

## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Thursday, 22nd February, 2024 at 2.00 pm  
(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 1.45 p.m.)

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### MEMBERSHIP

- D Blackburn - Farnley and Wortley;  
J Bowden - Roundhay;  
E Bromley - Horsforth;  
Amanda Carter - Calverley and Farsley;  
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;  
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

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

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

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

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# A G E N D A

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

3

### **LATE ITEMS**

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

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

4

### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

5

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

### **MINUTES - 24 JANUARY 2024**

7 - 20

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2024.

7

### **VOICE AND INFLUENCE - HEARING THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

21 - 96

To receive a report from the Director of Children and Families providing an update on the work of the Voice and Influence Team putting the voice of children and young people at the centre of the directorate's work.

8

### **LEEDS CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY - UPDATE**

97 - 142

To receive a report from the Director of Children and Families that presents an update on Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds and the work that sits underneath the strategy.

9

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

143 - 166

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

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 27 March 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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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Cohen in the Chair

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

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)**

Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic Diocese of Leeds)  
Mr A Khitou – Primary Parent Governor Representative

### **Co-Opted Members Non-Voting**

Ms H Bellamy – School Staff Representative  
Ms K Blacker – Co-Opted Member  
Ms J Ward – Co-Opted Member  
Laura Whitaker – Young Lives Leeds

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

There were no appeals.

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

There was no exempt information considered by the Board.

#### **62 Late Items**

There were no late items.

#### **63 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Board received the following apologies:

Cllr Amanda Carter, with Cllr Trish Smith attending as substitute

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 22nd February, 2024

Cllr Jordan Bowden, with Cllr Emma Flint attending as substitute  
Cllr Jane Senior  
Andrew Graham, Church Representative (Church of England)  
Nick Tones, School Staff Representative

## **65 Minutes - 29 November 2023**

In reference to Minute 58 a concern was raised around a follow up item on the Impact of Asylum changes on children and young people in Leeds not featuring in the work programme despite previous discussion on the subject. The Chair noted that it is still very much under consideration and will be brought forward at either the newly planned April meeting or earlier if possible.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 November 2023, be approved as an accurate record.

## **66 Financial Reporting 2023/24 (Month 7)**

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services which provided an update on the in year financial position in respect of the Revenue Budget and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), highlighting the budgetary position of services within the Board's remit.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture, and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children & Families
- Phil Evans, Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships
- Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer – Resources & Strategy
- Louise Hornsey, Senior Head of Finance - People

The Executive Board Member for Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships made some introductory remarks setting out the scale of the challenges being faced by local authorities in managing children's social care budgets.

The situation in Leeds, like elsewhere, is twofold. There is an increase in the number of children requiring care and more significantly the increase in cost of care in recent years. If the issue were only linked to increased numbers the budgetary position would be more manageable, but the costs of placements are now much higher. Key measures to reduce overspend is reducing the numbers entering care and supporting children and young people to leave care, some of those measures are highlighted in the paper being considered by the Board.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 22nd February, 2024

Responding to comments and questions from board members the following issues were discussed:

- The Chair sought clarity on the overspend position contained in the report, does the overspend represent a worsening position based on the last time the report was considered by Executive Board and are there any estimates of a possible worst case scenario in terms of overspending on children looked after budgets. The Board heard that the position has worsened since the last report and the next update on this will be reported to Executive Board in February and as such work is ongoing on the projection and is not yet finalised. There are plans to do more detailed work on the projection to the February Executive Board, assessing the areas of risk in the budget and putting forward a projection that presents a position that will be less likely to change by the financial year end.

**Resolved:** The Board noted the content of the report and the financial position in relation to service areas that fall within its remit.

## **67 The Proposed Budget 2024/25 and Provisional Budgets for 2025/26 and 2026/27**

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services that introduces the Council's proposed budget for 2024/25 and provisional budgets for 2025/26 and 2026/27 for consideration, review and comment on matters and proposals that fall within the Scrutiny Board's remit. Following consideration of the report feedback from this board will be incorporated into a composite report that will be submitted to Executive Board for consideration on 7 February 2024 as set out in the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Jonathan Pryor, Executive Board Member for Culture, Economy and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Children Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children & Families
- Phil Evans, Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships
- Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer – Resources & Strategy
- Louise Hornsey, Senior Head of Finance - People
- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

By way of introduction the Senior Head of Finance – People, set out that key elements of the report which were the overall £58.4m saving requirement that the Council will need to make to deliver a balanced budget in 2024/25, for Children and Families the saving requirement is £16.5m and these proposals have been detailed in reports to Executive Board in October and December 2023. All local authorities are required by law, to set a balanced budget.

In terms of wider context, the Director of Children and Families highlighted the funding challenges around children looked after. In terms of numbers of children in care Leeds is performing well when compared to statistical neighbours, the numbers have increased but not on the same scale as in other areas. It was noted that increases in child poverty is a driver for children entering care, and in Leeds deprivation levels have increased and lower super output areas have increased with 12 neighbourhoods classed as being in the most deprived 1% in the UK. In addition to this there has been an increase in adolescent populations in the most deprived areas which has further added to demand pressures.

In response to comments and questions from board members the following discussion took place:

- Board members were supportive of the invest to save approach which will see more in house provision delivered through new children's homes. However, there was also concern around the lengthening timescales of delivering the new small group living homes and the risks that are identified in the papers around successful delivery. In response it was noted that the timescales have been subject to robust testing and there is a desire to be cautious and as rigorous as possible. Risks associated with establishing the homes are linked to staffing, refurbishment and registration of the homes which can be a lengthy process. Mitigation of risk is ongoing, a good example of that being the discussions taking place with Ofsted around how registration of the homes can be expedited as quickly as possible by establishing a 'pipeline' approach of other means.
- Members were also interested in ensuring that the need to reduce costs does not mean that we are 'over keen' to avoid placing children in care and potentially increase risks for those children. The Board heard that this approach is more about prevention approaches and safely reducing the need for care through providing family support to those that most need it, it is not a blanket approach to reducing numbers. This preventative approach is delivered in partnership with other agencies, is evidence based and aims to deliver timely, restorative support to families often living in poverty and in adverse circumstances.
- The Board wanted to know more about the proposals in the budget to Cease the Multi-Systemic Therapy for Child Abuse & Neglect (MST-CAN) service and whether it will be withdrawn. In response the Board were informed that the proposal is still in the budget and results from the difficult financial circumstances that the authority is in following successive years of reductions in funding. It was also noted that none of the proposals put forward are decisions that are taken lightly. The Board were concerned that this proposal could impact 60 families that access support and that it is used as a service to prevent children from entering the care system. The risk being that the saving of £330,000 that will be delivered by the proposal could be significantly outweighed by costs in the care system further down the line as potentially more children enter care. The Board also heard that no decision has been taken on this yet and that the point about the consequential impact of the proposal will be a key part of the decision making process through impact assessment.

- On the same saving proposal (MST-CAN), board members wanted to know more about the methodology being used to calculate savings – specifically the £330K saving and why this does not reflect cumulatively for 2025/26 which would be £660K based on two years of savings. In response the Board heard that the £330K is removed from the base budget and is therefore recorded only in 2024/25 as opposed to the cumulative impact approach that would see the £330K recorded each year.
- It was reiterated that the proposals in the budget are difficult and given the legal requirement to deliver a balanced budget there is no other choice but to bring forward very difficult proposals. As part of this process, it was noted that part of the work on the budget is how to do things differently and in respect of MST-CAN services consideration is being given to how the staff will be retained through a multi-agency approach within the plans to develop Family Health services.
- The Chair referenced the working group held in preparation for this Budget item and noted some of the key discussion from that session, these were: Commissioned Services - the Board wanted to hear more about the planned review of commissioned services to understand which services would be most affected and what impact if any, this would have on services to Leeds residents; Life Coaches - the Board sought and received assurances around the life coaching staffing resource which will be integrated into family support and early help services; Skills - in light of the possibility that staff will leave the authority through voluntary redundancy or other measures, the board expressed some concern that valuable skills and experience could be lost; Financial Challenge - a key discussion theme at the working group was the need for additional funding to meet demand pressures and the higher costs of providing foster care; Overall Budget - the Board sought reassurances around sufficiency of budget for the Directorate in 2024/25. The concern being that despite additional resource the same budget pressures emerge within children looked after budgets which place pressure on the overall council budget in 2024/25; Children's Centres - the Board sought reassurance around the scope of the review and how integration and co-location might look and impact communities in the city; and the Board were concerned about service review proposals to cease the Caring Dads and Multi-Systemic Therapy for Child Abuse (MST-CAN) services given the valuable assistance they provide to children and families in the city.
- In addition to the comment on the Working Group the Chair also highlighted concern around the proposals to reduce the Youth Activity Fund and the potential impact it might have on vulnerable families across the city. There were also concerns around the possible impact of parking charges on the activity of children and families in the city.
- Board members referenced the demand led nature of the services provided by Children and Families and the pressures it can create due to the statutory nature of the services, set against the legal requirement to deliver a balanced budget as a local authority.
- On sufficiency of budget the Board heard that the directorate is confident in the budget it has proposed but it was clearly set out that the cost of care in external residential placements and the care system generally is a

major risk due to demand and costs of the services and the need for more funding.

- The Board noted that some of the strategies in the budget are high risk on the risk register. In response members were informed that risks have been highlighted in the spirit of openness and transparency and to highlight the pressures being faced and the difficult decisions that are having to be taken to balance budgets.
- The Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education highlighted the impact of inflationary pressure on the budget and that the challenges posed by that have come following successive years of budget reductions which has led to some difficult proposals being put forward in the budget for 2024/25.
- The Board were informed about the strong officer and member oversight, governance and scrutiny measures in place in Leeds to manage budgets and deal with the pressures being faced by services in the directorate. It was further noted that the financial pressures within the directorate have been the main focus of work in recent months at senior officer levels and at senior elected member level.

#### **Resolved:**

The Board noted the content of the report and appendices and that a summary of the deliberations of all five Scrutiny Boards during the period of consultation on the Executive Board's proposed budget will be submitted for consideration by Executive Board on 7 February 2024.

## **68 Performance Report**

Members received a report from the Director of Children and Families which provided a summary of performance information relating to outcomes for children and young people in Leeds.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture, and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Children Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children & Families
- Chris Hudson, Performance Programme Manager
- Dan Barton, Deputy Director – Learning

The Director of Children and Families provided a brief introduction. The report is intended to provide assurance around the health of the children's social care system in Leeds along with details on key performance information. It is also worth noting that this is the first performance report brought forward since the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan 2023-28 was agreed and there is an update provided on the three obsessions within the paper.

It was noted that the Key Stage 4 figures for 2022/23 could be subject to change as a final data release is awaited from the DfE. The Annual Standards report which regularly comes to the Board will provide more detailed information on attainment, in addition to the headline figures that are covered in today's report.

In response to members questions and comments the following points were covered:

- The Chair raised a question in relation to EHCPs and statutory timescales, seeking clarity on the number of EHC assessments issued within the 20 week timescale. In response the Board heard that there has been a significant increase in demand for EHCPs in Leeds (118% increase in demand since 2016 and in 2023, 954 completed assessments compared to 374 in 2022) which had driven both the internal improvement work being led by the directorate and the inquiry work being undertaken by the Board.
- The Board asked for more details on the attainment figures and comparison with statistical neighbours. performance in Leeds is broadly in line with statistical neighbours and in respect of Progress 8 Leeds is ahead. Members were keen to understand some of the changes in attainment data with Leeds performing better in some areas but with national figures in some areas appearing to have fallen. The Board were informed that post pandemic there are changes in attainment data in part attributable some of the experiences of children during the pandemic i.e. reduced access to school and nursery provision. In summary the figures presented are linked to both improvement in Leeds and some reduction in attainment at national level. The Board noted that this could be considered as a future item of scrutiny in the next municipal year.
- Board members asked about attainment in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 and any mapping that has taken place around when improvements might be seen in those cohorts. The Board heard that the Council has high ambitions for attainment at all stages of education and that work done at an earlier age will have a greater impact further down the line in terms of attainment, it was also noted that improvements will be delivered working in partnership with schools.
- Responding to a question in relation to registration of new children's homes by Ofsted the Board heard that the directorate is taking a proactive approach to working with Ofsted to develop in house provision. Meetings have taken place at a high level between officers and Ofsted in order to try to speed up registration.
- On overall CLA figures Leeds is above the national average in terms of the rate per 10,000 children but is below statistical neighbours. It was also noted that Leeds has a strong focus on reunification of families through invest to save measures and that 60% of children in the care system in Leeds are cared for in house either through foster carers or in kinship arrangements, which compares well to other local authority areas. Leeds performs particularly strongly in respect of kinship arrangements, and this has been noted by a recent all-parliamentary group.

- Members noted the demand that children's services are under and that this is backed up by the referral rate figures in Leeds, this is 642 per 10,000 set against a national figure of 544.5 per 10,000, which reflects the challenges faced by the city both in terms of overall demand and complexity of needs.
- It was noted that on Progress 8 Leeds has taken significant steps forward backed up by the attainment figures for 2022/23. An improvement of 0.12 in Progress 8 is actually a major improvement in performance.
- The Board heard about plans for Early Years and Foundation Stage development. Work is ongoing with health colleagues to increase the range of the Best Start Programme from 0-2 years to 0-5 years. It is hoped that this will deliver improvement in attainment and across a whole range of measures in the future. It is hoped that this approach will deliver a strategic, multi-agency focus on this age group targeting issues such as reading and an added focus on the 0-5 age range as a whole as opposed to just the 0-2 age group. This approach will tackle the increasing prevalence of children of school age being non-verbal or still using nappies.
- On Attainment, the Executive Board Member for Economy, Culture and Education stated that the recent improvements in performance are positive indicators for attainment in the future.
- The Board wanted to know more about breakdown of foster placements and any analysis of the reasons why a placement breaks down. In response it was noted that breakdowns are more common with adolescents and there is a need to provide more support to carers who are caring for adolescents. The importance of becoming a trauma informed city was also noted as an important step in providing support to carers.
- Returning to the issue of adolescents it was noted that there are additional challenges today linked to use of technology and devices, with adolescents often being 24/7 connected to phones or tablets. The Board asked about training and skills development for carers on these aspects of teenage life today. In response the Board noted plans for an Adolescent's Service or specific resource to target support at that age range and provide training and support to both carers and professionals.
- The Board also asked about any correlation between foster placement breakdown amongst adolescents and increased NEET rates. The Board heard that the strong focus on education and 3 As Strategy is a key element of the approach to tackle NEETs, ability to read being a major determinant of overall outcomes, for example.
- The Executive Board Member for Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships outlined the impact of poverty on families and that families facing financial crisis display higher instances of domestic violence, mental health issues and substance misuse which are often the main reasons why children enter care.
- Members highlighted ongoing concerns with increased primary and secondary school absence, NEET levels and the number of suspensions in schools. The Board accepted that based on national comparisons Leeds is performing reasonably well albeit the figures are increasing. The Board were informed that the impact of covid is still resonating in terms of

school attendance and a 'change in psyche' around school attendance with it not being seen as essential in all families following long periods when schools were closed. The Board also heard that additional resource has been allocated to dealing with NEET rates through a new colleague who is focussed in that area and on reducing the NEET figures.

- In respect of NEET the Board also heard that there has been a reduction in the number of young people who are classed as Not Known, by around 200 which is a significant positive set against the overall increase in NEETs.
- The Board wanted more detail on re-offending rates noting that there was an error in the report in terms of where the direction of travel was indicating. The Board heard that in the main the re-offending rates are being driven by a small cohort who are committing more serious crime and at a higher volume. It is a focus of the Youth Justice Partnership Board to tackle re-offending rates. In addition, local data on re-offending is showing a reduction and this will feed into the figure in future performance reports.
- The Board also expressed concerns about the obesity levels amongst children and young people.

#### **Resolved:**

The Board noted the updates provided on the progress being made against the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan (2023-2028).

### **69 Provision of EHCP Support Working Group feedback & Inquiry Session**

The Board received a report from the Head of Democratic Services providing a summary from the EHCP Inquiry Working Group held in November 2023 and details of the latest Executive Board report from December 2023 – *'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) – Review Process – Update Report'* setting out the latest position on the ongoing, directorate led review of EHCP and SEND services in the city.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture, and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Children Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children & Families
- Dan Barton, Deputy Director - Learning
- Phil Evans, Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships
- Maria Adams, Co-Vice Chair Leeds Parent Carer Forum
- Heather Jafar, Co-Vice Chair Leeds Parent Carer Forum
- Julie Hutchinson, LPCF Steering Group
- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

The Principal Scrutiny Advisor briefly introduced this item, setting out key elements of the report and appendices. The item brought together two work streams for Board member consideration. At Appendix 1 a December Executive Board report was provided to the Board which set out the latest position on the improvement work being undertaken by the directorate supported by PwC and at Appendix 2 a summary of a Scrutiny Board Working Group held on 23 November 2023 which was an evidence gathering session aimed at hearing the lived experiences of parents and carers in Leeds through feedback from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum (LPCF). These two areas of work, one led by scrutiny and the other by the directorate have similar aims in that they are intended to drive improvements in the provision of EHCP support in Leeds.

During board member questions and comments the following points were covered:

- The Director of Children and Families welcomed the feedback received from the LPCF through the working group and working group summary document. The directorate is committed to hearing from children and families and recognised that parents and carers are experts in the lives of their families.
- The significant problems in the delivery of EHCP support in the city have been identified and prioritised, not just in terms of meeting statutory EHCP timescales but more broadly there is a need to deliver improvements in the whole SEND system. This led to the commissioning of an independent, 'root and branch' review of EHCP and SEND services in Leeds, which is now being delivered in partnership with PwC.
- It was noted that this review has come at a financial cost, but it was felt that this was necessary in order to deliver a rigorous and far reaching review with concrete outcomes and development of a new vision and clear improvement plan for these services.
- The Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships introduced Appendix 1 and pointed to the detail at paragraph 1.3 which set out the principles of the improvement work being done by the directorate, these are as follows:
  - Codesign a future way of working with families.
  - Design processes that retain the focus on the Child and value-adding staff effort.
  - Create an approach to the Code of Practice which aligns with the Leeds Way.
  - Ensure Leadership which is stable and consistent.
  - Deliver a Culture which promotes equity and is obsessed with the voice of the child.
- The Board also heard about planned timescales, with an aim of delivering a sprint based approach to launching a new set of internal arrangements in April 2024. This will be followed by a piece of work, independent of PwC, focussed on how the authority works with schools in readiness for the start of the new academic year in September.
- The Chair raised a slight concern around the use of jargon and whether there was enough depth and detail in Appendix 1. The Board were

assured that there is significant detail and volumes of background work but that this was intended as a headline report setting out principles and challenges. The Board also received assurances that this is a high priority in the directorate and there is a clear commitment to improvement driven through a child centric approach and co-design with families.

- The Board were concerned that there is a group of people or families who feel let down and need help and that needs to be addressed in this work. In response it was made clear that the views and comments from parents and carers have been heard and that there is a commitment to reflecting the need to help children and families impacted by this and that it is a clear priority for the directorate. It was recognised that there is a need for a change in culture and practice, practice over process and restorative, respectful practice that enables the views of parents and carers to help shape services.
- The Deputy Director Learning noted that there is a need to build relationships with parents and carers and committed to meeting with representatives of the LPCF on a regular basis in the future.
- Members asked about recent comments made in public that suggested that the approach to placements could be seen as 'scatter gun'. In response the board heard about the ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and that the benchmark for the services being delivered are what the Director would like to see provided to their own family members and that there is no room for complacency and a commitment to change and continuous improvement.
- Members highlighted the improvement journey that is needed, the main area for improvement being the need to improve how the council listens.
- The LPCF commented that the Working Group session had been an effective forum and that they had felt listened to. The LPCF were slightly disappointed that the report at Appendix 1 does not reflect that albeit accepting that the audience it was intended for was not solely parents and carers in the city. In response to that there was both an apology and a commitment to ensuring that the directorate does evidence that it has listened to the feedback and a further commitment to working with parents, carers and families on the ongoing improvement work.
- The Chair sought to clarify that one of the aims of today was to formally bring the feedback received through the scrutiny working group into the work being done by the directorate and added that there is a commitment from scrutiny to ensure that the voices of parents and carers are heard and that this is monitored going forward. In addition, the Chair noted that the feedback from the LPCF will be an important consideration when the inquiry conclusions and recommendations are finalised.
- It was accepted by the directorate that language is important and that there is a need to take the feedback away to inform future reports on this work.
- Moving on to finance the Board highlighted the funding cap that Leeds is subject to through the DSG. In response the board heard that this is a national funding formula which caps the amount of funding an authority can receive linked to population.
- The Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education added that he has written to the Government on this on a number of occasions to

highlight the impact it is having in Leeds as the city has triggered the cap for a number of years and it is leading to Leeds falling behind on funding for these services.

- The LPCF highlighted some concerns around an ongoing survey of both parents and carers and children and young people being carried out by the directorate, and whether this has been circulated directly to families. In response there was an undertaking from the directorate to take the feedback away and respond to it.
- In closing remarks, the LPCF also noted that they were pleased to have the opportunity to work alongside the directorate and the Scrutiny Board on this area of work.
- The PSA and Chair set out the next steps in the inquiry. This will see some adjustments to the work programme with feedback on the ongoing survey of children and families an option for the Board's February meeting.

**Resolved:**

The Board:

- a) noted the aims and ambitions of the directorate led improvement work set out in Appendix 1
- b) noted and formally brought onto the record the working group summary at Appendix 2 which set out feedback on EHCP support services in Leeds from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum (LPCF)
- c) agreed that the timescales for the inquiry should be reviewed to enable feedback from the ongoing survey of children and families with EHCPs to feature at the February meeting of the Board, if possible
- d) agreed to the scheduling of an additional Board meeting in April that would enable completion of the inquiry work in 2023/24.

## **70 Work Programme**

The report of the Head of Democratic Services requested Members to consider the Board's work programme for 2023/24 municipal year.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser informed the Board that Appendix 1 was the latest draft of the work programme for the year.

Noting the discussion that took place under item 10 regarding a possible, additional meeting in April The Adviser set out options for that and noted both Easter and Passover as dates to avoid. The Board agreed to the additional meeting which will assist with the completion of work on the Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds.

In addition, the PSA referenced that the Board will now be considering the Draft Youth Justice Plan as part of the Budget and Policy Framework process at its March meeting.

Plans for a further item on the Impact of Asylum Changes on Children in Leeds will be included in the work programme for March or April 2024.

Lastly it was noted that the Board has discussed a specific SEND co-opted member for 2024/25 and it was agreed that the PSA could commence work on this and bring a report back to the Board in February.

### **RESOLVED –**

The Board:

- a) noted the work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- b) agreed in principle to an additional Board meeting in April
- c) agreed that a report on a SEND co-opted members could be brought to the next meeting.

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

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 22 February 2024 at 2.00PM. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 1.45pm.

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## Voice and Influence of Children and Young People

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

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

This report seeks to provide an overview of how the Voice Influence and Change (VIC) Team engage with children and young people and how they enable children and young people to share their views, experiences and priorities with decision makers to enable them to influence change in strategic plans, policy and practice. It describes the team's partnership approach developed to enable children and young people to have a voice and influence change, including those who are often underrepresented or seldom heard. The report also provides examples of how children and young people have shaped services and includes by way of appendices the VIC team's latest annual summary report, six-monthly city-wide children and young people's voice and influence reports and Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Action Plan.

### Recommendations

- a) Children and Families Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the work being undertaken.
- b) Children and Families Scrutiny Board to consider ways in which the Principal Scrutiny Advisor and Children and Families Scrutiny Board can work with the Voice Influence and Change team to enable board members to stay updated on key issues and priorities of children and young people and have more opportunities to hear from and respond to the voices of children and young people.

### What is this report about?

This report seeks to provide an overview of how the Voice Influence and Change (VIC) Team engage with children and young people and how they enable children and young people to share their views, experiences and priorities with decision makers to enable them to influence change in strategic plans, policy and practice. It describes the team's partnership approach (Leeds Youth Voice Model and VIC network) developed to enable children and young people to have a voice and influence change, including those who are often underrepresented or seldom heard to be heard. The report also provides examples of how children and young people have shaped services and includes the VIC team's latest annual summary report, six-monthly city-wide voice and influence reports and Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Action Plan. The report provides an opportunity for scrutiny board members to explore and discuss how they can stay updated on key issues and

priorities of children and young people and have more opportunities to hear from and respond to the voices of children and young people.

## Report Detail

### 1. What is voice and influence?

Children, young people and their parents and carers have a right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives. Having a voice and influence means they feel that their voices are listened to, valued and can influence decisions and actions. We use the term 'voice and influence' as children and young people have told us they want one definition, because there are so many different terms e.g., participation; empowerment; and active engagement, that it can be confusing.

Leeds has a bold ambition to be the best city for children and young people – a child friendly city. At the heart of making this a reality is a commitment to working restoratively with children and young people so that their voices are at the heart of decisions that affect them. There is strong evidence that working with children and young people wherever possible, instead of doing things to them or for them, produces better outcomes and helps to build confidence and resilience.

Giving a voice and influence to children and young people in decision making demonstrates our commitment to them and acknowledges their right to shape their own future. It increases trust and can enable positive change even in complex situations.

Practitioners can feel confident that decisions are informed by what children, young people and families say they want and need, which should lead to better quality services, saving money and using resources more effectively.

Working restoratively to listen and respond to the voices of children and young people is fundamental to front line-work that takes place every day across the city. Children and young people's voices should be considered at all levels:

- at an individual level: they are involved in making choices and influencing decisions about their own lives, for example co-producing their education, health and care plan or a child working with their teacher to agree their learning targets
- at a family level: all members of the family are involved in sharing their views, making choices and influencing decisions that affect their family. For example, a child and a range of their family members would be directly involved in developing an action plan at a Family Group Conference
- at a service level: they are involved in shaping and influencing how services they use are planned, delivered and evaluated. Feedback is sought in a range of ways and routinely informs service improvement, for example evaluating their service through using feedback forms or setting up a focus group to seek their views on what services should be offered.
- at a strategic level, they influence local or city-wide priorities and agendas, for example in staff recruitment panels for senior leaders or representing their peers on a city wide or local forum where they make recommendations or advise decision makers

For more information [One Minute Guide Leeds – Voice and Influence](#)

### 2. Why is it important?

Listening consistently to the voices of children, young people and families is central to the culture Leeds is working to create and this is evident in:

- the **Child Friendly Leeds 12 wishes** which were refreshed in 2022 and developed using the consultation findings which represented the views of over 80,000 children and young people

Child Friendly Leeds Wish 3 *‘Children and young people express their views, feel heard and are involved in decisions that affect their lives. Children and young people have a greater awareness of the different ways they can share their views and ideas. They know how to influence change within their school and community. They have access to support and training to develop their skills and confidence to enable them to have a voice and influence.’*

- the city’s **Children and Young People’s Plan 2023- 28**. One of the five outcomes in the Plan from the outset and in the refreshed plan is that... *‘All children and young people are active citizens who feel they have voice & influence’* and a core behaviour of all staff is to *“listen and respond to the voice of the child”*

Listening and responding to the voices of children and young people is also a right and a statutory duty for local authorities:

- article 12 of the **UN convention on the rights of the child**, which states that *‘every child and young person has the right to express their views freely – about everything that affects them’*
- Children’s Services has a legal duty to listen to the wishes and feelings of all children, including children in care. This is outlined in the landmark **Children Act of 1989**, which established this requirement as a ‘paramount principle’. All subsequent legislation and practice guidance has sought to reinforce this message as a key aspect of social care provision. The act makes clear the expectation that services will listen to children and young people both in relation to their own individual case and in terms of influencing design and delivery of services.
- **Childrens Act 2004** Places a duty on local authorities to ascertain children’s wishes and feelings when making decisions within child protection processes and ensure access to independent advice and support to enable children to express their views and influence decisions
- **Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services 2014** –to ensure effective arrangements are in place to ensure children and young people themselves are included in the scope of local authority planning, commissioning and delivery of children’s services and promote children’s and young people’s participation in public decision making.
- The **Children and Families Act 2014**, section 19 states that children and young people and their families should be involved in decision making at every level. This includes in commissioning services, in developing a local offer for children and young people with SEND, in developing and reviewing Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and giving new rights to young people at 16+ to participate in decisions about their EHCP that were previously held by their parents/carers.
- **Children and Social Work Act 2017** introduced a set of **corporate parenting principles** to looked after children and young people and care leavers. Providing a framework for local authorities to enable them to comply with existing duties for looked after children and young people and care leavers. Two out of seven principles relate specifically to the voice of the child. Another key part of this act was to introduce the statutory requirement for local authorities to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers.
- **Working Together (updated 2023)** states that; “Children are clear about what they want from an effective safeguarding system. These asks from children should guide the behaviour of practitioners.”

- **Children's Social Care National Framework (2023)** this statutory guidance puts the voices of children, young people and families at the heart of practice, so they can have a say in how they are supported. Key principle- children's wishes and feelings are sought, heard, and responded to. Key enabler- embed voices of children, young people and families in the design and delivery of services and support. Leaders put in place clear mechanisms for children, young people and families to raise concerns. They listen to the voices of children, young people and families and act on any complaints swiftly. Practitioners amplify the voices and feedback from children, young people, and families in respect of services.
- Such is the importance of the Voice of the Child that **Ofsted** considers it a key part of its inspection framework for local authorities.

### **3.Role of the Voice Influence and Change team**

The Voice Influence and Change team is based in the Children and Families Directorate and was established in 2012. The team consists of 5 officers who are led by the Strategy and Influence Lead. The Strategy and Influence Lead has also been the lead for the Child Friendly Leeds Team since October 2020.

The role of the Voice Influence and Change team in Leeds City Council is to support and enable children, young people, parents and carers to have a voice and influence over services that are provided in our city. The team support staff across services by facilitating the participation of children, young people, parents and carers in the recruitment of senior roles and commissioning services. Providing advice and guidance on how to involve children, young people, parents and carers in different elements of service development, design and review. Promoting citywide voice and influence news and opportunities such as consultations, new groups and events to the networks

The team work in partnership with strategic boards, senior leaders and elected members and organise annual takeovers and opportunities for young people to share their views and priorities with decision makers. The team work also with representatives from support groups for parents and carers with children with SEND to share issues and meet with relevant managers and services and work in partnership with social care to help develop 'Let's Talk' sessions which enable feedback to Children's Social Care from families who have received social work input to their family.

The team facilitate a wide range of city-wide youth voice programmes including: 'Have a Voice' Children in Care Council, Care Leavers Council, SEND Youth Forum, Leeds Youth Council, Leeds Children's Mayor and UK Youth Parliament. The team deliver an annual SEND youth summit and Primary School Leeds Children's Mayor Summit. The team work in partnership with the Communities team and Community Committees to deliver community youth voice summits across the city.

The team are also responsible for the coordination of the [Leeds SEND local offer](#) which provides information about education, health and social care services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents or carers. The team run an annual Leeds Local Offer event and facilitate monthly Leeds Local Offer drop-in sessions for families.

For more information about the team –

*Appendix 1 Voice influence and Change team – Plan on a Page 2023/24*

### **4. How do the VIC team engage with children and young people and enable them to share their views, experiences and priorities with decision makers?**

The VIC team have three strands of work to support engagement with children and young people:

**Universal Work strand** is focused on working in partnership with staff and children and young people they support in universal settings such as early years, schools, colleges, specialist provision, health, voluntary and community groups, youth groups and youth voice groups. The universal youth voice programmes the team facilitate include the Leeds Childrens Mayor and UK Youth Parliament which involve the team organising citywide elections enabling children and young people to apply for these roles, run their campaigns and for children and young people to elect their preferred candidate. The team support the Leeds Children's Mayor to deliver a project or campaign that supports their manifesto aims. For example, last year the team worked with Mason the Leeds Childrens Mayor and his school to plan and deliver his Accessible Olympics event and produce a guide which was shared with schools across the city at the summit event.

Any child or young person aged 10-18 (up to 25 with additional needs) can join the Leeds Youth Council network and 500 members receive monthly opportunities from across the city via email and text and have the opportunity to join monthly online or in person sessions and to apply to be part of the Leeds Youth Council working group. The team are currently running monthly Child Friendly Leeds Wishes youth voice sessions, focusing on a different wish a month. Schools, colleges, youth groups and youth voice groups are encouraged to register for the Make Your Mark Ballot every year and vote for their top issue. 5546 young people from across Leeds voted for their top issue in the 2022 Make Your Mark Ballot. The Leeds Youth Council working group and UK Youth Parliament develop an annual campaign based on the top issue voted for by young people across the city in the Make Your Mark ballot. For example, this year the focus is on health and wellbeing and top issues were exam stress and access to information about mental health services. The young people shared good practice about supporting students with exam stress at the secondary headteacher forum and have reviewed all secondary school websites. They fed back at the headteachers forum that currently 70% Leeds Secondary schools had pages around mental health for students and so are producing a template with MindMate and Public Health to support schools to provide better information for their students around mental health.

The team primarily engage with children and young people in schools and colleges through youth voice summits; Leeds Childrens Mayor Youth Voice Summit and the eight community youth voice summits delivered in partnership with the Communities team. The summits provide an opportunity for elected members and senior leaders to meet directly with children and young people and hear their top issues and priorities. The team recruit new members to the Leeds Youth Council at these events and through Breeze on Tour events in the summer. The team also engage with young people via social media - for example through Leeds Youth Voice Instagram. The team also regularly promote opportunities through their VIC network of voice and influence leads in universal settings including all schools (student voice/ school council link staff), youth services, health partners and third sector organisations. They also offer to go into schools and youth groups/ youth voice groups to develop spotlights on good practice and share information about youth voice programmes or help promote the Make Your Mark Ballot or Leeds Childrens Mayor.

If a team or service or strategic board would like to consult with children and young people, we can arrange for them to meet one of our youth voice groups or support them to develop a consultation activity which is then shared with our network and youth workers who run different groups/ school staff will then deliver the consultation activity. For example, we used this approach with the Child Poverty Board, who wanted to consult with children and young people to ensure their priorities were incorporated into the refreshed child poverty strategy and over 200 children and young people from 20 youth groups / youth voice groups participated in this consultation. If senior leaders and elected members would like to meet directly with young people about a particular issue, we can signpost them to the different youth voice groups in the city and if young people / services want to raise an issue with a relevant decision maker we can facilitate and support that meeting. For example, young people from Black Lives Matter and Youthwatch wanted to meet with senior

leaders about the film they developed Being Black and Being Me and we facilitated for the young people to present their film and share their recommendations / calls to action with the Children and Families Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board.

**SEND Work Strand** is focused on working in partnership with staff and senior managers in SEND services (health, education, social care and third sector), children and young people with SEND in specialist provision and mainstream settings and parents and carers via support groups and forums across the city. The team also facilitate the SEND Youth Forum which is a citywide youth forum for young people aged 11 -25 with additional needs. The SEND Youth Forum receive monthly opportunities and plan and deliver an annual campaign and are currently working on an e-learning training as they want staff working with children and young people with SEND to understand the importance of good communication.

The team now run an annual SEND youth summit, enabling young people to share their views and priorities with different teams and services and senior leaders. The team promote voice and influence opportunities through the VIC network of voice and influence leads working in SEND Services. The team also recruit young people to the SEND Youth Forum through visiting schools, sharing information with families attending SEND support groups and Leeds Local Offer events and through the SEND youth voice summit.

The team support students with SEND from Specialist Schools across the city to annually takeover the Area SEND Partnership Board. In response to feedback from young people at the Area SEND Partnership Board takeover meeting in 2021, the SEND Next Choices event was organised by the Employment and Skills Team. SEND Next Choices was created and designed to offer support with employment, training, education, support services and leisure activities. The event has now taken place for the last two years with thousands of young people attending. At the takeover meeting last year, young people shared they wanted more opportunities to try different activities and groups and so the team sourced funding from the Community Committees and organised a "Give it a Go" event for young people at the John Charles Centre for Sport. The SEND youth summit and Takeover Meeting provide opportunities for senior leaders and elected members to meet directly with young people with SEND and hear and respond to the issues that they feel are most important.

If teams and services would like to consult with children and young people with SEND, they can run consultations or workshops at the SEND youth voice summit or we can arrange for services to meet with the SEND Youth Forum. The team also help services develop consultation activities to share with staff in schools and specialist settings and youth groups. We have also developed a SEND Local Offer Facebook page for families and have a network of parent/ carer support groups and so we can promote surveys / voice and influence opportunities directly to parents and carers who can share with their children.

**Seldom Heard/ Social Care Work Strand** is focused on working in partnership with staff and senior managers in social care teams and teams across children and families and third sector groups/organisations on our VIC Network. We have built strong connections with staff who work directly with young people accessing their services whose views may often be seldom heard or under-represented for example Gypsy Traveller young people, Young Carers, LGBT+ young people, refugee and asylum seekers.

The team have previously run community youth voice summits to engage the wider views of children and young people in youth and community groups / working with third sector partners but this year we are planning a youth voice takeover for the Children and Young Peoples Partnership. The event has been planned in partnership with youth workers and young people from 12 youth voice groups and provides a platform for them to share their top issues and priorities, increase awareness about their group and seek support from senior leaders and elected members. The

team also offer to visit different groups to meet with young people and are running democracy workshops at the civic hall, adapting the format to meets the needs of the young people. For example, in 2022, the team facilitated a youth voice summit workshop for young people at GATE at the civic hall.

The team facilitate the Children in Care Council (10-17 years olds) and Care Leavers Council (17-25 year olds) and support senior leaders and team managers to regularly meet group members to seek their views on how to improve their services, youth proof documents or share their priorities to influence plans and strategies. For example, the care leavers council worked with the care leavers service to develop the headings and content for the Leeds Care Leavers Offer. The groups also deliver training to the Corporate Parenting Board members and social care staff – Total Respect Training and are members of the Corporate Parenting Board. The groups annually takeover the Corporate Parenting Board. An example of how group members who are representatives on the board have influenced the board, include the introduction of a glossary for meetings and influencing the data that is collected on the dashboard at every meeting.

The team have consulted with children and young people via surveys shared with foster carers and residential staff and have communicated voice and influence opportunities through newsletters sent directly to children and young people. For example, the team developed a consultation on the corporate parenting strategy and mental health and wellbeing was identified as a top priority and in response, corporate parenting priority leads will be including an action to address mental health and wellbeing in the refreshed strategy.

The team promote voice and influence opportunities through “voice of a child” training sessions with social care staff and attending staff away days or team meetings. Childrens rights advocacy team send information about the groups to all children and young people in care and promote the groups and referrals often come through different social care teams and services. The team work in partnership with the care leavers service who deliver a programme of activities to care leavers from Archway – the new care leavers hub and this provides opportunities for the team to engage and seek wider views of care leavers. The Co-design working group of care leavers plan activities on offer at the hub and care leavers council are represented on this group. The team have also worked with residential staff and third sector organisations working with care experienced young people such as Gipsil to seek the wider views of children and young people – for example for young people’s views on education for a film recently developed by the care leavers council for the virtual school which will be used in staff training for designated teachers.

We also regularly facilitate young people’s involvement in recruitment and selection of senior leaders and managers and commissioning panels. We work with the different teams and services to identify which young people / youth voice group it is relevant to approach depending on the job role or contract. For example, for a SEND related commissioning panel we have involved the SEND Youth Forum and students in Specialist Provisions.

*A diagram explaining our partnership approach see Appendix 2 – Leeds Youth Voice Model*

For more information about the Leeds Youth Voice programme visit the teams [website](#) aimed at children, young people and families

For more information about Voice and Influence Opportunities –[One Minute Guide](#)

## **5. Sharing good practice and demonstrating impact**

To raise awareness and demonstrate how children and young people are having their voices heard and influencing change – Outcome 5 in the Children and Young peoples Plan 2023-28, the team have produced six monthly citywide voice and influence reports and quarterly e-bulletins since

2012. Colleagues on the VIC network representing different teams, services and organisations across the city are invited to provide an update on:

- the top issues/ priorities of the children and young people they work with
- how children and young people they work with have had their voices heard and influenced change in their service, organisation or community in the last 6 months
- plans for the next 6 months on how they will work in partnership with children and young people and further enable them to have their voices heard and influence change in their service, organisation or community.

A voice and influence of parents, carers and families citywide report is also produced every six months. The reports are shared back with the network of VIC leads to raise awareness of the priorities and issues shared by children and young people and of the consultations and engagement activities that have taken place/ planned to reduce duplication, share learning and encourage partnership working.

The third six monthly report – the Voice of the Child in Social Care report is shared with the social care VIC leads on the network and available on request for the wider network. It has not been included in this report as it is primarily an internal report and therefore cannot be published on the website.

The voice and influence reports are presented or shared at the Children and Families Partnership, Area SEND Partnership Board, Childrens Population Board and Corporate Parenting Board.

The sixth monthly reports and Voice and Influence quarterly e-bulletins are also shared with all councillors via the Lead member for Children and Families Cllr Fiona Venner.

Over the last 12 months, the VIC team wanted to ensure children, young people and families could learn more about how children and young people are having a voice and influence in Leeds and started visiting staff and young people in groups and schools. They created spotlight summaries on the [Child Friendly Leeds Blog Page](#) and are promoting the blogs across social media.

Progress towards achieving short term and longer-term goals in the Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Action plan will be reported alongside the Children and Young Peoples Plan. Updates will be communicated to families via the Child Friendly Leeds Blog and an annual communication developed summarising highlights.

## **6.Examples of children and young people influencing services**

Detailed below are some examples of how children and young people have shaped services in Leeds linked to the Child Friendly Leeds Wishes. The examples have been shared by different teams and services and included in the six-monthly voice and influence reports:

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 1- Mental Health and Wellbeing**

MindMate Ambassadors (aged 17-23) help develop content for the Mind Mate website which is relevant and engaging for children and young people of different ages, including writing blogs and online content for social media platforms.

In response to exam stress being voted a top issue by a Leeds Youth Council consultation, MindMate updated the web content on exam stress, worked with the youth council on a social media campaign and filmed some [real stories](#) featuring young people sharing advice about their coping strategies.

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 2- Safe places to play, hang out and have fun**

Thousands of children and young people complete the Youth Activity Fund Survey and participate in consultation activities at community youth voice summits every year, sharing their views on the type of activities they would like to see on offer, when and where in their local area. Their feedback influences the offer for the following year, for example lots of children and young people said they wanted more dance sessions in 21/22 and so in 22/23 lots of additional dance sessions were funded by the community committees.

A growing number of knife crime incidents in Leeds has led to young people sharing with staff in different groups and projects that they are feeling anxious about knife crime and less safe in their local communities. In response to this the youth service and third sector organisations have been delivering knife crime workshops to support young people and speak to young people about knife crime through detached youth work sessions. In February, the police and agencies across Leeds are planning a month of activity engaging schools and youth groups, focused on the impact of knife crime and reducing the risk of young people carrying weapons.

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 3 – Voice and Influence**

Children and young people are routinely being involved in the recruitment and selection of staff across a wide range of services and therefore influencing which staff work with them – helping ensure they have the qualities and skills to engage with children and young people and understand their needs. This includes residential home staff and managers, youth workers, health practitioners, teachers and senior leaders in schools and personal advisors in the care leavers service.

Leeds Community Health NHS Youth Board developed a guide for staff around involving young people in recruitment panels and this guide is being used by staff when involving young people in staff recruitment. Young people also took part in videos promoting some of the children's healthcare services. These videos are being used as part of a recruitment campaign.

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 4 – Celebrating and understanding diversity**

LEAP Young Carers group created short films sharing their lived experience of being young carers and the impact this has on their lives. They were involved in filming, creating publicity material and planning the launch event involving a big screen, popcorn and awards. These films are now used with Health and Education professionals to raise awareness, aid identification and signpost to support. The group were involved in the review and update of the Leeds Young Carers Support Service Website, particularly surrounding preferred language used to talk about their caring role. They also designed posters for the service, which will be displayed across the city, giving information and advice about what a young person can do, if they think they may be a young carer. They also discussed what information they thought should be in the service leaflet and what they would have found useful when they were seeking support.

Out 2 18 & Transtastic LGBTQ+ youth group were involved in creating a training resource in partnership with young people from the care leavers council. This resource provides an introduction in how to talk to LGBTQ+ young people about gender identity and sexuality. The resource is now used as part of training available to all staff in Leeds City Council.

In response to requests from young people in their local areas two new LGBTQ+ youth groups were established – one by BARCA in West Leeds and one by the youth service in south Leeds.

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 6 -Safe reliable and accessible travel**

Leeds Citizens, First Bus and students at Carr Manor Community School in Leeds have worked together to develop a dedicated bus service. A group of 30 students aged 14-16 were trained by a team from Leeds Citizens in listening and leadership skills to get the views of Carr Manor's 1,500 pupils on initiatives they would like to see to improve life in the school. A bus service around the school day to better meet the travel needs of young people and families emerged from these sessions and First Bus responded by meeting with the students in March, followed by a series of

discussions to decide a plan. First Bus has created a pool of drivers dedicated to the CM3 school service operating from Halton Moor and made timetable changes to the 7 and 91 services to synchronise more closely with Carr Manor's start and end of lessons.

### **Child Friendly Leeds Wish 12 -Inclusive city and increasing awareness different disabilities**

A member of the health youth voice group Youth Watch made a film called '[Make it work for me.](#)' about her experiences of going to see her doctor. This has been used to deliver training to over 300 health and care professionals across the region which aims to improve the way that professionals communicate with people with disabilities.

Children and young people shared with the Leeds Children's Hospital Children and Young People's Diabetes team that they needed more support from schools regarding dealing with their diabetes. The team ran a focus group -offered to all children across Leeds with type 1 diabetes aged 7-15 and sought their views and experiences about living with diabetes and how this effects their school lives. Their feedback has been used to develop resources which are now used to help students settle in at school after diagnosis and when starting a new school.

For further examples of how children and young people's voices are influencing change see below

*Appendix 3 -Citywide Voice and Influence of Children and Young People April – September 2023*

*Appendix 4 – Voice Influence and Change team 2022/23 summary report*

## **6. Recommendations**

- a) Children and Families Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the work being undertaken.
- b) Children and Families Scrutiny Board to consider ways in which the Principal Scrutiny Advisor and Children and Families Scrutiny Board can work with the Voice Influence and Change team to enable board members to stay updated on key issues and priorities of children and young people and have more opportunities to hear from and respond to the voices of children and young people.

Further ideas to discuss and consider:

The chair of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board has been invited to attend the Youth Voice Groups Takeover of the Children and Young people's Partnership Board on 31<sup>st</sup> January. A summary report outlining key issues raised can be shared with the Children and Families Scrutiny Board following the event. If the event is successful and staff and young people from the youth voice groups want to plan and deliver another event next year, then potentially all members of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board could be invited, and it could become a joint takeover meeting.

The Principal Scrutiny Advisor meets with the Strategy and Influence Lead at the start of the year when planning the scrutiny inquiries and considers how the child friendly Leeds wishes and views of children and young people can be heard and responded to in scrutiny enquiries.

The Children and Families Scrutiny Board reporting template could be reviewed, to strengthen the voice of children and young people (and families) in scrutiny reports.

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

- 1 Board members will have a greater awareness of the issues and priorities raised by children and young people.

- 2 Board members will have a greater understanding of the different ways children and young people are influencing both strategic change and influencing practice and services they access.
- 3 The voice of children and young people will be further embedded within the Children and Families scrutiny board.

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

- Health and Wellbeing
- Inclusive Growth
- Zero Carbon

In the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Priority 1 is focused on Leeds being a child friendly city. The vision for a child friendly city is centred around the voice of the child and the 12 Child Friendly Leeds wishes, which were developed using consultation data from over 80,000 children and young people. The VIC team work in partnership with the Child Friendly Leeds Team and are Wish Lead Officers for two of the wishes (Wish 3 and 12) in the action plan that has been developed to help address the wishes. Priority 2 focuses on engaging communities and prioritising listening to the most vulnerable and directly links to the work of the VIC team and Child Friendly Leeds Wish 3 which is about children and young people having a voice and influence over services they access. Priority 5 focuses on being more active, Child Friendly Leeds wish 9 focuses on children and young people having support and information to make healthy choices and have more opportunities for physical activity. Priority 12 focuses on mental health and links directly to Child Friendly Leeds Wish 1- mental health and wellbeing is the top issue for children and young people in Leeds.

The refreshed Inclusive growth strategy focuses on economic growth but also on tackling inequality, ensuring we have the right infrastructure to enable our ambition, tackling the climate emergency, supporting all sections of our society into better jobs, raising skill levels and improving the health of the poorest the fastest while helping people to live healthy and active lives. This report and work of the team directly links with Child Friendly Leeds Wish 11 which focuses on young people having access to a wide range of work experience, employment and volunteering opportunities, Child Friendly Leeds Wish 8 which focuses on the impact of poverty and supporting families with the help they need. It also links directly to Child Friendly Leeds Wish 6 which focuses on children and young people wanting to be able to travel around the city safely and easily.

Zero carbon and climate emergency – this directly links to the Child Friendly Leeds Wish 5, which focuses on children and young people wanting to have a greater awareness and understanding of what actions are being taken to protect the environment and address the climate emergency.

**9. What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

This is not a decision-making report, and the purpose of the report is to provide an overview of our approach to consulting and engaging with children and young people, so consultation and engagement on its contents is not required.

**10.What are the resource implications?**

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

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

There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

**12. What are the legal implications?**

This report has no specific legal implications.

**Options, timescales and measuring success**

**13. What other options were considered?**

This is ongoing work to support the directorate and families in Leeds

**How will success be measured?**

This is ongoing work to support the directorate and families in Leeds

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

This is ongoing work to support the directorate and families in Leeds

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – VIC Team Plan on a Page 23/24
- Appendix 2 – Leeds Youth Voice Model
- Appendix 3 - Citywide Voice and Influence of Children and Young People Summary Report April – Sep 2023
- Appendix 4 – Voice Influence and Change team 2022/23 summary report
- Appendix 5 – Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Action Plan

# Children & Families Voice, Influence and Change Team

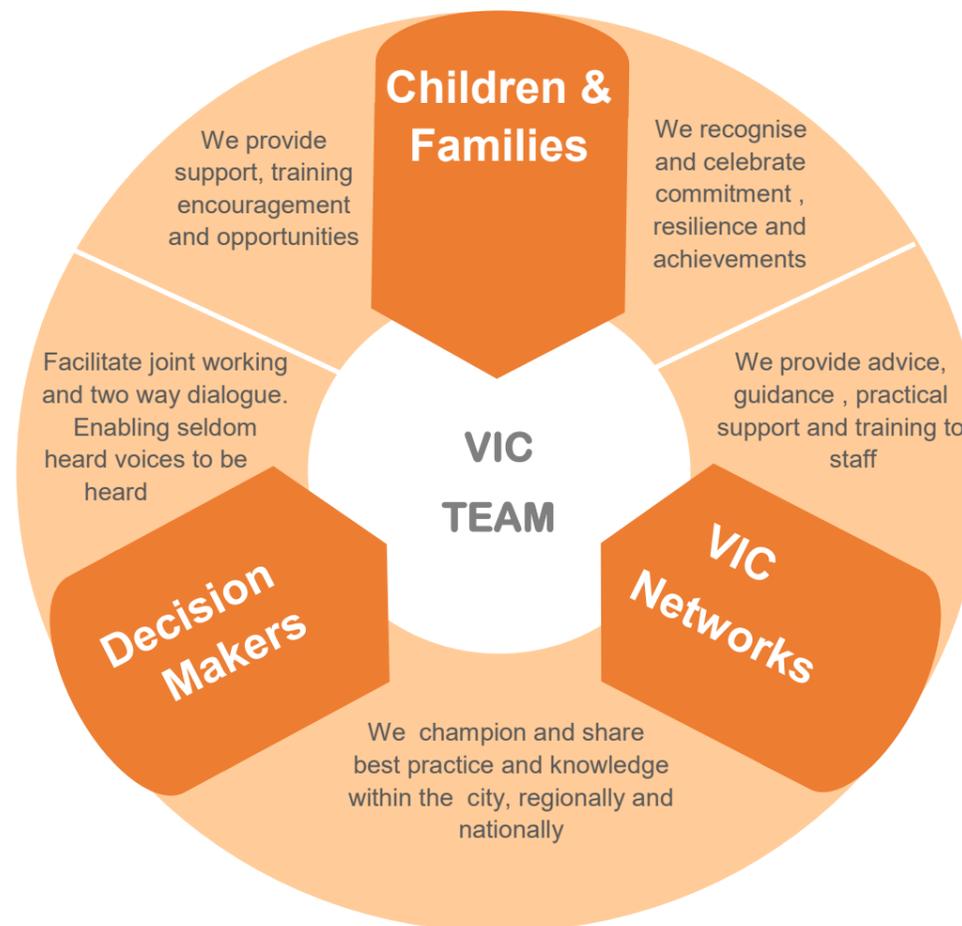
## Our Approach 2023/24

“Enabling children, young people, parents and carers to influence decisions and services that affect their lives”

### WHAT WE DO

- We champion the **rights** of CYP and families **to have a say** in decisions that affect their lives and shape the services they access.
- We challenge and support organisations and services to **meaningfully involve** CYP and families in decision making and feedback on outcomes of their involvement
- We **facilitate youth voice programmes** that support the delivery of the outcomes in the Children & Young People’s Plan and the Best City Ambition
- We **seek the views** of CYP and families to help identify key issues and priorities.
- We support CYP to develop and run **campaigns and projects**
- We develop **positive and supportive relationships** with the CYP and families we work with, **recognising and celebrating** their achievements.
- We create safe, welcoming environments for CYP and families to work together in groups, develop friendships and **strengthen their skills and confidence.**
- We facilitate **two way dialogue** between CYP, families and decision makers
- We provide **strategic and operational guidance**, support and training to staff
- We continually **review and refresh** our approach to maximise reach, improve outcomes for CYP and families and ensure value for money.
- We lead on the SEND Leeds Local Offer website, and ensure families are continually involved in the developments of the local offer and SEND Services.

### HOW WE WORK



### WHAT DIFFERENCE ARE WE MAKING

“Children and Young People feel they have a voice and influence and are active citizens” CYPP 2018-23

#### Evidence (every 6 months)

- We demonstrate impact by working in partnership to produce 3 voice and influence report cards:
- Citywide Voice and Influence: Children & Young People
  - Voice and Influence of Children and Young People: Children’s Social Work Services
  - Citywide Voice and Influence: Parents, Carers & Families

#### Measures (annual)

- CYP share how much they feel they have a say in their school, community and city in My Health My School survey
- Numbers of CYP voting in the Make Your Mark Ballot (UK Youth Parliament) and Leeds Childrens Mayor Elections
- Numbers responding to surveys and consultations

#### Accountability

- Team annual report
- Regular updates to strategic decision making boards
- Involving CYP & Families in identifying priorities, review and development strategies and policies, scrutiny enquiries
- Facilitate CYP to meet with Inspectors and share evidence
- Facilitate the Takeovers strategic Boards
- Monthly communication to young people’s mailing list
- Quarterly newsletters to VIC networks—1600 VIC Leads

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Leeds Children’s Mayor || Leeds Youth Council  
 SEND Youth Forum || UK Youth Parliament  
 Youth Voice Summits || Have a Voice Council  
 Care Leavers Council || City Wide SEND Projects ||  
 Commissioning Panels || Recruitment Panels  
 Leeds Local Offer || Parents with CYP SEND



Our work support and contributes towards achieving aims of :

- [Best City Ambition](#)
- [Child Friendly Leeds Wishes](#)
- [Children & Young People’s Plan](#)

#### Follow us and visit our websites

- [Leeds Youth Voice Instagram](#)
- [Leeds Youth Voice Twitter](#)
- [Leeds Local Offer Facebook](#)
- [Leeds Youth Voice Website](#)
- [Parent Carer Family Voice and Influence](#)
- [Leeds Local Offer \(SEND\) website](#)

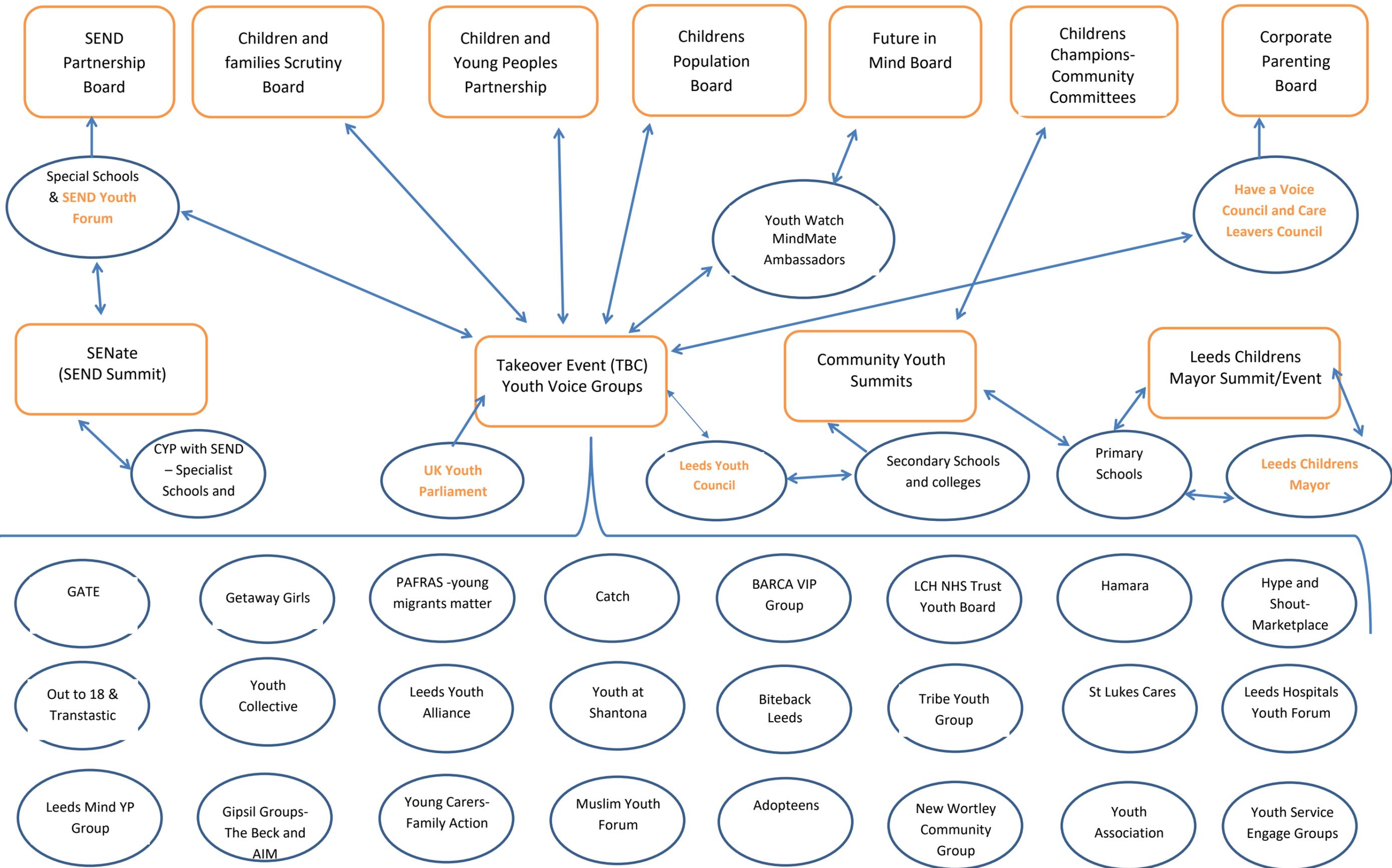
### Our Values & Behaviours

- Respect
- Restorative
- Child centred
- Meaningful
- Inclusive
- Innovative
- Flexible



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### Leeds Youth Voice Model 2023



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## Voice and Influence of Children and Young People Citywide Report April - September 2023



**Outcome:** Children and young people are active citizens who feel they have voice and influence.

**Indicator:** Number / percentage of CYP participating in city wide ballots, elections for youth representatives, consultations and surveys.

### Highlights:

- Young Minds Get Active [Make Your Move campaign](#)
- Leeds Youth Council influenced development of [online safety campaign](#)
- Leeds Children's Mayor organised his manifesto aim- school Olympics
- CFL wishes action plan launched at Ambassador Event in July
- Leeds 2023 Childrens Day -Reimagined July 14<sup>th</sup> 2023
- BARCA's young person led intergenerational community garden project
- Launch Leeds Youth Alliance new Voice and Influence group
- LS-TEN's programme shaped by feedback /issues from young people
- Shantona young women involved recruiting staff, films and newsletter
- Shine group's project on impact of racism on the mental health of young people – planning and event and developed [podcast](#)
- SEND Youth Forum -raising awareness hidden disabilities new [resource](#)
- [Give it a Go event](#) – planned in response to young people with SEND raising lack of opportunity to try new sports, groups and activities
- Young people influenced criteria- Transforming Mental Health Grants
- [LCH Youth Board](#) & [Leeds Youth Council](#) made films about their group

### Key Data:

- 25,648 pupils from 202 Schools- 22/23 My Health My School survey
- (20 Youth groups) 214 CYP consulted - Child Poverty Board Consultation
- 110 people attended Leeds Mind Young People's mental health event
- 6 youth voice -commissioning city-wide Mental Health support service
- 56 CYP (14 primary schools) -Leeds Childrens Mayor summit
- MindMate & Leeds Youth Council [social media campaign exam stress](#) reached 36,887 accounts and received 26,021 views

### Issues / Priorities

- The refreshed CFL wishes (July 2022) reflect the top issues of CYP in the city [12 wishes \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#).The wishes are being used to refresh the priorities in Leeds Childrens and Young People's Plan 2023-28.
- New Leeds Children's Mayor Manifesto Priority -[Climate Change](#)
- Top issue voted in the Make Your Mark ballot 2022 was Health and Wellbeing. Further [consultation](#) highlighted: exam stress, raising awareness of mental health services and vaping.
- YP with SEND -Raising awareness disabilities & imp of communication
- Issues raised third sector groups that are concerning young people:
  - anxiety, low self-esteem and recreational drug use
  - how to access support for mental health
  - racism not being addressed in community/ school and impact of racism on young people's mental health
  - violence against women and anxiety/ fear about knife crime & gangs
  - lack safe spaces after school (need for more youth groups/ provision) and positive activities in holidays
  - worries about the future and access jobs/ training

### Next Steps and Key dates (October 23- March 24)

- [Big Leeds Chat](#) taking place across city from October
- [Election](#) – new Leeds members UK Youth Parliament
- Community Youth Summits- October– March
- SENate Youth Voice Summit November 14<sup>th</sup>
- SEND Partnership Board and Corporate Parenting Board takeovers
- Short Breaks and Fun Activities Review/ Consultation –December
- Child Friendly Leeds Wishes (CFL) Campaign – [Wish 3](#) - December
- LGBT+ Youth Summit on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January
- School Food Ambassadors (SFA) Pupil Training in February 2023
- Opportunity for YP to vote in [Make Your Mark Ballot](#) – February
- Recruit young people's planning group to plan CFL awards (July)

## Highlights of how children and young people have had a voice and influence across services and organisations in Leeds from April to September 2023

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## Leeds Childrens Poverty Board Consultation

- During July – September 2023 the Voice Influence and Change team worked in partnership with the Childrens Poverty Board to develop a consultation to help identify priorities from young people for the refresh of the Child Poverty Strategy and Child Poverty Board.
- To be able to identify what the children and young people’s priorities are for tackling poverty, a range of multiple choice and open-ended questions were posed in the consultation designed for use in group settings. The group approach was selected to facilitate a more open and engaging environment for discussion, as well as utilising a safe space with known and trusted youth workers to oversee and support on potentially emotional and distressing conversations.
- Key features of the consultation such as the use of the third person and including a variety of multiple choice and open-ended questions were influenced by the success of the annual consultations conducted as part of the Children of Wales poverty plan.
- The consultation began with demographic questions relating to the age range and ethnicity of the young people participating. The subsequent questions were designed to cover three key settings that children and young people can identify the implications of poverty: school, home and local area/community. The final two questions of the consultation ask the young people to identify positive actions that have already been taken to address child poverty, and actions that have been unsuccessful or ineffective and how they can be improved. These questions help to identify the priorities of the children and young people in a practical way and understand how they interact with existing policies and services.
- The consultation activity (session plan and PowerPoint) was distributed to youth groups and youth voice groups across the city.
- 20 groups participated and the views of 214 children and young people shared their views. The groups included Team Daniel, SEND Youth Forum, Leeds Youth Council, Children in Care Council/ Care Leavers Council, MindMate Ambassadors, BARCA Leeds, Ebor Gardens Youth Group, YouthWatch, Halton Moor Youth group, Tingley Youth Club, Swillington Mobile- youth service, Rothwell Windmill Youth Club, Kippax Kicks, Hunslet Youth Club, Outer South Matters, Methley Youth Club, Garforth Kicks, East Ardsley Youth Club and Crossgates and Whinmoor Youth Club.
- The findings of the report will be presented to the Child Poverty Board on the 24th of October 2023 and a follow-up report will be distributed to the consultation participants in November outlining the steps that the poverty board will be taking to address the priorities raised in the consultation.  
For more information contact vic@leeds.gov.uk

## Public Health Annual Report

The Director of Public Health focused her annual report in 2022 on children. The report aims to highlight the experience of children during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and understand the immediate and ongoing impact of this experience to inform how we should respond to support children and families to support them to have healthy lives.

- The first stage of the report was a literature review (100 papers) to identify key themes.
- Then an online survey completed by 99 professionals working with children and young people.
- Following this there was a call for creative submissions. 8 children and young people created an online submission to explain how the pandemic impacted them and 6 completed this at Kirkgate Market.
- Focus groups with 46 children and young people and 25 parents at Shakespeare Primary, Allerton CE Primary, LS-TEN Skate Park and Parklands Childrens Centre.
- Over 100 pieces of artwork and timelines produced by children and young people were supplied through the community engagement approaches.
- A short film was developed in partnership with children and young people to capture their experiences through the pandemic [“in our shoes” film](#)
- A [children’s summary version](#) of the final report was produced and all children and young people involved were invited to attend an event to learn more about the key findings and thank them for their participation.



- 11 key themes were identified in response to this consultation data and quotes, drawing and feedback from children and young people are included throughout the report.
- The Director of Public Health Report calls upon Leeds City Council and its partners to:
  - Focus on keeping children safe,
  - Prioritise work around children's and parents' mental health,
  - Increase access to healthy food and create more chances to be active and access green spaces,
  - Support children to catch up on lost education,
  - Focus on how to make life fairer for families living in poverty in Leeds.
  - Children's healthcare to be accessible, especially dentistry, speech and language therapy and mental health services.
- 10 Recommendations were developed which include as recommendation 1  
*"All partners in Leeds to ensure the voices of children and young people are central to all work planned, taking into account the Child Friendly Leeds 12 Wishes."*
- An update report will be developed and published in 2024  
 Blog and full report is available [here](#)

## Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership

To provide insight to the development of the "start the conversation" campaign, the Leeds Youth Council were asked for their opinions on online safety. The group provided valuable feedback on their own experiences and in particular the terminology and phrases that they used when online. All of this information was used to ensure that the campaign was on message and relevant to young people's experiences.

The '[start the conversation' campaign](#) is currently running across the county.



## BARCA – Leeds (Children and Young Persons Team)

### Top Issues:

Barca's Violence Reduction Unit Project attended the West Yorkshire Youth Commission Big Conversation Conference for Violence Reduction. There was a presentation and Q&A put together by 1300 young people. Young people shared the main topics that they want support with in order to make change.

These were -

- Attitudes and violence toward women
- Drugs, gangs and knife crime
- Community relationships and life
- Rehabilitation and prevention

Barca worked with a Leeds Secondary School and held group work sessions where young people made podcasts to debate and discuss topics. During these sessions young people identified that:

- They felt knife and gang crime were a problem in their areas
- Young people did not feel they have safe places to attend after school with friends
- There was little understanding or education on sex, sexual health and relationships

### Over the last 6 months:

#### Jubilee Project: Broadlea Community Centre Garden Makeover.

- Our "Spring into Action" sessions brought together people of all ages within the Bramley community to make over the tired, unattended garden space at the Broadlea Community Centre. Barca along with other organisations such as Bramley Care Bears, Linking Leeds and the Youth Service have delivered sessions, foodbanks etc from this centre for many years. Although the inside of the centre underwent a makeover last year the garden area left a lot to be desired.
- Young people who attend our Voice, Influence and Participation group decided it needed to be made into a pleasant, functional space for the community. They made it more user friendly and sustainable. A



greenhouse was purchased and seeds such as strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce etc were planted. They made the planters out of recycled pallet wood which was donated by community members. The multi-generational group worked together well to make the vision come to life. Young people worked hard at weekly sessions over a period of 3 months, tidying, gardening, making and painting planters and even created an outdoor seating area ready for summer 2023.

- The young people then helped to plan and deliver an open celebration event for the community to launch the space which showcased all their skill and hard work. In addition to the garden makeover, they partnered up with a local community charity 'Bramley Care Bears' and volunteered to assist with garden makeovers for vulnerable and elderly residents. Young people also took part in other volunteering opportunities over the summer including Barca's national playday event, community litter picks, Armley food pantry and the delivery of the Play Box situated on Armley Moor. 8 young people from our VIP group made these projects happen.



### **Young people's voices influencing staff training and programmes**

- Due to young people voicing concerns and support needs around the issue of violence against women, staff attended the Squaring Up ABC Train the Trainers Course. This is training designed to assist youth workers deliver sessions to young men to challenge views about women in order to tackle violence against women and girls.
- Sessions from this training have now been incorporated into our ten-week group work program currently within a Leeds Secondary School. We also added a sex and healthy relationships session as this was identified by young people as something they had a lack of understanding of. 20 targeted young people per week are engaged in issue-based groupwork at the school.

### **Leeds Youth Alliance – Voice and Influence Group**

- The Pears Fund has enabled the Leeds Youth Alliance to establish a Young Persons Voice and Influence group to represent and help shape the consortium. Over the past year opportunities have been made available to young people including trips, events, a training session around participation with Yorkshire & Humber's Youth Work Unit, even a summer residential! All with aim of developing positive relationships, participation and leadership skills between the different young people attending third sector youth provision across East, West and South Leeds.
- The young people who have now formed this VIC group have feedback that they would like to take more responsibility for planning events and therefore have been allocated some funds to put on an activity within their communities, during the lead up to Christmas. The next meeting will be held in January 2024, we are excited to see the partnership blossom and for what these young people plan and deliver in the new year! 25 young people have been involved in this project and the final VIC group is made up of 12 representatives.

### **Next 6 months:**

- Some of the young people who attend weekly football sessions (45+ attendees some weeks) on the Multi-Use Games Area behind Broadlea Community Centre have expressed concern about some of the floodlights no longer working. This has clearly become an issue as the dark nights draw in. A 13-year-old local boy who attends Barca's VIP group and the football sessions is in contact with his local councillors about the issue and looking into whether support/ funding is available to get the floodlights working.
- Big Leeds Chat are planning to attend two of our youth groups in November.
- Young people identified that they felt they didn't have safe places to attend after school with their friends. A bid has been put in, in order to fund a new youth club in the Hyde Park / little London areas to give young people the opportunities to be informally educated, have fun, learn new skills and have somewhere safe to attend afterschool. 40 young people were involved in this consultation.

[Home](#) | [Barca-Leeds](#) [Leeds Youth Alliance](#)

## **LS-TEN**

### **Top Issues:**

Throughout our Youth Club, we understand that many young people are facing issues around anxiety and low self-esteem and are engaging in high-risk behaviours including the use of recreational drugs regularly. Young

people have made disclosures to us around these issues, along with other concerns around a lack of positive activities for them to engage in.

#### **Last 6 months:**

- **Recreational Drug Use:** Based on discussions we had with young people accessing our provision we arranged a visit from Forward Leeds to lead a frank and open discussion around the potential risks of taking drugs. (30-45 young people attend Youth Club weekly)
- **First Aid:** The young people we engage with at our youth club comment that they are often concerned that if a friend is in trouble or in a medical emergency, they would be unsure how to assist them. We delivered a session on CPR with our youth club, providing them with additional skills and confidence. (30 - 45 young people engage in our weekly youth club)
- **Lack of positive activities during the school holidays:** Many of the young people we work with struggle to access positive activities throughout the holidays due to financial barriers. Many have also commented that their anxiety prevents them from partaking in the same activities as their peers. In response, we applied for funding from the Sir George Martin Trust to deliver two separate blocks of trips to skateparks around Leeds and Manchester during the Summer and October school holidays. This meant we could provide an unforgettable experience for 10 young people with the help of our coaches, allowing them to visit skateparks they would previously not be able to access. We were also able to provide each attendee with a new skateboard, giving them the means to continue to engage in their hobby without the worry of affording new equipment. [Skateboarding Trips Film](#)

#### **Next 6 Months:**

- We are in the process of arranging further visits from organisations to deliver workshops at our youth club. We will be booking organisations with relevant experience in the areas that concern or service users the most, such as Battle Scars and Forward Leeds.
- We have noticed an increased need for more youth club sessions which offer a safe and positive environment in which children and young people can develop their social skills and engage in wheeled sports. As our current youth club is at full capacity, some of our less confident attendees feel uncomfortable involving themselves in the activities we deliver. We have applied for funding to deliver another youth club session to alleviate this and ensure we can reach the children and young people that need it most.
- We will be conducting an anonymous survey among our youth club attendees over the coming weeks to gather feedback on the service we currently provide. We would like to offer a more diverse range of activities to ensure we can engage every attendee.

## **Shantona Women Centre**

#### **Top Issues:**

##### **Consultation with the girl's club members:**

- 70% were **worried about the future and more specially access to training and jobs**, especially as competition to secure university places and apprenticeships.
- 60% have asked for **further information on how to access support with their mental health** in bridging the understanding between generations and asking for help on how to have open and transparent conversations about their own mental health without isolating themselves from the community further and feeling stigmatised.
- 45% are becoming **increasingly anxious about knife crime** in the local area and have been particularly affected by the London teenager who was stabbed trying to help her friend and the impact that will have locally, and the increasing confidence young people have in carrying knives.

#### **Last 6 months:**

- Young people are now routinely involved in recruiting new staff to the charity. 7 young people played an instrumental role in recruiting two new youth workers. This included devising questions and scoring the session.
- In contributing to our 25 years work: 10 young people contribute to our newsletter, to share their experiences of working with Shantona and the different opportunities they get involved in regarding social action in Harehills and campaign has been put together as Harehills heroes.

- Young people have been included in videos as part of the 25-year strategy to be shared regionally and beyond to showcase the impact of the work in strengthening communities and inspiring young people.

### Next 6 months:

- Young people are going to be involved in developing youth work tender
- Additional support for young people around mental health and school holidays programme

[www.shantona.co.uk](http://www.shantona.co.uk)

## St Luke's CARES Shine Project – Young Change Makers

The project was developed out of a need expressed by girls in the Shine project who collectively felt that the issue of racism was not being addressed either in the community or at school. In partnership with UK Youth, The Shine Project applied to be part of the Young Change Makers initiative funded by the Diana Award. The Young Change Makers come together to reimagine health services for young people from racialised communities.



### Last 6 months

- The Shine Project – Young Change Makers have spent time together learning about the challenges of mental health and a system that often lacks the required 'cultural competence' to understand the lived experience of racism.
- To help create more awareness of the effects racism can have on the mental health of young people the Young Change Makers have planned a 'Shine – Get Together' event to create more awareness of this issue and to promote self-care for all girls to have positive mental health. As part of the project, the Young Change Makers were able to visit a place that would broaden their knowledge in this area. The group chose to visit the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool. This helped the group to reflect on the roots of racism in society and how society has changed.
- The group have decided that they would like to create a lasting resource for the project that can be used in various settings to inform teachers etc of how not challenging racism in educational settings can affect young people. The group are producing a podcast at Chapel FM to discuss this and the wider issues of mental health on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

[St Luke's Cares: The Shine Project Podcast – Chapel FM](#)

## Mindmate Leeds

### Last 6 months:

#### Campaigns, Blogs and Podcasts

- BBC Radio Leeds interviewed a MindMate Ambassador (MMA) about lived experience of accessing support services for anxiety.
- Young Minds Get Active campaign in partnership with MindMate about link between physical and mental health -video production and partnership campaign page/ social media postings [Get moving - MindMate](#)
- Partnership with Leeds Voice, Influence and Change team to campaign on Exam Stress including development of campaign page on MindMate [Exam time - MindMate](#)
- MMA blogged about eco-anxiety [Coping with Eco-Anxiety: Taking Care of Yourself - MindMate](#)
- MMAs worked with Ashfield Primary to blog about their mini MindMate Ambassador work [MindMate Ambassadors at Ashfield Primary - MindMate](#)
- Kim blogged about the link between mental health and hobbies [How hobbies can be a great benefit to mental health - MindMate](#)
- Kim blogged in support of the Child Friendly Leeds wish #1 campaign ["Knowing how and where to get support with mental health or wellbeing if you need it"](#)
- Greta blogged about how she used meditation to quit vaping [How meditation helped me quit vaping - MindMate](#) and about ADHD and her mediation journey [My journey with ADHD medication and approaching exams - MindMate](#)

- Greta also recorded a podcast with Elle about their lived experience of Autism and ADHD diagnoses  
[Podcast #19: Not an excuse, but an explanation - MindMate](#)

### School Visits and Events

- MMAs ran a MindMate Awareness stall at Fire Engine Day and supported 25 selfie frame snaps for social media.
- MMA team ran 2 awareness stalls in Leeds East Academy -focussed on exam stress. Collecting selfie frame snaps for social media. 118 students took part in the voucher competition.
- MindMate supported Healthwatch to run a stall at Yeadon Carnival.
- Young Minds get Active event with 20 children and young people hosted by Re-establish supported by MMA.
- MMA ran an awareness stall and engaged with SEND students at Lighthouse School, 18 students took part in competition about body confidence - answers shared on social networks.
- Supported MindMate SPA team to run a MindMate stall at SEND Event.
- MMAs spoke at Child Friendly Leeds Ambassador workshop about the importance of investing in CYP mental health.
- MindMate supported MindWell to distribute MindMate rainbow wristbands at Leeds Pride
- MMA team ran an awareness stall at Leeds City College Quarry Hill campus during their freshers fare and asked students about the link between their physical and mental health.
- MindMate Ambassadors-2 days engaging young people and families at Leeds Trinity.
- MMA ran an awareness stall at Ruth Gorse Academy and ran a question competition about how social media effects mental health. 78 students took part - and the best answer awarded by MMA team was ***“social media can lead to people having high expectations like a slimmer body, lighter skin stuff like that - can lead to body dysmorphia and that can affect your mental health”***
- MMAs attended Leeds City College (Printworks campus) Freshers Fare where 23 students took part in the competition answering questions about cost of living and its effect on mental health.



### Website development/ digital communication

- Updates on urgent help page in response to SEND youth forum input.
- Formed partnership with Leeds Health and Care Partnership to review the MindMate content for young parents.
- Digital assets were designed for use in Trinity Leeds and White Rose - MMAs worked alongside designers to approve messages and design.

### Consultation and Co-production

- Former MMA spoke at health care conference about her input into the Networked Data Lab project.
- SEND youth forum had a session on MindMate and gave their feedback on the website. Their comments were taken by the MindMate team and responded to but updating the urgent help pages to include information for young adults.
- 3 MMAs contributed to a Child poverty consultation through VIC Team for the Leeds Child Poverty Board.
- MMAs formed partnership with Youth Watch to oversee CYP steer in commissioning process of city-wide Mental Health support service. During Summer 2023 the youth panel liaised with youth forums/ groups across the city to gather their views on what is important in the procurement of this support service for CYP. 6 youth groups formally fed into the process –Leeds GATE (Gypsy and Traveller exchange), Care Leavers council, Out 2 18 group (LGBT+), PAFRAS (asylum seeker youth group), Youth Watch and SEND Youth Forum (special educational needs and disability youth forum)

### Next 6 months:

- Recruitment process of a new MindMate Ambassador team
- Continue to facilitate peer led conversations in schools and colleges about mental health and 'hot topics'
- Continue to gather blogs and podcasts from young people to populate social media and website content to share lived experience and reach out to other children and young people in the city

## Leeds Mind

### Leeds Mind Young People's Steering Group

#### Last 6 months:

- 110 people attended our 'Young people present: Our ideas for mental health support' event in September, which was an opportunity for services and decision makers to hear directly from young people about their experiences and ideas for mental health support. Young people were involved in a wide range of ways including event planning, presenting, sharing art and poetry, DJing, and facilitating activities.
- One young person presented, and one facilitated a workshop at the West Yorkshire Peer Support Work **Conference** in June. The presentation shared the impact of a peer-led approach, and the workshop shared how we worked in partnership with young people to design Leeds Mind's Youth in Mind support.
- 6 young people contributed their experiences and ideas to help inform the criteria for the Transforming Mental Health Grants for support for young people with complex mental health needs transitioning into adult services.



#### Next 6 months:

- Use information gathered at our event to identify priorities for the next year
- Facilitate a workshop at the national Mind Federation Conference on working in partnership with young people to design services
- Expand the steering group, with a particular focus on diversifying the membership, and work with young people to design a way to involve more consistently those who are not in a position to commit to steering group meetings

<https://www.leedsmind.org.uk/young-people/>

## Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust Youth Board

#### Last 6 months:

- We developed a shadowing scheme for young people with aspirations of working in health and care. This scheme will give members of the Youth Board the opportunity to gain experience shadowing roles at Leeds Community Healthcare which may help with their decisions around career choices. Five young people were involved in developing this scheme and have now shadowed the role of a Paediatrician.
- Two young people took part in a Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) at Hannah House. This was the first time that young people have taken part in these for our Trust.
- We held a social media take over event in which eleven young people took over our 0-19's children's services social media accounts for the day. They posted various comments on a wide range of subjects from firework safety to exam revision tips.
- We have developed a [new video](#) about the Youth Board



#### Next 6 months

- We held our first annual meeting and 15 young people attended along with young people from Leeds GATE (Gypsy and Traveller Exchange) whom we link in with each month. This was key in planning our next six months and looking back at what we have achieved.
- We are exploring how Youth Board members can take part in quality walks of our children's services which are normally carried out by staff members. This will be the first time that young people have taken part in these.
- We are keen to link in with schools, offering opportunities such as pupils taking part on our staff recruitment panels, our projects and developing our children's services.

[Community Healthcare NHS Trust - Youth Board](#)

## Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

- Plans to carry out involvement and engagement with children in the Leeds Children's Hospital - meeting with Children's Patient Experience Lead to explore this in Jan '24
- Work with young people within Family Action organisation to adapt existing tools supporting adult carers, ensuring they are suitable for young carers, for example, the Carers Conversation Sheet.
- Continue co-facilitating Carer & Young Carer Awareness Training in Hospitals, collaboratively with Family Action and Carers Leeds.

## Health and Wellbeing Services- Leeds City Council

### Last 6 months:

- **My Health, My School Annual School (MHMS) Survey** - A record-breaking number of responses were received for the last academic year (2022-23) with a total of **25,648** pupil responses from **202** Leeds schools representing the largest ever number of responses since the survey began over 16 years ago! This is a free on-line survey for pupils in Years 5, 6, 7, 9 and 11 as well as pupils attending any Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) and post-16 settings in Leeds. The survey gathers important pupil perception data and measures health behaviours contributing to school improvement by providing instant school level data across a range of key areas including Healthy Eating; Physical Activity; PE and Sport; Gambling; Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education; Play; Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco; Sexual Health; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Safety and Anti-bullying. A full review (content and functionality) and consultation of the survey question set was undertaken with 8 schools (6 primary, 1 secondary, 1 post 16). New visuals, support websites, hover buttons and size of fonts have changed as a result of pupil/student feedback. The main survey for 2023-24 went live to schools and settings on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and has already resulted in more than 4,358 pupils from 41 schools completing the survey so far.
- There are currently a total of 102 schools and settings in Leeds that have received a copy of the **School Food Ambassador (SFA) Toolkit** that engages young people to take the lead for school food in their setting, improving lunchtimes and advocating for healthy food choices.
- **MindMate Ambassadors** encourage and empower pupils to take a proactive role in improving social, emotional and mental health in their schools. School MindMate Ambassadors become role models and advocates who champion positive attitudes and behaviours and lead by example helping to improve the social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of the whole school. Two training sessions have been completed with primary schools and 1 with Benton Park.

### Next 6 months

- We will deliver School Food Ambassadors (SFA) Pupil Training in February 2023. Attending schools can bring up to 2 pupils to the training to improve their skills and confidence as Ambassadors and take learning back to their school. [School food ambassador's pupil training | Leeds for Learning](#)
- The findings from the **My Health, My School Annual School Survey** 2022-23 will be the primary focus of the MHMS Steering Group at its next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December where a range of council services will consider how they have used the findings from the 2022-23 survey and how they will promote greater uptake of the 2023-24 MHMS Survey. The same meeting will be asked to consider approval of a review of the MHMS SEND surveys.

## SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice Support Service)

### Last 6 months:

- Our information videos developed based on feedback from young people and providing young people with information on key SEND topics have been viewed over 200 times in the last 6 months.
- We attended the young people SENATE Event on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and ran an information stall at Leeds Civic Hall meeting 15 young people and supporters, sharing resources and service information increasing young people's awareness of the service offer. More young people told us at the event that they had heard of SENDIASS before.

### Next 6 months:

- Leeds SENDIASS will be publishing a new young person animation on the SENDIASS You Tube channel aimed at promoting young people's knowledge of and access to the information for young people on the Leeds SENDIASS website.
- We continue to use feedback from young people to develop the young people's section of the Leeds SENDIASS website.

[Young people \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk)



## Voice Influence and Change Team (VIC Team)

### Leeds Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament Leeds

- Leeds Youth Council campaign group (3 Members of Youth Parliament and 12 members of the Leeds Youth Council) have been meeting once a month to continue their campaigns around health and wellbeing, the top issue voted for in the Make Your Mark Ballot.
- One of the key themes identified from their [campaign](#) was exam stress and their work has increased access to information for children and young people about this issue through a partnership with MindMate. They developed a social media campaign about exam stress, reaching a total of 36,887 accounts and receiving a total of 26,021 views. They also reviewed the MindMate [webpages](#).
- The group developed an exam stress survey leading to good practice examples from members' schools about their approach to supporting students. This will be shared at a presentation at the secondary head teacher's forum in November 2023. The group plan to audit all secondary school websites to determine how many have a mental health and wellbeing page and to develop best practice tips and / or a template in support another key themes, raising awareness of mental health services, identified from their [campaign](#).
- The Leeds Members of Youth Parliament attended a regional convention in which they came together with other Members of Youth Parliament to discuss regional campaigns, undertake consultations and find out more about youth voice work across the region.
- The also attended an annual conference to take part in workshops, debate, create and change national manifesto policy, and network with other Members of Youth Parliament from across the UK.
- Over the last 6 months, Members of the Leeds Youth Council network and Members of Youth Parliament have been invited to attend different workshops or campaign activities. These include:
  - Community Cohesion
  - Oral health
  - Child Poverty Strategy
- Members of the Leeds Youth Council helped produce a film to raise awareness of youth voice opportunities in Leeds. Please [watch the film](#) and share it with the young people you work with. They are also going to be involved in the development of a promotional video to increase the reach of the network and help spread the word about the benefits of youth voice.
- In the next 6 months, the VIC team are planning on reviewing the offer for the Leeds Youth Council network to ensure they are able to help shape services for young people, develop their skills and confidence to raise their voices, develop an understanding of issues that shape decision making and learn about youth voice in Leeds. In addition, the current Members of Youth Parliament will end their two-year term and elections will open for 3 new Members of Youth Parliament.
- Schools and youth groups across the city are being encouraged to register their settings to take part in the Make Your Mark Ballot 2024 which will go live in February 2024.



## Leeds Children's Mayor

- Mason worked with his school to plan and run an [accessible Olympics](#) on Monday 17th July, fulfilling the main manifesto pledge. Local ward Councillors donated some of their MICE money, contributing to their role as active community leaders. As a result of the task and finish group chaired by Cllr Venner, Breeze supported Mason's school with their accessible Olympics event by providing a football speedshot.
- Mason attended a summit, held by the VIC team in May 2023, to promote his winning manifesto and share his [school's Olympics guide](#) to encourage other schools to support his pledge and hold a similar event. 56 children from 14x primary schools attended the event, enabling them to implement ideas from the winning manifesto, as well as supporting children and young people to write effective manifestos for next year's elections. The schools were invited based on their location in the city and previous participation with the programme.
- Mason developed a [video](#) providing a personal insight into the impact the programme had, as well as promoted the winning manifesto, the events they attended and the Leeds Children's Mayor programme, thereby promoting youth voice opportunities. The video has had over 150 views and was shared via the VIC network and at the Leeds Children's Mayor summit.
- Over the last 6 months, Mason has been involved in lots of engagements including:
  - Leeds United v Crystal Palace game - 8<sup>th</sup> April 2023
  - Rob Burrows Marathon – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023
  - Yorkshire Ability Triathlon – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023
  - Leeds Children's Mayor Summit – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023
  - Opening of the Beryl Burton Flower Bed – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023
  - Armed Forces Day Flag raising event - Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2023
  - Leeds Music Education Partnership's Youth Music Festival Celebration Concert 2023 – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023
  - Leeds Armed Forces Day – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023
  - Temple Newsam Fun Day – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023
  - Summer Reading Challenge – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023
  - Leeds 2023 Children's Day – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023
  - CFL Live - 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023
  - SNAPS Superhero Challenge – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2023
  - Celebrating Cottage Road Cinema – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Mason Hicks' served his one-year term as Leeds Children's Mayor and a new winner was announced on 5<sup>th</sup> October at a final's night event, Mohammed Hussein from Ireland Wood Primary School. 33 Primary schools submitted manifestos which were shortlisted to a final 12 by a group of youth councillors on 11th July. The finalists had a very busy summer campaigning and canvassing for votes, resulting a total number of 11,111 votes cast!
- Mohammed's manifesto focuses on protecting the environment (Child Friendly Leeds wish number 5), he wants to beat climate change through tree planting and community clean up events, creating a composting program and a community garden. Read his [manifesto](#) and consider how you can support and implement his ideas.
- In the next 6 months, Mohammed will deputise to full council in November 2023 and read his manifesto to all 99 councillors. He will be supported by Democratic Services to attend a variety of civic functions throughout the year. He will attend a summit organised by the Voice, Influence and Change Team in May 2024 to promote his manifesto and help others write effective manifestos for next year's elections. Mohammed will also develop a guide for schools explaining how they can support his manifesto by, for example, taking part in a community clean up.



## Children and young people with SEND /SEND Youth Forum

### Top priorities:

- Raising awareness of disabilities
- Importance of communicating with young people with SEND

- Access to fun activities and sports

#### Last 6 months:

- [Resource - raising awareness of disabilities and how to support young people](#). The SEND Youth Forum have worked together to create a **booklet** of various journeys and challenges of young people with SEND to help professionals help them. The resource is not just about knowing how professionals can support young people, but to understand how young people might perceive and feel during these experiences.
- Members of the Leeds SEND Youth Forum have been developing **“Communicating with young people with SEND eLearning”**. They designed the training, objectives and wrote the scripts. Filming is planned for November 2023.
- **Give it a go event** - Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) across Leeds have continuously shared with us how they would like the opportunity to ‘try out’ different sports, groups and activities available to them in Leeds. On Thursday 6th July 2023; 69 students with SEND in Leeds attended the Give it a Go event at John Charles Centre for Sport. The event gave young people with SEND the opportunity to try out different activities and sports that are on offer to them in the city, known as short breaks and fun activities. The event was funded by Community Committees. Full event report can be found [here](#)



#### Next 6 months:

- Launch “Communicating with young people with SEND” eLearning (early 2024)
- Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board Takeover (November 2023)
- SENate – SEND Summit (November 2023) The Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board Takeover and the SENate will focus on the 12 Friendly Leeds wishes and which wish is most important to young people with SEND. Young people will share what we are doing well in Leeds and their ideas for the wishes in the future. The feedback will be shared directly with the wish leads.
- The SEND Youth Forum will be looking at the results of the wishes consultation and choosing their new project / campaign.  
[The SEND Youth Forum \(leeds.gov.uk\)](http://leeds.gov.uk)

## Child Friendly Leeds Team

- The team organised a Child Friendly Leeds Ambassador Event hosted at Temple Newsam Museum in July. At the event, Ambassadors learnt more about the [12 wishes](#), met the lead officers for each wish and explored how they could potentially support the wishes.
- Council officers have been identified as leads for each wish (from a range of different directorates) and have developed short term (1 year) and longer-term goals (5 years) in partnership with wider teams and services which has formed the CFL wishes action plan. An update on progress against the wishes will be developed for July 2024.
- From October 2023, a [communications campaign](#) will begin, focusing on a wish per month with blogs, social media posts and articles promoting the wish and work across the city taking place to support the wish.
- The team are working in partnership with City Varieties who are leading on the recruitment of a new group of young people to plan and deliver the Child Friendly Leeds awards in 2024.

## Community Committees/Communities Team

### Youth Activity Fund

Each Community Committee has been allocated a Youth Activity Fund which it is responsible for administering. The Youth Activity Fund has been made available to provide local activities for children and young people aged 8-17 years across the city. The Youth Activity Fund can provide money for activities that offer opportunities for play, arts, sport and culture, which enable young people to have fun, get creative and have new experiences both after school and during the school holidays. The fund requires the engagement and participation of children and young people in the decision making and evaluation. Children and young people are involved in the funding process and advise Community Committees on the activities they would like to take part in, in their respective areas.

## Youth Summits

Youth Summits are an opportunity for young people aged 8-17 years living in Leeds to learn about local democracy, as well as influencing the decision making of the Youth Activity Fund, by taking part in a consultation exercise that informs the Community Committee's budget spend. Building on a commitment to engage and involve children and young people in decision making in their own communities, young people get involved in choosing which activities should be supported by the committees, from respective (committee) Youth Activity Funds.

### Last 6 months

- In preparation for the planning for this municipal year's Youth Summits, the Communities Team met with the Voice & Influence Team & Children's Champions in a Youth Summits: Lessons Learned meeting. At this meeting everyone reflected on the previous year's events and offered learning to inform future ways of working. It was agreed in the meeting that the Youth Summit 'offer' for the Community Committees in 2023 will be the same as the previous year, therefore the agenda, format & outcomes, as well as the measurement of success remain the same.
- The Youth Activity Fund Consultation Surveys for 2023 went 'live'.

**YAF Survey link:** <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/H5X5TG/>

**YAF SEND Survey:** <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/4VGG2V/>

- The last day that young people can respond is the 31st of March 2024. Promotion of the online consultation survey is ongoing by the Communities Team, with publicity being posted on the committee Facebook pages, publicity being sent out to all our school & cluster contacts, youth groups and other organisations that are funded, or work with young people in each of the Community Committee areas, as well as being circulated to our mailing lists.
- In addition to this, the Communities Team attended various events & festivals over the summer months, to consult with young people in person. Where this is the case, this consultation will be input onto the online survey, where all feedback from young people will feed into a Youth Activity Fund Consultation Report for each respective committee area. This will, in principle, inform the Youth Activity Fund Budget spend for the next financial year.
- The **Inner West Community Committee** have been looking into the possibility of having young people involved as co-optees of the committee. These conversations are continuing to be explored via the Children & Families Subgroup.
- The **Outer South Children & Families Subgroup** meeting has a number of young people that regularly attend its meetings from the Youth Matters Group, which is a group coordinated by Youth Services. Between 5 & 10 young people have the opportunity to attend once a term and get involved in any agenda items that are discussed at the subgroup meeting with its core members. The children & young people also have the opportunity to feedback their thoughts and influence decisions making on funding applications that are presented to the subgroup, for consideration from the Outer South Community Committees YAF Budget.
- The **Inner West Community Committee Children & Families Subgroup** dedicated a whole meeting in July 2023, to respond to issues raised by young people at the Youth Summit event in 2022. This was fed back to schools and youth groups attending the Youth Summit in October 2023.
- The Community Committees are asked to note the recommendation that any projects funded by committees from its Youth Activity Fund, focus on key themes and priorities identified at a local level by young people, via the Youth Summits & Youth Activity Fund Consultation Survey.

### Next 6 months

- As a key objective for the Community Committees is that we engage with a wide variety of young people and that this engagement reflects the diversity of the city, the Communities Team will run a workshop at the **SEND Youth Summit** in November 2023 to consult with young people that have special education needs & disabilities. In addition to this, the Communities Team will be delivering a **LGBT+ Youth Summit** on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Jan 2024, as well as working closely with various officers in the council and external organisations, in an attempt to engage with young carers and young people that are home schooled.
- As we appreciate and understand that each community is different, the specific arrangements for each summit will be worked through using a collaborative approach and progressed by relevant officers in the Communities Team, the Voice & Influence Team and the Children's Champions for each respective committee area, with **all Youth Summits being delivered between October 2023 & March 2024.**

- The priority for all 10 Community Committees is the delivery of the Youth Summits & engagement with the YAF consultation survey that will inform YAF Budget spend for 2024/25 across the whole of Leeds.
- Children & Families Subgroups will continue to operate across Community Committees, and they will provide leadership, support, monitoring of performance and when required, decision making re: issues and matters that relate to children and young people.
- The Community Committees/Communities Team will continue to look at new ways of engaging and working with young people by working closely with the Voice Influence and Change Team.

[Inner West Community Committee](#)  
[Council and democracy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

## Leeds Youth Service – Swillington / Rothwell

Young people from the voice & influence groups / senior member volunteers participated in the recent Advanced Youth Work Practitioner interviews. The group made up the “young people’s panel” and interviewed each candidate with a series of 6 questions, scored each one and then discussed each candidate with the “adult panel”. Their scores and views were added to a whole group discussion before all deciding on the best candidate for the role.



## Policy and Plans (City Development)

### Local Plan Update – Leeds 2040

**What we’ve been doing:** We’re exploring opportunities to embed child-friendly city policies within the local plan, subject to further engagement with stakeholders, including elected members

**What we’re going to do next:** Continue to collaborate with Child-Friendly Leeds and Voice Influence and Change teams to further develop possible options for a child-friendly city policy, as well as develop engagement material suitable for children and young people for our next round of consultation that applies to all elements of the Local Plan.

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# Voice, Influence and Change Team



## Summary Report 2022-23

### Voice, Influence & Change Team

Established in 2012 and based in the Children & Families directorate of Leeds City Council, we are responsible for ensuring that children, young people, parents, carers and families are able to have a voice and influence over services that are provided in our city.

“Listening to and responding to the voice of the child” is one of the 4 key behaviours that underpin our citywide approach to supporting children and young people, and encouraging children and young people “to be active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence” is one of the 5 outcomes as detailed in the 2018-2023 Children and Young People’s Plan. We are proud to work towards the citywide ambition to become a ‘child friendly Leeds’ – the best city to grow up in.

The team deliver and support a range of projects and programmes for children and young people including:

<p>‘Have a Voice’ Children in Care Council</p> 	<p>Care Leavers Council</p> 	<p>Leeds SEND Youth Forum</p> 
<p>Leeds Youth Council</p> 	<p>Leeds Children’s Mayor</p> 	<p>UK Youth Parliament</p> 
<p>Takeover of strategic boards</p> 	<p>Voice and Influence of young people with SEND in schools</p> 	<p>Commissioning and recruitment</p> 

We work in partnership with teams and organisations to develop networks, deliver training, share good practice and to ensure that the views of children & young people and parents & carers and families are taken into account at different levels of local decision making.

We have produced this annual report to share some of our team highlights from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. We hope you enjoy reading and encourage you to get in touch if you would like further information on any aspect of our service or to be added to our mailing list.

Hannah, Karen, Kayleigh, Emily, Rebecca and Danielle  
The Voice, Influence and Change Team  
Leeds City Council [vic@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:vic@leeds.gov.uk)



@LeedsYouthVoice

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Delivered 166 online workshops, sessions and events with children and young people

Delivered Voice of the Child training and briefings to 128 social care staff and social work placement students in Leeds.

Worked in partnership with children and young people to refresh the Child Friendly Leeds 12 wishes

7,870 children and young people voted in the 2022/23 Leeds Children's Mayor Elections

Facilitated young people to take over 2 strategic decision-making boards

Worked in partnership with 504 young people on our Leeds Youth Voice Programmes

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2022/23**

Provided advice, guidance or training to colleagues from 7 different local authorities and shared our approach with colleagues from New Zealand, Australia and Paraguay

Enabled representatives from 19 SEND support groups to share their issues and concerns and work with services through the SEND Parent/ Carer Support Group Network

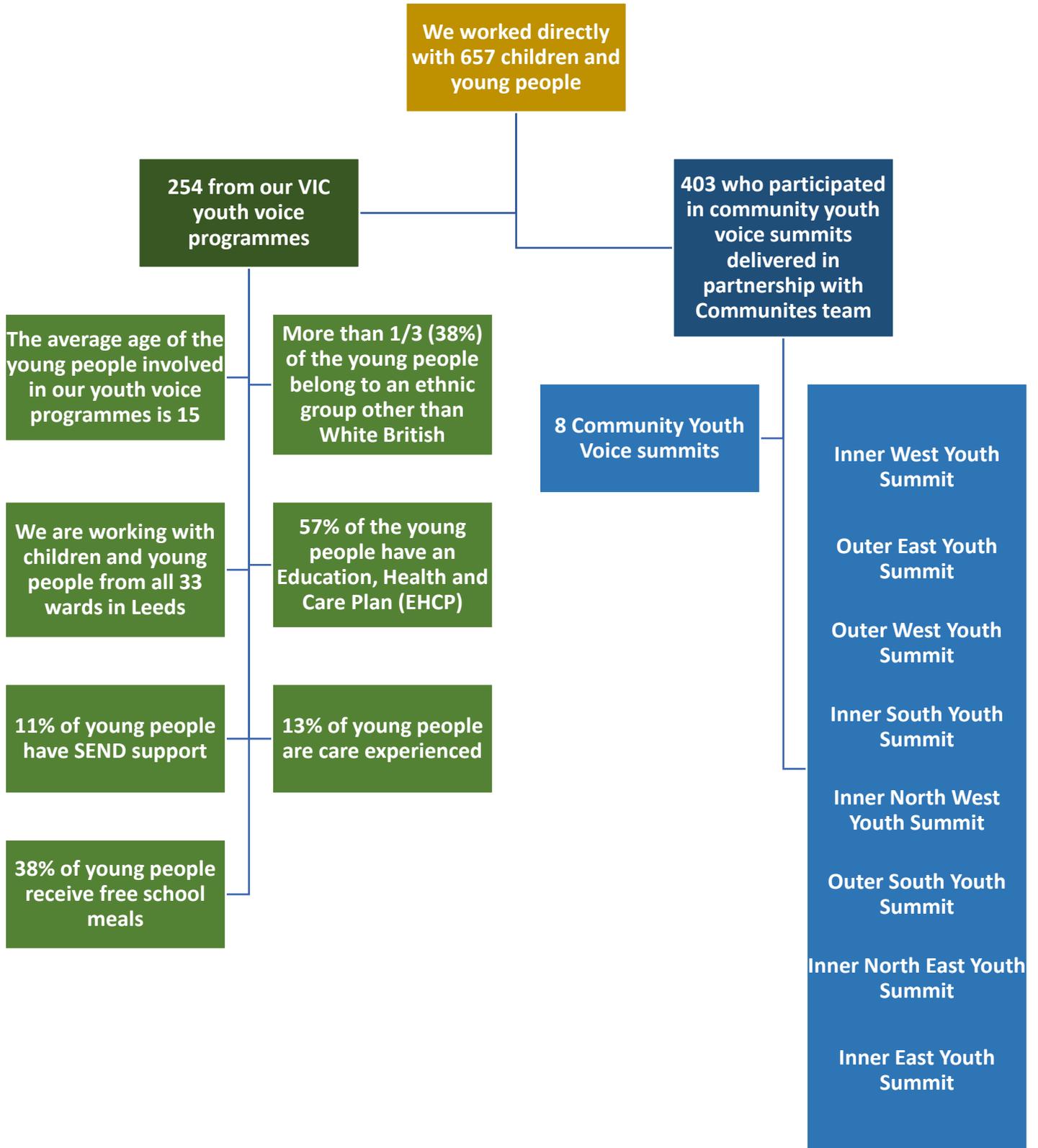
Delivered Democracy workshop to over 400+ children and young people across Leeds

Organised for 28 children and young people from youth voice groups, projects and schools to meet King Charles III

Shared updates, news and opportunities with 1560 colleagues on our VIC network

Shared good practice, news and opportunities with our 8708 followers on Leeds Youth Voice Instagram and X (Twitter) and Leeds Local Offer Facebook

# Direct work with Children and Young people - April 2022 to September 2023



## Communications and Engagement (April 2022- September 2023)

### VIC Network

- Our Voice Influence and Change Network includes 1560 colleagues across the city. Including staff who lead on pupil/ student voice in learning settings, voice and influence leads in third sector organisations, health and public sector partner organisations, Leeds City Council teams /services, youth groups and youth voice groups.
- Colleagues on the VIC network were invited to contribute to **6 quarterly e-newsletters** – sharing their news, resources, promoting voice and influence opportunities for children, young people and families.
- 6 newsletters were sent to 99 elected members via Lead member for Children and Families – Cllr Fiona Venner.
- Members of the network are invited to contribute to three voice and influence reports that are produced every six months: Citywide Children and Young People Voice and Influence Report, Citywide Parent Carer and Family Voice and Influence Report and Voice of the Child in Social Care report. Six monthly reports provide updates on issues raised by children, young people and families, voice and influence activity and future plans. **9 voice and influence reports** were shared with the network, elected members and presented at strategic partnership boards and meetings

### SEND Local Offer Network

- Our SEND local Offer network includes 323 colleagues and partners working with children and young people with SEND or their families. It includes colleagues from education, health, social care, children's services, third sector, parent carer support groups, short break providers, primary and secondary SENCO's, SILCS, colleges, targeted service leaders and youth groups for children and young people with SEND
- Network members were invited to contribute to **9 bi-monthly e-newsletters** over the last 18 months.

### Leeds Youth Council Network

- Approximately 500 young people aged 10-18 (or up to 25 with additional needs) who live or go to school / college in Leeds received **18 voice and influence monthly opportunity updates** via email and text message.

### Websites

- An [internal web page](#) promoting the work and offer of the VIC team to colleagues in Leeds City Council
- Web Pages on Leeds for Learning promoting the work and offer of VIC team to learning settings in Leeds. This includes [voice influence and change team](#), [parent carer family voice and influence](#) and [SEND Local Offer and Voice and Influence](#).
- Over the last 12 months the team have redesigned and updated all content on the [Leeds Youth Voice](#) web page which promotes the team offer to children and young people in Leeds. Updates include videos from all lead staff – following feedback from young people
- The team are also responsible for the coordination and updates of the [SEND Leeds Local Offer Website](#)
- The team share spotlights on good practice from across the city on the [Child Friendly Leeds Blog](#). Over the last 18 months the team have visited schools and youth voice groups and developed spotlights on [Carr Manor School Student Voice](#) , [LEAP Young Carers group](#) and [Youth Association Community Ambassadors](#).

### Social Media

- Leeds Youth Voice on [X \(formally Twitter\)](#) has 3247 followers
- Leeds Youth Voice on [Instagram](#) has 1468 followers
- [Leeds Local Offer Facebook](#) group has 926 members.

**One Minute Guides** -[Voice and Influence](#) and [Voice and Influence Opportunities](#) were updated in 2022

### Press Highlights:

[Leeds announces new Children's Mayor | Public Sector News \(publicsectorexecutive.com\)](#)

[Voting opens for next Leeds children's mayor - BBC News](#)

[King Charles given birthday card by 10-year-old mayor | UK News | Sky News](#)

## The 5 O's Model

In July 2023, the VIC Team had a development session exploring a wide range of different participation/ youth voice models and how we are using them both in our everyday practice and in advising different teams and services.

The team regularly use the [ladder of participation \(Hart 1992\)](#) to explain different levels of participation and youth voice, how participation can progress through stages and what is tokenistic/ non- participation. The team also use the [Lundy Model \(2007\)](#) which helps explain the importance of the; space of collaboration, the support adults provide, the influence young people can have and the audience.

The team reviewed the spectrum model -[pathways to participation \(Shier 2001\)](#) which identifies 5 different levels of involvement but recognises that organisations will work at different levels depending on their goals.

The 5 different levels of involvement in Shier's model are:

1. Children are listened to
2. Children are supported in expressing their views
3. Childrens views are taken into account
4. Children are involved in decision-making
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision making

The team agreed there would be value in developing a new framework to support how we plan and evaluate our voice and influence programmes and how we advise other teams and services. We decided to adapt the Shier's model, which identified three stages of adult-commitment (openings, opportunities, and obligations).

We developed two additional stages of adult commitment (outcome and ownership) to ensure we are continually prioritising demonstrating the outcomes and clear on who is the owner (team/ organisation) and responsible for acting on views of children and young or families.

Over the last few months, we have started to use the 5'O's framework to:

- Plan campaigns with young people on our youth voice groups
- Produce a 5 O's template which we support teams and services to complete when they are consulting with children, young people or families
- Developed a recording spreadsheet to plan and evaluate our work
- Review which consultations we have supported children young people or families to be involved in and are we are still awaiting an outcome about how their views have had an influence.

This Voice Influence and Change Team Summary report for the last 18 months is in a new format to previous years, we have used the 5'O's to demonstrate impact and outcomes of our different programmes.

# THE 5 O'S

framework for partnership programmes



## Citywide Consultations: coordinated by VIC Team and supported by partner organisations and schools

Consultation	Opening <i>Who</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<b>Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Refresh</b>	Views of 80,000 CYP – themes. 70 CYP consulted wording and 300 images during April -July 2022	For CYP to review and finalise wording of the wishes and create images linked to wishes	CFL wishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views of 80,000 CYP -ballots, surveys consultations to identify key themes</li> <li>Consultation sessions with CYP from Leeds Youth Council, BARCA, SEND Youth Forum, Youth Service Groups, 2 primary schools led to review and finalise wording for refreshed wishes.300+ children and young people drew the wish they felt was most important and these were used to develop the final images</li> <li>Wishes launched at exhibition at City Museum in July 2022</li> </ul>	Child Friendly Leeds Children and Young People's Partnership
<b>Leeds Children and Young People's Plan Refresh Consultation</b>	67 CYP contributed their views through sessions facilitated in youth voice groups, 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector youth groups and schools during November – December 2022	For CYP to feedback on proposed updates to the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan. The team devised guidance and consultation activity session plan and shared with VIC network	CYPP	<p>There was broad support for the proposed changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback that health 'obsession' addresses a range of views raised</li> <li>A climate change/emergency priority will be introduced, echoing the wording in the 12 Wishes.</li> <li>Align future updates of the Wishes and the CYPP so that young people's voices remain central to the CYPP.</li> <li>Refreshed plan launched by end of 2023.</li> <li>An update and new CYPP will be shared with youth groups and schools participating when it launched.</li> </ul>	Children and Young People's Partnership
<b>Child Poverty Strategy Refresh Consultation</b>	214 CYP contributed their views through sessions facilitated in youth voice groups and youth groups across the city during July – September 2023	For CYP to share what they feel poverty feels like, what is the biggest impact of poverty for CYP in school, home and their community and from their experience what approaches work and what could work better where they live.	CFL wish 6	<p>Priorities identified through consultation with children and young people are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the shame and stigma around poverty</li> <li>Improve offer and accessibility of offer of activities for CYP living in poverty</li> <li>Ensure children living in poverty have their basic needs met</li> </ul> <p>These priorities will be incorporated into poverty board priority lead work plans. Consultation report shared with Board on October 2023 Summary will be produced to share with youth groups and schools participating by December 2023.</p>	Leeds Children's Poverty Board
<b>Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Consultation</b>	297 CYP completed a survey shared at community youth voice summits, youth groups and with SILCS and via an online survey during October 22-April 23	For CYP to share how often they visit the city centre, why they visit, where they most and least enjoy going and why, what would they improve and how would they want to find out what is on offer.	CFL Wish 2 and 7	<p>Across the age phases, the joint top issues CYP would like to improve are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcoming safe spaces dedicated to CYP to support them and keep them safe</li> <li>Free / low-cost events, activities and clubs for children and young people</li> <li>More green spaces, less litter, less smoking, pollution and noise from traffic</li> <li>Consultation report presented Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Partnership in September 2023 and will be presented Safer Leeds Partnership Board in 2024</li> <li>Event planned for February 2024 – to discuss calls for action and explore how CFL Ambassadors and partners can support.</li> </ul>	Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Partnership Safer Leeds Partnership

## Training delivered by Voice Influence and Change Team

<b>Training</b>	<b>Opening</b> <i>Who</i>	<b>Opportunity</b> <i>What</i>	<b>Obligation</b> <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Ownership</b> <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<b>Voice of the Child in Social Care</b>	Social Care staff and students on placement with Leeds Social Care	Online 90-minute training sessions x 5	Wish 3 The promise	<p>Training delivered to 128 staff and students. Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand why it is important to involve children and young people in decisions that affect their lives</li> <li>• Learn from children and young people about what they want and need from social workers</li> <li>• Explore different approaches to enabling children and young people to meaningfully participate and have their voices heard in decision making forums.</li> <li>• Find out about guidance and resources to support you in your practice</li> <li>• Learn about examples of strategic voice and influence opportunities and youth voice groups to promote to children and young people you work with</li> </ul>	Workforce Development Team
<b>Listening to the voice of the child</b>	Scope activity providers.	Online training for activity providers undertaking the Scope Inclusive Activity Award.	Wish 3	<p>Training objectives met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify mechanisms in the city for ensuring children and young people with SEND and their families have a voice and influence in service review and development.</li> <li>• Practical ways to gather the views of children, young people and their families.</li> <li>• How can children, young people and their families influence your service</li> </ul>	SCOPE
<b>Training offer for Leeds Youth Voice groups</b>	Leeds Youth Voice Groups (SEND Youth Forum, Leeds Youth Council and Social Care groups)	Training programme to increase skills of young people participating in LYV groups.	Wish 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to youth voice delivered to 9 young people</li> <li>• Children's rights training delivered to 10 young people</li> <li>• Recruitment and selection training delivered to 3 young people</li> <li>• Public speaking and debating training delivered to 7 young people.</li> </ul>	Voice Influence & Change Team

## Universal Youth Voice Programmes Highlights

**Leeds Youth Council Network** is a network of children and young people aged 10-18 (up to 25 with additional needs). The programme aims for children and young people to have influenced decisions surrounding service improvement in Leeds. Children and young people receive monthly opportunities detailing voice and influence activities that are available to participate in. 197 children and young people have taken part in monthly consultations run by the VIC team.



### Reflections from CYP include:

*"I first joined after being a finalist for Leeds Children's Mayor in 2018. I have continued with it for the past 5 years because I have enjoyed being involved in meetings, workshops and projects provided by Leeds Youth Council"*

*"I enjoy the wide range of opportunities that they provide for young people of Leeds, it's an amazing programme to help unite the young people of Leeds considering we've been through a lot since 2019"*

**Leeds Youth Council Campaign Group** is a group of 15 CYP aged 10-18.

The programme aims for CYP to have influenced decisions surrounding the local issue from the Make Your Mark ballot. **Reflections from CYP include:**

*"I get the opportunity to help Leeds and improve it"*

*"Knowledge about how to make a change"*

*"Feels good to be able to make a difference"*

*"Skills for my CV and new friends with similar interests"*



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<a href="#">Leeds Youth Council Network Branding</a>	October 22 - July 23 17 members LYC attended 3 sessions	To develop the new Leeds youth council logo and promotional film.	Wish 3	6 candidates submitted their design for the logo and CYP voted for their favourite. The winning logo is now used on all branded documents. Young people helped produce a film to raise awareness of youth voice opportunities in Leeds. The film (including the logo) can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .	Voice, Influence and Change Team
<a href="#">Leeds food strategy</a>	November 2022, 5 members LYC online session	To share views on the future of how food is produced, consumed, and disposed of across Leeds.	Wish 9	The strategy document has been amended and additional recommendations have been taken forward to shape the Food Action Plan which is currently being coproduced.	Communities, Housing and Environment Team

<a href="#">Leeds innovation arc</a>	November 2022 7 members LYC online session	To share information about the draft proposals for the innovation arc and determine the aspects most important for young people.	Wish 2 Wish 7	The consultation supported the proposed changes and reinforced the need for change, including new and enhanced green space, enhanced connectivity, re-use of heritage buildings, and sustainability.	Inclusive Growth Partnership
<a href="#">Make your move campaign</a>	February 2023 9 members LYC online session	To develop a social media campaign to encourage young people to participate in physical activities in support of their mental health.	Wish 9	The social media campaign reached 70, 329 accounts within the target group. There were 1,595 click-throughs to the MindMate webpage. There were 550 interactions with the hashtag #MakeYourMove. The engagement and interaction was 3x greater than the average for a MindMate campaign. One of the videos from a Leeds Youth Councillors received the most clicks and highest click through rate. The videos can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .	Public Health
<a href="#">A660 development</a>	March 2023 4 members LYC online session	To consult with young people on safety and design of streets.	Wish 6	Changes have been made to the scheme because of the consultations. Findings can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Connecting Leeds
<a href="#">Community cohesion survey</a>	July 2023 3 members of LYC online session	To share views on how Leeds can become the best inclusive city by shaping initiatives that promote community cohesion.	Wish 4	The findings of the consultation are yet to be published.	Safer, Stronger Communities Team
<a href="#">Oral health</a>	July 2023 4 members of LYC in person session	To share experiences of dental care to help improve dental services for children and young people in Leeds.	Wish 9	Funding has been obtained towards providing oral health promotion within the East Leeds locality. A full report is being co-produced and will be finalised by end of 2023.	Healthwatch West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
<a href="#">Leeds Youth Council Campaign Group</a>	September 2022 - August 2023 3x MYP and 12x members LYC met in person on a monthly basis.	To influence decisions surrounding the top local issue from the Make Your Mark ballot, 'health and wellbeing'.	Wish 1 Wish 3	The group developed 'Your Health Matters: You're the Best at Knowing You' consultation which was completed by 853 young people. Services across Leeds received the consultation report and offer to request the raw consultation data. The report has been widely shared and 75 users have accessed it via the Leeds Local Offer website. Read the full report <a href="#">here</a> .  'Your Health Matters: You're the Best at Knowing You' consultation led to the development of a partnership with MindMate and resulted in a social media campaign about exam stress, reaching a total of 36,887 accounts and receiving a total of 26,021 views. It also led to a review of the <a href="#">MindMate webpages</a> , thereby increasing access to information for children and young people about the top issue of 'exam stress'. The group developed an <a href="#">'exam stress' survey</a> leading to good practice examples from members' schools about their approach to supporting students. This will be shared at a presentation at the secondary head teacher's forum in November 2023. The working group plan to audit all secondary school websites to determine how many have a mental health and wellbeing page and to develop best practice tips and / or a template.	Future in Mind Board Voice, Influence and Change Team

## Leeds Members of Youth Parliament (MYP)

A social change programme in which young people aged 11-18 apply to become a member and young people aged 11-18 across the city vote and elect their 3 members of youth parliament, elections take place every two years.

The programme aims for the 3 elected Leeds MYPs to have influenced decisions surrounding the national issue from the Make Your Mark ballot and represent the views of young people at local, regional and national events and workshops.

3 MYP attended 17 internal meetings, 3 regional youth conferences, 1 regional residential and 1 national annual sitting

### Reflections from MYPs include:

*“Being someone who always found it difficult to find ways to make a difference and bring about change. This role has equipped me with the tools needed to bring about change. The role has allowed me to meet with like-minded people and have discussions about not only the problem but solutions. The role has provided many opportunities such as going to the House of Commons, meeting the King, join campaign groups that are fighting for a cause that I agree with. This role has given me a bit of insight in the role of an actual MP. It has allowed me to see things differently and from different perspectives. I’ve become very perseverant as decisions makers don’t always make it easy. Overall, this role has opened so many doors that I would have never been able to open by myself. This role has boosted my confidence a lot and allowed me to move to the next level of my journey.”*

*“As someone who wasn’t interested in politics beforehand, it has been an eye-opening experience. These experiences have not only provided me a deeper understanding of the socio-political climate but also enabled me to develop leadership skills and shape my ability to campaign and advocate effectively. I didn’t realise how significant this role is as well when I mention it in my personal statement. I used to want to enter finance but now I want to do something that makes a wider impact on the community.”*



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<a href="#">Food for Learning Bill</a>	3 MYPs took part in a range of workshops throughout 2023 at Regional Youth Conventions and an Annual sitting.	To influence the Food for Learning Bill and help develop the Food for Learning campaign	Wish 8	The UK Youth Parliament’s priority campaign for 2023 is the cost-of-living crisis. It was voted for at the House of Commons sitting as having the biggest impact on CYP’s health and wellbeing. As part of the National campaign , Members of Youth Parliament have helped to develop content in the <a href="#">Food for Learning Bill</a> , promoting universal/wider access to free school meals. MYP’s participated in working groups regionally and nationally around the Food for Learning Bill where their ideas contributed to the issues around standardisation and food quality that were included the debate held at the Houses of Commons. MYP’s spoke with Hilary Ben MP to raise awareness of the bill. Though he was unable to fully back the bill, he sent a written response showing his support for free school meals in primary schools. They also made a <a href="#">film to be shared</a> to raise awareness with young people across Leeds.	British Youth Council
<a href="#">Climate Action Leeds Event</a>	3 MYPs participated in the event in October 2022.	To share views on how Leeds can work towards being zero carbon, nature	Wish 5	MYP’s attended the Leeds Climate Action event called ‘From Vision to Action’ where they gave a speech on their vision for a zero carbon, nature friendly and a socially just Leeds. The event was attended by social activist groups, students, local businesses, charities and	Climate Action Leeds

		friendly, more socially just Leeds by 2030.		community groups. The aim was to help influence the decision makers in the room to include the voice of young people in creating inclusive climate action plans.	
<a href="#">Information Commissioners Office</a>	12 young people including 1 MYP attended focus group in January 2023	To take part in a focus group to provide guidance for organisations on biometric use	Wish 3	MYP Took part in a focus group with the Information Commissioners Group to understand how biometrics is used in leisure, education, and technology; shared opinions on case studies regarding the use of AI to improve focus on students and consent when AI is used on marketing analysis. MYP was able to help to create a gold standard for how biometrics are used to protect young people and educate organisations. A summary of the consultation can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Information Commissioners Office / British Youth Council
<a href="#">Leeds 2023 Youth Fund</a>	1 MYP took part in planning sessions	To co-design 2023 Youth Fund	Wish 3	MYP was part of a group of young people who co-produced Leeds 2023 Youth Fund for young people aged 14 – 30 to apply for funding to develop ideas, gain skills and bring creative projects to life. The MYP was able to share their ideas on how the youth fund can be more accessible and appealing to young people. The youth fund was then promoted across Leeds for young people to apply for.	Leeds 2023
<a href="#">Votes at 16 Youth Action Group</a>	1 MYP attended group meetings February- July 2023	To join Votes at 16 action group and campaign	Wish 3	MYP worked with young people across England to put pressure on the government to change the voting age to 16. MYP also wrote a blog to update her following on the progress of the <a href="#">Votes @ 16 campaign</a> .	British Youth Council
<a href="#">Make Your Move Campaign</a>	1 MYP attended meetings and made a film	To make a film to support the Make Your Move Campaign	Wish 9	MYP took part in the <a href="#">Make Your Move Campaign</a> that promoted positive mental health and wellbeing and made a <a href="#">film</a> . MYP co-created and delivered dance workshops alongside professional dancers to young people as part of the campaign. MYP was supported to find other opportunities to allow her group to perform and was able to showcase their dance at the Yorkshire Dance festival.	Public Health

## [Leeds Children's Mayor](#)

The Leeds Children's mayor programme is delivered in partnership with democratic services team.

It is an annual citizenship programme where Year 5 children are nominated/ elected to represent their school and write a manifesto. Shortlisted finalists' campaign across the city and children aged up to 18 who live or go to school in Leeds vote for their preferred candidates.

The Leeds Childrens Mayor works alongside the Lord Mayor attending events throughout the year and representing children and works with the VIC team and their school on a project to address their manifesto aims.

### Reflections from CYP include:

*"I was scared before, now I can speak to loads of people"* – Leeds Children's Mayor

*"I feel a lot more confident now that I've had practice"* – attendee from Leeds Children's Mayor summit



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<a href="#">Leeds Childrens Mayor 21/22</a>	From April to September 2022	To plan and deliver an event that meets the LCM manifesto aims - creating opportunities for CYP to remember friends and family who were affected by / lost their lives to Covid 19	Wish 1 Wish 3	Zulaykha and her school Bardsey Primary worked with the VIC team to deliver a 'Togetherness' event over two afternoons in July. Children at Bardsey Primary School celebrated their resilience during the pandemic, remembered family and friends who they have lost and participated in activities to enable the children to explore maintaining good mental health practices through the support of MindMate. A total of £750 was also raised for charity and the school are working to get a memorial bench. Zulaykha helped develop a <a href="#">guide</a> for children across Leeds to explain how they could deliver similar events. The team wrote a <a href="#">press release</a> which included an update about the togetherness event.	Voice, Influence and Change Team in partnership with Democratic Services
<a href="#">Leeds Children's Mayor 22/23</a>	30x primary schools submitted entries during summer 2022. 12x finalists attended the finals event in October 2022 when the winner was announced.	For children and young people to experience active citizenship by writing a manifesto, casting a vote and influencing change.	Wish 1 Wish 3 Wish 4 Wish 9 Wish 12	<p>7870 children voted in the 2022 Leeds Children Mayor elections. The winner, <a href="#">Mason Hicks</a>, read his manifesto at a full council meeting to all 99 councillors in November 2022 and received a standing ovation. In response to his deputation, lead member for Children and Families Cllr Venner developed and chaired a working group to encourage partnerships with organisations and LCC teams / services, to work with the Leeds Children's Mayor on his manifesto aims. This resulted in Mason fulfilling his ceremonial role at a number of events such as the <a href="#">Yorkshire Ability Triathlon</a>. It also led to his school's involvement in '<a href="#">My Leeds 2023</a>'. In addition, Breeze supported Mason's school with their accessible Olympics event by providing a football speedshot.</p> <p>Mason worked with his school to plan and run an <a href="#">accessible Olympics</a> on Monday 17th July, fulfilling the main manifesto pledge. Local ward Councillors donated some of their MICE money, contributing to their role as active community leaders.</p> <p>Mason attended a summit, held by the VIC team in May 2023, to promote his winning manifesto and share his <a href="#">school's Olympics guide</a> to encourage other schools to support his pledge and hold a similar event. 56 children from 14x primary schools attended the event, enabling them to implement ideas from the winning manifesto, as well as supporting children and young people to write effective manifestos for next year's elections. The schools were invited based on their location in the city and previous participation with the programme.</p> <p>Mason developed a <a href="#">video</a> providing a personal insight into the impact the programme had, as well as promoted the winning manifesto, the events they attended and the LCM programme, thereby promoting youth voice opportunities. The video has had over 150 views and was shared via the VIC network and at the Leeds Children's Mayor summit. The Leeds Children's Mayor programme received lots of positive press throughout Mason's term, for example, meeting <a href="#">King Charles</a> and the Princess of Wales.</p>	Voice, Influence and Change Team in partnership with Democratic Services

## Social Care Youth Voice Programme Highlights

### Care Leavers Council

The Care Leaver council is a group of 17- 25-year-olds who have previously spent time in the care of Leeds City council. The aim of the group is to improve the services care leavers receive from Leeds City Council, and to help make the difficult transition from care to adulthood a better experience for all young people. The group also wish to make a difference to the lives of all young people experiencing care.



### Have a Voice (Children in Care Council)

The Have a Voice Council is a group of 10- 17 years olds who are currently in the care of Leeds City Council. Group members work with decision makers to improve children's services and to ensure all those who play a part in the lives of children in care – including schools – uphold the requirement to enable young people to have a genuine voice and influence.



*"I joined the Children in Care council because I wanted to get my voice heard and to make a difference. I want to make a positive impact and being a member has helped me to do this in so many different ways"*

*"I had a blast; it was so good and a pleasure. It feels good to be appreciated."*

*"I've gained a lot of experience and I feel like I am helping make a difference."*

*"I enjoyed myself and actually learnt a lot from being involved."*

<b>Project / Campaign</b>	<b>Opening</b> <i>Who / when</i>	<b>Opportunity</b> <i>What</i>	<b>Obligation</b> <i>Wish / Promise</i>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Ownership</b> <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<b>Designated Looked After Nurse Consultation</b>	Designated Nurse met with 6 group members April 2022	To share views about how Looked after nurses should communicate with them if they miss appointments, their views on health assessments and how GPs can support them in their final review health assessment	Wish 3 Wish 9 The Promise	The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and Care Leavers fed back in May 2022, that they have listened to the ideas they gave when asked about requesting feedback for when they don't attend appointments and will be using WhatsApp, making the message personal and keeping it short and snappy with requests for yes/no answers to 2 questions. The young people's ideas and feedback about health assessments will be included in a training film (animation) for social workers and carers about health and the importance of health assessments- still in development.	Specialist Nursing team – Looked after children and young people

<b>Archway – new care leavers hub</b>	April 2022 -3 group members joined other young people for consultation session at Archway and 2 young people joined ongoing co-design group	To take part in a consultation event with other care leavers and young people about how to make Archway even better for young people and what it should offer and be part of ongoing co-design group.	Wish 3 The Promise	Young people shared their ideas and feedback about improvements to the facilities and décor to make it a more young person friendly space. 2 group members have regularly attended the ongoing co-design group. All their ideas have influenced the changes and improvements made including furniture, equipment, soft furnishings and programme of activities offered on weekly basis.	Care Leavers Service
<b>Care Leavers Pledge and Agreement</b>	All group members have taken part in meetings with the Care Leavers Team manager over last 18 months April 2022 – September 2023	Following suggestion from Care Leavers Council, the young people, VIC Team and Care Leavers service have been working together to produce a new Care Leavers Agreement and Pledge.	Wish 3 The Promise	Over the last 18 months, regular meetings and updates have taken place on the content, wording, design and format and the final version was agreed in June 2023 and Care Leavers Service is currently working with the Communications team to finalise the pledge and agreement	Care Leavers Service
<b>Independent Fostering Agencies Commissioning Panel</b>	5 group members September 2022	To help decide which fostering agencies should be included as approved suppliers.	Wish 3 The Promise	5 young people were involved in a commissioning panel for independent fostering agencies. They assessed applications and rated the most appropriate ones to be included as approved ‘suppliers’ for the framework and influenced decision for who should be approved suppliers	Commissioning Team
<b>My Things Matter Campaign</b>	All group members September 2022 and May 2023	To decide if Leeds City Council should sign up to the My Things Matter Campaign and then share their views on draft guidance developed for staff in meetings/individual phone calls	Wish 3 The Promise	Leeds City Council signed up to the pledges in October 2022 following discussions with Have a Voice Council, Care Leavers Council, Corporate Parenting Operational Group and Corporate Parenting Board. Young people were consulted on their views and experiences in relation to the pledges and their views were included in the draft guidance that is being develop for staff.	Corporate Parenting Board
<b>SAFE taskforce Commissioning panel</b>	5 group members October 2022	To review applications for a SAFE taskforce contract	Wish 3 The Promise	5 Young people were involved in a commissioning panel for a SAFE taskforce contract. They shared their views, opinions and feedback and influenced the decision on who was awarded the contract.	Commissioning Team
<b>Recruitment Voice and Influence Officer</b>	9 group members January 2023	To plan young people’s involvement and take part in the recruitment of Voice and influence Officer	Wish 3 The Promise	9 young people developed an activity and asked the interviewees questions and scored them. The young people shared their scores and feedback with the VIC Team which contributed 30% to final decision.	Voice, Influence and Change Team.
<b>Total Respect Training</b>	3 group members planned and delivered Total Respect Training to members of the Corporate Parenting Board March and April 2023	To increase board members understanding of being in care and priorities of care experienced young people	Wish 3 The Promise	All members of the Corporate Parenting Board have an increased awareness of the care experienced young people’s lived experience and their top priorities.	Voice, Influence & Change Team in partnership with Workforce Development.

<b>Stable Homes Built on Love -National Consultation</b>	10 group members Discussed in group sessions and feedback gathered from one-to-one sessions April -May 2023	Opportunity for young people to share what they most want from a social worker to be included in a regional resource developed by Principle Social Worker Network -feeding into the Children and Family Social Worker Workforce government consultation -Stable Homes Built on Love	Wish 3 The Promise <a href="#">Influenced Statutory Guidance</a>	Young people shared a resource they were already developing about what they think makes a good social worker and top tips following the request from Principle Social Worker– this was included with other young peoples views and developed this regional <a href="#">resource</a> The young people’s feedback was shared with Leeds Childrens Social care staff who lead on recruitment, and they are using the young people’s feedback to design questions and activities for social worker recruitment. The feedback is also shared at the Voice of the Child in Social Care training sessions that take place through out the year in Leeds- 128 staff and social care students on placement in leeds have heard this feedback from YP	Principle Social Worker – Leeds
<b>Fostering Panels</b>	4 group members May 2023	To meet with Fostering team manager and share views/ experiences about foster carers and help develop questions to ask at fostering panels	Wish 3 The Promise	The young people were able to share their views on what would make a good foster carer. The young people created questions that will now be asked to aspiring foster carers attending panels	Fostering Team
<b>Recruitment Social Care Managers</b>	2 group members and 2 other care experienced YP May 2023	To plan young people’s involvement and take part in the recruitment of Service Delivery Managers- Children’s Residential	Wish 3 The Promise	2 group members and 2 YP from a residential home developed and asked interviewees several questions and assessed them based on their answers. The young people shared their feedback and scores which contributed 25% to final decision.	Children’s Social Care
<b>Have a Voice Council Promotion film and flyers</b>	10 group members June 2023	Opportunity to plan, develop and create a promotional film- which is going to be used to encourage young people to join the groups and update flyers	Wish 3 The Promise	The group produced this <a href="#">film</a> which is going to be shared across the city and developed new flyers to promote the groups	Voice, Influence and Change Team
<b>Step up social work Recruitment Panel</b>	3 group members attended the Step up to Social Work recruitment panel. June-July 2023	Members of the Care Leavers Council were given the opportunity to help assess and recruit student social workers to the Step Up to Social Work Programme.	Wish 3 The Promise	Young people helped develop a group exercise which included asking potential social work students questions. Young people were involved in the recruitment and selection for the Step Up to Social Work degree programme. The young people influenced the decision on which social workers were recruited.	Childrens Services Workforce Development Team
<b>Health Watch-Oral Health</b>	5 group members June 2023	Opportunity to share experiences of accessing dental care in Leeds and help improve dental services in Leeds	Wish 3 Wish 9 The Promise	Health Watch spoke with the young people to identify gaps in knowledge on oral health, areas in need of improvement within dental practices. Health Watch will share the information and views of the YP with dental services in Leeds to help improve dental services that young people access.	Health Watch

<b>Corporate Parenting Board Meeting</b>	3 group members July 2023	To participate in the Corporate Parenting Board Meeting to share young people's views and experiences about education.	Wish 3 Wish 10 The Promise	The young people shared feedback gathered from last few years and their own experience of being in education and highlighted areas of concern that needed improving.	Voice, Influence and Change Team Corporate Parenting Board
<b>Supported Accommodation for Young people Commissioning Panel</b>	5 group members July 2023	Group members were asked to evaluate applications from services for the Leeds Electronic Market Place (EMP) for Supported Accommodation for Young People	Wish 3 The Promise	The young people evaluated and scored the services and shared their feedback which influenced final decisions on who was awarded contracts	Commissioning Team

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Programme Highlights

The Leeds SEND Youth Forum was established in December 2020. The forum is a group of 11 to 25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are passionate about making Leeds a more child friendly city. The 61 forum members receive monthly email updates giving them the opportunity to attend and to have their say on local, regional and national consultations.

### SEND Youth Forum

*"I joined the SEND Youth Forum to help young people similar to me get the support and help they deserve"*

*"I joined the SEND Youth Forum as I wanted to share my voice and experiences of growing up with various neurodiverse conditions that were undiagnosed for a long time. I want to make a difference to services, activities and education in Leeds, in the knowledge that other young people can get the best support possible."*

*"I joined the SEND Youth Forum to make friends and to make the world a better place for everyone, so they don't have a tough time like I do."*

*"I enjoy being able to share my voice and be heard, and bring to light SEND young people too help make Leeds a more inclusive and child-friendly city"*

*"I enjoy taking part in projects and creating resources to help improve SEND services"*

*"I have a greater understanding of my own and other young people's needs and wants"*

The team deliver a number of youth voice programmes for young people with SEND in mainstream and specialist provisions, these include the SEND Summit, Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board, Compass House Project and consultation sessions.

### SEND Summit

*"The activities were fun and enjoyable."*

*"I really enjoyed being able to share my ideas."*

### Give it a Go Event

*"It was my first time riding a bike!"*

*"It was such a fun event; I don't usually get chance to take part in these kinds of activities."*



<b>Project / Campaign</b>	<b>Opening</b> <i>Who / when</i>	<b>Opportunity</b> <i>What</i>	<b>Obligation</b> <i>Statutory / Wish / Promise</i>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Ownership</b> <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<a href="#">Leeds Local Offer website</a>	Students from the Powerhouse, West SILC. 1 hour a week for 3 months.	Reviewing and rewriting the young people's section on the Leeds Local Offer website.	SEND Code of Practice	Full review of the young people's section of the LLO website. <a href="#">All suggested changes implemented.</a>	Voice Influence and Change Team
<a href="#">Accessible Breeze in the Park session</a>	Consultation with 72 students from specialist provisions across Leeds.	Focus groups were delivered in specialist provisions across Leeds with the aim to raise awareness of Breeze in the Park and find out from young people how the sessions could be more accessible.	Wish 2 Wish 7 Wish 12	More relaxed sessions were offered during the summer programme. Suggestions made by students were implemented.	Breeze Leeds
<a href="#">SEND Review Green Paper</a>	July 2022  Two national consultations.	Opportunity to influence the way local services for children and young people with SEND are inspected. Shared the online consultation surveys with the SEND Youth Forum. Held a focussed SEND Youth Forum session to gather their feedback.	SEND Code of Practice	All feedback was submitted, and the new papers were written taking into account feedback from children, young people, parents and carers.	National Government
<a href="#">Compass House Project</a>	September to December 2022  77 students from across six specialist learning settings	The Compass House is a work experience project- which was developed following young people sharing they had limited work experience opportunities. Students worked together to plan their Christmas pop up shop, the students made all the decisions about the shop, created all the products to be sold and then worked in the pop-up shop,	Wish 3 Wish 11	The 2022 pop up shop opened for five days week commencing 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2022 in Kirkgate Market.  The full report can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Voice Influence and Change Team in partnership with specialist learning provisions.
<a href="#">SEND Summit</a>	56 students from Bromfield South SILC, Rodillian Partnership, West SILC, John Jamieson, Oulton Academy, Green Meadows Academy and the Lighthouse School came together on Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2022 at Leeds Civic Hall for the first SEND Summit.	The SEND Summit provided an opportunity for secondary aged students with SEND to come together to share views and opinions on service delivery and development as well as finding out about services that are available to them.  The SEND Summit enables students to meet other young people from across the city, learn about services, visit Leeds Civic Hall and make a difference.	Wish 3	<b>Youth Activity Fund consultation</b> – all feedback was shared with the community committees and fed into decisions about activities to fund locally.  <b>Your Health Matters consultation</b> – all feedback received was incorporated in the final report and shared with services to use as a reference when developing services. The full report can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Community Committees/ Communities team

<b>Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board</b>	<p>In November 2022; 12 students from West SILC, East SILC and Broomfield South SILC took over the SEND Partnership Board on Tuesday 29th November 2022 as part of National Takeover Challenge.</p>	<p>Every November students from specialist provisions in Leeds takeover the Leeds Area SEND Partnership board. Students plan the meeting, agree what they want to share with the board and chair the meeting.</p>	<p>Wish 3 Wish 12</p>	<p>Students from our specialist schools and the SEND Youth Forum have developed a resource for the teams and services to share information about the qualities they would like to see in the workers who support them in their everyday lives. <a href="#">The resource can be found here.</a> The resource has been shared widely, and service are being asked to feedback how they have used the resource. The feedback will be shared with students. The full reports can be found <a href="#">here.</a></p>	<p>Voice Influence and Change Team in partnership with specialist learning provisions. SEND Partnership Board</p>
<b>Give it a Go event</b>	<p>On Thursday 6th July 2023; 69 students with SEND in Leeds attended the Give it a Go event at John Charles Centre for Sport.</p>	<p>During the 2021 takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board students asked for the opportunity to try out different sports and activities (short breaks) to see what they enjoy and don't enjoy.</p>	<p>Wish 2 Wish 7 Wish 9 Wish 12</p>	<p>The event gave young people with SEND the opportunity to try out different activities and sports that are on offer to them across Leeds (short breaks and fun activities). Each student received an activity booklet that provided information about the activities and how to book onto them after the event and an accessible play spaces booklet developed for the event. Information about activities available in Leeds and accessible places spaces can be found on the <a href="#">Leeds Local Offer website.</a> The full report <a href="#">here.</a></p>	<p>Funded by the Community Committees  Event planned and delivered by the Voice Influence and Change Team, Breeze Leeds, Child Friendly Leeds and Active Leeds.</p>
<b>Raising awareness of disabilities – resource developed by the SEND Youth Forum</b>	<p>2023 Campaign developed by Leeds SEND Youth Forum</p>	<p>The Leeds SEND Youth Forum raised that they want professionals they come into contact with to have a greater understanding of disabilities and how to support young people in different situations.  Members developed their campaign over a number of online sessions.</p>	<p>Wish 3 Wish 12</p>	<p>The SEND Youth Forum have worked together to create a booklet of various journeys and challenges of young people with SEND to help you help us! The resource is not just about knowing how you can support young people, but to understand how we might perceive and feel during these experiences. <a href="#">The resource can be downloaded here.</a></p>	<p>Voice Influence and Change Team</p>
<b>Scope – information for activity providers</b>	<p>June 2023  SEND Youth Forum Members</p>	<p>Members heard from Scope Activities for All and how Scope have shared the SEND Youth Forum resource with activity providers in Leeds.</p>	<p>Wish 3 Wish 12</p>	<p>The SEND Youth Forum have developed an information document for activity providers that shares how young people feel when accessing an activity or group for the first time and provided some 'top tips' to help make a young person's experience of accessing group / activities positive.</p>	<p>Scope</p>

<b>MindMate – website alternations</b>	May 2023 SEND Youth Forum Members	Members heard from MindMate about their website, and the new Neurodiversity Information Hub. Members shared their experiences of using the website and were tasked with having a further look at the website and then provide feedback to MindMate.	Wish 1 Wish 3	Members fed back to MindMate that they really liked the website; however, they shared how the urgent help information is all for under 18's, and only option for 19 to 25 year olds is to call 999 or visit A&E. Based on their feedback MindMate have updated the service information on their website for 19 to 25 year olds.	MindMate
<b>Reviewing the Leeds Local Offer Website</b>	February 2023	The Leeds SEND Youth Forum attended an online session on to review the young people's section on the Leeds Local Offer website.	Wish 3 Wish 9 Wish 12	All feedback and recommendations for improvement to the website have been actioned and responded to. The full report can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Voice Influence and Change Team
<b>Youth Activity Fund Consultation</b>	November 2022 to March 2023	The Communities Team at Leeds City Council asked young people with SEND via an online survey and consultation activity at the SEND Summit in November 2023 what activities they would like to be available in their local area.	Wish 2 Wish 3 Wish 7 Wish 12	All feedback has been shared with the Communities Team to share with the Community Committees when making decisions about activities to fund in local areas.	Communities Team

## Leeds Local Offer (SEND)

The Leeds Local Offer website is for those 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and has been operational since 1 September 2014: [www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk) The Leeds Local Offer is not just a directory of services, it is the unique place where young people with SEND and their families can provide suggestions for improving services and for new services they need. Comments that come in through the website and to [llo@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:llo@leeds.gov.uk) drive and influence service improvement.

### Feedback from families

*"The Leeds Local Offer is pretty good, and there is lots of useful information for families."*

*"The videos are especially helpful and explain things simply and clearly for families as well as staff."*

*"Useful to find and share consultations."*

*"Leeds Local Offer Live is a great event, not only for families but for professionals to network and find out more about SEND services."*

*"The Leeds Local Offer ebulletin is really useful to hear about SEND events and service updates."*

### Leeds Local Offer Website

In the report period from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2022 to the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 the Leeds Local Offer website had 41,766 unique visitors; unique visitors are the number of visitors to a website in a single reporting period. The number of people viewing the Leeds Local Offer website has increased by 13,119 from the previous year, when there were 28,647 unique visitors. This is a 45% increase.

### Raising awareness of the Leeds Local Offer and SEND services in Leeds City Council

- The [Leeds Local Offer Facebook group](#) was set up for families in December 2020 as an alternative mechanism for families to receive updates about SEND services and activities taking place in the city. There are 771 members in the group; 417 have joined in the last 12 months. Over the last 12 months there have been 280 posts.
- [Leeds Local Offer Live](#) is an annual marketplace event that provides families an opportunity to speak and find out about a wide range of SEND services in Leeds. The 2023 event took place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023, 10am till 2pm at Pudsey Civic Hall. There were 50 SEND service stalls at the event, with 236 families in attendance.
- Following feedback from families, the [Leeds Local Offer information booklet](#) was produced to help families of a child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) find out about information, help and support available to them in Leeds. The information booklet can be downloaded [here](#).
- The Leeds Local Offer officer [visits support groups](#) across Leeds to promote and share information about the Leeds Local Offer website and SEND services in Leeds.
- The bi-monthly **Leeds Local Offer ebulletin** is shared with over 700+ professionals working with families. The ebulletin provides information on service updates, Leeds Local Offer developments, voice and influence opportunities and much more.

### You said our response

Leeds City Council must respond to all feedback and comments received about the Local Offer on an annual basis, and outline what actions have been taken in response to the comments received. A summary of all the feedback received and actions taken in response to this feedback is published [here](#). Examples include information being updated on the website, sections reviewed, new sections added, new document created to explain how to use the website and a new summary booklet for families.

## Parents and Carers

Leeds Parent Carer Forum is led by local parents working to represent the views of parents and carers of children and young people with SEND while working in partnership with the Local Authority Education, Health & Care services to make a positive difference for children and families in Leeds. 30 Parent / Carer Support Groups from across Leeds meet quarterly with the Leeds Parent Carer Forum and the SEND Voice and Influence Coordinator at Leeds City Council to feedback the issues parents / carers of children with SEND are experiencing. These issues are shared with the relevant service and responses given.



<b>Project / Campaign</b>	<b>Opening</b> <i>Who / when</i>	<b>Opportunity</b> <i>What</i>	<b>Obligation</b> <i>Statutory / Wish / Promise</i>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Ownership</b> <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
<a href="#">SEND Review Green Paper</a>	Parents and carers of children with SEND July 2022	Opportunity to influence the way local services for CYP with SEND are inspected by participating in online consultation surveys with parent carer support groups and via the Leeds Local Offer website.	SEND Code of Practice	All feedback was submitted, and the new papers were written, taking into account feedback from children, young people, parents and carers.	National Government
<a href="#">Developing a new Leeds Parent Carer Forum (SEND)</a>	September 2022 to April 2023	Support the development and promote the new DfE funded parent carer participation forum	Statutory – SEND Code of Practice	The VIC Team worked with Contact and parent/ carer support groups to help develop a new Leeds Parent Carer Forum -launched in March 2023.	Leeds Parent Carer Forum (SEND)
<a href="#">Leeds SEND Parent Carer Support Group Network</a>	Quarterly online meetings with representatives from SEND parent carer support groups	Representatives from SEND parent carer support groups feedback the issues parents / carers of children with SEND are experiencing. These issues are shared with the relevant service and responses given.	Statutory – SEND Code of Practice	The issues tracker, responses and actions can be <a href="#">found here</a> .	Voice Influence and Change Team and Leeds Parent Carer Forum
<a href="#">STARS/Communication &amp; Interaction Team Leader Interview Panel</a>	A parent / carer sat on the interview panel September 2022	To be part of an interview panel and decide who should be appointed to the role		A parent / carer sat on the interview panel with an equal weighting.	Learning Inclusion Service
<a href="#">Leeds Schools Admissions Policy</a>	Parents and carers of children with SEND November 2022	An online survey was shared via the Leeds Local Offer website and Facebook group and with parent carer support groups.	Wish 10	The new admissions policy was signed off in February 2023.	Admissions Service, Leeds Cit Council
<a href="#">Thackray Museum of Medicine – sensory room</a>	6 Parents and carers of children with SEND November 2022	Mystery shopping visit to the Thackray Museum to review how accessible the museum is for families with SEND.	Wish 2 Wish 12	The Museum have made changes to the museum based on feedback from families.	Thackray Museum of Medicine
<a href="#">Accessible Playgrounds in Leeds</a>	38 parents' carers of children with SEND completed the online survey January 2023	An online survey was shared via the Leeds Local Offer website and Facebook group and with parent carer support groups.	Wish 2 Wish 12	The information gathered was used to inform the design of new play facilities to help ensure we fulfil our aim to provide 'something for everyone'.	Parks and Countryside Service, Leeds City Council

## Key priorities for the next 12 months

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- a) Work in partnership to ensure the voice and influence of children, young people and parents carers and Child Friendly Leeds Wishes become embedded within Leeds City Council key strategies, policies and plans.
- b) Five O's model – implement and embed the new Five O's model in Voice Influence and Change team practice and use model when advising teams and services on effective voice and influence practice.
- c) Continue to build stronger relationships with third sector partners who facilitate youth voice groups by working together on the Youth Voice Groups Children and Young people's Partnership Takeover and visiting groups and creating spotlights on good practice blogs.
- d) Increase the number of third sector organisations contributing to the 6 monthly voice and influence reports and quarterly newsletters.
- e) Help raise children and young people's understanding of how to share their ideas and raise any issues in their local community by developing guides with elected members and community committees
- f) Increase young people's awareness of the work of the team and voice and influence opportunities through implementing our social media plan for Instagram. Impact will be demonstrated by increase in followers and engagement with posts
- g) Update and refresh parent, carer and family voice and influence on Leeds for Learning
- h) Targeted campaign to recruit younger members aged 10-15 to the children in care council
- i) Review the Leeds Youth Council network model and approach
- j) Respond to feedback from families and explore options for Leeds Local Offer Website to move away from being a directory-based website
- k) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) -continue the review of all team programmes and use the EDI checklists developed by the team when planning and delivering sessions and events.

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# CHILD FRIENDLY LEEDS 12 WISHES

## ACTION PLAN

## 2023 / 2024

Prepared By:

**Sadiya Salim**

Approved By:

**Hannah Lamplugh**

Date:

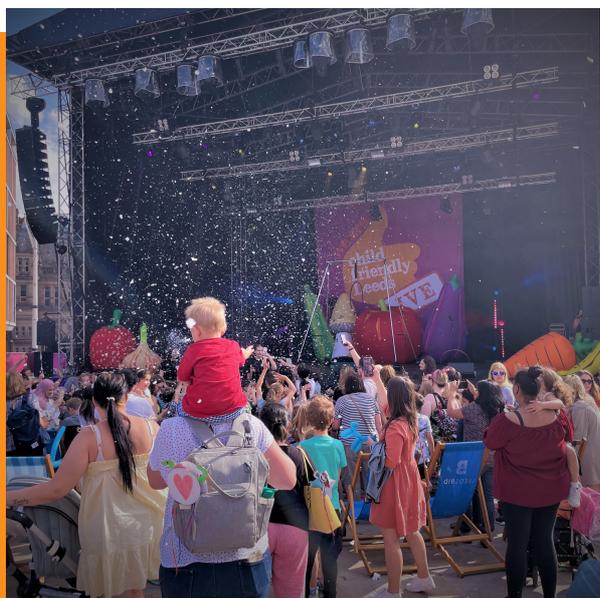
**20/12/2023**

### ANNUAL ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Child Friendly Leeds 12 Wishes were refreshed in 2022 as we marked the tenth anniversary of the initiative. For each wish, leads have developed some key goals working with the CFL team highlighted below.



# Background to Child Friendly Leeds



Since 2012, Leeds has had a vision to be a child friendly city, an approach underpinned by the UN Convention on the rights of the child and initiated by UNICEF. In undertaking this journey, we had a focus on one question: 'what is it like to be a child growing up in Leeds & how do we make it better?' We consulted children and young people to find out what would make Leeds a more child friendly city, which formed the wishes.

## What are we outlining?

Celebrating the tenth birthday from July 2022 - July 2023, we refreshed the CFL 12 wishes. The feedback from local and city-wide consultations, surveys, and ballots over a three year period (2018 - 2021) were reviewed, capturing the views of 80,000 children and young people to identify the top issues and priorities. The next step involved reviewing the draft wording with the CFL Forward Planning group, other key teams and then "checked back" with 68 children and young people from youth groups and schools to finalise and launch the new wishes.

The CFL 12 wishes action plan outlines the lead officers, supporting staff and teams for each wish along with the short and long-term goals which will help address the 12 wishes and raise awareness of the importance of them.



## An Introduction to the Leads

The voices and views of children and young people are at the heart of making Leeds a child friendly city. As a team we are raising awareness by prioritising these wishes in all our work. We believe everyone can use these to think about how they can make a difference. That is why we asked experts in work happening around the wishes from across different departments of the council to take a lead and champion them.



The aim is to work towards the short-term goals over a 12 month period and review and long-term goals over the next 5 years. The action plan is developed to highlight some of the key activities, and resources linked to the wish or things that have been developed in response to the wish. This plan does not describe all of the actions and work taking place across the city, which will potentially contribute towards the wishes. Through this, we aim to share and communicate back to children, young people and families of what actions are being taken to address the wishes.

### What is the role of a lead?

- > The role of a lead is to champion and raise awareness of the wish. They will work with colleagues from different teams and services that may work on a similar agenda to agree goals.
- > The lead will be responsible for coordinating updates from relevant teams on progress and identifying any challenges that may hinder progress against the goals.
- > Lead officers key role is to identify where they can add value in their current role and in partnership with the relevant teams and services. The CFL team will then work collaboratively to feedback and share updates with the city.
- > Leads are asked to provide a brief annual update at the 'CFL Forward Planning Group' meeting and for the annual communication in template provided. Ideally there would be regular communication between the lead officer and those supporting the wish in the form of a working group or email group.

## CFL 12 WISHES

# Measuring Success

The 12 Wishes shape the work we do here in Child Friendly Leeds and were also shared with HM King Charles during his visit to Leeds in 2022. For each wish, goals have been developed by the lead officers in partnership with relevant teams, services and in some cases strategic boards.

The wishes can be mapped against any data available to the leads and have already been mapped out against questions in the 'My Health My School Survey' - a citywide pupil perception survey completed anonymously in learning settings. This will provide a data source that can help track how children and young people's perceptions and behaviours change over time.

Other outcomes may include how the wishes have influenced or been incorporated into strategic priorities and plans and how they have been linked to / inspired projects and activities across the city as well as raising awareness through the 12 wishes communication campaign.



## How will we measure impact?

An annual update will be produced and shared via our blog in partnership with lead officers as well as a five year report in 2028. We will regularly communicate on social channels and will also be present updates to the Child Friendly Leeds Forward Planning Group, Children and Families Senior Leadership team and Children and Young People's Partnership.



### Strategic Commitment

Embedding these 12 wishes into city-wide strategies and plans



### Greater Awareness

Sharing the 12 wishes through a digital campaign and city-wide communication



### Annual Survey Data

Mapping against annual data sets i.e. 'My Health My School' Survey



### University Research

Working with local Universities on data, research and projects



### Achieving Goals

Regular progress updates by leads against their goals for each of the 12 wishes

1

of 12  
CFL  
Wishes



**Children and young people know how and where to get support for their mental health and wellbeing if they need it.**

Children and young people have a greater understanding of their mental health and emotional wellbeing. They know where to get information and advice and who to speak to, to help them find services and support and it is available to them when they need it.

### Projects & Plans

- Future In Mind Strategy
- Leeds Mental Health Strategy 2020 - 2025
- Schools can access a variety of initiatives and support by LCC Health and Wellbeing Service including MindMate
- CYP Suicide Prevention work plan is in development
- Programme of work aiming to address inequalities

### Short-term goals

**Lead: Charlotte Hanson**

Advanced Health Improvement Specialist • Adults & Health  
charlotte.hanson@leeds.gov.uk

1. To organise an ambassador event focussing on mental health in 2023 and encourage partners to promote MindMate and local services using existing assets as well as finding out how else they can support broader wish.
2. To deliver locality mental health promotion campaigns in Inner East Cluster in summer terms and 2 further clusters in Autumn and Spring terms. Ensuring schools and local community groups taking advantage of mental health promotion opportunities.
3. Promote Make Your Move campaign showing links between being active and positive mental health across social media platforms and targeted promotion.
4. To engage with Youth Council Campaign group to work in partnership with MindMate colleagues to improve the section of the website relating to getting help in schools.

### Long-term goals

1. Build in systems so that MindMate is promoted in schools and other settings automatically.
2. Reduce inequalities related to minority ethnic young people including reducing stigma about accessing support.
3. All staff working with children and young people in Leeds have good understanding of pathways and can advise families/young people effectively about how to get support.



# WISH 2

PLAY & SPACES



## Projects & Plans

- Physical Activity Ambition
- Children Young People’s Plan
- Leeds Commitment to Play
- Play Sufficiency Partnership
- Leeds Parks and Green Spaces
- Play Streets
- Play Streets Enabling Project
- Playing Out
- Play Enabling Grant
- Play Sufficiency
- Urban95 Academy
- Love Exploring

### Lead: Jenny Rutherford

Play Strategy Officer • Children & Families  
jenny.rutherford@leeds.gov.uk

## Short-term goals

1. To increase the number of new and regular play streets in Leeds.
2. To influence key housing partners (Leeds City Council and external developers) to innovate new and existing developments in pilot areas of the city to make environments near to home more child friendly and playful.
3. To embed the voice of children into neighbourhood planning, ensuring the needs of children are considered and responded to in a meaningful and impactful way.

## Long-term goals

1. For all housing contractors (including private housing) to engage with Child Friendly Leeds design principles to make new developments more playful, including children's voice in planning and design.
2. To develop new spaces in the city centre that are safe, welcoming and child friendly, with a particular focus on creating places for older children/teenagers.
3. To have child friendly parks and green spaces - where we are making improvements and creating new play spaces and children involved in this process.



# WISH 3

YOUTH VOICE

**3** of 12 CFL Wishes

**Children and young people express their views, feel heard and are involved in decisions that affect their lives.**

Children and young people have a greater awareness of the different ways they can share their views and ideas. They know how to influence change within their school and community. They have access to support and training to develop their skills and confidence to enable them to have a voice and influence.

we are **child friendly Leeds**

## Projects & Plans

- Children & Young People’s Plan
- Children & Families Partnership Board
- Teams include VIC team, Communities Team and Youth Offer team
- Leeds youth voice programmes and youth voice groups
- Forums across the city (third sector, health, LCC etc.)

### Lead: Emily Alderson

Area Voice & Influence Coordinator • Children & Families  
emily.alderson@leeds.gov.uk

## Short-term goals

1. Increase the reach of the Leeds Youth Voice Instagram platform so that more children and young people know how they can have their say across the city (impact measured by number of followers and number of programme sign ups direct from Instagram).
2. Develop and share films produced by young people to promote Leeds Youth Voice programmes (impact measured by number of views on YouTube and number of programme sign ups referencing films).
3. Produce a ‘youth voice’ guide to be shared by Councillors explaining how young people can express their views / ideas / issues and influence change in their local community and city wide (impact measured by number of programme sign ups referencing guide).

## Long-term goals

1. An increase in children and young people reporting that they know how to share their ideas in their local area / city.
2. An increase in children and young people actively sharing their ideas in their local communities and city.



# WISH 4

## DIFFERENCES

# 4

of 12  
CFL  
Wishes

**Differences are celebrated in Leeds so children and young people feel accepted for who they are. They do not experience bullying and discrimination.**

People in Leeds have a better understanding of diversity and therefore celebrate differences in abilities, ethnicity, family background, language, religion, sex and opinions.

Children and young people feel accepted, included and valued. They have a greater awareness of their rights not to be bullied or discriminated against and know what to do if it happens.



### Projects & Plans

- Trauma informed vision
- Future in Mind Board
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy
- Cultural cohesion quality mark available to services and schools to complete
- Council-wide focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Hate Crime Strategic Board - work being done across the city to address and reduce Hate crimes and Hate Incidents including those experienced by Children and Young People

### Leads: Saira Mumtaz & Joedy Greenhough

Health & Wellbeing Lead • Children & Families  
Policy, Planning & Procedures Officer • Children & Families  
saira.m.jones@leeds.gov.uk • joedy.greenhough@leeds.gov.uk

### Short-term goals

1. Establish and embed a Wish 4 planning and working groups to support with Anti-bullying & discrimination work. The group to include the following service areas: Early Help, C&FS Intelligence and Policy service, Youth Service, Learning Improvement, Vulnerable Learners, Learning Inclusion, Prevent.
2. The planning and working groups to carry out a consultation across the directorate to gather greater intelligence on bullying and discrimination. This consultation will extend to schools and settings and the findings will be analysed.
3. Determine a broad directorate definition of bullying.
4. Develop a 'Services and Resources Hub' of information for wish 4 on the School Wellbeing site.
5. Analyse the data from the My Health My School survey and identify questions which could be impact measures for this wish.

### Long-term goals

1. Bi-Annual consultation with services and schools to be in place along with arrangements to analyse the data/information gained and produce a report on the findings.
2. Reduction in number of children and young people reporting bullying incidents in schools and learning settings to be determined by the data from the My Health, My School Survey.
3. Work with young people to produce a video on bullying and discrimination that could be shared with schools and children and young people.



# WISH 5

CLIMATE CHANGE



## Projects & Plans

- Climate Action Plan
- Best city ambition
- Inclusive Growth
- Climate emergency advisory committee
- Scrutiny board
- Executive board
- Measure carbon footprint of the city
- YP Toolkit
- Leeds By Example
- engagement with Inner North-West Children & Young People's sub-group

### Leads: Chad Newton & Steve Ruse

Senior Policy & Comms Officer • Communities, Housing & Environment  
 Sustainable Schools Consultant • Children & Families  
[chad.newton@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:chad.newton@leeds.gov.uk) • [steven.ruse@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:steven.ruse@leeds.gov.uk)

## Short-term goals

1. Promote to schools: increase the awareness of the Climate Action Route Map, promote Eco/Green team training for pupils, increase third party provision in schools (e.g. Vital Energi Project) and teacher training on climate education.
2. Publish the climate action plan with a link to children and young people.
3. Introduce awards to celebrate the best climate action by young people.

## Long-term goals

1. Link in with Employment & Skills around green skills and opportunities. Work towards climate action plan delivery.
2. Establish targets for implementation of Climate Action Route Map and/or Eco/Green-Teams.
3. Identify and support best practice sharing between schools to amplify and accelerate school climate action.

# WISH 6

TRAVEL & SAFETY

6

of 12  
CFL  
Wishes

Children and young people  
can travel around the city  
safely and easily.

we are  
child  
friendly  
Leeds

Children and young people feel that public transport is safe, reliable and accessible. They will not experience rising costs.

## Projects & Plans

- Vision Zero
- Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy
- Road Safety training in Primary Schools across Leeds, inc. for children with SEND
- Road Safety assemblies
- Support the Independent Travel Team
- Bikeability offered by Cycle North to primary and secondary schools and family sessions
- Leeds Best City Ambition
- Children & Young Peoples Plan



## Short-term goals

**Lead: Rosie Revell**

Team Leader Safe & Sustainable Travel • City Development  
[rosie.revell@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:rosie.revell@leeds.gov.uk)

1. Increase delivery of cycle lessons to adults and children.
2. Develop a new resource to support parents support the delivery of road safety messages at home.
3. Review and update existing class lesson plans.

## Long-term goals

1. Zero people killed or seriously injured on Leeds roads by 2040 (to view interim report due 2025).
2. Encourage and develop Behaviour Change so that more sustainable and active travel decisions are made.
3. Ensure that all schools receive road safety training every 2 years (yearly if within a priority area).

**7** of 12 CFL Wishes

Children and young people know about different things to do and places to go across the city. They enjoy different cultural experiences including art, music, sport and film.

Children, young people and families feel there is better promotion and communication of fun and particularly free things to do and places to go within the city including events, activities, groups, cultural experiences and days out.

*we are child friendly Leeds*

## Projects & Plans

- Leeds Best City Ambition
- Children and Young People's Plan
- 3 A's Learning Strategy
- Cultural Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Strategy

### Lead: Sarah Westaway

Head of Arts Development • Children & Families  
[sarah.westaway@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.westaway@leeds.gov.uk)

## Short-term goals

1. Engage with partners to ensure the offer for children and young people is visible and clearly communicated.
2. With partners, provide opportunities for children and young people to share their ideas in the design and delivery of activities.
3. Ensure care experienced children and young people, including those in residential settings, have opportunities to participate in leisure activities.

## Long-term goals

1. Understand the value and impact of the work delivered with and for children and young people during 2023 Year of Culture, to inform future working.
2. Work with the University of Leeds on the second phase of the Mapping Cultural Engagement with Schools research project.
3. Work with Leeds Cultural Education partnership, Leeds Music Education partnership, Breeze, Active Leeds, and other partners on a shared vision for work with and for children and young people in Leeds.



### Projects & Plans

- Child Poverty Strategy and Child Poverty Board
- Healthy Holidays and Healthy Holidays Steering Board
- Neighbourhood improvement board
- Youth Activity Fund
- School Uniform Exchange
- Digital inclusion
- Lord Mayor £2 bus travel
- Household support fund
- Cost of living silver group
- Local welfare support scheme
- Tacking Poverty Framework
- Workforce Development

### Lead: Julie Devonald

Head of Service Workforce Dev & Change • Children & Families  
[julie.devonald@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:julie.devonald@leeds.gov.uk)

### Short-term goals

1. To consult with young people across Leeds regarding the Child Poverty Strategy. refresh to ensure the refreshed strategy integrates their thoughts views and needs and to feedback to children and young people.
2. To engage ambassadors in the work of the council to mitigate the impact of poverty and how they can collaborate with projects initiatives and programmes.

### Long-term goals

1. To establish a mechanism to consolidate the support we offer CYP in Leeds in relation to poverty and to establish effective ways of communicating our offer to CYP and families in Leeds (CAN).
2. To work together as a city and support young people into adulthood - to thrive and succeed.



# WISH 9

HEALTHY & ACTIVE

**9** of 12 CFL Wishes

**Children and young people have the support and information needed to make healthy choices. They have opportunities for regular physical activity.**

Children and young people know about different opportunities to take part in physical activity and are supported and encouraged to join in. They have access to the information they need to make healthy choices and have healthy and safe relationships.

## Projects & Plans

- Future in Mind Strategy
- Health and wellbeing plan
- Physical Activity Ambition
- Children & Young People's plan
- Healthy Schools framework
- Play Sufficiency
- Leeds Girls Can
- School food ambassadors
- Active Schools
- Henry 5-12 programme
- Travel Behaviours
- Positive Futures
- Leeds Well Schools Partnerships
- Young Mind Get Active

### Lead: Jason Minott

Active Leeds Development Officer • City Development  
jason.minott@leeds.gov.uk

## Short-term goals

1. Make Your Move campaign (July 2023) - working with young people promoting importance of active lifestyles via a social media campaign.
2. Support schools with the implementation of the updated DfE Statutory Guidance for RSHE Relationships, Sex and Health Education.
3. Sharing information and promotion of resources available in the Public Health Resource Centre via blogs, Leeds for Learning article, social media to schools, healthy holidays providers and partners.
4. To promote movement opportunities, services and support available for expectant and current parents and carers to encourage and promote the 'Best Start' in life and the importance of the first 1001.

## Long-term goals

1. Open-access information about opportunities for children and young people to be active to be made available via an online portal which is well marketed and widely disseminated.
2. Focus on children accessing Free School Meals: Physical activity rates to increase (MHMS), access to programmes offering physical activity, healthy food and info over school holidays, reduce holiday hunger.
3. To provide enhanced mechanisms for children and young people with protected characteristics to access movement opportunities via Active Leeds.



# WISH 10

LEARNING SETTINGS

**10** of 12 CFL Wishes

*we are child friendly Leeds*

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

Early years settings, schools and post 16 settings identify and address the barriers that prevent children and young people, particularly those with additional needs, engaging in and enjoying learning.

## Projects & Plans

- Children and Young people's plan
- SEND and inclusion strategy
- Future in Mind strategy
- Neurodiversity pathway work
- Compassionate Leeds: Trauma Informed City strategy
- SILC school Places

### Leads: Anna Turner & Lucy Taylor

Deputy Pr Educational Psychologist • Children & Families  
 Senior Educational Psychologist • Children & Families  
 anna.k.turner@leeds.gov.uk • lucy.taylor@leeds.gov.uk

## Short-term goals

1. Neurodiversity pathway work – To provide feedback/raise awareness in relation to the cluster-based pilot looking at: a) Whole-school understanding of neurodiversity – what’s working well and how to further develop inclusive practice. b) Developing the use of profile tools to support a shared understanding of individual neurodiverse pupils.
2. Compassionate Leeds: Trauma Informed programme – To evaluate what is working well and further development for trauma-informed workforce development, looking at whole-school/setting understanding of the impact of trauma and adversity and what helps.

## Long-term goals

1. Neurodiversity pathway work – Schools will be able to clearly communicate their increased understanding of neurodiversity and how they meet the needs of neurodiverse young people.
2. Compassionate Leeds: Trauma Informed programme – Schools/settings will have an increased awareness of working in a trauma-informed, relational way. An increasing number of schools will have adopted a whole-school trauma-informed, relational approach.

# 11

of 12  
CFL  
Wishes



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.



## Projects & Plans

- Children and Young People's plan
- Future talent plan
- Best city plan
- Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) network for careers practitioners
- CEIAG monthly newsletter
- Start in Leeds online careers guidance platform
- 14-19 strategic partnership
- Leeds SEND Employment Forum
- Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair
- SEND Next Choices Event
- Leeds Digital Careers Event
- Leeds Creative Skills Festival

### Lead: Tracey Greig

Employment & Skills Senior Manager • City Development  
[tracey.greig@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.greig@leeds.gov.uk)

## Short-term goals

1. To maximise attendance at the 4 careers fairs in the city. These include: Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair, SEND Next Choices - Getting ready for adult life, The Leeds Digital Careers Festival & The Leeds Creative Skills Festival.
2. To increase the uptake of careers resources in schools and support careers practitioners to deliver good quality careers advice.
3. To work with employers to promote employment and skills opportunities and maximise social value including offering experiences of the world of work.

## Long-term goals

1. Identify schools with highest levels of NEET and not known and encourage the take up of careers resources and programmes.
2. Increase the number of supported internships in the city so that young people with additional learning needs have access to sustainable jobs.
3. Target interventions for young people who require additional support including those who have additional learning needs, care experienced young people and those at risk of becoming NEET.
4. Continually evaluate and view careers offer including events.



# WISH 12

INCLUSIVE

# 12.

of 12  
CFL  
Wishes



**Leeds is an inclusive city for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.**

Children and young people feel there is more awareness and understanding of different disabilities and that there are more activities and places to go that are accessible to all.



## Projects & Plans

- SEND Inclusion Strategy
- Encouraging providers to achieve the Scope inclusivity award and the link to the Play enabling grant
  - Developing the Leeds Local Offer website and Facebook group
  - Developing resources with young people with SEND to raise awareness of disabilities
- Leeds Parent Carer Forum
- Commissioning short breaks and activities

### Leads: Kayleigh Thurlow & Natalie Samuel

SEND Voice and Influence Coordinator • Children & Families  
Best Practice Development Officer • Children & Families  
kayleigh.thurlow@leeds.gov.uk • natalie.samuel@leeds.gov.uk

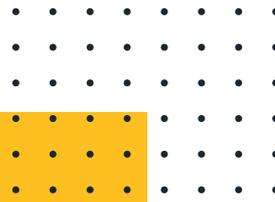
## Short-term goals

1. More awareness and understanding of different disabilities through developing the Local Offer, a project with the SEND Youth Forum, resources developed with the VIC team and a review of resources made by other services to raise awareness of disabilities.
2. More activities and places to go that are accessible to all through working with Breeze/Strategic Play Officer to host an SEND Activity day, an accessible play spaces information booklet and the VIC team Youth Groups achieving the Scope Award.

## Long-term goals

1. More awareness and understanding of different disabilities through developing child-friendly posters about disabilities with CYP and adapting the NHS ENglan SEND training framework for Leeds.
2. More activities and places to go that are accessible to all through highlighting which parks are accessible on leeds.gov website and using disability register data to influence activities commissioned in local areas.

# CFL 12 WISHES COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN



## Reaching different audiences

From September 2023, the 12 wishes communication campaign commenced. Each month has a focus on one wish.

The blog has a dedicated page sharing positive stories, meaningful information and signposting to services and places.

During the campaign, we will also be sharing ways on how everyone can play their part and get involved.

### 2012

HM The Queen Launches Child Friendly Leeds and we first launch the 12 wishes

### 2022

Marking the tenth anniversary, the feedback from city-wide consultations, over three years were reviewed, capturing the views of 80,000 children and young people to identify the top issues and priorities. These were launched as the refreshed 12 wishes and shared with HM King Charles during his visit to Leeds in November 2022.

### 2023

Leads were identified and invited to an event to discuss what actions can be taken to address the wishes and ask city ambassadors to play their part in supporting goals.

## The Citywide Partnership

Child Friendly Leeds was launched by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2012. Since then, a growing number of partners across the city have been working together to create better outcomes for children and young people in Leeds.

Working on this citywide ambition, we have hundreds of ambassadors and partners that embed this vision in their work place, plans and day to day work. These people and organisations are our ambassadors and they come from a diverse range of backgrounds and contribute in a variety of different ways.

By spreading the child friendly message across the city and joining the network, we're working towards building a better future. This will enable partnership working on projects, campaigns and activities that benefit children and young people. From understanding the wishes to promoting them, we ask everyone to take action in their learning settings, communities, businesses and organisations to make Leeds a child friendly city.



# Child Friendly Leeds 12 Wishes



Since 2012, Leeds has had a vision to be a child friendly city and we had one simple question:

‘What is it like to be a child growing up in Leeds and how do we make it better?’

Celebrating the tenth birthday, the feedback from local and city wide consultations, surveys, and ballots over the last 3 years was reviewed, capturing the views of 80,000 children and young people to identify the current top issues and priorities.

<p><b>1.</b></p> <p>Children and young people know how and where to get support for their mental health and wellbeing if they need it.</p>	<p><b>2.</b></p> <p>Children and young people have safe spaces to play, hang out and have fun.</p>	<p><b>3.</b></p> <p>Children and young people express their views, feel heard and are involved in decisions that affect their lives.</p>	<p><b>4.</b></p> <p>Differences are celebrated in Leeds so children and young people feel accepted for who they are. They do not experience bullying and discrimination.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p>Everyone takes more action to protect the environment from climate change.</p>	<p><b>6.</b></p> <p>Children and young people can travel around the city safely and easily.</p>	<p><b>7.</b></p> <p>Children and young people know about different things to do and places to go across the city. They enjoy different cultural experiences including art, music, sport and film.</p>	<p><b>8.</b></p> <p>Leeds is a city that reduces the impact of poverty and helps families who need it.</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p> <p>Children and young people have the support and information needed to make healthy choices. They have opportunities for regular physical activity.</p>	<p><b>10.</b></p> <p>All children and young people are in learning settings that meet their needs.</p>	<p><b>11.</b></p> <p>Young people have access to a wide range of work experience, employment and volunteering opportunities.</p>	<p><b>12.</b></p> <p>Leeds is an inclusive city for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.</p>



Website  
[www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds)



Our blog  
[www.wearechildfriendlyleeds.com](http://www.wearechildfriendlyleeds.com)



Email Address  
[childfriendlyleeds@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:childfriendlyleeds@leeds.gov.uk)



Social Media  
Find us on most social media platforms searching @ChildFriendlyLeeds

Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

We know that the feeling of being in poverty, the feeling of being excluded and the feeling of being ashamed can impact a child for the rest of their life. We know of the associated stigma and feeling of shame for children and young people who live in poverty. Children who experience poverty are more likely to face a wide range of difficulties, both now and in the future. There are strong links between experiencing poverty as a child and having worse mental and physical health, a shorter life, lower grades in education, poor financial health and lower paid, insecure work.

Poverty is most often defined by income. But for most children, poverty is about more than just money. It is about growing up in a home without enough heat or nutritious food. Poverty means no new clothes, no telephone and no money for a birthday celebration. These deprivations have consequences that can last a lifetime. We don't want this in Leeds. So, we are working together, as a city, to reduce the impact of poverty on young people. This is our moral imperative.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Leeds' Child Poverty Strategy and the work that sits underneath the strategy, including work that has been done to address post pandemic and cost of living priorities. This report gives an update on each of these workstreams in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps. It also considers the impact that the national cost of living crisis is having on local levels of poverty and the impact this is having on children and families. Additionally, it contains the new national and local statistics on child poverty with a full analysis detailed on Appendix 2.

This report is an updated progress report that was presented to Scrutiny in April 2023 and Executive Board in June 2023.

The Child Poverty Strategy has been reviewed and updated post consultation with 20 groups of young people with a planned launch date of early 2024.

A full and comprehensive cost of living report<sup>1</sup> on the cost-of-living crisis and actions being undertaken by the Council and partners from a welfare and financial inclusion perspective was presented by the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment to Executive Board in November 2023 as well as a report entitled Reducing Poverty Improving Financial Inclusion presented to Scrutiny board in December 2023<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Cost of Living Update Cover Report 101123.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Reducing Poverty Improving Financial Inclusion DEC 2023 FINAL.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

This report provides information on poverty, which is a key city, regional and national challenge. This priority is reflected in all city strategies contributing the Best City Ambition, including the three pillars of:

- Health and wellbeing
- Inclusive growth
- Zero carbon

## **Background information**

The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds has been in place since 2019. In 2016, Children & Families started to develop a plan around mitigating the impact of child poverty across Leeds. In 2017/2018, a scrutiny enquiry on child poverty recommended that Children & Families integrated more of a central focus on child poverty. The first Child Poverty Impact Board met in 2018, and 'Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds' was launched in 2019.

The child poverty strategy has been co-created with children, young people, families with direct experience of poverty, third, private and public sector, schools, academics and other organisations. Recent consultation with young people and colleagues has led to an updated strategy being launched in early 2024.

Equality and diversity issues have been considered throughout this work. Disadvantaged pupils are not a single group; characteristics such as Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), ethnicity, and English as an Additional Language (EAL) interact with disadvantage with varying impacts on progress rates, gaps with non-disadvantaged pupils and the long-term impact of disadvantage.

Equality Improvement Priorities 2021 - 2025 have been developed to ensure that the council meets its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 by helping the council to identify work and activities that reduce disadvantage, discrimination, and inequalities of opportunity.

## **Recommendations**

- a) That Scrutiny Board acknowledges the ongoing strategic framework in place to mitigate the impact of child poverty, and the work being undertaken by the council and other partners in the key areas of activity.
- b) The Scrutiny Board acknowledges the need to promote the work of the Child Poverty strategy across the city and across council directorates and through our wider city partnerships in order to highlight the impact of poverty on children and their families.
- c) Note the responsible officer is the Deputy Director, Social Care, Children and Families.

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds, and the work that sits underneath the strategy, including work that has occurred post pandemic. This report gives an update on each of these workstreams in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps.

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

- 2 This is an ongoing strategy about mitigating the impact of child poverty for children and families in Leeds. Further detail is set out in Appendix 1 of this report in terms of the outcomes and outputs of each project linked to the Strategy for the Scrutiny Board's information.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

This strategy directly relates to the Best City Ambition<sup>3</sup> specifically:

Our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.

**Health and wellbeing** -In 2030 Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.

**Inclusive growth** -In 2030 Leeds will have an economy that works for everyone, where we work to tackle poverty and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed fairly across the city, creating opportunities for all.

**Zero carbon** -In 2030 Leeds will have made rapid progress towards carbon neutrality, reducing our impact on the planet and doing so in a fair way which improves standards of living in all the city's communities.

- The work supports some of the best council objectives and priorities as defined in the Best City Plan 2020 and 2025. These include: - improving educational achievement gaps; providing skills programmes and employment support; improving school attendance and reducing the percentage of young people who are not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).
- The strategy aligns with local and city-wide strategies such as the Priority Neighbourhoods work, the Children and Young People's Plan, Child Friendly Leeds, Future in Mind Strategy, and the Best City for Learning.
- This strategy relates to the council priority around the climate emergency. As the climate continues to change, extreme weather patterns across the globe will become increasingly common. The knock-on effects of these changes will be profound; however, it is hard to determine what specifically they will look like. What is certain is that there will be scarcity of various resources, such as food and energy, which could lead to price increases, which will have a disproportionate impact on people who live in poverty. We should seek to mitigate the impact of poverty and reduce insecurity and inequality around these basic needs to build strengthened communities for the future.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 3 Extensive consultation has been carried out with regards to this strategy, with private, public, third and education sectors, children, young people and parents, universities and community groups.

## What are the resource implications?

- 4 There are no new proposals with resource implications presented in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> [Best City Ambition \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://leeds.gov.uk/best-city-ambition)

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

5 None

**What are the legal implications?**

6 There are no legal implications.

**Options, timescales and measuring success**

**What other options were considered?**

7 This is an agreed corporate wide strategy which is ongoing.

**How will success be measured?**

8 This is an agreed corporate wide strategy which is ongoing.

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

9 This is an ongoing strategy.

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Update on The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds
- Appendix 2 – Child Poverty statistics

**Background papers**

- None



## Appendix One

### Update on Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds

#### 1. Main issues

This report provides an update on the Leeds Child Poverty Strategy and progress of the workstreams that sit underneath the strategy. It also details our responses to the post pandemic and cost of living crisis, in terms of ongoing work, impact and next steps.

##### 1.1 Child Poverty Statistics<sup>1</sup>

The 2021/22 national and local statistics were published in March 2023. These are the latest statistics available.

It is recommended that these statistics are viewed as point in time estimates. These statistics should not be used to indicate trend analysis or for year-on-year comparisons due to smaller sample sizes and differing data collection methods carried out for surveys in 2020/21 and 2021/22 compared with previous years<sup>2</sup>.

In addition, the data referenced pre-dates the bulk of the cost-of-living crisis, meaning that although some costs had started to increase during the financial year 2021/22, the full effects of the crisis on income are not represented. Similarly, it should also be noted that the measures of poverty described take into account essential housing costs of; rent, mortgage interest, council tax, water bills etc, but do not include fuel bills.

A full detailed analysis of official Child Poverty data is contained on Appendix 2.

The 2021/22 data should be viewed as an estimate for the number of children living in poverty in Leeds and the UK. Key statistics:

- 4.2 million dependent children under 20 were living in relative poverty after housing costs (AHC). This equates to 29% of children in the UK.
- A higher number and percentage of all dependent children under 20 in poverty in the UK are from households where at least one adult is in work (3m out of 4.2m children equating to 70.6% AHC)
- In Leeds, 32,933 children under 16 were living in relative poverty before housing costs (BHC), equal to 22%
- Looking at the most recently available data, it can be said that even by the lowest estimate, 1 in 5 children under 16 in Leeds are living in poverty.
- 22% of Leeds' population is living in relative poverty after housing costs are deducted from income. This equates to approximately 178,630 people<sup>3</sup>.

Further to the official data, Child Poverty Action Group<sup>4</sup> published in June 2023 their annual report for the End Child Poverty Coalition by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University. This research uses the official poverty data from the DWP and HMRC alongside further administrative data and household surveys to estimate local area housing impacts. They are then able to produce local child poverty estimates after housing costs to highlight the disposable income that families have available to meet their living costs. Data from this report has shown, in Leeds during 2021/22, 55,780 children aged under 20 were living in relative poverty after housing costs are deducted from income. This is equivalent to 31.3% of children in Leeds and provides a comparable figure to the national child poverty rate of 29% of children in the UK being in relative poverty after housing costs.

<sup>1</sup> [Children in low income families - Local area statistics](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Technical report: assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the HBAI statistics for FYE2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> DWP, [Households below average income \(HBAI\)](#)

Please note: data collection for HBAI in recent years has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the figures produced are subject to additional uncertainty and are not comparable with previous years.

<sup>4</sup> [Child Poverty Statistics - End Child Poverty](#)

Analysis by Child Poverty Action Group<sup>5</sup> in March 2023 found

- 47% of children in Asian and British Asian families are in poverty, 53% of children in Black/ African/ Caribbean and Black British families, and 25% of children in White families.
- 44% of children in lone parents’ families were in poverty.
- 42% of children in families with 3 or more children were in poverty, up from 36% a decade earlier.
- 36% of children living in families where someone has a disability were in poverty.

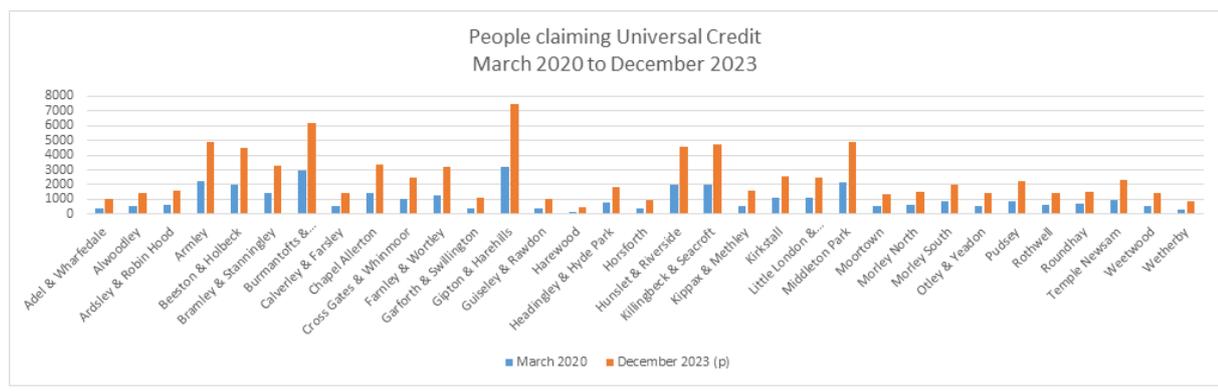
Child Poverty Action Group published research in March 2023<sup>6</sup> which estimates that child poverty in the UK costs £39.5 billion a year in lost tax and earnings, unemployment benefit and additional public service spending. This is up from £25 billion in 2008.

### Universal Credit

In March 2020, 35,450 were claiming Universal Credit in Leeds, this increased to a high of 74,515 people in March 2021. The latest provisional data shows that in December 2023, that figure has increased to 83,283 claimants, that remains more than double the pre-pandemic level.

All wards in Leeds have seen an increase in people claiming UC (Not in Employment), with the highest impact on our poorest wards. The most affected wards are Gipton and Harehills, where claimants have increased from 10.6% of WAP, 2,209 claimants in March 2020 to 22.3% of WAP, 4,641 in November 2023, and Burmantofts and Richmond Hill ward where claimants have increased from 11.0% of the working age population, 2,072 claimants in March 2020 to 20.3% of the working age population, 3,819 claimants in November 2023.

Below details the information by ward across for UC all claimants.



## 1.2 The impact of poverty on children and families

Poverty has a profound effect on families and children living in them. Children who experience poverty are more likely to face a wide range of difficulties, both now and in the future. There are strong links between experiencing poverty as a child and having worse mental and physical health, a shorter life, lower grades in education, poor financial health and lower paid, insecure work.

Poverty is most often defined by income. But for most children, poverty is about more than just money. It is about growing up in a home without enough heat or nutritious food. Poverty means no new clothes, no telephone and no money for a birthday celebration. These deprivations have consequences that can last a lifetime. Research shows that children in poor families are less likely to complete a good education.<sup>7</sup>

The cost-of-living crisis is having a severe impact on families with children. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the war in Ukraine, Brexit and austerity and inflation has all increased pressures on low-income households and the most vulnerable in society, as well as pushing many additional households to experience financial uncertainty and hardship for the first time.

<sup>5</sup> [Official child poverty statistics: 350,000 more children in poverty and numbers will rise | CPAG](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Cost of child poverty 2023.pdf \(cpag.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Child Poverty in the Midst of Wealth | UNICEF Office of Global Insight & Policy](#)

A report published in September 2023 based on an Education Anti-Poverty survey of 1,023 professionals working in schools in England, organised by the Child Poverty Action Group<sup>8</sup> revealed:

- 79 % of school staff have to divert time from their allocated roles to combat child poverty, for example dealing with dinner money debt, sourcing food bank vouchers, hardship grants and home equipment like washing machines in families.
- Over half of teachers report an increase in the number of pupils struggling to concentrate on learning due to hunger and fatigue, compared to two years ago.
- 68% say more pupils don't have money for enough food at lunchtime.
- 74% say there's evidence that children growing up in poverty have fallen further behind their peers with their learning.
- 70 % of headteachers say more parents are asking for help with essentials like food and clothing.

In December 2023 Action for Children, working with the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), analysed UK government data on children growing up in material deprivation<sup>9</sup>. Key findings were

- In 2021/22, there were 2.6 million children in the UK growing up in material deprivation – meaning their families can't afford the items and activities considered essential to a happy and healthy childhood. That's almost one in five children (18%).
- 1.5 million children in material deprivation are also in families with an income below the official poverty line (10% of all children) – meaning they are even more likely to be growing up in severe hardship.
- Over half of the children growing up materially deprived are under 10 (58%). That's 1.5 million young children growing up deprived of the essential items and activities they need to get the best start in life – including 900,000 who are also living below the poverty line.
- Even before the worst of the cost-of-living crisis and energy price shock, there were 4.2m children in families that can't save at least £10 a month, 1.2m children in families that can't keep up with bills, and 800,000 children in families that can't keep the house warm.

New data was released in December 2023 which revealed the North /South divide of children hit by the 2-child limit on benefits.<sup>10</sup>

- Yorkshire and Humber among regions with the highest percentage of households hit by the two-child limit.
- 13% of children in Yorkshire and Humber impacted.
- 12 of the 20 UK local authority areas with the highest percentage of affected families are in the North of England.

A report in September 2023 by Barnardo's found an estimated 894,000 children (11%) are without a proper bed, impacting on their wellbeing and education<sup>11</sup>. A report published in April 2023<sup>12</sup> about overcrowding in homes by revealed that households from ethnic minorities backgrounds were 3 times more likely to be affected by overcrowding than white households.

In October 2023 October Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported<sup>13</sup> that approximately 3.8 million people experienced destitution in 2022, including around one million children.

- The number of children facing destitution since 2019 has almost doubled and is nearly triple the number in 2017.
- Lone parents with children were around twice as likely to experience destitution compared with their share in the UK population (11% versus 5%).

Research published in June 2022<sup>14</sup> suggests 10,356 more children living in English local authority areas became looked after than would have been the case had poverty levels remained at 2015 levels. The research

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<sup>8</sup> ['There is only so much we can do' - school staff in England | CPAG](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Going without: Almost one in five children growing up deprived of the basics | Action For Children](#)

<sup>10</sup> [New data reveals North/South divide of children hit by two-child limit on benefits - End Child Poverty](#)

<sup>11</sup> [No crib for a bed: the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on bed poverty | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> [National Housing Federation - Overcrowding in England](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Destitution in the UK 2023 | Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(jrf.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Child Poverty & children entering care](#), The Lancet, June 2022

team's modelling showed that within English local authorities, between 2015 and 2020, a 1% increase in child poverty was associated with an additional five children entering care per 100,000 population.

To its extreme, poverty impacts on the mortality rate amongst children and infants. The National Child Mortality Database for November 2023<sup>15</sup> shows that deaths were highest for children of black or black British ethnicity and those living in the poorest areas. The National Child Mortality Database includes data from reviews of all children who die at any time after birth and before their 18th birthday. The database started in 2019.

- the death rates in the poorest areas were more than twice as high as in the richest.
- for infants under one year of age, the death rate for the poorest went up from 5.4 per 1,000 infant population in 2022 to 5.9 in 2023.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health president, Dr Camilla Kingdon, said: "*Figures such as these in a nation as rich as ours are unforgivable. Reducing child poverty must finally become a national priority... This has to be a wake-up call for us all and I urge our political leaders to action.*"

### 1.3 The Leeds Approach

We know that the feeling of being in poverty, the feeling of being excluded and the feeling of being ashamed can impact a child for the rest of their life. We don't want this in Leeds. So, we are working together, as a city, to reduce the impact of poverty on young people. This is our moral imperative.

Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds was launched in 2019. The strategy was refreshed in 2023 with consultation with over 20 groups of Children and Young people in Leeds. As a result, the names and aims of each of the 7 workstreams have been refreshed to reflect new emerging and existing priorities as well as addressing the feedback and voices expressed. This includes addressing the stigma of poverty, improving access to food and other basic needs and increasing our communication around available services. This strategy will be launched in early 2024 and future governance meetings and will report on this.

#### Our Ambitions

- We will be innovative, together, to break down the barriers that poverty creates.
- We will be brave, together, to revolutionise the way that Leeds works with children, young people and families who live in poverty.
- We will fight, together, to ensure that every child and young person who experiences poverty can thrive.
- We will work together to tackle inequality across services and organisations, to find meaningful solutions for those experiencing poverty.

### 2.0 Main issues

This section provides an update on each impact workstream, the projects that sit within the impact workstreams and details responses to COVID-19, impact and next steps.

### 3.0 Financial Health & Inclusion

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every family to be equipped with the support, guidance and opportunities needed to live financially secure and stable lives.***

This workstream is led by Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer Customer Access and Welfare Communities and Environments.

The main projects are: Financial health and inclusion support directly to families; Increasing engagement in wider support and guidance to families to support financial health and inclusion; and Ensuring knowledge and understanding of financial health and inclusion issues and support.

#### ***3.1 Priority 1: Increasing engagement in financial health and inclusion support directly to families.***

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<sup>15</sup> [Child death data release 2023 | National Child Mortality Database \(ncmd.info\)](https://www.ncmd.info/)

## **Update on recent activities.**

The key areas of activity for priority 1 are the Healthy Holidays programme, Household Support Fund, and Free School Meal uptake.

### **Healthy Holidays**

Healthy Holidays is a Department for Education funded scheme that delivers provision for children eligible for Free School Meals over the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays. The core of the programme is engaging children and young people with enriching, fun activities and a healthy hot meal, however the benefits of the programme are far reaching and long lasting. The multiplicity and varied nature of the programme within Leeds is a key strength.

The Leeds 2023 programme, for which we have received £3.5 million, has continued as in previous years, with provision being funded and delivered through schools, third sector organisations (managed by Leeds Community Foundation) and council provision through Community Hubs and Breeze.

Successful Easter, summer and Christmas programmes have now been delivered, and the team are currently evaluating the 2023 programme and planning the 2024 programme.

Additional support for the programme is provided by a range of Council and external providers enhancing the local offer and including Food support from Catering Leeds, FareShare, Rethink food, Hamara and Give a Gift; Active Leeds swimming catch up programme; Parks & Countryside's trips and visits to our Activity Centres as well as nutritional education support through Zest-Foodwise.

### **Household Support Fund**

The Department for Work and Pension's Household Support Fund is a short-term national funding stream, delivered by local authorities in England to support those most in need with the costs of food fuel and essential items. Now on its fourth round the fund for the first time has been extended for 12 months (previous rounds were 6 months). Leeds City Council received £7.1m to allocate between 1st October 2022 to the end of March 2023, and £14.2m from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

In Leeds the agreed approach is a mix of direct provision, application-based support and through support offered through third sector organisations and council services already working to help households most impacted by the Cost-of-Living crisis.

### **Free School Meals**

See data below.

## **Outcomes and outputs:**

### **Healthy Holidays**

The Healthy Holidays Programme in Leeds has a significant, beneficial impact upon the children and young people participating. Providers, especially schools, report ongoing and improved engagement from children and young people who have accessed the Healthy Holidays Programme; better transitions between primary and secondary education settings and reassurance in seeing children throughout Easter, summer and Christmas holidays from a safeguarding perspective.

For Easter 2023, the programme reached 5330 children and young people and served over 29,542 portions of food. The programme continued its success over summer by reaching 11,868 children and young people, exceeding our target of 10,000 children and young people. This summer 46 lead schools (65 schools in total), 48 third sector organisations and 16 council provisions took part in Healthy Holidays, reaching 8768 primary, and 3100 secondary school- aged children, with 76,500 portions of food served. Providers took up the offer of catch-up swimming through Active Leeds – 650 children attended 5 days of lessons at one of thirteen sites in the city. Christmas delivery programme is currently being evaluated.

*“Student 1- has an EHCP for extreme behaviour he really wanted to take part in summer school, so a staff member was with him at all times. Student A struggles to be in a classroom setting but he really engaged*

*will all the activities available. He was also very good at climbing and wants to sign up to a climbing club which school will financially support as a motivational tool going forward. Without summer school we would have never known he has a passion for climbing.”*

*“Healthy Holidays makes a significant difference in parents’ lives. For example, one parent was a new international resident in the local area therefore, Healthy Holidays was socially beneficial because it gave them access to families in the local area who can now act as a social support system. Parent F disclosed that she is currently undergoing cancer treatment therefore, Healthy Holidays has given their children purpose and something fun to look forward to, after having an emotional year”.*

*“I am so thankful for the support they have been able to provide for me. When I was informed about the help they can provide it was such a relief. Thank you does not cut it” Parent.*

## **Household Support Fund**

Between October 2022 and March 2023, Leeds received £7.1million of government funding to support vulnerable people with the costs of energy, food and essential items. The funding was used as follows:

- Support to Housing Benefit recipients not eligible for the £650 DWP Cost of Living payment- January/ February (approximately 600 households)
- £70 payments to working age people in receipt of Council Tax Support- Letters sent out w/c 5TH December (42,484 households)
- Additional funding to the Local Welfare Support Scheme and additional payments for people claiming Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Funding to Childrens services and Housing Leeds to support foster carers.
- Third sector support through Voluntary Action Leeds, Forum Central, Leeds Food Aid Network and advice organisations.

Leeds received £14.2 million for use between 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. The funding is being distributed as per our Delivery Plan for 2023/24:

- Approximately £5.4m in direct cash awards to households in receipt of Council Tax Support who are on the lowest incomes in the city (this includes 16,999 household with children and an estimated 33,200 children). In addition, payments will be made to households solely claiming Housing Benefit who have missed out on DWP Cost of Living payments. These will be £900, paid at an equivalent rate to the DWP Cost of Living payments, and delivered in Winter 2023/24, anticipated to be paid by the end of January 24.
- Increasing funding for the Local Welfare Support Scheme, our application-based scheme supporting people in crisis, and additional payments to people applying for Discretionary Housing Payments demonstrating exceptional hardship. Almost £2m has been allocated to these areas of support.
- Winter support initiatives amounting to £234k- funding Public Health winter warmth priority projects and the welcome spaces network.
- Housing costs in exceptional circumstances for Housing Leeds tenants and distributed through Housing Leeds. Support for homeless households and those threatened with homelessness administered by Leeds Housing Options. £700k in total has been allocated for these initiatives.
- £500k has been allocated to Children and Families’. Proposals supporting a range of projects including 0-5’s in low-income households, care leavers, Roma families, section 17 and foster carers have been agreed.
- Third sector - £3.4m has been allocated as follows:
  - Voluntary Action Leeds to support the Leeds Community Anchor Network.
  - The Leeds Food Aid Network to support a wide range of food aid providers including the City’s Cultural Food Hubs and charities such as Zarach and Leeds Baby Bank.
  - Forum Central to support health and social care charities and grassroot organisations provide direct assistance to households in need.
  - Advice agencies to provide practical help to clients actively engaging with advice.
- The remaining funding will cover the administration of the scheme and any unspent funds will be used as flexible pot to support issues and projects which emerge throughout the year.

For quarters 1 and 2, April to the end of September 23, over £2.6m was spent supporting 53,144 households, over 52% of which included children. This spend was delivered through the Local Welfare Support Scheme, additional payments to people applying for Discretionary Housing Payments and through direct targeted support delivered by third sector partners. During Q3, 16,925 vouchers with a value of £100 were issued to households with children and in receipt of Council Tax Support. The redemption rate for this cohort of recipients stood at over 94% as of 31/12/23.

In July, all third sector organisations received their funding and they have started to roll out their programmes to coincide with the upcoming colder autumn and winter period and the time of greatest need. All of the projects funded offer practical support to households with essential costs, including food, fuel or both.

### **Free School Meals**

The number of children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM) has increased substantially over recent years. In January 2020 (pre-pandemic) 25,473 children were eligible. By January 2022 to 32,886 and latest statistics in January 2023 show an increase to 34,174 children. This increase is partly due to the introduction of transitional protection, introduced in April 2021 and currently set to be in place until the end of the roll out of Universal Credit in March 2025.

These statistics shows that 26.0% of pupils in Leeds were eligible and claiming a free school meal, up by 1.4% of pupils on the previous year. Nationally 22.3% of all pupils were eligible and claiming a free school meal, the national rate also increased by 1.4%.

Data from the January 2023 census showed take-up was at an average of 78.2% across all settings, which is a 1.4% increase from the previous year. Therefore 7,450 pupils entitled to an FSM didn't take their meal. UIFSM take-up is recorded at all three census dates, and whilst we saw an increase in take-up last year at 90.1%, 5,947 Reception and Key Stage 1 children missed out on their school meal at the May census.

To support schools to increase take up the Health and Wellbeing Service alongside Catering Leeds delivered a free school meals campaign in January 2023, this campaign will be relaunched in 2024.

Schools can also access a quick for increasing your take up on quick guide at the link below.

[A quick guide to increase your take up of school meals | School Wellbeing](#)

The Health and Wellbeing Service in partnership with the Council Tax and Benefits Service, will also provide training on in January and March 2024, to support schools with maximising the number of children who take up free school meal they are entitled too.

[Free school meals and tackling poverty in schools | Leeds for Learning](#)

### **Next steps:**

#### **Healthy Holidays**

Current priorities are evaluating Christmas programmes and supporting organisations to apply for 2024 funding. The team are also working with colleagues in the Councils IDS to improve the booking system for council provisions.

#### **Household Support Fund**

The focus remains the arrangement of payments for households in receipt of Council Tax Support, supporting the network of Welcome Spaces and other winter projects and working with Housing Leeds and Housing Options and on their priority areas. Childrens Services' delivery has been agreed and they are offering support to vulnerable families across their services.

#### **Free School Meals**

The Health and Wellbeing Service, in partnership with Leeds University are currently developing a survey to explore breakfast provision in Leeds schools. The survey will aim to map current provision, identify gaps and encourage more schools to provide a nutritious breakfast as part of their offer. Providing breakfast in schools can help to remove hunger as a barrier to learning.

The project will also aim to identify schools who may be eligible for free or subsidised breakfast offers and ensure they are maximising available funding. Phase one of the project will begin in early 2024.

### ***3.2 Priority 2: Increasing engagement in wider support and guidance to families to support financial health and inclusion.***

#### **Update on recent activities.**

In terms of engagement in wider support and guidance, current focus is on the Uniform Re-use scheme and gambling-related harm work.

#### **Leeds School Uniform Exchange (LSUE)**

Leeds City Council (Financial Inclusion Team) and Leeds Community Foundation have funded Zero Waste Leeds (ZWL) to bring a co-ordinated uniform reuse scheme to the city. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the number of uniforms sent to waste, reduce the stigma of wearing second hand clothing and tackling poverty through encouraging more families to reuse and donate rather than to feel pressured to buy new uniform every term.

Uniform exchange promotional events supported by ZWL now take place across the city, during half term and seasonal periods. Various regular weekly exchanges now also take place, alongside community groups and support services such as food pantries.

In addition to the uniform activities, ZWL coordinate the Winter Coat Campaign and established the 'Together for Sport' project, for the donation and distribution of sport kit and equipment.

#### **Gambling Related Harm**

Gambling-related harm continues to be a key priority for Leeds City Council through a strong partnership approach, led by Public Health and Financial Inclusion and working with wider Council services, treatment services and external partners.

The Leeds Gambling Harms Group is a citywide partnership bringing together services to collectively address gambling-related harm in the city. The group have identified 'protecting children and young people from gambling-related harm' as a key priority for the group. This has been built into the forward work programme and a specific working group was set up to identify projects to address this priority, building on work already undertaken. This working group meets bi-monthly.

Work is underway to review websites and gambling support information for children, young people, parents and guardians in Leeds, including MindMate, Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Making Every Contact Count (MECC) websites. Updated information will incorporate any emerging gambling trends amongst young people.

The annual "My Health, My School Survey" included questions on gambling for the fourth year running. Revised gambling questions were proposed for the 2022-2023 survey, taking into account feedback from clinical experts and young people and clinical experts. They have also taken into account emerging trends amongst young people, such as cryptocurrency, e-sports and skin-betting.

A survey carried out with staff in Secondary and Further Education settings found that there is a need for further training and support with gambling harm resources. In response to this, a training and resource package was developed in partnership with the charity Gambling with Lives and was piloted in Leeds in February 2023. 100% of attendees rated the session as excellent. Following the success of this training package, Leeds Public Health are commissioning a further session to support staff from primary schools, secondary schools and colleges, with a focus on those with a pastoral support role. This forms part of a wider regional pilot to develop a training offer around children and young people's gambling, without industry funding or influence.

Leeds City Council continues to roll out Harmful Gambling Guidance for all staff. This guidance aims to support staff experiencing gambling related harms, whether it is caused by their own gambling or that of a

loved one. Plans are being developed to roll this out across Anchor Employers in the city. A 'One Minute Guide' on Gambling and young people has now been approved for distribution to the Children's Directorate workforce. Online information on gambling harm has also been added to the MindMate website.

### **Leeds Money Information Centre (Leeds MIC) Resources**

A suite of online and printed resources is maintained, distributed and refreshed by the Financial Inclusion Team to assist families and frontline workers in accessing quality assured, free, confidential and impartial help and advice on a range of money related matters such as debt, energy, food and utilities. Resources are available online and in printed format. The printed resources are available in advice and health service locations and community hubs across Leeds.

### **Outcomes and outputs:**

#### **LSUE**

##### ***Leeds School Uniform Exchange Quarterly Update (Feb 2023)***

- Number of schools covered by a uniform exchange: 259 (85%)
- Number of Community Schemes: 13
- Number of weekly pop-up shops: 10

##### **Easter Holiday School Uniform pop-up shops:**

- Total amount of uniform given out: 1,374 items
- Total number of families helped: 219.
- Total Cost Saving: £23,358.00 (According to DfE Cost of School Uniform Report, the average cost of uniform is £17)

##### **Summer Pop Up Events:**

- Number of events/pop up shops: 98 (from the end of June to the first week in September 2023)
- Items given out: 16,714.
- Number of families helped: 2,787.
- Carbon Emissions saved: 60,170kgs CO<sub>2</sub>e saved - Equivalent to the CO<sub>2</sub>e that would be produced from driving around the world 12.5 times.
- Cost Saving: £284,138 saved by families.

##### **Latest available data as of September 2023:**

- Number of schools covered by a uniform exchange: 223
- (74 school led, 43 parents led, 23 school lost property schemes, 50 schools covered by Community exchanges and 33 Facebook exchanges).
- Number of Community Schemes: 19; Number of weekly pop-up shops: 13.
- New additions to the LSUE website: 8 schools/schemes since May 2023

##### **Digital:**

- LSUE Facebook page: 3,226 members.
- Number of views to LSUE Facebook page: 26,745 (223% increase since May 2023)
- LSUE Website: 1,074 views - 73% increase from May 2023

**Donation points:** There are 24 uniform donation points across Leeds. In addition, Merrion House, Step Change, and Places for People are collecting additional uniform via staff specifically for the summer Breeze and pop-up shop events.

##### **Gambling Related Harm**

The My Health, My School Survey analysis showed that 1988 secondary school pupils completed the gambling questions within the survey. Of those, 24% reported they had gambled, 0.6% reported gambling as a cause of concern or worry (an increase of 0.2%) and 49% reported they need better information on learning material in school on gambling.

## **Leeds MIC Resources**

The Leeds MIC website [www.leedsmic.org.uk](http://www.leedsmic.org.uk), includes links to local and national advice services and also includes a link to the Leeds MIC Map showing where to access advice services across Leeds.

Over the last 9 months to end of September 2023, approximately 29,000 printed resources have been distributed to partners and frontline services across the city. These resources include:

- Debt and Money Advice flyer – includes useful numbers for key services in Leeds. Translated versions are also available.
- Energy Advice flyer – Useful numbers for key services in Leeds offering advice on energy bills and utilities. Translated versions are also available.
- Concertina card – a credit card sized item that opens to double sided A4, for staff to use when signposting.

## **Next steps**

### **Leeds School Uniform Exchange**

The project was funded for another year in March 2023, with quarterly meetings with Zero Waste Leeds, LCC Financial Inclusion Team and representation from Children & Families in place. The project is will now concentrate on increasing the scheme's overall coverage of schools in Leeds, with particular focus on schools in areas of high deprivation.

The project continues to focus on increasing the overall coverage of schools in Leeds, particularly concentrating on schools in areas of high deprivation.

Quarterly update meetings including Zero Waste Leeds, LCC Financial Inclusion Team and representation from Children & Families are in place to support this development.

Plans are also being finalised to deliver a Winter Coat Scheme for 2023/24, building on the success and learning of the winter 2022/23 project. The project will be coordinated by Zero Waste Leeds, and delivered primarily through Community Hubs and Libraries, with further opportunities via 'Welcome Spaces' and other third sector groups currently being explored.

### **Gambling Related harm**

The findings of the gambling survey will be analysed and will inform the children and young people's gambling work stream, alongside the results from the My Health, My School Survey.

Financial Inclusion and Public Health will continue to work with the LCC Health & Wellbeing Service/Healthy Schools Team to improve the gambling questions within the My Health My School survey to ensure the latest trends amongst young people are incorporated where possible. Analysis will be undertaken on the gambling questions from the 2022-2023 My Health, My School data, once released.

Once fully implemented in Leeds City Council, the Financial Inclusion Team and Public Health will be working with other anchor organisations in the city to implement their own Harmful Gambling Guidance to support employees.

Financial Inclusion and Public Health will continue to deliver work on children and young people's gambling within the Leeds gambling harms action plan that will be in development imminently as part of the refreshed approach to the Leeds Gambling Harms Group.

### **Leeds MIC Resources**

A refresh of the MIC booklet, Help with Managing your Money has been concluded and The Leeds Money Information Centre booklet has been updated is being distributed across frontline council, housing and third sector services across the city. This booklet contains useful numbers and addresses for key services in Leeds offering free, impartial, confidential advice around money matters.

### **3.3 Priority 3: Ensuring knowledge and understanding of financial health and inclusion issues and support.**

#### **Update on recent activities.**

##### **Google drive**

A Google drive has been established to share key resources, and messages across services and organisations. Physical resources are available to download or request for printing, including flyers (including translations), concertinas and business cards.

##### **Training Awareness Sessions**

A suite of themed awareness videos is being developed to be shared with frontline staff and volunteers on key subjects including advice and support, energy, mental health.

A range of awareness raising sessions have been undertaken over the past 3 months focussed on financial health and inclusion. These have included sessions on tackling poverty and financial inclusion, cost of living, fuel poverty support and training, signposting to warm spaces. Each session has been facilitated by the financial inclusion team in collaboration with the relevant partners organisations and experts. Sessions have been promoted across the council and attended by a range of services including services working directly with families with children.

##### **Cost of Living Response**

Building on a long established and effective approach to tackling poverty and addressing financial inclusion in the city, in September 2022 Leeds City Council set up a citywide approach to mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. Strategic and operational partnership groups were established, and focussed on ensuring that there is awareness and understanding of the support available, developing practical support which enhances existing services, and ensuring the short-term funding available is coordinated and maximised. Between September 2022 and May 2023, the approach focussed on ensuring communication, information advice and guidance, practical support and funding opportunities were as well coordinated as possible in Leeds. This work continues, in addition theme-based discussions are also taking place so that there is a deeper understanding and collective response around issues such as Housing, Child Poverty, Crime and Community Safety, Migration, Third sector support, Health and Social Care.

#### **Outcomes and outputs:**

##### **Google Drive**

Over 85,000 resources have been distributed to organisations including council services, NHS and health settings, DWP, third sector and universities over the past two months.

##### **Training Awareness Sessions**

Financial Inclusion Team have delivered training and awareness sessions to a wide range of council (including elected members) and health services since October 2022 including

- Inner North East Community Committee Workshop - Cost of Living (approx. 60 attendees)
- Training Session on Money Information Centre & signposting to advice services for DWP staff – 80 attendees
- Public Health Want to know more about 'Tackling Poverty & Financial Inclusion' Session – 40 attendees.
- Fuel Poverty & Support Training for PCN – 25 attendees
- Tackling Poverty & Financial Inclusion Session for Childrens Services – 80 attendees
- Childrens Services Directors Development session- 40 attendees
- Equalities Assembly – Cost of Living (approx. 150 attendees)
- All Ward Member Seminar – Cost of Living (100 attendees)

- Inner West Children and Young People’s Sub-Group – answering questions from children relating to the 12 wishes (15 attendees)

### **Cost of living Response**

Full details of the activities undertaken, and the impact made were reported at Executive Board in November 2023<sup>16</sup> and Scrutiny in December 2023<sup>17</sup>.

### **Next steps**

#### **Google Drive**

To continue updating resources.

#### **Training and Awareness sessions**

Continue establishing a clear and concise narrative using poverty statistics, data and local evidence, maintaining resources such as the Leeds Poverty Fact Book and Leeds MIC Website and Printed Resources.

Members of the financial inclusion team are liaising with partners and cross council services to ensure training and awareness sessions with respect to specific areas of concern/emerging issues within the context of the cost of living are available to frontline services including Children & Families. Sessions in development include the risk and response to illegal money lending.

The Financial Inclusion team and representatives from Children and Families are also working together to increase awareness and partnership working with respect to food aid provisions in the city.

## **4.0 Best Start for Health & Wellbeing**

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every Leeds baby from conception to age two to have the best start in life, especially those who are the most vulnerable.***

This workstream is led by Kathryn Ingold, the Chief Officer - Public Health.

### **4.1 Priority 1: Baby Buddy App**

#### **Update on recent activities.**

Baby Buddy is a parenting app that is free to use. It provides evidence-based support and information throughout pregnancy and the first year, which is accessible at any time.

The 22/23 annual report data show that 42.5% of expectant and new parents in Leeds are using the app, with the most recent data showing this remains slightly increased at 43%. Practitioners continue to promote the app at all contacts and prominent displays are visible in areas where families visit e.g., Children’s Centres, GP surgeries and relevant areas within Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust.

New content to support pregnant people and new mothers in the workplace and LGBTQ+ parents is currently being developed with the support of practitioners and families in Leeds as well as other parts of the country. Once complete practitioners will have all the available information to share the messages and signpost to new and expectant parents to the content.

There is a limitation to ongoing access to the Baby buddy data and it was therefore decided that this is no longer a viable area to report on going forward. A proposal to report to the Board on Breastfeeding initiation and continuation (6-8 weeks) and associated work that supports this has been agreed.

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<sup>16</sup> [Cost of Living Update Cover Report 101123.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Reducing Poverty Improving Financial Inclusion DEC 2023 FINAL.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

There is a wealth of evidence that human milk and breastfeeding contribute to healthier mothers and babies, reduces health inequalities, and improves public health. Breastfeeding is budget friendly and provides food security for the infant in the first six months of life and thereafter alongside other foods.

The Leeds Breastfeeding Plan is the overarching strategic document driven by the Breastfeeding Plan Partnership to achieve the overall indicator of increased breastfeeding continuation rates (6-8 weeks). Breastfeeding continuation data will be shared in future reports along with relevant activity aimed to positively impact and service user feedback.

### **Outcomes and outputs:**

Data showed that there was a total of 2,198 Baby Buddy registrations across thirty-three wards of Leeds within the reporting period of March 31 2023 to October 31 2023. The highlights of the report are as follows:

1. 86% of the users are mothers and 11.6% are fathers.
2. 71.4% White, 13.8% Asian, 7.5% Black, and 3.5% Mixed ethnicities of the Leeds users in the Baby Buddy app.
3. 17.9% of Leeds users' household income has been reported under 25K annually, with over 34% of them being from Black, Asian, and Mixed ethnic groups. Almost 20% of these users are new parents with babies below the age of 6 months.
4. Baby Buddy app log-in frequency has stayed consistently high (around 200K downloads each month nationally) from April 2023 to October 2023

### **Next steps**

- Continue the promotion and momentum to increase downloads of the Baby Buddy App as one of the Breastfeeding Plan priorities.
- To look at the Breastfeeding Plan priority actions through a poverty lens to understand current links and use them to focus and facilitate opportunities.
- To develop an action plan/log to support this work for ease of reporting and to provide regular updates.
- To use the breastfeeding dashboard data to drive work in areas where inequalities continue to widen.

## ***4.2 Priority 2: Preparation for Birth and Beyond***

### **Update on recent activities.**

The virtual PBB courses continue to run with good attendance from pregnant people and their support partner. The sessions are delivered in partnership by 0-19 service and children's centres with 4 courses being delivered per month on a rolling programme and are now bookable via Eventbrite. Face to face courses are running alongside the virtual courses and are now running 4 per month. In the 8-month period from April-Nov 2023 56 courses have been delivered (virtual and face to face combined), with 395 pregnant people attending at least one session, many with partners/support person. Face to face groups continue to be popular and are organised with Children's Centres and teams on a 12-month rolling programme.

Improvements have been made on inputting and collecting data, and in Quarter 2 123 fathers/partners attended at least one session which means that around 3 quarters of mothers attending do so with a partner which widens the reach of the key messages contained within PBB.

The first Baby Bubble (Baby Bubble Leeds is a closed Facebook support group for mums to be that begins at sixteen weeks pregnant and is there for you up to six months after your baby is born) bespoke PBB group was facilitated in September via MS teams.

## **Outcomes and outputs:**

Parent feedback (Oct 2023)

### **One thing you enjoyed about the session.**

- The discussions especially about how to put baby to bed.
- Learning about safe sleeping
- Bed safety
- Car seat safety
- Group chat
- Talking about how our relationship will change.
- Discussing strategies to support our relationship.
- Being able to ask questions & learn about safety.

### **One thing you have learnt that you didn't know before**

- Place baby at bottom of cot/crib
- Remove mitts when feeding.
- 20 minutes is the safest to leave a baby in a car seat within the first 6 weeks of their lives.
- Needing new car seat if taken on holiday
- Arms outside of the blanket
- 6 weeks no longer than 20 mins in a car seat
- Sleep bags may not be used from birth dependant on weight.
- Safe ways for baby to sleep.
- No pods, no extras in bed, ideally no co-sleep

### **From today's session, is there anything new you would you plan to do with baby?**

- Try nonsense conversations.
- 15 minutes when partner comes home (before taking over with baby)
- Serve & return.
- Practice with car seat
- Learning about mental health for both parents
- Serve & return. Just random conversations
- Leeds sling library to find the right one for me.
- How to sling them properly as a dad
- Playing and developing baby's brain

Observations from a recent external Baby Friendly initiative audit on Children's Centres highlighted how highly expectant mothers rated the PBB sessions and noted that they could tell the high-quality information that was shared at the sessions due to the audit question responses.

The practitioner PBB forum continues to run quarterly to ensure that practitioners are skilled and confident in facilitating the sessions. The most recent forum was in September running face to face to support training and development around baby brain development, partnership working across the services and to share new initiatives. Feedback from delivery of sessions remains extremely positive with practitioners reporting that it is rewarding and enjoyable.

### **Next steps**

Continue the rolling programme of courses including 4 virtual courses 4 face to face courses per month. Promote and use the Baby Buddy app to in PBB sessions with expectant parents. To continue to develop the resource pack for parents using the PBB forum as a training platform to inform staff.

The infant mental health service is providing on-going training to enable more practitioners to be able to facilitate the courses.

Priority changes agreed at the last Child Poverty Board meeting will lead to future reporting on activities to support improvements in children achieving the expected level in communication skills at 2 to 2 ½ years. 2022/23 data show 89.6% of 2 and 2 ½ year olds achieving the expected level in communication, which is an improvement on 2021/22 data but still below the pre-pandemic rate of 94%. There are large inequalities in child development between those living in the most and least deprived areas of Leeds with a difference of 6% between the most deprived decile (83.2%) and least deprived decile (89.4%).

### **4.3 Priority 3: Economic wellbeing 0-19 service**

#### **Update on recent activities.**

The 0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service has an economic wellbeing pathway linked to their internal intranet, making it accessible to all practitioners. The pathway describes how the 0-19 PHINS and Early Start practitioners will support families to achieve economic wellbeing. This includes support to families to:

1. Maximise income.
2. Manage debt.
3. Access support services
4. Reduce fuel bills.
5. Develop financial literacy.
6. Access education and work

The pathway includes links to a vast range of support that practitioners can signpost to including food banks and Healthy Holiday clubs. The service also ensures families are receiving all benefit entitlement including access to dental care and prescriptions during pregnancy. In addition, they ensure families are aware of the 2-year-old child place entitlement for those on specific benefits.

In Q2 commissioners requested an audit of three, 0-19 pathways as part of the quality assurance process. This included economic wellbeing, safe sleeping and domestic violence and abuse. See below for information.

Sarah Cooke, Clinical Change Lead for the 0-19 service attended the Child Poverty Board meeting in Oct 2023 to deliver a presentation on how the service support families around economic wellbeing.

#### **Outcomes and outputs:**

The 0-19 PHINS practitioners continue to support families with social and economic needs through their mandated contacts with children and families. Needs are identified and reviewed with practitioner's enquiring about food availability, debt, benefit entitlement and employment. They signpost/refer families to benefit support, healthy start vouchers, child benefit and local support networks including food banks, Healthy Holiday clubs, One Stop centres, Children's Centres, or libraries.

Since the start of April 2022 to end of March 2023 the service recorded 9803 economic wellbeing contacts. Between April 23 – Sept 23, the service has recorded 5735 offers of signposting, support and advice around issues related to economic wellbeing.

The results of the recent audit of the economic well-being pathway found:

- Conversations about economic wellbeing were raised at all contacts.
- These included conversations about benefit entitlement/ESOL/Universal credit/Healthy Start Vitamins/Child benefit/Childrens centre support and activities/Local facilities they can access/Housing Support/Loans for baby equipment/Traveller Community advice service.

- Referrals were being made to Children Centres, Childrens social work services and Housing advocacy.

## **Next steps**

The audit found staff were well equipped with information to support families, however noted the impact of the child benefit policy (only paying child benefit for 2 children) is causing hardship for parents with more than 2 children.

An additional audit of the three pathways' will be completed in 6 months, to end the audit cycle.

The service will continue to update the pathway with information on relevant support services.

## **5.0 Housing & Provision**

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to support every family and young person living in social housing in Leeds to achieve a sustainable tenancy.***

This workstream is led by Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer Housing, Resources and Housing.

### ***Priority 1 - Joint Working Between Housing and Children's Social Work Teams to Support Families in Council Tenancies***

#### **Update on recent activities.**

Partnership working continues with Children's Health and Disability (CHAD) with continued attendance at their Operations Group where we discuss inappropriate referrals and learning outcomes. Draft guidance produced and being considered by relevant teams to help staff identify the correct route for enquiries relating to adaptations to reduce inappropriate referrals and unnecessary waiting times.

Housing staff attended West Yorkshire Trauma Informed Foundation Training promoting understanding of the barriers to engagement and awareness of how to appropriately respond to a person that has suffered trauma, improving confidence, communication, and insight about the approaches for engaging with and supporting families to achieve better outcomes.

Housing Officers and Housing Managers met with representatives from the Institute of Health Equity (IHE) who are leading on the Marmot City health programme for Leeds with the aims of, increasing everyone's opportunity to have all the right building blocks of good health and developing approaches for everyone but at a different scale or intensity depending on the needs of different communities. Housing has been identified as one of the priorities of the programme. Staff shared their experiences of inequality issues are from a housing perspective, and their thoughts on the areas that the partnership could have most impact.

A dedicated Damp & Mould team was set up in the wake of the coroner's report on the death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale which saw a ten-fold increase in damp and mould enquiries from tenants and visiting professionals. The team log, triage and take appropriate action on these enquiries, prioritising the most urgent cases and using remote technology to identify / diagnose cases more efficiently. Officers have been sharing updates with colleagues in children's services, family support networks and schools to ensure all are aware and concerns are being acted upon.

An E-Learning package has been developed and has been rolled out to Housing staff and it is due to be shared with Children's staff to help them offer advice identify issues when visiting homes. To help tenants keep their homes warm this winter our gas contractor, PH Jones, as part of their Social Value commitments, have partnered with British Gas Energy Trust. As a result, they are able to offer the Housing up to £200,000 of free energy vouchers, which we will use to support our most vulnerable tenants to spend on their gas and or electricity. This scheme is only available to existing council tenants.

## **Outcomes and outputs:**

Case study example - Family A - had stopped making rent payments for their home, they were refusing to engage with the local housing team despite 24 months' worth of visits, letters, and ongoing enforcement on their tenancy. Approach had been made to Children's Social work team over risks to the family's tenancy due to rising arrears and non-engagement. CSW visited but were unable to get the parents to engage with Housing or make the necessary payments, there were no concerns at the visit about the children's welfare. Support and enforcement options were exhausted, and case referred to court due to large arrears c.£6k. District judge granted a suspend possession and order the parents to pay their rent plus an additional amount to gradually reduce their arrears, they did not attend court and failed to pay as ordered by the court.

The courts subsequently issued a warrant for the family's eviction, Housing and CSW carried out a joint visit to deliver the eviction notice, advised the parents they could still stop the eviction if they attended court ask for a suspension and agree to engage make payments on their rent. Parents attended court with support from Housing Paralegal team and Judge agreed to a suspension of the eviction on condition the parents engaged with and accepted support from Housing to check their income, maximise their benefits and commence rent payments. Parents met with Benefits Officer submitted a claim for UC and have agreed for rent element to be paid direct to LCC with an additional amount to pay off the arrears each month.

## **Next steps**

To build on conversations with Children's Social Work and the Court Bailiff team to ensure we are doing everything possible to support families facing eviction and ensure we continue to try and prevent tenancies failing, up to and including at the point of eviction.

To build on early conversations with Employment & Skills colleagues to improve understanding and build closer working in a bid to better understand and support our tenants needs in accessing training and employment also the wider offer from Employment & Skills around digital inclusion, budgeting, and financial wellbeing.

## ***Priority 2 -Refreshing the Rehousing Pathway for Care Leavers***

### **Update on recent activities.**

Leeds Housing Options (LHO) continue to work with partners in children's social care around future joint protocol for assessment of 16/17 year old homeless young people.

Training has been delivered for senior and operational managers within both services to raise awareness of the Southwark Judgement<sup>18</sup> and best practice for handling homeless cases within this age group. The training was delivered by a national expert and has also delivered "train the trainer" sessions so this knowledge and expertise remains available and deliverable in future.

We are currently working on SHAP (Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme) bid which is targeted towards 18–25-year-olds that are not served by existing commissioned providers (usually based on more significant support needs). If successful, this bid will deliver additional accommodation for vulnerable young people that have struggled to access conventional supported projects such as Our Way Leeds.

Additional cross directorate staff -Children's services are looking to fund two "staying close" workers. These staff will be based within LHO with a remit of helping to rehouse care leavers, specifically those that are accommodated (often at great expense) outside of Leeds. We are currently working with Children's services on developing the roles which will be going out to advert and present a real opportunity to help vulnerable care leavers return to their areas of support but also a cost saving based on the expense of the existing accommodation.

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<sup>18</sup> [Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/provision-of-accommodation-for-16-and-17-year-olds-who-may-be-homeless-and-or-require-accommodation)

Work carried out by the Local Government Authority -funded project to improve the rehousing pathway for young people helped to inform this work through considering available data, relevant policy and strategy documents, semi-structured interviews with internal and external stakeholders, including some young people, dip sampling of 20 recent cases of homeless 16- and 17-year-olds, visits to some services and the author's own knowledge of youth housing options and homelessness.

Consideration has been given to the national context in terms of child poverty, the impact of Covid -19 on young people and on housing and homelessness, cost of living crisis, the housing crisis. Also, the local picture regarding young people, population, deprivation, and the local housing market

### **Outcomes and outputs:**

Dip sampling showed that most teenagers who go on to become homeless at the age of 16 or 17 are already known to Children's Services due to other risks and needs. There are an impressive range of universal and more targeted services for children, young people and families in communities, but there are gaps for some 16- and 17-year-olds, often those most at risk of homelessness, especially if they are no longer at school or college. They do not have 'touch points' to services and are at risk of being out of sight when they are at highest risk of homelessness.

Young people learn about housing and their options locally from their families and peers, but this can be supplemented by the provision of local information provided by the local authority or another agency. Realistic information and advice can cover in some detail the realities of living independently and the extent to which some housing options are limited for young people in a local area.

What young people said:

- "They didn't teach us about life – about this - they taught us about passing qualifications. There was no 'what's next?' "
- "They told us about what's in a cell in your body, but not how to actually live".
- "No one gives you a heads up - so you are obviously going to fail and then everyone gets mad at you."
- "I wish we'd learned about money and how to budget."

What young people said about living in non-commissioned 'exempt' supported accommodation in Leeds:

- "My house is so lonely."
- "... advice is 'don't work'. The rent is not affordable if you're working."
- "You're not allowed visitors or family in."
- "My social anxiety is horrible."
- "I find it too overwhelming now - I don't want to sound ungrateful but it's too much, all the bills and it's a massive house."

When asked what they needed at the point of housing crisis young people responded:

- "We need something stable, that's there, that's not going to change, that you know you can rely on."
- "There needs to be more places where you can actually talk to someone."
- "There should be more centres for young people - it's better than being on the street."

### **Next steps**

To progress with the joint assessment protocol and the Young Persons Multi Agency Panel which relaunched in May 2023. The panel is attended by Our Way Leeds – who provide housing support and accommodation to people aged 16-25 living in the city - Children's Services, Corporate Parenting, Youth Justice Team, Housing Options and Housing Management.

Meetings cover placements for young people accessing supported accommodation and support for move on when ready to live independently with a new focus on supporting those who are living independently but whose tenancies are at risk of failing.

### ***Priority 3 - Supporting Families in Council Tenancies to Maximise their Income.***

#### **Update on recent activities.**

During April 2023 and November 2023, the HOI team worked with **3212** Households in total and been able to secure **£2,205,038** in additional income for them with an average additional income per family of **£687**. Of the **3212** total households supported, **817** of those were households with children.

This generated for them **£456.659** of additional income which works out as an average of **£559** of additional income per family supported.

We have been able to secure income for households with children from 19 sources. The 5 top income streams which have generated the most for households with children are:

1. Universal Credit
2. Housing Benefit
3. Disability Benefits
4. Pension Age Benefits
5. Council Tax Support

The team feel that the current Cost-of-Living crisis is still affecting tenants city wide and forms the basis for many conversations they are currently having. They have noticed an increase in referrals for tenants of pension age and have targeted this group to increase the numbers applying for Pension Credits. The team have also worked closely with LBS (Leeds Benefits Service) targeting tenants reported on the Housing Benefit HB stop list.

Tenants are still struggling to make ends meet as neither benefit levels nor wages have increased accordingly. Many of our tenants continue to pay for their fuel via top up meters and are finding it increasingly difficult to find the money to top up as the current situation continues.

Food and Fuel poverty issues are raised by most tenants they engage with regardless of the main reason for referral. This comes at a time they have been able to refer tenants to the LCC/British Gas Emergency Fuel Voucher Scheme which initial run 2022/23 and is currently in place for 2023/24.

The team have been working closely with LBS regarding Pension Credits (PC) & Housing Benefit (HB).

Housing Benefit – LBS provided a list of tenants who they had been unable to contact with regards their HB claim and these had been suspended. Each team member attempted to contact the listed tenants from within their area supporting them to provide necessary information to ensure their claims remained live.

Pension Credits – The team worked closely with LBS who had provided a list of pension age tenants that were not currently in receipt of Pension Credits. Each team member attempted to contact tenants within their areas to perform benefit checks and advise on eligibility/assist with applications where necessary.

A poster campaign was launched within all Retirement Life properties across the city advising tenants that they could be eligible for Pension Credits and encouraging them to contact their local area housing offices for referral to their Housing Officer (Income) (HOI) team member.

#### **Outcomes and outputs:**

## Case Study

Mr W was referred to HOI following a priority annual tenancy Check-In (ATCI). Upon gaining access to the property to complete the ATCI it was declared that the named tenant had passed away some time ago and their partner, Mr W, had remained in the property.

Mr W was undergoing treatment for a rare aggressive form of cancer and had no support. HOI liaised with HO manager and arranged for Mr W to be granted tenancy succession.

HOI then liaised with DWP as housing costs were not submitted at start of UC (Universal Credit) claim as Mr W was not named on tenancy. Due to Mr W's current health concern DWP agreed to backdate Housing Costs to date of partners death which, with a backdated payment of £1264.48, cleared his rent arrears in full.

HOI also assisted Mr W with applications for PIP (Personal Independence Payment) and the completion of his UC50 which resulted in an award of PIP at High-Rate Mobility and High-Rate Daily Living with a backdated award of £2936.75.

## Next steps

### British Gas Energy Trust – Emergency Fuel Voucher scheme:

We are currently distributing £200,000 worth of Emergency Fuel Vouchers to tenant's city wide. We have until March 24 to award the vouchers, however, should we utilise the award before that date we may be eligible for a further award.

### Emergency Housing Support Fund:

In the New Year we will once again be able to allocate an amount of money to each local area housing office to spent directly on reducing rent arrears in their areas. The total allocation this year will be £350,000 and this will be distributed across the city based on each areas housing stock and their arrears profile at the time. Each office will be able to decide how they wish to distribute their allocation which must be used to directly offset rent arrears.

## 6.0 Employment & Transitions

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every young person and family to have the relevant skills and experience to access and secure well paid employment.*** This workstream is led by Dawn Hall, Head of Service Employment and Skills

### Update On Activities

- **Morley Town Deal Jobs Fair** took place on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at Morley Town Hall. The event provided information to the local community in Morley about current and future jobs vacancies, support with job applications and interview skills. 20 employers attended. The event was well received from the 278 visitors, including the Morley Town Deal board and Councillors.
- **The BIG Social Care Jobs Fair** was delivered on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at the Bridge Community Church, Burmantofts. The event was co-ordinated in partnership with We Care Academy and provided information and opportunities for people interested in accessing roles within the care sector. 304 visitors attended. 27 employers provided opportunities offering interviews, collected CVs and distributed applications form. Employers included Children's Residential, private care homes and Adult Social Care. E&S Advisors also provided support, 10 job offers were made on the day.
- **Leeds Creative Skills Festival** returned to the Leeds first direct arena on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 with exhibitors showcasing opportunities in the creative and cultural sector. The event offered the 3,081 visitors a chance to speak 63 exhibitors including training providers, colleges and universities who offer creative courses; talk to employers; and attend interesting speaker sessions to learn about creative careers, skills and pathways; interactive activities. 9 Leeds schools block booked students and were sent the targeted LCSF23 presentation prior to the event.

### Outcomes and Outputs

From April to December 2023, 9,799 people have accessed our services:

- 6,266 (64%) of those accessing the Service live in neighbourhoods that fall within the 20% most deprived SOA's on the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- 6,147 (63%) customers identified as ethnically diverse and 507 (5%) declared a physical disability and 569 (6%) experience poor mental health
- 1,990 (20%) customers were young people age 16-24

Supported 2,457 people into work (including 324 Apprenticeships), an increase of 10% on the same period last year (2,239)

- 1,361 (55%) of those supported into work live in neighbourhoods that fall within the 20% most deprived SOA's on the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- 1,145 (47%) customers identified as ethnically diverse and 67 (3%) declared a physical disability, 89 (4%) experience poor mental health
- 679 (28%) customers were young people age 16-24
- Employment and Skills social value obligations in contracts and developer agreements supported the delivery of 201 jobs and 21 Apprenticeships for local residents during April to December 2023.

Supported 2,975 people to improve their skills

- 1,803 (61%) of these learners lived in neighbourhoods that fall within the 20% most deprived SOA's on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- 1,977 (66%) learners identified as ethnically diverse and 248 (8%) learners declared a physical disability and 278 (9%) experience poor mental health.
- 346 (12%) customers were young people age 16-24

Engaged with 385 employers new to the service to secure jobs, Apprenticeships and education outcomes, an increase of 34% on the same period last year (287). Improved processes has contributed to the higher number of Employers Engaged recorded from Events. The addition of a targeted programme of work to engage businesses on their journey to Net Zero has increased the number of businesses engaged with the service.

- Of the 181 employers engaged this quarter:
  - SMEs 127
  - large organisations (250+ employees) 54
- Support was provided across all sectors of industry including:
  - Information Serv's, ICT, Digital & Comms
  - Professional, scientific and technical activities
  - Manufacturing
  - Health & Care
- Ongoing support is being provided to a number of employers, delivering social value obligations on 27 developments and contracts to support local residents to access jobs, Apprenticeships and learning in Q3.

### Next Steps

- Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair will take place on 5th February 2024. Visitors can find out more about Apprenticeships and meet with providers and employers. Over 100 organisations have booked stands to exhibit at the event and approximately 6,000 visitors are expected on the day
- Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair Community Events community based information sessions will be delivered early in the new year within the priority wards to support the engagement of residents with the Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair 5th February 2024. The sessions will give those attending the opportunity to speak to E&S staff about Apprenticeships and what to expect from the recruitment fair
- Social Care Recruitment Events, in partnership with We Care Academy, will take place at Vale Circles (LS11 5JF) 19th January 2024 and East Recovery Hub (LS14 6JL) 24th January 2024. The events will support the recruitment to Support Worker and Case Officer roles across the city. Advisors will be attending to support delivery
- Migrant Access Project 8 week facilitated training programme for migrants new to Leeds, starting January 2024. The advisors will attend the event taking place on 9th February 2024 at Compton Community Hub with guest speakers sharing information about their services

- Multiply an introduction to numeracy skills course “Count Me In” will be delivered from St Luke’s Cares in January supporting the local community to build confidence in everyday maths including reading timetables, weights, measurement and money literacy. An introductory session will be delivered at New Wortley Community Centre in January enabling consultation with the local community regarding the content of a course to be delivered from February
- **Careers in Catering** recruitment information and interview sessions planned for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at City Centre Community Hub to support promotion of kitchen assistant posts in schools across the city
- **Farnell Recruitment Events** information and interview sessions are being planned to be delivered in local Community Centres and venues around Temple Green area to build strong connections to enhance their ability to recruit and retain local talent and support sustainable development in the area
- **Connecting Communities to Health and Care Careers** fortnightly Information and/Assessment Sessions will be delivered at sites across the Priority Wards and City Centre Hub. The sessions will continue to support recruitment to roles within the Health and Care sector, including Adult Social Care, Children’s Residential Practitioner and Administrative roles. Additional Community Learning provision will also be in place
- **Smart Works Jobs Fair** at Leeds Beckett University Students’ Union planned for 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024. This event will provide information on vacancies, Apprenticeships and supported internships to all attendees.
- **Leeds Local Offer** event planned for 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 at the Pudsey Civic Hall. The event will provide a marketplace where families of children with special educational needs and disabilities in the city can find out about services available to them.

## ***6.2 Priority 2 - Connecting parents / carers to Family Learning provision to enhance children’s learning through activities, techniques and games delivered in schools***

### **Update on Recent Activities**

- **Employment Hub Mental Health** received 12 referrals from Primary Care Mental Health, 5 people signed up for support. 4 people achieved positive outcomes
- **Community Learning**
  - Developing You, 7 people started the course which commenced in November 2023.
  - Learning Disabilities Developing You 19 people started the course which ran for 12 weeks, ending in December.
- **Have a Go Fortnight** as part of the national Lifelong Learning campaign, local partners delivered taster and have a go skills sessions from 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The focus was on digital and other priority sector skills as part of the fortnight of activities, aiming to encourage adults to undertake further learning to help progress their career. 4 skills taster sessions took place with 26 people attending the in-person and on-line sessions
- **Carbon Literacy (CL) Action Day**, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023, saw 14 colleagues from Employment and Skills (E&S) gain CL accreditation. The training has been the catalyst for a range of individual/service pledges to include, the creation of a committed network of CL champions. The network will enable the opportunity for E&S CL champions to shape a conversation to take forward CL within the service whilst extending the learning across the Council to increase the reach / impact of change

### **Outcomes and Outputs**

In this quarter, 96 courses have been delivered across 47 venues. Courses included ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages), Digital Skills, Life Skills, Employability and Family Learning.

480 unique learners have enrolled with 82.3% self-declaring they are from an ethnically diverse background, 19.6% self-declaring they have a learning difficulty or disability and 50.1% self-declaring they have no prior qualifications.

### **Next Steps**

- **Community Learning**
  - Developing You 15 people have registered for the next course, starting in January 2024 at City Centre Community Hub. A further course is planned for February 2024

- Developing You 50+ working in partnership with DWP Health Model Office to offer a course specifically for unemployed people aged 50+. The first course will commence in January 2024, with a further course planned in February 2024
- ESOL 5 additional ESOL courses, supporting the local community with English as a second language, will be delivered in the priority wards increasing confidence in reading and social conversations. Courses will be delivered at Greenmount Primary School, Gipton Community Centre, Hamara Centre, Shakespeare Primary School and Castleton Children Centre

For further information on courses available both online and face to face at community venues, please visit: <https://leedsadultlearning.co.uk>

### **6.3 Priority 3 - Ensuring career information, advice and guidance supports young people to move into Education, Employment or Training (EET) from school**

#### **Update on Recent Activities**

- **Apprenticeship Awareness** 27 sessions delivered at 17 schools to a total of 1,725 young people, 334 parents and 69 teachers. Oulton Academy, Bishop Young Academy, Horsforth School, Corpus Christi, Leeds College of Building, Morley Academy, Ruth Gorse Academy, The Pennington Centre, Boston Spa, Mount St Mary's, Farnley Academy, Stephen Longfellow, Coop Academy Priesthorpe, Dixons Unity Academy, Abbey Grange C of E Academy, Wetherby High.
- **Employer Engagement (school brokerage)** 32 businesses provided activities to approximately 1,680 young people at 6 events. The events included a careers fair, 4 mock interview sessions and an employability session.
- **CEIAG - Newsletters** published monthly and circulated to 500 careers practitioners and post 16 leaders, including Employment Hub, Pathways team and internal colleagues who work with young people. The newsletter now has a sector spotlight focus each month which includes information, events, resources and related Apprenticeships relating to October: Digital Industries, November: Creative Industries and December: Financial and Professional Services.
- **CEIAG network meeting** first of the 2023/2024 academic year. Agenda items included careers in Economics from Discover Economics including careers in the Bank of England, Positive Destination reporting and tracking and support for care leavers.
- **The Next Gen Careers Fair** took place at Elland Road on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Organised by the Luminare Education Group, they brought together schools from the whole of West Yorkshire to meet with exhibitors who could talk to them about their post 16 options. We engaged with 250 young people in years 10 and 11, 88 parents and 10 teachers.

#### **Outcomes and Outputs**

34 activities to a total of 3,655 young people, 422 parents and carers and 79 teachers.

#### **Next Steps**

- **School engagement** activities including Apprenticeships awareness sessions and careers fairs planned for delivery during January – February 2024 to a total of 10 schools:
  - Woodkirk High School, Abbey Grange CofE Academy, Allerton High School, The Stephen Longfellow Academy, Notre Dame College, Leeds College of Building, Brigshaw High School, Horsforth, Elliott Hudson College.
- **CEIAG network termly meeting** to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at Lawnswood School. We are co producers of the network along with the Learning Improvement team.
- **Connecting Schools to Hospitality programme** launch event to take place 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the Leeds Met Hotel. 6 schools and 6 hotels will be attending to receive an introduction to the programme which will be delivered from February to June.
- **Development of the Start in Leeds platform** to incorporate the Green Economy – January 2024.

### **7.0 Empowering Families & Safeguarding**

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to change the structure around social care to better support children, young people and families living in poverty.***

This workstream is led by Farrah Khan, Deputy Director Social Care, Children and Families Service.

## **7.1 Priority 1 – Connecting services to better support families.**

### **Update on recent activities.**

EPEC (Empowering Parents Empowering Communities) continues to develop, and 2023 has seen additional recruitment and training of volunteers in 'Being a Parent' and 'Living with a teenager' programmes.

In 2023 the Communities directorate relaunched the Migrant Access Project (MAP). The project works to ensure new and emerging communities in Leeds get an understanding of local services. The project also offers community members the opportunity to become a Migrant Community Networkers (MCN). Childrens Services have committed to attending each of these sessions to build and strengthen relationships within the community, and to provide support and guidance within meetings as to what Early Help support is available for families in Leeds.

During the Summer, services have supported the uptake of the summer holiday Library reading challenge. This enabled families to register with the library and become aware of their universal services. Across Leeds 6318 children signed up to the challenge, and 2723 completed. of these, 92 were children accessing the Healthy Holidays provision.

During 2023 we also worked with 'Leeds 2023' who have provided free activities for children and families including theatre productions and art sessions aimed at celebrating diversity and culture. We have also worked with Leeds 2023 to support their ambition for children from marginalised communities to receive a free poetry book.

During October Child Friendly Leeds held a focused workshop for ambassadors on Mitigating the impact of Poverty. This workshop was an opportunity for businesses & organisations to connect and understand what child poverty is and how we can work together. Guest speakers included; Cllr Venner, BabyBank, ZeroWaste Leeds and Healthy Holidays. The session was very positive and solutions discussed included; actively recruiting volunteers through Leeds Universities to support projects, working with Schools and businesses to donate their lost property to ZeroWaste Leeds, approaching logistics companies with requests of storage space to support projects and sharing good practice examples of how CFL ambassadors have supported projects in order to recruit more businesses.

It has been highlighted during 2023 that there are a number of Children living in B&B accommodation. Childrens services are developing an Early Help offer of support for these Families which will be in the form of a bespoke leaflet specific for the location providing advice on local amenities such as; the library, local children's centre, parks and children's activities.

Childrens Services will join Zarach strategic board to support the Charities aims and ambitions and offer support.

We continue to work alongside the Leeds Childrens charity who have provided many free activities for disadvantaged children and families over the summer period. This has provided opportunities for Children to take part in new activities as well as meet footballers from Leeds United. Leeds Childrens Charity will continue to provide free Christmas gifts for disadvantaged children in Leeds.

### **Outcomes and outputs**

Childrens Services delivered an introduction to Early Help briefing to the MAP community. This was well received, and members would like to continue to develop relationships, and learn more about support available to Families.

EPEC delivery for January 2024 will target East Leeds. Going forward we will deliver in other areas of Leeds.

Leeds Children's Charity at Lineham Farm has been delivering support to the most disadvantaged children in Leeds for years. The base for the charity, Lineham Farm is 30 years old this year and offer support to over 2500 children and young people each year and free activities during school holidays for our most deprived children and young people.

## **Next steps**

EPEC (Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities) will deliver two programmes in January 2024, and the 'Living with a Teen' course will launch Spring 2024. EPEC delivery for January will target East Leeds. Going forward we are currently devising the 2024 timetable which will see expansion into other areas of Leeds.

Childrens Services will continue to attend each of the MAP forums to build relationships with communities and progress this work.

Childrens Services continue to support ZeroWaste School uniform exchange and the winter coat campaign. This has seen 4 dedicated Childrens Services collection points to support the project.

## **7.2 Priority 2 – tackling inequality in accessing services and support.**

### **Update on recent activities.**

Childrens Services are committed to the voice of parents and children being at the heart of everything we do. We have held an annual 'Let's talk' session for several years, and the session was held in November 2023 with over 30 parents attending. The event was also attended by Senior Leaders committed to hearing the voice and experiences of parents.

Let's Talk has been instrumental in developing parent led training for social workers, advocacy for parents involved with child protection conferences and peer training courses.

## **Next steps**

To complete evaluation of the session and continue to work with Parents on next steps.

## **7.3 Priority 3 – Workforce Development**

### **Update on recent activities.**

The launch of the revised early help documentation and notification (formerly registration) process happened between June and July 2023:

The launch reached colleagues from across the Children and Families Partnership with 398 accessing the on-line briefings and 248 accessing the early help practice and process development sessions. Attendance of the latter was dominated by primary school, children centre and cluster staff. 73% (180/248) of attendees at the practice development sessions completed an evaluation; 70% (126/180) had attended an on-line briefing first. Feedback overall was very positive with 88% affirming that their skills, confidence and knowledge had been enhanced and 93% finding the activities and materials very useful. The full report includes an analysis of feedback which was grouped into three themes: (1) the response to the revised documentation and processes generally, (2) attendees' experience of the early help practice and process session and (3) further support needs. Multiple recommendations were made in response and to progress this work further.

The Report's recommendations include:

- 1) Implement a sustainable rolling programme of early help practice and process sessions - as structured in July 2023 - delivered once per term for an average of 15 participants and supported by two or three leaders.
- 2) Review the extent to which the cascading of the strategic message has reached senior leaders in settings and services and identify further opportunities through existing forums (e.g., Head teachers Forum, Best Start Board etc.) to promote these and secure alignment with the revised documentation and notification process.
- 3) Liaise with Targeted Service Leads to explore further support and training needs required for schools within cluster arrangements to adopt the revised documentation.
- 4) Target secondary schools outside of cluster arrangements to ensure key messages have been cascaded and to encourage their adoption of the revised documentation.

- 5) Liaise with the youth service to explore further communication and support needs to ensure key messages have reached this service and respond to any further support to adopt the revised documentation.
- 6) Identify how best to communicate with post-16 providers and ensure they have received the key messages and understand expectations to adopt the revised documentation.
- 7) Liaise with health colleagues to determine if there is additional support required to cascade key messages and support the adoption of new processes and the early help notification only documentation.
- 8) Establish the Early Help Champion role to create a supportive network that brings practitioners together, develops relationships and shares knowledge and skills across the system.
- 9) Create a film targeted at young people and families that explains the early help documentation and notification process.
- 10) Develop and resource a plan for the quality assurance of early help work submitted to the local authority for the purposes of notification in order to inform further training and development needs.

During October 2023 2 bespoke briefings were delivered by the Financial Inclusion team to Childrens Services covering support available for families. The briefing included details of household support fund, healthy holidays, utility support, food support and general money advice. Over 300 practitioners attended the training and found the information very useful. Practitioners told us the most common needs they support families with are; damp/ mould problems, overcrowded housing, debts for utilities including water, families not attending hospital appointments due to travel costs, foodbanks having to limit families access, childcare provision closing which in turn is seeing parents not able to work, family stress and the link this is having on school attendance, demand in need for baby essentials, and a rise in criminal exploitation.

Delivered by Professor Claudia Bernard, the “Poverty and neglect masterclass” was delivered to Services practitioners in November 2023. The masterclass drew on current knowledge to address neglect- the most common form of child abuse. It also focused on the discourse about the links between poverty and neglect.

### **Outcome and Outputs**

- 248 practitioners attended Early Help practice and process in person sessions. 398 attended the online briefing.
- 300 practitioners attended the ‘available support for families’ briefing.

### **Next steps**

The Early Help Registration Task and Finish Group is implementing the recommendations from the Early Help paperwork process. Recurring feedback includes an ask that there is the ‘buy-in’ of senior leaders; supporting them to have the time and capacity to align their early help work to the Leeds Practice Model. The extent to which this workstream has impacted upon an increase in early help notifications is to be analysed in Spring 2024.

Beginning in 2024, Poverty briefings will be delivered within Childrens Services every 2 months. These will cover various topics including practical support for families, risk of loan sharks- how to identify and what support is available, supporting conversations with families around poverty, Marmot city, regular updates from the Poverty board workstreams.

## **8.0 – Readiness for Learning**

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of children and young people who live in poverty.***

### **8.1 Priority 1 Early Years - Take up of free nursery places for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds.**

## Update on recent activities.

Leeds entered into a long-term partnership with Nesta alongside York and Stockport called Fairer Start Leeds and is a three-to-five-year innovation partnership with an aim to work together so that all children have a brighter start for a stronger future. The partnership centres on a shared commitment to reimagining early years support to deliver tangible improvement to the lives of disadvantaged children. There is a greater focus on collaborative working with York and Stockport, sharing the learning across the partnership.

We are now in the third year of our partnership with Nesta and the focus for the project involves NESTA working with the Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service, Leeds' Library Services and Leeds Council to see if we can find new ways to work together to improve support for children and parents by looking into how Speech and Language support and services can be improved within Leeds.

This work aimed to develop a better understanding of:

Common referral sources to the CLST service and characteristics of children/families referred from different sources

- Socio-demographic and economic characteristics of children and families currently on the CLST waitlist broken down by whether or not they are re-referrals and/or accepted by the service.
- Whether wider language and communication support in Leeds (inc. library services) is geographically targeted by need, correlated with outcomes and whether there are differences in acceptance to the CLST service by area
- Differences and accuracy in CLST service pathways
- Differences in episodes of care including wait times between discharge and re-referral and between re-referral and appointment

## Outcomes and Outputs

As a result of the above, a revised pathway into the speech & language therapy service has been developed along with a communication & language toolkit available for all practitioners to use. Recent workshops have been delivered across the city to launch this toolkit and were attended by health & early years/ education practitioners.

### Two-year-olds take-up

Leeds has an average take-up city wide of 72.7%, based on three terms worth of data (Spring 2023, Summer 2023 and Autumn 2023). The inner-city areas of Harehills (50.5%), Woodhouse (56.9%), and Holbeck (62.4%) are still significantly below the city average. Further work to increase take-up in these areas is a priority as is Richmond Hill (59.1%) which is now also a priority area.

Burmantofts, which was a priority area in 2022, now has an uptake close to the city average (72.6%)

### Inner City Areas with lowest uptake (2023)

PPA	Average Uptake of 2 Year Old Places (2023)
Harehills	50.5%
Woodhouse	56.9%
Richmond Hill	59.1%
Holbeck	62.4%

### Eligible Children

City wide, the number of 2 year olds eligible for FEEE funding has decreased over the past 3 years: From 3609 in Spring 2021 to 2746 in Autumn 2023.

### Three and four-year-olds take-up

Take up of FEEE for 3 and 4 year olds in Summer 2023 was 92.2%, which is an increase of 0.6 percentage points on Summer 2022 (91.6%) and an increase of 3.2 percentage points since Summer 2021 (89.0%).

The area of Harehills is an outlier with significantly lower uptake than other areas; in Summer 2023 there were 1,119 children living in this area who were eligible for a funded place, but only 70.4% took one. This means 331 eligible 3&4 year olds in Harehills did not access nursery funding in this term. Harehills is deemed to be the priority area in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, to increase take-up.

Other areas of concern are: Chapel Allerton (85.9%); Burmantofts (88.1%) and Holbeck (89.8% uptake).

### **Next steps**

In preparation for the new Two-Year-Old scheme from April 2024 for eligible working parents, Leeds Family Information Service are hoping to capture some data from providers (via a survey), to understand the number of children currently in settings and paying for childcare, who are likely to become eligible for a funded place of 15 hours from April onwards. The Department for Education haven't yet launched the application portal, but the criteria will broadly follow that for the current 30 hr scheme. This will help inform where there may potentially be sufficiency issues within Leeds. The survey closes on 26 January.

## **8.2 Priority 2 – Emotional Health and wellbeing/ Mental Health**

### **Update on recent activities.**

The My Health, My School (MHMS) annual school survey 2022-23 launched to schools in September 2022 for the academic year. All participating schools were able to access their own survey data to inform planned interventions. The Health & Wellbeing Services collated data at a city-wide level. The MHMS survey is included in the actions within priority 4 of The Refreshed 3As Plan.

### **Outcomes and outputs**

A total of 25,648 pupil responses were received from 202 Leeds schools and settings participating in the 2022-23 survey. The raw data survey results were made publicly available on Data Mill North. A number of resultant Annual Reports, reflecting the survey themes were also published. Broadscale consultation on the MHMS survey question set for 2023-24 commenced at the beginning of February and was open for a 4-month period. Leeds City Council Service representatives were invited to review and suggest amendments to the survey questions to be used with schools for the 2023-24 academic year as well as being tabled as agenda items on various strategic Programme/Project Boards facilitating broader discussion. Following the review, the survey was revised, amendments made and drafted for approval by Steering Group members over summer 2023. The revised My Health, My School survey went live to schools in September 2023. As of January 2024, there have been an encouraging number of 6871 survey responses from 53 Leeds schools and settings indicating a degree of confidence that the total number of survey returns for the 2023-24 academic year will be at least in line with last year's results.

### **Next steps**

December's MHMS Steering Group meeting 2023 considered survey results from the 2022-23 survey and endorsed a subsequent survey consultation this year on the question set for the My Health, My School SEND survey 2024-25. In light of the continued increased annual uptake of the survey, both in the number of responses and numbers of participating schools year on year a proposal to further strengthen governance arrangements for the survey was accepted. The plan is to complement the Steering Group through establishing a new, formalised, multi-agency Management Group capturing expertise from beyond LCC (e.g. NHS, Leeds University, Leeds Trinity University, etc.) to work alongside LCC colleagues. This will provide greater, more immediate day to day support and a bridging mechanism between the Operational and Steering Groups. The Management Group will provide further rigour on the question set, data analysis and proposed changes going forward aiding development of the survey and is to be underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

## **8.3 Priority 3 – The 3 As strategy - working with schools to improve attendance, achievement and attainment.**

Update of recent activities

The 3A's Strategy is has been refreshed. The refreshed strategy takes into account the change of one of the CYPP obsessions 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"*.

The '3 As' is a directorate-wide strategy which identifies how LA services can support schools in their work with young people to raise outcomes.

- **Attainment:** children reach their full potential in learning
- **Attendance:** children need to attend school as much as possible for them, not just to learn, but to be safe and build friendships
- **Achievement:** all children have the opportunity to take part in positive activities in their local community such as sports, the arts and volunteering.

The strategy focuses on the learning and outcomes of all the children and young people in Leeds including those living in areas of the city with high indices of multiple deprivation, children looked after, children and young people with SEND, vulnerable learners and children and young people experiencing SEMH problems.

The Refreshed strategy has the following five 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.

### **Outcomes and outputs**

The new 3As strategy was approved at the end of December 2023 and will be launched in early 2024 and therefore outcomes and outputs will be reported at the next meeting.

### **Next steps**

Once approved the next steps will be to implement the actions detailed on the plan. An update will be provided on the next report.

## **9.0 Green Spaces**

The aim of this workstream is: **We want to improve access to green spaces by improving the quality of existing green spaces, influencing the location and quality of new local green spaces through the Planning System, creating an online map of all Leeds green spaces, and making travel to green spaces easier, safer and more affordable.**

This workstream is led by Sarah Wilson, Senior Design Officer and Jenny Rutherford from Child Friendly Leeds Team.

### **Priority 1 Play Sufficiency**

Active Leeds and Child Friendly Leeds are working in partnership on the Play Sufficiency project. Play Sufficiency is about securing sufficient opportunities for children's play and that involves far more than simply looking at designated provisions (although these are still important). Securing sufficient opportunities for play is about cultivating the time, space and attitudes needed for children's play to flourish, in their homes, on doorsteps and residential streets, within local neighbourhoods and across local authority policy and practice.

Play Sufficiency is an ongoing process of research and action to assess, improve and protect children's opportunities for play. The assessment stage explores what is working for who, where and why at a neighbourhood and organisational and/or local authority level.

Research has been conducted in priority wards in the South, East and West of the city (Boggart Hill; Lincoln Green; Cliftons and Nowells; Holbeck and Beeston Hill; New Wortley). Active Leeds and Child Friendly Leeds are currently writing up the Play Sufficiency Assessment Report, which collates all of the background, context and findings from the extensive research programme.

On September 26th the Play Sufficiency team hosted a Strategic Priorities Workshop at John Charles Centre for Sport. Ben Tawil and Mike Barclay, play consultants from Ludicology commissioned to guide us through the Play Sufficiency work in Leeds, provided a brief overview of the Play Sufficiency process and the principles behind this approach. Active Leeds and Child Friendly Leeds then presented each priority, with supporting background research. Over half of the session was dedicated to discussion focused on each strategic priority: What work is already going on? What are the challenges to delivering this priority? How can we work collectively to progress this priority for children, families and communities in priority wards.

See below for Play Sufficiency priorities:

- Priority 1: Facilitate the cross-service endorsement of Play Sufficiency and embed key principles within Leeds City Council departments.
- Priority 2: Celebrate and enable parents and carers permissions, confidences and skills for play.
- Priority 3: Grow a play workforce of adults whose work directly and indirectly impacts upon children and their play.
- Priority 4: Facilitate sufficient time, space and attitudes towards play in educational settings.
- Priority 5: Enable sufficient time, space, design and attitudes to play for children with protected characteristics.
- Priority 6: Create streets that are safe, welcoming and encourage children's play.
- Priority 7: Improve the variety of spaces available for play for all age groups within close proximity of children's homes (including informal and designated spaces).
- Priority 8: Improve access to nature-based play environments.
- Priority 9: Improve the perception of teenagers and improving their opportunities to play and hang out.

The Strategic Priorities Workshop brought together representatives from across the council to think collectively about how to improve opportunities for play in priority wards. The energy and commitment in the room was evident. From the Open Space Spotlight key ideas and actions were put forward that can be fed directly into the next phase: the write up of the Play Sufficiency Action Plan.

### **Outcomes and outputs**

Full Play Sufficiency Assessment report to be completed in the new year. This will share detailed findings about factors supporting and constraining children's freedoms to play. The Play Sufficiency Assessment report will be shared with partners who have been involved with the project so that they can comment on the draft report.

Play Sufficiency is being taken to Exec Board in December 2023. This is a joint report by Child Friendly Leeds and Active Leeds and will be presented by Cllr Venner, with comments from Cllr Arif. The work follows the 2007 Play Strategy which included a call for a citywide Play Partnership. A strategic board – the Play Sufficiency Partnership, supports the project, formed of LCC representatives and partners. The paper proposes that a Play Champion is appointed from Executive Board, who will lead the development of an Action Plan which will report annually to Executive Board. Councillor Venner has agreed to be the named champion.

Play Sufficiency research has been used to bring in significant external funding to priority wards in the south of the city. The National Lottery Reaching Communities bid funding will deliver a project that focuses specifically on play, responding to the Play Sufficiency insight which articulates how children feel about their opportunities to play in their local area.

Play Sufficiency was presented at Executive Board (December 2023)

### **Next steps**

- To share finding of the research through a series of community workshops
- To embed Play Sufficiency principles, findings and recommendations within the Priority Neighbourhood Partnership Plans in priority wards of the city.
- Complete all resources to share across teams within the council. This will include:
  - The development of a video outlining our key research findings and priorities
  - A set of Play Pamphlets that will go into greater detail focusing on our key themes.
  - A full Play Sufficiency Assessment report
  - An abridged Play Sufficiency Assessment report
- Produce a Play Sufficiency Action Plan

### ***Priority 2 Planning for Play***

#### **Update on recent activities.**

The Planning Service influences the provision of green space and play in new developments through engagement with National Government, Local Plan policies, design guidance and consultation with technical specialists during the consideration of planning applications.

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Committee Inquiry

The (LUHC) Committee has recently launched an inquiry looking at how better planning and building and urban design in England could enhance the health and well-being of children and young people.

The inquiry states:

It's important for children and young people's mental and physical health that they have access to spaces to play and to socialise.

In our inquiry, we want to find out more about how children and young people experience outdoor spaces in towns, cities and rural areas across England. What policy interventions from local and central government could help to deliver streets, estates, villages, neighbourhoods and parks that enable kids to enjoy active outdoor lifestyles and engage with others?

Child Friendly Leeds and Strategic Planning (Policy and Plans) are coordinating a response to this inquiry that articulates best practice in Leeds (and elsewhere) and makes recommendations regarding next steps. The CFL 12 Wishes, Play Sufficiency and play streets will feature heavily as part of this submission to demonstrate the ways in which Leeds City Council are already working to tackle the issues that this inquiry highlights.

## **Local Plan update**

The Leeds Local Plan is made up of a number of documents that contain planning policies that guide the amount and location of development in the Leeds district. It also includes more detailed topic-specific policies that will guide different types of development, and make sure that priorities such as design, green space, heritage, infrastructure, flood risk management are considered during decision making.

We are required to review our planning policies every 5 years, to check they are still working, relevant and fit for purpose, and to identify any policy gaps that may have arisen. Following a review of all our Local Plan policies in 2020, a number of policies requiring update were identified. These include policies on green space and new policy G4b is proposed to ensure new developments include good quality green space and play:

In order to be considered high quality new green and blue space should seek to meet the following objectives:

- c. serve multifunctional purposes for human health, recreation, play sufficiency, ecology, carbon capture and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.
- e. usable for recreation including facilitating movement, play – both formal and informal, rest and observing nature
- o. a mix of formal and in-formal play provision with innovative spaces using natural materials and varied planting to allow imaginative play and connection to nature.
- p. is suitable for children and young people of different ages and abilities in line with local play sufficiency.
- q. Any play provision needs to be designed in accordance with national guidance (such as Fields in Trust) and local play sufficiency assessments.

Additionally, further consideration is being given to how the Local Plan can include reference to the provision on indoor play facilities associated with high density residential schemes particularly in the city centre.

Final public consultation on the first Local Plan update is underway before the plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination. A further Local Plan update is currently being scoped ('Local Plan 2040') and this is likely to include specific play sufficiency policies.

## **Design guidance**

Green Space guidance for how green spaces should be designed in planning applications for proposed developments was finalised and published on the Council's website in August 2023 for use by Developers, Designers, Planning Officers.

The guidance is intended to set the standard for good quality green space and play until new Local Plan policy G4b is adopted; and includes good design principles for green space location, layout, accessibility and play provision.

## **Outcomes and outputs**

Ongoing monitoring of policy and guidance use by officers and resulting green space and play quality will be carried out.

## **Next steps**

Coordinate response to LUHC inquiry and submit document December 2023.

Continue to support Planning Policy colleagues with adoption of new green space policy, and advocate for the inclusion of play sufficiency in Local Plan 2040.

## **Priority 3 Urban 95 Project**

### **Update on recent activities.**

A Leeds team of three representatives from the Council have recently completed the Urban95 Academy programme: a global sponsored leadership course designed for local governments that are dedicated to

early childhood development. The programme was delivered online over seven weeks, during which city leaders learned how to plan, design and implement child-focused infrastructure, policies and programmes related to public space, neighbourhood planning, mobility and transport whilst also developing effective analysis, strategy and leadership skills. The programme focused on how to design better cities for babies, toddlers and their caregivers.

As part of this work, the Leeds Team highlighted a local challenge for our city and designed an outline strategy for how to address this challenge. The priority for Leeds was to address the dominance of the car and how this impacted children's opportunities to play in the streets and green spaces around their homes. Children are becoming less visible in our streets and across our built environment. Nationally and globally there has been a significant shift in the function of streets, with competing demands between the place and movement function. It's about a better design of streets that need to function as spaces that allow people to connect with one another, that can connect cities but at the same time offer opportunities as places for public engagement and play.

The strategy focuses on how the Council could introduce low traffic/active travel type initiatives positively to communities through the lens of play (It's worth noting that the terminology 'active travel' and 'low traffic' would not be used as part of this project).

This proposal places great emphasis on the importance of playful, in-depth and thorough engagement. There are two strands to this engagement:

1. Partner engagement – the power of play as an organising principle to ensure that stakeholders across different departments and directorates are working towards a collective vision and set of outcomes.
2. Community engagement – empowering communities to make decisions about the spaces and culture of their neighbourhood. Residents work towards a collective vision of what they want their neighbourhoods to look and feel like

Community engagement would focus primarily through the lens of play and would be coordinated through the organisation Playful Anywhere. Playful Anywhere CIC is a Leeds-based social enterprise with a mission to catalyse creativity, inventiveness and playfulness, where we work, live and travel. Founder Emma Bearman says: 'Play is a great way to bring people together to catalyse a space and to imagine the potential of what it could be'. This is really the guiding principle of our engagement approach.

## **Engagement Methods**

### **The Playbox**

- Catalyst for play: The brightly coloured box is an immediate invitation to play and be curious. It draws people to a space and gives permission for play. This is really important. So often in Leeds it's not the case that neighbourhoods contain no playable space, but rather that spaces aren't giving permission for play and inviting social interaction. The presence of the Playbox – in an immediate sense will facilitate play and provide opportunities for play. This is crucial to healthy childhood development and ultimately creating better cities for children, for families and for everyone.
- Catalyst for conversation: The Playbox animates a space and creates an inviting environment that draws people in. This is often one of the most difficult parts of community engagement: the initial starting point. The approach with the Playbox helps to break down these initial barriers. Its physical structure is robust, and it can be left in situ without fear of damage. It can collect and share stories, data and information like a gallery space. It prompts the imagination by virtue of being in a space and makes people think differently from the get-go.

### **Play Streets**

Running alongside the neighbourhood planning thread catalysed by the Playbox will be the second strand of community engagement: play streets. Supporting residents to open streets for play will allow them to experience how streets change when you remove the dominance of the car. It is a powerful way to visualise

your neighbourhood: presenting opportunities for play, socialising and positive interactions. Caregivers can conceive how it feels for toddlers to play in public realm without fear of speeding cars; possibilities for unused space to become a focus for exploring nature and growing plants; plain walls can become a canvas for local art. Residents start to reclaim space and understand how they have the power to shape the neighbourhood they live in.

### **Play Street Enablement Project**

Child Friendly Leeds have secured funding to continue work on the Play Streets Enablement project. This project focuses specifically on priority wards, where the benefits of play streets would be significant, but where a resident's capacity for completing the play streets application process independently may be limited. Third sector partners will be commissioned to support residents to organise play streets and get them up and running, with the long-term vision being that residents will feel confident in sustaining these sessions independently. Focused work (via community partners – soon to be confirmed) is likely to take place in the following areas: Seacroft; Lincoln Green; Halton Moor; Osmondthorpe; Middleton; Holbeck. There are plans to launch a winter play streets campaign to support outdoor play through the colder months. We will be looking to coordinate this project with a range of services who can signpost to much needed support and resources.

Child Friendly Leeds have also secured funding in partnership with Leeds University to receive portable air quality monitors. This project will run in conjunction with the play streets enablement work so that residents (ideally it will be children who are leading on this work) can monitor levels of air pollutants outside of, during and after playstreet sessions.

### **Outcomes and outputs**

Data collection regarding play streets will be collected at a city-wide level e.g., Number of play streets (including number of new play streets); number of regular play streets (streets that have an Annual Pass and hold play streets regularly throughout the year); location of play streets (with a particular focus on deprivation).

Through the Play Streets Enablement project, third sector partners will support in reporting on progress in priority wards e.g., number of new and regular play streets; occurrence of play streets; evaluation and impact (with a focus on the voice of children and young people); case studies etc.

Leeds University will collect and analyse air quality data from streets/play streets and will report on key findings. There will be a focus on priority wards.

Play Strategy Officer (Child Friendly Leeds) is also beginning to deliver training sessions to key Leeds City Council services based on the Urban95 learning.

Where the Urban95 Academy strategy is piloted, a case study will be produced to evaluate and monitor impact.

### **Next steps**

As part of the Urban95 Academy, the Leeds Team submitted the local challenge and outline strategy (referenced above: How to positively introduce low traffic/active travel type initiatives through the lens of play). Ten cities are selected to attend a residence week in London where they are matched with a technical partner (e.g., Arup; Gehl; NACTO etc.) who can work intensively with the Local Authority to develop the outline strategy and have it ready for delivery. Due to the strength of Leeds' outline strategy, the Leeds team are now an alternate city. Should any city not be able to attend the residence week, then the Leeds Team will attend.

The Child Friendly Leeds team are pushing ahead with the outline strategy – having received high recommendation from the Urban95 Academy team – and are currently in the process of sourcing funding to pilot this work in Lincoln Green (as well as Meanwood).

Partnership working to progress the play streets and air quality monitoring projects will continue to develop. These projects will be ongoing from September 2023. Third Sector partners are currently being identified and are in the process of being commissioned for this piece of work.

#### **Priority 4 – Lincoln Green**

##### **Update on recent activities.**

Roxby Community Garden (former disused play area) was completed in May 2023 and Mafwa Theatre (community theatre company working mainly with women from migrant backgrounds) have held several community events in the space including theatre performance, live music, dance, art, gardening and craft activities for children and adults.

The Lincoln Greeners gardening group continue to meet every Tuesday and are growing a range of fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Urban Trails are being designed across Burmantofts, Richmond Hill, Harehills as part of a Department for Transport funded walking, cycling, wheeling project and Lincoln Green has been identified as a pilot area for a play-focused trail. A series of design workshops and a site visit were held in August and September and detailed proposals are now being designed by the project team for discussion with community stakeholders. It is planned for the play route to be temporarily marked out as part of a consultation day in Spring 2024.

Plans for a Playbox are at the very early stages. Play Sufficiency research highlighted that there were very limited opportunities for children to play in their local area. The Playbox – a corrugated shipping container – provides a prompt for children’s play, as well as holding a space for community conversations. The design and content of the Playbox is unique to each space it inhabits and can be developed by the local community and key partners. Currently, the idea of a partnership with Mafwa Theatre is being explored.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Mabgate, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts is under development by local groups supported by the Council. In partnership with Leeds City Council’s Planning and Housing teams and East Street Arts, the future play box has been identified as a useful tool to engage with children, young people and families (as well as the wider community) in developing the Neighbourhood Plan, influencing the design of their neighbourhood and responding to the strategic priorities from the Play Sufficiency Assessment

##### **Outcomes and outputs**

Success of completed and developing green space and play improvement projects to be measured through ongoing engagement with Shakespeare Primary School, Mafwa Theatre and the Lincoln Greeners.

##### **Next steps**

Design development of the Urban Trails and play box and ongoing partnership working with Neighbourhood Plan team, Housing team and third sector partners.

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## Child Poverty Measures in Leeds Briefing 2023

This briefing provides an update on Child Poverty statistics, based on the latest data available from Households Below Average Income and Children in Low Income Families (data published by DWP, and DWP & HMRC).

It is recommended that the statistics included in this briefing are viewed as point in time estimates. These statistics should not be used to indicate trend analysis or for year on year comparisons due to smaller sample sizes and differing data collection methods carried out for surveys in 2020/21 and 2021/22 compared with previous years ([full explanation available here](#)).

In addition, the data referenced pre-dates the bulk of the cost of living crisis, meaning that although some costs had started to increase during the financial year 2021/22, the full effects of the crisis on income are not represented. Similarly, it should also be noted that the measures of poverty described, take into account essential housing costs of; rent, mortgage interest, council tax, water bills etc, but do not include fuel bills.

### Glossary

**Relative poverty/low Income** - measures the number and proportion of individuals who have household incomes below 60% of the median average in that year. The terms relative poverty and relative low income can be used interchangeably.

**Absolute poverty/Absolute low income** - measures the proportion of individuals who have household incomes 60% below the median average in 2010/11, adjusted for inflation. It is used to look at how changes in income for the lowest income households compare to changes in the cost of living. The terms absolute poverty and absolute low income can be used interchangeably.

**Housing costs** - Both relative and absolute measures are available before housing costs (BHC) and after housing costs (AHC) are deducted from income. The after housing cost measure is useful in the current economic climate as rising rents and property prices are a growing contributor to poverty.

**Relative poverty, after housing costs** is the measure primarily referenced when discussing poverty estimates in official reports and documents produced by Leeds City Council.

The [Leeds Poverty Fact Book](#) includes all four measures (where available) for reference purposes.

### Households Below Average Income (HBAI)

#### Children in relative poverty in the UK

All dependent children under the age of 20	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2011/12	2010/11
Number of Children in Relative Poverty in the UK BHC(m)	2.9	2.8	3.2	2.3	2.3
Children in Relative Poverty in the UK BHC %	20.0	19.0	22.9	17.6	17.5
Number of Children in Relative Poverty in the UK AHC(m)	4.2	3.9	4.3	3.6	3.6
Children in Relative Poverty in the UK AHC %	29.0	27.0	30.7	27.0	27.2

Leeds Poverty Factbook - Table 2.1

Amy Porter & Sophia Ditta - Financial Inclusion Team - Leeds City Council

The information contained in this briefing is up to date as of 20/04/2023. Additional analysis and information relating to these statistics is published on [Leeds Poverty Factbook](#). For any questions, please contact [financial.inclusion@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:financial.inclusion@leeds.gov.uk)

Latest figures show 2.9 million dependent children under the age of 20 experienced relative poverty before housing costs were deducted (BHC) during 2021/22 (20% of children in the UK).

Looking at relative poverty figures after housing costs (AHC) are deducted from income, there were 4.2 million children in relative poverty 2021/22 (29% of children in the UK).

### Children in absolute poverty in the UK

All dependent children under the age of 20	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2011/12	2010/11
No of Children in Absolute Poverty in the UK BHC(m)	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.3
Children in Absolute Poverty in the UK BHC %	16.0	16.0	17.4	19.2	17.5
No of Children in Absolute Poverty in the UK AHC(m)	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.8	3.6
Children in Absolute Poverty in the UK AHC %	23.0	23.0	24.8	28.3	27.2

Leeds Poverty Factbook Table 2.2

Latest figures show 2.2 million dependent children under the age of 20 experienced absolute poverty during 2021/22 before housing costs (BHC) were deducted from income (16% of children in the UK).

Looking at absolute poverty figures after housing costs (AHC) are deducted from income, there were 3.3 million children in absolute poverty AHC during 2021/22 (23% of children in the UK).

### Children in poverty by economic status of household

Economic status of household	Total number of all children in the UK	Children in poverty BHC		Children in poverty AHC	
		Number	%	No	%
At least one adult in work	12.4	2.0	15.7	3.0	24.0
Workless households	2.0	0.9	46.1	1.2	60.7
Total number of children	14.5	2.9	n/a	4.2	n/a

Leeds Poverty Factbook Table 2.3

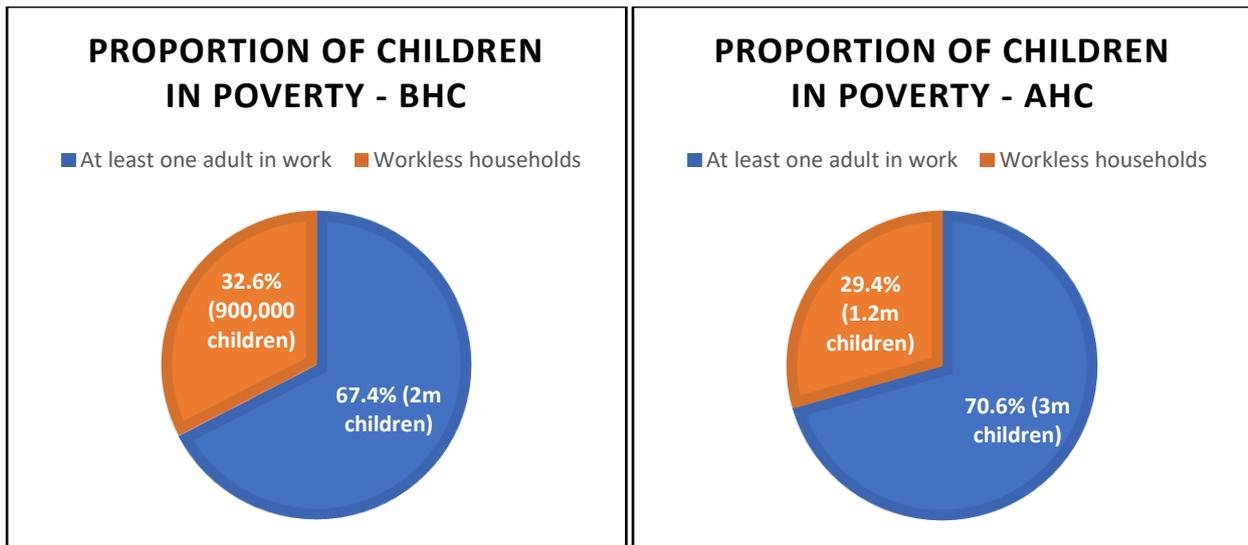
The above table shows the total number of children by economic status, as well as the number and percentage of children in poverty in each economic status group.

A higher percentage of children in workless families are in poverty, compared to children in families where at least one adult is in work. However, when looking at the numbers, there are more children in poverty from households where at least one adult is in work.

In 2021/22, 60.7% of all children in workless families were in relative poverty AHC (affecting an estimated 1.2m children). In contrast, 24% of all children with at least one adult in work were in relative poverty (affecting an estimated 3m children).

### Economic status of household for children in poverty

Amy Porter & Sophia Ditta - Financial Inclusion Team - Leeds City Council  
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Of the 2.9m children in poverty BHC, 2m are from a household with at least one adult in work, equating to 67.4%. 900,000 are from a household with no adults in work, equating to 32.6%.

Of the 4.2m children in poverty AHC, 3m of those are from a household with at least one adult in work, equating to 70.6%. 1.2m are from a household with no adults in work, equating to 29.4%.

This means that overall, both a higher number and percentage of all children in poverty are from households where at least one adult is in work.

### Children in Low Income Families: Local area statistics

The Children in Low-Income Families data contains annual official statistics on the number of children under 16 living in relative and absolute low income families BHC, by local area across the United Kingdom. These statistics replace earlier Official Statistics previously published by DWP (Children in out-of-work benefit households) and HMRC (Personal tax credits: Children in low-income families local measure).

Please note: While the official Children in Low Income Families dataset only publishes BHC statistics, AHC statistics are available via analysis from the Child Poverty Action Group and were recently published in early June 2023. Analysis of this data will be available on the Poverty Fact Book by end of June 2023.

### Children under 16 in relative poverty

Number & Percentage of children under 16 living in <u>relative</u> poverty BHC	2021/22		2020/21		2019/20	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
UK	2.5	20	2.4	19	2.4	19
Leeds	32,933	22	37,937	25	36,496	24

Leeds Poverty Factbook - Table 2.4

Latest figures show in 2021/22 in the UK, 2.5 million children under 16 were living in relative poverty BHC, equal to 20%. In Leeds, 32,933 children under 16 were living in relative poverty BHC, equating to 22%.

### Children under 16 in absolute poverty

Number & Percentage of children under 16 living in absolute poverty BHC	2021/22		2020/21		2019/20	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
UK	1.9	15	1.9	15	2	16
Leeds	25,673	17	32,408	21	30,197	20

Leeds Poverty Factbook - Table 2.5

Latest figures show in 2021/22 in the UK, 1.9 million children under 16 were living in absolute poverty BHC, equal to 15%. In Leeds, 25,673 children were living in absolute poverty BHC, equal to 17%.

### Conclusion

The 2021/22 data referenced in this report should be viewed as an estimate for the number of children living in poverty in Leeds and the UK. Key statistics include;

- 4.2 million dependent children under 20 were living in relative poverty (AHC). This equates to 29% of children in the UK.
- A higher number and percentage of all dependant children under 20 in poverty in the UK are from households where at least one adult is in work (3m out of 4.2m children equating to 70.6% AHC)
- In Leeds, 32,933 children under 16 were living in relative poverty BHC, equal to 22%

**Looking at the most recently available data, it can be said that even by the lowest estimate, 1 in 5 children under 16 in Leeds are living in poverty.**

### Additional information

#### Poverty Estimates for Leeds

Poverty Measure	National Proportion	Leeds Estimate
People in Relative Poverty BHC	17%	138032
<b>People in Relative Poverty AHC</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>178630</b>
People in Absolute Poverty BHC	13%	105554
People in Absolute Poverty AHC	17%	138032

The DWP's estimates for Absolute and Relative Poverty are only available at a national level, however an estimate for Leeds can be calculated using nationally informed assumptions against the Leeds population figure for the same year. As the latest DWP data refers to 2021/22; the ONS Mid-year Population estimates for Leeds at 2021 of 811,953 have been used in the estimates above.

For example it is reported by the DWP that there are 14.4 million people living in relative poverty in the UK, after housing costs. This was 22% of the UK population in 2021. Therefore, because Leeds is statistically considered to mirror the UK trend in terms of demographic profile, it can be assumed that 22% of the Leeds population in 2021 was living in relative poverty. **This equates to an estimated 178,630 people in Leeds living in poverty.**

Amy Porter & Sophia Ditta - Financial Inclusion Team - Leeds City Council  
 The information contained in this briefing is up to date as of 20/04/2023. Additional analysis and information relating to these statistics is published on [Leeds Poverty Factbook](#). For any questions, please contact [financial.inclusion@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:financial.inclusion@leeds.gov.uk)

### Poverty Thresholds

60% of UK Median Weekly Income	2021/22 £ per week RELATIVE BHC	2010/11 £, per week ABSOLUTE BHC	2021/22 £ per week RELATIVE AHC	2010/11 £, per week ABSOLUTE AHC
Couple with no children	339	314	300	270
Single with no children	227	210	174	157
Couple with two children aged 5 and 14	519	481	486	438
Single with two children aged 5 and 14	407	377	360	324

This table shows the relative and absolute poverty thresholds for various household types in 2021/22 AHC.

For example, a couple with two children aged 5 and 14 is considered to be in relative poverty (after housing costs) if they earn £486 per week or less. A couple with two children aged 5 and 14 is considered to be in absolute poverty (after housing costs) if they earn £438 per week or less.

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## Work Programme

Date: 22 February 2024

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, Diversity and Inclusion 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 7 February 2024 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 January. There is now an additional meeting date for 2023/24 on 17 April at 1.30PM, this should enable the work on the Provision of EHCP support to be finalised and will also create additional space to agree the end of year statement that all five scrutiny boards complete at the end of the year.
4. The March meeting now has a further item on the Impact of asylum changes on children in Leeds, which is a follow up on a report considered in September 2023 on the same subject and reflects the Board's ongoing interest in this area.
5. Following past discussion work is underway to consider the allocation of one of the Board's co-opted member places to an individual representing the voice of children and families accessing SEND support and Alternative Provision in the city. This will require a more detailed report to be brought to the Board setting out the options and process that will be followed. This will be concluded in the current municipal year.

## 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 held on 7 February 2024.

**Background papers**

- None

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

June	July	August
<b>Meeting Agenda for 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 10 am</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
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)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**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
<b>Meeting Agenda for 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 10 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 10 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 10 am</b>
<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 – 23 November 10.00AM

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

December	January	February
<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting.</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 10 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 at 2 PM</b>
	Performance report (PM)  2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals  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)
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) – 19 December 2023 at 13.30 (remote working group)		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

### 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
<b>Meeting Agenda for 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 10 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 1.30 pm</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
<p>The independent review of children's social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)</p> <p>Draft Inquiry Report – Provision of EHCP Support (PM)</p> <p>Draft Youth Justice Plan 2024/25</p> <p>Impact of asylum changes on children – Follow Up (PSR)</p>	<p>Children and Families Scrutiny Board End of Year Summary Statement</p> <p>Inquiry Report – Provision of EHCP Support (PM)</p>	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

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

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor M Harland

**88 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 B to the report entitled, 'Capital Receipts Programme Update', referred to in Minute No. 101 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 the financial and business affairs of the Council. It is considered that the release of such information would, or would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial interests in relation to property transactions. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time.

**89 Late Items**

Supplementary Information – Agenda Item 13A - 2024/2025 Revenue Budget and Council Tax

With the agreement of the Chair, supplementary information was circulated to Board Members and published ahead of the meeting for inclusion within agenda item 13A, '2024/2025 Revenue Budget and Council Tax' in the form of Annex 2 which provided a statement of 2023/24 and 2024/25 budgets by service and also a revised Appendix 10 which presented budgeted movements in Earmarked Reserves 2024/25. The supplementary information was considered by the Board as part of agenda item 13A. (Minute No. 99 refers).

**90 Declaration of Interests**

Regarding agenda item 13 entitled, '2024/25 Revenue Budget and Council Tax Report including Reports on the Capital Programme and Treasury

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Wednesday, 13th March, 2024

Management Strategy', Councillor Rafique drew the Board's attention to the fact that he is a Trustee of Wade's Charity in a personal capacity. As such, Councillor Rafique advised the Board that he would leave the meeting room for the duration of the Board's consideration of that item (Minute No. 99 refers).

**91 Minutes - 13th December 2023 and 15th January 2024**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be respectively approved as correct records.

**ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

**92 Ofsted Inspection: Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeships**

The Director of City Development submitted a report which presented to the Board the key judgements and full report of the recent full Ofsted inspection of the Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeship programmes.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member advised the Board that the Council had been found to be 'Outstanding' in all areas, following the recent Ofsted inspection of the Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeship programmes. It was noted that Leeds was the first Local Authority to achieve this 'Outstanding' judgement since the new Inspection Framework commenced in September 2019.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated all involved in achieving this 'Outstanding' outcome, which it was highlighted was in such a key service area. The Board extended its thanks to all who had contributed to this achievement.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report be noted, with the fact that Leeds City Council is the first Local Authority to achieve the 'Outstanding' judgement since the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) commenced in September 2019, being celebrated;
- (b) That it be noted that the Employment and Skills Service has improved from its previous inspection and judgement of 'Good' to 'Outstanding';
- (c) That it be noted that there are no areas identified for improvement;
- (d) That Executive Board's appreciation and congratulations be formally recorded and extended to all those involved in the inspection.

**93 Determination of School Admission Arrangements for 2025/26**

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought approval of the Leeds City Council admission arrangements (admission policy) for September 2025.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member specifically highlighted that these arrangements applied to all Leeds community and voluntary controlled maintained schools, and not to schools that are an academy, voluntary aided, foundation trust or free schools, as these schools must set their own arrangements annually. The Board's attention was also drawn to the proposals regarding reductions in the published admission numbers (PAN) for some specific schools as identified within the report, which had been incorporated into the proposed admission arrangements for 2025/26.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That in determining the school admissions arrangements for the academic year 2025/26, the admissions policies for the Leeds Community and Voluntary Controlled maintained Primary and Secondary schools (as detailed at Appendices A, B, and C to the submitted report), be approved;
- (b) That the resolutions within this minute be exempted from Call In for the reasons as set out within paragraphs 48 and 49 of the submitted report;
- (c) That any necessary authority be delegated to the Lead for Admissions and Family Information Service, to enable that officer to take any actions should there be a need to revise these arrangements after they have been determined, where this revision is necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement of the School Admission Code 2021, admissions law, a determination of the Schools Adjudicator or any misprint in the admission arrangements, under regulation 19 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012;
- (d) That the following be noted:-
  - (i) The Coordinated scheme for admissions arrangements for entry in September 2025 (as detailed in Appendix D to the submitted report) has been set;
  - (ii) That the officer responsible for this work is the Lead for Admissions and Family Information Service;
  - (iii) That the statutory date for implementation (i.e. determination of the policies) is no later than 28 February 2024, with the arrangements published by 15 March 2024.

(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 (b) above, and for the reasons as detailed above and as set out within sections 48 - 49 of the submitted report)

## **CLIMATE, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACE**

### **94 Parks and Green Spaces Overview**

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented an update on the progress being made by the Green Spaces Service and which provided a response to a statement of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) entitled, 'Plans for Community Parks' and its associated recommendations.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member drew the Board's attention to the key points within it and the actions for the service which were proposed to be undertaken in response to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations. Details of proposed changes to the Leeds Quality Park Assessment process were also highlighted.

The Board welcomed Councillor Stewart Golton to the meeting, as Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities), who was in attendance to introduce the Scrutiny Board statement and its recommendations, as referenced at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

Members welcomed the report and extended their thanks to the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) for the work undertaken and the statement produced on this issue. Thanks was also extended to the team of Council officers delivering the Green Spaces service.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Statement of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities), as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted, and that the response provided, as detailed in section 17 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That approval be given to the reduction in frequency of the Leeds Quality Park Assessment to once every three years, which is more in line with how Green Flag assessments are undertaken;
- (c) That the Board's continued support for community food growing in areas of land managed by the Green Spaces Service, which builds upon the approach as set out in paragraph 14 of the submitted report, be confirmed;
- (d) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions above.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **95 A Habitat Banking Vehicle for Leeds City Council**

The Director of City Development and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a joint report presenting details to the Board on how the Council could respond to new approaches to protecting and

enhancing biodiversity in Leeds which have been brought about by the Environment Act 2021. The report proposed the principle of establishing a Habitat Banking Vehicle (HBV) for the Council, which would enable direct investment in strategic nature recovery.

By way of introduction to the report, the Board received details of the relevant requirements arising from the Environment Act 2021 and how the proposals within the report responded to those requirements.

Responding to an enquiry raised, assurance was provided that in line with Government guidance and the Council's draft Local Plan Update the delivery of the biodiversity net-gain would be onsite wherever possible. Regarding sites where this was not possible and off-site biodiversity was delivered, it was noted that the Council's draft Local Plan Update emphasised that this should be within the locality where possible.

Emphasis was placed upon the importance of this issue and Members extended their thanks to officers for the proactive work which had been undertaken in developing such proposals.

In response to a further enquiry regarding the potential involvement of Parish and Town Councils, it was noted that there was the opportunity of working in partnership with other stakeholders so that their land could potentially be included within the HBV process.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the principle of establishing a Special Purpose Vehicle (a Habitat Banking Vehicle (HBV)) be approved so that the sale of habitat units can be undertaken by the HBV in line with the Environment Act 2021;
- (b) That approval be given to delegate the necessary authority to the Director of City Development and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment regarding the establishment and operation of the HBV, in consultation with the City Solicitor, Section 151 officer and the Executive Members for 'Sustainable Development & Infrastructure' and 'Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space';
- (c) That it be noted by Executive Board that an annual report will be provided which details the performance of the HBV for the previous financial year and which presents the future plans for the next financial year.

#### **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS**

##### **96 Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic**

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought agreement to 'care experience' being recognised as a locally protected characteristic by Leeds City Council and which presented the reasons for this proposal. Further to this, the report also recommended a series of actions arising from that proposed designation.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member highlighted the significance of the proposals, which followed the deputation presented to Full Council by care leavers on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024. It was noted that the designation of care experience as a locally protected characteristic was part of a national campaign, and if adopted Leeds would be the 77<sup>th</sup> Local Authority to do so. It was also noted that the report recommended the establishment of an implementation group to develop and deliver this work, with an undertaking being given that care leavers would be invited to play a key role in that process.

Members welcomed the proposals within the report and reiterated their thanks to the care leavers who presented their deputation to Full Council.

Responding to an enquiry, it was confirmed that provision would be made to enable cross-party representation on the implementation group.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That it be recognised that care experienced people are a group likely to face discrimination;
- (b) That ‘care experience’ be enshrined as a locally protected characteristic, and that all other local organisations and partners be called upon to treat ‘care experience’ as a locally protected characteristic to be adopted with the Corporate Parenting Principles;
- (c) That it be agreed that the Council will amend its Equality and Diversity Policy to include ‘care experience’ as a Locally Protected Characteristic;
- (d) That it be agreed that the Council will amend its Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process and associated guidance, to include ‘care experience’ as an additional category to be considered for any changes or improvements to future services and policy;
- (e) That it be agreed that the Council will include ‘care experience’ in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and annual information relating to protected characteristics;
- (f) That agreement be given to delegate responsibility to the Director of Children and Families, in consultation with the Executive Member for ‘Children’s Social Care and Health Partnerships’, to set up a time limited implementation group which will develop an action plan, co-produced with care experienced individuals, to support Council services to embed the amended Equality and Diversity Policy and EIA guidance and establish a cross-Council approach to creating opportunities for care experienced people.

**97 Recommendation to increase levels of Fee and Maintenance payments to Leeds Foster Carers and agree ongoing process for annual review**

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought approval to recommendations for providing an uplift in the weekly fees and maintenance allowances paid to Leeds foster carers with the aim of ensuring that cost-of-living increases do not disadvantage and impact negatively on Leeds foster carers. The report also presented a proposal for a process to be established for future years regarding the approval of an annual uplift being delegated to the Director of Children and Families.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted the importance of the role undertaken by foster carers, and how this proposed uplift was something that the Council 'could not afford not to do', as it was vitally important to continue to recruit and retain foster carers. The significant demand for foster carers being experienced nationally was noted. It was highlighted that whilst foster carers provided the best outcomes for Looked After Children, foster care was also the most financially sustainable way of caring for those children.

Members welcomed the proposals and extended their thanks to foster carer community in Leeds for the vital role that they played.

Whilst supporting the proposals, a Member made enquiries regarding what further actions could be taken to provide greater support and incentives to foster carers, with an offer to work on a cross-party basis, as appropriate. In response, the Board received further detail on the actions being taken in this area, which included 'invest to save' initiatives such as the proposed establishment of an additional level of foster carer for adolescents. Members also noted that work continued to build upon Leeds' positive performance regarding in-house foster carer levels when compared to other Core Cities and statistical neighbours. Further detail was also given on the wider support and enrichment package being provided to foster carers in Leeds, and also the work being undertaken which aimed to enhance the provision for children's social care more generally.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That a 5% increase for the fee element paid to Leeds foster carers, to be implemented retrospectively from the 1st April 2023, be agreed;
- (b) That a 7% increase for the maintenance allowance element paid to Leeds foster carers, to be implemented retrospectively from the 1st April 2023, be agreed;
- (c) That given the need to annually review foster carer fees and allowances, it be agreed that the approval of changes in fee levels in subsequent years be delegated to the Director of Children and Families, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Resources and the Chief Officer, Financial Services.

## **LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

### **98 Best City Ambition - 2024 Update - Final Proposals**

Further to Minute No. 80, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report which presented the final proposals for the 2024 update of the Leeds Best City Ambition. The report sought the Board's endorsement of the Leeds Best City Ambition update and that the Board recommends to Full Council that the updated version is adopted.

Responding to a specific enquiry, the Board noted that the Council's Communications team would undertake the graphic design work referenced within the report, which would be consistent with the approach previously taken in relation to the Council's other strategy documents.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Best City Ambition update final proposals, as presented within Appendix 1 to the submitted report, together with the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board response, as detailed at Appendix 4, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that graphic design work will continue to be developed prior to the publication of the updated Best City Ambition around 1st April 2024, which may include some amendments to wording;
- (c) That the Best City Ambition update, as presented in the submitted report, be endorsed, and that Full Council be recommended to adopt the updated Leeds Best City Ambition;
- (d) That it be noted that the Director of Strategy and Resources is responsible for the next steps, as outlined in paragraphs 10-14 of the submitted report, including bringing forward an update of the 'Being Our Best' organisational plan to Executive Board in March 2024.

(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)

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

### **99 2024/25 Revenue Budget and Council Tax Report including reports on the Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy**

Further to Minute No. 81, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a suite of reports regarding: proposals for the City Council's Revenue Budget for 2024/25 and the Leeds element of the Council Tax to be levied during the same period; proposals regarding an updated

Capital Programme for 2024 – 2028 and also a proposed updated Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25.

With the agreement of the Chair, supplementary information was circulated to Board Members and published ahead of the meeting for Members' consideration as part of agenda item 13A (2024/25 Revenue Budget and Council Tax), in the form of Annex 2 which provided a statement of 2023/24 and 2024/25 budgets by service and also a revised Appendix 10 which presented budgeted movements in Earmarked Reserves 2024/25.

The Board was advised that the budget proposals as detailed within the submitted report were based upon the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. However, it was noted that following the publication of the submitted agenda papers, the final Local Government Finance Settlement had been received, which was consistent with the initial Settlement in all but the following elements: it was confirmed that additional resources had been received from the Services Grant of £98k and Social Care Grant of £97k, with a reduction in the New Homes Bonus Grant of £6k, totalling an additional £189k for 2024/25. Executive Board was asked to note this updated position and that this additional funding was proposed to be allocated to the Council's reserves to deal with in year pressures within Social Care.

Responding to a specific enquiry, the Board received an update on the Government's recent announcement regarding additional funding for Local Authorities, the level of funding being received by Leeds and how this was being managed in terms of the budget proposals.

**(A) 2024/2025 Revenue Budget and Council Tax**

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That, subject to the inclusion of the updated position as referenced above, Council be recommended to note the recommendation of the Council's statutory Section 151 officer (the Chief Officer – Financial Services) that the Budget proposals for 2024/25 are robust and that the proposed level of reserves is adequate, as set out at Part 7 of Appendix 1 to the submitted report;
- (b) That, subject to the inclusion of the updated position as referenced above, Council be recommended to adopt the following:-
  - (i) That the revenue budget for 2024/25 totalling £622.0m be approved. This means that the Leeds element of Council Tax for 2024/25 will increase by 2.99% plus the Adult Social Care precept of 1.99% from 2023/24. This excludes the police and fire precepts which will be incorporated into the Council Tax report to be submitted to Council on 21st February 2024;
  - (ii) That approval be given to grants totalling £73.1k to be allocated to parishes, as shown at Appendix 5 to the submitted report;
  - (iii) That approval be given to the revised virement rules at Appendix 7 to the submitted report - Virement Decisions to Amend Approved Budgets, specifically that the de minimis level for

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virements below which any variations to net managed budgets will be deemed 'Other Budget Adjustments' is increased from £10k to £50k. Budget movements that are not between budget headings within the approved net managed budget will also be 'Other Budget Adjustments';

- (iv) That approval be given to the strategy at Appendix 9 to the submitted report in respect of the flexible use of capital receipts - specifically the additional planned use in 2023/24 of £6.7m and planned use in 2024/25 of £18.9m;
  - (v) That in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, the budget be approved with:
    - An increase of 7.7% in dwelling rents;
    - An increase of 7.7% in garage and travellers site rent;
    - An increase of 7% for the standing charges in district heating schemes and the district heating unit rate will remain at 10p per kwh;
    - A 7% increase in heat consumption charges in sheltered complexes;
    - An increase in service charges for low/medium rise flats to £5.17 per week and for multi-storey flats to £12.20 per week;
    - An increase in the charge for tenants who benefit from the sheltered support service to £9.22 per week;
    - An increase in the Retirement Life charge for the provision of additional community facilities to £12.20 per week for services within complexes and £5.17 per week where they are within a standalone community centre;
    - An increase in the service charges for Wharfedale extra care scheme to £50.73 per week;
    - An increase in the service charge for Gascoigne House extra care scheme to £64.04 per week;
    - The support charge at both extra care schemes being increased from £24.54 in 2023/24 to £28.77 in 2024/25;
  - (vi) That in respect of the Schools Budget, the High Needs Block budget for 2024/25, as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the Schools Budget Report at Appendix 8 to the submitted report (specifically the table at paragraph 3.4.6), be approved;
- (c) That Executive Board's thanks be conveyed to Scrutiny Boards and all those who took part in the public consultation for their comments and observations made in consideration of the Council's Proposed Budget.

## **(B) Capital Programme Update 2023 – 2028**

### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That Executive Board recommends to Council:-
  - (i) the approval of the Capital Programme for 2024-2028 totalling £1,906.7m, including the revised projected position for 2023/24, as presented in Appendix A to the submitted report;

- (ii) the approval of the MRP policy statements for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report; and
  - (iii) the approval of the Capital and Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix D to the submitted report; with it being noted that as part of the Capital and Investment Strategy, the Council is required to set prudential limits for the total value of its non-treasury investments and, specifically, limits for the total value of service investments and the total value of commercial investments that it holds; and as such, Council be recommended to approve, as detailed within Appendix D that:-
    - the prudential limit for service investments be set at £80m;
    - that a limit of £200m be set for the carrying value of assets which are classed as commercial investments, with it being noted that these limits represent no change between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- (b) That Executive Board approval be given to the following net injections totalling £264.7m into the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A(iii) to the submitted report:-
- £31.7m to address Capital Programme Review budget pressures as detailed at Appendix A(iv) to the submitted report;
  - £72.6m of annual programme injections as detailed at Appendix A(v) to the submitted report;
  - £11.8m of ringfenced capital receipts for the District Heating Network Phase 4 scheme and the Future Ways of Working Programme;
  - £4.0m of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategic Fund monies; and
  - £144.7m of other injections, primarily relating to annual capital grant allocations, one off capital grant allocations funding schemes such as junction improvements at Dawsons Corner and the LUF3 Heart of Holbeck project, the roll forward of the HRA Programme, invest to save borrowing schemes and other secured external grant funding.
- (c) That it be noted that the above resolutions to inject funding of £264.7m will be implemented by the Chief Officer - Financial Services.

### **(C) Treasury Management Strategy 2024/2025**

#### **RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the treasury strategy for 2024/25, as set out in Section 8.5 of the submitted report, be approved by Executive Board, and that the review of the 2023/24 strategy and operations, as set out in Sections 8.3 and 8.4 of the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That full Council be recommended to approve that the borrowing limits for the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 be confirmed as set in February 2023 and that new limits for 2026/27 be approved at £3,200m for Borrowing and £490m for Other Long-term Liabilities for the Authorised Limit. For 2026/27 full Council be recommended to approve that the Operational Boundary be set at £3,000m for Borrowing and £470m for Other Long-term Liabilities, as detailed at Section 8.6 of the submitted report;

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- (c) That full Council be recommended to approve the treasury management indicator for the maturity structure of the Council's borrowing as detailed in Section 8.7 and Appendix A to the submitted report;
- (d) That full Council be recommended to set the investment limits for periods greater than 364 days for 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26 at £150m, and that a new limit for 2026/27 be set at £150m, as detailed in Section 8.8.9 of the submitted report.

(The matters referred to in Minute Nos. 99(A)(a) – 99(A)(b)(vi) (Revenue Budget and Council Tax); 99(B)(a)(i) – 99(B)(a)(iii) (Capital Programme) and 99(C)(b) – 99(C)(d) (Treasury Management Strategy), given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In)

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

(Further to Minute No. 90 above, Councillor Rafique left the meeting room for the duration of the Board's consideration of this item).

## **RESOURCES**

### **100 Financial Reporting 2023/24 – Month 9 (December 2023)**

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report which presented the Council's financial position as at the end of the first 9 months of the 2023/24 financial year. Specifically, the report reviewed the current position against the 2023/24 Budget, provided an update on the use of other funding resources and also updated the Board on the current position regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points which included the current forecasting of an overspend of £39.0m for the General Fund as at month 9 of the financial year. The measures being taken to manage this position were highlighted, but with it being noted that the use of the Council's reserves to achieve a balanced position for 2023/24 would be necessary, which would have an impact upon the resources available for 2024/25 and beyond.

Members further discussed the Council's current financial position and the financial outlook for the coming year, noted the range of actions being taken to manage that position and also considered the financial challenges being faced by Local Authorities nationally. The increasing pressures arising from key areas of demand such as children's social care were highlighted, with Members also referencing the national funding model for such areas.

## **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That it be noted that at Month 9 of the financial year (December 2023), the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £39.0m for 2023/24 (6.8% of the approved net revenue budget) within a challenging national context, with it also being noted that a range of actions are being undertaken to address this position;
- (b) That it be noted that at Month 9 of the financial year (December 2023) the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of £1.4m for 2023/24 (0.5% of the approved gross budget);
- (c) That it be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care, known impacts of the rising cost of living, including the NJC pay settlement of £1,925 and the JNC pay settlement of 3.5%, have been incorporated into this reported financial position, as submitted. That it also be noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available, and 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 February 2023 through the annual Revenue Budget report;
- (e) That the Month 9 positions regarding the use of Invest to Save, Covid Backlog and Flexible Capital Receipt resources be noted, and that the additional planned use of £0.3m of Capital Receipts in 2023/24 also be noted, which is to support transformation projects and deliver savings in addition to the budgeted use approved by the Board to date.

### **101 Capital Receipts Programme Update**

Further to Minute No. 107, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023, the Director of City Development submitted a report presenting an update and overview of the Council's Capital Receipts Programme and which recommended to the Board a number of related approvals in relation to the programme.

The Board noted that further to the submitted report, 'Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary School - Caretaker's Property, Moorland Grove, Pudsey, LS28 8EP' was to be withdrawn from Table 2 (properties proposed for inclusion in the Capital Receipts Programme) due to further discussions to be undertaken with the school.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the actions which were ongoing in relation to the Capital Receipts Programme, which given the financial challenge being faced by the Council was with the aim of having a smaller estate that was more fit for purpose. It was also noted

that further reports were expected to be submitted to Executive Board on such matters, as and when appropriate.

Following consideration of Appendix B 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, subject to the removal of ‘Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary School - Caretaker's Property’ from properties proposed for inclusion in the Capital Receipts Programme, the contents of the submitted report and its appendices be noted, together with the previous Key Decisions which have been taken in relation to the disposal of assets, as set out at paragraph 16 of the submitted report;
- (b) That the progress made and achieved since Executive Board considered the last report on 8 February 2023, be noted;
- (c) That, subject to the removal of ‘Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary School - Caretaker's Property’ from properties proposed for inclusion in the Capital Receipts Programme, those assets identified in Appendix A and exempt Appendix B of the submitted report as “Proposed for Inclusion” be declared surplus and that approval be given to their disposal. Also, agreement be given to their addition to the Council’s Capital Receipts Programme of surplus properties for disposal;
- (d) That, subject to the removal of ‘Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary School - Caretaker's Property’ from properties proposed for inclusion in the Capital Receipts Programme, the withdrawal of properties from the Capital Receipts Programme, as set out in Appendix A and exempt Appendix B to the submitted report, be approved, which will be implemented by the Director of City Development;
- (e) That the approach being taken in relation to the review of Locality buildings across the city, be supported, with support also being given to how this approach will be informed by the review of locality service delivery.

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

**102 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance and Assurance Report**

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report which presented an update on the current position and provided assurance to the Board in respect of health, safety and wellbeing matters for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The report summarised the Council’s performance and main achievements, as well as looking ahead at any challenges and identified priorities for the next two years.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an update on some of the key points arising.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiries, the Board was advised that health, safety and wellbeing performance data was shared with Scrutiny for consideration. In terms of the timeliness of the data presented, it was noted that whilst the submission of the report to Executive Board was slightly later than it would normally be, given the availability of the data, the period that it covered was as timely as possible.

Members also noted that Corporate Leadership Team considered such matters regularly, with specific reference being made to the issue of violence, abuse and aggression against staff, which was a specific area of focus.

Thanks was extended to all officers involved for their role in this important area and for the work that would continue with the aim of delivering further progress and improvement.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report and appendices, be noted;
- (b) That it be recognised that a robust, yet proportionate approach to health, safety and wellbeing risk management continues to be applied within the Council, in order to enable the Council do the best it can with the resources and information available.

(Councillor J Pryor left the meeting during the consideration of this item)

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:** FRIDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY 2024

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN  
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 2024

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