

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Wednesday, 4th September, 2024 at 10.00 am
(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 9.45 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

- J Bowden - Roundhay;
- D Cohen (Chair) - Alwoodley;
- R Downes - Otley and Yeadon;
- O Edwards - Guiseley and Rawdon;
- E Flint - Weetwood;
- T Goodall - Headingley and Hyde Park;
- J Heselwood - Weetwood;
- D Jenkins - Killingbeck and Seacroft;
- R Jones - Horsforth;
- N Manaka - Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
- L Martin - Roundhay;
- K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood;
- 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 S Gul - Young Lives Leeds
- Ms M Adams - Leeds Parent Carer Forum
- Mrs K Blacker -

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

Produced on Recycled Paper

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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.

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A G E N D A

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

3

LATE ITEMS

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

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

4

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

5

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

MINUTES - 18 JULY 2024

7 - 16

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2024.

7

SEND - EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS – REVIEW PROCESS – UPDATE REPORT

17 - 28

To consider a report from the Director of Children and Families that responds to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) through its inquiry report on the Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds in April 2024.

8

IMPACT OF ASYLUM CHANGES ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN LEEDS

29 - 34

To consider a report from the Director of Children and Families setting out how recent changes to the asylum system have impacted children in Leeds, this is a follow up item to reports considered in the 2023/24 municipal year.

9

JOINT TARGETED AREA INSPECTION ON SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE - ACTION PLAN

35 -
52

Following consideration of the Youth Justice Plan 2024-27 and the outcome from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) on Youth Violence the Board is asked to consider the follow up Action Plan on the JTAI.

10

WORK PROGRAMME

53 -
78

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

11

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next public meeting of the Board is scheduled for 9 October 2024 at 10.00AM with a pre-meeting for all board members at 9.45AM.

THIRD PARTY RECORDING

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

Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice

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

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SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 18TH JULY, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor D Cohen in the Chair

Councillors J Bowden, R Downes,
O Edwards, E Flint, T Goodall, Graham,
J Heselwood, D Jenkins, R Jones,
N Manaka, K Renshaw, A Rontree and
S Seary

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr A Khitou
Mr A Graham

Co-Opted Members (Non-Voting)

Ms S Gul
N Tones

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair of the meeting Cllr Cohen put on record his thanks and the thanks of the Board for the hard work carried out in Leeds during the 2023-24 academic year noting the efforts of children and young people, parents and carers school support staff, teachers and Head Teachers.

Executive Board Member for Children and Families, Cllr Hayden also noted the work carried out in schools in 2023-24 adding her thanks and support for the hard work by all those involved in learning in the city.

24 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

25 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

26 Late Items

There were no late items of business.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 4th September, 2024

27 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

28 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Ryan Stephenson with Cllr Simon Seary attending as substitute

Cllr Lisa Martin with Cllr Andy Rontree attending as substitute

Ms H Bellamy

Mr T Britten

Ms M Adams

Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families

29 Minutes - 10 June 2024

In relation to the minutes from the 10 June 2024 Board meeting members emphasised the need to provide an update on recent work done on Youth Vaping. It was accepted that this does feature in the minutes and that a report will come back early in 2025 reflecting that the King's Speech did cover this issue.

The Board also discussed the Youth Justice Plan item that featured at the last meeting. It was noted that with that item being part of the Budget and Policy Framework, correspondence will be drafted through the Chair that will pick up the general discussion and points made by the Board on that item, this will be done in advance of Executive Board considering the item later in the year.

Resolved - That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 June 2024, be approved as an accurate record. Following a vote this was carried unanimously.

30 Children Looked After (CLA) Sufficiency Strategy

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services setting out the Council's Children Looked After (CLA) Sufficiency Strategy that was approved at Executive Board on 19 June 2024.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Farrah Khan, Deputy Director Social Care
- William Shaw, Head of Comms, Marketing & Customer Services
- Benjamin Finley, Head of Service Corporate Parenting

By way of introduction the Executive Member for Children and Families highlighted that the strategy sets out how the Council will meet its statutory obligation to meet the needs of Children Looked After. A key priority for the Council is to have as many children living in Leeds as possible where it is safe and appropriate to do so. It was also noted that rising costs and increased demand for placements are also key factors.

Responding to comments and questions from the Board the following points were covered:

- In response to questions around budget pressures linked to external placements and the consequent need to reduce costs and the number of external placements as quickly as possible the Board heard that delivery of small group residential homes was now moving ahead, and significant progress has been made in delivering the planned homes. A key challenge is recruitment of staff and work is underway to speed up recruitment to optimise recruitment and retention approaches. Agency staff are no longer used in residential settings as a result of improved recruitment techniques. The Board were also told that the approaches being taken are regularly reviewed to ensure they are operating as well as they can to quickly deliver the new homes. In general terms the Board welcomed the approach to delivering new in house residential homes and the progress being made to deliver 8 new small group homes as well as two larger homes.
- The Board asked about frequency of contact for CLA with parents and carers in the context of increased numbers in care. The Board were informed that family time is considered to be very important and can take place in a variety of settings and between different family members depending on the particular case. Each CLA has an individual care plan in which family time features and the voice of the child is captured within the plan. In addition, avoiding stigma and appearing different to other children and young people is a key factor in terms of delivering family time so it is a strong theme of the social work done in Leeds. In terms of increased numbers in external placements bringing children back to live in Leeds will have a positive impact in terms of increasing opportunities for family time.
- The children and young people who will live in the new homes will largely be those that the authority is already working with and know but inevitably new CLA will enter the care system when the new homes are opening and it is likely, assuming there are vacancies in the homes, that they will be cared for in them as well.
- The Board heard about the reduced costs associated with having more residential homes and that they increase the quality of care at a reduced cost when compared to private providers, so in many respects increasing in house provision in the city has a double benefit.
- The Board inquired about placement breakdown and strategies to retain foster carers in the workforce, for example using informal support arrangements between more long standing and experienced foster carers and newer foster carers. The meeting heard that strategies are in place to prevent placement breakdown through a common practice model to strengthen relationships and placements. Work is also ongoing on a

partnership basis to develop services to support foster carers and young people in care – the aim being to get it right first time and have a placement that CLA stay in. The Board were also informed about support and placements for asylum seeking children and young people.

- The Board emphasised the importance of staff retention and the problem of higher salaries in the private sector. Members were reassured that Leeds does offer a competitive offer to staff based on training and support, competitive salaries, progression routes, local government pension, sickness pay and through training and development a stimulating and rewarding work environment.
- On specific cost differences between public and private sector the Board were informed that private placements can be 40% higher in terms of costs albeit it was noted that comparison can be difficult given the different nature of placements and care packages provided. A key driver is providing quality or better care and sometimes that commitment can lead to higher costs in some placements for example if a CLA had to be cared for on their own for a period of time. The Board acknowledged that private sector care costs have significantly increased in recent years.

Resolved - The Board noted and commented on the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy and unanimously supported the report recommendations.

(Moved by Cllr Cohen and Seconded by Cllr Edwards)

31 Changes to Funding for Inclusion (FFI) - Briefing

The Board considered a report from the Director of Children and Families that provided a briefing on the planned changes to Funding For Inclusion (FFI) in Leeds.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Dan Barton, Deputy Director – Learning

The Executive Board Member for Children and Families introduced the report setting out the legislative requirement for the Council to move from FFI to statutory assessments through the Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) model. A key priority within the work is to ensure that the changes are not overwhelming for the existing system and that it is based on assessments being carried out within the 20 week timeframe. The initial focus is on those children going through transition years so those that are facing changes anyway and, in many cases, moving to a new setting. The additional focus being provided by scrutiny on this issue was also welcomed.

It was emphasised that this is a children and young people centred process and changes will not be made where they would be detrimental to children and young people receiving support.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
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Responding to comments and question from members the following discussion took place:

- Board members sought assurance on the scope of the planned changes with around 5,000 children currently accessing Funding For Inclusion. Given the wider challenges Leeds is having in terms of meeting the 20 week EHCP statutory timescales, these changes will add further pressure on to a system that is currently struggling. Noting the plan to make these changes over four years the Board thought this may be too short to deliver the changes. The Board were assured that there is flexibility on timescales.
- In addition, the Board thought that 30% of children will potentially not qualify for an EHCP due to the higher thresholds to access support through that route. A concern being that this could mean that children and young people needing support could lose it due to wider funding challenges in the sector and schools not having the resource to replace FFI.
- Noting the legislative issues faced by the Council and the FFI approach the Board heard that the risk of challenge under the present arrangements was too high and means that this work must be done, and a start made on moving from an FFI model to EHCP assessments.
- The Board also received assurances around additional recruitment plans and productivity improvement plans linked to better use of IT systems. The enhanced staffing and productivity improvements have led to the 4 year timescale for this work.
- The Board were assured that FFI funding will not be removed until EHCP assessments have been carried out. It was noted that it is difficult to project what the move to EHCP assessment will lead to in terms of numbers of children and young people having an EHCP assessment and receiving an EHCP.
- The Board were also informed that where a pupil has FFI currently and goes through the EHCP assessment and does not qualify for support funding to meet their needs should come from the school's notional funding. However, additional funding will be available to schools and settings with a higher proportion of children who have needs that are below the EHCP threshold – this is currently being developed and is known as Environmental Funding. The Board were reassured that this measure will assist those children and young people who potentially will not meet the EHCP threshold.
- The Board asked about prioritisation for those that will be transitioning to the new approach. In response the Board were informed that Children Looked After (CLA) are the top priority, along with those already facing learning transition. A key element of the approach is to target those with the most significant vulnerabilities first.
- Board members asked about how CLA, and children and young people generally, will be engaged and consulted about the planned assessments and changes to funding arrangements. The Board were informed that the 2014 legislation covers the engagement and consultation elements in the code of practice, so it is part of the EHC assessment to include the voice

of the child and capture their views. This process will be carried out by schools and SENCO staff that work in schools supported by the directorate through FAQ approaches and support with correspondence. It was noted that additional support will be developed to meet specific needs of families when they arise.

- The Board asked about educational psychologists and where the authority would like to be in terms of head count and wider recruitment plans. The Board heard that in an ideal world there would be more educational psychologists available and for them to be focussed on early help and early intervention to reduce the requirement and demand for EHCPs in the longer term. The Board were informed that recruitment processes are underway currently to expand the educational psychologist teams.
- The Board were also informed about ongoing work with the Leeds Parent Carer Forum (LPCF), more engagement has taken place with the LPCF, and more is planned to meet both the forum and parents and carers themselves.
- The Board asked about EHCP funding allocations and whether this is used to meet the needs of the child it is intended for and any monitoring arrangements to ensure the funding is used as intended. It was explained that with the number of EHCPs that are now in use it is very difficult to monitor how the funding is used outside of the annual review process. It was noted that in Leeds there is a high degree of professional trust and that creates confidence that at least the requirements of the EHCP are being met, where there are concerns that needs are not being met fully then this should be reported to the SENSAP Team.
- A Board member highlighted the challenges being faced by schools in providing SEND support and that often the funding allocated to support children and young people is not sufficient to fully meet needs which adds pressure to wider school budgets.
- The Chair highlighted the reassurances provide through the report and discussion at the Board particularly on timescale flexibility and the plans for Environmental Funding.

Resolved

The Board unanimously agreed the following, to:

- a) Note the specific and detailed responses to questions raised at Executive Board on the 19th June.
- b) Note the clarity and assurance provided in relation to the interface and for some children the necessary transition from FFI to Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) provision.

(Moved by Cllr Cohen and Seconded by Cllr Edwards)

32 The Annual Standards Report

The Board considered a report from the Director of Children and Families that presented Scrutiny with externally validated performance data for pupils

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in Leeds in 2023 following the statutory assessments and examinations which took place in 2023.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Dan Barton , Deputy Director – Learning
- Becky Lawrence, 0-19 School Improvement Consultant

The Executive Board Member for Children and Families introduced the report setting out that this report is focussed on results from 2023, which have been validated and verified.

In addition, the Deputy Director – Learning highlighted secondary school outcomes and positive performance on Progress 8 which highlights progress on SATs to GCSE, in Leeds the progress 8 score is 0.12 which is a significant achievement but is not cause for complacency as it is an aggregate figure and does not mean that there aren't pockets of concern around performance in some areas of the city. SEND performance was also highlighted as an area for further work and it was noted that the development of a learning partnership would be a positive initiative to deliver further improvement in performance city wide.

Responding to comments and question the following issues were raised:

- Whilst welcoming the Progress 8 performance the Chair noted that primary performance is a contributor to this in that primary school performance is not as high and that progress is good at secondary but can often mean that academic progression is not always achieved due to starting from a relatively low base at SATs. It was acknowledged that attainment at all levels is also a priority, but that Attainment 8 is above national average and that in the majority of cases young people are accessing positive post 16 destinations at the end of their time in secondary schools.
- The Executive Board Member for Children and Families noted the positive performance at secondary schools and the hard work done at primary stage. Post 16 provision was noted as an area for reform with a need to adjust some attitudes to attainment at age 16, learning being a process that goes on throughout life and value added progress should be acknowledged and destinations at post 16 supported and praised even if placements are not always at level 4.
- The Board asked about performance amongst the cohort of children accessing free school meals. In response the Board heard that around a quarter to a third of pupils within most year groups in Leeds schools meet the Government's "disadvantaged" criteria, that is they have had a period of free school meal eligibility during the last six years, or are looked after or adopted. The performance of this cohort in Leeds tends to be lower than for pupils nationally who share the same characteristic. Pupils in Leeds who are not disadvantaged typically have outcomes in line with non-

- disadvantaged pupils nationally. Where support has been provided to a school by the learning improvement service this tends to be impactful, but the capacity of the service means that there is a limit to the number of schools that can be supported.
- The Board noted plans for a system led approach to early years provision and that it is an item already identified for the work programme later in the year. It was also noted that there is a focus on from conception support to tackle inequalities and have children school ready when entering nursery and reception.
 - The Board debated Early Years performance and the need to improve further despite some increases achieved in 2023. The Board acknowledged the impact of Covid on children but it was also accepted that the pandemic did impact the country as a whole so there is a need to work as a city towards achieving national standards at foundation level.

Resolved

The Board unanimously agreed the following, to:

- a) Note the performance against headline measures for pupils in Leeds in 2023 in comparison to national data.
- b) Note the actions taken by local authority services to support maintained schools and academies in their work to improve outcomes in Leeds.

(Moved by Cllr Cohen and Seconded by Cllr Edwards)

33 SACRE Report Scrutiny - July 2024 FINAL

The Board considered a report from the Director of Children and Families that sets out the priorities for SACRE over the last year and the progress made on them.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Dan Barton , Deputy Director – Learning
- Katie North, School Improvement Adviser
- Russell Trudgen, Chair of Leeds SACRE

The Executive Board Member for Children and Families introduced the report and noted the value that Religious Education (RE) adds to school curriculums and the challenges that can be faced teaching RE in schools. The commitment to and standard of RE provision in Leeds was also acknowledged.

Responding to member questions and comments the following topics were discussed:

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- The Chair of Leeds SACRE highlighted the importance of RE and the value it adds to the school curriculum. In addition, an ambition to support teachers who are not specialist RE teachers was set out. The work SACRE does with the wider community and faith groups was also noted.
- Board members asked about teaching RE in non-exam classes a suggestion being that examination could become more common. By way of response, it was noted that fitting all subjects into the school curriculum can be problematic based on available time. However, it was recognised the value RE brings in terms of other subjects and disciplines that are covered by it such as philosophy, sociology, history and geography.
- Members asked about the gender gap in terms of attainment with boys appearing to not engage as effectively as girls. In response the Board were informed that confidence in the classroom can be an issue as well as SACRE being able to offer more support linked to the asks that were included in the submitted report.
- The board discussed the role that RE and SACRE can play in terms of ethics and ensuring that children and young people are taught this through the curriculum. This approach could be of particular value given the way society has become more polarised in recent years.
- Members suggested that young people could be members of the SACRE Board. Currently there aren't any, but SACRE does visit schools proactively to engage with young people. It was noted that more engagement could be done such as taking the SACRE meeting to schools and to have discussion with young people before the board meetings start. The Board felt that young people could be strong advocates for SACRE if this was developed further and through the Council's voice and influence team it was thought that further support for this could be given.
- The Chair of the Board sought and received permission (by unanimous vote) to adjust the recommendations in the report on page 89 of the agenda pack, to add in the following: 'and to thank all who contributed to the report and updated the curriculum.'

Resolved – By unanimous vote Members noted the content and recommendations set out within the appended report and thanked all who contributed to the report and updated the curriculum.

(Moved by Cllr Cohen and Seconded by Cllr Edwards)

34 Work Programme

Members considered the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The following issues were raised under this item:

- Board members suggested that a work item could be developed to look at Youth Services. However, it was noted that some aspects of youth services do not sit in this board's remit and are under the Environment,

Housing and Communities (EHC) Board, albeit roles such as life coaches do sit within this board's remit.

- It was agreed that the Principal Scrutiny Adviser should take the suggestion away and scope a possible working group working jointly with the EHC Board. It was also agreed that the impact of the life coaching role could form the basis of a separate item in November.
- The Board also thought that an item could be brought forward on school support staff in terms of the role they play and what is expected of them in schools. It was noted that this could cover a strategic overview of recruitment and retention, expected role, salary levels and workloads of teachers and support staff generally particularly given that there is a new Government in place. This was agreed to but it was noted that funding levels are an issue along with the complex nature of the school system in Leeds in terms of the number of different employers.

Resolved - Members considered and commented on the Board's work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

35 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board is scheduled for **Wednesday 4 September** at 10.00AM with a pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.45am.

SEND - Education, Health and Care Plans – Review Process – Update Report

Date: 4th September 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

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

Children and Families Scrutiny Board identified Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) as an item for detailed scrutiny in the 2023/24 municipal year. The Board completed its inquiry in April 2024 by agreement of its final inquiry report.

Running concurrently with the inquiry was the improvement work led by the Children and Families directorate supported by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) aimed at delivering effective, sustainable change to improve outcomes for children and families accessing EHCP and SEND support services in Leeds.

The Executive Board at its meeting on 19th June 2024 considered the Scrutiny Board inquiry report and the report of the Director of Children and Families which outlined the proposed changes required to the EHCP arrangements in Leeds. The Executive Board also endorsed the approach to capturing the views and experiences of children, young people parents and carers during the delivery of changes and improvements, and also the range of partnership work with stakeholders, especially schools and other specialist settings.

This report sets out an update now that the high level 'design stage' of the improvement programme is complete and the Council is in the operational design and 'delivery stage' of the new arrangements. This report also responds to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in April 2024.

Recommendations

Children and Families Scrutiny Board is asked to note and comment on the content of this report and make recommendations as deemed appropriate.

What is this report about?

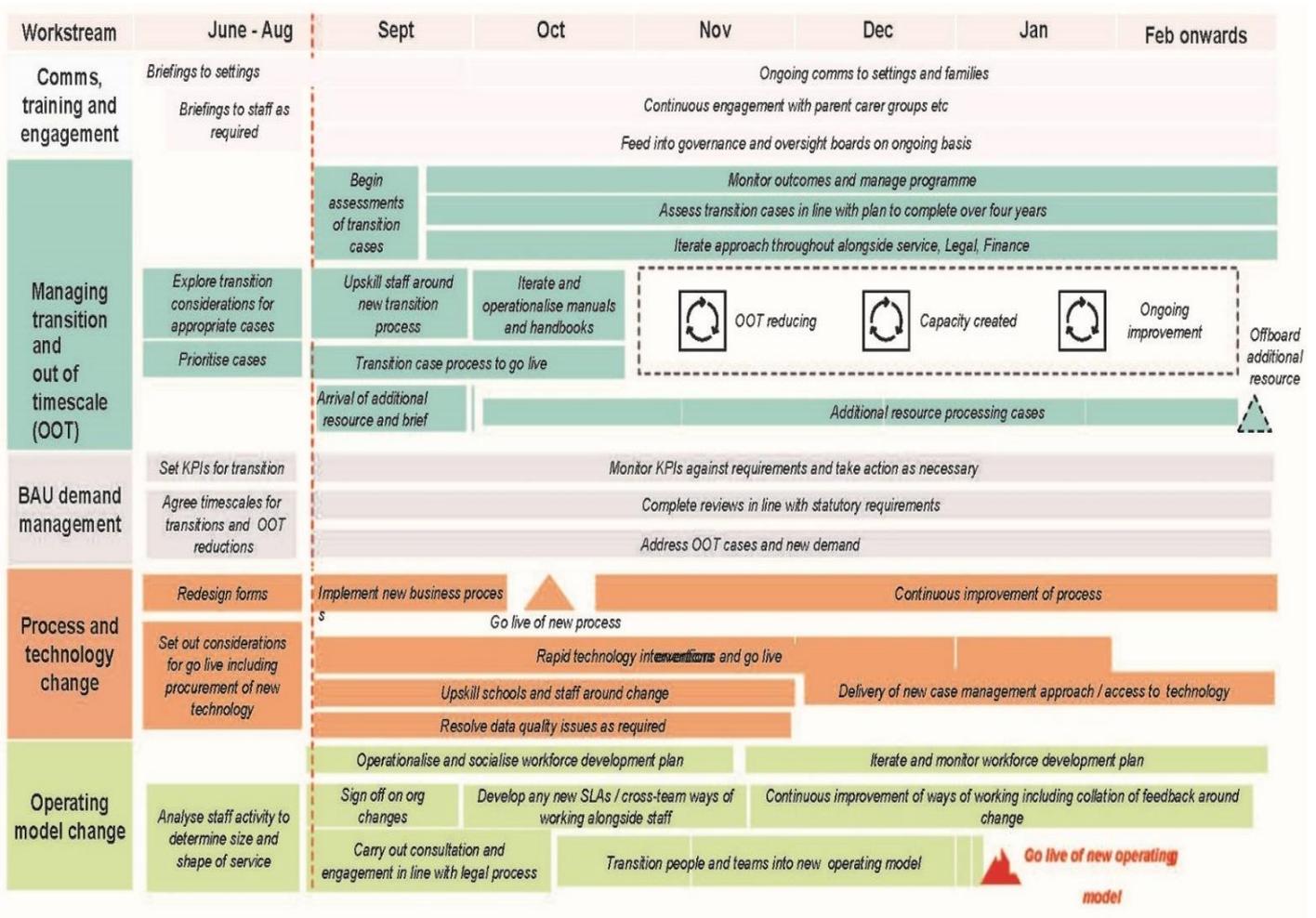
Background

- 1.0 An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document for an individual child or young person aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), which sets out a description of their educational, health and social care needs and the provision that must be implemented in order to help them achieve key life outcomes. It also includes information about the child or young person's aspirations, and, for those in Year 9 or above, information about preparation for adulthood.
- 1.1 At a national level, demand for EHC assessments and EHCPs have been increasing exponentially in recent years, in Leeds demand for these services has increased by 118% since 2016 and demand has continued to increase following the Covid-19 pandemic. The significant increase in demand has led to difficulties in meeting statutory timescales associated with EHCPs and therefore an increase in concerns and complaints being raised by parents and carers accessing services. This, combined with an increasing complexity of needs and funding pressure has placed significant strain on the Council's SEND and Inclusion service. Leeds City Council is aiming to improve EHCP processes and the experience of parents, carers and professionals to minimise the negative impact this is having on children and families, and on the organisation.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Board through its inquiry during 2023/24 received evidence which set out the challenges that exist in Leeds and the organisational response to undertake detailed investigation and analysis of the challenges through independent review, supported by external resources. The review was undertaken to better understand the opportunities and challenges around securing improvements in outcomes for children and young people whilst considering the Council's position in relation to operating in accordance with the overriding legislation and relevant codes of practice.
- 1.3 In its inquiry report, 'Provision of EHCP support in Leeds', the Scrutiny Board made a series of recommendations which supports the Directorate principles and improvement approach. The Director of Children and Families welcomes the recommendations, and this report provides an update outlining the progress made.

Update Information

2.1 Timeline for improvement

The high level timeline for the delivery of improvement is set out below:



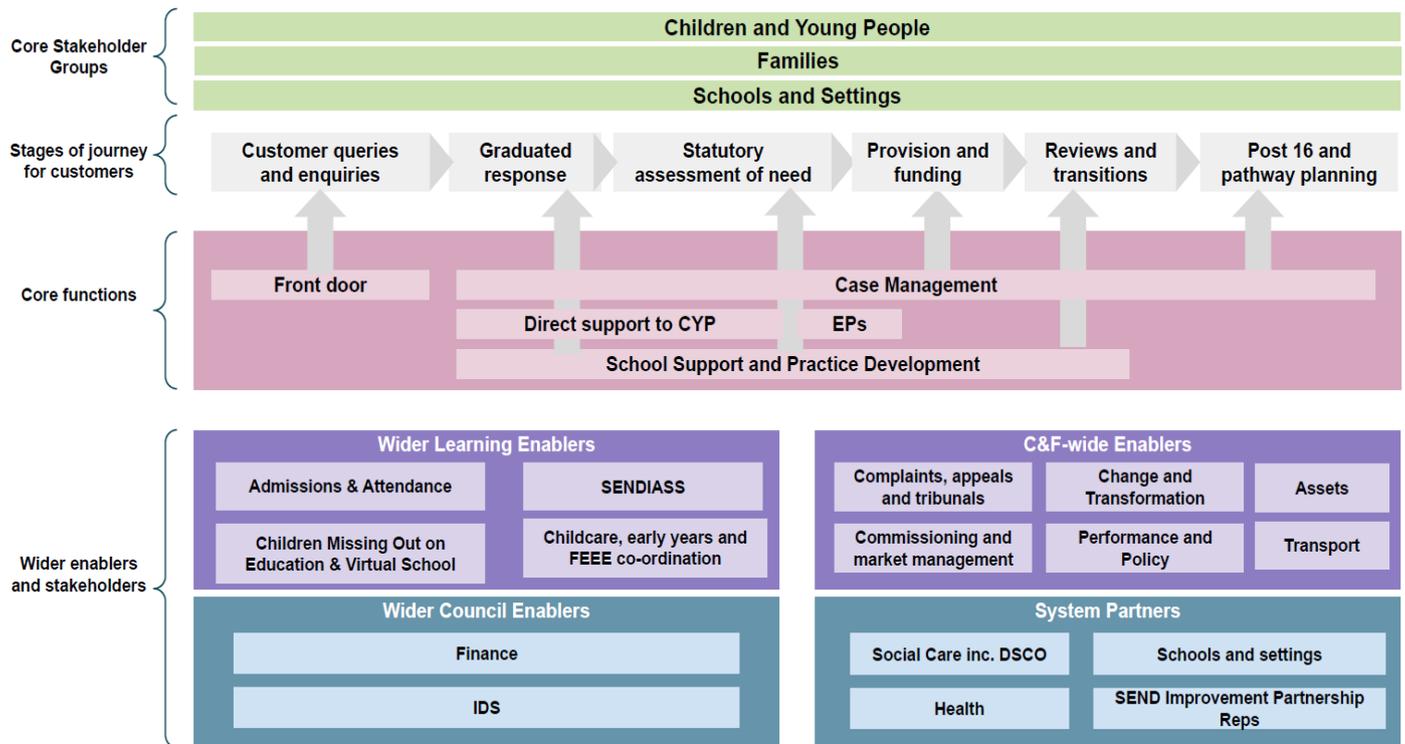
The timeline has been adjusted since April 2024. It was knowingly ambitious given the need to make sustained and real change, however with any major programme of transformation activity, there are risks around pace and this is being monitored closely. Fundamentally the areas where timescales have been redefined are:

- a) changes to the service operating model, which is a significant and complex review of workforce structures, roles and responsibilities in the SEND and inclusion service. This is being progressed by the Deputy Director for Learning and Interim Chief Officer for Learning Inclusion and a revised model should be scoped by the end of August 2024 and
- b) securing temporary additional resource through the procurement process, to work on cases out of timescale. This reflects a three month delay in the start of the work to reduce the number of cases out of timescale however, temporary additional resource will be in place from September 2024.

Both aspects have been impacted in part by staffing capacity as the recruitment process for a number of senior leadership posts has been progressed, alongside the need to ensure that procurement, contractual and governance arrangements are sound and robust.

2.2 Service Model and Case Management

The way in which the Council delivers its arrangements for administering the EHCP process will change and the way that the service is delivered will change as below:



Whilst a significant element of the model is focussed within the Children and Families Directorate, a system wide approach to delivering improvements with external partners is essential. Whilst progress to deliver some change has been delayed as previously outlined, work is now underway to develop the mechanisms which should support an enhanced and consistent approach for service delivery. This involves putting into place different ways of working and the appropriate resources which enables EHCP caseload demand to be managed in the short term to reduce the number or requests out of timescale, and then to manage increasing anticipated demand over the medium and long term.

2.2.1 Recommendation 1 – Progress to meet statutory timescales

Meeting statutory timescales is a fundamental service performance indicator. Contractual arrangements through the procurement process are now in place securing temporary Educational Psychologists and Plan Writers from September 2024, who will be working on the cases which are outside the statutory timescale. This resource is currently expected to be in place for a period of approximately six months, after which the identified cases out of statutory timescale will be cleared, with performance and completion rates being monitored as part of contract management arrangements. The processing of assessments which are not in timescale will proceed in time order, however we will be prioritising assessments at phase transfer and also considering additional vulnerabilities as part of our prioritisation exercise. We will process 100 assessments per month with the additional resource. Additional assessments which have become out of timescale will be able to be processed through the service efficiencies generated as part of the wider transformation programme.

The extent of resources required to support a more effective long term service model is under review during August to ensure that current EHC assessment and planning demand and future anticipated demand can be managed. Workforce tasks and responsibilities are also being reviewed to ensure that time is spent undertaking high value tasks with

appropriate delegations in place. This includes the role of Educational Psychologists (EP), Caseworkers and the support provided by the Business Administration Service.

A pilot panel process was introduced during July 2024. Currently consisting of internal representatives, this is due to be developed to incorporate multi-agency representation in September 2024 and will include the Educational Psychology Team, SEN support services, the Virtual School, Head Teachers and College Principals, SENCOs, Social Care, NHS, and the Youth Offending Team. The new Panel is responsible for ensuring a robust decision making process to assess or issue new EHCPs, to change provision or placement within EHCPs, or to cease plans, focusing on specific cases where consensus is not reached by panel members in advance of the panel meeting itself. The new panel has now met five times (weekly) and is working correctly. This means that new EHCP assessment requests are being approved in a more consistent way. Over time, this will certainly reduce delays but is currently processing requests that are out of timescale at a rate of approximate 100 per week.

Collectively the change to the service delivery model, automation (as outlined in section 2.3) combined, with improved data management will enable improved timescales in the progression of cases and reviews based on indicators around timeliness, complexity, input required, key transition stages, and dependencies on other teams. The renewed focus on joint working, including the new panel approach, supports enhanced working with families, settings and agencies to obtain information, in a timely way so that decision making around issuing a plan and providing funding can be made at the most appropriate time.

2.2.2 Recommendation 4 Improved Casework Processes

Consideration has been given to the establishment of a dedicated, monitored email address for elected members, MPs, school leaders to use in cases where urgent escalation is necessary. It has been proposed that the existing DCS correspondence email address, which is monitored currently and tracks correspondence for urgent response, is used to provide a workable response to this recommendation.

Guidance will be shared with elected members, MPs, school leaders as to how and when they could use this email inbox to escalate and raise concerns.

2.2.3 Recommendation 8 - Practice Driving Process

The principles underpinning the SEND improvement programme and service change remain focused on the codesign ways of working with families. This also extends to professionals and partners supporting children and families. A SEND Oversight Group is now established to facilitate this, which is attended by learning professionals and parent/carer representatives. Engagement and participation through this network is ongoing which facilitates direct feedback on practice change. This has included the design of the digital EHC application form, presented at the July meeting. Since April access and participation across wider networks to discuss EHC improvement is providing assurance that processes are placing children at the centre of all activity to achieve the best possible outcomes. This is underpinned by the cultural restorative values of the Children and Families Directorate including the Children and Young People's Plan obsession of listening to the voice of the child ensuring that children and young people have Voice and Influence.

These wider networks have included:

- Various Families of School across Leeds
- Children and Families Workforce
- Leeds Parent Carer Forum

- SILC Principals
- Health and Wellbeing Board

In the next few weeks engagement through influential networks will also include the SEND Partnership Board, Leeds SEND Employment Forum, SENCO Forum and Leeds Schools Forum and Children and Young People with SEND.

Focus on the design of our service delivery model, and the automation of work through technology will enable staff to focus on work of value, including strengthening knowledge and connections with families and professionals.

Ensuring leadership across SEND and Inclusion which is stable and consistent is essential, recruitment is currently underway for the position of Principle Educational Psychologist. Unfortunately, the recruitment process to appoint the permanent Chief Officer (SEND and Inclusion) and Statutory Assessment and Provision Lead was unsuccessful however, capacity is currently in place through interim arrangements. Recruitment to both these posts will now be supported initially through a revised approach to promote further reach with executive search nationally being considered as an option. It is anticipated that a successful recruitment process would see new staff coming into these crucial roles in the second half of the Spring term of 2025

2.3 Technology and Automation

The SEND improvement programme has emphasis on using technology to automate what are currently manual processes, undertaken by staff who could potentially focus on higher value work, such as progressing plans and engaging with families and partners. Colleagues within the Council's IDS team are supporting the major elements of digital change required to support the improvement work outlined below.

2.3.1 Recommendation 3 - Digital EHCPs

The Scrutiny Board supported the prioritisation of work to develop a digital solution which will enable families to complete digital forms and make EHC submissions on-line. Enabling digital solutions through the creation of a digital EHC application form for professionals, parents, carers and Young People is in progress and an established area of work in the SEND improvement programme. Good progress is being made with the digital form in construction and due to be going through user acceptance testing through August and early September 24. Users testing the new form will consist of education professionals and parent/carers. The opportunity for non-digitally connected parents and carers to make applications, will remain although it is anticipated non digital numbers will be low.

Digital EHCP application work has been prioritised and the solution that allows for individual families to receive an accessible update on the status of their application will be developed in the Autumn.

2.3.2 Planned work below is also built into digital development activity, to support staff focus on value-added work, through the use of technology:

- Automated transcription of notes from a decision panel which can then be uploaded onto core information systems. This will minimise time taken to manually input decision outcomes and support the progression of applications to the next stage.
- Reduce the effort spent chasing partners through automated reminders and simple application forms. This will ensure that outstanding information is collected in a timely manner and reduces complexity in the process.

- Reduced requirements to 'mail merge' information to correspondence manually, to ensure that information is provided to parents, carers and professionals at the right time minimising the need for staff intervention to generate this.

2.4 Customer Focus Communication and Engagement

2.4.1 Recommendations 9 and 10 - Communication Plan and Communication and Engagement

As described in section 2.2.3 access and participation across wider networks to discuss EHC improvement is providing assurance around processes that put children at the centre to achieve the best possible outcomes. During the inquiry process it was acknowledged that communication to Parents, Carers and the wider support network needs to be improved and subsequently a framework of information sharing linked to the SEND improvement work has been established across Leeds Local Offer, Leeds Learning Network and the Staff Hub. The Deputy Director (Learning) and the interim Chief Officer have actively built connections and networks across learning settings and with parent and carer representative groups, including the Leeds Parent Carer Forum. This has enabled conversations regarding the SEND improvement programme to be discussed in greater depth which has facilitated the development of 'frequently asked question information' and direct responses to concerns. Further engagement is being planned, working alongside the Child Friendly Leeds team and the SEND Children and Young People's Forum.

A comprehensive communication and engagement plan is in place and arrangements will continue to ensure that external perspectives including the experiences, views, wishes and feelings of parents and carers, schools and settings, children, and young people, are heard and are reflected in improvement delivery in accordance with the agreed principle of co-design. The recently refreshed Leeds Local Offer is an excellent source of information, advice and signposting for parents, carers and professionals in identifying options for early support. The Leeds Learning Network website is also hosting information providing update and progress on the SEND improvement programme.

Planned changes to the service delivery model and automation will also generate workforce time to enable focus on improved customer response and interaction.

2.5 Funding models

The Scrutiny Board considered a report on the 18th of July 2024 which explained that Funding for Inclusion (FFI) has been a mechanism in Leeds for supporting the education of children with Special Educational Needs by funding provision in education settings since 2002. Following changes to legislation, it has become clear that the system needs to change for a number of reasons, set out in the July report. FFI will be gradually removed whilst the needs of children are reviewed, enabling children to transition to an EHCP as required and therefore receive regular review of provision and the right to appeal in line with statutory responsibilities. At the same time, the local Early Help Strategy will ensure a whole system focus on early intervention and prevention, ensuring a 'Think Family' and right conversation with the right person at the right time approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children at the earliest opportunity.

Engagement with schools and settings has already taken place to explain the need for change to the FFI support model. The timetable for transition will begin in September 2024 and will proceed in four phases, culminating in a final phase in September 2027. There will be a prioritised approach to assessments for Children Looked After and those children at an education transition point. Schools and settings will be supported through the transition, and the transition plan will be under continuous review in order to take advantage of any

improvements in capacity generated by the progress of transformation activity across the service.

For children currently accessing FFI funded support, some will not meet the EHCP criteria and will have their education provision funded through the school's notional budget in line with the national guidance. Obligations under 'the graduated approach' mean that early support should be put in place by the school and funded by this budget prior to and during the EHC assessment request stage.

As the council's SEND team transitions away from Funding for Inclusion (FFI) as a mechanism for supporting children, a 'SEND support grant' is being developed. This grant funding will allow settings to apply for additional grant funding if the proportion of children with additional needs in their school is above an identified threshold. A similar model is already in place in Leeds where the proportion of children with an EHCP in a setting exceeds a particular threshold. Work is being done now to assess how much resource would be available to support this proposal once FFI transitions have been completed. A suitable percentage threshold will then be identified and will ensure that any SEND support grant funding does not exceed the available budget.

2.6 Additional improvement activity

2.6.1 Recommendation 5 - Information Governance

A review of information governance is currently underway as part of the establishment of the EHC multiagency panels. This means that robust data sharing agreements will be in place ahead of the first multi-agency panel which will take place from the first week in September. This will mean that professionals from across the children's partnership are able to contribute to assessment discussions in a timely way and concurrent with all other professional discussions. This brings Leeds City Council's procedures in line with the national expectations.

2.6.2 Recommendation 6 - Tribunals

As part of Leeds' involvement as one of the pilot authorities within the DfE's Change Programme Partnership, we have adopted the DfE's guidance on 3-tier mediation. This includes the recommendations of communication with families and the offer of a meeting with LA officers subsequent to any assessment being turned down by the panel. We hope that this will support our intention to reduce tribunal levels.

2.6.3 Recommendation 7 - Placements

Work has begun, led by the commissioning team, in relation to the quality assurance of independent education placements. The interim Head and Assistant Manager of SENSAP are currently reviewing the training available to casework officers to support improved knowledge in relation to the legislation and statutory processes.

2.6.4 Recommendation 11 - Ongoing Check and Challenge

The Director of Children and Families welcomes the ongoing commitment of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board to providing check and challenge through the Board's work programme in the 2024/25 municipal year. This systemic programme of improvement as outlined in 2.1, with its associated complexities will take time to deliver and establish as 'business as usual' however progress is under constant review and supported through the

internal governance of the Children and Families Delivery Board and Children and Families Financial Task and Finish Group.

3.0 What impact will this proposal have?

- 3.1 The improvement work will seek to deliver and embed improvements to the Council's arrangements for the delivery of EHCPs which will ensure that the Council's processes are legally compliant, and achieve improved outcomes for children and families, centred on the needs of children and young people within Leeds who need the most support.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Boards recommendations provide an ongoing commitment to monitor progress and provides a welcome element of check and challenge on the ongoing improvement work being undertaken by the Children and Families Directorate

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 4.1 The review process will have a direct impact on the ability to deliver improvements to the health and well-being of children and young people with additional needs and will support health and well-being of children and families accessing support and longer term, as improvement is delivered, improve the skills and qualifications achieved by this cohort and contribute to the Council's Inclusive Growth ambitions.

5.0 What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 5.1 In addition to the provision of information to support the Scrutiny Board inquiry, consultation and engagement has occurred in the steps taken in developing the programme and has included activity with schools and settings, user questionnaires, direct focused engagement with the parent and carer forum, and children/young people along with significant internal communication and engagement with staff. Engagement will continue as the improvement work continues, supported by 'Frequently Asked Questions', information and advice, which will also be hosted on Leeds for Learning, Leeds Local Offer and the Children and Families Staff Hub webpages.
- 5.2 The planned programme arrangements have been reported to the Executive Board which is supportive.

6.0 What are the resource implications?

- 6.1 Funding of SEND and EHCPs is shared between the Council's General Fund and the High Needs Block (HNB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). DSG is allocated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and is the main source of income for local authorities' schools' budgets. It consists of four funding blocks: schools, high needs (special educational needs), early years and central school services (provided by the Council). In general terms the General Fund meets the cost of assessment and review and the costs of transport arising from EHCPs. The HNB meets the cost of provision.

- 6.2 Along with many other local authorities, Leeds is currently not receiving the full allocation of DSG due under the national funding formula, as there is a limit imposed on the funding increase which has contributed to creating pressures on the DSG account. If the gains limit factor had not been in place, Leeds would have been allocated an additional £34.06m of funding between 2018/19 and 2023/24 across the schools' block (£9.5m) and high needs block (£24.56m). A further funding gains limit factor of £2.92m will apply in 2024/25 to the high needs block. Leeds is one of the 32 local authorities out of 150 that will continue to have their funding capped in 2024/25.

Therefore, with regard to Recommendation 2 - Funding, The Director of Children and Families welcomes the Scrutiny Board support in its decision to lobby Government for additional funding for the general fund to support the cost of assessment, review and transport arising from EHCPs and the national funding formula for the DSG.

- 6.3 The Medium Term Financial Strategy completed during 2023 showed that in 2025/26, if no action is taken the DSG in Leeds is projected to overspend by £31m and in 2026/27 this would increase to £51m. The majority of the overspend is on the high needs block.
- 6.4 The cost of the review process and the implementation of required changes will be managed initially through the application of existing resources. The cost of reducing EHC cases out of timescale is currently estimated at £850,000, this will be funded in part by the Council's Strategic Contingency reserve, which will be reimbursed over time. There is an additional cost associated with the delivery of digital improvements and programme management for the required changes, in the region of £350,000 which is provided on an invest to save basis.

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

- 7.1 Mitigating the risk of negative outcomes for Children and Young People is driving the programme of work being undertaken by the Children and Families Directorate. Using feedback, knowledge and experience of everyone supporting this work, including parents, carers and children will ultimately inform the approach for change to ensure that services respond in a timely and effective way. Risk management activity forms an integral element of the Directorate's Transformation Programme and is reported to and scrutinised by the cross Council Delivery Board, which is chaired by the Director of Children and Families. In addition, the SEND Partnership Board has a monitoring and oversight role to ensure that the necessary progress and improvement is achieved.
- 7.2 There are specific reputational and financial risks associated with the Council's arrangements not being legally compliant. The improvement work set out in this report is integral to having appropriate arrangements in place to fulfil statutory duty.
- 7.3 The risks associated with the change process and the current arrangements are included within the Directorate's risk reporting and monitoring. There is a direct link to the Directorate based risk and a wider set of corporate risks around in-year budget challenges, medium-term financial strategy, workforce planning and poor outcomes for service users which may be reflected in poor inspection outcomes.

8.0 What are the legal implications?

- 8.1 The improvement process itself does not give rise to any legal implications. It is imperative that any new or revised arrangements are legally sound and reflect the legal framework governing the EHC process.

Options, timescales and measuring success

9.0 What other options were considered?

9.1 Given the risks associated with not having appropriate arrangements, a 'do nothing' option was discounted. Following the 'discovery' and 'design' stages of the review, the option not to move forward with the 'delivery' stage was discounted for the reasons set out in the body of the report.

10.0 How will success be measured?

10.1 As part of the programme a range of success measures will be constructed to measure impact and success across all workstreams. This will include the reduction in cases out of statutory time scale, current and future EHCP demand management and improved customer support.

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

11.1 The Deputy Director (Learning) and the interim Chief Officer Learning SEND and Inclusion are responsible for implementation. Timescales are as set out earlier.

12.0 Appendices

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers

13.1 None.

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Impact of asylum legislative/guidance changes on children

Date: 4th September 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

The report highlights the current funding shortfalls in providing care and support to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in Leeds.

The report summarises the impact of national legislation and changes affecting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).

The report will also provide an update on the impact of national and local issues in relation to families who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF)

The report is an update for Scrutiny and is not seeking decisions.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to note and endorse this update report.

What is this report about?

- 1 As previously reported to the Scrutiny Board in March 2024, the funding provided by the Home Office for unaccompanied children does not cover the full cost of placements or support. This causes budget shortfalls for local authorities nationally, including Leeds. In total, we are projecting a £1.2 million funding shortfall from the Home Office to support UASCs and former UASCs this financial year.
- 2 As reported to Scrutiny Board in March 2024 and September 2023, there have been significant changes in asylum legislation and guidance that impact on children and families locally and nationally. The main legislative change for consideration in relation to unaccompanied children is the Illegal Migration Act 2023. The Act places a legal duty on the Home Secretary to remove anyone arriving by non-approved routes to the UK to claim asylum. Although the duty does not apply to unaccompanied children, the Home Secretary retains power to remove them when they turn 18.

- 3 In July 2024, the new Government announced that the Rwandan deportation scheme would be scrapped. The new Government also announced on 30 July 2024 a significant policy change which will mean that some Afghan families can now be reunited in safety in the UK. The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will be expanded to enable family reunion for some Afghans who were resettled under Pathway 1 of the scheme.
- 4 In recent weeks, there have been significant and unacceptable attacks on asylum hotels, businesses and mosques by far-right extremists. These racist attacks should have no place in our society, and it has a devastating impact on children, families and communities. This report will outline the impact of recent events and legislative changes on children and families in Leeds and how Leeds continues to support children and families who have No Recourse to Public funds (NRPF) and unaccompanied children (UASC) in the role of corporate parent.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3 This is an update report, with no new proposals.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 4 Leeds City Council has made commitments relating to the health and wellbeing of children within the city, outlined as part of the Best City Ambition and Children and Young People’s Plan. The arrangements described in this report support the delivery of services to meet ongoing need in relation to corporate responsibilities.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 5 This is an update report, with no specific consultation or engagement.

What are the resource implications?

- 6 There are no new proposals with resource implications presented in this report.

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

Update regarding UASCs in Leeds

- 7 The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) was set up in 2016 by the Government and although initially voluntary, Leeds made the decision as an inclusive city to welcome unaccompanied children seeking asylum. All local authorities have been mandated to participate in the NTS since February 2022. At present, the majority of referrals of UASCs to Leeds children’s services come via refugee charities, accommodation providers and solicitors acting for young people who are believed to have been incorrectly age assessed by the Home Office and placed in hotel accommodation in Leeds.
- 8 As of 1st July 2024, Leeds had 123 UASCs, a decade highpoint and a significant increase from 101 as at March 2024. Afghanistan (34) and Sudan (31) are the two highest countries of origin with Sudan showing a significant increase since March 2024. Afghanistan and Sudan are among the top 10 nationalities claiming asylum in the UK, and the significant increase in

UASCs from Afghanistan and Sudan is likely due to the presence of adult asylum hotels in Leeds.

Age assessments

- 9 Leeds social workers continue to carry out holistic Age Assessments of age disputed UASCs in line with the Merton Judgement and subsequent case law, and the 2015 ADCS Age Assessment Guidance. From January 2024 – August 2024, Leeds received 91 new referrals of UASCs via a variety of sources, including the National Transfer Scheme, the Refugee Council, Migrant Help, Asylum Support, PAFRAS (Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers), solicitors, and directly from hotels accommodating young people.
- 10 Since January 2024, twenty-one (21) children have been incorrectly assessed as adults by border officials and sent to adult accommodation in Leeds. These individuals were age assessed to be children following referrals to Leeds Children's Services. We are concerned by the number of children whose age has been wrongly assessed and who have been placed in adult hotels, often sharing a room with an unknown adult.

Funding shortfalls

- 11 The cost of external placements and the impact on local authorities is highlighted nationally as an increased area of risk. For unaccompanied children and care leavers who arrived as unaccompanied children, the cost is as it is for any other child looked after and the placement will depend on their individual needs. The set amount by the Home Office does not reflect individual needs for children which can have a significant impact on the cost of placements. Additional costs for local authorities include staffing in relation to social workers, personal advisors, Independent Reviewing Officers, interpreters and other support for the child or young person's individual needs as per the local authorities corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 12 As detailed in previous reports to the Scrutiny Board, the funding provided by the Home Office for unaccompanied children does not cover the full cost of the placement or support. Local authorities looking after volumes of UASC at or above the 0.07% "threshold" are paid a higher rate (£143/night per UASC). Those local authorities looking after UASC which amount to less than 0.07% threshold are paid the lower rate (£114/night per UASC). The 0.07% threshold is calculated as 0.07% of the child population according to the Office of National Statistics Population estimate. Based on child population data, there are 172,651 children living in Leeds, therefore the 0.07% threshold is 120 UASCs. As of July 2024, Leeds is caring for 123 UASCs (above the 0.07% threshold), and we expect to receive £3.9 million in grant funding this financial year to provide support and accommodation to our UASCs. While this may appear to be a large sum, the cost of staffing, placements, key work support, interpreters and overheads means that Leeds is currently projecting a budget shortfall of approximately £1 million for UASCs this financial year.
- 13 Leeds also continues to have corporate parenting duties to former UASCs who become care leavers upon their 18th birthday. Since the Children and Social Work Act (2015), local authorities have extended duties to care leavers until their 25th birthday. The Home Office also provides grant funding to local authorities for care leavers who were formerly unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Of the 761 allocated care leavers over 18 as at 1st July 2024, 238 are former UASC. Based on July 2024 data, Leeds expects to receive £3.2 million in grant funding for 238 over 18 former UASCs. This represents a £600k funding gap from the Home Office for former UASCs/care leavers this financial year. In total, we are projecting a £1.2 million funding shortfall from the Home Office to support UASCs and former UASCs this financial year.

Impact of Illegal Migration Act 2023

- 14 The Illegal Migration Act caused distress and anxiety for UASCs in Leeds, and our social care staff have shared the following concerns and impact:
- 15 Home Office asylum decisions for people arriving after March 2023 were delayed and postponed for some months. This caused prolonged uncertainty and an inability for children and young people seeking asylum to plan and to move forward with their lives. This impacted on children and young people's mental health and being able to start the process of recovering from significant trauma. However, we have recently heard that decisions have started to be processed again and clear and obvious asylum and humanitarian protection cases are being expedited to clear the backlog of asylum claims.
- 16 The threat of being "deported" to Rwanda upon turning 18 increased anxiety for a number of asylum seeking children. Social workers reported that a number of UASCs experienced panic attacks and anxiety, with one young person hospitalised. We note that the scheme will no longer be progressed.
- 17 Legal Aid Solicitors in the West Yorkshire region are full and have reported to have waiting lists in excess of 3 months for new clients. This has an impact on children and young people being able to complete Statement of Evidence Forms (SEFs) and witness statements to the Home Office in support of their asylum claim. Leeds social workers have been able to successfully advocate for extensions to Home Office timeframes to allow children and young people to secure independent legal advice. In addition, prior to March 2023, Legal Aid solicitors were depleted and had been difficult to secure.

Impact of far-right extremism

- 18 The recent far right extremism has understandably frightened many UASCs and care leavers, leaving them feeling unsafe. When staff were made aware of suspected planned protests and disorder, they took all necessary action to ensure the welfare of these children/young people.
- 19 In addition, social work staff have highlighted concerns that Home Office asylum hotels have been targeted by far right extremist groups, and this puts those hotel residents at risk, including children who may have been incorrectly assessed by the Home Office as adults. Social work staff continue to complete age assessments of children who have been incorrectly age assessed and placed by the Home Office in shared hotel accommodation with adults. In these situations, Leeds accommodates age disputed young people under s.20 of the Children Act while a full age assessment is carried out. The support provided to young people while an age assessment is carried out is the same as for any other child accommodated under s.20 of the Children Act, this includes allocation of a social worker, initial health assessment, suitable accommodation, education provision, and subsistence allowance.
- 20 There is the additional concern that accommodation housing UASCs and care leavers may become a target of far-right extremists, and this situation is being carefully monitored by the Corporate Parenting Service. To date, we are not aware of any threats or risks posed to accommodation sites for children. Colleagues in the directorate continue to work with Safer Leeds colleagues to share information and monitor risk levels. Safety advice has been given to young people and additional support offered where needed.

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

- 21 NRPF applies to a person who is subject to “immigration control” in the UK and has no entitlement to welfare benefits or social housing. A NRPF condition is usually imposed when a person has been issued with leave to enter or remain for a temporary purpose, such as to visit, study or work. Families who have the NRPF status can access school and NHS provision but are not entitled to any other support and cannot work. A family with no recourse to public funds may be provided with accommodation and financial support by social services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, when a child (under 18 years old) has been assessed by social services as being in need.
- 22 Families who have this status are not considered to be asylum seekers and can find themselves in such circumstances for several reasons. They may have entered the UK supported by a family member or spouse and there is a breakdown in the relationship. This is a particular concern where there is domestic violence, honour-based violence and abuse or concerns of modern slavery. Victims in such circumstances are more likely to remain with perpetrators and at risk due to fear and dependency. Victims of domestic violence can apply for Destitute Domestic Violence Concession however people in such circumstances, mostly women, do not have access to legal advice or may face language and communication barriers.
- 23 Families who have NRPF can be fearful of asking for help or accessing services and therefore, can be hard to reach. They often are more likely to engage with community and faith groups who will refer for a child in need assessment if they feel a family needs support beyond the provision they can provide.
- 24 Social workers at the Front Door are skilled and experienced in directing referrals for child in need assessments whereby a family presents as having NRPF. Once the assessment is completed this is considered at the NRPF Panel which reviews and considers each family and the local authority’s legal duties.
- 25 As reported in March 2023, the families presenting as having NRPF are reducing in Leeds in line with the national trend. We continue to have around 20 families needing support however due to increased housing costs, and cost of living there is a significant pressure on Sc17 spending in Leeds and other local authorities. There is no additional funding received to cover this cost. Last financial year, Leeds spent £230k supporting NRPF families. As of this financial year, Leeds has spent £112k in the first 4 months of financial year 2024-2025, with a projected spend of £300k by financial year end.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 26 There are no options considered in this report as it is an update report.

How will success be measured?

- 27 As above

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

- 28 As above

Appendices

- None

Background papers:

- [Families with No Recourse to Public Funds \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://trixonline.co.uk)
- [Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Child Victims of... \(trixonline.co.uk\)](https://trixonline.co.uk)
- [Assessing age for asylum applicants: caseworker guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Age Assessment Guidance and Information Sharing Guidance for UASC | ADCS](https://www.adcs.org.uk)
- [RMCC-IMB-HoL-Report-Stage-Age-Assessments-June-23.pdf \(refugeechildrenconsortium.org.uk\)](https://refugeechildrenconsortium.org.uk)
- [Processing children's asylum claims: caseworker guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [National Transfer Scheme \(NTS\) Protocol for unaccompanied asylum seeking children \(UASC\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Unaccompanied asylum seeking children: national transfer scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [UASC funding instructions to local authorities 2022 to 2023 \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Suitable placements for UASC updated \(adcs.org.uk\)](https://www.adcs.org.uk)
- [Social workers join outcry over children vanishing from Home Office hotels | www.basw.co.uk](https://www.basw.co.uk)
- [Debate on accommodation of asylum-seeking children in hotels, House of Commons, 7 June 2023 | Local Government Association](https://www.localgovernmentassociation.org.uk)
- [ECPAT -v- Kent Council judgment \(judiciary.uk\)](https://www.judiciary.uk)
- [Kent makes renewed legal threat over National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children \(localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk\)](https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk)
- [Asylum backlog | Institute for Government](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk)

JTAI Action Plan

Date: 4th September 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

The report provides details of the partnership action plan in response to the findings of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Leeds.

This inspection took place from 4 to 8 March 2024 and was carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The inspection report was published on 16th May 2024.

The duty is on Leeds City Council as the principal authority to prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in the inspection report. This should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that this report is addressed to. The response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies. The local safeguarding partners should oversee implementation of the action plan through their local multiagency safeguarding arrangements. Leeds City Council needs to send the written statement of action to OFSTED by 23 August 2024. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates. For purpose of clarity, this statement will be referred to as the action plan throughout this report.

Recommendations

- Scrutiny is asked to note and endorse the action plan.

What is this report about?

1. Following the JTAI inspection on Serious Youth Violence in Leeds in March 2024, the JTAI inspection report was published in May 2024. The JTAI inspection report highlighted several areas of strengths in relation to how services in Leeds respond to serious youth violence. These included a theme of reassurance in relation to partnership working around safeguarding and decision making for children and young people. The inspection also identified three main areas of improvement around police protection notifications, CAMHS waiting times, and multi-agency audits.

2. Strengths:

- Strong multi-agency relationships with a shared vision and culture, both strategically and operationally, resulting in effective communication and effective partnership working.
- Collation and analysis of data across the partnership has informed a detailed strategic needs assessment and action plan.
- Targeted multi-agency interventions and projects across the city are helping to divert children away from youth violence and support children affected by criminal exploitation.
- Multi-agency formulation meetings provide a helpful insight into children's risks, vulnerabilities and needs through a trauma-informed lens.
- The partnership information portal (PIP) enables practitioners across all agencies to contribute vital information in an accessible way. This improves the partnership understanding of risk to children and their vulnerabilities.
- The research unit within the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) provides regular and detailed analysis of data, research, community feedback and children's views and experiences. This builds a rich picture and understanding of where, when and why children are at risk of serious youth violence.
- The partnership's 'Project Shield' includes daily multi-agency information-sharing to provide an immediate response when children have been affected by serious youth violence.
- Children at risk of significant harm from serious youth violence or exploitation are responded to through the risk outside the home (ROTH) pathway. The ROTH pathway enables partners to work under statutory child protection planning to effectively address risks and enable children and families to work in partnership with agencies using a non-blaming relational approach.
- Police analysts use information from their own systems and other organisations to profile crime and thematic topics across the whole force, local authority and locality areas. These profiles contain detailed information about risks to children, including places and times. They are used practically to drive interventions and disruption activity and to engage multi-agency practitioners in educational and prevention activities, such as engagement with cohorts of school child

3. There were three main areas of improvement identified:

- Consistent and timely sharing of police protection notifications (PPNs) when police officers identify risks to children. The quality of PPNs should include detailed information, including a child's ethnicity and culture, to assist with multiagency decision-making
- Waiting times for children to receive CAMHS assessments and therapeutic treatment in line with needs arising from their mental health conditions and neurodiversity
- The frequency of multi-agency partnership auditing of children affected by serious youth violence, to inform a partnership learning and development strategy that builds on and enhances the existing training available to professionals working with children affected by serious youth violence.
([50246977 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk))

4. As part of the inspection framework for JTAI, the partnership must submit a partnership action plan responding to the areas of improvement identified during the inspection. The expectation is that Leeds City Council as the principal authority prepare and submit to Ofsted by 23rd August 2024 a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined by inspectors in the published inspection report.

5. The action plan sets out partnership and individual agency actions and will be collectively overseen by the Leeds Childrens Safeguarding Partnership. The action plan will cover the 3 main areas of improvement as well as other findings by inspectors.

What impact will this proposal have?

6. Leeds City Council should send the written statement of action to OFSTED by 23 August 2024. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

7. Leeds City Council has made commitments relating to the health and wellbeing of children within the city, outlined as part of the Best City Ambition and Children and Young Peoples Plan. The arrangements described in this report support the delivery of services to meet ongoing need in relation to corporate responsibilities.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

8. This report is to present the action plan in response to the inspection findings, this is a partnership plan. The plan sets out the response from individual organisations and these responses have been signed off by senior managers in the respective organisations and the LSCP Executive.

What are the resource implications?

9. There are no new proposals with resource implications for Leeds City Council presented in this report. It is recognised that the challenges of CAMHS waiting times is a significant national and local challenge with resource implication for the ICB. There is work already being undertaken in this area as detailed in the action plan. Where appropriate, some organisations who have contributed to the plan have re distributed existing resource in response to the findings.

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

10. Due to the multi-agency nature of the required actions, there is a risk of the plan not being implemented. The Leeds Childrens Safeguarding Partnership will keep oversight of the plan's implementation.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

11. The action plan sets out the individual agency and partnership response to the findings of the inspection report.

How will success be measured?

12. The action plan will have oversight of the Leeds Childrens Safeguarding Partnership.

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

13. As detailed in the action plan.

Appendices

- Leeds JTAI Action Plan August 2024

Background papers

- ([50246977 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50246977))

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Leeds Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) – Serious Youth Violence, March 2024

Multi-agency post-inspection action plan

In response to the JTAI inspection which took place in Leeds in March 2024, the partnership is required to submit a response to Ofsted, as follows:

We have determined that Leeds City Council is the principal authority and should prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in this letter. This should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that this report is addressed to. The response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies. The local safeguarding partners should oversee implementation of the action plan through their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Leeds City Council should send the written statement of action to ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk by 23 August 2024. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates.

Response to findings under the heading ‘what needs to improve.’

Response to findings	Lead agency	Proposed actions	Responsible agency	Proposed timescale	Governance
Consistent and timely sharing of police protection notifications (PPNs) when police officers identify risks to children. The quality of PPNs should include detailed information, including a child’s ethnicity and culture, to assist with multi-agency decision-making.	West Yorkshire Police (WYP)	Force Safeguarding Trainer Gemma Wilkins is to include an input of data quality (culture and ethnicity) in her Sept/Oct training. The advice provided by the trainer is to be included in the WYP Safeguarding newsletter and as a news/training item on the front page of the Intranet. Niche/Minerva Group has agreed to a systems change to add a red ‘culture’ prompt to PPNs to encourage submitting officers to consistently include ethnicity and culture information related to the	WYP	October 2024	WYP Safeguarding Governance

		<p>subject. It will appear as an added help [?] prompt with the following text</p> <p>“Culture includes language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, and ceremonies, among other elements.”</p> <p>The Niche team are going to add some extra Q sets around ethnicity and cultural background of subjects.</p>			
<p>Waiting times for children to receive CAMHS assessments and therapeutic treatment in line with needs arising from their mental health conditions and neurodiversity.</p>	<p>ICB (LCH)</p>	<p>Children & Young Peoples Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) is currently undergoing a service redesign and within this the service offer is being re-evaluated. The redesign will review the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the CYPMHS offer, which is anticipated to impact waits.</p> <p>The services are strengthening their support to children, young people and their families who are waiting for CAMHS/Neurodiverse (ND) assessment, with signposting to support and advise via the MindMate website. MindMate Spa which acts as the sole referral point for social/emotion/mental health assessments are also</p>	<p>LCH: CYPMHS</p>	<p>April 2025</p>	<p>LCH Quality and Value Programme</p>

		<p>establishing a dedicated phone line and emailing service for families looking for further information whilst waiting for assessment, including information about Right to Chose. This additional service will be operational from the end of August 2024. For children and young people waiting for an enhanced ND diagnostic assessment the picture is much better with children and young people waits between 6 to 9 months for assessment with the CAMHS service.</p> <p>Additional work to find solutions to the long waiting lists has included identifying non-recurrent in-year funding to support out-sourced ND diagnostic assessments for children and young people where there are additional risk factors and/or more particularly where they are aged between 17-17 ½. Utilising out-sourced capacity has helped to ensure that assessment takes place before children and young people reach the age 18 years where they would usually automatically transfer onto an adult waiting list. The out-sourcing exercise</p>			
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		<p>has been coordinated by the CAMHS service which has helped to ensure families feel supported during and after the outsourced assessment.</p> <p>In addition, pre-school neuro-developmental assessments had been paused since December 2023 due to recruitment difficulties. However, these issues are now resolved, and the multi-disciplinary team has worked on developing pathways that use its capacity differently and these will commence from September 2024. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing enhanced assessments in line with the school age assessment pathway • providing sole assessor assessments following NHSE guidance • building on prioritising meeting the needs of children who are neuro-diverse ahead of (potentially instead of) a diagnostic assessment. 			
The frequency of multi-agency partnership auditing of children affected by serious youth violence, to inform a partnership learning and development	Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings of JTAI audits to be discussed at the LSCP SILVER MACE in September 2024 with a view to support the development of an audit 	LSCP Silver MACE and LSCP Business Unit	Quarter 3 October 2024 Audit undertaken with findings	LSCP Exec and Safer Leeds Executive

<p>strategy that builds on and enhances the existing training available to professionals working with children affected by serious youth violence.</p>		<p>tool and methodology to be used in quarter 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit to be undertaken in Quarter 3 2024 which will inform the development of Learning and Development Strategy • Quarter 1 2025 second audit to be undertaken for assurance that JTAI findings are improving outcomes for children. <p>All audits identified above will be undertaken in partnership with Safer Leeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious Youth Violence will form part of the 2025-26 LSCP Audit and Review Audit plan. • Findings of JTAI audits and all future audits undertaken will be discussed at the LSCP Learning and Development group to consider how this will inform the Learning and Development offer. 		<p>presented to the Gold MACE on completion</p> <p>Quarter 1 2025 audit undertaken with findings presented to the Gold MACE on completion</p>	
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Additional findings from the JTAI report

Inspectors' findings	Lead agency	Proposed actions	Responsible agency	Proposed timescale	Governance
<p>It has been recognised by the LSCP that access to the right level of training and development in relation to serious youth violence for practitioners across agencies could be enhanced through a more consistent multi-agency strategic approach. The LSCP acknowledge that there needs to be frequent and high-quality multi-agency auditing via the LSCP to identify and collate themes of good practice and areas for development. This will help to develop a training needs analysis and ensure that there is a coherent workforce learning and development plan across the whole of the partnership.</p>	<p>Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)</p>	<p>Training needs analysis to be completed to establish current offer and requirements.</p> <p>Learning and Development group to consider findings of training needs analysis and establish Learning and Development offer which will be published on the LSCP website and promoted via the Newsletter.</p> <p>Consultation of findings and proposals with LSCP practitioner group.</p> <p>Learning and key messages will be disseminated across the partnership through the established communication networks.</p>	<p>LSCP Silver MACE</p>	<p>November 2024</p>	<p>LSCP Executive</p>
<p>When an incident requires a rapid response, partners work effectively together to ensure that children are safeguarded at the earliest opportunity. However, there are some</p>	<p>LCC Children and Families Access to YJS information. Co-location of Education</p>	<p>LCC Children and Families have identified funding for an education worker from the Education Safeguarding Team to be based full time at the Front Door.</p>	<p>LCC Children and Families</p>	<p>November 2025</p>	<p>Front Door Operational Group and LSCP Executive.</p>

<p>inconsistencies in how partners share information at the front door. For example, there is no consistent access to youth justice information, and health and education practitioners are co-located only one day a week.</p>	<p>Practitioners at the Front Door.</p> <p>ICB for Health Practitioner (ICB, LCH, LTHT, LYPFT)</p>	<p>EDT already have access to the YJS ICT System. This will be expanded to all social workers at the Front Door.</p> <p>Health partners commit to examining the evidence to determine whether the current arrangements for a rapid response from health practitioners is robust and effective and if any improvements are indicated.</p>	<p>ICB and LCH</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>Front Door Operational Group and LSCP Executive.</p>
<p>For serious incidents, the (A&E youth work) navigators will triage and offer support within 24 hours; however, for less serious incidents, there are waiting lists. This means not all children get immediate help, and this creates a missed opportunity to intervene at the point of crisis for a child.</p>	<p>ICB (LTHT)</p>	<p>The LTHT will review the process of first contact and support within 24 hours of referral. Current initial referral is based on assessment of need and evidence of victim of serious assault (knife crime, violence causing major injury).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development time will be facilitated for the front-line Navigator team to ensure full understanding of any barriers to good practice (in relation to this plan) that may require further work. 2. A Children and A&E Navigator Safeguarding Nurse has now been recruited to work 	<p>LTHT</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>LSCP Executive</p>

		<p>alongside and provide safeguarding leadership within the A&E Navigator service. This post will provide operational support for this plan and facilitate a regular review of the plan with the Navigator team.</p> <p>3. Some referrals currently on 'waiting list/triage list' are better supported outside of the Navigator service. This will require closer links with the Child Safeguarding team to identify appropriate agencies and assurance that such referrals have been made and as required contact facilitated. This assurance should include contact with the child/young person within 24 hours of referral to inform of the plan and where appropriate give contact arrangements with the service referred to. At this point a discharge should be agreed. Where joint working between services is ongoing clear agreement on role and leadership should be identified at an early stage.</p> <p>4. Children and A&E Navigator Safeguarding Nurse will</p>			
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		<p>support the further integration of the Navigator team into existing Safeguarding weekly A&E meetings reviewing cases of concern.</p> <p>5. In a number of cases young people present to A&E in crisis or concern but leave without engagement. There are significant issues in engaging this group. A number of young people are simply not contactable. Leaving such cases open gives an impression of the support being offered which can be misleading. In such cases the team should document this, contact the referrer and agree a plan based on risk need.</p>			
Social workers are developing their knowledge and understanding of the links between exploitation and serious youth violence, although there is no bespoke specialised training for this scope.	LCC Children and Families	A needs analysis will be undertaken as part of the annual Workforce Development Review. This will inform the training offer on Serious Youth Violence.	LCC Children and Families Services	December 2024	LCC Children and Families Senior Leadership Team
There are multiple regular professional forums and meetings taking place for children who are at risk of serious youth violence and/or	All partners.	Safer Stronger Communities will facilitate, and Children and Families will facilitate a workshop in September to map all meetings with multi agency	Children and Families Services and Safer Stronger	Workshop arranged for 9 th September	Safer Leeds Executive Board

<p>criminal exploitation. While these meetings ensure timely information-sharing, there is inconsistency in the clarity of actions from some of these meetings. Many of these multi-agency children's meetings are time and resource inefficient, as they are attended by the same professionals who discuss predominantly the same issues. The sheer number of meetings and professionals can be confusing and overwhelming for many children and their parents. Some multi-agency meetings lack efficient coordination to serve multiple functions and reduce bureaucracy. Multi-agency partners recognise there is some duplication and are working towards better alignment of key meetings to make them more efficient.</p>		<p>attendance to explore more efficient and effective ways of information sharing and planning, how we can reduce duplication.</p> <p>The ICB will work with other partners to better align key meetings to ensure clarity of actions and to increase efficiency.</p> <p>A member of the ICB Safeguarding team has been identified to support this workstream and will attend the initial workshop that is being held on the 9th September.</p>	<p>Communities in partnership with ICB, LCH, LTHT, and LYPFT.</p>		
<p>Project Shield has clearly improved partnership information sharing about violent crime affecting children. The daily meeting shares information about incidents of youth violence that have 8 happened the evening before. It is well attended by a range of multi-</p>	<p>ICB (LCH, LTHT, LYPFT, ICB)</p>	<p>Project Shield (PS) is a WYP initiative and is still in development. At the time of the JTAI PS was in its infancy and health had not yet been identified by WYP as a partner who needed to be included. Conversations have since commenced with the Sergeant leading Project Shield to identify</p>	<p>West Yorkshire Police in partnership with ICB, LCH, LTHT, and LYPFT.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Front Door Operational Group Safer Leeds Executive</p>

agency professionals, with the exception of health.		the most appropriate health practitioners to attend. The A&E Navigator Service are now engaged which allows timely access to all partner agencies to share and respond to any patients accessing LTHT as a result of serious youth violence, and also respond to any questions from partner agencies. Other health partners will be invited to attend as appropriate as the model expands. Further work has commenced between the WYP Lead for PS and LTHT IT Dept to develop a system for the sharing of information from the meeting with appropriate health practitioners.			
Safeguarding supervision in the ambulance service is ad hoc and not all staff have had appropriate training. This means that some ambulance staff are less aware and knowledgeable about children's vulnerabilities for exploitation and violence.	Yorkshire and Humber Ambulance Service	The trust is currently developing a clinical supervision framework and will then be reviewing how both safeguarding supervision and CPD are delivered through this framework. The aim is to develop an awareness campaign linked to YAS intranet Pulse Page containing a 5-minute briefing on Serious Youth Violence along with a training video and a supporting reflective tool to encourage practitioners to apply the learning to their practice.	Y and H Ambulance Service	In line with the training plan for 25/26	Y and H ambulance Service Safeguarding Executive Review Group

<p>There are also short waiting lists for other specialist services, such as the 'Safe' team, and there are delays in children being considered by MAPPA panels. Some children at high risk of serious youth violence are being turned down as not meeting the criteria, where there would be value in bringing greater attention and resources to their needs.</p>	<p>SAFE team waiting times LCC children and Families</p>	<p>The SAFE Team have a waiting time of up to 6 weeks for new referrals. They work with children who are assessed as medium or high risk of exploitation. Whilst they are waiting for an allocated worker, the team around the child are offered a consultation. They also run groups for siblings and parents in addition to direct work with YP who are exploited.</p>	<p>LCC Children and Families</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children and Families SLT Youth Justice Partnership Board</p>
	<p>MAPPA Leeds Probation Service</p>	<p>From May 2024 Leeds Probation have started to facilitate an increased number of MAPPA meetings, meaning that meetings are convened over two days rather than one. Partners have supported this expansion. A Business Case has been made and accepted to employ a further 0.5 MAPPA Admin officer. This position will allow a further 0.5 days of MAPPA meeting activity.</p> <p>Leeds Probation and the Leeds Youth Justice Service have co-operated to improve understanding of MAPPA, quality of referral and establish mechanisms whereby managers can raise concerns.</p>	<p>Probation Service Youth Justice Service</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>West Yorkshire MAPPA Strategic Management Board</p>

		<p>Agreement has been made for the YJS Service Manager to escalate any specific concerns around cases to the Head of Leeds Probation.</p> <p>Leeds Probation have agreed to support Leeds YJS to understand what makes a good referral and the Leeds MAPPA Co-Ordinator will offer support where requested. Where a MAPPA L2/L3 referral has not been accepted feedback is given.</p>			
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Work Programme

Date: 4 September 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 and Diversity Scheme.’
- Reflecting on the information in this report, members are requested to consider and discuss the Board’s work programme for this municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the Board’s work programme for the 2024/25 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 at its meeting held on 10 June 2024.
2. The latest Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 24 July 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. In terms of changes to the work programme since the Board's last meeting on 18 July, members will note that today's agenda has been adjusted with the JTAI on serious youth violence action plan featuring instead of the planned item on the MacAlister Review Implementation update, this was to enable more time for a full update to be developed and implemented to progress since the last time the Board considered the item. The independent review of children's social care (MacAlister Review) – Implementation Update does feature later in the municipal year.
4. In addition, the identified item on Work Experience Accessibility has been pushed back a month to November to enable further consideration of the content with colleagues and to ensure that the item is properly scoped.
5. Members should note that a working group has been scheduled on the 24 September at 1.30PM to consider the proposed changes to transport assistance for post-16 learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in advance of Executive Board decision making at their meeting on 16 October 2024. This meeting will be in person in Committee Room 6/7.
6. In addition, a further working group has been established to set the scene for the forthcoming 2025/26 budget round in advance of private working groups taking place in December 2024 for all scrutiny boards. This session has been scheduled for 25 September at 4.30PM and is to be held remotely.

What impact will this proposal have?

7. 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

8. 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

9. 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?

10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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?

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

What are the legal implications?

14. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work programme of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 24 July 2024.

Background papers

- None

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Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 10 June 2024 at 10.30 am	Meeting Agenda for 18 July 2024 at 2.00 pm	No Scrutiny Board meeting
Co-opted Members (DB)	Changes to Funding for Inclusion (PSR)	
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB)	CLA Sufficiency Strategy (PSR)	
Potential Sources of Work (DB)	Annual Standards Report (PDS)	
Performance Update (PM)	SACRE Annual Report (PM)	
Youth Justice Plan (PDS)		
Youth Vaping Update (PSR)		
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

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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 2024/25 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 4 September 2024 at 10.00 am	Meeting Agenda for 9 October 2024 at 10.00 am	Meeting Agenda for 11 November 2024 at 1.30 pm
Impact of Asylum Changes on Children and Young People in Leeds (PSR) EHCP and SEND Services Review – Update (PDS) Joint Targeted Area Inspection on Serious Youth Violence - Action Plan (PM)	Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Update (PSR) Early Help Themed Approach – School Attendance (PDS)	The Leeds 3As Strategy (PDS) Early Help Themed Approach – CAMHS/ Mental Health/Life Coaching (PDS) Transition from Children’s to Adult services (PM) Work Experience Accessibility (PM)
Working Group Meetings		
24 September 2024 @ 1.30PM – Post 16 Transport Review 25 September 2024 @ 4.30PM – Budget Working Group		

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



Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

December	January	February
No Scrutiny Board meeting.	Meeting Agenda for 29 January 2025 at 10.00 am	No Scrutiny Board meeting.
	Performance report (PM) 2025/26 Initial Budget Proposals Financial Health Monitoring (PDS/PSR) Youth Vaping Update (PSR) School Support Staff Overview (PSR)	
Working Group Meetings		
2025/26 Initial Budget Proposals– TBC (remote working group)		
Site Visits		

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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 2024/25 Municipal Year

March	April	May
Meeting Agenda for 19 March 2025 at 10.00 am	Meeting Agenda for 28 April 2025 at 1.30 pm	No Scrutiny Board meeting
Early Years and Best Start Programme (PM) The independent review of children’s social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)	Children and Families Scrutiny Board End of Year Summary Statement (DB)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

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Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 24TH JULY, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor H Hayden

15 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 2 to the report entitled, ‘Heart of Holbeck: Levelling Up Round 3 Funding’, referred to in Minute No. 31 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 or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council). It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of Appendix 2 as exempt from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as doing so would prejudice the Council’s commercial position and that of third parties should it be disclosed at this stage.

16 Late Items

Supplementary Information – Agenda Item 14 - Updated Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy

Whilst there were no late items of business submitted, with the agreement of the Chair, supplementary information was circulated to Board Members and published ahead of the meeting for inclusion within agenda item 14, ‘Updated Community Asset Transfer Policy’ in the form of an updated Appendix 2 EDCI Screening document. It was noted that this document had been updated in response to the consideration of the proposed new CAT Policy at the recent Scrutiny Board Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth meeting. The supplementary information was considered by the Board as part of agenda item 14. (Minute No. 28 refers).

17 Declaration of Interests

Councillor S Arif declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with respect to the agenda item entitled, 'Heart of Holbeck: Levelling Up Round 3 Funding'. As such, Councillor Arif advised the Board that she would leave the meeting room for the duration of the Board's consideration of that item (Minute No. 31 refers).

18 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th June 2024 be approved as a correct record.

19 Disorder in Harehills - 18 July 2024

Given that this was the first Executive Board meeting held since the disorder which occurred in Harehills on 18th July 2024, the Leader invited Members to address the Board on this matter.

Councillor Arif, as Ward Councillor for Gipton and Harehills, thanked all of those in the local community, Council staff and all partner organisations for the support provided during this difficult period and for the actions taken during and since the disorder to calm the situation. In terms of moving forward, Councillor Arif emphasised that the priority was now to rebuild as a community and reflect upon this experience.

Councillor Lamb also provided his thanks and specifically highlighted children's social care colleagues, emphasising the valuable role that they play on a daily basis in the protection of children and young people.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Leader undertook that a review into this matter would be undertaken at the appropriate time.

In conclusion, assurance was provided that the Council would never allow violence and intimidation to be a factor in respect of decision making around child protection cases and that the interests of children and young people would always be at the heart of such matters.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AND CULTURE

20 Community Health and Wellbeing Service: Transforming Home Care

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report on arrangements for the Community Health and Wellbeing Service pilot, which the report described as a transformational approach to delivering health and care services at home through a collaborative partnership of contracted providers working together on a neighbourhood basis. The report provided an update on the outcome of the recent tendering exercise for providers, set out the benefits of this model and presented the process for the mobilisation of the contract. It was noted that the new model was to be piloted in 'Bramley and Stanningley', 'Armley' and 'Farnley and Wortley' Wards.

The Executive Member introduced the report and in doing so provided an overview of this new model of home care. Also, details were provided on the

benefits arising from this approach, how performance data would be monitored and what the model required for it to be implemented. It was also noted that consultation had been undertaken with local Wards Councillors with the matter also being recently considered and well received by Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board was advised that in terms of Scrutiny involvement moving forward, the Scrutiny Board was scheduled to receive an update within approximately 6 months of the pilot commencing. It was also noted that there would also be external evaluation of the outcomes from this pilot, which would be incorporated into the update to Scrutiny Board.

Regarding a question on funding arrangements, the Board received details of the key mechanisms that would be in place to ensure that the costs of the new service would be covered, and noted that should it be needed, there was a contingency sum in place received via the NHS Transformation Fund.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the award of the Community Health and Wellbeing Service pilot contract to 'Be Caring Limited' and 'Springfield Homecare Limited', be noted, as per the delegated decision of the Director of Adults and Health (D57519 refers);
- (b) That the award of a £247,000 grant from the Rayne Foundation's "Better Careers for Better Care" fund via the grant holder Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust to be allocated to Leeds City Council, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust and the above contract holders to support the delivery of the pilot, be noted;
- (c) That the process for mobilisation and communication with key stakeholders during this period, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted.

- 21 Adults and Health - In House Care Homes Service Review: Knowle Manor and Dolphin Manor: Post Consultation Recommendations Report**
- The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report which presented the findings of the consultation exercise, as previously agreed to be undertaken at Executive Board in December 2023, on proposals to close Knowle Manor residential care home in Morley, and to repurpose Dolphin Manor residential care home in Rothwell into a community care bed base (Recovery Hub). In considering those outcomes, the report made recommendations regarding the future of both residential care homes for the Board's consideration.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the proposals and of the consultation undertaken. Information on current occupancy levels for both care homes was provided, with it being highlighted that the context of the proposals was that the use of Council residential care homes had declined over recent years. It was noted that there were other care home providers in the locality with vacancies and as such it was felt that there were suitable alternatives available for residents. It was also noted that

there were jobs available for affected Knowle Manor staff at the Council's other in-house care delivery services, and that proposals would see Dolphin Manor staff retaining their jobs. Acknowledging the potential impact of these proposals, details were provided on the support that would be given to those affected, should the recommendations be approved.

Responding to a Member's enquiries regarding the future of Knowle Manor, Members received an update on the condition of the building. Whilst it was acknowledged that investment had been made via the installation of solar panels, it was noted that the building was in a poor condition and that the level of funding required to refurbish and maintain it was not available.

It was also noted that whilst not covered within the submitted report, the Leader highlighted that he and the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture had met with local Ward Councillors and the local MP about the longer-term future of Knowle Manor. It was undertaken that the Council would work with those local Ward Members and the MP in terms of looking for wider funding opportunities, with the aspiration that Knowle Manor be used for the future provision of care and health services in Morley, if at all possible, and that at the appropriate time, such matters would be submitted to the Board.

A Member raised an enquiry regarding consultation undertaken in relation to Dolphin Manor. In response, the Board received further information on the consultation exercise conducted in respect of the proposals within the submitted report affecting both Dolphin Manor and Knowle Manor.

In response to a Member's comments regarding the provision of the Council's residential care services more generally and the impact that these proposals would have, the Board received further details on this matter. It was noted that the Council's provision of long-term residential care services was very small and underutilised. It was highlighted that the external market currently does not have sufficient supply of intermediate care provision, hence the proposal within the report that Dolphin Manor could be repurposed as an intermediate care facility.

Members received further details and context on the current occupancy levels at both Knowle Manor and Dolphin Manor and also on the processes and timeframes by which the Council had stopped the admission of long-term residents.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the closure of Knowle Manor care home be approved, and that once closed, the building be declared surplus to service requirements;
- (b) That the repurposing of Dolphin Manor into a community care bed base (Recovery Hub), be approved;
- (c) That following resolutions (a) and (b) above, the timeline for closure as set out at point 66 of the submitted report, be approved;

- (d) That it be noted that the Director of Adults and Health is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions above.

(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)

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

22 Outcome of Call In: Little Owls Nurseries Review

Further to Minute No. 7, 19th June 2024, the Board considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services which, in response to the outcome of a Call In meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, asked Executive Board to reconsider one of its decisions taken on the Little Owls Nurseries Review report submitted to the 19 June 2024 Executive Board meeting.

Whilst the Scrutiny Board resolved at the Call In meeting of 9th July 2024 to release Executive Board resolutions 7(a) to (f) for implementation, the Scrutiny Board had resolved to refer resolution 7(g) back to the Board for reconsideration on the basis that the Scrutiny Board believed that democratic oversight would be enhanced if future decisions on the 12 Little Owls settings listed at resolution 7(e) were taken by Executive Board rather than through officer delegated decision. The Board was therefore asked to either confirm its original decision of 19th June as set out at resolution 7(g), or vary it, taking into account the recommendations made by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board at the recent Call In meeting.

Resolution 7(g) of 19 June 2024 Executive Board minutes read, '*That it be noted that the Director of Children and Families may take further decisions in respect of the settings listed at resolution (e) above following the market sounding exercise for the twelve settings indicated, which would be as a direct consequence of this decision*'.

It was confirmed that in taking account of the outcomes from the Scrutiny Board Call In meeting, it had been agreed to vary the Board's original decision at 7(g) (as set out above) so that future decisions on the 12 Little Owls settings listed at resolution 7(e) of the same minute were taken by Executive Board. In response, a Member welcomed this proposal, commended the Scrutiny Board for the work undertaken and highlighted the value of the Scrutiny process.

RESOLVED – That in response to the outcome of the recent Scrutiny Board Children and Families Call In meeting regarding the decisions made by Executive Board on the Little Owls Nurseries Review (19 June 2024), resolution 7(g) be varied so that future decisions on the 12 Little Owls settings listed at resolution 7(e) of the same minute be taken by Executive Board.

(The resolution above, given that it was a decision which has been the subject of a previous Call In, was not eligible for Call In, in line with Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 8.1.1)

23 Outcome of consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and permanently close the local authority-maintained nursery.

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report on a proposal to change the age range of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and to permanently close the Local Authority-maintained nursery. The report highlighted that a public consultation on the proposal had taken place between 13 May and 28 May 2024 and provided a summary of the consultation responses received. Additionally, the report sought approval for the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposals.

On behalf of the Executive Member for Children and Families, the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development introduced the report and in doing so, highlighted the key recommendations. It was noted that whilst there had been 24.5 full time equivalent children attending the nursery in the summer term 2024, this would reduce to 5.5 in September 2024. It was also noted that should the submitted recommendations be approved, then the intention would be to bring a further report to the November 2024 Board, presenting the outcomes of the Statutory Notice.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding the timing of the proposals within the submitted report, given the new Government's manifesto commitment regarding childcare provision, the Board was provided with further context on the proposal. It was noted that the proposals were being brought forward due to a decline in population of children and young people in the local area together with a sufficiency of available provision in that locality. In addition, it was noted that the school was considering working with a private provider with regard to the potential delivery of childcare.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the public consultation for this proposal, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the publication of a Statutory Notice on the proposal to change the age range of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and to permanently close the Local Authority-maintained nursery at the school, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the implementation of the proposal would be subject to the outcome of the Statutory Notice;
- (d) That the intention for a further report to be presented to the November 2024 Executive Board meeting, be noted;
- (e) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 18th September, 2024

(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)

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

24 Annual Corporate Risk Report

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report presenting the Council's annual corporate risk and resilience report for consideration. The report provided details of the most significant risks currently on the Council's corporate risk register together with summary assurances describing the key controls in place to manage those risks, details of where any further actions were planned and also signposting to where more detailed information can be found.

In presenting the report, the Leader highlighted the challenging environment in which Local Authorities were operating, which meant that the number of significant risks being faced was increasing. The Board's attention was specifically drawn to the significant mitigation now in place with regard to the risk associated with major flooding, which was due to the key actions in this area including the development of the flood alleviation scheme.

The significant risks linked to the Council's financial position were also highlighted.

In response to a Member's question regarding the risks associated with the Council's IT systems and arrangements for dealing with a major cyber outage, the Board received an update and assurance on the actions being taken in this area to mitigate the level of associated risk. It was noted that this matter was recently considered by the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board and whilst there was no complacency in this area, the Council was as confident as it could be in the arrangements it has established.

Linked to this and in response to a further enquiry, the Board received an update on the Council's business continuity arrangements for the delivery of key services, which it was noted continued to evolve in response to the changing environment. Further to this, it was undertaken that the Member in question be offered a separate briefing on such matters.

RESOLVED – That the annual risk report, as presented in the submitted report and appendix, be noted, together with the assurances provided on the most significant corporate risks, in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy and also in line with the Board's overarching responsibility for their management.

RESOURCES

25 Annual Corporate Performance Report 2023/24

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report presenting the Council's annual Corporate Performance report which provided an update on the Council's performance in 2023/24 against the range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) monitored which covered all directorates.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member noted that whilst the annual corporate performance report provided an update on the Council's strategic performance indicators, the importance of contributions to the successful delivery of those performance indicators by individuals and services across the Council was highlighted. The Board's attention was drawn to the Council's performance against some specific KPIs. The value of resources such as the Social Progress Index was also highlighted together with the reference in the report to the introduction of the Office for Local Government (OFLOG), which aimed to provide accessible data about the performance of Local Government.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the value of the relevant Scrutiny Boards having the opportunity to analyse this data in detail.

Regarding the performance metric relating to the collection of household waste, a Member enquired whether a further metric could be added which measured performance on household waste collection specifically on the designated collection day. In response, the Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Spaces gave an undertaking that the Member in question would be provided with further information on this specific matter, with an offer of a further meeting between the Executive Member and the Member in question also being given, if required. The Executive Member also provided a wider update in relation to refuse collection.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding the Council's preparedness in relation to the introduction of new refuse collection policies, it was noted that a further report was intended to be submitted to the Board on such matters in due course.

RESOLVED – That the annual Corporate Performance Report for 2023/24, as submitted, be received and noted, together with the progress made during that period, as detailed within the submitted report.

26 Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29 - Quarter 1 Update

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting an update on the Council's Capital Programme for the period 2024-2029, split between the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), with a forecast of resources available over that period. The report also provided a specific update of the 2024/25 Capital Programme and also sought approval in relation to specific injections into the Capital Programme.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that both this report and the following Financial Health Monitoring report were being considered together, given that a review of the Capital Programme was taking place with the aim easing the pressure on the Council's revenue budget. It was also noted that the level of borrowing within the Capital Programme, as presented, remained affordable and that the report also sought approval in relation to specific injections into the programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the following injections into the Capital Programme, as detailed at Appendix A (iii) of the submitted report, be approved:-
 - £7,347.0k of Major Repairs Reserve funding for Capitalised Voids and Repairs; and
 - £1,558.1k of additional departmental borrowing for the project to rehouse tenants and subsequently demolish 6 high rise blocks;
- (b) That it be noted that the above resolution to inject funding of £8,905.1k will be implemented by the Chief Officer Financial Services;
- (c) That the latest position on the General Fund and HRA Capital Programme as at Quarter 1 2024/25, as presented within the submitted report, be noted. That the current review of the existing programme to identify where schemes could be delayed to reduce debt costs and support the in-year revenue position, also be noted.

27 Financial Health Monitoring 2024/25 Quarter 1

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting the Council's financial position in respect of the 2024/25 revenue budget following the first quarter of the financial year. The report also provided an update on the Quarter 1 position in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, the Schools Budget, the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund and Treasury Prudential Indicators.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points in which it was noted that as at Quarter 1, the Council was forecasting a General Fund overspend of £19.936m. The key areas of overspend were noted together with the reasons for those. The Executive Member also highlighted the range of mitigating measures being taken to address the overspend.

In response to a Member's concerns about the projected overspend being reported at Quarter 1, the Board received detailed information on the complex challenges being faced together with the range of comprehensive actions being taken to address those challenges and to manage the financial pressures faced, with specific reference made to the work that continued to be undertaken in respect of the services within Children and Families directorate.

Regarding a specific enquiry on the projected overspend within the Adults and Health directorate, the Board received further detail on the key causes of that projected overspend. It was noted that higher than anticipated demand in

relation to working age adults was a key factor that remained ongoing, and it was noted that this was not a unique trend to Leeds. Details of the range of work undertaken as part of the budget preparation and also in response to the current position were highlighted.

Also, noting that the report reflected the budgeted assumption of a 3.5% pay increase, an enquiry was raised about the potential impact on the budget should the pay award be higher. In response, it was noted that the JNC pay award had been agreed at 2.5%, whilst the NJC pay award was still being negotiated. In response to a further enquiry, it was undertaken that the Member in question would be provided with details of the potential impact upon the budget, should the NJC pay award be at a level of 5.5%.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with further details on the range of actions that would continue to be taken to address the currently projected overspend in-year and look towards budget setting processes for future years. It was noted that this issue continued to dominate discussions, and whilst it was a challenging situation for all employees, it was highlighted that there was a commitment for the Council to do everything that it could to operate within its budget. It was also noted that such matters would continue to be reported to Executive Board, as appropriate.

Members also discussed the national position in relation to Local Government funding arrangements moving forward, given the recent change in national Government.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That as presented within the submitted report, it be noted that at Quarter 1, the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is reporting an overspend of £19.936m for 2024/25 (3.2% of the approved net revenue budget) after the application of reserves and within a challenging national context, with it also being noted that a range of actions are being undertaken to address this position;
- (b) That as presented within the submitted report, it be noted that at Quarter 1, the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is reporting a balanced position;
- (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, with it also being noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available. That it also be noted that proposals would need to be identified to absorb any additional pressures;
- (d) That it be noted that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, are required to present action

plans to mitigate their reported pressures and those of the Council's wider financial challenge where possible, in line with the Revenue Principles agreed by Executive Board in February 2024 through the annual Revenue Budget report;

- (e) That as presented within the submitted report, the quarterly analysis of the Prudential Indicators be noted, specifically that the actual gross and net debt for the Council in 2024/25 to date remain comfortably within both the Operational Boundary and the Authorised Limit set by Council.

28 Updated Community Asset Transfer Policy

The Director of City Development submitted a report proposing the adoption of an updated policy for Community Asset Transfers which would replace the policy approved by Executive Board in September 2012 (Minute No. 77, 5th September 2012 referred). The report noted that the updated policy incorporated experience and learning acquired from managing community asset transfers for over ten years and would establish revised criteria and process that aligned with current estate strategies and challenges around estate maintenance.

With the agreement of the Chair, supplementary information was circulated to Board Members and published ahead of the meeting for consideration as part of this report in the form of an updated Appendix 2 EDCI Screening document. It was noted that this document had been updated in response to the consideration of the proposed new CAT Policy at the recent Scrutiny Board Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth meeting, and the timing between the meetings had not allowed this information to be included within the original agenda pack.

The Executive Member introduced the report and in doing so highlighted how the new policy would allow a proactive approach to be taken and how the policy benefitted from the experience of previous CAT processes. The extensive consultation undertaken with Elected Members was also highlighted, together with the fact that the matter had been considered by Scrutiny.

The approach which had been taken to reach the current position on the proposed new policy was welcomed, with a Member commenting upon the assessment process, striking the correct balance between community value and financial liability, having robust processes in place to mitigate against risk and the need to work with Elected Members and communities.

Further details were provided in response to the Member's comments, with it being noted that the policy looked to provide communities with more certainty around related CAT processes and criteria in order to support those communities who were interested in potentially undertaking CAT's.

In terms of a list of properties being drawn up which were suitable for CAT, the range of factors that would be taken into consideration as part of this process were highlighted. It was also noted that in presenting any potential

CAT's to Members moving forward, whilst there was a statutory duty to achieve best consideration for assets, the legal framework allowed for less than best disposals. As such, Members would be presented with details of best consideration, to enable Members to consider the value that they were willing to forego against the wider benefits that may be achieved through community and social value.

In conclusion, the Executive Member committed to continue working with Elected Members on such matters, including Scrutiny.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the new Community Asset Transfer policy, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, which will replace the previous Community Asset Transfer Policy, be agreed;
- (b) That agreement be given to a list of properties suitable for Community Asset Transfer being established and presented to Executive Board in a future report.

29 Being Our Best - Our Organisation Plan 2024/25 Update

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report presenting for approval an update to the 'Being Our Best – Our Organisation Plan' for 2024/25, which set out the Council's plan to be an efficient, enterprising, healthy and inclusive organisation.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the within the updated Organisation Plan and how it had been updated in response to the current Best City Ambition following its adoption in February 2024, and also in response to the Government's Productivity Plan requirements.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the value of the relevant Scrutiny Boards having the opportunity to analyse this report in detail.

In response to a Member's enquiries, the Board received further details on the actions that continued to be taken to ensure that the range of services across the Council worked as cohesively as possible as 'One Council'. It was acknowledged that whilst much progress had been achieved in this area, there was still further improvements to be made. It was also noted that part of the ongoing review into Community Committees was around considering the Council's ways of working from a local perspective.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updated 'Being Our Best – Our Organisation Plan 2024/25', as presented in the submitted report, be approved, which responds to the UK Government Productivity Plan requirements;
- (b) That it be noted that the submitted report and the Being Our Best publication was considered by Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board at its July 2024 meeting;

- (c) That it be noted that graphic design work will be developed prior to the publication of the updated 'Being Our Best – Our Organisation Plan 2024/25' around 1st September 2024, which may include some amendments to wording.

CLIMATE, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACES

30 Proposed Funding Bid for 'Wild Aire' project at St Aidan's and Fairburn Ings Nature Reserves

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report regarding the RSPB's (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) proposed funding bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) for investment into St. Aidan's and Fairburn Ings nature reserves as part of the 'Wild Aire' project. The report noted that the nature reserves were mostly owned by Leeds City Council and leased to the RSPB, and that in terms of St Aidan's, an endowment existed which was administered by the St Aidan's Trust (of which the Council is the Sole Trustee). As such, the report sought the Council's in principle support for the RSPB's proposed funding bid to the NHLF and also for the allocation of £805,000 from the St Aidan's Trust as match funding for the project, should the bid be successful.

The Executive Member highlighted the benefits which would be achieved as a result of the proposals. Responding to a Member's specific enquiry, assurance was provided that there were no risks to the Council arising from the proposals within the report and that the positive working relationship with the RSPB would continue irrespective of the outcome of the bid.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in principle support be given as landowner, for the RSPB's proposed £8.5 million bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) to invest in St Aidan's and Fairburn Ings, as part of the 'Wild Aire' project, for the purposes of improving the visitor offer, engaging more diverse communities, making the sites better for wildlife and helping St Aidan's become financially sustainable. That this support be demonstrated through the provision of a letter of support delegated to the Chief Officer for Climate, Energy and Green Spaces;
- (b) That if the bid is successful, the allocation of £805,000 from the St Aidan's Trust as match funding for the project, be approved;
- (c) That approval be given to defer and delegate to the Director of City Development, any requirements to negotiate and agree terms for the variation of the lease of St Aidan's to the RSPB, to help facilitate the successful delivery of the project.

(Councillor Pryor left and returned to the meeting room during the consideration of this item)

ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

31 Heart of Holbeck: Levelling Up Round 3 Funding

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing detailed proposals of the Levelling Up funded 'Heart of Holbeck' programme, with £15.9m of funding having been committed by the previous Government. The report outlined the proposed delivery method, which comprised a mixture of direct Council delivery and the provision of grants to third parties. The report noted that the programme aimed to tackle deep rooted health, economic and social inequalities in a concentrated area of Holbeck where deprivation and health outcomes were amongst the poorest in the city.

The Executive Member introduced the report and in doing so, provided an overview of the key aspects of the scheme and highlighted the benefits arising from it.

Following consideration of Appendix 2 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the scope and delivery principles outlined for the Heart of Holbeck programme, as set out in the submitted report and the draft masterplan as presented at Appendix 3, be endorsed;
- (b) That approval be given for the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Director of Strategy and Resources and the Executive Member for 'Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development', to finalise detailed legal agreements with Central Government, Holbeck Together and Leeds Building Society in accordance with the terms as set out in exempt Appendix 2 to the submitted report, subject to subsidy control assessments;
- (c) That it be noted that the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Director of Strategy and Resources, the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment and the Executive Member for 'Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development' will finalise designs and enter into construction contracts for the former St Matthew's Church, Local Centre and Holbeck Moor improvements.

(Further to Minute No. 17 above, Councillor Arif left the meeting room for the duration of the Board's consideration of this item, returning to the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

EQUALITY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

32 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2023 - 2024

The Director of Strategy and Resources and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a joint report presenting the Council's

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report 2023 – 2024. Following the Council's adoption of a new Vision and Action Plan for EDI in February 2023, the report included a first full year update on progress against the 15 high level priorities contained in the Action Plan for EDI alongside the annual update on the Equality Improvement Priorities.

The Executive Member introduced the report and in doing so, highlighted key aspects and recommendations, which illustrated the breadth of work being undertaken by the Council in relation to EDI. The issues of poverty and health were highlighted as major factors which continued to impact upon individuals in this area. Noting the update provided on LGBT+ Inclusive Leeds, it was highlighted that there was an intention to broaden the communities covered through the 'Inclusive Leeds' initiative. It was also noted that the report presented the statement of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board entitled, 'Leeds City Council Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' for the Board's consideration.

Regarding the proposed updating of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to include 'Care Experienced' as a locally protected characteristic, it was noted that the Executive Member was to chair a cross-party Member implementation group on such matters.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the value of the relevant Scrutiny Board having the opportunity to analyse this data in detail.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2023 – 2024, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That the adoption of the LGBT+ Inclusive Leeds approach for 2024/29, as presented at Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (c) That the refreshed approach to the Equality Assembly, as presented at Appendix 3 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (d) That the new Equality Improvement Priority relating to Leeds being a Carer Friendly City to replace the previous priority on responding to the impacts of Covid 19, a detailed at Appendix 4 to the submitted report, be adopted;
- (e) That the updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which now will include 'Care Experienced' as a locally protected characteristic, as detailed at Appendix 5 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (f) That the refreshed Zero Tolerance Statement, as presented at Appendix 6 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (g) That the conclusions and recommendations of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board Statement entitled, 'Leeds City Council

Workforce EDI' as presented at Appendix 7 to the submitted report be noted;

- (h) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions made by Executive Board in respect of Appendices 1-5 of the submitted report;
- (i) That it be noted that the Director of Strategy and Resources is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions made by Executive Board in respect of Appendices 6-7 of the submitted report.

33 Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 - 'Ageing Well: Our Lives in Leeds'

The Director of Public Health submitted an Annual Report for 2023 entitled, '*Ageing Well: Our Lives in Leeds*' which fulfilled the requirement of the Director to publish a report on an annual basis which described the health of the population in Leeds and which made recommendations regarding the improvement of health in the city. It was noted that this 2023 Annual Report brought together lived experiences of ageing well amongst Leeds' citizens having listened to the voices and stories of local people as well as professionals who work in this field. The report also reviewed relevant data and evidence in relation to ageing well.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview and highlighted a number of key elements including the disparities around life expectancy and how people aged across different parts of the city. The Director's recommendations arising from the report were also highlighted. It was noted that the report had recently been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Director of Public Health highlighted that whilst Leeds was a relatively young city demographically, there would be an increase in the older population in the coming years, hence the ongoing work being undertaken in response to that evolving demographic change.

Also, it was noted that Leeds was in a strong position given its approach as an age friendly city, but still further action needed to be taken in this area. It was highlighted that a different approach towards the ageing well agenda was needed, in order to ensure that public services remained sustainable moving forward. It was noted that whilst the Director's report included recommendations to the Council, it also contained recommendations to a range of partners.

Responding to a Member's enquiries covering a range of issues, the Board received further details on the actions being taken to improve health outcomes and life expectancy generally. It was noted that whilst this report was entitled '*Ageing Well*', focus was placed on an individual's health from birth onwards and that there was continued investment into prevention work and Public Health programmes. It was also noted that these actions were

being taken alongside the support provided to NHS partners in the delivery of their services. Further to this, it was highlighted that there was more targeted work in place for those parts of the city with the poorest health outcomes.

Particular reference was made to the age friendly approach taken in Leeds and how this covered areas such as transport provision and road safety for older people. Regarding public transport, details were provided on the collaborative work being undertaken with WYCA in this area, however, it was acknowledged that whilst improvements were being made, further consideration needed to be given to the provision of cross-Authority transport services and those affecting the communities in the outer areas of the city. Information was also provided on matters such as the actions being taken to increase uptake of cancer screening services and also how there was close collaborative working with Neighbourhood Networks across the city.

It was highlighted that poverty remained the issue with the most significant impact on an individual's life expectancy, with further information being provided on the practical work undertaken in this area.

RESOLVED – That in order to increase the number of years spent in good health in Leeds:-

- (i) The findings and recommendations of the 2023 Director of Public Health Annual Report, as presented within the submitted report and appendices, be noted; and
- (ii) The recommendations identified for Leeds City Council within the Director of Public Health's submitted Annual Report for 2023, be noted and supported.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 26TH JULY 2024

LAST DATE FOR CALL IN OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS: 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 2ND AUGUST 2024

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