

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Wednesday, 29th November, 2023 at 10.00 am
(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 9.45 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

- D Blackburn - Farnley and Wortley;
J Bowden - Roundhay;
E Bromley - Horsforth;
D Cohen (Chair) - Alwoodley;
R Downes - Otley and Yeadon;
O Edwards - Guiseley and Rawdon;
C Gruen - Bramley and Stanningley;
J Heselwood - Weetwood;
N Manaka - Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
L Martin - Roundhay;
K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood;
D Seary - Pudsey;
J Senior - Morley South;
R. Stephenson - Harewood;

Co-opted Members (Voting)

- Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr A Graham - Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr A Khitou - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Vacancy - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

- Mr N Tones - School Staff Representative
Ms H Bellamy - School Staff Representative
Ms L Whitaker - Young Lives Leeds
Mrs K Blacker
Ms J Ward

Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Rob Clayton
Tel: (0113) 37 88790

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[Council and democracy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](http://leeds.gov.uk)

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items have been identified.</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 - 4 OCTOBER 2023

7 - 16

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2023.

7

IMPACT OF VAPING ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

17 - 34

To consider a further update report from the Head of Democratic Services on youth vaping setting out recent policy developments at Government level that impact on the work of the Board in this area. Included as an appendix to this item is a proposed consultation submission to the 'Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation Government' for board comment and approval as appropriate.

8

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

35 - 42

To receive a report from the Director of Children and Families providing an update on the Children and Families Transformation Agenda.

9

REFRESH OF THE LEEDS 3AS STRATEGY

43 -
94

To receive a report from the Director of Children and Families that presents an update on the refreshed 3A's plan following previous consideration by the Board in March 2023.

10

WORK PROGRAMME

95 -
118

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

11

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 24 January 2024 at 10.00am. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 9.45am

THIRD PARTY RECORDING

Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice

- a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.

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SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 4TH OCTOBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor D Cohen in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, J Bowden,
E Bromley, R Downes, O Edwards,
C Gruen, J Heselwood, N Manaka,
L Martin, K Renshaw, T Smith and
R. Stephenson

CO-OPTED MEMBER (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)

Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Mr N Tones – School Staff Representative

Ms H Bellamy – School Staff Representative

37 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

38 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information considered by the Board.

39 Late Items

There were no late items.

40 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

41 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

The Board received the following apologies:

Ms K Blacker – Co-opted Member

Ms J Ward – Co-opted Member

42 Minutes - 6 September 2023

The Board noted that the minutes from the meeting held on 6 September did not reference attendance from the Board's co-opted members and therefore need to be amended to reflect those that attended.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 29th November, 2023

The Board also raised a query in respect of an item considered at the September meeting on the Impact of Asylum changes on children in Leeds, with a view to potentially bringing back a further update item once the impact of the recent Illegal Immigration Act (2023) was being felt in Leeds. It was agreed that this would be picked up under the Work Programme item.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendment to the attendance at the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2023 be agreed as an accurate record.

43 Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership - Update

The report of the Head of Democratic Services set out to the context and background of the Board's past interest in the work of the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP).

In 2022/23 the Board considered a number of work items in relation to the Notification of Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents. The board requested and received updates from the LSCP Executive throughout this period the last of which was during the meeting on 8 March 2023.

Following discussion, and recorded in the minutes from the meeting held on 8 March 2023, agreed actions that formed the basis of the latest update report and presented to the Board were:

- The findings from the LSCP Executive's twelve-month review of its revised notification processes, which will be undertaken in July 2023.
- Progress on the work being undertaken around practitioner escalation and resolution of concerns.
- Capturing the voice of the child and evidencing how the learning stemming from reviews is being disseminated and is improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Addressing the use of language and jargon and understanding the use of definitions used in the sector.
- The work being undertaken to ensure the use of accurate and timely risk assessments and improving awareness and understanding amongst practitioners around differing risk assessment processes.
- The Leeds input into the review of the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance, with an update on progress dependent upon the timing of the national review process.
- Clarification of the levels of oversight, including democratic oversight, that surrounds those Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews that are notified to the National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families

- Jo Harding, Director of Nursing and Quality, NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Councillor Pryor Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Phil Coneron, Interim Business Unit Manager for the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Rebecca Roberts, Section Head of Social Care Legal and legal adviser to the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership

Responding to question from members the following discussion points were raised:

- Members were interested in hearing more detail about how the child's voice is captured by the partnership as discussed under section 3 of the submitted report and specifically around how feedback from children and young people has impacted the findings of reviews and the wider work of the LSCP. The Board were informed that feedback can vary depending on the age of the child involved but through the independent authors that are commissioned to conduct Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) meetings with the child or young person do take place and also feedback is provided to them on learning that has resulted from their case. It was acknowledged that when recommendations are made during CSPRs there is more work to do in terms of ensuring that reviews impact practice and make a difference on the frontline and outcomes for children and young people. Further work is planned over the coming year on quality assurance and the impact that the reviews have had on practice in Leeds.
- More generally the Board were assured about the voice of the child being a central theme in the work done by Children and Families in terms of consultation from the Voice and Influence Team on key strategic policies such as the Children and Young People's Plan and ensuring the child's voice is heard in Looked After Children Reviews with feedback incorporated into practice through a 'you said, we did' approach which clearly shows how services have responded to feedback.
- The ILAC inspections that are carried out by Ofsted also involve detailed reviews of case files through which an assessment is made on how the voice of the child has impacted on services and impacted on practice. Section 11 inspections are also relevant in ensuring services in the LSCP capture the voice of the child these are carried out under Section 11 of the Children Act (2004) and contained in those is a question on how the voice of the child is used to shape and develop services which informs service development and improvements.
- The Board sought clarification in relation to paragraph 7 of the submitted report which related to the notifying of child safeguarding cases to the National Panel and who decides on the threshold that is reached that leads to a national notification. The Board were informed that this is a joint decision at the Review Advisory Group (RAG) of the three partners on the LSCP, Health, Police and Children and Families services supported by legal advisors and the involvement of the independent scrutineer who participates in the RAG decision making process. This is further supported by consideration at the LSCP Executive who have oversight of RAG decisions on notifications. If the decision is to notify to the national panel

rationale for this decision is also provided. For those cases that are not at the threshold of national notification, these are subject to further action at a local level comprising of lessons learned reviews or local thematic reviews. It was also noted that when a case involving significant harm arises a strategy meeting takes place involving all partners and this can lead to referral to the RAG and independent scrutineer, this can be to consider a national notification but also where learning and review will be beneficial and lead to improvement in practice. Professional judgement is the key factor in determining referrals to the National Panel or other courses of action.

- Board members sought further details on the involvement of the third sector in the work of the LSCP in particular the involvement of Women's Aid and their recent work. It was noted that input from the Third Sector would be welcomed by the LSCP and that contact should be made via the LSCP Business Manager and would lead to the involvement of the Third Sector Safeguarding Group. It was also noted that the newly appointed independent scrutineer has a particular interest in third sector organisations which could offer an opportunity for further links to the work of Women's Aid.
- A further area of interest was around collective decision making and how disagreements about notifications between the three LSCP partners are resolved. Over the past 12-18 months this has been the subject of significant development and scrutiny at both the Executive Board and at this Scrutiny Board. It is still the case that the local authority is the responsible body in terms of making a notification, but it was stressed that these decisions are reached collaboratively between the three partners and there has not been a situation over the past 12-18 months where a consensus has not been reached on a particular case. Effectively the legal duty is for the Director of Children and Families to make a decision on notifications but in practice this is a collaborative process through which a consensus is reached on whether to make a notification to the National Panel or other courses of action.
- Responding to further questions on the Review Advisory Group (RAG) the board were informed that where a decision not to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review is made this is subject to wider scrutiny at a national level which acts as a 'sense check' on those processes.
- The Board recognised that over the past year and more the processes surrounding national notifications have improved and that democratic oversight both through this Board and more widely has played a significant part in that.

Resolved:

- a) Members noted the content of the report.
- b) Agreed that an annual update on LSCP activity should feature on the Board's work programme each municipal year.

44 School Attendance Update

The Board received the report from the Director of Children and Families providing an overview of school attendance in Leeds. This included relevant Leeds data, an overview of actions the LA has taken to support schools in their work to improve attendance and a summary of planned actions the LA will take to support schools in their work to improve attendance and reduce absence.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families
- Rebecca McCormack, Head of Service Vulnerable Learners
- Jancis Andrew, Headteacher Virtual School Looked After Children

In opening remarks both the Chair and Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Learning stressed the importance of school attendance and the importance it plays in effective learning and attainment and ensuring that children and young people reach their potential.

The Executive Member provided a summary of the attendance position highlighting the national trends that have seen an increase in persistent absence since the pandemic from approximately just over 10% to now being slightly over 20%, that position is also reflected in Leeds.

Leeds ranks 74th out of 152 local authorities overall and attendance is a key element of the 3As strategy at priority 2. Cllr Pryor also noted that the data does not identify underlying causes of the increases in absence and further highlighted the need for additional resources within schools to tackle the problem and welcomed the comments of Board members on the issues faced in relation to school attendance in the city as part of this report.

Responding to questions from members the following discussion points were raised:

- Board members highlighted the issues with children and young people who are unable to attend mainstream secondary school settings for a variety of reasons but a key reason being the size of schools and also problems in diagnosing children and young people due to backlogs both nationally and locally in identifying conditions that children and young people might have. Members believed that there was a need for a different kind of provision between mainstream and SILC settings to provide appropriate places of learning for this cohort of children and young people. Members suggested a piece of work at a national and local level to understand the barriers and reasons for this cohort not attending school. It was believed that mental health is a key issue much of which has been evident post pandemic.

- Members further noted that EHCPs are not always the answer to the issues that have been identified with many pupils who are persistently absent often needing short term support that the model offered by EHCPs does not fit and this links into some of the demand issues being felt by the SENSAP team. The Board noted that waiting lists for diagnosis of conditions for children and young people is a priority for the Integrated Care Board in terms of speeding assessments up through services such as CAMHS, it was further noted that these issues are prevalent nationwide.
- The Board discussed how the family help model established in the MacAilister Review could be applied to locality support for schools. A key area of interest being how the city can wrap family help approaches around schools to ensure that they can respond to the needs of children and young people effectively through development of a whole system approach and working collaboratively and collectively across organisations to develop solutions for the city.
- Building on earlier comments around resources in schools the board recognised that there is a need for more support staff to be available in schools to support children and young people in schools, an important factor being recruitment and retention and some of the terms and conditions that are found in support staff contracts, such as term time only contracts. The Board also recognised that national approaches are an important contextual factor when discussing the situation in Leeds, the issues being identified around persistent absence and wider school attendance are not unique to Leeds and are being felt nationally.
- The Board were interested in best practice in the city and the possibility of pairing schools up who are performing well in terms of attendance management with other schools who are doing less well. The Board felt that sharing of the methods being used in schools that are working effectively on attendance could deliver improvements more widely. It was noted that this is a priority area for the service in the current academic year. To support the Board's understanding of this a request was made to share more data on school performance on attendance, it was agreed that this would be shared following the meeting.
- Responding to a question around working with statistical neighbours and other local authorities the board were informed that the Council is active in working within the region and trying to adopt best practice where that is evident. In addition, the Board heard that there is additional support in place for this through DfE provided Attendance Advisors that are aimed at supporting local authorities and exploring learning from other authority areas that are performing well.
- The Board were also interested in transition between primary and secondary provision. During the pandemic some of the strategies used to assist and smooth transition had to be ceased due to necessity but these arrangements are now operating again as they were pre-pandemic. In addition to that there is a renewed focus on the individual student and understanding the barriers to attendance and seeking to remedy them.
- Following questions from Board members they were assured that children and families services were fully committed to developing early intervention and prevention measures. A recent example of this is the expansion of

the Early Help Hubs from three to seven and plans to have SEND co-ordinators as part of their teams to accompany existing staff such as Domestic Violence and Mental Health Co-ordinators.

- Members discussed how students who are regularly or persistently absent are responded to when they return to school and were cautious of approaches that saw large amounts of 'catch up' work given to them as often that can lead to the student being overwhelmed and could lead to further absence. Whilst emphasising the need for a strong focus on attainment the Board thought that taking a different view on attainment and more carefully managing re-introduction to school could be beneficial for students who have been persistently absent.
- Developing on this theme the board noted the impact that core groups of persistently absent students have on a school's overall attendance figures and ultimately attainment figures. Responding to questions about how much freedom schools have to manage returns from persistent absence, the board were informed that resource is a key limiting factor in what options schools have to develop potential solutions such as phased returns or more nuanced approaches to individual students to meet their needs and drive better attendance in the future and ultimately higher attainment.
- When discussing other limiting factors on this theme the role of Ofsted was noted and the Board were informed of positive recent discussion between the Directorate and Ofsted that touched on the unintended consequences of Ofsted judgements.
- Board members highlighted an issue around awareness of neurodiversity amongst children and young people. It was recognised that workforce development and enhancing skills within the workforce would be important in this potentially by developing partnership working between agencies to encourage and facilitate workforce development.
- The Board requested more information on attendance broken down by ethnically diverse communities, which it was agreed will be looked into and provided.
- On penalty notices for absence the Board were keen to know more about the approaches referred to in the submitted report. It was noted that the majority of penalties issued were linked to family holidays. The Board were informed that the local approach is still being developed and it was recognised that a standardised approach both across Leeds and in line with the national approach is one of the issues. A potential problem in relation to standardised approaches is that it is the school's responsibility to request that a penalty notice is issued by the local authority which can lead to different approaches being taken. In addition, understanding the reasons behind absence is an important element before issuing penalty notices.
- The Chair asked about attendance of children looked after in the city and the challenges faced and was keen to hear more about the approaches taken to improving attendance amongst that cohort. The Board were informed of attendance levels before the pandemic and how Children Looked After at primary level had a better attendance rate than their non-looked after contemporaries. In addition, there was a commitment to re-

establish this performance which was impacted by the pandemic. It was also suggested that further details will be provided.

Resolved:

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) Additional information noted in the minutes above to be circulated to Board members when available.

45 Impact of Vaping on Children and Young People in Leeds

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services setting out an update on the Board's interest in youth vaping following consideration at its meeting in July 2023.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Advisor
- Helen Goddard, Advance Health Improvement Specialist

By way of introduction the Chair set out recent context linked to this issue. The Government and media coverage has been suggesting that disposable vapes are to be made illegal in the near future. This resulted in the postponement of a planned Scrutiny Working Group on 27 September as it was thought that many of the key aims established for the Board's work were likely to be met through disposable vapes being made illegal.

The following issues were raised in discussion:

- Responding to a question from the Board on how definitive the suggestions from Government and media coverage on disposable vapes had been, the Scrutiny Advisor and Chair noted that it had been covered by a number of different media outlets and that the main risk of progressing with the working group as had been planned was the possibility of duplication and the recommendations being superseded by Government announcements.
- The Chair added that if an announcement on vaping had not been made by the next Board meeting on 29 November the plan to hold a working group would be re-established. The Chair emphasised that the Board is adopting a watching brief on the issue would revisit it if no further announcements were made.

Resolved:

The Board:

- a) Noted the potential for a government announcement that would make disposable vapes illegal

- b) Agreed to adopt a 'watching brief' on this issue to ensure that if no further announcements are made the issue will be revisited through a working group.

46 Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds - Working Group Notes

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services which provided a summary of the Working Group on the Provision of EHCP support that took place on 22 September 2023.

The Board agreed Terms of Reference for the inquiry at the 6 September Board meeting and the working group considered further details from the children and families directorate in terms of the latest position on EHCP performance and other related matters set out in the Terms of Reference. In addition, the working group also featured input from PWC as they conduct their independent review of EHCP processes in Leeds.

The Chair set out the planned next steps in the inquiry work. The Board has identified stakeholder consultation as an important element of this work and whilst also noting the engagement work being carried out by PWC there remained a desire to meet directly with stakeholders to understand the lived experiences of those who are dealing with EHCP related services.

As a result, it was agreed that a Working Group to facilitate stakeholder engagement will be set up in November 2023.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) Noted the Working Group summary into the Provision of EHCP support in Leeds which was held on 22 September 2023.
- b) Agreed to carry out direct stakeholder engagement through a further Working Group to be set up in November 2023.

47 Work Programme

The Board considered the latest position on the Board's Work Programme for 2023/24 through the submitted report from the Head of Democratic Services.

The Scrutiny Advisor noted the comments made under the Minutes from the 6 September meeting referring to the Impact of Asylum Changes on Children and Young People in Leeds and suggested that the future programming of that will be picked up through consultation with the Chair.

The Chair also noted that the pre-meetings for the remainder of the municipal year will commence at 9.45AM.

Resolved:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 29th November, 2023

The Board:

- a) Noted the contents of the submitted work programme report.

48 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 29 November 2023 at 10.00am. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 9.45am

Impact of Vaping on Children & Young People – Consultation and Planned Legislation Update

Date: 29 November 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Children and Families Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Children and Families Scrutiny Board agreed to look into the impacts of vaping on children and young people (youth vaping) in 2023/24. The Board considered the issue in detail at its 5 July meeting and agreed to conduct further work on this in the 2023/24 municipal year.

A working group was scheduled to build on consideration of youth vaping following the July meeting but subsequent policy developments at Government level and media coverage, including the Smokefree Generation Command Paper (*‘Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation’*) led to that approach being postponed. The main reason for this was the possibility of Government announcements and/or legislative measures superseding any work done locally in Leeds to press for stronger regulation of vaping and to reduce the impacts it has on children and young people.

The Smokefree Generation announcement launched a further consultation with three key areas of focus: creating a smokefree generation on smoking which would mean that tobacco products will never be legally sold to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009; tackling youth vaping and building on the recent youth vaping call for evidence analysis; and enforcement, specifically on new powers for local authorities in England and Wales to issue fixed penalty notices to enforce age of sale legislation of tobacco products and vapes.

The consultation is open until 6 December 2023 and given the Board’s interest and previous comments in this area this item is brought back to the Board to provide an update on recent policy developments and seek the Board’s views on a draft consultation response, at Appendix 1, to the smokefree generation consultation based on discussion at the Board’s July meeting and to be submitted as a Board response to the Government’s proposals.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Note the smokefree generation policy announcement and the analysis of the Call for Evidence on youth vaping and the impact they have had on the work of the Board.
- b) Agree, comment and shape the draft smoke free generation consultation response presented at Appendix 1.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides a further update on youth vaping following previous reports brought to the July and October public meetings of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board.
- 2 Much of the concern around youth vaping both nationally and expressed at the Children and Families Board meeting in July centred around key issues such as advertising, marketing, packaging, targeting at young people, free gifting of vapes, environmental impacts and a strong desire for a much tighter regulatory framework to be established.
- 3 The main concerns focussed on disposable vapes and their increasing usage amongst children and young people as opposed to refill vapes that evidence suggests are more commonly used by adults and as a smoking cessation tool.
- 4 Since this issue was first considered by the Board the Government has set out proposals through a new command paper, '*Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*' and analysis of a call for evidence on youth vaping that was carried out over Summer 2023.
- 5 In addition, the King's Speech on 7 November 2023 included the Tobacco and Vapes Bill which has a headline measure of ensuring no one currently aged 14 or under can ever be legally sold cigarettes or other tobacco products but also has significant measures to tackle the growing problem of youth vaping. This is mirrored in the consultation and evidence gathering that forms part of the ongoing consultation on the Smokefree Generation proposals and will inform the Tobacco and Vapes Bill.
- 6 Given the activity from Government that covers many of the concerns raised by the Board in July it is possible that any local scrutiny work could duplicate or be superseded by the proposals and legislation being put forward by Government.
- 7 In order to capture the views expressed by Board members at the July public meeting of the Board and to feed into the wider work in this area at Appendix 1 there is a suggested response to the Smokefree Generation consultation based on the comments made in July for further discussion, comment and approval at today's meeting.
- 8 It should be noted that the remit of the Board in this area, and therefore the discussion held in July, relates to the impact of vaping on children and young people as opposed to the issue of vaping and tobacco usage more broadly, as a result some questions in the consultation do not contain a response as they have not been covered by the Board to date or sit outside of the Board's remit and focus of this work.

Analysis of the Call for Evidence on Youth Vaping

- 9 Responding to growing concerns about the impact of vaping on children and young people the Government launched a call for evidence that ran between 11 April and 6 June 2023. The key areas of interest which to a significant degree mirrored concerns expressed by the Board at its July meeting, were:
 - Building regulatory compliance: ensuring only adult smokers can access legally compliant vape products.
 - The appeal of vape products: how the appearance and product characteristics of vapes may attract children.
 - Marketing and promotion of vape products: how the marketing and promotion of vapes may attract children.
 - The role of social media: the impact of social media on the uptake and use of vaping by children.
 - Effective educational approaches to prevent the uptake of vaping by children.

- The impact of vapes on the environment, particularly disposable products.
- Understanding the vape market.

- 10 The analysis of this call for evidence was not available until October 2023 but this has now been published and is closely linked to the Smokefree Generation consultation which seeks to build on the evidence base established by the call for evidence work.
- 11 The Call for Evidence analysis highlights many of the areas that the Board identified as areas of concern when they considered the issue in July 2023. These can be summarised as increasing usage particularly disposable vapes, directing marketing and advertising of vapes at children and young people, packaging and product placement in shops, regulation and illicit products, online advertising and social media, low cost of vapes, development of effective education programmes to tackle vape usage and impacts of vapes on the environment in terms of littering, pollution and fire hazards.
- 12 The call for evidence resulted in a number of practical suggestions being made that again reflected the Board's consideration when it was substantively discussed in the Summer. For example, to address growing usage and accessibility of vape products it was suggested that plain packaging is used for vaping products, point of sale displays should be removed, stronger restrictions on advertising should be introduced and that price promotions should be prevented.
- 13 On Marketing and promotion the call for evidence suggested better enforcement of existing regulations and clarification of existing restrictions on advertising the products by the Advertising Standards Authority along with added online protection for children and young people.
- 14 In respect of environmental impacts the evidence also highlighted practical measures to tackle the impact disposable vapes are having. These included introducing an extended producer responsibility (regulations that apply to organisations supplying vapes and vape packaging) or deposit return scheme (deposits placed on vapes to incentivise people to recycle them), making instructions for disposal more readily available, banning disposable vapes, promoting reusable products, fines for littering and making vapes only available on prescription to people trying to quit smoking.
- 15 On the low cost of vapes when compared to other nicotine products the evidence from responders suggested that the current costs mean that disposable vapes are within an affordable price range for children and young people and that increasing the cost could lead to reduced usage. Reusable vapes require an up-front payment of between £10 and £40 on average which may act as a cost deterrent for usage by young people. One interesting suggestion from responders was around taxation of vapes either generally or focused on disposable vapes which would obviously increase costs but also that imposing an excise duty could strengthen enforcement approaches to illicit vapes. A potential negative of taxation is that it could deter adults accessing vapes in order to quit smoking.

Smokefree Generation Consultation

- 16 Following on from the call for evidence the Government announced a further consultation aimed at creating a smoke free generation. Announced in October 2023 the consultation will run until 6 December 2023. The consultation asks question in three key areas:
- Creating a smokefree generation: on smoking, the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on the smokefree generation policy and its scope to inform future legislation. This policy will make it an offence for anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 to be sold tobacco products.

- Tackling youth vaping: there is also significant evidence for action to tackle youth vaping, the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on several options to ensure they take the most appropriate and impactful steps, building on the analysis of the youth vaping call for evidence.
 - Enforcement: the consultation also asks questions on the proposal to introduce new powers for local authorities in England and Wales to issue fixed penalty notices to enforce age of sale legislation of tobacco products and vapes.
- 17 The second bullet point has particular relevance to the Board's recent consideration of youth vaping and the Government consultation seeks views on the following in relation to vaping:
- Restricting vape flavours
 - Regulating vape packaging and product presentation
 - Regulating point of sale displays
 - Restricting the supply and sale of disposable vapes
 - Exploring further restrictions for non-nicotine vapes and other nicotine consumer products such as nicotine pouches
 - Action on the affordability of vapes, exploring a new duty on vapes
- 18 Many of these areas were covered when the Board initially considered this issue in July 2023 and Appendix 1 to this report provides a suggested response to the consultation questions on vaping based on that session. This is included for comment, adjustment and, if deemed to be appropriate by the Board, approval and submission.
- 19 The update report provided to the Board for the October cycle of meetings included comment on the possibility that disposable vapes could be made illegal. This potential policy development is covered in the consultation and remains an option in terms of future legislation.
- 20 This is particularly relevant to the Board's interest in youth vaping given that ASH's Use of e-cigarettes among young people in Great Britain survey found that 69% of vape users aged 11 to 17 mainly used disposable vapes in 2023. Northern Ireland's Young person's behaviour and attitude survey 2022 shows that 85.7% of 11 to 16 year olds in Northern Ireland who currently use e-cigarettes reported that they used disposable products. This concerning data along with the known environmental impacts of disposable vapes begins to make a case for future measures against the sale and use of disposable vapes in the UK.
- 21 Where a consultation question sits outside of either the Board's remit or has not been picked up in the previous discussion held on this topic no response is provided in the proposed board submission. Should members wish to provide a submission there will be an opportunity at the meeting to highlight any additional comments that could be submitted.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 22 The Board is asked to consider the information in this report and the wider context of the ongoing Government consultation and likely policy developments. By commenting, shaping and agreeing to submit a consultation response on youth vaping it is hoped that this will contribute to the development of legislation to tackle the impact of vaping on children and young people both in Leeds and nationally.
- 23 The Vision for Scrutiny agreed by full Council sets out the nationally agreed four principles of good scrutiny. Within these is a commitment to 'Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard.' Given the recent focus on vaping in the media, from Government and from health professionals this work item has sought to respond to both

elected member concern and recent coverage that has raised the profile of this issue in Leeds and nationally.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

24 The terms of reference of the Council's Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition.

25 This item has a stronger focus on the Health and Well-Being pillar, seeking to understand and challenge the health impact that vaping is having on children and young people in the city and contribute to wider action and to prevent harm to children and young people through the use of vape products.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

26 Children and Families Scrutiny Board discussed this issue at its meetings in June July and October. Through this the Board has agreed to include this as an item in the 2023/24 Work Programme and also to keep a watching brief on developments to ensure that action is taken to address youth vaping nationally and in Leeds.

27 The Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Board also discussed this at its June meeting, identifying the impact of vaping on children and young people as an area of concern. This led to the development of a joint approach to this issue from both Boards. The Chair of the Adults Health and Active Lifestyles Board has been invited to attend this item along with other members who had identified this as an issue of concern in the city.

What are the resource implications?

28 There are no specific resource implications associated with this item.

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

29 There are no specific risk management implications associated with this item.

What are the legal implications?

30 There are no specific legal implications associated with this item.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

31 This is an update report aimed at informing the Board of recent developments at Government level which have an impact on the work being done in Leeds. Initially the Board had agreed to a Working Group to consider youth vaping in more detail but national developments led to the postponement of that approach and ultimately to this possible course of action, to submit a response to the ongoing consultation.

How will success be measured?

32 If supported by Board members, submission of a consultation response to the '*Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*' consultation.

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

33 This work stream has been impacted by a decision made by Government that has the potential to supersede any scrutiny recommendations that might have been made. The consultation closes on 6 December any consultation submission will need to be agreed and submitted by that date.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft consultation submission to the '*Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*' Government command paper consultation.

Background papers

- None

Consultation overview

The consultation asks questions in 3 areas for which new legislation would be needed:

1. Creating a smokefree generation: on smoking, the case for change is clear and the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on the smokefree generation policy and its scope to inform future legislation.
2. Tackling youth vaping: while there is also significant evidence for action to tackle youth vaping, within each proposal the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on several options to ensure we take the most appropriate and impactful steps, building on England's [analysis of the youth vaping call for evidence](#).
3. Enforcement: the consultation also asks questions on the proposal to introduce new powers for local authorities in England and Wales to issue fixed penalty notices to enforce age of sale legislation of tobacco products and vapes.

The UK Government and devolved administrations would like to understand the impacts on businesses and on people, and if there are any impacts on groups with protected characteristics (see [Discrimination: your rights](#)). We want to hear from:

- the public - from young people, parents, carers and teachers
- the retail sector and the independent vaping industry
- local authorities across the UK
- clinicians and medical professionals
- public health stakeholders and academic experts
- employers and trade unions

The UK Government and devolved administrations would like to receive as much detail as possible under each of the themes of the consultation. For each multiple choice question, you will be able to provide additional information and evidence to support your answer through free text boxes.

The UK Government and devolved administrations will only make any decisions on these proposed measures after fully considering:

- the consultation responses we receive
- the evidence provided in those responses
- a further review of the international evidence base

Following this, impact assessments will be published.

The UK Government, Scottish Government and Welsh Government intend to bring forward legislation as soon as possible. In Northern Ireland, the outcome of this

consultation will inform decisions of incoming ministers and the Northern Ireland Executive, or in the absence of ministers, those decisions that can be taken under the [Northern Ireland \(Executive Formation etc\) Act 2022](#). This applies to all proposals in the consultation document.

Consultation Questions

All questions below are proceeded with: Please explain your answer and provide evidence or your opinion to support further development of our approach. (maximum 300 words)

1. Do you agree or disagree that the age of sale for tobacco products should be changed so that anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 will never be legally sold (and also in Scotland, never legally purchase) tobacco products?
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Don't know

Proposed Board Response: No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.

2. Do you think proxy sales should also be prohibited?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

(Proxy sales refer to a person at or over the legal age of sale purchasing a product on behalf of someone under the legal age of sale. Proxy sales are prohibited under existing tobacco age of sale legislation. In this context, prohibiting proxy sales would mean that anyone born before 1 January 2009 would be prohibited from purchasing tobacco products on behalf of anyone born on or after 1 January 2009.)

Proposed Board Response: No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.

3. Do you agree or disagree that all tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products should be covered in the new legislation?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.*

4. Do you agree or disagree that warning notices in retail premises will need to be changed to read 'it is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009' when the law comes into effect?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.*

Vaping:

5. Do you agree or disagree that the UK Government and devolved administrations should restrict vape flavours?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Agree – *Given the negative health impacts of vaping on young people the Children and Families Scrutiny Board believes that restricting vape flavours and preventing the sale of flavours that resemble sweets or sweet flavours will deter children and young people from vaping. Vape flavours are clearly aimed at attracting young people to vaping and the wide variety of flavours available also encourages users to try different flavours and encourage others to try new or 'different' flavours. We do not believe it is acceptable to market vapes at children and young people and this is one of the methods used to do that.*

Vaping is an effective tool to reduce smoking rates and any measures taken should be mindful of any possible unintended consequences on the aim to reduce smoking rates.

6. Which option or options do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to implement restrictions on flavours? (You may select more than one answer)

- Option 1: limiting how the vape is described
- Option 2: limiting the ingredients in vapes
- Option 3: limiting the characterising flavours (the taste and smell) of vapes
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: All three options – *The use of exotic flavours and flavours that can be described in a similar way to sweets and sold in shops that in some cases also sell sweets clearly encourages young people to use vapes and can lead to more regular use rather than simply experimentation as users try the different flavours and can hear through word of mouth about new flavours. Names and descriptions such as custard creams, citrus explosion, red solero and berry blast either mimic or partially mimic existing sweet products or are designed to be marketable and potentially appealing to young people.*

Ingredients in vapes need to be regulated more tightly and the Board is concerned about the availability of illicit vape products that can be widely available and contain dangerous ingredients such as lead and nickel and could have higher nicotine concentration levels, contain banned ingredients or have oversized tanks for nicotine liquid.

The characterising flavours are also a concern one of the main deterrents to smoking is the taste of cigarettes, on first try cigarettes do not taste or smell nice. With some vape flavours being appealing in smell and taste this deterrent is lost and could lead to greater levels of nicotine addiction both now and in the future. The Board also believes that some of the problems posed by vapes are similar to those issues that presented when alcopops were heavily promoted and popular in the 1990s and were used as a means to encourage young people to drink through marketing and advertising that was designed to attract them to alcohol. Taxation and regulation of marketing were used to reduce appeal and usage amongst young people.

7. Which option do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to restrict vape flavours to children and young people?

- Option A: flavours limited to tobacco only
- Option B: flavours limited to tobacco, mint and menthol only
- Option C: flavours limited to tobacco, mint, menthol and fruits only

Proposed Board Response: Option C – As noted in question 5 and 6 The Board is concerned about the description and marketing of vapes at children and young people and would like to see this tackled as a priority. However, it is clear that adults are using vapes as a means to quit smoking and any measures that are aimed at restricting flavouring should be mindful of that particularly given evidence that adults do access fruit based vape flavours. However, it is clear that brightly coloured fruit flavoured vapes are very popular with young people so measures to tackle that including curbs on marketing, advertising and packaging could be a first step before moving on to consideration of reducing the number of flavours that are available.

Any measures to reduce available flavours would need to be balanced with any impacts on the number of adults accessing vapes to quit smoking. As already note the Board is concerned that vapes can taste and smell pleasant as opposed to cigarettes that on first try have an unpleasant smell and taste.

8. Do you think there are any alternative flavour options the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: No – There is evidence that smoking related flavours such as tobacco and mint are not popular with young people and that fruit flavours are much more appealing, with approximately 60% of young people saying that they prefer fruit flavouring. On that basis the scrutiny board does not believe that further flavouring options should be explored by Government. Indeed, depending on the impact on adults seeking to quit smoking consideration of reducing flavouring availability would be the preferred direction of travel certainly in terms of reducing 'catchy,' marketable names but potentially also available flavours.

9. Do you think non-nicotine e-liquid, for example shortfills, should also be included in restrictions on vape flavours?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – During its consideration of these issues the scrutiny board heard that the health impacts of vaping are not yet fully understood, only that vapes are considered to be much less harmful than smoking tobacco. Nicotine addiction amongst young people is also a serious concern arising from the increase in vape usage and whilst non-nicotine versions of the product would negate that concern the uncertainty around health impacts suggest that measures to restrict nicotine based versions should also apply to their non-nicotine counterparts. In short vaping of any description is not risk free and is potentially harmful.

Regulating point of sale displays

10. Which option do you think would be the most effective way to restrict vapes to children and young people?

- Option 1: vapes must be kept behind the counter and cannot be on display, like tobacco products
- Option 2: vapes must be kept behind the counter but can be on display

Proposed Board Response: Option 1 – Whilst recognising the need to ensure adults can access vapes as a smoking cessation aid there is an equally compelling need to prevent children and young people being attracted to vaping products. Clear messaging to adults around the continued availability of vapes should assist if option 1 were pursued. The Board was of the view that strong action on advertising and marketing should be taken to prevent the continued growth in youth vaping and option 1 would be the best method to deliver that.

11. Do you think exemptions should be made for specialist vape shops?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – Exemptions could work for those businesses that specialise in selling vape products but would need to be coupled with measures to reduce on street advertising and in particular brightly coloured, hard to miss shop windows often used by specialist vaping shops. In addition, measures to prevent access to specialist shops by children and young people might be considered. The Board is clear that advertising and marketing is a real issue and strong measures should be taken to reduce this both in shops and how they impact on the street scene.

12. If you disagree with regulating point of sale displays, what alternative measures do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

Proposed Board Response: N/A – *The Board supports additional regulation on point of sale displays.*

Regulating vape packaging and product presentation

13. Which option do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to restrict the way vapes can be packaged and presented to reduce youth vaping?

- Option 1: prohibiting the use of cartoons, characters, animals, inanimate objects, and other child friendly imagery, on both the vape packaging and vape device. This would still allow for colouring and tailored brand design
- Option 2: prohibiting the use of all imagery and colouring on both the vape packaging and vape device but still allow branding such as logos and names
- Option 3: prohibiting the use of all imagery and colouring and branding (standardised packaging) for both the vape packaging and vape device

Proposed Board Response: Option 3 – *Given the alarming growth in use of vape products by children and young people and concerns raised by the Board in relation to the accuracy of data on youth vaping, the belief being that the figures are low in terms of usage, the strongest measures on packaging and product measures should be taken which are found in option 3. Again, the possible unintended consequence of impacting adult smoking cessation rates will need to be monitored closely.*

14. If you disagree with regulating vape packaging, what alternative measures do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

Proposed Board Response: N/A – *The Board does support additional regulation on vape packaging.*

Restricting supply and sale of disposable vaping products

15. Do you agree or disagree that there should be restrictions on the sale and supply of disposable vapes?

That is, those that are not rechargeable, not refillable or that are neither rechargeable nor refillable.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Agree – Given the strong evidence from Ash on a national level and the My Health, My School surveys carried out in Leeds that indicate that disposable vapes are by far the most popular vaping product for children and young people restrictions on sale of disposable vapes should be introduced. The ongoing implications of youth vaping in terms of nicotine addiction amongst children and young people are significant and strong action is needed to prevent that as quickly as possible.

16. Do you agree or disagree that restrictions on disposable vapes should take the form of prohibiting their sale and supply?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Agree – During discussion on youth vaping the Board had clear concerns about availability and accessibility of disposable vapes and the environmental impact these have in and around school premises and in the wider community. To prevent harm to children and young people and to reduce environmental impacts disposable vape products should be made illegal.

17. Are there any other types of product or descriptions of products that you think should be included in these restrictions?

Proposed Board Response: Other products that could replace vapes in this market area should also be part of new restrictions, devices such as nicotine pouches and other similar products should be included. The Board has concerns about nicotine addiction amongst this generation of children and young people so other products similar in nature should be included.

18. Do you agree or disagree that an implementation period for restrictions on disposable vapes should be no less than 6 months after the law is introduced?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Agree – Urgent action is needed on disposable vapes and the whole issue of youth vaping so a swift approach to banning disposable vapes should be pursued. However, in addition to this the existing loophole on gifting vapes, which enables legal gifting of vapes to children and young people needs to be addressed with immediate effect.

19. Are there other measures that would be required, alongside restrictions on supply and sale of disposable vapes, to ensure the policy is effective in improving environmental outcomes?

Proposed Board Response: Litter picking groups that operate in communities in Leeds are reporting a huge increase in disposable vapes being found littered in communities and near to schools, urgently restricting sale and supply would bring clear and immediate environmental impacts, it is estimated that 5 million vapes per week are being discarded restricting availability would therefore bring clear environmental benefits.

Non-nicotine vapes and other consumer products

20. Do you have any evidence that the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider related to the harms or use of non-nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – The Board heard evidence that suggested that children and young people do not always use vapes that contain nicotine and given uncertainty around health impacts of vaping the Board believe that the Government should also act to prevent uptake of non-nicotine vapes by children and young people.

21. Do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should regulate non-nicotine vapes under a similar regulatory framework as nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – *As noted above vaping is not without risk and is potentially harmful so any measures taken on nicotine based products should be applied consistently on all vape products.*

22. Do you have any evidence that the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider on the harms or use of other consumer nicotine products such as nicotine pouches?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: No - *This was not specifically covered in the Board's consideration of this matter. However, products that deliver nicotine and can cause addiction were clearly an area of concern and therefore the Board believes that any measures taken on vapes should also be applied to other products containing nicotine.*

23. Do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should regulate other consumer nicotine products such as nicotine pouches under a similar regulatory framework as nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes - *Products that deliver nicotine and can cause addiction were a clear area of concern and therefore the Board believes that any measures taken on vapes should also be applied to other products containing nicotine that could be marketed or targeted at children and young people.*

Increasing price on vapes

24. Do you think that an increase in the price of vapes would reduce the number of young people who vape?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – During consideration of the impact of vaping on children and young people the Board had clear concerns around the low costs of disposable vapes with their pricing being within the budget that children and young people typically have. It was noted that the non-disposable versions of vapes require an up front costs in addition to ongoing costs which could contribute to those being considerably less popular amongst young people. Therefore, taxation or an increase in price were considered to have potential in reducing youth vaping.

Enforcement

25. Do you think that fixed penalty notices should be issued for breaches of age of sale legislation for tobacco products and vapes?

Powers to issue fixed penalty notices would provide an alternative means for local authorities to enforce age of sale legislation for tobacco products and vapes in addition to existing penalties.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Proposed Board Response: Yes – The role of trading standards and the need for stronger action on youth vaping through enforcement is a key element of preventing access and usage of these products. The Board were concerned about reports of vapes being more accessible in Leeds City Centre and supported stronger measures to tackle this through Trading Standards and the Police where appropriate. As noted above illicit products are a real concern given the content of them in terms of harmful ingredients, stronger enforcement powers would be an important deterrent in reducing that illicit market.

26. What level of fixed penalty notice should be given for an underage tobacco sale?

- £100
- £200
- Other

Proposed Board Response: *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion which was focussed on youth vaping as opposed to tobacco sales.*

27. What level of fixed penalty notice should be given for an underage vape sale?

- £100
- £200
- Other

Proposed Board Response: **Other** – *Enhanced co-ordinated working between agencies to tackle the harms caused by youth vaping should be introduced as a matter of urgency with Trading Standards playing a key role in that. The Board was clear that more enforcement is needed and should be prohibitive in terms of the penalties faced by offenders and be sufficiently high to be an effective deterrent to underage sales, which may be potentially higher than the £200 figure listed.*

How to respond

This consultation seeks feedback on the proposed measures, to inform future legislation. On youth vaping, there are a number of options proposed, to ensure the UK Government and devolved administrations take the most appropriate and impactful steps, building on existing evidence.

The consultation closes on 6 December 2023 at 11:59pm and you can respond via our [online survey](#).

Children and Families Transformation Agenda

Date: 29th November 2023

Report of: Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships, Children and Families Directorate

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report seeks to provide the Children and Families Scrutiny Board with an overview of the work being undertaken within the Children and Families Directorate on the transformation agenda. It seeks to outline the resources available for delivery, the workstreams of current and potential activity and at a headline level the opportunities and challenges presented by the work.

Recommendations

Children and Families Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the work being undertaken and comment accordingly.

What is this report about?

- 1.0 This report seeks to provide the Children and Families Scrutiny Board with an overview of the work being undertaken within the Children and Families Directorate on the transformation agenda. It seeks to outline the resources available for delivery, the workstreams of current and potential activity and, at a headline level, the opportunities and challenges presented by the work.

Report Detail

- 2.0 As part of the Council's consideration of its budget proposals for 22/23, Executive Board agreed a proposal to form a Transformation Team within the Children and Families Directorate to aid the transformation of services with a view to assisting in the delivery of significant financial savings to the Council, whilst also seeking to deliver, where possible, beneficial outcomes for children and young people across the city. Executive Board agreed an invest to save proposal in the amount of £1.4m to deliver against this work.
- 2.1 Following approval of the proposal by Executive Board, work has been undertaken to secure the agreed staffing structure, including the creation of job descriptions and person specifications, undertaking job evaluation for the roles and streaming against existing roles within the Council more generally for the team, undertaking governance approvals for the roles to be recruited to and finally undertaking the recruitment and selection process. This has included the flexible deployment of an existing LCC Chief Officer to undertake the role of Chief Officer with responsibility for the Programme. The majority of posts within the team have now been recruited to and a team of fifteen staff are hosted in the core team (excluding the Chief Officer) In addition, the team funding provides for an additional five posts which are organisationally hosted elsewhere within the Council but whose work directly supports the Directorate's change programme.
- 2.2 A further piece of work has been undertaken which has sought to put in place appropriate governance and programme management arrangements to support delivery. This has seen the establishment of an officer 'Delivery Board' chaired by the Director of Children and Families which is the overarching Programme Board for the work being undertaken and comprises officers from across the Council including officers from Finance, Internal Audit, Asset Management etc and includes external partners including the Integrated Care Board and West Yorkshire Police. The Delivery Board receives an overview of the overall delivery of the programme of activity, receives a regular dashboard of activity and exception-based reports of risks, actions, issues and dependencies along with focused reports on particular activity when decision points are reached or a steer on direction is required. The Delivery Board seeks to inform formal decision making which, in accordance with the Council's established arrangements, remains with individual officers and Executive Board (subject to the decision and the existing scheme(s) of delegation for decision making). The two portfolio holders for Children and Families are regularly provided with an update on the work of the Programme.
- 2.3 The Delivery Board is supplemented by a more focussed 'Task and Finish Group' which seeks to take a more detailed view of issues with a view to unblocking barriers and challenges. The Task and Finish Group is chaired by the Chief Officer – Financial Services. The task and finish group is a much more operationally focused group and has a more flexible reporting structure which allows it to flex and focus on issues presenting particular challenges at any particular point in time. There is a strong correlation between the work of the Delivery Board and the Task and Finish Group and the Transformation Team seek to act as both a conduit and 'the glue' between the two groups.

2.4 The programme of activity underway across the Directorate is broad and touches almost every aspect of the Directorate's work. Given the financial challenges being experienced both nationally and within Leeds, unsurprisingly there is a strong correlation between the areas of financial challenge and the change programme. But equally the programme of work seeks to ensure that better outcomes for children and families is at the heart of activity within the Directorate. The Transformation Team has a very clear approach of 'working with' staff within the Directorate and seeking to support professional activity delivered by committed practitioners.

2.5 In outline there are nine currently established areas of activity (each with various sub elements). In addition to this activity there is a 'pipeline approach' capturing activity which is not yet captured in the agreed programme of activity but which needs to be undertaken. This is though linked to capacity to deliver, noting of course that whilst the Transformation Team can provide support to activity, there is also a need for a 'business lead' which also has to be resourced by staff within the Directorate. The nine areas of activity (including the main sub areas) are:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

This review is the work supported by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), which has been reported previously to Scrutiny Board. This activity seeks to deliver improvements in the end-to-end process of how the Council responds to requests for SEND assessments and seeks to follow through from assessment to provision. This work is at the discovery and diagnostic stage (the initial stage considering the 'as is') and is currently moving into a more detailed define and design stage (the stage that considers the 'to be') which will consider how future arrangements will be delivered. This next stage is centred on a key outcome of being co-designed with stakeholders, most notably, children, young people and parents and carers. The review will aim to deliver improvements in our arrangements and in particular will seek to ensure that the arrangements place the child at the centre of activity undertaken. There is a key requirement within this review to ensure that the Council's arrangements are fully compliant with legislation and relevant codes of practice, including meeting statutory timescales whilst also providing better outcomes for young people with additional needs.

- Learning Inclusion

This review has not yet been scoped given the potential interdependences with the SEND and EHCP review. Whilst not formally scoped it is likely that this review will consider a range of delivery issues associated with support for children with additional needs but not formally included within the scope of SEND and EHCP. Whilst not scoped it is likely that this review will consider arrangements for the delivery of services relating to provision including Education Other Than in School, the Virtual School and support more generally to vulnerable learners, whilst also seeking to consider some of the wider partnership issues associated with learning inclusion.

- Transport

This review is very clearly linked to the SEND and EHCP review and in essence seeks to determine the most appropriate arrangements for the Council to discharge its responsibilities in relation to transporting children across the city for children both attending mainstream schools and specialist settings. This is a challenging area in relation to cost and a range of matters are being considered including nature of provision, eligibility for support and seeking opportunities for maximum efficiency and value for money.

- Children Looked After

This particular activity is currently the subject of a considerable amount of focus which reflects the very challenging financial situation, especially in relation to demand pressures in terms of number of children within and entering the care system, the increasing complexity of needs of individual children and overriding market related issues of capacity, sufficiency and cost. A number of areas of activity are underway including:

- Residential Accommodation – In order to address the market issues currently being experienced work is being undertaken to create more capacity within Leeds by means of additional provision directly delivered by the City Council with staffing being provided by Leeds City Council staff. The area of focus is on identifying and purchasing properties, in suitable locations, across the city which can be purchased (on the open market) and converted (sometimes requiring building changes) so that they are appropriate for use. Currently the focus is on Small Group Living (SGL) where 2 children can be accommodated but other opportunities for larger scale homes are also being considered. The aim of the SGL work is to bring on-stream 8 additional children's homes each having capacity for one to two children. Currently one SGL home has been purchased and is being converted, two further SGL homes have been identified and offers of purchase have been made and in addition one larger home has been selected and an offer has been accepted. The Council is pushing for as early completion as possible on the properties subject to offer.
- Fostering – work is underway around enhancing the Council's offer to foster carers and includes work looking at how children with more complex needs can be placed with suitably supported foster carers. A specific action relates to making changes to fostering support which would allow for children with more complex needs to be placed with foster carers who have the requisite skills and experience to be able to support the additional level of complexity of need.
- Re-unification – Activity is underway to look at the group of children in care who could safely and appropriately be re-united with families and taken out of the formal care system. In order to progress this work a dedicated staffing resource has been created (by deploying staff from existing roles) which allows for a discreet and dedicated focus on identifying these children and working on their reunification.
- Repatriation – Activity is being undertaken whereby children who may be in placements outside of Leeds are considered for being moved to placements within or closer to Leeds. This approach usually provides better outcomes to the children, given the availability of systems of care and also provides efficiency opportunities in terms of staff costs associated with travel and (sometimes) accommodation to visit and review children placed outside Leeds. This activity links to the work on commissioning as set out below.

- Commissioning

Children and Families Commissioning has been invested into with the aim of providing greater capacity which allows for greater financial return on investment. The aim of this activity is that where we have services which are delivered by others outside of LCC, that those services are initially procured, appropriately managed and subject to regular review. This seeks to ensure that Value for Money is secured and that external providers deliver on the outcomes (financial and child/family) that the Council requires. Activity to date includes reviewing contracting arrangements for providers, seeking to ensure greater compliance with contractual arrangements, more regular review of placements (avoiding high cost placements for any long duration), looking at ways to stimulate the Leeds placement market and to avoid placements

within Leeds being used by other local authorities, closer alignment of placement costs with decision making on type of placement, supporting Value for Money reviews of commissioned activity and considering gaps in commissioned activity. In addition, the Commissioning Team is working on a potential joint West Yorkshire bid to the Department for Education relating to Government proposals to deliver Regional Care Co-operatives. Opportunities for closer working with commissioning colleagues in Adults and Health are also being looked at along with our approach to joint commissioning with Health colleagues most notably within the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

- Early Help

A key plank of the Directorate's approach to ensuring beneficial outcomes to children and young people is by making sure that early support and help is provided to children and families, which prevents less beneficial and more costly interventions later. A number of work packages are being progressed under this activity including:

- Little Owls Review – The Council provides 28 nursery settings across the city and they are in the process of being reviewed against the Council's legal duty to ensure sufficient provision alongside issues associated with use by children with SEND (who may otherwise not be provided for by other providers) and deprivation. This could, ultimately, lead to the council directly providing less nursery provision.
- Childrens' Centres – a review, in part complementary to the review of Little Owls but also linked to a wider review of locality-based assets is at the scoping stage.
- Early Help staffing – a review of the most advantageous and appropriate staffing structure for Early Help Services is nearing completion. This work directly links to the national agenda for moving towards a more preventative based system of Childrens' Social Care (which, of course, has been the position in Leeds for a number of years).

- Turning the Curve is activity which seeks to address the upcoming potential demand and to seek to deliver interventions which support children to remain outside the care system. This activity is currently subject to a revised scoping exercise.

- Digital

Activity focussed on ensuring that the Directorate's two principal childcare information systems (one for social care and one for learning inclusion) are fit for purpose and are supporting practitioners in appropriate models of operation, including making sure that practitioners have a single live version of the data associated with individual children and families. This activity picks up two significant elements of work; group working which provides for effective linking of data which reduces the need for double data entry but also provides for a more holistic view of issues and needs and also a separate element of placement payments which seeks to link placement financial information to individual child records thereby, removing manual intervention and reducing the risk of incorrect placements.

- Work Environment

This activity seeks to support ad-hoc pieces of work that enables practitioners within the Directorate to focus on their key and core work tasks and seeks to 'problem solve' routine day to day issues which may divert attention from providing the best possible service to children and young people. The work in this activity does change over time but to date as been focused on issues that distract practitioners from focussing on their core role, examples include the provision of effective business support, accommodation and office related issues, travel and co-ordination of activity issues etc.

- 2.6 Whilst not a formal workstream activity is also undertaken to streamline decision making across the Directorate to enable more agile implementation of decisions to support service delivery with a focus on ensuring that officer delegated decision making is taken in line with existing schemes of delegation. This will continue to be in accordance with the Council's Decision Making Framework.
- 2.7 All the work being undertaken is supported by a range of enabling functions or foundations including Human Resources, Finance, Asset Management, IDS, Performance and Intelligence etc.
- 2.8 Whilst the activity being undertaken is reported here separately there are clear links and interdependencies between areas of work and there is a significant focus on ensuring that opportunities for change are progressed on a holistic basis where possible. Programmes will include working closely with other directorate transformation teams across the organisation to drive cross cutting and corporate improvement. Collaboration will further support oversight of social, economic and legislative influences that may negatively impact on children and families, which may require assessment and inclusion in cross departmental work programmes.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3.0 Delivery of the transformation agenda within the Directorate is a key task and links directly to the provision of beneficial outcomes for children and young people whilst also seeking to assist the Directorate (and the Council more generally) to operate in a more financially sustainable way.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 4.0 The work being undertaken will have a direct impact on the ability to deliver improvements to the health and well-being of children and young people across the city and therefore has a direct link to the Health and Wellbeing pillar of the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 5.0 Consultation and engagement is and will continue to be a key element of the activity undertaken. This consultation and engagement will however be undertaken as an integral element of the workstreams. Dependent upon the individual activity this may involve Elected Members.
- 5.1 It is important to recognise that the Directorate's transformation focus extends beyond the organisation. The importance of engagement with citizens, partner organisations and the third sector to provide expertise and to shape the redesign of services is understood, and fundamental to the successful delivery of positive change.
- 5.2 There is an acknowledgement that there is a need to improve the overall communications of the work of the programme and this will be addressed when a postholder is in place.

What are the resource implications?

- 6.0 The resources for the team itself is provided on an invest to save basis. The cost of the overall team is £1.4m but this must be recouped by savings at least equal to the cost of provision.
- 6.1 There are significant savings that the Directorate must deliver upon, to help secure the long-term sustainability of the Directorate and indeed the Council. Currently £13m (in addition to the cost of the team itself as referenced in 6.0 above) of savings are directly attributed to be delivered by activity supported by the Transformation Team.

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

- 7.0 The key risk is non-delivery of change, this is mitigated by robust governance arrangements for the programme as a whole however there remains a risk should programmes of activity not deliver the expected outcomes or delivers them to a different timescale.

What are the legal implications?

- 8.0 This report of itself does not raise any legal implications, however there is a need to ensure that legal compliance is in-built into every area of activity supported or delivered by the programme.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 9.0 Given the scale of the financial challenges the 'do nothing' option was discounted. An internal resource, supplemented by external resource where necessary and appropriate was considered the least costly option and provide the most benefits in terms of being sustainable and allowing for effective knowledge transfer.

How will success be measured?

- 10.0 Each individual activity will have individual success measures and these will be set out in individual project proposals/business cases as appropriate.

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

- 11.0 The Director of Children and Families is ultimately responsible for the delivery of the work, with the lead officer being the Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships. Implementation is underway and ingoing.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

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The Refreshed 3As Plan

Date: 29th November 2023

Report of: The Director of Children and Families Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

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

- This report summarises the new 3As plan which covers 2024-2026. Following wide-ranging consultations with school leaders and review of the previous plan by service providers, it outlines the priorities, explains the rationale and provides outcome measures. A full list of the five priorities, actions and impact measures can be found in Appendix 1.
- The report is structured sequentially with each priority being divided into its actions, how they will be undertaken and the intended impact they will be measured by.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board members are asked to consider and comment on the draft new 3As 2024-2026 Strategy to help inform the final version. Local authority officers will be present at the board meeting to provide appropriate inputs and to respond to questions.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 [The Best Council Plan](#) has the aspiration for Leeds to be a child-friendly city. The [Leeds Children and Young People's Plan](#) (CYPP) explains this child friendly approach in greater detail and sets out eleven priority areas of work and three key obsessions. The third obsession is to *improve achievement, attainment, and attendance in learning settings*. To deliver on this obsession, the 3As Strategy was developed in 2018. The current strategy builds on the development of this as outlined below.
- 2 The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a re-evaluation of the strategy to address the significant, immediate, and longer-term impacts on the health, wellbeing and learning of our children and young people. Consequently, the 3As Strategy was revised in autumn 2021.
- 3 This Refreshed 3As Plan set out to align the work of teams in the Children and Families Directorate around five key priorities with progress against each priority. The Refreshed 3As Plan aimed to ensure that all resources and capacity across the directorate were employed to support better outcomes for young people.
- 4 The 3As Strategy 2024-2026 continues these aims and this focus. Once again, consultation with a wide range of stakeholders (and in particular, educational leaders) has shaped the priorities. Through roundtable events and Families of Schools' meetings, leaders have told us what their concerns are and what support they need from the local authority. We have tried to reflect them in this plan.
- 5 The plan was not designed for educational professionals to enact; rather the priorities selected are areas of focus where the Children and Families Services could have the most impact in *supporting* learning settings who work with children and young people. We recognised that each early years setting, school, academy, and college has its own priorities and development plan. The plan sets out to support them.
- 6 Our Leeds vision, as expressed in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, is to tackle poverty and reduce inequalities that still exist. The priorities continue to be selected by questioning whether they are likely to have a positive impact, particularly on disadvantaged cohorts of children.
- 7 The five key priorities and the associated key actions are:

7.1 **Priority 1: All children in Leeds are supported to improve their communication, language and literacy so they develop into strong readers, taking into account their individual needs.**

Action 1: A Communication & Language audit to review practice across all EY settings (PVI and childminders) will be developed and launched to all settings.

Action 2: Targeted communication and language programme will be offered to settings in areas of city with high indices of multiple deprivation and low Foundation Stage Profile data for communication and language, reaching at least 10% of settings.

Action 3: Universal free literacy training offered to all Leeds EY settings.

Action 4: Language, Communication and Literacy CPD programmes to be offered to all schools to include development of disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, questioning and vocabulary development for development at KS1 and KS2.

Action 5: Secondary schools to be offered KS3 reading reviews to ascertain progress in reading skills in Year 8.

7.2 Priority 2: Support education providers to ensure children and young people regularly attend their educational setting

Action 1: All schools to be offered register checks and be allocated a link Attendance Officer.

Action 2: Establish Significant Absence Panels.

Action 3: Review the code of conduct for the use of fixed penalty notices and school attendance orders.

Action 4: Co-produce revised strategy for Alternative Provision and reinforce city-wide shared commitment to avoid exclusion.

Action 5: Local Authority SEND support colleagues and school-based SENDCOs will focus on identifying effective support for SEND pupils in order to improve attendance.

7.3 Priority 3: Support education settings to meet the needs of Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Action 1: Supporting implementation of the Graduated Approach Toolkit for SENDCOs will ensure children have clearer pathway for support and will be further developed to be accessible to all phases.

Action 2: Ensure clear communication and alignment of service objectives with ongoing development through the DFE Change Programme Pilot.

Action 3: Complete school SEND curriculum reviews using the SEND review curriculum toolkits.

Action 4: Review and remodel funding for inclusion to ensure it meets needs of children within their settings.

Action 5: Improve the timeliness of EHCP Needs Assessment process, developing effective strategies where delays occur and ensure a provision offer of 'waiting well' which supports children and settings.

7.4 Priority 4: All children, young people and staff in learning settings feel safe and supported with their wellbeing

Action 1 : Launch an effective online gateway platform for staff in schools that brings together a range of support for wellbeing.

Action 2: Continue to work in partnership with colleagues in health and social care to embed a city-wide trauma informed service that provides support to education professionals working with traumatised children in schools and settings.

Action 3: To engage Leeds schools/settings with the My Health, My School Survey, supporting them to deliver practice to improve pupil wellbeing, with a particular focus on pupil examination stress.

Action 4: Support school leaders in dealing with gang related violence and knife crime in their settings.

7.5 Priority 5: Ensure all young people in Leeds participate in education, employment and training after statutory school age and progress to a positive destination.

Action 1: Engage an interim strategic lead to focus on reducing NEET and achieving full participation for young people aged 16-18 (25).

Action 2: Prioritise post-16 provision place planning and provider attraction to ensure sufficiency of places for young people at the right levels.

Action 3: Ensure wider understanding of the changing nature and impact of post 16 curriculum and qualification reforms.

Action 4 Support the impact of careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools and post 16 settings and review and develop digital information resources and communications which meet the needs of young people and professionals.

Action 5: Develop a Risk of NEET indicator to identify and target support to those who most need it.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 8 Each element of the plan identifies the impact of actions both in the short term, to improve immediate support for educational settings, and also identifies impact over time, which reflects the intended impact on outcomes for children and young people.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 9 Once again, we have consulted with a range of stakeholders to determine our priorities. Through roundtable events and Families of Schools' meetings, leaders have told us what their concerns are and what they need from the local authority. We have tried to reflect them in this plan.
- 10 The information captured from the stakeholder engagement events was collated, cross-referenced and it was established which themes were consistently raised by participants across the consultation events. These themes were reviewed by Children and Families Senior leaders with final oversight from the Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education.
- 11 The refreshed 3As Plan is closely aligned with plans and strategies across the authority including but not exclusive to; the Best Council Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan, the SEND Strategy, the Children and Young People's 12 Wishes and also with recommendations from previous Scrutiny Board Meetings.

What are the resource implications?

- 12 The Council's Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board maintains oversight of the financial management plan in accordance with its remit.
- 13 In refreshing the priorities of the 3As Plan, Children and Families Services resources will be deployed appropriately to ensure support can be given where the most impact can be made for children, families and learning settings across Leeds, with a focus on those who have been disproportionately affected.

What are the legal implications?

- 14 This report has no specific legal implications.

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

- 15 Children and Families Services Leadership Team, The Good Learning Places Board and the Learning Leadership Team will continue to monitor the progress of the 3As Plan and the actions which sit below it and will regularly assess the risks associated with the implementation of the Plan.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

- 16 Providing the right support at the right time, the local authority enables children, families and learning settings to succeed. This, in turn, has significant positive influence within the Inclusive Growth Plan for Leeds as children and young people who enter apprenticeships and into working life will add their wealth of talents in contributing to the city's economic growth.
- 17 Work continues to promote energy efficiency and eco-awareness with schools, students and with families. There are likely to be environmental impacts associated with the pandemic that will become clearer over time. Where current changes in how work is undertaken, how schooling is delivered and where support is offered to children and families, there are potential opportunities for carbon saving efficiencies. This potential is being balanced against the determination to continue to deliver high quality, personalised services.
- 18 The health and wellbeing of staff within learning settings, as well as the children and young people who attend them, is incorporated into the aims of the 3As Plan. Mental and physical health are intrinsically linked and learning settings have existing plans in how to improve the wellbeing of every child, young person, and adult within their learning community. Children and Families Services proactively support settings to support their staff and the children and young people who attend their settings.

Options, timescales and measuring success

How will success be measured?

- 19 Each of the priorities identified in the refreshed plan has key actions and identified impact measures which will enable those directing the plan to regularly assess the impact of the work being undertaken by the local authority and report progress made. The plan also identifies longer term intended impact on outcomes for CYP. That is, how the actions the service have committed to deliver to support schools can have an impact over time on outcomes for CYP.

What is the timetable for implementation?

- 20 The 3As Plan runs until August 2026. Each of the measurable targets have their own timeframe for completion, implementation, delivery, and monitoring.

Appendices

- 21 Appendix 1 - Draft version of the 3As Plan 2024-2026.

Background papers

- 22 None.

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The 3As Plan 2024 - 2026

Children and Families Services

Leeds City Council



Introduction



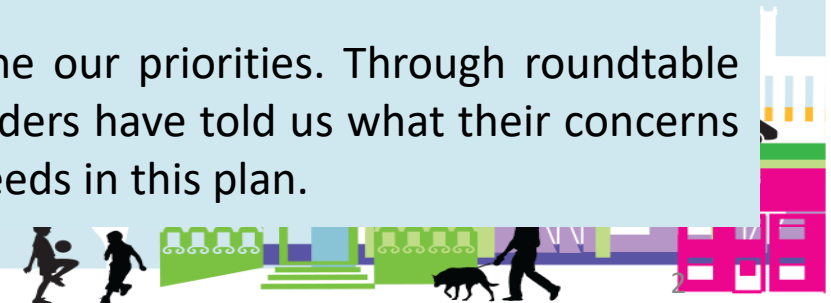
In the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan which ran from 2018 to 2023, there were three obsessions. One was "improve achievement, attainment and attendance at school". To address that obsession the 3As Strategy was created.

The intervention of Covid meant that our priorities changed, so, in June and July 2021, we held a series of discussions with educationalists from early years to further education to find out what they considered to be the barriers to achievement, attainment and attendance at school.

As a result of those consultations, we drew up the Refreshed 3As Plan which had five priorities. These were based around reading, attendance, SEND, well-being and transitions. The plan was designed to last two years and end at the same time as the Children and Young People's Plan ended.

As we launch the new Leeds Children and Young People's Plan, it is also the right time to update our Refreshed 3As Plan. It takes account of the change to one of the obsessions which is that "young people in Leeds attend school, achieve, and attain well", and they also "continue their route of a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination".

Once again, we have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders to determine our priorities. Through roundtable events across the city with school leaders and Families of Schools' meetings, leaders have told us what their concerns are and what they need from the local authority. We have tried to reflect their needs in this plan.





Our updated plan is not for schools to enact. We know they have their own plans. Education leaders in Leeds are highly effective. This plan is our way of marshalling our combined forces and energy so we can help those leaders do what they do in the service of young people in the city.

The 3As Plan 2024-2026 is based on service delivery. At its core, it is the means by which the local authority will provide services to education settings which support them to improve the outcomes of the children they work with through constant interaction.

We look forward to working with settings, partners, children, and their families to offer the best possible opportunities for all children and young people to attend, attain and achieve.



Cllr Jonathan Pryor
Deputy Leader and
Executive Member
for Economy, Culture
and Education



Cllr Fiona Venner
Executive Member
for Adult and
Children's Social
Care and Health
Partnerships



Julie Longworth
Director
Children
and
Families
Services



Dan Barton
Deputy Director
Children
and
Families
Services

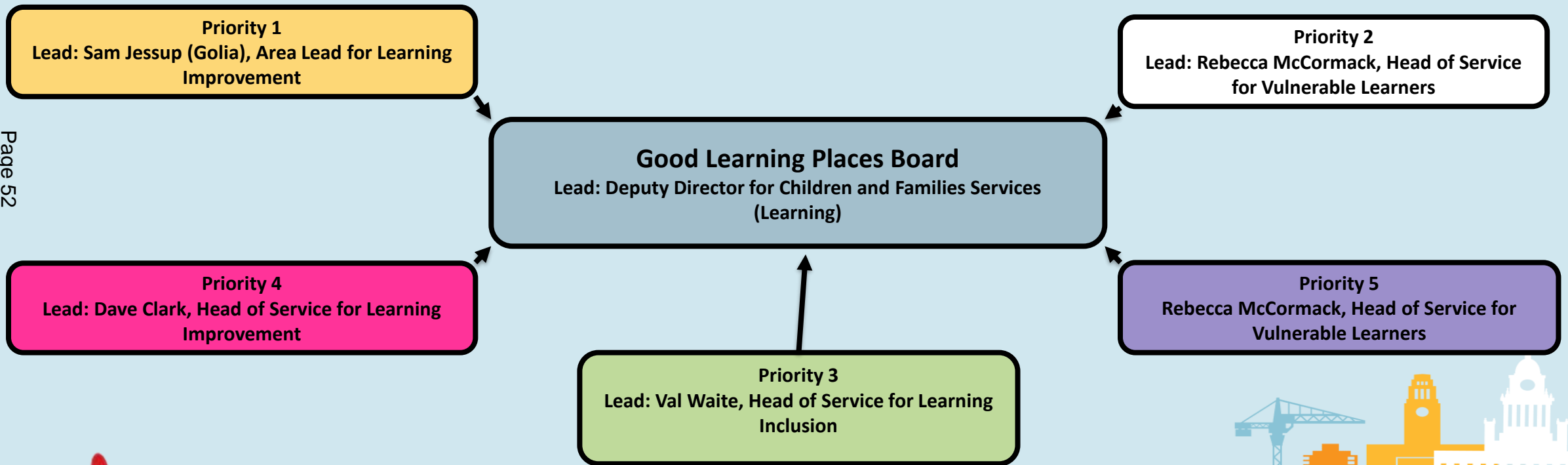


Farah Khan
Deputy Director
Children
and
Families
Services



Governance, leadership and partnerships

Each of the 5 priorities is led by the appropriate priority lead within Children and Families Services, who will complete a half termly summary evaluation. These will be presented at the Good Learning Places Board, a board which will consist of Heads of Service and Deputy Directors from across the directorate. Summary evaluations will include relevant information and evaluations against the key performance indicators providing an outline of success, areas for improvement and risk management. The board will hold lead officers to account through high challenge and support and will form part of the regular review and delivery cycle.



Performance and priorities

Priority 1 - All children and young people in Leeds are supported to improve their communication, language and literacy so they develop into strong readers taking into account their individual needs.

Priority 2 - Support education providers to ensure children and young people regularly attend.

Priority 3 - Support education settings to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Priority 4 - All children and young people and staff in learning settings feel safe and supported with their wellbeing.

Priority 5 - Ensure all young people in Leeds participate in education, employment and training after statutory school age and progress to a positive destination.



Priority 1 - All children and young people in Leeds are supported to improve their communication, language and literacy so they develop into strong readers taking into account their individual needs.



Priority lead: Sam Jessup, Area Lead for Learning Improvement

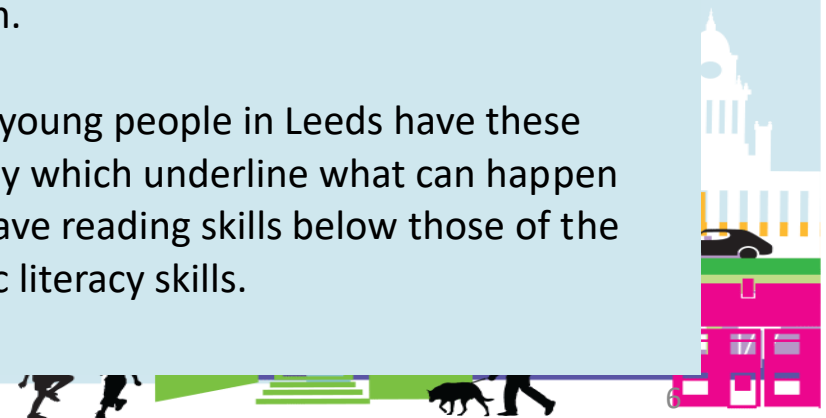
Why we have chosen this priority:

Pupils who can read fluently are able to make progress with their learning. They have a key skill which will help them manage day to day life, both as a child and an adult. They can benefit emotionally through reading stories and understand their own feelings and those of others. The building blocks for reading include effective development of communication and language.

Pupils take the phonics screening check at the end of year 1 (typically aged 6) to test their proficiency at word reading. In Leeds and nationally in 2022, a quarter of children did not meet the phonics test threshold and therefore, entered year 2 without the basic literacy skills to access the curriculum.

Furthermore, learning loss as a result of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic continues to make reading a greater issue in secondary schools. In 2022, 27% of pupils left primary school without having reached the expected standard in reading. This means that many children will struggle with the demands of the secondary curriculum.

The ability to communicate and read well is essential to most jobs and it is important that young people in Leeds have these essential skills in order to access a positive destination. There are stark reminders in society which underline what can happen when children do not develop basic literacy skills. For example, 25% of young offenders have reading skills below those of the average seven-year-old, whilst 60% of the prison population experience difficulties in basic literacy skills.





What education leaders in the city have told us needs to sit under this priority:

Support the development of children's speech, language and communication in early years education to provide a strong foundation for the teaching of reading.

Agreed service actions:

- **Action 1:** A Communication & Language audit to review practice across all EY settings (PVI and childminders) will be developed and launched to all settings.
- **Action 2:** Targeted communication and language programme will be offered to settings in areas of city with high indices of multiple deprivation and low FSP data for communication and language, reaching at least 10% of settings.
- **Action 3:** Universal free literacy training offered to all Leeds EY settings.
- **Action 4:** Language, Communication and Literacy CPD programmes to be offered to all schools to include development of disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, questioning and vocabulary development for development at KS1 and KS2
- **Action 5:** Secondary schools to be offered KS3 reading reviews to ascertain progress in reading skills in Year 8.



Action 1: A Communication & Language audit to review practice across all EY settings (PVI and childminders) will be developed and launched to all settings.

How?

This will be a Universal offer – accessible as a self- evaluation audit for all settings via the EYFS leadership and management gateway on Leeds for Learning. Communication and Language audit and programme will be launched at sector networks/leadership forums. Engagement will be monitored by reviewing the number of Communication and Language audits accessed through the EYFS gateway.

Impact

- ❖ Outcomes in communication and language data (FSP) improve.
- ❖ Learning Improvement offer will be more clearly aligned to the needs of settings.
- ❖ Ofsted reports will be positive about the Communication and language strategies used in settings.

Impact over time

Outcomes in communication and language data (FSP) improve.



Action 2: Targeted communication and language programme will be offered to settings in areas of city with high indices of multiple deprivation and low FSP data for communication and language, reaching at least 10% of settings.

How?

Service to identify settings in scope and communicate offer. Setting to complete communication and language audit prior to initial visit by EYC/EYCC. Settings signposted to communication and language training offered by range of providers – eg. DfE, EYPDP programme, Elklan – Leeds speech and language team. Work with service to identify priorities and agree actions. Mid-year review conducted to monitor progress towards agreed actions. End of year review conducted to measure engagement and progress.

Impact

- ❖ Increased staff confidence in settings in delivery of speech, language and literacy provision.
- ❖ Minimum of 10% (=60+ settings) of all settings will be offered the targeted communication and language programme.

Impact over time

Outcomes in communication and language data (Foundation Stage Profile) improve.



Action 3: Universal free literacy training offered to all Leeds EY settings.

How?

Early Years team to develop a literacy training offer to support children's communication, language, and literacy. Scheduled throughout the year at different times to meet needs of sector. Celebration events established to share good practice across the sector.

Impact

- Training offered to 100% of EY settings with engagement of at least 10% (60+) settings
- Improved engagement and skill set of EY settings in areas of city with high indices of multiple deprivation and low FSP data for communication and language, reaching at least 10% of settings through attendance at free literacy training and celebration events and target

Impact over time

Outcomes in communication and language data (Foundation Stage Profile - FSP) improve especially in settings in areas of high deprivation and low FSP data..



Action 4: Language, Communication and Literacy CPD programmes to be offered to all schools to include development of disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, questioning and vocabulary development for development at KS1 and KS2

How?

Subject leader networks will include development on disciplinary language, questioning and critical thinking. Subject leaders will be supported to better understand the prerequisites for disciplinary language and develop questioning to promote thinking. This should support children to answer extended questions. Training to include reference to the tiers of language and the importance of tier 2 words. Training and support to promote group and paired work with a specific reference on how to support children how to do this.

Impact

- Teachers more confident with vocabulary teaching and supporting children with communication.
- Teachers more confident to make effective use of talk in the classroom.

Impact over time

Outcomes in reading and writing at KS1 and KS2 improve..



Action 5: Secondary schools to be offered KS3 reading reviews to ascertain progress in reading skills in Year 8.

How?

Continue to offer reading fluency to KS3. Continue to focus on reading in the senior leader briefing agenda and share effective practice between schools. Engage with schools to offer reading reviews (in KS3) in secondaries, to ascertain progress in reading skills in year 8 and identify gaps. Further engagement with University of Leeds and the dissemination of research projects focussed on reading and include a focus on disciplinary literacy in the LLP including a link with the CTG strategy.

Impact

- ❖ Fewer pupils progress into Year 8 with poor reading skills.
- ❖ Secondary schools will have strong provision in place to address weaknesses in reading on entry.

Impact over time

Secondary schools will have strong provision in place to address weaknesses in reading on entry.





Aligned links to local authority plans

Tackling the long term impacts of Covid 19 on children and families inquiry report (July 2021) recommendations:

Work with schools to ensure that pupils receive good quality phonics teaching enabling them to become proficient readers, access the curriculum and read independently.

Child Friendly Leeds young people's 12 wishes: All our learning places identify and address the barriers that prevent children and young people, particularly those with additional needs, engaging in and enjoying learning.

Best Council Plan 2020-2025: Priority 5: Improve achievement and attainment for all, with a KPI: percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 (end of year 6)



Priority 2 - Support education providers to ensure children and young people regularly attend



Service lead: Rebecca McCormack, Head of Service for Vulnerable Learners

Why we have chosen this priority:

Children who have strong attendance in learning settings are more likely to fulfil their potential and achieve their best possible outcomes in education. Access to education settings also keeps children safe from harm, promotes protective factors such as positive relationship with adults and access to targeted services that sit around schools and settings, and enables them to get involved with enrichment activities such as sports, the arts, and volunteering. Regular attendance also enables them to develop good routines and habits which prepare them well for the world of work.

Attendance in schools is much lower than it was before the pandemic. In the 2022/2023 confirmed attendance data, the DfE reported percentage for absence in primary schools was 6.0% and 8.7% in secondary schools. In Leeds, for the same time period, the figure for primary schools is 5.7% and 9.1% for secondaries. These figures compare starkly with the same ones for 2018-19 where nationally the absence figure for primary schools was 4% and for secondary 5.5%

The numbers of young people excluded from Leeds schools, despite remaining significantly lower than the national picture, is also rising. There is an extensive evidence base that children who are excluded from school face further adverse life experiences. Supporting children to stay in school might lead to higher educational attainment and more opportunities in the future, and ensure children remain in a safe environment.



What education leaders in the city have told us needs to sit under this priority:

- A shared commitment to not permanently excluding young people.
- For Social Care to support schools when children are not attending and continue to be involved with the family.
- Making attendance a big priority for the city, for example, by having a very visible advertising campaign.
- Consistent policy on fines, clear steer from LA for one approach for all schools and Headteachers.

Agreed service actions

- **Action 1:** All schools to be offered register checks and be allocated a link Attendance Officer.
- **Action 2:** Establish Significant Absence Panels
- **Action 3:** Review the code of conduct for the use of fixed penalty notices and school attendance orders
- **Action 4:** Co-produce revised strategy for Alternative Provision and reinforce city-wide shared commitment to avoid exclusion
- **Action 5:** School-based SENDCOs and Local Authority SEND support colleagues will focus on identifying effective support for SEND pupils in order to improve attendance



Action 1: All schools to be offered register checks and be allocated a link Attendance Officer.

How?

Schools to be allocated link attendance Officer to support approaches to improving attendance. All schools to be offered officer capacity to undertake register checks to identify areas where attendance gains could be made. Service to review engagement and prioritise engagement with schools with high levels of persistent absence. Ensure Cosial Care colleagues are aware of these link officers and can liaise with them.

Impact

- ❖ Key attendance indicators improve
- ❖ Good communication between attendance service and schools
- ❖ Ofsted validation of attendance strategies used by schools
- ❖ Attendance personnel in Leeds schools are knowledgeable about DfE attendance guidance and legislation and confident in implementing it.

Impact over time

Attendance headlines improve and narrow gap with pre-pandemic levels



Action 2: Establish Significant Absence Panels

How?

Service to engage schools in establishing Terms of Reference for Significant Absence Panels to ensure confidence in the system. Panel schedules to be drawn up and panel members to be trained. Social Care colleagues to be fully briefed on intent and impact of these panels. Communication with schools and families to be effective in ensuring all stakeholders know the purpose, process and intended outcomes of the Significant Absence Panels.

Impact

- ❖ Significant Absence Panels established
- ❖ Referral to panel leads to improved engagement with school
- ❖ Key attendance indicators improve
- ❖ Good communication between attendance service, families and schools

Key performance indicator
Attendance headlines for identified
CYPs improve



Action 3: Review the Code of Conduct for Fixed Penalty Notices and School Attendance Orders

How

Attendance Team will review impact of current system, engage stakeholders including Social Care colleagues and identify elements of strength and areas for improvement in current Code of Conduct. A new Code of Conduct will be reviewed and consulted upon.

Impact

- ❖ Code of Conduct renewed and launched
- ❖ Improved engagement with school-based staff
- ❖ Improved communication between attendance service, families and schools

Impact over time

Attendance headlines for identified Children and Young People improve



Action 4: Co-produce revised strategy for Alternative Provision and reinforce city-wide shared commitment to avoid exclusion

How

Service colleagues will work together with school leaders (specifically through Area Inclusion Partnerships) and wider stakeholders – including parent/carer forum, Social Care and Commissioning colleagues to review current provision, revise strategic plans in line with SEND and Alternative Provision Change Programme strategy and establish a summary strategy to be consulted on.

Impact

- ❖ Strategy shared and understood widely across city.
- ❖ Reduction in suspensions and exclusions from schools.

Impact over time

Improved outcomes for vulnerable learners



Action 5: Local Authority SEND support colleagues and school-based SENDCOs will focus on identifying effective support for pupils with SEND in order to improve attendance

How?

Termly SENDCO Forum and partnership working with colleagues from SENIT and the STARS teams will focus on developing practice and meeting the needs of children with SEND to encourage attendance. SEND teams will liaise with parent/carer forum to ensure stakeholder voice is acted on. Social Care colleague will be invited to engage in these discussions to support engagement with provision.

Impact

- ❖ LA and school-based staff have shared understanding of effective SEND provision to promote attendance
- ❖ Pupils are better supported to access learning and attend school.

Impact over time

Improved attendance of pupils with SEND





Aligned links to local authority plans

Best City Plan : Priority 4: Increase the number of children and young people participating and engaging in learning.

Best Council Plan 2020-2025: KPI: Improved attendance at primary and secondary schools

Child Friendly Leeds Young People's Wishes: All our learning places identify and address the barriers that prevent children and young people from engaging in and enjoying learning.



Priority 3 - Support education settings to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).



Service lead: Val Waite, Head of Service for Learning Inclusion

Why we have chosen this priority:

All children and young people in Leeds, whatever their needs or circumstances, should have equal rights and opportunities to reach their full potential in learning and development. 18% of learners in Leeds in schools have identified SEND needs and research suggests a further 4% may have unidentified needs, making up 22% of the school population (Over 137,000 CYP in Leeds).

In 2022 a survey by the Early Years Alliance found that over two years 74% of respondents reported an increase in the number of children with formally-identified SEND while 82% reported an increase in the number of children who they believed may have SEND that has not yet been formally identified.

A recent Ofsted report highlighted that too many pupils with SEND do not make nationally expected rates of progress at Key Stage 2 or achieve well in level 2 or level 3 qualifications. This has an impact on their next steps in education, employment, or training.

Following the pandemic, Ofsted noted that SEND pupils had missed out on education and were further behind their peers. Missed support for physical health, communication needs and mental health had had a seriously detrimental impact. Preparation for adulthood had been adversely affected and delays in identifying needs meant that some children and young people's needs may not have been properly assessed or identified.

School leaders in Leeds have told us that they are seeing an unprecedented rise in the number of children with complex needs. They are facing delays in the identification of need and getting them the right support.



What education leaders in the city have told us needs to sit under this priority:

- Training and specialist advice available to school based staff from the authority on how to support individual children with very specific needs.
- Training for classroom staff on how to support struggling learners.
- More specialist provision in the city and making full use of what already exists.
- Better support for young people with SEMH.
- More creative use of available space to serve the needs of young people with SEND.
- Creating appropriate provision for young people with SEND at Post 16.
- Ensuring a continuum of support across the city through the Early Help Hubs and the Clusters and that services are aligned with these.
- Prioritisation of resource into Early Years to resolve issues quickly and prevent them from escalating.
- EHCP assessments to be completed within the timeframe.
- A focus on SEND and SEMH needs of children in Early Years.



Agreed service actions:

- **Action 1:** Supporting implementation of the Graduated Approach Toolkit for SENCOs will ensure children have clearer pathway for support and will be further developed to be accessible to all phases.
- **Action 2:** Ensure clear communication and alignment of service objectives with ongoing development through the DFE Change Programme Pilot
- **Action 3:** Complete school SEND curriculum reviews using the SEND review curriculum toolkits.
- **Action 4:** Review and remodel funding for inclusion to ensure it meets needs of children within their settings.
- **Action 5:** Improve the timeliness of EHCP Needs Assessment process, developing effective strategies where delays occur and ensure a provision offer of 'waiting well' which supports children and settings.



Action 1: Supporting implementation of the Graduated Approach Toolkit for SENCOs will ensure children have clearer pathway for support and will be further developed to be accessible to all phases.

How?

This will be a Universal offer – schools will be supported through clear communication of the Graduated Toolkit and an effective offer of CPD and support to implement the strategies in the toolkit. SENDCO forum will ensure that there is a bespoke offer of support for SENDCOs which includes support with communicating the strategy to wider staff and across schools' stakeholders. In addition, we will develop and extend Early Years SENDCO networks to at least three meetings per year. To ensure familiarity and alignment with approaches.

Impact

- ❖ Graduated Approach Toolkit is used to support identifying learning needs
- ❖ SEND LA offer will be more clearly aligned to the needs of settings

Impact over time

Children and Young People have clear pathway for support for identified SEND needs



Action 2: Ensure clear communication and alignment of service objectives with ongoing development through the DFE Change Programme Pilot

How?

As a selected pilot local authority for the DFE SEND and Alternative Provision Change Programme Partnership, the service is working with other regional LAs to explore and pilot a wide range of strategies to implement DFE strategies for improvement to SEND and Alternative provision. We will work with LAs to evaluate pilot approaches and will involve stakeholders in this evaluation. We will ensure stakeholders are aware of potential changes and encourage feedback from them.

Impact

- ❖ Pilot approaches will lead to better provision for CYP with SEND needs
- ❖ Changes to SEND practices will be co-constructed with stakeholders

Impact over time

Provision of, and access to SEND support improves for Children and Young People and families



Action 3: Complete school SEND curriculum reviews using the SEND review curriculum toolkits.

How?

We will continue publicise the newly developed SEND curriculum review toolkit. The impact of early pilots will be reviewed and communicated in order to encourage further engagement. The service will communicate with schools and encourage uptake, offering bespoke support where required.

Impact

- ❖ Schools review their curriculum offer through a SEND 'lens'
- ❖ Schools have the opportunity to use a framework to re-shape their curriculum to ensure provision meets the needs of all children
- ❖ Improved attendance due to improved engagement

Impact over time

CYP access a curriculum which enables them to succeed.



Action 4: Review and remodel funding for inclusion to ensure it meets needs of children within their settings.

How?

School leaders and SENDCOs will work with service colleagues to review the impact of Funding For Inclusion. This review, alongside external review recommendations will be used to inform changes as identified as further meeting the needs of children within their settings.

Impact

- ❖ Funding For Inclusion criteria are clearly understood by educational leaders and SENDCOs
- ❖ Children are supported in their learning as additional funding enables settings to meet identified needs.
- ❖ Improved attendance due to improved engagement

Impact over time

CYP have access to the resources which enable them to succeed.



Action 5 : Improve the timeliness of EHCP Needs Assessment process, developing effective strategies where delays occur and ensure a provision offer of 'waiting well' which supports children and settings

How?

The service will continue to improve timeliness measures of EHCP Needs Assessment and Annual Reviews. Responding to findings and recommendations from external reviews the service will identify and implement changes to process and strategy to ensure the LA returns to more prompt delivery of Needs Assessments and Annual EHCP reviews. Educational Psychologists will continue to explore opportunities to extend the workforce and find effective ways of streamlining the assessment process without diminishing quality. Colleagues will work with members of the SEND Partnership Board – including parent/carers, representatives from health, social care and third sector colleagues to further develop an effective strategy to ensure children and families are supported with their needs whilst awaiting assessments, ensuring they are 'waiting well'.

Impact

- ❖ Children identified as meeting criteria for assessment are supported whilst awaiting appointments and possible diagnosis.
- ❖ Schools and families are supported in meeting the needs of children who are awaiting assessment
- ❖ Improved communication reduces the anxiety and stress of awaiting assessments for children, families and educational settings

Impact over time

Children awaiting assessments are supported to ensure their potential needs are met.





Aligned links to local authority plans

Best City Plan:

- Children and Young People (CYP) do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life.
- Improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes.

Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2023:

- Priority 2 - Ensure the most vulnerable are protected.
- Priority 6 - Improve at a faster rate, educational progress for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes.

Child Friendly Leeds young people's 12 wishes: All children and young people have their basic rights met.

4. Differences are celebrated in Leeds so children and young people feel accepted for who they are. They do not experience bullying and discrimination
12. Leeds is an inclusive city for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities

Leeds City Council Equality and Diversity Plan: Advance equality of opportunity.



Priority 4 - All children and young people and staff in learning settings feel safe and supported with their wellbeing.



Service lead: Dave Clark, Head of Service for Learning Improvement

Why we have chosen this priority:

When we feel well, we are likely to feel like we can cope with everyday life. Positive wellbeing has many benefits, which include adding years to our lives, improving recovery from illness, helping us reach our full potential and giving us the best opportunity to be more successful in learning.

Children and young people:

We know also that there has been a sharp increase in the numbers of children with mental health issues with increased anxiety post pandemic or experienced trauma and some struggle to attend school as a result. Services are under strain because of the increase in demand. Leaders have told us about the increased prevalence of young people experiencing suicidal thoughts.

The issues of gang violence and knife crime have also led to many staff and young people feeling unsafe. Whilst the vast majority of children and young people are not engaged in serious violence or knife crime, there have been recent increases in proven possession offences and a worrying rise in the numbers of children and young people treated for assault with a knife. We know that even primary school age children can be drawn into gang activities or very young children can be severely impacted by their young parents' or older sibling's involvement in gangs, underlining the need for an integrated multiagency, multi-disciplinary response to tackling serious youth violence and knife crime.



What education leaders in the city have told us needs to sit under this priority:

- Support in dealing with the increase in gang related violence and knife crime affecting both primary and secondary pupils.
- Improvement in the ways that the local authority communicates with education leaders.
- For the local authority to look for ways to advance possible solutions and support to break down barriers preventing these.
- Support with recruitment and retention of staff.
- Investigate ways the LA can advertise the advantages of Leeds as a place to teach. Investigate whether the local authority can become the sponsor for teachers from abroad.
- Support in conveying views of leaders in Leeds to Ofsted and the Department for Education.

Agreed service actions:

- **Action 1:** Launch an effective online gateway platform for staff in schools that brings together a range of support for wellbeing
- **Action 2:** Continue to work in partnership with colleagues in health and social care to embed a city-wide trauma informed service that provides support to education professionals working with traumatised children in schools and settings.
- **Action 3:** To engage Leeds schools/settings with the My Health, My School Survey, supporting them to deliver practice to improve pupil wellbeing, with a particular focus on pupil examination stress
- **Action 4:** We will support school leaders in dealing with gang related violence and knife crime in their settings.





Action 1: Launch an effective online gateway platform for staff in schools that brings together a range of support for wellbeing

How?

In order to support this priority, a range of Leeds City Council Teams have worked together to create access to all resources and contact information school staff and Governors can access to support well-being, along with overviews of the services available. Following a pilot period and feedback from the sector, the well-being gateway initiative will be launched fully on Leeds for learning in January 24. (Teams involved include: Health and Well-being, Headteacher Support Service, Occupational Health, HR, Voice and Influence, Health and safety, Learning Inclusion, MindMate).

Impact

All leaders and schools will have access to a newly developed wellbeing gateway and Governing bodies will be offered additional support in how to ensure their duty to have regard for wellbeing of headteachers is effective.

Impact over time

Leadership teams and staff feel supported and reassured that they have access to a service when needed.





Action 2: Continue to work in partnership with colleagues in health and social care to embed a city-wide trauma informed service that provides support to education professionals working with traumatised children in schools and settings.

How?

We will work in partnership with colleagues in health and social care to continue to develop a city-wide trauma informed service which will provide support to education professionals working with traumatised children in schools and settings. Improved links will be fostered with other initiatives and programmes, such as the Safe Taskforce and Mindmate Support Teams, to ensure a joined-up supportive approach to settings and communities. The Learning Inclusion Service has dedicated time from a Senior Educational Psychologist to work with colleagues to develop an understanding of trauma work and advise education and schools settings. The senior psychologist will be a core member of the service development group. Materials and information to support schools will be available through the SEND practice framework toolkit.

Impact

An effective multi-agency trauma informed service is established, and a clear offer of training, support and information is available to all schools and settings

Impact over time

Improved Early identification of need, support for vulnerable learners and improved outcomes for learners





Action 3: To engage Leeds schools/settings with the My Health, My School Survey, supporting them to deliver practice to improve pupil wellbeing, with a particular focus on pupil examination stress.

How?

We will provide a My Health, My School Survey resource pack to support schools to navigate their way through school level data, city level data and reporting results to the whole school community, including governors, to ensure identified pupil well-being priorities are acted on.

The Voice and Influence team will meet with school leaders to discuss examination stress and to share resources and strategies to mitigate these for pupils. A working group to be initiated to explore strategies to address this priority as identified by students.

Impact

The Health & Wellbeing service achieve a completion rate of 11500 responses to the MHMS Survey and the Voice Influence team provide access to all schools to access resources for students on exam stress.

Impact over time

Pupils feel that their concerns are being shared and listened to and that effective action is being taken to address their well-being priorities.





Action 4: We will support school leaders in dealing with gang related violence and knife crime in their settings.

How?

We will facilitate discussions between school leaders, safe communities' teams and WY police to support increased understanding and awareness of the challenges and impact of gang related violence. We will facilitate resources and support being shared effectively with schools and settings. An education representative will attend the Safer Stronger Communities Team working group.

WY Police representatives will be invited to meet with school leader representative groups and opportunities will be sought to share resources and information with schools and academies through existing networks and education groups.

Impact

A strategy is in place to ensure that school leaders understand, and can access, resources from WY Police

Impact over time

School Leaders feel more effectively supported in managing the impact of increasing gang related violence on their school community and specific students



Aligned links to local authority plans



Best Council Plan:

- Ensuring support for the health and social care sector to respond to and recover from COVID-19.
- Supporting healthy, physically active lives.
- Working as a system to ensure people get the right care, from the right people in the right place.

Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2023:

- Priority 7 - Improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.

Tackling the long term impacts of Covid 19 on children and families draft inquiry report recommendations:

- Actively promote the uptake of the My Health My School survey and ensure the directorate is considering the outcomes of the survey and refining its offer to schools to respond to them.
- All learning places identify and address the barriers that prevent children and young people from engaging in and enjoying learning.

Future in Mind Plan: Leeds 2021-26: The refreshed plan will continue to drive to improve children and young people's social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) outcomes with a particular focus on reducing health inequalities.



Priority 5 - Ensure all young people in Leeds participate in education, employment and training after statutory school age and progress to a positive destination.



Service lead: Rebecca McCormack, Head of Service for Vulnerable Learners

Why we have chosen this priority:

We want young people in the city to achieve their potential, go on to exciting pathways when they leave school or college, continue to stay safe from harm and contribute to the economy.

In 2010, a report by the University of York found that its lowest estimate of the life-time public finance cost of young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) between the ages of 16 and 18 was just short of £12billion . Thirteen years on, it is likely that this figure is now even higher.

We know that the issue of NEET is a particularly critical one for Leeds. In February 2023, there were approximately 730 young people between the ages of 16-18 (25 for young people with a special educational need) who were NEET or Not Known.



What education leaders in the city have told us needs to sit under this priority:

- Work with providers and colleges to ensure that young people can pursue apprenticeship opportunities.

Agreed service actions:

- **Action 1:** Engage an interim strategic to lead to focus on reducing NEET and achieving full participation for young people aged 16-18 (25)
- **Action 2:** Prioritise post 16 provision place planning and provider attraction to ensure sufficiency of places for young people at the right levels.
- **Action 3:** Ensure wider understanding of the changing nature and impact of post 16 curriculum and qualification reforms.
- **Action 4:** Support the impact of careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools and post 16 settings and review and develop digital information resources and communications which meet the needs of young people and professionals
- **Action 5:** Develop a Risk of NEET indicator to identify and target support to those who most need it.



Action 1: Engage an interim strategic lead to focus on reducing NEET and achieving full participation for young people aged 16-18 (25)

How?

Colleague identified and seconded from educational setting. This lead will work with existing Positive Destinations colleagues to develop more effective engagement with wider partners across the city to raise participation rates in 16+CYP. A major focus will be on identifying post-16 destination pressure points and developing strategies to address any shortfall in destination opportunities.

Impact

- ❖ 100% schools engage with 14-19 strategy
- ❖ City wide understanding of current challenges and potential solutions

Impact over time

CYP have clear pathway positive destinations



Action 2: Prioritise post 16 provision place planning and provider attraction to ensure sufficiency of places for young people at the right levels.

How?

Colleagues will develop effective communication of current destinations data and ensure understanding amongst key stakeholders – from education, social care, health, third sector, and employers. Review of current provision will inform discussions about expansion of offer for 2024 and 2025.

Impact

- ❖ Post-16 providers work together to ensure September Guarantee translates to sustained positive destinations.
- ❖ City wide understanding of current challenges and potential solutions

Impact over time

Children and young people have clear pathway to sustained positive destinations



Action 3: Ensure wider understanding of the changing nature and impact of post 16 curriculum and qualification reforms

How?

Colleagues will develop effective communication and understanding amongst key stakeholders – from education, social care, health, third sector, and employers. Through establishing network meetings and consultation events, educational leaders will be supported in identifying the impact of qualification reforms and in finding alternative solutions to meet the needs of their learners which give all students access to successful outcomes and positive further destinations.

Impact

- ❖ Post-16 providers are supported in understanding the impact of qualification reforms.
- ❖ City wide understanding of current challenges and potential solutions

Impact over time

Educational providers are supported in designing effective Post-16 curriculum offer which meets the needs of learners and provides access to further positive pathways.



Action 4: Support the impact of careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools and post 16 settings and review and develop digital information resources and communications which meet the needs of young people and professionals

How?

Working with Careers and destinations colleagues we will support schools and Post-16 settings to review the content of their current careers education, information, advice and guidance and identify areas for improved content and/or communication. We will support these settings to review the impact of their current offer and explore more effective – digital- provision to enhance their offer.

Impact

- ❖ Post-16 providers are supported in developing their CEIAG offer.
- ❖ Post-16 providers are supported in identifying potential digital solutions to enhance their offer.

Impact over time

CYP have access to clear, accurate and inspirational careers education, information, advice and guidance



Action 5: Develop a 'Risk of NEET' indicator to identify and target support to those who most need it.

How?

Working with data teams, careers and destinations colleagues, school leaders and wider sector specialists, we will develop and pilot an early identification index which could support schools in identifying potential NEET Children and Young People in order to target positive destinations intervention.

Impact

- ❖ Schools are supported in working with Children and Young People to sustain engagement and reduce the risk of the Children and Young People becoming NEET

Impact over time

Reduction in NEET numbers across the city



Aligned links to local authority plans

Best City Plan:

- Priority 4: Increase the number of children and young people participating and engaging in learning
- Do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life

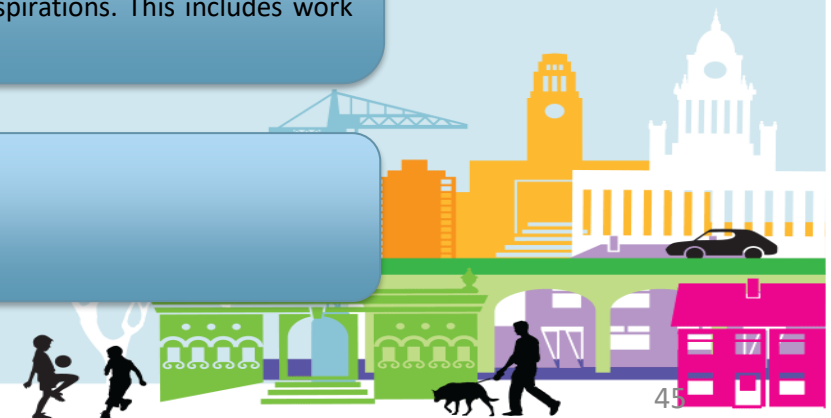
Children and Young People's plan: Priority 10: Help young people into adulthood, to develop life skills, and be ready for work through the KPI: Percentage and number of young people who are not in employment, education or training or whose status is 'not known'.

Child Friendly Leeds young people's 12 wishes:

Wish 10. All children and young people are in learning settings that meet their needs

Wish 11. Young people have access to a wide range of work experience, employment and volunteering opportunities. Young people know where to get information and advice and are supported to access a wide range of opportunities that meet their needs and aspirations. This includes work experience, employment, training and volunteering.

Leeds City Council Equality and Diversity Plan: Advance equality of opportunity.



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Work Programme

Date: 29 November 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- 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 as fixed and rigid, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- 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 and Diversity Scheme.’
- Reflecting on the information in this report, members are requested to consider and discuss the Board’s work programme for this municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Consider the Board’s work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

What is this report about?

1. A draft work programme for the Children and Families Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in the document are known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, as well as other areas of work identified by the Board over the course of the municipal year.
2. The latest Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 18 October 2023 are also attached as Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and consider any matter where specific scrutiny activity may also be warranted.
3. Members will note some adjustments to the work programme since the last meeting in October. The EHCP Working Group on 23 November takes place after the publication deadline for the papers for this meeting so it has not been possible to include the planned EHCP Inquiry item at this meeting as was set out at the October Board meeting. This has been moved to the January 2024 meeting.
4. In order to have sufficient time to include the EHCP item at the January meeting of the Board the Future in Mind Strategy will now be brought forward in March 2024.
5. Members are also reminded that the date for the Budget Working Group has now been finalised and this will take place on 19 December 2023 at 13.30 and will be held remotely through Microsoft Teams.

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 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 maintain dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. 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.

What are the resource implications?

9. 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 and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.

10. 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.
11. 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?

12. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

What are the legal implications?

13. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work programme of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 18 October 2023.

Background papers

- None

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Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 7th June 2023 at 10 am	Meeting Agenda for 5th July 2023 at 10 am	No Scrutiny Board meeting
Co-opted Members (DB) Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB) Potential Sources of Work (DB) Performance Update (PM) Youth Justice Plan Update (PSR)	Impact of Vaping on Children & Young People (PSR) Inquiry Terms of Reference – Provision of EHCP Support (PM) Annual Standards Report (PDS) SACRE Annual Report (PM)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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



Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 6th September 2023 at 10 am	Meeting Agenda for 4th October 2023 at 10 am	Meeting Agenda for 29th November 2023 at 10 am
<p>The independent review of children's social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)</p> <p>Impact of asylum changes on children (PSR)</p> <p>Provision of EHCP support – Terms of Reference (PM)</p>	<p>Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Update (PSR)</p> <p>School Attendance Update (PM)</p> <p>Impact of Vaping on Children and Young People (PSR)</p> <p>Provision of EHCP Support Working Group feedback (PM)</p>	<p>Impact of Vaping on Children and Young People (PSR)</p> <p>Children and Families Transformation Agenda (PDS)</p> <p>Refresh of the Leeds 3As Strategy (PDS)</p>
Working Group Meetings		
Provision of EHCP Support Inquiry Working Group – 22 September 10.00-11.30AM		23/11/23 - Provision of EHCP Support Inquiry Working Group

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



Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

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December	January	February
No Scrutiny Board meeting.	Meeting Agenda for 24th January 2024 at 10 am	Meeting Agenda for 22nd February 2024 at 2 PM
	Performance report (PM) 2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals and Financial Health Monitoring (PDS/PSR) Provision of EHCP Support Working Group feedback & Inquiry Session (PM)	Leeds Child Poverty Strategy Update (PSR) Voice and Influence Team – hearing the voices of Young People (PSR) Draft Inquiry Report – Provision of EHCP Support (PM)
Working Group Meetings		
2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) – 19 December 2023 at 13.30 (remote working group)		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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



Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2023/2024 Municipal Year

March	April	May
Meeting Agenda for 27th March 2024 at 10 am	No Scrutiny Board meeting	No Scrutiny Board meeting
<p>The independent review of children's social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)</p> <p>Future in Mind Strategy (PSR)</p> <p>Inquiry Report – Provision of EHCP Support (PM)</p>		
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, D Coupar, M Harland,
H Hayden, A Lamb, J Lennox, J Pryor,
M Rafique and F Venner

- 45 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**
RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-
- (A) That Appendix C to the report entitled, 'Future of Six High Rise and Resident Rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange', referred to in Minute No. 49 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that it contains information relating to financial valuations of the land per site to support the options appraisal content (Appendix B to the submitted report). It is designated as being exempt from publication because disclosure would be likely to adversely affect the commercial interests of the Council. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at present; and
 - (B) That Appendices B and C to the report entitled, 'Accelerated Property Releases and Disposals', referred to in Minute No. 58 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that these appendices contain information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council including valuation details for the properties included within the submitted report. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at present.

46 Late Items

Late Item of Business – Agenda Item 10 – ‘The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds’

With the agreement of the Chair, a late item of business was admitted to the agenda entitled, ‘The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds’.

This was due to the fact that the submitted report was in response to the recent Government announcement regarding Network North, and as such the report was not able to be included within the agenda as published on 10th October 2023. However, given the significance of this announcement, it was deemed appropriate for the matter to be brought to the attention of Executive Board at the earliest opportunity. (Agenda Item 10 and Minute No. 53 refers).

47 Declaration of Interests

Agenda Item 9 (Transpennine Route Upgrade – Transport and Works Act Order Representation)

Both Councillors J Lewis and M Harland drew the Board’s attention to the fact that, in their respective capacities as Ward Councillors, they have both had significant engagement on issues around Peckfield level crossing. However, Councillors Lewis and Harland both respectively confirmed that they were approaching the consideration of this report as part of the Executive Board agenda with an open mind.

Agenda Item 7 (Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation)

Councillor A Lamb drew the Board’s attention to the fact that he attended the recent Development Plan Panel (DPP) meeting that considered the Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation). However, Councillor Lamb confirmed that he had abstained from voting on this matter at that DPP meeting and was approaching the consideration of this report as part of the Executive Board agenda with an open mind.

48 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

HOUSING

49 Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report regarding the future of six high rise blocks within the Council’s housing estate. The report noted that as significant investment work would be needed to ensure the long term future of the blocks, including intrusive and costly strengthening works, an options appraisal had been undertaken. The report presented the recommendations arising from that appraisal, which were for all residents to be rehoused, with appropriate support for those who needed it, and for subsequent demolition to clear the sites. The report noted that this

would enable the development of new modern housing in the future on the sites, whether by the Council or other parties.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the report including the options appraisal work that had taken place and the recommended next steps.

In considering enquiries regarding the potential impact that the proposals may have upon the current demand for social housing and also regarding the potential future use of the sites, it was acknowledged that whilst there may be a short term pressure on demand as a result of the proposal, it was felt that this would be manageable as part of the Council's wider social housing estate. It was also noted that the ultimate aim of the proposals was to increase the number of social housing units available in Leeds for the longer term and also to deliver a beneficial outcome for the current residents of those blocks. Furthermore, it was noted that the considerable timeframes involved in the delivery of the proposals were with the aim of ensuring that a managed approach was taken, and that liaison with partners on the opportunities regarding the future use of the sites would be ongoing.

In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further detail on the consultation and engagement processes which have taken place with residents of the blocks to date.

As part of the discussion, a Member acknowledged that whilst action was needed and that refurbishment of the blocks was not a viable option, they confirmed that they could not support the recommendations without further assurance around the future plans for the sites, or that all residents were supportive of the proposals, and as such, recommended a deferral so that further detail could be obtained. In response, further information was provided on the timeframes involved and the reasons for the proposed actions, with it being reiterated that the intention was to deliver a greater number of social housing units on these sites in the longer term. It was undertaken that further information on such matters could be provided to the Member in question, if required.

Following consideration of appendix C to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the rehousing of residents of secure tenanted flats in the blocks (Bailey Towers, Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Raynville Grange), be approved, and that approval be given for Home Loss and Disturbance payments to be made to qualifying residents; with this resolution being supported by ongoing engagement with residents during implementation;

- (b) That approval be given for the awarding of 'Band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants of the blocks;
- (c) That the suspension of lettings to the flats and garages be approved, with any void properties being taken out of charge;
- (d) That approval be given for the negotiation and undertaking of the re-purchasing of any leasehold flats, with approval also being given for compulsory purchase to be pursued if a voluntary approach is unsuccessful;
- (e) That it be agreed that the buildings should be safely demolished, creating clear sites;
- (f) That it be noted that activity will be progressed to explore options for the sites - for example, for development by the Council, or with other parties, or for sale;
- (g) That spend of £5,267,600 from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, be authorised, to deliver rehousing and building emptying activity; and
- (h) That agreement be given for the Initial Demolition Notices and Final Demolition Notices to be served by the Council at the appropriate times.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

50 Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation)

Further to Minute No. 46, 21 September 2022, the Director of City Development submitted a report setting out a number of changes proposed to the Local Plan Update following detailed consideration of consultation responses to the publication draft policies. The report requested endorsement of the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs of the Local Plan Update 1 and sought approval to undertake a further period of public consultation.

The Executive Member introduced the report, providing an overview of the changes proposed and highlighting the key role played by the Plan in the actions being taken in response to the Climate Emergency.

Members extended their thanks to officers for the work which continued to be undertaken in getting the plan to this advanced stage.

A Member raised a concern regarding the proposed changes and how they could dilute the Council's existing commitments in relation to the Climate

Emergency, with it being acknowledged however that at this stage, the Board was being recommended to approve a further consultation exercise where the public could submit their views on such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs of the Local Plan Update 1, as set out in **Appendix 1** to the submitted report, and as a schedule of changes in **Appendix 2** and the Sustainability Appraisal, as set out in **Appendix 3**, be endorsed;
- (b) That 6 weeks consultation of the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs, as set out in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2**, together with supporting technical information (comprising Sustainability Appraisal at **Appendix 3**, Habitat Regulations Assessment at **Appendix 4**, Report of Consultation at **Appendix 5** and Duty to Co-operate Statement at **Appendix 6**), be approved, with it being noted that that this will be accompanied by additional draft supporting consultation documentation, including the Council's evidence base and background papers alongside accessible summary material for consultation purposes;
- (c) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, to approve any detailed technical or drafting amendments to the consultation material in advance of public consultation;
- (d) That it be noted that the Chief Planning Officer is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions set out above.

(The matters referred to within this minute, given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In, as Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

51 Morley Town Deal grants and general project progress

Further to Minute No. 103, 16th December 2020, the Director of City Development submitted a report summarising the progress made on the Morley Town Deal since the Morley Town Investment Plan (TIP) was approved in principle by the Government in March 2021, with associated capital funding to invest in projects intended to deliver transformational regeneration of the town. The report outlined six projects which were now moving forward to delivery and sought the Board's approval of several associated recommendations.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview on the key points within the report and highlighted the effectiveness of the Board and how it was regarded as an exemplar in terms of Town Deal Boards.

Gerald Jennings, Chair of the Morley Town Deal Board was in attendance to provide Members with an overview of the progress being made by the Board and an update on the most recent key developments. The ongoing work being undertaken to maximise the benefits from the Town Deal funding was highlighted, via initiatives including engagement with the private sector and also through the sourcing of other funding streams, where available. Regarding the Board's membership, it was noted that work had been successfully undertaken to develop the inclusivity and diversity of the Board. The good working relations between the Board and the Council were reiterated, with it being highlighted that work needed to continue at pace and with purpose in order to deliver the projects within the required timeframe.

Several specific enquiries were raised by a Member on the progress being made in relation to Morley Town Hall and in terms of the associated governance arrangements for the Town Deal Board and its decision making. Assurance was also sought that the projects were delivering the community's priorities. In response, Members received a detailed update on the Morley Town Hall project, and also received further information on the range and extent of public consultation and engagement which had been undertaken and which was planned moving forward, both for the Town Hall project and the others within the wider programme in order to inform the delivery of those projects.

Members thanked officers for the work that continued in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the subsequent Town Investment Plan bid approval by Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which sets the context for the forward delivery of the capital projects, as outlined within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That approval be given for the Director of City Development to use delegated powers to approve all project capital spend, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, and the Morley Town Deal Board;
- (c) That approval be given for the Director of City Development to use delegated powers to authorise entering into appropriate contracts or grant agreements required for delivery of the Heritage Investment Programme, White Rose Innovation Hub and Morley Learning and Skills Centre, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, and the Morley Town Deal Board.

52 Transpennine Route Upgrade - Transport and Works Act Order Representation

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an overview of the development of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) and which set out the Council's response to the Secretary of State for Transport in respect of

a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) submitted by Network Rail for the TRU east of Leeds. The report referenced the 'holding objection' that had been submitted to the Secretary of State in response to the draft TWAO and noted that whilst the Council recognised and supported in principle the benefits of TRU, it detailed the reasons for the submission of the 'holding objection'. Further to this, the report also made a recommendation to Full Council to approve the submission of a formal objection to specific elements of the TWAO for the Leeds to Micklefield part of the TRU.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's overall strategic support for the outcomes proposed from the Transpennine Route Upgrade, be noted;
- (b) That the contents of the submitted report, be noted; and that the 'holding objection' submitted by the Council to the Secretary of State in response to Network Rail's application for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) also be noted, together with the justifications for this;
- (c) That Full Council be recommended to approve the submission of the formal objection to specific elements of Network Rail's Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) for the Leeds to Micklefield part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, pursuant to s239 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- (d) That Full Council be recommended to delegate the necessary authority to the Director of City Development, to enable the Director to continue negotiations with relevant stakeholders in order to seek to agree the withdrawal of the objection should sufficient agreement on the issues raised be reached, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure;
- (e) That approval be given for the resolutions above to be exempted from Call In pursuant to paragraph 5.1.3, Part 4 of the Council's Constitution on grounds of urgency, as set out within paragraphs 35 - 38 of the submitted report.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (e) above, and for the reasons as set out within sections 35 - 38 of the submitted report)

53 The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds

The Director of City Development submitted a report in response to the Government's recent announcement and publication of the Network North document, which cancelled HS2 Phase 2, HS2 East and the Integrated Rail Plan study into how to bring HS2 trains to Leeds, and committed to invest

£36bn in alternative transport schemes across the country. The report presented the references to Leeds within that document and considered the interfaces and impact that these may have upon existing infrastructure programmes, and also the operation and growth of the city.

With the agreement of the Chair, the submitted report had been circulated to Board Members as a late item of business prior to the meeting for the reasons as detailed in Minute No. 46.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within it, including an update on the current position following the Government's Network North announcement on 4th October 2023, and highlighting that whilst the Network North document made reference to Leeds, further detail was required on such matters in order to better understand the implications for the city.

In terms of next steps following this announcement, emphasis was placed upon the importance of ensuring that a collaborative, cross-party approach was taken on such matters and when engaging with Government in order to deliver the strongest case for the city and the wider city-region in securing the required funding moving forward.

The Chief Executive provided an update to the Board regarding the National Infrastructure Commission, which had today launched its second national infrastructure assessment report, in which it had backed the case for major investment into England's largest regional cities, including Leeds, to improve public transport provision. It was also highlighted that the additional station in Leeds was still deemed to be crucial to the future of the city, and moving forward, emphasis was placed upon the Council's commitment to working closely with Government on such matters with the aim of delivering those key infrastructure improvements for the benefit of the city and the whole network.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the implications of the Department for Transport Network North (document as at Appendix A to the submitted report) Government announcement for Leeds, be noted;
- (b) That Government assurance be sought that the rail commitments in the Integrated Rail Plan and Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline will remain commitments apart from HS2 Phase 2; and that the Board's endorsement be given to the Council writing to Government seeking clarity regarding the proposed Leeds Area Study which incorporated a study into Leeds Station Capacity and which is still required to understand how to accommodate the revised services referenced by Network North, including whether a T-shaped station is required;
- (c) That the Board endorse a continued collaborative approach to development and implementation of the detail behind the proposals in the Network North document, the development of a new Leeds Station Integrated Masterplan and Integrated Transport Growth Strategy,

which is critical to ensuring that Leeds remains a resilient, globally competitive and investible city that continues to operate for all our businesses and residents.

- (d) That further reports be brought to Executive Board as more information becomes available, including safeguarding and future consenting strategies.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

54 2022/23 Leeds City Council Local Account for Adult Social Care

The Interim Director of Adults and Health submitted a report presenting the 2022/23 Local Account of Adult Social Care for citizens in Leeds. The report noted that the Local Account reviewed the performance of the Council in its delivery of social care services and support to the adult population of the city.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that this was the first Local Account publication following the pandemic, covering the period April 2022 to March 2023 and which detailed the progress being made, the Council's priorities moving forward and the challenges that continued to be faced.

The key nature of the Local Account document was highlighted, as it formed part of the suite of documents that the Care Quality Commission would consider when inspecting the Authority against its statutory duties.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted how, in this case, he felt that the representations made to Government regarding the funding of Adult Social Care were beginning to make a positive impact and which illustrated the benefit of a co-ordinated approach on such matters and which could continue to be applied to areas such as the resourcing of Children and Families services.

RESOLVED – That the production and publication of the 2022/23 Leeds City Council Local Account for Adult Social Care, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be agreed.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

55 Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Further to Minute No. 111, 8th February 2023, the Chief Executive submitted a report presenting an overview of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report, which outlined the findings of the one-day follow-up visit made by the Peer Challenge team on 11th September 2023. Appended to the report was the full LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report, and also a document presenting the recommendations of the LGA Peer Challenge, a progress update on those recommendations together with proposed next steps.

In presenting the report, the Leader noted that the proposal was to refer the progress review to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board for consideration, and in welcoming the progress review, highlighted the importance of receiving and acting upon the outcomes from the external scrutiny of the Council by partners in Local Government.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the findings of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Report, as appended to the submitted report, which followed the Peer Challenge team's revisit on 11th September 2023, be noted;
- (b) That the progress made against the original LGA Peer Challenge recommendations from November 2022, be noted, together with the findings of the peers following their revisit in September 2023;
- (c) That the proposed next steps developed in response to the findings of the peers following their revisit in September 2023, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted;
- (d) That the findings of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report be referred to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board's December 2023 meeting.

RESOURCES

56 Financial Health Monitoring 2023/24 – Month 5 (August)

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting the Council's projected financial health position as at month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account

The Board was requested to note the following correction to the submitted report:

Regarding the reference on page 1396 of the agenda pack (paragraph 3.11.1 ('Reserves') of Appendix A) which read, '*...£0.8m Leeds Older People's Forum for delivery of the Age Friendly programme which is funded by Health*'. This was to be amended to, '*...£0.8m Leeds Older People's Forum for delivery of the Enhance Programme commissioned by Leeds Community Healthcare (LCH) and delivered by the Third Sector*'.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points, which included the current forecasting of an overspend of £29.6m for the General Fund as at month 5 of the financial year. The Board was also provided with an update on the work that continued in respect of managing in-year pressures.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding the refund of transport levy reserves, as one-off funding from WYCA (West Yorkshire combined Authority) to each of the 5 West Yorkshire Local Authorities. In Leeds' case this was a sum of £17.7m. It was noted that this sum would be returned to the Council's

General Fund. It was also noted that this sum would be factored into future Financial Health Monitoring reports submitted to the Board moving forward.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That, subject to noting the correction as detailed above, the contents of the submitted report be noted, and that it also be noted that at Month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £29.6m for 2023/24 (5.2% of the approved net revenue budget) within a challenging national context, and with it also being noted that a range of actions are being undertaken to achieve a balanced budget position;
- (b) That it be noted that at Month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year, the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of £3.0m for 2023/24 (1.09% of the approved gross expenditure budget);
- (c) That it be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care and known impacts of the rising cost of living, including the employer's 2023/24 NJC pay offer of £1,925 and the JNC pay settlement of 3.5%, have been incorporated into this reported financial position, with it also being noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available. That it also be noted that proposals would need to be identified to absorb any additional pressures;
- (d) That it be noted that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, are required to present action plans to mitigate their reported pressures and those of the Council's wider financial challenge where possible, in line with the Revenue Principles agreed by Executive Board in 2019;
- (e) That following WYCA Members' approval of a refund of transport levy reserves to the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities on 12th October 2023, it be noted that this one-off injection will be used in Leeds to add to the Strategic Contingency Reserve.

57 Revenue Savings Proposals for 2024/25 to 2026/27

Further to Minute No. 40, 20th September 2023, the Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report providing an update on the actions being taken in response to the Council's estimated revenue budget gap. Specifically, the report presented a number of savings proposals - a collective term used in this context to apply to efficiencies, income generation and accounting measures – to contribute towards addressing that budget gap over the three-year period (2024/25 to 2026/27).

In presenting the report the Executive Member highlighted the unprecedented financial challenges that continued to be faced across the sector and by this Council, and it was within this context that the submitted proposals were being presented to the Board as part of the wider approach being taken to manage

such challenges. The Board also noted the Council's recent issuing of a Section 188 notice, which was a process to instigate collective consultation with the Council's recognised Trade Unions to avoid, reduce and mitigate the potential risk and consequences of compulsory redundancies.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the challenge that continued to be faced nationally in terms of the resourcing of services for Children and Families. Whilst the Member highlighted the importance of the Council continuing to take action in this area, it was acknowledged that this was a matter which required a national response and continued communication with Government.

In addition, as part of the consultative process on proposals around managing the financial challenge more generally, emphasis was placed upon the benefit of involving communities and Members across the Council on such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the financial position for 2024/25 to 2026/27, as outlined within the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that further savings are required to deliver a balanced budget position for 2024/25 and to contribute to closing the projected gaps in the following two years;
- (b) That the 'Business as Usual' savings put forward, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions);
- (c) That it be noted that additional savings proposals will be brought to Executive Board for consideration at its meeting on 13th December 2023.

58 Accelerated Property Releases and Disposals

The Director of City Development submitted a report which, in considering the Council's in-year budget position and medium-term financial plan, presented proposals regarding the potential to accelerate the release of a number of operational properties in order to deliver in-year additional capital receipts, and also with regard to proposals relating to further work being undertaken around the potential disposal of let out properties, as identified within the report.

Members welcomed the proposals within the submitted report.

Following consideration of appendices B and C to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which were considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the accelerated release of the properties set out in Table 1 of the submitted report, be agreed, and where identified, agreement also be given for their inclusion within the Capital Receipt Programme for disposal;
- (b) That agreement be given for further exploration being undertaken into the disposal of the properties identified in Table 2 of the submitted report;
- (c) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Director for City Development, to enable the Director, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and the Chief Officer Financial Services, to take decisions as to which of the properties identified from the Investment Portfolio in Table 2 of the submitted report should be progressed for marketing; and that subject to the value of the offers received, the final decision to sell be delegated to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources;
- (d) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Director for City Development to enable the Director to agree the terms of the disposals which are agreed as part of the submitted report;
- (e) That it be agreed that the receipts as set out in Table 2 of the submitted report be exempted from the Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme.

ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

59 The Annual Standards Report

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the Council's Annual Standards Report which provided an overview of the educational outcomes for Leeds following the statutory assessments and examinations which took place in 2022.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that these statutory assessments and examinations were the first to be undertaken post-pandemic which weren't under teacher assessed grades. In addition, the Executive Member drew the Board's attention to a number of key progress measures featured within the report and extended thanks to the city's schools and school staff for the achievements recorded within the report.

Members welcomed the submitted report, with a suggestion that it may be beneficial for Scrutiny to consider the significant detail within it.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the performance against headline measures for pupils in Leeds in 2022 when compared with national data, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted;

- (b) That the actions taken by the Local Authority to improve outcomes in Leeds, be noted, together with the planned actions for the coming year.

60 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) - Review Process

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report providing an update on the current position regarding Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) both locally and nationally. The report noted that in relation to Leeds City Council, a 60% post-pandemic increase in applications for EHCPs had been experienced. Given this, it was noted that a review was being undertaken into the Council's approach towards EHCPs by external consultants in order to provide independent challenge and insight. The report also provided details of the related work which had been undertaken to date and further proposed as part of the review process.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the significant increase in demand for EHCPs which had been experienced post-pandemic both nationally and in Leeds and highlighted the range of reasons why an individual may need an EHCP. The importance of the review process being undertaken by external consultants was emphasised in order to ensure that the process was as effective as possible, and it was noted that the submitted report was the first of two scheduled reports, with this initial report providing detail on the work done to date, emerging findings and opportunities for change. The second report is scheduled to be submitted to the Board in December 2023.

The Board welcomed the submitted report and the priority that was being given to this important area.

A Member highlighted how this process affected many young people and their families in Leeds and emphasised the importance of the Council's relationships with those key stakeholders. In response, the Director of Children and Families emphasised her absolute commitment to ensuring that improvements were made to the EHCP process and to the experiences and outcomes for young people and their families. The Director highlighted the integral role that key stakeholders, including young people, parents and carers would play in that improvement, alongside the external consultants undertaking the review. Emphasis was also placed upon the clear objectives for the next phase of the process, which included that the Council achieved full legal compliance in its statutory duties; and that moving forward clear performance metrics around timeliness of assessment and issuing of EHCPs were developed together with a robust management framework in order to measure and scrutinise progress in a timely way.

It was noted that the Children and Families Scrutiny Board was also considering these matters in parallel to the review work being undertaken, and that overall, the aim was to ensure that a 'Leeds approach' is established in response to the issues being experienced nationally in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the prevailing situation nationally in relation to EHCPs, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the work undertaken to date to improve performance in Leeds, be noted;
- (c) That the review work instigated, as referenced within the submitted report, be endorsed; that it be noted that the review seeks to highlight areas of opportunity and improvement; and that the key lines of enquiry which the work to date has generated also be noted;
- (d) That the proposed 5 key principles, as referenced within the submitted report, which will form the basis of more detailed organisational and process design over the next six months, be agreed;
- (e) That a further report be submitted to the December 2023 meeting of Executive Board around detailed planning for future arrangements.

COMMUNITIES

61 Annual Update on Migration in Leeds

Further to Minute No. 74, 19th October 2022, the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented the key developments and progress on the migration agenda over the last 12 months by Leeds City Council and its statutory and non-statutory partners. The report also highlighted the challenges associated with delivering a range of migration programmes to families and individuals across the city.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within it, including the approach being taken in Leeds in response to national and international developments during the course of the year. Also, the Board noted the approach being taken by the Council in working towards joining the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network, which followed a related deputation to full Council in September 2023.

Members extended their thanks to a range of Council officers and the third sector partners for the work which continued in this area.

Responding to a specific enquiry, the Board received further information on the actions which were being taken with partners around the promotion of access to employment for migrants and improving their employability.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted annual update report on migration, together with the full overview and insight as presented at Appendix 1, be noted;

- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for leading this work through the Council's Safer Stronger Communities programme;
- (c) That it be noted that the Chief Officer for Safer, Stronger Communities is responsible for leading the work of the Leeds Strategic Migration Board which oversees delivery on the strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach towards migration in Leeds, and the work of the Council's migration and resettlement team to provide strategic and operational direction for the city;
- (d) That the Council's approach towards becoming a member of the national Local Authority of Sanctuary Network, be endorsed;
- (e) That the issues raised in the submitted report which impact current and future Leeds residents as part of the review of the Best City Ambition, be noted.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 20TH OCTOBER 2023

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2023