiple challenges the city faces, particularly as we begin to better understand the long-term health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.
26. Swings in climate and more extreme weather will create inequality, as financial disparity creates pressures between those able to invest in measures to maintain comfort, diet and activity that may be denied to those least able to afford it. A range of initiatives within the Community Committees supports the climate emergency agenda, including creating pocket parks, hanging baskets, planting additional trees, as well as creating areas of greater natural biodiversity that all help to improve air quality, by working with 'In Bloom' and 'Friends of groups throughout the city; also work to improve greater energy efficiency in buildings.

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

27. The Community Committee Review was approved by Executive Board on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023. A meeting of the 10 Community Committee Chairs took place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 to canvas their feedback on the scope and timescales for the review.
28. Consultation has also taken place with strategic leaders and service managers.
29. The review will seek to consult with both attendees of committees, including co-opted members, where these exist and non-attendees. Further discussions will take place with the Member Working group to agree the best way to deliver this aspect of the review.

### What are the resource implications?

30. The work articulated through the Community Committees and the Locality Working approach makes best use of existing resources already working in neighbourhoods and seeks to do things differently by making best use of the leadership role and knowledge of locally elected representatives; working with residents to shape their neighbourhoods and inform service re-design to address the needs of all our communities in Leeds. It also seeks to help communities to be more resilient and strengthen cohesion.

31. The council is under increasing pressures due to a range of factors. This includes the ongoing financial challenge, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the current cost of living crisis, as well as demographic changes which bring increased demands upon local services. The Communities Team structure provides an integrated and flexible approach to Locality Working around the citywide, targeted and seasonal and responsive work strands.
32. The Community Committees review must therefore consider the effective use of public resources to deliver better outcomes for communities. Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

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

33. The city's community committee structure provides an infrastructure through which the Council executes its democratic renewal ambitions, by bringing elected Council members and services providers closer to residents to help shape and influence the places where they live. They are formal Council meetings held in public and form a key element of the Council constitution and hold devolved powers from the Council's Executive Board. However, public attendance at committee meetings in some areas is low and there is a danger that opportunities are being missed to fully engage with the public about the issues that matter to them most in the areas where they live and work. The review will consider how the Committee infrastructure can improve community engagement and better empower local people so that can become more involved in their local community and influence how services are delivered.
34. The Council has determined a risk to community cohesion, and it has established this risk on its corporate risk register. It has also been discussing a need to change radically the way we work in localities and implemented a new approach to locality working in November 2017. Pressures in some of our most challenged and disadvantaged neighbourhoods are now greater than ever due to a range of factors. The communities of Leeds have changed rapidly over the past decade, this is much more apparent in the city's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A failure to fully engage and be inclusive to all the communities of Leeds may result in increased tensions leading to a sense of alienation and isolation.
35. These fractures may increase the city's risk of becoming more susceptible to the influences of those who want to divide our communities, making them more polarised and vulnerable to extremism and other harmful influences. The locality working approach through the Community Committees, seeks to engage with all communities, with a strong focus of the work on strengthening communities and building self-reliance and resilience.
36. Resources in many front-line operations have already been deployed on a needs-led basis with limited capacity from simply shifting where staff work to another area. Additionally, the agility of organisations to respond in the context of broader economic changes could challenge the pace of improvement. Locality Working through the Community Committees cannot just be about addressing poverty but also about more effective use of resources with all our communities, delivering better outcomes. Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.
37. Failure to fully engage and get 'buy in' from a range of partners and council services to support the work of the Community Committees and the delivery of the locality working approach will hamper the council's efforts to deliver significant and sustainable change in our

neighbourhoods. It is therefore imperative that we maintain and build on the whole Council approach, working with local communities to drive change and much needed improvements. An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening document is included at **Appendix 1**.

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

#### **What are the legal implications?**

39. Community Committees are a constitutional function of Leeds City Council. As such they are written into the Council's constitution. Any changes to the way that the committees operate therefore, will need to be reflected in the Council's Constitution, under Article 10 (committee procedure rules and terms of reference).
40. There are no exempt parts of this report so there are no access to information issues.
41. There are potential legal implications for the work articulated in this report subject to any recommendations that the review makes. Officers from Governance services will be involved in the review and advise of any potential legal implications should they arise.
42. This report is eligible for call-in.

#### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

##### **What other options were considered?**

43. The recommendation in the reports to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board and Executive Board, is to evolve the way that we work through the Community Committees, through a refreshed framework that enables greater impact and outcomes, delivered through a collective focus on all our communities in Leeds.

##### **How will success be measured?**

44. With IMD data only published sporadically, we have previously struggled to measure the impact of local intervention. However, with the publication of the Social Progress Index (SPI) for Leeds, this has changed. The Social Progress Index (SPI) 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 and offering us a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city. A link to Social Progress landing page can be found here: [The Leeds Social Progress Index | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#)
45. 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.
46. In addition to this, each year the Community Committees produce an Annual Report: [2 Annual Report 2022 23.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#). 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 3 key strategic pillars; Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and Zero Carbon, by linking projects funded through the committees to the strategies: [Leeds Best City Ambition.pdf](#)

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

- ✓ **July 2023:** Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board agreed review scope.
- ✓ **September 2023:** 1<sup>st</sup> Member Working Group meeting (Elected Member workshops TBC). Up to 4 member workshops to be developed between September 2023 and February 2024, to engage and seek feedback and ideas from Elected Members.
- ✓ **February 2024:** Working Group recommendations presented and approved.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Community Committee Review Recommendations.
- Appendix 2 – Forward Work Programme 2023/24.
- Appendix 3 – Forward Work Programme 2024/25.

### **Background papers**

- None.



## Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

### Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



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.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate:</b> Safer Stronger Communities Team	<b>Service area:</b> Communities
<b>Lead person:</b> Liz Jarmin	<b>Contact number:</b> 07891 278078

<b>1. Title: Community Committee Review</b>
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>
<b>If other, please specify</b>

<b>2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening</b>
<p>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 Council Plan and the council's overall aim of creating safe, strong communities.</p> <p>The committee's role and purpose have not been reviewed for a number of years, therefore the review of the Community Committee's role, purpose and governance arrangements, involving all 99 Councillors, will aim to use the scrutiny process as a mechanism for engagement and accountability.</p>

**3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration**

All the council’s strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community, city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?	x	
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> </ul>	x	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above, please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and:

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

**4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration**

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

## **Community Committees and use of the Social Progress Index**

All Community Committee funded projects are assessed in relation to Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration. In addition, the Communities Team ensures that the funding process complies with all relevant policies and legislation.

From this year, 2023/24, we will also be using the Social Progress Index (SPI) for Leeds as an additional tool to measure impact and progress of our work with the committees. SPI 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, by looking at multiple indicators and offering us a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city. The SPI compliments the IMD data, as it allows 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.

Recent events, such as COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis, continue to have a hugely significant impact on all areas of the Best City Ambition, with the economy, employment, education, community resilience and health and wellbeing all detrimentally affected by the pandemic, therefore, research and development and effective monitoring of impact on equality will form a focus of work going forward.

As part of the delegated budget workstream in relation to the Community Committee Review, specific focus will be on refining the criteria for wellbeing funding, to include a greater emphasis on the cost of living crisis, as well as the equality, diversity & inclusion agenda, in addition to the cohesion agenda.

## **Communication and Community Engagement**

The Community Committees currently utilise a variety of engagement methods/tools, including face to face meetings, online meetings, social media, local engagement plans and email distribution lists.

During COVID-19 all Community Committees had to amend their engagement approach, with varying amounts of participation, however COVID-19 has provided a real opportunity for the committees to look at how they actively engage in the future with a much wider audience and discussions are ongoing around future meetings, looking at alternative ways of engaging with the public.

The proposal through the Community Committee Review is that we will review our engagement approach through research/sharing good practice, to identify the most appropriate channels and platforms to use and how these could be incorporated to create more inclusive engagement work; looking at how 'in person' and digital approaches could blend together to make effective and accessible engagement.

We are also aiming to look at agendas and reports that are taken to the Community Committee meetings; looking at how we can re-shape the Update Report to be more engaging; how we can better demonstrate the value and impact of projects taking place in their respective wards in reports that go to the committee; how they can link up with

Priority Ward Partnership Plans and how they can look more attractive and visually appealing to encourage people to read them.

### **Identify potential barriers on who may be affected**

Work continues to take place in Leeds to understand and get a picture of the disproportionate or differential impact on inequality that is happening due to COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. However, the emerging evidence highlights that both of these have further exacerbated social and economic inequalities and we need to better understand what these impacts are on communities in Leeds. What it tells us so far mirrors national evidence and the local narrative that major events such as these do have a disproportionate and differential impact based on where you live, your gender, your ethnicity and your job.

The key issues pertinent to all communities of interest and the general public include:

- Navigating information & guidance: Challenges around accessing accurate, appropriate, and accessible information in a rapidly changing scene, littered with mis/dis-information and complex communications.
- Access to essential provisions and services: Challenges in gaining/maintaining access to food, essential personal and household items; and accessing support necessary to protect health, care, and wellbeing.
- Social isolation & boredom: Challenges around the loss of social bonds, relationships and contact; the loss of physical and intellectual stimulation.
- Mental Health – low level anxiety to crisis: Challenges around management of pre-existing mental health issues and the emergence of new concerns.
- Abuse, domestic violence and safeguarding issues: Challenges around imposed segregation of perpetrators and victims, accessing support whilst experiencing violence and abuse.
- Concerns about restrictions being lifted: Challenges around managing change uncertainty and the concerns and anxieties which this brings.
- Digital Exclusion: Communities and individuals having limited/no access to equipment and/or data thus exacerbated barriers to accessing information, support and social connection.

### **• Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

**The following paragraphs provide examples from the Community Committee Youth Summits to overcome inequality.**

### **Youth Summits**

A key objective for the Community Committees is that we engaged with a wide variety of young people and that this engagement reflected the true diversity of the city, not just young people who are academically inclined, or naturally engaged with these types of events.

With this in mind the Communities Team attended the SEND Youth Summit, alongside the Voice & Influence Team, to consult with young people that have special education needs & disabilities. At the SEND Youth Summit which took place in November 2022, the Community Committees engaged with 56 young people that have special educational needs & disabilities.

We're aware that at one of the Youth Summit events that took place, we had a small number of young people that were home schooled and this is an avenue we would like to explore for future events.

The Communities Team also delivered a Youth Summit to young people from the LGBTQ+ community and at this event in March 2023 there was 15 young people in attendance.

The Community Committee Youth Summits engaged with 57 young people that are identifiable as being entitled to free school meals (this number will increase as we are still awaiting data from events).

### **Youth Activity Fund Consultation**

Alongside the physical Youth Summit, the Communities Team created a consultation survey for young people, as another objective is that we, "consult with as many young people as possible (hybrid approach), by ensuring that alongside the summits, other consultation is coordinated; for example, online consultation, Breeze Summer Events": <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/YouthActivities2022/>

The online survey had 2340 responses, with an additional online survey being created to engage with young people that have special educational needs and disabilities. In relation to this survey, we had 144 responses (in total = 2484 across both surveys).

#### **• Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

The Community Committees Annual Report covers some of the progress of all ten committees and demonstrates how they helped provide local residents with a voice. It also provides examples of 'real life' human stories and how some of the projects the committees have funded have benefitted local communities across Leeds, contributing towards the Best City Ambition and the council's overall aim of creating safe, strong communities.

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.

**5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.**

N/A

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:

N/A

Date to complete your impact assessment

N/A

Lead person for your impact assessment

N/A

(Include name and job title)

## 6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

**Name**

**Job title**

**Date**

Paul Money

Chief Officer - Safer  
Stronger Communities  
Team

June 2023

## 7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening 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** screening's should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk). For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

**Date screening completed**

13<sup>th</sup> June 2023

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

N/A

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

N/A

## Community Committee Review 'Draft' Recommendations for Approval

RAG Rating = **Green** (implement straight away); **Amber** (further work required via Task & Finish Groups); **Red** (unable to implement)

Recommendation	Approval needed (Y/N)	Work programme to be developed & implemented	RAG	Notes
<b>Champions Role</b>				
<b>Review Champions role/role profile:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify clear accountability.</li> <li>Responsibilities.</li> <li>Boundaries.</li> <li>Link to the committee Chair.</li> <li>Linked to strategic aims locally.</li> <li>Pre-agreed level of service support.</li> </ul>	Y	Autumn 2024		General Purposes Committee approval needed. Full Council approval needed.
<b>Champion themes to be reviewed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment &amp; Skills Champion to be renamed Inclusive Growth.</li> </ul>	Y	Autumn 2024		General Purposes Committee approval needed. Full Council approval needed.
<b>Review of sub groups:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership.</li> <li>Terms of reference.</li> <li>Frequency.</li> <li>Efficacy.</li> <li>Links to other themes.</li> <li>Any potential budget?</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?
<b>Development &amp; learning for Champions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design a learning and development package for new Champions.</li> <li>Look at a mentoring/peer support network.</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?

<b>Delegated Budgets</b>				
<p><b>Review full customer journey when applying to committees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application form (1 for all budgets)?</li> <li>• Funding deadlines (cycles)?</li> <li>• Cross committee applications/economies of scale.</li> <li>• Due diligence process.</li> <li>• Funding agreements.</li> <li>• Supporting documentation.</li> <li>• Monitoring process (inc. interim monitoring/project visits).</li> <li>• Evidence required.</li> <li>• Process to ensure other funding opportunities shared with organisations.</li> <li>• Can we make the funding process less bureaucratic for organisations?</li> </ul>	Y	April 2025		Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?
<p><b>Review localised committee decision making process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deferments (do we limit this)?</li> <li>• DDN's.</li> <li>• Finance meetings pre-committee.</li> <li>• Finance Sub Groups.</li> <li>• CIL arrangements.</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		<p>Any changes to decision making process will need to go to Full Council.</p> <p>Other changes will not need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p>



<p><b>Agree local priorities for Community Committees at start of each municipal year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support/fund communities in capacity building as LCC has adopted the ABCD approach.</li> <li>• Look at social value.</li> <li>• Review every year.</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		<p>Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p>
<p><b>Develop better links with other funders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve links with Parish &amp; Town Councils (CIL).</li> <li>• Mayor's Office (Safer Communities Fund).</li> <li>• West Yorkshire Police (POCA).</li> <li>• West Yorkshire Combined Authority.</li> </ul>	Y	April 2025		<p>Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p> <p><i>To increase funding opportunities with Community Committees.</i></p>
<p><b>Look at how committees can influence other council funding streams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Engagement Budget (previously HAP).</li> <li>• Climate Action Grants.</li> <li>• S106.</li> <li>• How this influence can also link to specific Champion themes.</li> </ul>	Y	April 2025		<p>Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need final sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p> <p><i>So that they become better community 'place shapers': EHC Scrutiny Board statement on plans for community parks, Oct 2023: "Community Committee Review...members recommended that local influence over funding should be an integral part of the current community committee review."</i></p>
<p><b>Look at how committees can become more enterprising/potential income generators.</b></p>	Y	April 2025		<p>Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p> <p><i>Example given in MWG of how to generate income in a ward through parking tickets, which then pays for the officer.</i></p>

<b>Community Engagement &amp; Empowerment</b>				
<b><i>Gather feedback and opinions from existing attendees and non-attendees on their local committee and how they can work better/improve their reach.</i></b>	N	July 2024		<i>Feedback from existing attendees to be analysed and feedback to committee Chairs and the MWG. Consultation with non-attendees to take place through existing engagement methods, LCAN, community newsletters etc.</i>
<b><i>Consider how committees can further support the work of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector, particularly in relation to sector resilience and empowerment:</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector resilience as a key theme for 1<sup>st</sup> CC Summit.</li> <li>• Consider the role of the LCAN network as potential co-optees.</li> </ul>	N	Summer 2025		General Purposes Committee approval needed. Full Council approval needed.
<b><i>Create clear engagement principles for committees/engagement offer:</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a 'toolbox' of engagement techniques/approaches that committees can implement dependent on the audience/issue.</li> </ul>	Y	April 2025		Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?  <i>Acknowledgement that the formal committee meeting is only one small element of the engagement approach in Leeds. There are many other examples of engagement with communities in Leeds, via the Community Committees, such as committee workshops, Youth Summits, Public Forums &amp; events &amp; festivals etc.</i>
<b><i>Look at structure of committee meetings to allow for more meaningful engagement:</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a name change for the Community Committees.</li> <li>• Listen to residents (what would they like to see discussed at meetings).</li> <li>• Co-optees for all committees?</li> <li>• Open Forum/resident participation, more flexibility needed.</li> <li>• Ensure agendas reflects different wards.</li> </ul>		Summer 2025		General Purposes Committee approval needed. Full Council approval needed.  <i>Priority setting with local communities could be done at the end of the year, potentially by using SMART Survey technology (as well as other means), which could then inform a Community Committee Forward Plan for the year ahead.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme for each meeting, working with the relevant Champion &amp; services.</li> <li>• Consideration given that the Community Committee visits each committee ward in turn.</li> <li>• Use of technology to live stream/webcast committee meetings (mobile device equipment).</li> <li>• EDI agenda, ensure all protected characteristics are considered when arranging meetings/preparing reports.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Look at structure of committee reports to allow for more meaningful engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Report.</li> <li>• Update Report (repurposed, or removed altogether)?</li> <li>• Review use of language (plain English, no technical jargon).</li> <li>• Better use of pictures &amp; social media to make reports more visually appealing.</li> <li>• Sharing success/good news stories.</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?
<p><b>Create Chairs Role profile for the committees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify clear accountability.</li> <li>• Responsibilities.</li> <li>• Boundaries.</li> <li>• Link to the committee Champions.</li> <li>• Pre-agreed level of service support.</li> <li>• Training.</li> </ul>	Y	Summer 2025		General Purposes Committee approval needed. Full Council approval needed.
<p><b>ABCD training for identified groups/organisations across Leeds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with Adults &amp; Health.</li> <li>• Links with Voluntary Action Leeds.</li> </ul>	Y	To be discussed with Adults & Health Service		To be discussed with Adults & Health Service.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with Local Community Anchor Network (LCAN).</li> <li>• Links with other third sector organisations.</li> </ul>				
<b>ABCD training for all Elected Members.</b>	Y	To be discussed with Adults & Health Service		To be discussed with Adults & Health Service.
<b>Annual Community Committee Summit.</b>	Y	Feb/Mar 2025		<p>Won't need this to go to a formal council meeting for approval, however, will need sign off from somewhere i.e., Chairs Forum/Group Leaders?</p> <p><i>Opportunity for all 99 Elected Members/10 Community Committees to get together &amp; have an annual summit that shares good practice.</i></p>
<b>Delegated Functions</b>				
Review any current SLA arrangements to ensure they are still relevant, as well as looking at others that could be in scope.	Y	Summer 2025		<p>Approvals would need to be via Executive Board.</p> <p><i>Initial workshop on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, to find out what Elected Members think could/should be delegated to Community Committees. Further workshop with Elected Members later in the year once meaningful discussions have taken place with relevant services.</i></p>

## Community Committee Review 2023/24 – Forward Work Programme

Date	Work Programme
<b>20<sup>th</sup> Jul 23</b>	<b>Scrutiny Board (report/agree Member Working Group)</b>
Jul 23	Write to Scrutiny Chairs requesting representation
Jul 23	Meeting with Governance and Corporate Support
<i>Aug/Sep 23</i>	<i>Political Party Group Meetings</i>
Aug 23	Draft terms of reference for Member Working Group
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Oct 23</b>	<b>Community Committee Chairs Forum (item on review)</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup> Oct 23</b>	<b>Member Working Group: 1<sup>st</sup> meeting (agree terms of reference)</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> Oct 23</b>	<b>Community Committee Champions Workshop 1</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup> Nov 23</b>	<b>Delegated Budgets Workshop 2</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> Nov 23</b>	<b>Member Working Group: 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting (update on workshops/check in re: report for Scrutiny Board)</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Dec 23</b>	<b>Scrutiny Board (report on issues &amp; feedback from workshops)</b>
<b>17<sup>th</sup> Jan 24</b>	<b>Community Engagement &amp; Empowerment Workshop 3</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> Jan 24</b>	<b>Member Working Group: 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting (update on workshops &amp; feedback from Elected Members)</b>
<b>31<sup>st</sup> Jan 24</b>	<b>Community Committee Chairs Forum (item on review)</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> Feb 24</b>	<b>Member Working Group: 4<sup>th</sup> meeting (agree 'draft' recommendations from w/shops 1, 2 &amp; 3)</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> Feb 24</b>	<b>Community Committee Chairs Forum (update on agreed 'draft' recommendations from w/shops 1, 2 &amp; 3)</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Mar 24</b>	<b>Delegated Services Workshop 4 (listening exercise)</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Mar 24</b>	<b>Scrutiny Board (draft recommendations presented from w/shops 1, 2 &amp; 3)</b>

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## Community Committee Review 2024/25 – Forward Work Programme

Date	Work Programme
Jun 24	Task & Finish Groups 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting (1 per CC Review workstream)
Aug 24	Task & Finish Groups 2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting (1 per CC Review workstream)
Sep 24	Member Working Group (check in on Task & Finish Groups)
Oct 24	Delegated Services Workshop 4 (feedback on discussions)
Oct 24	Task & Finish Groups 3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting (1 per CC Review workstream)
Oct 24	Scrutiny Board (update on Task & Finish Groups)
Dec 24	Task & Finish Groups 4 <sup>th</sup> meeting (1 per CC Review workstream)
Dec 24	Member Working Group (check in on Task & Finish Groups)
Feb 25	Task & Finish Groups 5 <sup>th</sup> meeting (1 per CC Review workstream)
Mar 25	Member Working Group (final check in on Task & Finish Groups)
Mar 25	Scrutiny Board (update on Task & Finish Groups)
Mar 25	CLT Cabinet feedback
Mar 25	Communicate recommendations
Apr 25	General Purposes Committee (report for approval of work from Task & Finish Groups)
Apr 25	Exec Board (report for approval of delegated functions)
May 25	Full Council Annual Meeting (approve arrangements)
May 25	Councils Constitution/Community Committee Procedure Rules documents updated
Jun 25	All new Community Committee arrangements commence

Community Committee Chairs Forum will be kept updated on CC Review as a standard agenda item in Chairs Forum meetings.

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## Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy progress update

Date: 21 March 2024

Report of: Chief Officer, Climate, Energy and Green Spaces

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities).

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

This report provides an update on progress with delivering the actions set out in the *Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy* two year's on from its publication. It covers the period Jan – December 2023. Highlights include:

- 77% of community parks achieving the Leeds Quality Park standard.
- Tree planting taking place at 58 new locations across the city
- New flagship playground opened at the Arium
- Significant external investment in local public green space for improvements to play, sports facilities and nature conservation.
- Over 14,000 hours of volunteer time recorded.

The report also makes proposals for a small number of changes to the actions in the Strategy

### Recommendations

- a) For Scrutiny to consider progress so far with delivering the goals and actions set out in the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.
- b) For Scrutiny to consider the proposed changes to the actions set out in the Strategy as outlined in section 3.1 below.

### What is this report about?

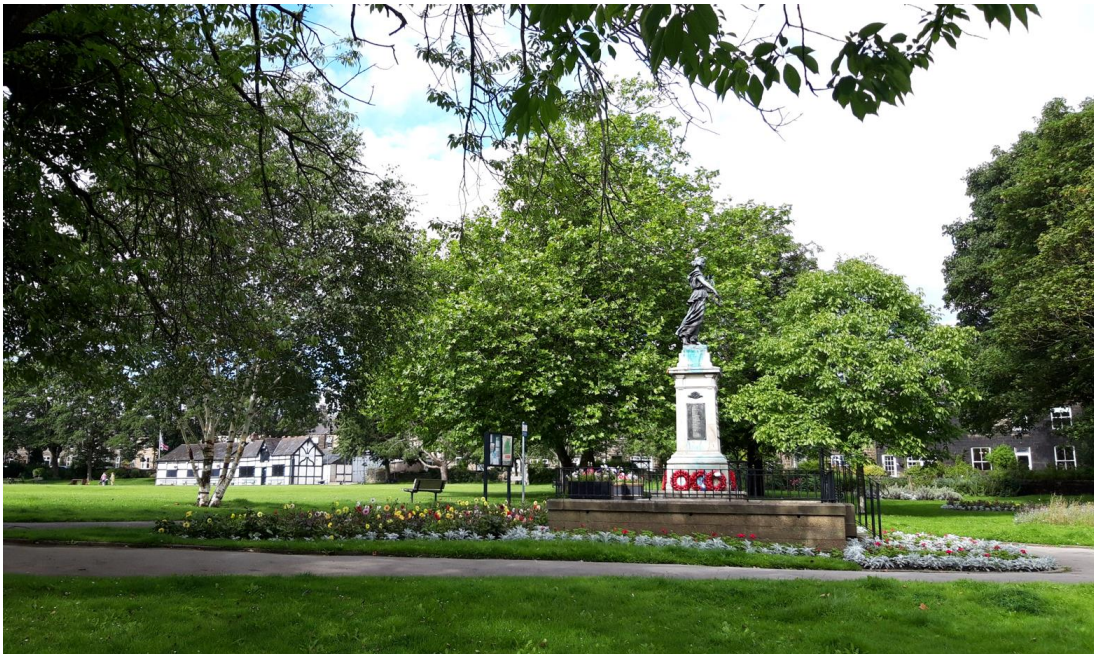
#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Following an extensive public consultation process, which included the formal Scrutiny process, the [Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy](#) was published in February 2022.
- 1.2 The strategy sets out a vision for Leeds City Council's Green Spaces Service, and the actions that will be undertaken by the service to deliver that vision over the 10 years from 2022 – 2032.

- 1.3 The vision set out in the strategy is for Leeds City Council to '*provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK.*'
- 1.4 To ensure this vision is achieved, eight priorities for the Parks and Countryside Service are outlined in the strategy:
  - i. Quality
  - ii. Climate and biodiversity
  - iii. Access for all
  - iv. Culture
  - v. Child friendly
  - vi. Working with communities
  - vii. Financial sustainability
  - viii. Health and wellbeing
- 1.5 The priorities support the Best Council Plan and are closely aligned with the 3 pillars of the Best City Ambition – Zero Carbon, Inclusive Growth and Health and Wellbeing.
- 1.6 For each priority, specific goals, and the actions that will be undertaken to achieve them, are identified in the strategy document, along with a time scale for delivery (short term - 1-3 years, medium term – 4-6 years; long term – 7-10 years, for each action).
- 1.7 This report, and the accompanying document in appendix 1, outlines progress on those actions.

## 2. Highlights

- 2.1 Progress on each action listed in the Strategy is set out in appendix 1.
- 2.2 Key developments that have taken place in 2023 towards the goals set out in the Strategy are outlined below.
- 2.3 **Quality priority - *Providing high quality parks and green spaces.***
- 2.4 All city parks (Roundhay, Middleton, Temple Newsam, Golden Acre, Chevin Forest Park and Kirkstall Abbey) achieved the national Green Flag standard in 2023.
- 2.5 One of the 2 Key Performance Indicators in the strategy is an aspiration in the Quality priority 'For all community parks to reach the Leeds Quality Park (LQP) standard during the life of the strategy'.
- 2.6 In 2023, 50 of the 65 community parks (77%) that were judged, passed LQP. This means the number of community parks reaching the LQP standard has increased year on year since 2010 (when just 22% passed) and that we continue to get closer to our goal for all community parks to reach the standard.



*Calverley community park achieved LQP in 2023*

- 2.7 Following a decision at Executive Board on 7 February 2024, rather than judging all community parks, cemeteries and crematoria annually, a third of the sites will be judged against the LQP criteria each year on a rota basis with those scoring lowest to be prioritised.
- 2.8 Efforts continue to be made to source and allocate external funding to improve the community parks that are failing LQP to achieve the goal of getting them all to the standard by 2032. In 2023, approximately £1.2 million of external funding from S106 and match (such as CIL, Wellbeing, WBI, Veolia) was committed for investment in community parks.
- 2.9 In 2023, a new process for producing 'Plans on a Page' for community parks was developed focussing on a comprehensive public consultation and engagement process including online surveys and face to face conversations on site and in the local community. Plans for Harehills park, East End park, Burley park and Blenheim Square were completed and Woodhouse Ridge went out to consultation. In 2024, consultations will be undertaken on a further 12 community parks and the plans for those sites should be finalised by the end of the year.
- 2.10 Tropical World passed its zoo inspection with flying colours in 2023 and some new animals were introduced to the refurbished Rainforest Canopy area of the attraction.



*Animals newly introduced to Tropical World in 2023.*

- 2.11 Climate and Biodiversity priority - *Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.*
- 2.12 The second key performance indicator in the Strategy is to help combat the climate emergency by planting 50 hectares of trees each year.
- 2.13 2023 was a year in which we reviewed progress on the ambitious tree planting scheme that commenced in 2020, so there was a focus on re-planting at sites where a number of trees

previously planted had died, and ensuring systems are in place to make certain as many newly planted trees as possible survive in future years. Tree planting also took place at 58 new sites. In total 52 hectares of trees were planted in 2023.

- 2.14 With regards making improvements to our green spaces for the benefit of wildlife, the Tropical World team, in collaboration with the charity Butterfly Conservation, created a new wildflower area in Roundhay Park. Using seed sourced through Natural England, native wildflowers and grasses are now being grown in order to provide areas where British butterflies and other invertebrates can thrive. Accompanying signage was also installed providing educational information about the project and the native butterfly and plant species that can be seen there. Each year, through spring and summer, Tropical World staff record data on butterfly species abundance within the park, which is submitted to Butterfly Conservation, to further the understanding of native butterfly species populations in the UK.



*Butterfly conservation area cultivated in Roundhay park in 2023.*

- 2.15 2023 was also a significant year for nature conservation in the city because a lot of work was undertaken by our service, in partnership with colleagues in the Planning team, to get the necessary legal and regulatory systems in place so Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) can be delivered on our green spaces. The new BNG planning condition presents an opportunity for significant investment in wildlife habitat improvements such as wildflower meadows, hedges and ponds. The scheme, which has so far been non-mandatory, has already raised £2.5 million for this purpose. A Technical Officer with a background in ecology was recruited in 2023 to help us deliver BNG and the first set of schemes has been identified with habitat improvements on the ground due to be implemented from 2024, starting with woodland improvements at Armley park.
- 2.16 The Green Spaces education team received Healthy Holidays funding in 2023 to provide activities to enthuse and engage children and young people about green spaces, wildlife and nature. Activities including environmental art, den building and nature walks were delivered during August 2023 at Hunslet Moor, Armley Park, Meanwood Park, Tropical World, Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Pudsey Park – 695 children were engaged.



*Bushcraft at Hunslet Moor (part of Healthy Holidays), summer 2023*

- 2.17 Access for All priority - Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible for everyone who wants to use them.
- 2.18 In 2023, as per the commitment in the Strategy, a process for undertaking accessibility audits of our green spaces was developed. It was based on wide-reaching background research into what makes a fully accessible public space (e.g. using the *British Standard S8300-1:2018* - a standard of design for accessible and inclusive built environment), and consultation with local experts such as the Council's Disability Officer and the Leeds Disability Hub and it covers things like; how easy our sites are to enter and move around, how welcoming and safe the sites feel and whether they provide a range of facilities to meet the needs and interests of the wide range of people living in Leeds.
- 2.19 Following the production of the access audit, 20 community parks were audited. The findings of the audits will be fed into the park plans and any proposals to invest in the sites in future.
- 2.20 In the 2023 LQP judging, 53 out of 64 community parks (83%) and 18 out of 25 cemeteries/crematoria (72%) achieved 7 or above for *Equal Access for All* criteria.
- 2.21 A new space that is particularly accessible and welcoming was created in Barley Hill park in 2023. Designed as a quieter space that will appeal to all ages, it includes a story telling throne, chess board and raised beds for food growing.



*Information about the new 'Gather and Stay' space at Barley Hill park*

- 2.22 Culture priority - Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.
- 2.23 757 events (including markets, community galas, funfairs, sponsored walks, food festivals and rock concerts) were facilitated by the Green Spaces service in our parks during 2023 with around 650,000 people participating in them overall. Live music concerts – 'Live at Leeds' and 'Slam Dunk' returned to Temple Newsam and the Leeds West Indian Carnival, which is Europe's longest running Caribbean carnival parade, returned to Potternewton

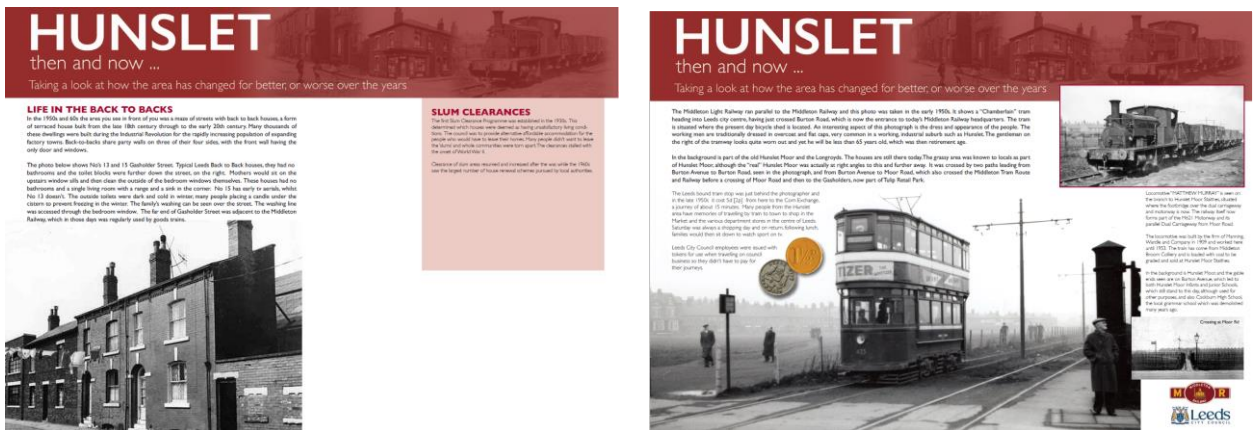
park. We also hosted 25 'My Leeds,' community-led events along with the WOW (Women of the World) Barn at Cinder Moor for the 2023 City of Culture.

2.24 In 2023, the Green Spaces events and activities leaflet 'Out and About' was re-launched. The leaflet, which is widely distributed online and at visitor attractions around the city, is used to promote our events, income generating visitor attractions, volunteer opportunities, sports facilities and the like.



Extracts from Out and About leaflet

2.25 Four heritage interpretation signs were installed at Tulip Street green space in South Leeds which are eventually to form part of a South Leeds heritage trail incorporating Cross Flatts park where the installation of new history signs is due to take place shortly.



Heritage information signs installed at Tulip Street in 2023

2.26 Deer tours were launched at Lotherton in summer 2023. These allowed visitors to join a new programme of tractor-trailer rides among the herd of 45 red deer and learn more about the animals and their habitat. The tours proved very popular and will be repeated in 2024.



Deer at Lotherton

- 2.27 Child Friendly priority - *Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit so that they can gain the health, wellbeing and educational benefits of spending time in them.*
- 2.28 An independent audit of play facilities in parks was undertaken in 2023 – the results of this enable us to prioritise resources for maximum benefit going forward.
- 2.29 Over £1 million of external funding (from S106 and match such as Veolia, Wellbeing and CIL) was invested in local play facilities across the city in 2023 (locations include Meanwood park, Chapel Allerton park, Woodhouse Moor, Meadowfield and Gildersome park). For teenagers, a new multi-use games area was installed at Hunslet Moor and a BMX track was refurbished at East End park and plans for a space aimed at teenage girls at Lewisham park were developed.



Newly refurbished play area at Chapel Allerton park

- 2.30 Working with Communities priority - *Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the Parks and Countryside Service.*
- 2.31 The Parks and Countryside Service currently works with over 100 *Friends* (or similar) groups, 30 *In Bloom* groups and 600 sports clubs to engage people with, care for and improve green spaces for recreation, health and nature across the city.
- 2.32 We have recorded a total of 14,796 hours of volunteering being undertaken on our sites involving a range of tasks (e.g. tree planting, hedge-laying, sowing wildflower seeds, pulling Himalayan balsam, improving footpaths) with the Ranger team. We are also extremely grateful for the support of hundreds of other volunteers who contribute many more

unrecorded hours to caring for public parks and green spaces in the city through activities such as litter picking, fundraising and organising events.



Corporate volunteers hay raking at Asket Hill, Sept 2023

- 2.33 Financial Sustainability priority - *Ensuring that quality green space is available for the long term.*
- 2.34 S106 developer's contributions through Planning continue to provide significant external funding for green space improvements with over £2.7million of S106 (and match funding from grants such as WBI, Wellbeing, Veolia, CIL and MICE) being committed to green space schemes such as playground improvements, soft landscaping, path improvements and the installation of benches, bins and fences on a number of sites in 2023.
- 2.35 We continue to invest in our income generating visitor attractions, cafes and shops where we see opportunities to improve the visitor experience and sustain/increase income. As part of this work exciting new playground was installed at the Arium in 2023 which has proved very popular and resulted in a significant increase in visitors to the site and income through the refreshment stall next to it.



New playground at the Arium

- 2.36 Health and Wellbeing priority - *Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces*



2.37 Investment in sports facilities in 2023 included the installation of a new Multi Use Games Area at Hunslet Moor, a trim trail at Pepper Road, a table tennis table at Yeadon Tarn and non-turf cricket pitches at Roundhay park and Bedquilts. Several other large-scale, community-led schemes still under construction include new rugby pavilions at Stonegate Road (North Leeds Leopards Rugby) and Butt Lane (Farnley Falcons Rugby) and an extension on the changing rooms at West Leeds Rugby League Club in Armley. Investment for these facilities has come from various sources including the English Cricket Board (ECB), Sport England, Rugby World Cup Legacy Fund, local ward members, S106 and Landfill providers, along with contributions from the clubs themselves.



*New multi-use games area at Hunslet Moor, installed summer 2023.*

### 3. Proposed changes to action plan

3.1 In light of developments since the Strategy was published 2 years ago, it is proposed that the following new actions are added building on the original agreed priorities and goals.

Priority	Goal	Proposed new action	Timescale	Measuring Success
Climate & Biodiversity	To increase the quantity, quality, size, variety and connectedness of wildlife habitats (e.g. woodlands, meadows, ponds, hedgerows) on our green spaces.	Deliver new and improved wildlife habitats funded by Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).	Ongoing	Number of biodiversity units delivered through BNG.
	To minimise any negative impact the Parks and Countryside Service has on the environment	Switch to electric vehicles and machinery where practicable and install EV chargers for public in the car parks of popular sites.	Ongoing	Proportion of vehicles and machinery that are electric and number of our car parks with EV chargers in them.
		Minimise the use of single use plastic at our cafes, shops and takeaways.	Long	Minimal (only use where no other option) use of single-use plastics at our outlets.
		To put in place systems to recycle/re-use green waste	Medium	For all suitable green waste to be re-cycled in an

		for mulch/compost close to site where possible.		environmentally-friendly way.
	*To manage the impact of climate change on the service.	Produce and implement a Climate Adaptation Plan for the Green Spaces service.	Medium	Plan in place and actions being implemented.
Access for All	For our parks and green spaces to feel safe and welcoming for girls and women.	To use new guidance to improve access to parks and green spaces for women and girls.	Ongoing	Guidance applied when managing and developing parks and green spaces.
Child Friendly	To have a wide range of good quality play facilities for children of all ages and abilities across the city	Develop and implement a Green Spaces Play Strategy.	Medium	Play strategy in place and being implemented.

\*Priorities and Goals are unchanged except for this new priority.

3.2 In addition, it is proposed that the current action (See row 14 in *Working with Communities* priority) ‘Continue to organise and run the following city-wide volunteer groups: Leeds Wildlife Volunteers, Leeds Cemetery Volunteers, Volunteer Rangers and Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers’ should be changed to ‘Continue to support green space volunteer groups,’ because we have found that it is more effective to be responsive to what works best for volunteers and our sites rather than stick with supporting named groups whatever happens. So, for example, it has proved more effective to support site-based groups in cemeteries than focus on one city-wide cemetery volunteer group. This will also provide us with an opportunity to report all volunteer hours in future rather than just those relating to the named groups.

3.3 It is also proposed that the action to develop an outdoor water play visitor attraction is removed from the Strategy to create capacity for the team to focus on developing a masterplan for Tropical World with the aim of improving the attraction and ensuring it is financially and environmentally sustainable.

3.4 Actions that have been completed, such as removing peat from our operations and supporting the City of Culture 2023, will also be removed from future action plans to ensure the document is as simple and easy to follow as possible.

### What impact will this proposal have?

4. The aim set out in the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK.
5. By focussing on the 8 priorities set out in the Strategy and undertaking the actions listed in it, we believe we can achieve that goal.
6. This report demonstrates that the actions are being delivered within the agreed time scales for the benefit of parks and green spaces in the city and the people who use them.
7. We believe that the proposed changes to the actions in the Strategy will contribute further to the delivery of the key priorities of the Service and the Council.

### How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

8. The Strategy supports the council’s three key pillars.

## 9. Zero Carbon

10. Climate and Biodiversity is a priority in the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy with a number of actions having been undertaken in 2023 to achieve Zero Carbon including planting 52 hectares of trees, moving to battery-powered tools and putting in place the processes that will allow us to deliver extensive natural habitat improvements through Biodiversity Net Gain going forward.

11. To reflect the importance of the climate emergency to the Council this report also proposes that a number of new actions are added to the Strategy focussed on climate adaptation and caring for the environment (see section 3.1).

## 12. Health and Wellbeing

13. Health and wellbeing is a priority in the Strategy and a number of actions were taken in 2023 to help deliver the goal of 'providing a range of opportunities to be physically active in green spaces so everyone can enjoy being active outdoors, no matter what their level of ability or interests'.

14. For example, a new externally funded multi-use games area was installed at Hunslet Moor and support was provided for a number of community-led projects to improve sports facilities like a new rugby pavilion which is now under construction at Stonegate Road.

## 15. Inclusive Growth

16. The Strategy contains several elements that contribute to the Council's inclusive growth priority, particularly in relation to '*understanding that place matters, and positive identity, culture, heritage and pride in our communities are vital assets in a sustainable future for the city and its local centres*'.

17. Evidence suggests that the continued provision of quality parks across the city has a beneficial impact on the local economy. For example, a study by Fields in Trust in 2018 estimated that parks have an equivalent economic value of £30.24 per person, per year based on several objective government measures of non-market goods including willingness to pay, life satisfaction and health.

18. The installation of the flagship playground at the Arium provides a new visitor attraction and aims to increase income for the Council through spend in the café and shop there.

19. The hosting of hundreds of events such as community galas, funfairs, sponsored walks, music concerts and the Leeds West Indian Carnival) contributes culture, heritage and pride in our communities.

20. As also outlined above, the Green Spaces Service is supported by hundreds of volunteers each year (including as part of *Friends* groups, *In Bloom* groups and corporate volunteering schemes) - many of whom gain valuable skills and work experience which can help them into work and better jobs.

## **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

21. An extensive public consultation was undertaken ahead of producing the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. Details of this were shared at Executive Board in December 2021 when the content of the Strategy was approved for delivery.

22. As part of this process, Scrutiny (Environment, Housing and Communities) were consulted twice - in September 2019 on the Strategy consultation process itself, and in October 2021 on the draft Strategy.

### **What are the resource implications?**

23. In producing the strategy, the Green Spaces service tried to balance our ambition to have the best parks and green spaces in the UK with a realistic assessment of the resources available to maintain and improve them over the next 10 years.
24. The service will continue to adopt the wider council approach to spending money wisely, for example, by regularly reviewing costs, fees and charges.
25. Also, as referenced in the 'Financial Sustainability' priority, the service will continue to explore opportunities for the Green Spaces service to generate funds to help achieve the aims of the Strategy through enterprises such as shops, cafés and commercial events (whilst being mindful of the other priorities set out in the strategy).
26. The service also continues to explore other external funding opportunities such as developer's contributions for recreation and biodiversity, and grants like the Heritage Lottery Fund.
27. The service has a good track record of working with communities and volunteers with over 100 established groups and thousands of volunteers. The strategy proposes to prioritise 'Working with Communities' – continuing our successful approach of collaborating with volunteers and other organisations to achieve shared goals more effectively than we could do alone.
28. Longer term, having a strategy for local parks and green spaces should improve value for money by focussing on agreed priorities and the most effective way to allocate resources to public green space in Leeds.

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

29. The Green Spaces service has recently held a risk workshop that identified operational risks that will be reported to the service's leadership team. Any risks arising from the management of the city's green spaces can be raised for reporting and escalation via the new service risk management arrangements shortly to be implemented.
30. The current budget pressures make it challenging to deliver the actions set out in the Strategy and make substantial improvements across our green spaces. The work with volunteers provides a vital additional resource to help ensure our green spaces are well maintained. The team continue to seek out commercial opportunities to increase income as well as exploring alternative funding streams such as Biodiversity Net Gain funding.
31. Unfortunately, anti-social behaviour continues to present challenges for the service with littering, graffiti and arson still being relatively regular occurrences. The damage is rarely covered by insurance and therefore creates a real financial pressure for the council.

### **What are the legal implications?**

32. None

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

33. Following an extensive public consultation process, the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy was endorsed for delivery over a 10-year period by the Council's Executive Board in December 2021.
34. Where, due to developments that have taken place since the Strategy was published in Feb 2022, we believe that other options involving adding and removing particular goals and/or actions, is now required, it has been suggested above.

### **How will success be measured?**

35. Success will be measured by delivery of the actions and measurable goals set out in the Strategy within the timescales given in the document.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

36. The Strategy was published in February 2022 and runs for 10 years to 2032.
37. Each action in the Strategy has been given a delivery time scale of either short (1 – 3 years), medium (4 – 6 years) or long term (7 – 10 years).
38. The Chief Officer for Climate, Energy and Green Spaces is responsible for its implementation.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Progress update for each action in the strategy.

### **Background papers**

- [Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy Executive Board report, Dec 2021](#) (item 102)
- [Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy](#)

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**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 1: Quality**

Providing high quality parks and green spaces

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Other council services	Progress update, Jan 2024
For all city parks to retain the Green Flag award for the life of strategy.	Continue to use the Green Flag criteria as a best practice guide to managing Temple Newsam, Roundhay Park, Chevin Forest Park, Golden Acre Park, Kirkstall Abbey Park and Middleton Park.	Ongoing	Green Flag Award		All city parks were awarded a Green Flag in 2023.
For all community parks to reach the Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.	Area based operational teams to prioritise community parks	Long	Leeds Quality Park Assessment – the percentage of community parks that reach LQP standard - <b>Key Performance Indicator.</b>		In 2023, 50 of the 65 community parks (77%) that were judged, passed LQP. This means the number of community parks reaching the LQP standard has increased year on year since 2010 and that we continue to get closer to our goal for all community parks to reach the standard.
	Continue to target S106 (and other suitable external-) funding on community parks where possible (and in consultation with ward members and Community Committees).	Ongoing			This work is ongoing with S106 and match investment totalling approximately £1.2 million committed for community parks this year. Externally funded improvement works in community parks in 2023 have included soft landscaping, refurbishing playgrounds and paths and installing benches and bins.
	Establish a strategic investment fund to improve parks and green spaces in areas most in need.	Medium			£1 million of discretionary capital for the purpose of 'preventing decline' in parks (particularly with regards health and safety concerns like broken equipment) was proposed in 2023 and approved at Full Council in Feb 2024.
For all cemeteries and crematoria to reach Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.	Bereavement and operations to work together to get sites to LQP	Long	Leeds Quality Park Assessment – the percentage of cemeteries and crematoria that reach LQP standard		14 of 25 (56%) of cemeteries and crematoria achieved LQP standard in 2023 - the same number as last year when the sites were judged for the first time.
	Ensure all relevant staff (including apprentices) have a good understanding of the LQP standard (through training) and that the LQP judging process involves a wide range of staff from across the service.	Medium	Number of staff trained in LQP standard		The LQP training process was updated in 2023 and 23 members of staff were newly trained (59 people are already trained). So 82 members of staff were involved in the judging process in 2023. The process for assessing LQP will be reviewed in 2024 to ensure it is efficient, effective and consistent across the board.
For all community parks to have a 'plan on a page'.	Produce a 'plan on a page' for each community park, setting out a vision for each site in consultation with ward members and local community.	Long	Plan on a page available for each community park		In 2023, a new process for developing the Plans on a Page was established which includes a comprehensive public consultation process through online surveys and face to face conversations on site and in the local community. Plans for Harehills, East End and Burley parks and Blenheim Square were completed with Woodhouse Ridge nearly there. The plan for Blenheim is now being used to allocate investment in the site through S106 and the plans for Harehills and Burley are being used to support funding bids for MUGA refurbishments on those sites. In 2024, consultations will be undertaken on a further 12 community parks and the plans for those sites should be finalised by the end of the year.
For Parks and Countryside visitor attractions to meet the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard .	Use the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard as a good practice guide to managing our visitor attractions at Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Roundhay Park.	Short	Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Roundhay park meeting the VE Quality Assurance Standard		Lotherton and Temple Newsam have both retained the accreditation and are now judged every other year with the next visit planned for June 2024. Some improvement works are planned for Tropical Work after which judges will be invited to assess Roundhay park.

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<b>To have excellent animal welfare standards in our zoos and at Home Farm.</b>	Ensure our zoos meet the standards set out in the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and that Home Farm meets standards set out in Animal Welfare Act (2006), Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 and the Animal Welfare (licencing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018.	Ongoing	All standards met		Home Farm, Lotherton and Tropical World all have the relevant licenses in place. Tropical World was successful in having its zoo licence renewed in December 2023. The Lotherton interim inspection is due December 2024.
<b>To reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure people feel safe in our public green spaces.</b>	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling issues with dogs, to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Medium	Approach to dog-related issues agreed and implemented as necessary	Dog wardens	This is planned for delivery by 2028.
	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling litter to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Short	Approach to litter agreed and implemented as necessary	Environmental Action	This action is planned for delivery in 2024. In relation to litter problems, (externally funded) new bins were installed at several sites in 2023 including at Gildersome park, Hall Lane recreation ground, Stanningley park and West park fields play area.
	Work with <i>Safer Leeds</i> to target anti-social behaviour hotspots as necessary	Ongoing		Safer Leeds.	ASB is usually referred to the police and support is provided by Safer Leeds where possible. Sometimes site management can be done in such a way as to make a site less attractive for ASB, for example, by cutting back shrubs and this is done as required. Also, where necessary, parks officers attend local Neighbourhood Policing team meetings to discuss issues on site and take positive actions. Two initiatives underway in 2023 were; an anti-social behaviour working group for Temple Newsam and plans for access controls at Middleton park funded by Safer Streets (proposals are currently out for consultation).

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.



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Priority 2: Climate and Biodiversity

Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
To plant 50 hectares of woodland each year.	Identify and design suitable sites for woodland creation each year in consultation with ward members and the local community.	Ongoing	50 hectares identified for tree planting each year.	In 2023, 118 sites were initially identified as having potential for tree planting and, after further investigation and due diligence, 65 underwent a public consultation and, following that process, 58 were eventually planted on.
	Seek external funding to support tree planting.	Ongoing	External funding obtained annually.	External funding of £558k was sourced in 2023 for tree planting from external funders including the Tree Council, Trees for Climate, Trees for Cities, Northern Forest and compensatory planting for developments at Armley Gytratory and Calverley Bridge.
	Plant 50 hectares of woodland per year.	Ongoing	Hectares of new woodland created - <b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	This season we have undertaken 37 hectares of re-planting, 12 hectares of new woodland whip planting and 3 hectares of planting of standard trees (larger, 'standard' trees are planted to get good canopy cover in areas where woodland planting is not appropriate e.g. housing estates and formal parks).
For all our woodland management to meet the <i>UK Forestry Standard and the UK Woodland Assurance Standard</i> .	Manage woodlands in line with the standards and have them assessed as required.	Ongoing	% woodlands being managed to the standard.	We have UKWAS accreditation for our woodlands and work is ongoing to retain it. Our UKWAS portfolio is audited annually.
Page 97 To increase the quantity, quality, size, variety and connectedness of wildlife habitats (e.g. woodlands, meadows, ponds, hedgerows) on our green spaces.	Management plans for community and city parks to set out minimum of 25% wildlife habitat (where reasonable).	Long	Plans on a page include 25% wildlife habitat	The 4 'Plans on a Page' newly produced in 2023 show approximately 25% of the parks' area (as viewed from above) as wildlife habitat (trees, grassland meadows, and wildflowers mainly). Wildflower meadows were introduced at Roundhay Park as part of the site conservation strategy in 2023 and further sites are being identified to be part of a related 'Wild Spaces' project.
	Reduce the area of seasonal bedding in our green spaces and replace them with more wildlife-friendly alternatives.	Short	Area of seasonal/wildlife-friendly bedding	Seasonal bedding was reduced by 50% and replaced by a mix of natural and pictorial wildflower meadows in 2022. <b>ACTION COMPLETE</b>
	Seek to increase knowledge and understanding of nature conservation in the Parks and Countryside team through recruitment and training.	Medium	Training sessions organised and run	Training in nature conservation has been added to the horticultural apprenticeship training programme and apprentices joined the Rangers on 2 practical nature conservation sessions in 2023 to learn about the subject and how it's applied in practice. A new Technical Officer, with a background in ecology was recruited in 2023 to lead on Biodiversity Net Gain.
	Produce nature conservation management plans for all our green spaces with wildlife designation (SSSIs, LNRs, LWS)	Long	Management plans complete and up to date for all sites	28 out of our 50 designated sites currently have a management plan in place. We plan to deliver management plans for designated sites as part of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

	Work with partners and volunteers to implement management plans at designated sites.	Ongoing		Via the Ranger service, 6,081 hours of practical work have been undertaken with groups in designated nature sites alone (Local Nature Reserves and SSSIs including Meanwood Valley, Middleton Woods, Wyke Beck Valley, Chevin Forest Park) - including tree planting, path clearance, woodland management, invasive species removal and pond clearance. This work has been carried out by roaming groups, corporates, community groups, schools and out-of-school groups. In addition our partnership with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in the Wyke Beck, Kirkstall and Lower Aire Valleys delivered 3,197 days of nature conservation-focussed volunteer work. There is also an 'unmeasurable' number of additional volunteer hours spent at our sites led directly by independent volunteer groups e.g. Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods.
	Regular monitoring of designated sites to ensure valuable habitats are not being lost.	Short	Record of inspections of designated sites.	Natural England monitor SSSIs and other sites are currently monitored by our Natural Environment team & West Yorkshire Ecology on an ad hoc basis. We are currently in the process of setting up a system for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain on our sites and, if successful, this should provide resources to support the delivery of this action.
Page 58	Seek and use external funding to deliver the management plans from grants and developers' contributions related to Biodiversity Net Gain.	Ongoing	Number of SSSIs, LWS and LNRs in favourable condition	Of our 3 formally monitored SSSIs - 2 are in favourable condition and 1 is recovering. A partnership with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust allows us to access external funding to care for designated sites in the Wyke Beck Valley and Lower Aire Valley. We are currently working with colleagues in Planning to establish a process for securing funding to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain with over £2 million already committed for BNG in Leeds (although it is often tied to particular locations and habitats). A Technical Officer was recruited to lead on BNG for our service and commenced work on the scheme in August 2023.
	Develop and implement an Ash Dieback Management & Recovery Plan to ensure the loss of ash trees from the disease doesn't have a negative impact on biodiversity and the climate.	Medium	Ash Dieback Management Plan in place.	The Forestry Section has worked with a private consultancy and Council GIS colleagues to identify and categorise all ash trees within falling distance of Leeds A and B Roads (Phase 1 of a wider ambition). Using a revolutionary AI system, ash tree locations have been plotted, tree height and canopy spread measured and tree condition, in relation to % canopy loss due to Ash Dieback has been categorised. This information is being used to prioritise action and estimate costs and timescales.
<b>To eliminate the use of peat in our operations</b>	Stop selling compost with peat in it at the Arium. Only purchase plants from suppliers who don't use peat. (Peat isn't used as a growing medium at the Arium).	Complete	No peat used in our operations.	<b>ACTION COMPLETE</b>
<b>To provide well-managed allotment sites across the city to facilitate local food growing.</b>	Produce and deliver a Leeds City Council Allotment Management Plan	Short	Allotment management plan in place	The Allotment Management Plan is in development.

<p><b>To minimise any negative impact the Parks and Countryside Service has on the environment</b></p>	<p>Continue to review Parks and Countryside operations (including those of external providers) and implement all viable means to minimise impact on environment e.g. by using electric vehicles where possible, minimising the use of pesticides, stopping using single-use plastic cups and straws at our cafes.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Improvements made</p>	<p>We are reviewing the opportunities to use electric vehicles where practicable and increasingly use them (this is coordinated by the Council's Transport service). We are also working on replacing diesel-powered machinery such as strimmers, hedge cutters and mowers with electric versions. New EV chargers for our work vehicles were installed at the Arium in 2023 and are planned for Lawnswood Cemetery and Kirkstall Abbey. A new ground source heat pump has been installed at Temple Newsam to power the new playbarn (which is under construction). Tropical World, Golden Acre and Temple Newsam cafes have now replaced plastic bags with paper bags and introduced paper-based takeaway containers for food and drink. All stirrers and takeaway spoons are wooden and straws are now paper. Salads are served in recyclable tubs. Some (as is practicable at this time) plastic bottled drinks have been changed to either glass bottles or cans.</p>
<p><b>For our zoos to retain the BIAZA (British Association for Zoos and Aquariums) accreditation for conservation of the natural world and education.</b></p>	<p>Continue to manage zoos at Lotherton and Tropical World to BIAZA standards.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieving BIAZA standard at regular inspections</p>	<p>Both zoos passed their last BIAZA inspection and are constantly working to ensure we retain this accreditation. A native butterfly conservation project (involving wildflower creation, education, training and research) was launched this year in partnership with the charity, Butterfly Conservation at Roundhay park &amp; Tropical World and there is a tansy (endangered, local) beetle conservation project currently underway at Lotherton. Lotherton also introduced an 'Adopt a Penguin' scheme in 2023 of which 10% of the profits go to the Ocean Conservation Trust.</p>
<p><b>To provide activities (including school visits) for over 5,000 children and adults a year to inspire them about nature and teach them about local wildlife, climate change, and how they can help (including anti-litter message).</b></p>	<p>Continue to promote and deliver education programme</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Number of children taking part in an educational event/activity.</p>	<p>10,067 children have taken part in led education workshops themed around nature and wildlife across our sites during 2023: 1,959 at Lotherton Wildlife World, 6,248 at Tropical World, 391 on the wider Lotherton Estate and 60 at Temple Newsam. 1,115 children took part in tree seed gathering sessions in a range of other parks and green spaces and 30 children took part in a nature exploration workshop. A further 85 secondary school children, 226 primary school children and 45 out-of-school club children took part in practical nature conservation tasks in local green spaces.</p>
	<p>To promote wildlife-friendly gardening and local food growing at the Arium through selling relevant seeds and plants and providing associated educational information.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Items available in shop at Arium</p>	<p>There is an area of the Arium shop allocated to promoting wildlife-friendly gardening and the 'grow your own' and 'little growers' sections were expanded in 2023.</p>
	<p>When planning new developments, consider ways to integrate environmental improvements and environmental education into the scheme.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Educational interpretation about local nature and wildlife has been produced and installed this year for new site improvement schemes at Meanwood park, Gledhow Valley Woods, Farnley reservoir and Roundhay park.</p>

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

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**Priority 3: Access for All**

Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible for everyone who wants to use them.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
<b>Access to our visitor attractions will remain affordable</b>	Discounts on entry to be offered at our visitor attractions for those least able to pay e.g through LeedsCard Extra.	Ongoing	Concessions available	Concessions are available for Leeds Card, Breeze Card and Leeds Card Extra.
<b>All parks and cemeteries &amp; crematoria to be judged as 'good' (score 7) or higher in 'equal access for all' LQP criteria</b>	To develop a process for auditing the accessibility of our sites.	Short	Access audit available to use	In 2023, 53 out of 64 community parks (83%) and 18 out of 25 cemeteries/crematoria (72%) achieved 7 or above for Equal Access for All.
	To undertake an access audit of all city and community parks every 5 years	Long	Record of access audits.	Following the recruitment of an intern for 10 weeks in the summer, the access audit process was developed, researched and consulted on, and audits commenced on the ground. Consultees included the Council's Disability Officer, Disability Champion and EDI Officer along with the Leeds Disability Hub, the Parks & Green Spaces Forum and individual volunteers with an interest in accessible parks. Access audits were undertaken at 20 community parks in 2023 and the outcomes of these are fed into park plans.
	Feed findings from access audits into 'Plan on a Page' for each site.	Long	Access included in all 'Plans on a Page'	Accessibility is considered as part of the process of developing the plans on an ongoing basis.
Page 61	Seek and use external funding for access improvements in parks, cemeteries and crematoria.	Ongoing		Access improvements are ongoing, externally funded through S106 and grants such as wellbeing and WBI. For example, in 2023 several externally funded benches were installed, including some Jubilee benches at Calverly, Farnley and Pudsey parks. Other access improvements in 2023 included the installation of handrails, path improvements and the removal of entrance barriers.
	Provide training for relevant Parks and Countryside staff on what makes a green space truly accessible.	Medium	Record of training provided	This is included in the LQP training process and more details will be added to the training in 2024 following further research having been undertaken for the access audits. Anyone undertaking access audits will receive more detailed guidance before commencing work on them.
	Design all new developments to be fully accessible by applying the guidance set out in BS8300 2018 where possible.	Short		This is included in all plans, proposals and briefs e.g. it's in the specification for the Lotherton playground that is currently out for tender.
<b>To ensure our parks and green spaces are welcoming and accessible for older people.</b>	Increase number of disabled parking bays in parks and review bench numbers and locations when putting together plans on a page.	Long	Number of disabled parking bays and park benches.	This has been part of the process of developing the Plans on a Page in 2023 with a need for more accessible benches being included in many of the new plans. Disabled parking bays have been designed in to plans to upgrade golf club car park at Temple Newsam (as part of the proposed new developments there). A representative of the Green Spaces service sits of the <i>Age Friendly Leeds</i> Board.
<b>To continue to provide well maintained, accessible public toilets in all our city parks and the Arium.</b>	Install a Changing Places toilet as part of new developments at Tropical World	Medium	Accessible toilets in all city parks	We have a Changing Places toilet at Temple Newsam and Lotherton and one planned as part of the Home Farm play barn development. A Changing Places toilet is also planned to be included as part of any future developments at Tropical World.
	New city centre park (Aire park) will include accessible public toilets	Short		These are included in the plans for the park which is still under development (by private developers).

<b>To provide correct, up to date and easy to understand information about our sites online.</b>	Get correct, up to date information about all our city parks and the Arium on <i>Euan's Guide</i> website	Short	Information on website	This task has been completed for the Arium, Tropical World, Temple Newsam and Kirkstall Abbey - updates and edits made as necessary. To be entered in 2024 are Golden Acre Park, Lotherton Hall, Otley Chevin and Middleton Park
	Ensure there is good quality information about all our community and city parks, cemeteries and crematoria and local nature reserves available on the internet	Medium	Information on internet	Web content relating to Green Space's services takes place on an ongoing basis with the most popular sites being prioritised for web content.
<b>For our parks and green spaces to feel safe and welcoming for girls and women.</b>	Collaborate on research to find out how safe women and girls feel in our green spaces and how safety might best be improved.	Complete	Research complete	This research is complete and guidance based on it was produced for Green Spaces managers. This was shared widely across the service including through external workshops and conferences and in-house presentations. The findings of the research are now used to inform design and management of green spaces, for example, the guidance is used to inform the Plans on a Page. Related to this, in 2023 funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was allocated to providing facilities for teenage girls (based on the guidance) at Lewisham park with further investment at other sites to come. <b>ACTION COMPLETE</b>
<b>For our parks and green spaces to provide something for all Leeds residents.</b>	Continue to undertake thorough Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Impact Assessments for new developments and major decisions.	Ongoing		The process of undertaking EDCIs for new developments has continued through 2023 with support and oversight from the newly established CEG service EDCI steering group.
<b>To increase the diversity of the workforce in the Parks and Countryside team at every level in the service.</b>	Work with HR to produce and implement a plan for diversifying our workforce through the recruitment process.	Long	Equality characteristics of workforce	A CEG EDCI steering group was established in 2023 to lead on improving Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Inclusion in the service and they have put together, and are working on delivering, an EDCI action plan - this includes actions to achieve the goal of diversifying our workforce.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

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**Priority 4: Culture**

Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
<b>To provide a range of fantastic visitor attractions that contribute to making Leeds a great place to live and visit.</b>	Create new indoor playbarn at Temple Newsam to improve the winter visitor offer at Home Farm.	Short	Playbarn open	Play barn construction was quite advanced until a fire in May 2023 caused significant damage and delay to the scheme. Work clearing the site and preparing to re-build is underway with the completion date now estimated as autumn 2024. Meanwhile, we have also been working with colleagues from the Museum and expert contractors to improve the experience at the rest of Home Farm through installing new, improved signage and interpretation and creating interactive, educational elements so children and adults get more from their visits - this element of the scheme should be completed and open to the public by Easter 2024.
	Create new cycle trails, Learn to Ride area, playground and café on area of Temple Newsam that was previously a golf course.	Short	Facilities open	The plans have been finalised (following a public consultation) and are awaiting planning permission with the aim of completing the project in 2024.
	Develop an outdoor water play visitor attraction	Long	Water play open	This scheme is currently on hold pending a review of the business case.
	Continue to improve the visitor offer at Lotherton	Medium	Wider variety of animals and new playground.	A key decision was taken in July 2023 to spend, inject capital and begin the procurement of this playground. The procurement process is underway. Deer tours were introduced at Lotherton in 2023 and were well received.
	Create an indoor play centre at Tropical World	Medium	Indoor play centre open	This proposed development has been postponed whilst the future of Tropical World as a whole is reviewed to ensure investment is undertaken in the most efficient way - building condition surveys are underway. In the meantime, to retain its place as one of the most popular visitor attractions in the city, we invested in refurbishing the Rainforest area and introducing some new animals (porcupines, tamarins, pygmy marmosets and tegus) to the zoo in 2023.
	Promote Golden Acre Park as a botanical garden	Medium	Golden Acre launched and promoted as 'Leeds Botanic	Initial research is underway to understand what actions would need to be undertaken to achieve Botanic Garden Status
	Develop a new public parkland area at the site that was previously <i>South Leeds Golf Course</i> including a covid memorial woodland, new walking routes, viewpoints and education and information points.	Medium	New park open to public	The area is now open for public use and access improvements have been undertaken. A whole-site masterplan is currently in development.
<b>For lifelong learning to be integrated into our parks and green spaces and associated visitor facilities.</b>	When developing/improving our green spaces and visitor attractions, include relevant education and interpretation e.g. the new cycle trails at Temple Newsam will include signage about historic features along the way.	Ongoing		Information signs are provided at sites where there is new tree planting/relaxed mowing/wildflower meadow creation and the like - these have been a great success in terms of reducing enquiries and complaints about site management. New interpretation about the wildlife and history of the sites has been developed as part of investments at Farnley Reservoir, Gledhow Valley Woods and Tulip Street, Hunslet. New interactive educational interpretation (focussing on the history of the site) was procured and designed for Home Farm in 2023 and will be installed in spring 2024.

	To provide activities (including school visits) for over 30,000 people to educate and inspire them about the animals at Temple Newsam farm, Lotherton and Tropical World, and key features (historic, artistic etc) in Leeds parks.	Ongoing	Number of children taking part in an educational event/activity.	12,013 children have visited TW on school trips, with 6,248 attending a workshop; 2,542 have visited Lotherton Wildlife World with 1,959 attending led workshops at the zoo and a further 390 children attending led workshops on the wider estate; 2,248 children visited Home Farm on school trips and 961 attended a farm tour, plus a further 60 who attended led workshops on the wider estate. An additional 15,430 children engaged with informal education activities in the Nestbox at Wildlife World and on the wider Lotherton estate during school holidays. TOTAL: 32,683 children reached on the estates.
<b>For our visitor attractions and city parks to be recognised as key elements of local tourism offer.</b>	Continue to refresh and deliver marketing plans for visitor attractions (Temple Newsam, Lotherton, Arium, Roundhay park/Tropical World)	Ongoing	Marketing plans in place	Marketing plans for Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Tropical World are in place and a marketing plan for the Arium is under development and will be completed in line with the growing programme review in 2024. The Green Space's events and activities leaflet was re-launched (post-Covid) in spring 2023 and is widely distributed across the city.
<b>To preserve, promote and provide information about features of cultural interest (e.g. historic landmarks) found in our parks and green spaces</b>	The preservation and interpretation of historic and other interesting features in community and city parks should be included in their management plans/plan on a page	Medium		Conservation Management Plans have been completed for Temple Newsam and Lotherton setting out how the heritage of the sites will be promoted and preserved for the future, work has commenced on identifying how they will be delivered.
	Seek and use external funding to preserve and provide interpretation about features of interest. Includes large-scale NHLF bid for Temple Newsam.	Ongoing	Temple Newsam NHLF bid submitted	Conservation Management Plans, setting out how heritage features will be sustainably managed at the sites, were produced for Temple Newsam and Lotherton in 2023. Having those plans in place is an essential step towards securing funding from the National Heritage Lottery for the preservation of key historic features and colleagues are currently in discussions with the NHLF in relation to conservation projects at both sites.
<b>To host a diverse range of events in green spaces across the city every year.</b>	Promote our sites as excellent venues for events of all types and sizes.	Ongoing	Number of events hosted each year	757 events (including markets, community galas, funfairs, sponsored walks, rock concerts etc) were facilitated by the Green Spaces service in our parks during 2023 with around 650,000 people participating in them overall. These included live music concerts – 'Let's Rock', 'Live at Leeds' and 'Slam Dunk' returning to Temple Newsam and the Leeds West Indian Carnival, which is Europe's longest running Caribbean carnival parade, with 2023 being its 56th year. We also hosted 25 'My Leeds,' community-led events along with the WOW (Women of the World) Barn at Cinder Moor for the 2023 City of Culture.
	Support community event organisers with advice and guidance	Ongoing		164 community-led events took place in parks in 2022. Support for them is ongoing through the Bookings and Licensing team who provide advice and guidance to enable community organisers to ensure event legislation is adhered to and the events go ahead safely.
	(Subject to a suitable business case) create a new event space at Temple Newsam to facilitate more events and move larger events away from the historic core of the estate.	Medium	New event space created	A feasibility study for this scheme is currently underway.
	Work with Leeds 2023 team to ensure parks and green spaces contribute to the year of cultural activity both as event venues and destinations in themselves.	Short		Green Spaces were represented on the City Readiness Team and 2023 Operations Delivery Team. Several events took place on parks and green spaces as part of 2023 including the WOW Barn (celebrating women of the world on Cinder Moor) and Children's day revisited at Roundhay park, along with 25 of the community-led <i>My Leeds</i> events taking place across the city. <b>ACTION COMPLETE.</b>



<p><b>To provide exciting and diverse parks that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.</b></p>	<p>When planning new developments, consider their context and history, and be creative to cultivate green spaces with their own unique character, that provide for, and represent their local communities, resulting in a varied and complementary offer across the city</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>This is considered by our Landscape Architect and other relevant staff/suppliers when putting designs together for our green spaces. For example, the brief for the planned Lotherton playground asks suppliers to consider the history of the site as part of the design process and new interpretation being designed for Home Farm focusses on the history of that site.</p>
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Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

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Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK				
Priority 5: Child Friendly				
Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit so that they can gain the health, wellbeing and educational benefits of spending time in them.				
Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
<b>To have child friendly parks and green spaces</b>	Consult children and teenagers, as well as adults, ahead of making changes to our sites.	Short	Consultations involve children and teens.	We made considerable efforts to consult children and young people during the process of developing community park Plans on a Page for East End park, Burley park and Harehills park in 2023, though this age group (particularly teenagers) have proved quite hard to reach. The most successful approach for these sites was contacting local schools directly and then going in to meet and talk to the children there.
<b>To have a wide range of good quality play facilities for children of all ages and abilities across the city</b>	Develop a checklist to allow us to assess the quality and accessibility of our playful spaces.	Short	Checklist in place	All our playgrounds are independently inspected annually to ensure the equipment is safe to use. Our playground's team also check them weekly for this purpose. In addition, in 2022 our contracted playground supplier was commissioned for the first time to undertake an audit of the condition of our playground equipment too - this was completed in Feb 2023 so we now have up to date information about the condition of all our playgrounds.
	Audit quantity, location and quality of play facilities across the city so we can prioritise effectively.	Short	Audit complete	Playground quality and accessibility will be assessed in 2024, and, along with the information referred to in the row above, will feed into the development of a new Green Spaces Play Strategy.
	Seek external funding for the creation and improvement of green spaces and related facilities for children and teenagers	Ongoing	Number of play facilities on our sites judged to be of good quality	Approximately £1 million of external funding from S106 and match (e.g. CIL, Wellbeing and Veolia) was invested in play facilities this year at locations including Meanwood park, Chapel Allerton park, Woodhouse Moor, Gildersom park and Meadowfield. In addition, a flagship new playground was installed at The Arium and a decision to invest £850k capital funding in a new playground at Lotherton has been made on the basis of a spend to save business case.
	Top slice income from our chargeable family visitor attractions to improve access to play facilities in areas where external funding isn't available (often inner city).	Short		The principle of top slicing has been established and has been included in all recent business cases. The first income to be generated will be from The Arium which opened in June 2023 and, from the 2024-25, financial year a budget will be set aside for providing opportunities for children who might otherwise be unable to do so (e.g. due to poverty), to visit our family attractions
<b>To ensure there is suitable provision for teenagers in our parks and green spaces</b>	Undertake consultation to find out what teenagers around the city want from green spaces.	Medium	Consultation complete	Consultations are undertaken locally for new developments and every effort is made to get feedback from teenagers (who are a hard-to-reach group) during these processes - for example, local schools and youth groups are contacted directly for feedback during Plan on a Page consultations. The Council's Voice and Influence team undertook a wide-reaching consultation (involving feedback from 80,000 children and young people) in 2022 on <i>The Children and Young Peoples' Plan</i> and the <i>12 Wishes</i> of children and young people in Leeds and have advised that we use the findings of that consultation to inform our work in future (so, for example, we can work to deliver the wish for <i>more action to protect the environment from climate change</i> ).
<b>For there to be clear information available on the internet about facilities for children and teenagers in our parks and green spaces.</b>	Provide information about what's available for children and teenagers at green spaces across the city on the internet	Medium	Clear, up to date information provided.	Web content is regularly reviewed with the most popular web pages prioritised. Information about activities and facilities for children and young people at our sites is shared from our social media platforms as appropriate: @leedsparks @templenewsam @tropicalworldleeds @theariumleeds @lotherton.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

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**Priority 6: Working with communities**

Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the Parks and Countryside Service.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
<b>To provide good customer service</b>	To provide customer care training for staff who have public facing elements to their role (includes café, shops, rangers, gardeners, technical, bereavement, admin etc - nearly everyone!)	Medium	Training complete	We are working with the Council's Business Support Centre to develop and roll out Customer Excellence training for all Green Spaces staff and, going forward, the in-house training team will ensure it is delivered to all new starters.
	To provide clear and accessible information about the Parks and Countryside Service and any changes that might affect service users.	Short		Ongoing - we consult on all changes and use a range of communications (social media, direct mailing, press releases) to inform park users of proposed changes to service provision.
<b>To achieve gold in the Charter for the Bereaved annual assessment for both cremations and burial-related services</b>	Use the Charter as a best practice guide for the delivery of bereavement services.	Long	Gold award	Bereavement services currently have a gold award for cremations and a silver award for burials. Although it will be challenging to achieve a gold for burials, it is something we continue to work towards.
<b>To provide parks and green spaces that are valued by Leeds residents and visitors to the city.</b>	To develop and implement a 'best-practice' approach to undertaking public consultations when changes to green spaces are proposed.	Ongoing	Consultations undertaken	The 'best practice approach' was developed as part of the Plan on a Page process in 2023 and has been well-received although there is not one definitive way to undertake a consultation and charities <i>Love Leeds Parks</i> and <i>Women's Lives Leeds</i> have both adopted slightly different but very effective approaches to consultation about green space in 2023. The process for undertaking public consultations will regularly reviewed, adapted depending on the situation and continually improved over time as appropriate.
	Continue to consult Community Committee Environment Sub-groups with regards proposed changes to public green spaces in their areas.	Ongoing		Ongoing. Ward members are also consulted about how S106 will be spent in their wards.
<b>To continue to work in partnership with <i>Friends of</i>, <i>In Bloom</i> groups and other relevant community organisations.</b>	Continue to work with the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum as a key service partner (representing Friends, In Bloom groups and similar)	Ongoing		Ongoing secretarial support for the Forum is provided for the Parks and Green Spaces Forum, which currently has 102 members, by the Green Space's Outreach Manager. Training opportunities have also been identified and provided for Forum members, so 8 members attended a fruit tree training course and 7 attended First Aid training funded by Love Leeds Parks charity.
	Ensure all Friends, In Bloom, outdoor sports clubs, allotment associations and similar community groups with an interest in our green spaces have a contact in the Parks & Countryside Service who can support them to achieve shared goals	Ongoing	Number of volunteer groups affiliated with the Parks and Countryside Service	The Technical team, Operational teams, Rangers (including a new, In Bloom-focussed ranger, who was recruited in 2023) and Allotment officer provide this service. There are over 100 Friends and other green space community groups, over 30 active In Bloom Groups, over 600 Sports clubs and 58 self-managed allotment sites currently affiliated with the service.
	Set out a clear approach to how we will support <i>Friends of</i> , <i>In Bloom</i> and other similar community groups.	Short		A Green Spaces Volunteer Policy is in place. An 'In Bloom' ranger was recruited to support the 40 active <i>In Bloom</i> groups in the city in 2023 and this role will involve setting out a clear approach to how the service will support those groups going forward.
<b>To increase volunteer engagement with the Parks and Countryside Service and provide volunteer opportunities for everyone who is interested.</b>	Continue to promote and facilitate a wide range of volunteering opportunities.	Ongoing	Number of corporate volunteer days held per year	160 ranger-led corporate volunteer team days took place in 2023, engaging 1,537 individuals who have contributed a total of 7,183 work-hours between them on jobs such as tree planting, seed sowing and woodland maintenance work.
	Continue to organise and run the following city-wide volunteer groups: Leeds Wildlife Volunteers, Leeds Cemetery Volunteers, Volunteer Rangers and Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers	Ongoing	Number of volunteer days held per year	Roaming ranger-led volunteer groups including Leeds Wildlife Volunteers, Volunteer Rangers, Meanwood Valley Volunteer Rangers and Woodland Wednesday Groups carried out 2,085 hours work over 81 tasks, with 458 attendances (mostly by repeat attendees so this is not the total number of volunteers). Rangers also led site-based groups on 107 tasks with a total of 493 attendances (again likely often by repeat volunteers), amounting to 1,710 hrs of voluntary work carried out so far this year. Leeds Cemetery Volunteers have been disbanded because it has proved more effective for the team to focus on site-specific groups instead. A new system whereby individual volunteers can book on ranger-led volunteer days through Eventbrite has been set up so it's easier for volunteers to arrange to a drop-in volunteer session. Approximately 375 volunteer hours were given to improving our path networks by the Leeds Footpath Volunteers with the Public Rights of Way team.

	To provide training for relevant staff in working with volunteers and communities	Short	Record of training provided	A Green Space's Service Training Plan is in development. This will provide an overview of all training requirements including <i>Working with Volunteers</i> . Once in place it will identify who needs training in working with volunteers and delivery will commence.
	Seek external funding opportunities for community engagement projects, particularly at sites where communities are currently less involved.	Medium		Community engagement projects in the Meanwood Valley, Wyke Beck Valley, Lower Aire Valley and Armley and Gotts park are part or wholly externally funded (with the funding for the Gotts & Armley park ranger having recently been extended by Wades to 2025). With the support of the Green Space's Service, partners <i>Love Leeds Parks</i> secured funding that has allowed them to engage communities (through workshops, conversations and public events) at Harehills and Burley parks in 2023.
<b>To work in partnerships where they can help us deliver the aims of the strategy more effectively than we can do alone.</b>	Regularly review current partnerships with external organisations and give due consideration to any new partnership opportunities that arise.	Ongoing		Grants for TCV, Groundwork Yorkshire, Meanwood Valley Farm and Middleton Park Equestrian Centre are reviewed annually. Partnerships with the RSPB and YWT are continually monitored - both are currently doing excellent work for people and wildlife on a number of our green spaces in the Lower Aire, Wyke Beck and Kirkstall Valleys.
	Continue to work with other council departments such as Regeneration, Active Leeds, Corporate Property Management, Museums and Galleries and Public Health to deliver the aims of strategy.	Ongoing		Work is ongoing with a range of other council departments e.g. joint Lotherton & Temple Newsam management boards with Museums and Galleries, Playzone and tennis court funding bids with Active Leeds and park improvement projects with the City Development in Morley.
<b>To learn from other organisations</b>	Keep up to date with national research and developments in the public green space sector and attend core cities, APSE and other network events as appropriate to ensure we are applying a best-practice approach to managing green space.	Ongoing		Officers keep up to date with national research and best practice through attending the national Core Cities Parks Group and conferences and workshops as appropriate, such as the conference on research by the University of Leeds and partners into Women and Girls' perceptions of public parks in May.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 7: Financial Sustainability**

**Ensuring that quality green space is available for the long term**

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, Jan 2024
<b>For public parks and green spaces to continue to be managed and core funded by Leeds City Council as a public service, for the benefit of the people of Leeds</b>		Ongoing		Ongoing
<b>To balance budget whilst achieving the aims of the strategy over next 10 years.</b>	Set a sustainable financial plan and review annually	Ongoing	Budget at year end	Done annually as part of budgeting process. This has included developing a number of savings plans in 2024/25 such as the introduction of car parking charges, service redesign in particular areas to reduce staffing costs, reduction of fleet costs, increasing of and amendments to charges etc.
	Review costs, fees and charges regularly and use innovation (such as new technology) to ensure we are getting best value where we are purchasing, or providing, goods and services.	Ongoing		Done annually as part of the budgeting process and through applying council procurement processes when purchasing goods and services to ensure we get value for money. The newly appointed Commercial and Estates Manager has brought a new focus, ensuring consistency across sites alongside a dedicated member of staff that has been allocated to support the service to increase its level of on-contract spend and help to ensure compliance with corporate procurement rules. In 2023 we also set up a monthly outlet manager's meeting focusing on monitoring and improving each site's performance, including the effectiveness of any special promotions.
	Ensure new developments are sustainable before investing e.g. by ensuring there is a business case for commercial developments	Ongoing	Business cases made	All commercial investments are based on a sound business case checked by the Council's Finance Performance Group. The sustainability of other, externally funded, investments in parks is taken into account at the design stage.
Page 71	Seek external funding (e.g. from HLF or developers' contributions) to support the delivery of the priorities in strategy	Ongoing	Income from external funding	S106 continues to provide significant levels of funding for recreational improvements to parks and green spaces (such as new play facilities, benches, planting and paths) alongside smaller pots of external funding like WBI, Wellbeing, CIL, MICE and Veolia. £2.7million of S106 and match was committed to various schemes in local communities in 2023. A bid to the Town's Fund for a range of park works in Morley resulted in £3 million being secured for improvements to parks in the area in 2022 and this year the improvement works funded at Dartmouth park were completed and got underway at Hembrigg and Lewisham parks. A system by which parks and green spaces will benefit from the new developer's contribution 'Biodiversity Net Gain,' is in the process of being developed with over £2.5 million already committed for delivering and maintaining better natural habitats over 30 years (subject to various conditions). We are also currently working on potential bids to national sporting bodies for significant investment in tennis courts, football pitches and playzones (MUGAs).
	Continue to explore and develop the income generating opportunities of our service such as visitor attractions, sponsorship, cafes, events, shops and concessions.	Ongoing		The Arium play opened in June 2023 and has proved extremely popular. In 2024 the new Learn to Ride Centre, playground and cafe should open at Temple Newsam. The new playbarn at Temple Newsam was unfortunately delayed due to a fire, however the rebuild has begun and a new opening date is still to be confirmed. Work is underway to explore further commercial opportunities, including a new growing programme at the Arium and a refreshment kiosk in Pudsey Park.
	Develop and implement marketing plans for income generating schemes and facilities	Ongoing	Marketing plans implemented	Marketing plans are in place and being implemented for Tropical World, Temple Newsam Home Farm and Lotherton Hall and a marketing plan for the Arium will be finalised upon completion of the growing programme review in April 2024. The Green Space's events and activities leaflet was re-launched (post-Covid) in spring 2023.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

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**Priority 8: Health and Wellbeing**

Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress Update, Jan 2024
To provide good quality public green space that people want to visit (see priority 1!) - particularly in areas of deprivation where the positive impact on health will be greater.	(If we have limited resources) Where possible and appropriate, prioritise investment in green spaces in areas of deprivation.	Ongoing	Number of sites achieving LQP/Green Flag in areas of deprivation	Parks in areas of deprivation have been prioritised for Plans on a Page (among other key criteria like current park quality, numbers using the sites and density of local population).
To provide a range of opportunities for people to be physically active in green spaces across the city, so everyone can enjoy being active outdoors, no matter what their level of ability or interests.	Update and publish the <i>Playing Pitch Strategy</i> (which sets out future priorities for football, rugby and cricket pitches) to ensure there is a suitable level of provision across the city.	Short	Playing Pitch Strategy complete	Resource and funding is currently being sought for the development of the PPS.
	Audit, and keep a record of the condition of, other sports facilities (tennis courts, bowling greens, outdoor gyms, MUGAs) on our sites so the information can be used to prioritise investment in them to provide equal access	Short	Audits complete and up to date	Bowling green and tennis court audits in place. Outdoor gyms and MUGAs still to do.
Page 73	Work with local sporting organisations and national sporting bodies to develop, maintain and promote sports facilities across the city.	Ongoing		We work with national and regional sport bodies to provide ongoing support and advice to sports clubs that are seeking improvements to sports facilities such as clubhouses, changing rooms, pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens. Large, community-led capital projects that were in development in 2023 and are now nearing completion include the construction of new rugby pavilions at Stonegate Road (North Leeds Leopards Rugby) and Butt Lane (Farnley Falcons Rugby) and an extension on the changing rooms at West Leeds Rugby League Club in Armley. Investment for these facilities has come from various sources including the English Cricket Board (ECB), Sport England, Rugby World Cup Legacy Fund, Leeds City Council and Landfill providers, along with contributions from the clubs themselves.
	Develop new opportunities for people to cycle at our sites (where suitable) including creating the new cycling trails and Learn to Ride Area at Temple Newsam	Medium	Temple Newsam cycling facilities in place	A BMX cycling area was refurbished at East End park in 2023. The proposal for new cycling facilities at Temple Newsam is with Planning awaiting planning permission and we are optimistic that the scheme will be delivered in 2024.
	To create and promote a measured and signposted walking route in every suitable community and city park (to go in Plan on a Page)	Long	Parks with measured walking routes available	These are included in Plans on a Page as appropriate - for example in 2023 a new circular walking route was proposed and agreed as part of the long term vision for East End park.
	To make every effort to accommodate healthy activity, including new sports, on our sites (as appropriate)	Ongoing		Ongoing - we are constantly liaising with council colleagues, sports clubs and national sporting bodies to ensure they have suitable facilities such as changing rooms and pitches. With regards new sports, we supported Leeds Petangue Club to create a new petangue court at Kirkstall Abbey Park and installed Pickleball (low impact form of tennis) courts at Springhead park and Hunslet Moor.
	Seek external funding to develop and improve sports facilities in parks and green spaces	Ongoing		This work is ongoing and involves many partners with some information on externally-funded projects in the pipeline provided above. In 2023, new sports facilities installed included a multi-use games area at Hunslet Moor, non-turf cricket pitches at Roundhay park and Bedquills, table tennis at Yeadon Tarn and a trim trail at Pepper Road. We are also currently in conversation with the West Riding County FA re: funding for pitch improvements, the Football Foundation with regards funding for a number of 'Playzones' (which are Multi Use Games Areas) across the city and the Lawn Tennis Association re: investment in tennis courts.
For our green spaces to be used for 'active travel' around the city as a healthier, more environmentally friendly option than driving.	Update and implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).	Short	PROW Improvement Plan up to date	Updates on the implementation of the actions in the ROWIP continue to be provided to the Leeds Local Access Forum quarterly. £608,880 external funding was secured from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) fund for PROW improvements in 2023 which will provide significant support for the delivery of the actions.
	Work with partners to support the development of off-road transport routes across the city (where possible)	Ongoing		The Green Spaces service is represented on the Active Travel and Healthier Streets Board which seeks to improve opportunities for active travel.

<b>For people to use 'active travel' to get to and from our green spaces</b>	Develop and promote walking routes connecting green spaces and communities across the city, prioritising the areas of deprivation where the public health benefits of accessing green space will be greater.	Long	Extension of 'country park' routes to cover the whole city.	Approx. £608,880 funding was secured in 2023 through the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement fund (CRSTS) from West Yorkshire Combined Authority for public rights of way improvements to be delivered over the next 4 years in line with the actions set out in the ROWIP. CRSTS is aimed at providing an integrated and inclusive transport network to make it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport around West Yorkshire. CRSTS has a number of aspirations for integrated sustainable transportation with the key ones for the Public Rights of Way network being connectivity and contributing to Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans. A significant amount of S106 is also available for PROW improvements and planning work has commenced on schemes funded by S106 in Horsforth, Micklefield and Morley.
	Promote active ways to get to our green spaces on our website e.g. cycling and walking routes	Medium	Information available on internet	This action is to be undertaken by 2028.
	Seek funding to install bike stands at all our most popular sites.	Long		Bike stands were installed at Wortley Rec in 2023.
<b>To increase awareness of the benefits of spending time in green space for health and encourage people to use them for that purpose</b>	(With partners) promote the mental and physical benefits of spending time in parks and green spaces	Medium		We continue to work closely with colleagues in Active Leeds and Public Health to provide and promote active lifestyles in parks. The Ranger team recently joined the Green Activity Provider's group in relation to their volunteering programme and the group are looking into opportunities to promote the health benefits of volunteering.
	Improve the availability of information about our sports facilities and walking and cycling (including PROW) routes on the internet and through the use of new technology (e.g. online bookings and walking apps)	Medium	Information available on internet	Work continues with community groups to create walking trails, heritage trails, mindfulness walks and augmented reality games on the Love Exploring app. Routes have been made available for some of our community and city parks and we continue to work with Public Health, Active Leeds and community groups to promote and develop the walking routes on the app. Over the coming year the ranger team will be trained on devising the trails and help create content with their volunteers and community groups.
	Sell local cycling & walking route leaflets, maps & books from our shops	Short		These were introduced at our all our outlets in 2023 and have been selling well.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

## 2023/24 End of Year Scrutiny Board Statement

Date: 21 March 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Article 6 of Leeds City Council's Constitution states that the Head of Democratic Services, as designated Scrutiny Officer, will provide an annual report to Council setting out how the authority has carried out its overview and scrutiny functions during the preceding twelve-month period. As such this year's Annual Report will collate highlights of the work of all five Scrutiny Boards over 2023/24.

To complement the Annual Report, each Scrutiny Board also produces an end of year statement. This provides details of the full work programme for each Scrutiny Board for the last municipal year, with links to the associated agenda packs, minutes and webcast recordings. The document also includes a statement from the relevant Scrutiny Chair reflecting on the key priorities for the Scrutiny Board over the last year.

The 2023/24 summary for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) is appended to this report. Once it has been approved by members it will be published on the Council's website.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to note the appended 2023/24 end of year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) and, subject to any agreed amendments, approve its publication.

## What is this report about?

- 1 The appended report summarises the 2023/24 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities), providing links to the associated agenda packs, minutes and webcasts. It also includes a statement from the Scrutiny Chair, which highlights the issues that have been priorities for the Scrutiny Board over the last municipal year.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 It is intended that the detail in the appended summary will complement the Annual Report to Council, which will bring together highlights from all five Scrutiny Boards during 2023/24.
- 3 The appended statement illustrates how the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) has operated within its Terms of Reference and in the context of the [Vision for Scrutiny](#) to add value to the organisation.
- 4 Items reflected in the work programme illustrate how the Scrutiny Board has assisted with the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, monitored progress against key performance indicators, analysed proposed Council policy, and provided 'critical friend' challenge to decision makers. The work programme further reflects engagement with Executive Members, senior Leeds City Council officers and representatives from partner organisations.
- 5 Where the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) has made recommendations to the Executive Board, Council and/or other committees these can be accessed via the links included in the schedule. In line with the requirements of the Budget and Policy Framework, this has included a contribution to the composite Scrutiny Statement on the Budget, as provided to [Executive Board in February 2024](#).

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 6 All Scrutiny Boards aim to ensure that they add value through engagement in programmes of activity that reflect the three pillars of the Best City Ambition. Within this context the appended report sets out the items of business conducted by the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities).

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 7 During 2023/24 the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) has aimed to add value through a member led process of examination and review, involving engagement with a range of stakeholders. The nature of such engagement has varied depending upon the issue under consideration – full details are available via the links in the appended statement.

## What are the resource implications?

- 8 There are no resource implications associated with this report.

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

9 The appended report provides a summary of work already undertaken and therefore presents no risks that require management.

### **What are the legal implications?**

10 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

11 It has previously been agreed with Scrutiny Chairs that an end of year statement will be produced for individual Scrutiny Boards to complement the publication of the Annual Report to Council.

#### **How will success be measured?**

12 The appended report summarises the activity of the Scrutiny Board during 2023/24.

#### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

13 All five Scrutiny Boards will be asked to approve their respective end of year statements at the final public meetings of the 2023/24 municipal year.

14 Once the five statements have been approved, they will be published on the [Leeds City Council website](#).

### **Appendices**

- End of Year Statement – Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

### **Background papers**

- None

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# Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

## Year End Summary: 2023/24



# Scrutiny at Leeds City Council



## Purpose

Scrutiny is nationally recognised as an integral part of the improvement landscape for local government and forms part of governance arrangements for councils and some other local statutory bodies.

## Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference that are applied to all Scrutiny Boards are set out in Leeds City Council's Constitution. The variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with any special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the Constitution.

Article 6 also sets out the Council's agreed 'Vision for Scrutiny'.

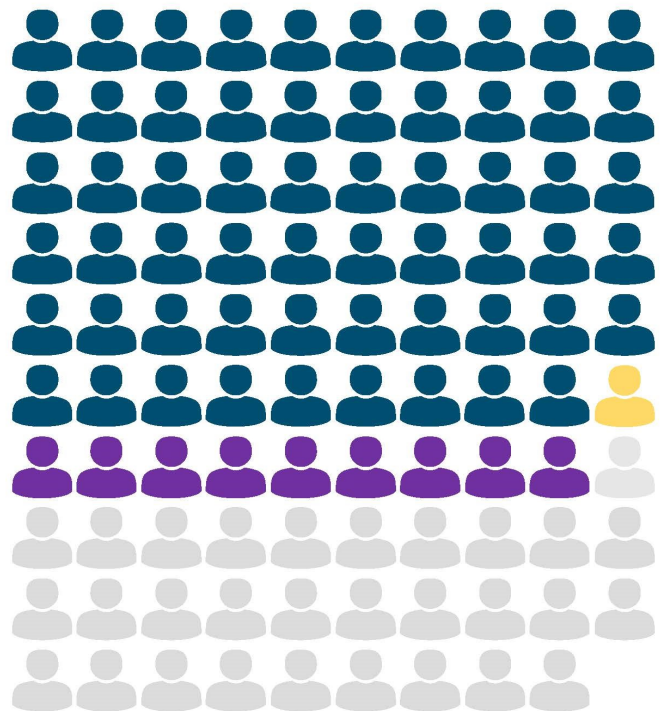
## Transparency & Accountability

Scrutiny Boards usually meet in public, holding key decision makers to account, as well as providing 'critical friend' challenge and support for public service improvement and policy development.

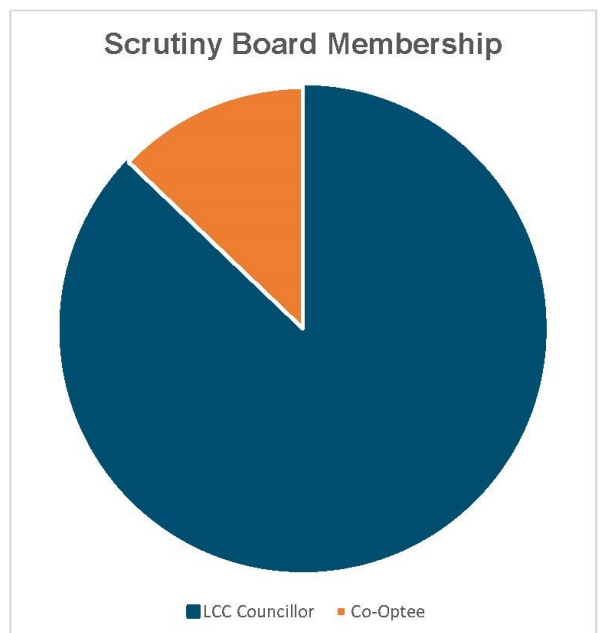
## Membership

Membership of all Scrutiny Boards broadly reflects the political balance of the Council and cannot include members of the Council's Executive.

There is provision for Scrutiny Boards to appoint additional Co-opted Members.



Councillors who are Scrutiny Board members





# Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board 2023/24



Cllr Barry Anderson



Cllr Javaid Akhtar



Cllr Stewart Golton  
(Chair)



Cllr Pauleen Grahame



Cllr Abdul Hannan



Cllr Norma Harrington



Cllr Asghar Khan



Cllr Annie Maloney



Cllr Adrian McCluskey



Cllr Andy Rontree



Cllr Simon Seary



Cllr Penny Stables



Cllr John Tudor

## ***Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board***

***Focusing on services affecting the lives of citizens living and working in the council's neighbourhoods to monitor progress as a citizen focused city and prioritising environmental sustainability.***

### **Completed Work Schedule for the 2023/24 Municipal Year**

Each Scrutiny Board schedules eight formal meetings throughout the course of a municipal year. The Local Government Act 1972 requires formal meetings to be held in person to enable members of the public to be admitted as observers wherever the meeting is being held. To further promote access and engagement, formal meetings are also webcast.

In addition, the Scrutiny Board may choose to carry out additional work using alternative methods including site visits, working groups and remote consultative meetings (consultative sessions do not constitute formal meetings but do enable public access via a webcast).

The completed work schedule of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) for the 2023/24 municipal year has been provided as part of this summary. This presents an overview of all meetings held throughout the year and the work items considered at each meeting. The work schedule also includes links to the agenda papers, minutes and webcast recordings of the Scrutiny Board's publicly accessible meetings.



# Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

## Statement from the Chair



“Ensuring decision makers reflect the lived experience of citizens in Leeds has been a priority for our Scrutiny Board over the last year. Whether we have been examining policies on housing, parks, waste services or anti-social behaviour, we have challenged Executive Members, officers and partners to ensure that policies work well for those directly impacted by them—especially in the case of our most vulnerable citizens.

With that in mind, we have explored the accessibility of greenspaces for people with disabilities, considered what women have said about their safety in parks, and questioned how to achieve a more accurate understanding of the number of incidents of hate crime in Leeds given we know these are under reported.

There’s no doubt that hearing from people external to our own organisation has added significant value to our work. I want to thank all those people who have taken the time to engage with the Scrutiny Board over the last 12 months to share their insights and expertise.

Over the course of this year, the Scrutiny Board has reiterated the importance of collaboration and co-production of services, particularly as financial constraints increase. We have recommended that third sector groups play a greater role in the work of our community committees and have explored how strong partnerships can help tackle financial exclusion and reduce anti-social behaviour.

There’s no escaping the enormous financial challenges facing our organisation, partners and citizens alike. All Scrutiny Boards considered the Council’s budget proposals in December 2023 and January 2024. Our conclusions and recommendations were presented to the Executive Board to influence the development of the final budget proposals. This included a recommendation that Scrutiny members are engaged in early consultation about a future waste strategy for the city including options for glass recycling. With this in mind, it was therefore disappointing that proposals for the introduction of doorstep glass collection in 2024 were announced at the annual budget meeting without prior involvement with Scrutiny Board members.

As part of the Budget and Policy Framework we are required to carry out performance monitoring twice a year, to understand how key services are delivering against Council targets. Homelessness and the efficiency of housing repairs and maintenance were areas of particular interest for members and I have no doubt these matters will be revisited by the successor Scrutiny Board in 2024/25.

Finally, I want to thank Scrutiny Board members for their commitment, engagement and challenge during the year. Scrutiny provides an important forum to help strengthen decision making and transparency in the Council—and I’m proud of the way in which members of the Board have approached some very varied, and often sensitive, issues during this year.”

Councillor Stewart Golton  
Scrutiny Chair



# Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

## Work Schedule 2023/24

June	July	September
<a href="#">Agenda for 22 June 2023 at 10.30 am</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 20 July 2023 at 10.30 am</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 14 September 2023 at 10.30 am</a>
Annual reports: Co-opted Members (DB) Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB) Potential Sources of Work (DB)  Performance Update (PM)	Waste: Draft Waste Strategy / Route Review / future of waste services (PSR)  Proposed review of community committee infrastructure, following recommendations of LGA Peer Review (PSR)  Referral to Scrutiny: Impact of radon gas on social housing tenants (Cllr Dixon) (PSR)	Safer, Stronger Communities – Leeds Plan Update (PSR)  West Yorkshire Police & Crime Plan 2021-2024 – Update (PSR)  <i>ASB Ombudsman report to be attached to agenda for information.</i>
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
		21 September – Budget Briefing (remote) for all Scrutiny members [DB]
October	November	December
<a href="#">Agenda for 12 October 2023</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 6 November 2023</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 7 December 2023</a>
Parks – Development of ‘Plan on a Page’ for city parks, including safe access for women & girls (PSR)  Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 update (DB)	<u>Call In Meeting</u> Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange	Reducing poverty and improving financial inclusion (PSR)  Local Welfare Support Scheme Review Update (PSR)  Update on Community Committee Review (PSR)
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
		2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) – 15 December 2023 9.30am -11am (remote)
January	February	March & April
<a href="#">Agenda for 25 January 2024 at 10.30 am</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 22 February 2024 at 10.30 am</a>	<a href="#">Agenda for 21 March 2024 at 10.30 am</a>
Performance report (PM) Financial Health Monitoring (PSR) 2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) Car Parking Charges Golden Acre and Otley Chevin (PSR)	Ensuring the future resilience of the Third Sector (PSR)  Housing Activity Update (PSR)	Climate Emergency Update (PSR)  Green Spaces - annual update on progress towards ambitions set out in the Parks & Greenspaces Strategy (DB)  Community Committee Review Update (PSR)  End of year statement
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
31/1/24 1.30-2.30pm: Lettings Policy Briefing		9/4/24 1.30-2.30pm: Regulation of Social Landlords

**More information about Leeds City Council's Scrutiny Service, along with the activity and membership of individual Scrutiny Boards, can be found on the Council's committee webpages.**

**You can also follow @ScrutinyLeeds on X (formerly twitter).**



## Work Programme

Date: 21 March 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The report includes an initial summary of the items members have recommended for consideration by the successor Scrutiny Board in 2024/25.

All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year. In doing so, the work programme should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year.

The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme.'

As has been the case during 2023/24, members of the successor Scrutiny Board will be invited to review and discuss the work programme at each public Scrutiny Board meeting that takes place during the 2023/24 municipal year.

### Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) note the draft meeting dates for 2024/25
- b) note the draft work programme for 2024/25, which includes items recommended for consideration by the current Scrutiny Board membership.

## What is this report about?

- 1 A draft 2024/25 work programme for the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion.
- 2 Reflected in the programme are known items of scrutiny activity, including performance and budget monitoring and identified Budget and Policy Framework items.
- 3 Members are asked to note the 2024/25 meeting dates. These have also been circulated to members as provisional diary invitations, which will be updated once committee appointments are agreed at the Annual General Meeting in May 2024.
- 4 The following draft meeting dates have been agreed for the 2024/25 municipal year for board members consideration:
  - Thursday 20 June at 10.30AM
  - Thursday 18 July at 10.30AM
  - Thursday 19 September at 10.30AM
  - Wednesday 23 October at 10.30AM
  - Friday 6 December at 10.30AM
  - Thursday 23 January at 10.30AM
  - Thursday 20 February at 10.30AM
  - Wednesday 2 April March at 10.30AM
- 5 There will be a pre-meeting scheduled for 10.00AM to support these meeting dates.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 7 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities in the Best City Ambition.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 8 To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to establish and maintain an effective, early dialogue with relevant Directors, senior officers and Executive Board Members.
- 9 The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

10 The Board's Work Programme is the subject of consultation with Board members at each public meeting and is subject to input from relevant Directors, senior officers and Executive Board Members both early in the municipal year and on an ongoing basis.

### **What are the resource implications?**

11 Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time.

12 The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.

13 Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
- Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

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

14 This report has no specific risk management implications.

### **What are the legal implications?**

15 This report has no specific legal implications.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Draft work programme 2024/25

### **Background papers**

- None

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## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

June	July	August
<b>Thursday 20 June 2024 at 10.30am</b>	<b>Thursday 18 July 2024 at 10.30am</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
Annual administrative reports: Co-opted Members (DB) Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB) Potential Sources of Work (DB)  Performance Update (PM)  Community Safety Strategy Refresh (PSR)	Radon Gas – Phase 1 Testing Update  Future Waste Strategy for Leeds (incl. Glass recycling)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<b>Thursday 19 September 2024 at 10.30am</b>	<b>Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 10.30am</b>	<b>No meetings</b>
Climate Emergency – Annual Update		
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

December	January	February
<b>Friday 6 December 2024 at 10.30am</b>	<b>Thursday 23 January 2025 at 10.30am</b>	<b>Thursday 20 February 2025 at 10.30am</b>
	Performance report (PM)  2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) – XX December 2024 (remote)		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

March	April	Notes
No meetings	Wednesday 2 April 2025	To be scheduled
	Annual Update - Parks and Greenspaces Strategy  Welfare and Benefits Review.  End of year statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hate Crime</li> <li>• Green Spaces Play Strategy</li> <li>• Leeds Poverty Truth – Resourcing the City &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> Commission</li> <li>• Community Committee Review</li> <li>• Housing related transformation projects to be covered in performance reporting</li> <li>• Integrated Locality Working</li> <li>• Housing Repairs and Maintenance</li> <li>• West Yorkshire Police &amp; Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 &amp; Safer, Stronger Communities Plan Update</li> <li>• Third Sector Role &amp; Resilience in Leeds</li> <li>• Clean Air</li> </ul>
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

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### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring