



SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Monday, 17th June, 2024 at 10.30 am

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

MEMBERSHIP

E Carlisle	-	Hunslet and Riverside;
A Carter	-	Calverley and Farsley;
D Chapman	-	Rothwell;
B Flynn	-	Adel and Wharfedale;
P Grahame	-	Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
S Hamilton	-	Moortown;
T Hinchcliffe	-	Bramley and Stanningley;
A Khan (Chair)	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
W Kidger	-	Morley South;
A Parnham	-	Armley;
E Thomson	-	Guiseley and Rawdon;
C Timmins	-	Calverley and Farsley;

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

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

[Council and democracy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/council-and-democracy)

Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Rob Clayton
Tel: 37 88790

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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> <p>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.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <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>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</p> <p>To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.</p>	
5			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.</p>	
6			<p>MINUTES - 25 MARCH 2024</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2024.</p>	7 - 16
7			<p>CO-OPTED MEMBERS</p> <p>To consider the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources).</p>	17 - 20
8			<p>SCRUTINY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>To consider the Scrutiny Board's Terms of Reference for 2024/25 as presented in the report of the Head of Democratic Services.</p>	21 - 38
9			<p>SOURCES OF WORK AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25</p> <p>To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services on potential sources of work for the Scrutiny Board and an initial draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.</p>	39 - 62

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
10			<p>PERFORMANCE REPORT</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Strategy and Resources which presents a summary of performance data relating to Council and city priorities that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) including coverage of Office for Local Government (OFLOG) indicators.</p>	63 - 78
11			<p>EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Strategy and Resources setting out the Council's approach to employee mental health and well-being support. This follows consideration of these issues in 2023/24 and a request for further updates to the Board.</p>	79 - 92
12			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 22 July 2024 at 10.30am. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 10.00am.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
			<p>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title. b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete. 	

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

MONDAY, 25TH MARCH, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor A Khan in the Chair

Councillors H Bithell, S Burke, S Firth,
T Hinchcliffe, W Kidger, A Parnham and
E Thomson

88 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

89 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information considered by the Board.

90 Late Items

There were no late items.

91 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

92 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from the following Board Members:

Cllr Andrew Carter
Cllr Gohar Almass
Cllr Diane Chapman

There were no substitutes.

93 Minutes - 19 February 2024

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 February 2024, be approved as an accurate record.

94 Matters Arising

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser highlighted the following areas as matters arising from the 19 February 2024 meeting of the Board:

Min 84 – To note that supplementary questions asked by Board members on the EDI update have been answered by email. In addition, recommendation B) on the Report under this minute has been acted on and the suggested scrutiny statement is provided as part of this agenda pack at item 10.

Min 85 – A verbal update was provided on follow up questions related to the distribution of Northern Dreaming books and the Leeds 2023 Wikipedia page which responded to issues raised in February. In respect of the city readiness Board minutes and agendas these are available to board members on request.

Min 86 – In respect of the work programming discussion this has been actioned with the five items on the agenda today representing the prioritisation that has taken place and also the viability of bringing reports forward.

95 Financial Reporting 2023/24 - Month 10 (January)

The Board received a report from the Head of Democratic Services providing the latest update on the in year financial position in respect of the Revenue Budget, the Dedicated Schools Grants (DSG) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources
- Victoria Bradshaw, Chief Officer – Financial Services

The Chief Officer – Financial Services, introduced the item setting out a projected overspend of £36.3m on the revenue budget in 2023/24, a slightly improved position on Month 9, with the main pressures being felt in the Children and Families directorate and the number and increasing costs of external residential placements in line with previous iterations of the report.

There have been savings in the Strategic Account budget that are being used to partially offset overspend in the Children and Families Budget. This in combination with use of one off funding from WYCA and use of most of the Merrion House reserves will enable the authority to deliver a balanced budget by the end of the financial year.

The HRA is projecting a balanced position by year end, but the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has an in year pressure of £2.6m which will be offset by balances brought forward from the previous financial year. It was noted that

the DSG will be a feature of the Financial Health reports in 2024/25 with action planning for those budgets also included.

The Board also heard that collection rates on Council Tax were lower than anticipated due to wider cost of living pressures but that business rate collection rates were above the anticipated rate.

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

- Given the cost pressures around Children Looked After budgets the Board asked whether there were any updates available since the Month 10 position which is the focus of this paper. In response the Board heard that external residential placement numbers (and CLA generally) were stabilising with external residential numbers fluctuating between around 142 to 146 placements. It was also noted that the issue with placements is primarily driven by increasing costs of placements as well as overall numbers.
- The Board asked about the strategic accounts underspend and the quite significant underspend of over £10m. It was explained that these savings are made from debt savings on the capital programme, scheduling of borrowing requirements and using cash balances. In addition, with the possibility of reduced interest rates later in 2024 there could be further savings delivered through longer term borrowing at lower rates. Energy underspend due to falling prices is also a factor.
- On procurement cards members asked about the changes that have been made to deliver savings and the possibility of officer time being wasted on authorisation processes. Whilst approval processes have been tightened these are based on essential spend requirements so where services do not have essential spend requirements purchasing cards cannot be used and have zero balances. This followed a review of purchasing cards at Chief Officer level to ensure that purchasing cards were only used for the delivery of essential services, in line with the freeze on non-essential spend.
- Members raised a question regarding the Little Owls Nursery Service Review. It was noted that this issue falls under the remit of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board and can be picked up through the Principal Scrutiny Adviser.
- The Board asked about staffing levels in adult social care and potential budget pressures in that directorate. In response the Board heard about regular monitoring and modelling approaches that have identified demand pressure as key issues in both children's and adult social care and that these pressures are linked to national issues being felt across the local authority sector. The budget gap in 2024/25 was high due to expected demand pressures and additional resource required for these budgets.
- The Chair asked if the plans to address the overspend through the Transport Levy funding, Merrion House Reserve and underspend on energy would be enough to bridge the projected gap in budgets and how much the underspend on energy is expected to be. In response the Board heard that the energy underspend is estimated at £3m but that was

already being used to offset in year pressures and is part of the savings highlighted in the strategic accounts. The Board were reassured that through the WYCA funding and use of reserves as well as mitigation from under spending budgets in year the projected overspend will be addressed and a balanced budget delivered at year end.

- The Executive Board Member for Resources emphasised the demand pressures being faced by the Council and the budget pressures that are being felt in a number of service areas. The final details on the 2023/24 financial year will be provided through the outturn reports.

Resolved:

Board Members noted the content of the report and appendix within the wider Board remit linked to financial sustainability and long-term budgetary robustness.

96 Procurement Update

The Board considered a report from the Director of Strategy and Resources providing an update on the Council's Procurement and Commercial Services. This follows consideration in previous municipal years and focused on social value in procurement, the Procurement Act (2023) and effective contract management.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources
- Victoria Bradshaw, Chief Officer Financial Services
- Lewis Sinkala, Head of Procurement
- Sasha Walton, Procurement - Social Value Team

The Head of Procurement delivered a presentation to the board setting out the key issues in the presented report. This covered the following areas:

- Approaches to staff training and the number of staff who have accessed contract management training support
- Developments in how the Council does contract management including the Contract Management Assurance Board, Contract Management Framework and contract balanced scorecards
- Social Value and the lead role being played by the Council regionally in terms of social value being at the heart of procurement activity and being the only local authority to have a dedicated social value team
- The Social Value Fund
- Support to Leeds suppliers
- The implications of the Procurement Act on how the Council operates including potential resource implications

Responding to comments and question from Board members the following discussion took place:

- The Board asked about source to contract business cases and also the implications of the 2023 Procurement Act. Work is ongoing in this area and could be the focus of a future report to be brought to scrutiny.
- On Value leakage the Board noted the 8.6% average value leakage which results from poor contract management and whether the Council has quantified the amount of value leakage within council contracts. The Board heard that a review is ongoing with Ernst & Young which is a phased approach to reviewing contracts with plans for these reviews to become part of standard practice across the Council and part of the contract management framework.
- Members were keen to see as much social value included in contracts as possible potentially through partnership with anchor organisations. The Board heard that services can put a weighting of 20% in contracts and that this was in line with practice in other local authorities. Work is planned with anchor organisations in Leeds which will focus on social value and it was noted that social value commitments are contractual commitments and if the social value is not delivered then penalties can be applied.
- In response to a question around mentoring and buddying the service was happy to set up more in terms of ensuring sharing of best practice and buddying arrangements are in place across Leeds and West Yorkshire in respect of social value and sharing of best practice across organisations.
- The Board were keen to hear more about the new systems being planned and why the new tech had not been developed and delivered earlier. In response the Board heard that the public sector market is quite immature and driven by the incoming legislation, now is a good time to develop new systems and explore the market to find better tech to support the service and have fit for purpose systems moving forward.
- The Board noted that the term 'BAME' features in the report and it shouldn't given the Council is committed to using different languages to describe diverse communities. This was noted and will be avoided in the future.
- The Board heard more about the social value engine and contract management approaches to deliver social value where it features in the contract. The number of meetings with suppliers will be determined by the value of the contract with more regular meetings with higher value contracts to ensure the social value is being delivered.
- Members were also informed that the figures on social value were low at around 10% of the social value commitments in contracts largely because work is ongoing on social value to ensure that suppliers are evidencing delivery. Members were assured that where suppliers are not delivering then this will be contract managed through the Social Value Team.
- The Executive Board Member for Resources noted the amount of work going on this area and the commitment to social value that the council has made through the establishment of the Social Value Team. Future update reports will look to evidence more clearly the delivery of social value by suppliers through their contracts with the Council. It was also emphasised

that social value brings clear benefits to communities and can be used to offer career opportunities and support to people throughout the city.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) noted the contents of the report and endorsed the work underway to develop a Council-wide best practice approach to contract management.
- b) Identified procurement as a potential area of interest for the next municipal year.

97 Integrated Digital Services (IDS) Service Desk - Update

A report was considered from the Chief Digital and Information Officer on the Integrated Digital Services (IDS) service desk which supports staff with IT related issues and supports the wider delivery of services to citizens, patients, visitors and businesses by the Council, Health and other partners.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources
- Andrew Byrom, Chief Digital & Information Officer
- Ben Tunnicliffe, Service Centre Team Leader

To support this item the Board received a presentation from the Service Centre Team Leader setting out the key issues in the report, this covered:

- A summary of performance between 2021 and 2023, covering call volumes, calls answered and the number of service tickets raised
- The measures taken to deliver service improvements including new approaches to recruitment, automation and restructuring of the service
- Customer satisfaction and the different ways that the service can be contacted
- Plans for the future including a new phone system, virtual technology and further automation and usage of Power BI

Responding to comments and questions from the Board the following areas were discussed:

- The Board wanted to know more about call volumes and why the service now seems to be answering less calls when compared to 2021. In response the Board were informed that some of the data from 2021 will have been impacted by the pandemic and the different ways of working, largely remotely, that needed additional support from the service desk, use of zoom and other new platforms were listed as examples. In addition, it was noted that staffing shortages have been an issue in terms of answering calls along with a need to train staff with a four week lead in

time. The latest position in 2024 with a near full staffing complement has improved from the position presented with 97% answered. It was also noted that channel shift to self-service methods will have impacted and helped to reduce call volumes.

- The Board asked about roles being targeted at unemployed residents and what they were. By way of response the Board heard that work is ongoing with a company called Generation that trains people through a 12 week skills academy which targets people who want to have a career in tech and there are a number of examples where this work has led to really positive career changes. It was also noted that employment through the service desk can lead to career advancement and can be the starting point of a career with Integrated Digital Services and the Council.
- The Board also queried the use of SEN Internships as opposed to apprenticeships or traineeships. The Board heard that the three or four internships will be introduced in 2024 for a whole academic year, supported by coaching which will benefit both the interns and enable the council to learn and adapt processes to support the interns and deliver positive outcomes by applying for roles and having support to do that, it was noted that the internships do not provide a guarantee of a role. The Board believed that any application processes arising should take account of the needs of the applicants as they can act as a barrier if not done appropriately.
- Members added that on internships it would be positive to see this supported by accreditation which would be provided by a traineeship or apprenticeship, which would not guarantee a job either but would provide level 1 and level 2 qualifications potentially. The Board were supportive of the commitment to internships and asked that a follow up item be brought back that tracks the progress of the individuals starting the internship in September 2024, this will be factored into future work programming discussions.
- The Board also heard about surveys and the processes in place to learn from feedback that is not positive, the service is committed to following up on negative feedback to understand the reasons and look to improve but in general terms survey feedback has been positive.
- The Executive Member for Resources welcomed the comments on accreditation for the internships and that the Board will receive further information on this in the future. In addition, the Executive Member noted the positive progress that has been made on performance since 2020/21 and thanked the officers and their teams for the work they have done to improve the service. Future tech improvements were also noted as a possible opportunity for the Council that could deliver more efficiency and lead to further service improvements across the Council.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) noted the positive assurances on service desk performance set out in this report.

- b) Identified an update on internships and this work more generally to form part of the Work Programme in 2024/25.

98 Scrutiny Statement - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services which set out a scrutiny board statement on the Council's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) which has included input and feedback from each of the Council's staff networks in recent and this municipal year.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Debra Coupar, Executive Board Member for Resources
- Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources

The following comments were made during consideration of this item:

- The Executive Board Members for Resources thanked the Board for its work in this area and highlighted the priority it has been given by the Council leadership and senior officers. It was also noted that this is a good example of joint working between Scrutiny and the Executive, and it was hoped that the Council's focus on this will make a difference to employees both now and as the work continues to develop, in the future.
- The Director of Strategy and Resources also added thanks for the work on this issue given that it has been such a priority for the Council in recent years. The Board also heard that the timing of the statement is good in that it coincides with a planned Annual Report on Equality Improvement Priorities to Executive Board in July 2024, which will enable the statement to feature as part of that.

Resolved:

The Board approved the Scrutiny Board Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

99 Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board End of Year Statement 2023/24

The Board considered the 2023/24 end-of-year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) which if agreed would be published on the Council's website.

Resolved:

The Board approved the 2023/24 End of Year Statement for the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board and agreed its publication.

100 Work Programme

The Board considered the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

The Board discussed the following:

- The Principal Scrutiny Adviser noted that this is the final time the work programme will be considered by the Board in 2023/24. In addition, the report notes some potential items to be recommended to the successor board for consideration to include in its work programme. These included an update on Mental Health and Well Being and a Digital Strategy Update.
- The Board highlighted data analysis as a potential future work programme item and how the Council uses it to inform its evidence base when making decisions. This was noted and will form part of the work programme discussion for 2024/25.

Resolved:

The Board noted the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year and the potential for items to be picked up by the successor board in 2024/25, subject to their work programming priorities.

101 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next public meeting of the Board, subject to agreement at the Annual Council Meeting in May, will take place on 17 June 2024 at 10.30am. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 10.00am.

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Co-Opted Members

Date: 17 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- The Council's Constitution includes provision for the appointment of co-opted members to individual Scrutiny Boards.
- For those Scrutiny Boards where co-opted members have previously been appointed, such arrangements have usually been reviewed on an annual basis at the beginning of a new municipal year.
- This report provides guidance to the Scrutiny Board about the appointment of co-opted members. In addition to general provisions applicable to all Boards, there are also several specific legislative arrangements for certain co-opted members. Such cases are set out in the Council's Constitution and are also noted within this report.

Recommendations

- a) In line with the options available and information outlined in this report, members are asked to consider the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board.

What is this report about?

- 1 In most cases the appointment of co-opted members is optional and is determined by the relevant Scrutiny Board.
- 2 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution outline the options available to Scrutiny Boards in relation to appointing co-opted members.
- 3 In general terms, Scrutiny Boards can appoint:
 - a) Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council; and/or,
 - b) Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.
- 4 To assist the Scrutiny Board, this report sets out issues to consider when seeking to appoint a co-opted member.
- 5 As well as general provisions for co-opted members, applicable to all Boards, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution reflects the specific legislative arrangements that relate to Education representatives co-opted onto the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, no such provisions exist for the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 It is widely recognised that in some circumstances, co-opted members can significantly add value to the work of Scrutiny Boards and, where appropriate, facilitate co-operation between Scrutiny Boards.
- 7 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules make it clear that co-option would normally only be appropriate where the co-opted member has specialist skill or knowledge, which would be of assistance to the Scrutiny Board.
- 8 In considering the appointment of co-opted members, Scrutiny Boards should be satisfied that a co-opted member can use their specialist skill or knowledge to add value to the work of the Scrutiny Board. However, co-opted members should not be viewed as a replacement for professional advice from officers.
- 9 Co-opted members should be considered as representatives of a particular group of stakeholders. However, when seeking external input into the Scrutiny Board's work, consideration should always be given to other alternative approaches, such as the role of expert witnesses or use of external research studies, to help achieve a balanced evidence base.
- 10 When considering the appointment of a co-opted member for a term of office, Scrutiny Boards should be mindful of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the year in view of the Scrutiny Boards' wide-ranging terms of reference. To help overcome this, Scrutiny Boards may wish to focus on the provision available to appoint up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a specific scrutiny inquiry.
- 11 The process for appointing co-opted members should be open, effective and carried out in a manner which seeks to strengthen the work of the Scrutiny Board. In doing so, due regard should also be given to any potential equality issues in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

12 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition. A decision to co-opt members would be taken with the intention of adding value to the work of the Scrutiny Boards.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

13 The guidance surrounding co-opted members has previously been discussed by Scrutiny Chairs and it was agreed that individual Scrutiny Boards would consider the appointment of co-optees onto their respective boards.

What are the resource implications?

14 Where applicable, any incidental expenses paid to co-optees will be met within existing resources.

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

15 When considering the appointment of a standing co-opted member for a term of office, members should be mindful of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of the year in view of the Scrutiny Boards' wide-ranging terms of reference.

What are the legal implications?

16 Where additional members are co-opted onto a Scrutiny Board, such members must comply with the provisions set out in the Member's Code of Conduct as detailed within the Council's Constitution.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

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Scrutiny Boards - Terms of Reference

Date: 17 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- This report presents the terms of reference for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)
- While general Terms of Reference are applied to all Scrutiny Boards, the variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with their special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the constitution.
- Further information is presented within this report to show how each of the five individual Scrutiny Boards align to 2024/25 Officer Delegated Functions and Executive Portfolios.
- In line with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Boards will also continue to ensure through service review that equality and diversity/cohesion and integration issues are considered in decision making and policy formulation.

Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to note the Terms of Reference as they relate to the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources).

What is this report about?

- 1 This report presents the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources).
- 2 The general Terms of Reference applied to all Scrutiny Boards are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3 The variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with their special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the constitution (see Appendix 2).
- 4 Further detail has been provided to illustrate how each of the five Scrutiny Boards align to 2024/25 Officer Delegated Functions and Executive Portfolios (Appendix 3).
- 5 There are some new board members appointed to the Board following the Annual Council Meeting on 23 May 2024 therefore, to accompany this item a brief introductory presentation will feature in the meeting to cover the services that fall under the Board's remit.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 This report sets out the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources).

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

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

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 8 The Terms of Reference were formally considered and approved by the Council at the Annual General Meeting on 23 May 2024.

What are the resource implications?

- 9 This report has no specific resource implications.

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

- 10 This report has no risk management implications.

What are the legal implications?

- 11 This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: General Terms of Reference applicable to all Scrutiny Boards
- Appendix 2: Article 6 of the constitution, outlining the variation in Scrutiny Board remits and any special responsibilities.
- Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board alignment with officer Delegated Functions and Executive portfolios 2024/25.

Background papers

- None

Scrutiny Board

The Scrutiny Board is authorised to discharge the following overview and scrutiny functions¹:

1. to review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with any council or executive function or any matter which affects the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area;²
2. to receive and consider requests for Scrutiny from any source;
3. to review or scrutinise the performance of such Trust / Partnership Boards as fall within its remit;
4. to act as the appropriate Scrutiny Board in relation to the Executive's initial proposals for a relevant plan or strategy within the Budget and Policy Framework which falls within its remit;³
5. to review or scrutinise executive decisions that have been Called In;
6. to exercise such special functions as are allocated in Annex 3 to Article 6 – Scrutiny Boards; and
7. to make such reports and recommendations as it considers appropriate and to receive and monitor formal responses to any reports or recommendations made.

¹ In relation to functions set out in Annex 2 to Article 6 – Scrutiny Boards, whether or not those functions are concurrently delegated to any other committee or officer.

² Including matters pertaining to outside bodies and partnerships to which the authority has made appointments.

³ In accordance with Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

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ARTICLE 6 – SCRUTINY BOARDS

6.1 ROLE

The Council will appoint Scrutiny Boards as set out in Annex 2 to this Article to exercise functions conferred by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 and in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006, in accordance with their terms of reference¹.

6.2 VISION FOR SCRUTINY

The Council has adopted a Vision for Scrutiny, which is attached at Annex 1.

6.3 ROLE OF SCRUTINY

Policy development and review

Within their Terms of Reference all Scrutiny Boards may:

- assist the Council and the Executive in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- question Members of the Executive and Directors about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area; and
- liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

Scrutiny

Within their terms of reference all Scrutiny Boards may:

- make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate committees and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Scrutiny Board and local people about their activities and performance; and
- question and gather evidence.

¹ As set out at Part 3 Section 2A of the Constitution

Article 6 - Scrutiny Boards

6.4 SCRUTINY OFFICER

The Council has designated the post of Head of Democratic Services, as Scrutiny Officer².

The functions of the Scrutiny Officer are:

- (a) to promote the role of the Scrutiny Boards;
- (b) to provide support to the Scrutiny Boards and their members³;
- (c) to provide support and guidance to Members (including Executive Members), and officers⁴, in relation to the Scrutiny Boards' functions;
- (d) to report to Council⁵ annually about how the authority has carried out its overview and scrutiny functions.

6.5 PROCEEDINGS

Scrutiny Boards will conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

6.6 MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be appointed in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

Scrutiny Boards shall co-opt members in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

6.7 SCRUTINY BOARD CHAIRS

The Chair of each of the Scrutiny Boards shall be appointed in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules.

Group spokespersons shall not be appointed to Chair a Scrutiny Board which corresponds to the same portfolio.⁶

² Under Section 9FB Local Government Act 2000.

³ The Scrutiny Officer shall exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to Scrutiny Boards.

⁴ The Scrutiny Officer shall exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of the officers employed to support the work of the Scrutiny Boards.

⁵ After consultation with the relevant Scrutiny Chairs

⁶ This does not apply to those groups who have less than 10% of the membership of the Council

Vision for Scrutiny at Leeds

“To promote democratic engagement through the provision of an influential scrutiny function held in high regard by its many stakeholders and adds value by achieving measurable service improvements for the people of Leeds through a member led process of examination and review”

To achieve this Scrutiny will follow the nationally agreed ‘Four Principles of Good Scrutiny’;

1. Provide ‘critical friend’ challenge to decision makers, through holding them to account for decisions made, engaging in policy review and policy development;
2. Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard;
3. Ensure Scrutiny is carried out by ‘independent minded’ Board members;
4. Improve public services by ensuring reviews of policy and service performance are focused.

To succeed Council recognises that the following conditions need to be present;

- Parity of esteem between the Executive and Scrutiny
- Co-operation with statutory partners
- Member leadership and engagement
- Genuine non-partisan working
- Evidence based conclusions and recommendations
- Effective dedicated officer support
- Supportive Directors and senior officer culture

Council agrees that it is incumbent upon Scrutiny Boards to recognise that resources to support the Scrutiny function are, (like all other Council functions), under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met. Therefore Council agrees that constructive consultation should take place between the Executive and Scrutiny about the availability of resources prior to any work being undertaken.

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 (e.g. Plans Panel, Housing Advisory Board, established member working groups, other Scrutiny Boards)***
- ***Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.***

Scrutiny Board	External oversight	Officer oversight (by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme)	
		Council Functions	Executive Functions
Strategy and Resources		Chief Executive Director of Strategy & Resources Chief Officer (Financial Services) City Solicitor Director of Communities, Housing and Environment	Chief Executive (1-4) Director of Strategy & Resources (1-7) City Solicitor (1-3) Chief Officer (Financial Services)(1-5) Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (17-19)
Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth	Risk management authorities (defined by S6 Flood and Water Management Act 2010)	Director of City Development Chief Planning Officer	Director of City Development (1, 3, 4, 5(a-c), 6-11, 13, 14) Chief Planning Officer (1-4) Director of Children and Families (2(e)) Director of Strategy and Resources (8)
Environment, Housing and Communities	Responsible authorities (defined by S5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998)	None	Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (1-16, 20-22) Director of City Development (2)
Children and Families		Director of Children and Families	Director of Children and Families (1, 2(a-d & f), 3 & 4) Programme Director Strengthening Families, Protecting Children (1 – 3) Director of Children & Families 1 (Functions delegated as Lead Officer of One Adoption Agency for West Yorkshire)
Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles	Relevant NHS bodies or health service providers including:- NHS England NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board Local NHS Trusts and other NHS service providers Healthwatch Leeds	None	Director of Adults and Health (1 - 8) Director of Public Health (1-6) Director of City Development (12)

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCRUTINY BOARDS

1 – Flood risk Management

The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) is allocated special responsibility for flood risk management namely:-

- To review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities⁷ of flood risk management functions⁸ which may affect the Leeds City Council area⁹.

2 – Crime and Disorder

The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) is allocated special responsibility for crime and disorder namely:-

- To exercise the functions of a crime and disorder committee¹⁰, including the following:
 - a) To review or scrutinise the exercise of crime and disorder functions¹¹ by responsible authorities¹²; and
 - b) To review or scrutinise any local crime or disorder matter¹³ raised by a Member.

3 – Health

The Scrutiny Board (Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles) is allocated special responsibility for health¹⁴ namely:-

- to review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in its area and to make reports and recommendations on any such matter it has reviewed or scrutinised;
- to comment on, make recommendations about, or report about such proposals as are referred to the authority by a relevant NHS body or a relevant health service provider;

⁷ As defined by Section 6 Flood and Water Management Act 2010

⁸ As defined by Section 4 Flood and Water Management Act 2010

⁹ In accordance with Section 9FH Local Government Act 2000

¹⁰ In accordance with Section 19 Police and Justice Act 2006

¹¹ As defined by Section 6 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (formulating and implementing crime and disorder strategies)

¹² These are the authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies set out in Section 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

¹³ Any matter concerning –

- a) crime and disorder (including in particular forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); or
- b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in that area

¹⁴ In accordance with regulations issued under Section 244 National Health Service Act 2006 (the regulations).

Article 6 - Scrutiny Boards

- to respond to consultation by any relevant NHS body or health service provider; and
- to nominate Members to any joint overview and scrutiny committee appointed by the authority¹⁵

Matters which fall within the terms of reference of this Scrutiny Board include:

- arrangements made by local NHS bodies to secure hospital and community health services to the inhabitants of the authority's area and the quality and safety of such services;
- the provision of family health services, personal medical services, personal dental services, pharmacy and NHS ophthalmic services;
- arrangements made by the authority for public health, health promotion, health improvement and for addressing health inequalities;
- the planning of health services by NHS bodies, including plans made in co-operation with local authority's Health and Wellbeing Board for improving both the health of the local population and the provision of health care to that population;
- any matter referred by Healthwatch Leeds; and
- the arrangements made by relevant NHS bodies and health service providers for consulting and involving patients and the public.

The Scrutiny Board may make recommendations to the authority, relevant NHS bodies, or relevant health service providers arising from the scrutiny process.

4– Residual Responsibility

The Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) is allocated residual responsibility for any function not otherwise allocated to a Scrutiny Board.

¹⁵ such nominations to reflect the political balance of the Board.

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

Scrutiny Board: Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles	
Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme	Executive Board Portfolio
<p>Director of Adults & Health 8. Public Health</p> <p>Director of Public Health 1. Health Improvement Functions 2. Health Protection Functions 3. Functions relating to the commissioning of Public Health services 4. Provision of statutory and mandated functions 5. Functions of Responsible Authority 6. Publication of the annual report on the health of the local population.</p>	<p>Equality, Health and Wellbeing Cllr F Venner</p>
<p>Director of Adults & Health 1. Promotion of well-being 2. Information, advice and advocacy 3. Prevention and Recovery 4. Safeguarding 5. Assessment and eligibility 6. Diverse and high-quality services 7. Charging and financial assessment</p> <p>Director of City Development 12. Sport and Active Leeds</p>	<p>Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture Cllr S Arif</p>

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

Scrutiny Board: Children and Families	
Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme	Executive Board Portfolio
<p>Director of Children and Families</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children’s Social Work 2. Learning (excluding 2e) 3. Child Friendly City 4. Youth Services¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adoption services (Function delegated to the Director of Children and Families as Lead Officer of one Adoption Agency for West Yorkshire) <p>Programme Director Strengthening Families, Protecting Children</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act as an ambassador for Leeds City Council 2. Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Programme (SFPC) 3. Partners in Practice including Leeds Relational Practice Centre (LRPC) 	<p>Children and Families Cllr H Hayden</p>

¹ Save for Locality Youth Services

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

Scrutiny Board: Environment, Housing and Communities	
Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme	Executive Board Portfolio
<p>Director of Communities, Housing & Environment</p> <p>1. Integrated locality working and its associated city-wide support and delivery functions including Locality Youth Services</p> <p>3 Customer services</p> <p>4. Central Library and Information Services</p> <p>5. Community Safety</p> <p>20. Welfare and Benefits services</p>	<p>Communities, Customer Services and Community Safety</p> <p>Cllr M Harland</p>
<p>Director of Communities, Housing & Environment</p> <p>6. Public Health Protection and Control of Statutory Nuisance</p> <p>7. Environmental Health and Consumer Protection</p> <p>8. Environmental management</p> <p>9. Car parking</p> <p>10. Waste</p> <p>11. Cemeteries, crematoria, burial grounds and mortuaries</p> <p>12. Greenspaces</p> <p>13. Countryside management</p> <p>14. Ecological sustainability</p> <p>15. Climate Change</p> <p>16. Clean Air</p>	<p>Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space</p> <p>Cllr M Rafique</p>
<p>Director of Communities, Housing & Environment</p> <p>21. Council Housing Landlord Functions (funded by the Housing Revenue Account)</p> <p>22. Other Housing Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Condition and Occupation of Housing b. Housing advice c. Homelessness d. Gypsies & travellers e. Emergency & temporary accommodation 	<p>Housing</p> <p>Cllr J Lennox</p>

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

f. Energy efficiency & fuel poverty g. Adaptations	
Director of City Development: 2. Functions relating to the Council's Register of Assets of Community Value	Resources Cllr D Coupar
Director of Communities, Housing & Environment 2. Equalities	Equality, Health and Wellbeing Cllr F Venner

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

Scrutiny Board: Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth	
Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme	Executive Board Portfolio
Director of City Development 1. Asset Management Director of Strategy and Resources 8. Community Infrastructure Levy	Resources Cllr D Coupar
Director of Children & Families 2e. 14 – 16 Skills Development	Children and Families Cllr H Hayden
Director of City Development 3. Inclusive Growth 4. Sustainable Development 6. Sustainable Economic Development 7. Employment and Skills 8. International and domestic inward economic investment 9. Highways and Transportation 10. Flood and water management 13 Active Travel 14. Planning Services Chief Planning Officer 1. Development Plan functions 2. Planning Policy and Guidance functions 3. Neighbourhood Planning functions 4a. Conservation Area functions	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development Cllr J Pryor
Director of City Development 5. Sustainable Housing Growth:- a) Private housing development b) Affordable housing c) Council Housing Growth	Housing Cllr J Lennox
Director of City Development 11. Culture	Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture Cllr S Arif

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

Scrutiny Board: Strategy and Resources	
Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme	Executive Board Portfolio
<p>Chief Executive 1. Functions in relation to elections</p> <p>Director of Strategy and Resources 1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the council’s policies and procedures for:- a) human resources (including health and safety and equalities); b) access to information c) procurement, purchasing, contract management and commercial activity d) projects and programmes f) performance, organisational planning and service improvement h) customer relations</p> <p>2. Digital and Information Services 3. Corporate communications and marketing services 5. The Council’s city-wide resilience and emergency planning functions 6. Shared Services 7. Civic Enterprise Leeds services</p> <p>Chief Officer Financial Services 2. Ensuring effective financial management and controls 3. Setting, supporting and monitoring the Council’s policies and procedures for budgets 4. Administering effective financial management and controls 5. Corporate Governance</p> <p>City Solicitor 1. Legal Services 2. Democratic Services including support to elected members in their responsibilities 3. Standards and Conduct</p>	<p>RESOURCES Cllr D Coupar</p>

Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<p>Director of Communities, Housing & Environment</p> <p>17. Registrars functions 18. Licensing functions 19. Land and property search functions</p>	<p>RESOURCES</p> <p>Cllr D Coupar</p>
<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>2. Civic and Ceremonial functions of the Council 3. Devolution and local freedoms 4. City Region Functions</p> <p>Director of Strategy and Resources</p> <p>1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the council’s strategy, policies and procedures for:- e) Joint Strategic Needs Analysis g) risk and business continuity</p> <p>4. The Council’s corporate planning and policy development services, including co-ordination of the Best City Ambition.</p> <p>Chief Officer Financial Services</p> <p>1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the Council’s financial strategy.</p>	<p>LEADER’S PORTFOLIO</p> <p>Cllr J Lewis</p>

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Sources of Work and Work Programme 2024/25

Date: 17 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report provides information and guidance about potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference.

In consultation with the relevant Directors and Executive Board Members, the Scrutiny Board is requested to consider and discuss potential areas of work for the Board for the forthcoming municipal year.

The Council's scrutiny function seeks to add value to the work of the authority by carrying out a range of different categories of work including policy and service review, performance monitoring and pre-decision scrutiny.

In addition, and to remain agile to decision making requirements, the Board could also seek to make recommendations through enhanced use of scrutiny statements that would deal with forthcoming issues quicker whilst also enabling scrutiny boards to exert further influence on policy development and decision making within the authority.

Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to reflect on the information and guidance provided within this report when considering potential areas for scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

What is this report about?

- 1 Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that their work programme prioritises issues where the Board can add strategic value, challenge service performance and/or respond to issues of significant public interest.
- 2 Scrutiny can also provide a valuable mechanism to consult members about new policy initiatives and as in previous years pre-decision scrutiny continues to be encouraged as an approach through which scrutiny can add insight and value to the achievement of the Council's ambitions.
- 3 To assist the Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload for the forthcoming municipal year, this report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

Key sources of information

Best City Ambition

- 4 The Best City Ambition was adopted in February 2022 and was last updated in 2023/2024. It sets out the long-term vision for the city with a strong emphasis on the importance of partnership working.
- 5 The Best City Ambition focuses on tackling poverty and inequality, through activity that prioritises the three 'pillars' of health and wellbeing, inclusive growth and zero carbon. It also identifies 'breakthrough priorities,' which will be the focus of cross-cutting, collaborative project teams.
- 6 The Council's approach to performance management is being reviewed following the adoption of the Best City Ambition and the implications of the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) which was established in 2023, revised performance monitoring will therefore be a matter for consideration by the five Scrutiny Boards over the course of 2024/25 and beyond.
- 7 The Best City Ambition, following the 2024 refresh, is attached as Appendix 1 for information.

Performance Data

- 8 Performance monitoring remains a key element of the Scrutiny Boards' work and is also a valuable source of information to help identify issues that may warrant further scrutiny. The most recent performance data is included as a separate agenda item at today's meeting. This provides the Board with a summary of performance against the strategic priorities that are relevant to the Board's remit – although as noted above this is subject to ongoing review.

Financial Information

- 9 All Scrutiny Boards are consulted annually on the Council's initial budget proposals in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. This is undertaken in conjunction with a review of the in-year financial health of the authority.
- 10 Maintaining an overview of the Council's financial health is also a key element of the Scrutiny Board's work and the Board may wish to receive further financial health updates during the municipal year.

Executive Board

- 11 Elements of the Executive Board's work programme which relate to policy development are often known in advance. As key issues and policies arise the Board could consider undertaking pre-decision scrutiny work to support and enhance policy development within its remit.
- 12 Additionally, as per the Constitution Scrutiny is also involved in pre-decision scrutiny work linked to the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. A good, recent example of this in relation to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board was consideration of the Best City Ambition Refresh in January 2024.

Draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year

- 13 The draft work programme set out at Appendix 2 incorporates these matters if any are known, along with other annual update items so that members can consider and determine whether to proceed with these areas of work within the timescales available and to provide an initial overview of some possible work items in the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 14 In addition, reflected in the work programme are other known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring and other identified areas of work recommended by the former Scrutiny Board to pursue in this new municipal year.

Working with External Partners

- 15 In recent months, the scrutiny function has sought to develop stronger links with the University of Leeds to explore potential collaboration on policy development and making use of the significant expertise the University has in that area. Whilst this is not fully developed there is potential for the Board to make use of this expertise when developing its work programme and more generally to hear evidence from academics in areas that fall under the Board's remit.

Other sources of Scrutiny work

- 16 Other common sources of work include referrals to scrutiny, Call In requests and other corporate requests. The Scrutiny Board is required to be formally consulted during the development of key policies which form part of the council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Methods of working

- 17 Each Scrutiny Board has planned to hold eight formal or 'consultative'¹ meetings throughout this municipal year.
- 18 Whilst the decision to hold any additional meetings is left to the discretion of each Board, historically Scrutiny Boards have also adopted other methods of evidence gathering outside of the public meeting setting, such as site visits and working group meetings.
- 19 Working groups comprise of Members of a particular Scrutiny Board who are appointed to carry out specific tasks on behalf of the Board. Suitable tasks for a working group may involve Members meeting on their own (for example for the purposes of developing reports and recommendations in connection with an ongoing inquiry or terms of reference for a future Inquiry). Alternatively, they may entail activities which cannot realistically be undertaken within the confines of a formally convened Scrutiny Board meeting.

¹ Consultative meetings are held remotely and webcasted live to enable public access. However, they are not a public meeting held in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

20 In all cases, the primary purpose of a working group is to obtain and/or develop information and to report back to a formally convened meeting of the Scrutiny Board. A working group cannot discharge the primary purpose of a Scrutiny Board i.e. it cannot undertake inquiries independently from its parent Scrutiny Board, issue reports/recommendations (other than to its parent Scrutiny Board) or in any way present itself to a third party as representing the views of the parent Scrutiny Board.

21 As set out within the Vision for Scrutiny, the Board must also remain mindful of the resource implications associated with the use of site visits and working group meetings when determining its work programme.

What impact will this proposal have?

22 The information and guidance presented within this report focuses on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference. This aims to assist Members when considering potential areas of scrutiny work for the forthcoming municipal year.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

23 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition. The Boards are asked to consider proposed items of business within this context.

24 National guidance from both the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and the Local Government Association (LGA) advocates pre-decision scrutiny as a means through which scrutiny can improve and influence decision making. In particular it can offer an impartial perspective, challenge assumptions and strengthen evidence to support decision making, provide enhanced engagement with the public and understanding of local views and widen ownership of decisions as more elected members are consulted on their expectations linked to decisions.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

25 To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic priorities, it is recognised that each Board needs to establish an early dialogue with those Directors and Executive Board Members whose remits are aligned to that of the Scrutiny Board. 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?

26 The Vision for Scrutiny², agreed by full Council, recognises that like all other Council services, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- a) Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;

² This forms part of Article 6 within the Council Constitution. Page 42

- b) Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- c) 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?

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

What are the legal implications?

28 This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Best City Ambition
- Appendix 2: Draft Work Programme 2024/25

Background papers

- None

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Leeds

Best City Ambition

Tackling Poverty and Inequality

Health and Wellbeing • Inclusive Growth • Zero Carbon

2024 UPDATE - FINAL VERSION
TEXT VERSION – DESIGN WORK TO FOLLOW

Foreword

Our ambition is for Leeds to be the Best City in the UK – where we work together in partnership to achieve our goals, proud of our strengths and track record of success, but focused fiercely on tackling poverty and reducing inequalities wherever we can.

Times are hard. Over a decade of austerity, paired with rampant inflation and a cost-of-living crisis have inevitably had an impact on the public services which people rely on, and created new challenges for businesses, organisations and families in every part of our great city. Leeds has proven itself time and again to be a resilient place and while the coming months and years will be challenging, I have no doubt we will remain an ambitious, vibrant and compassionate place to live, work, study or visit.

In spite of the challenges that we face across Leeds, we continue to deliver beyond expectations and contribute over and above to the wider UK economy, being one of only two cities outside of London that are net contributors to the Treasury. We continue to make our mark regionally, nationally, and globally, celebrating the broad range of talent and assets that we have across all areas of the city.

The Best City Ambition sets out a positive vision for the future of Leeds – one which recognises the amazing strengths and opportunities we still have. Our economy is growing and continues to attract investment making Leeds a better place to do business and a great place to live. The partnerships which drive our efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of our population are as good as you will find anywhere in the country. And Leeds is once again leading the way in demonstrating how we can meaningfully tackle climate change, recently being one of only 119 global cities to receive the highest 'A grade' by the Carbon Disclosure Project.

To be the best city Leeds must be a place where everyone can reach their potential, and I'm proud of our continued focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our society. As budgets get tighter – for the council and its partners – maximising the impact of investment into prevention and early intervention will take on even more importance.

We won't be able to do everything we would like to, that is clear, but by embracing the Team Leeds spirit that has been seen so often we have the best possible chance to continue to improve people's lives locally and promote everything Leeds has to offer nationally and internationally. When resources are stretched thin, it is more important than ever that we come together and support each other to pursue the shared goals we set out here.

We can all play a part in making Leeds the best city, one that is inclusive, compassionate, welcoming and ambitious in the face of challenge. To everyone who is part of Team Leeds and will be in the future – thank you.

Councillor James Lewis

Introduction

The Best City Ambition is our overall vision for the future of Leeds.

At its heart is **our mission to tackle poverty and inequality** and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.

Our 3 Pillars are at the centre of the Best City Ambition. They capture the things that will make the biggest difference to improving people's lives in Leeds up to 2030 and beyond – and many of the big challenges we face and the best opportunities we have relate to all three.

The Best City Ambition aims to help partner organisations and local communities in every part of Leeds to understand and support the valuable contribution everyone can offer – no matter how big or small – to making Leeds the Best City in the UK.

Since we set out our Ambition...

There has been lots of feedback about the priorities which it sets out and the contributions people and organisations across Leeds are making, but we also know making progress is challenging and the cost-of-living crisis has made life a lot tougher for more people. Our drive to tackle poverty and inequality has therefore never been more important.

Over the last two years partners across the city have continued to demonstrate an extraordinary level of commitment to supporting our communities as we emerged from the pandemic and into the cost of living crisis. Together and alongside all of this work, we have refreshed our strategies to improve people's health and wellbeing and promote inclusive growth, while continuing to demonstrate national and global leadership in tackling climate change. Alongside this we have shown our commitment to reducing health inequalities through becoming a Marmot City.

As a city we have developed new tools like the Social Progress Index which can help us make better use of data and research to know if we are making a difference, as well as continuing to invest time and resources in engaging with communities directly to learn from their lived experiences.

Most importantly we have continued to strengthen our partnerships to pursue opportunities and support each other in tougher times. This update of the Best City Ambition has been informed by conversations based on honesty and openness; and continues to set out a vision that we will work together towards in the years ahead.

“The evolution... to the Best City Ambition has been a powerful way of galvanizing partners across the city at a time of less resource.”

Leeds City Council LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, November 2022

Our Team Leeds Approach

Team Leeds is about supporting one another to **make Leeds the best it can be**.

It is about sharing ideas and learning, working in genuine partnership, being ambitious about our collective social, economic and environmental impact, and using our buildings, assets and other resources more collectively and creatively to deliver on shared goals.

We want to build **Team Leeds** – made up of the people who live or work here, and those who champion all of the distinct and diverse parts of the whole city nationally and internationally. Everyone in Leeds coming together to play their part is how we will achieve our ambitions, and be in a strong position to adapt to whatever the future may hold.

When coming together in this way we have proved it is possible to overcome some of the trickiest issues we face – and that **breakthrough spirit** is at the core of what makes Team Leeds so valuable. This is even more important when the economic environment is so challenging, with rising costs affecting us all and demand for many services increasing.

We will promote and adopt the following ways of working to drive a Team Leeds approach:

1. **GOOD NEIGHBOURS** Building mutual respect and understanding between one another by working together, leading with kindness, and valuing everyone's input and experiences.
2. **COMMUNITY POWER** Empowering people to generate the positive changes they want to see, enabling communities to thrive and tackle systemic inequalities.
3. **INNOVATION IMPACT** Being evidence-led, ambitious and optimistic for the future of Leeds, sparking innovation, creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit so we can succeed in a digital world.
4. **HEALTHY SOCIETY** Recognising the impact of society, environment and our economy on the health of people in Leeds, pursuing equity for people at every stage of their life.
5. **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** Promoting the opportunity and responsibility for every business and organisation to create social value and engage with their local community.
6. **STRENGTH BASED** Developing community capacity and strengthening prevention, focusing on what people can do not what they can't.

We are all Team Leeds

Leeds is made up of 812,000 people - from a diverse range of backgrounds, speaking over 175 different languages. Leeds has a unique geography with a vibrant urban centre surrounded by towns, villages and more rural areas, each with their own distinct history and character. We are proud to be a welcoming city, where our rich culture and diversity is celebrated and accessible for all. Every person in Leeds counts and should have the opportunity to contribute their strengths to Team Leeds.

Leeds doesn't have a 'top table' – we don't believe in that. The breadth and diversity of our city partnerships is a big strength – one that enables more people from a wider range of backgrounds to contribute. We are stronger and more successful as a city when we learn from the life experiences and voices of everyone.

Our Best City Ambition is by and for us all – and everyone will be involved to make it happen.

Leeds's networks of Anchors provide an important platform to come together as Team Leeds to agree and focus on collective goals, progressing our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and make Leeds the best it can be. The Anchors can provide a focal point for discussion and action while remaining more inclusive than traditional city partnership structures.

DIAGRAM explaining the anchors groups.

Leeds Inclusive Anchors

Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network is a group of 13 of the city's largest (mainly) public sector employers. They come together and focus on areas where they can make a difference for people as an employer, through procurement, through service delivery or as a civic partner.

Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network

Leeds Business Anchors

The Leeds Business Anchors Network encourages businesses to work together, alongside other partners in the city, to maximise their positive contribution to benefit the people of Leeds.

Leeds Business Anchors

In the Third Sector, Community Anchors form part of a much wider and hugely vibrant ecosystem of local organisations and groups working closely with communities. These organisations are making a huge contribution to the priorities in the Best City Ambition, but can also act as a critical friend of statutory organisations as we strive together to achieve the best for Leeds communities.

Third Sector Partnership

Cross-cutting city partnership group

Third Sector Leeds

Leeds's not-for-profit policy & advocacy body

Local community-based forums and city-wide thematic networks

Supporting over 3,200 local organisations and groups which make up the Leeds Third Sector

Leeds Community Anchor Network

Leeds Community Anchor Network is a movement of independent local organisations promoting citizen-led activity and partnerships. In addition to their own activities, Community Anchors show generous leadership to help and support other groups and communities, as well as acting as advocates at a city level.

Leeds Community Anchor Network

AMBITION ENABLER

Child Friendly Leeds – 12 Wishes

We want to be the best city in the UK for children and young people to grow up in. Over 750 businesses, organisations and individuals have joined our campaign to make Leeds a Child Friendly City and have signed up to be a Child Friendly Leeds ambassador.

The voices and views of children and young people are at the heart of making Leeds a Child Friendly city and are crucial to achieving our Best City Ambition. Child Friendly Leeds has captured the views of over 80,000 children and young people in the city to identify top issues and priorities. Through a Team Leeds approach, the Child Friendly 12 Wishes have been created in partnership with children and young people from Leeds, as well as key stakeholders. Each year the council will publish an update on their progress, which will also be overseen by the Children and Young People Partnership, alongside the Children and Young People's Plan.

The 12 Wishes are focussed on making Leeds a better city for children and young people to play, live and grow up in, where their voices are heard.

AMBITION ENABLER

Age Friendly Leeds

Leeds has a longstanding ambition to be the best city to grow old in and a place where people age well. The Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan sets out this vision, focussing on the key factors that support healthy ageing, aligned to the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly domains:

- Housing
- Public and Civic Spaces
- Travel and road safety
- Active, included and respected.
- Healthy and independent ageing
- Employment and learning

The strategy and plan represent the insights and experiences of older people in Leeds, forming a key driver of our Best City Ambition. This work is co-produced and co-delivered in a Team Leeds way by the Age Friendly Leeds Board in collaboration with statutory organisations, voluntary and community sector and private partners.

There are many other key partnerships across the city that contribute to delivering our ambitions. These are often rooted in places across Leeds or working with groups of people who share similar circumstances.

Whether it is Community Committees involving more people in local democracy, Local Care Partnerships supporting community health and wellbeing, schools and clusters ensuring every child has the best start in life, or partners like the Chamber of Commerce advocating for businesses and industry in the city – everyone is making a huge contribution which is recognised and appreciated.

Many of those working most closely with people affected by poverty and inequality are in our **vibrant Third Sector** – made up of over 3,200 organisations and groups which reach into every community across the city. Leeds needs a diverse and resilient Third Sector to be the Best City, and there are things we can all do to better understand, support and work in partnership with the sector so it can continue to make its vital contribution. The relationship between the sector and the Best City Ambition is highlighted in the [Leeds Third Sector Strategy](#).

Together, working towards the Best City Ambition, we will continue to act and speak up for Leeds and the people who live, work or study here.

AMBITION ENABLER

Locality Working and Community Investment

Working at a community and neighbourhood level is how partners across Leeds are able to listen to and work with local people to deliver the most meaningful change, especially in areas where people are facing the most disadvantage. Locality working in Leeds is organised through a range of governance arrangements – including community committees, local care partnerships, priority neighbourhoods and clusters. As part of our collective efforts to achieve the Best City Ambition these different forums will strive to work effectively together, multiplying the positive difference they can make alongside a wider group of partners, especially those in the Third Sector.

Through locality working and priority setting – including by using local area plans where they exist – we will pursue opportunities to achieve additional investment at a community level. Great progress is already being made with the £24m Morley Town Deal ongoing, £15.9m secured for community investments in Holbeck, and West Yorkshire being home to the country's third Investment Zone.

The 3 Pillars of our Best City Ambition

The 3 Pillars bring together the key priorities set out in the main strategies we are working together towards. They provide a clear and coherent vision for the future of Leeds – a city where we work collectively to tackle poverty and inequality in everything we do.

The pillars are not independent of each other – in fact many of the biggest opportunities and challenges we see in Leeds sit at the centre of the three. They include a range of cross-cutting priorities which recognise that everyone has something to offer.

We take a long-term view here, an ambitious vision for the future. More detailed projects, programmes and delivery plans are outlined in supporting strategies, which have been developed in partnership and aligned to the Ambition.

Health and Wellbeing

Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, with health and care inequalities reducing, and people being supported to thrive from early years to later life.

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Ensuring children have the best start in life and enjoy a healthy, happy childhood, where their right to play and have fun is protected and they are free to express their views and feel heard.
- Promoting a mentally healthy city for all, where people are treated with compassion and are well-supported by their families, workplaces and communities.
- Creating a well-connected and welcoming city where every community has access to local green spaces, and people of all ages can enjoy activity that supports their mental and physical health.
- Working with housing providers, landlords, tenants and communities to provide more affordable and better quality housing, so everyone can have a home which supports good health, wellbeing and educational outcomes.
- Providing high quality care as part of an integrated system, with equitable access to essential services which support people to age well and are focused on prevention and early intervention.

Inclusive Growth

Leeds will be a place where we create growth in our economy that works for everyone, where people and businesses can thrive, and we work together to tackle poverty and inequality.

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy access to education, skills development, and employment opportunities to meet their needs and the needs of a growing

economy, where businesses and educators are encouraged to invest in upskilling people and supporting them to reach their full potential.

- Supporting our businesses, organisations and social enterprises to be productive, innovative, creative, ambitious and connected to their local community, with access to the talent they need to boost productivity in a rapidly changing labour market.
- Maximising the potential of our city centre and local high streets to sustainably grow our economy, create jobs and deliver for people by investing in quality infrastructure, a transport system that will benefit our future and a vibrant public realm.
- Stimulating innovation which drives a healthier, greener and more inclusive future, growing cross-city research capacity and making Leeds a test bed for new ideas and technologies.
- Championing Leeds on the global stage by showcasing the talent and opportunity we have in the city, welcoming inward investors that want to create good jobs locally and attract top international talent.

Zero Carbon

Leeds aims to become the first net zero city in the UK, rapidly reducing carbon emissions and reversing the decline in biodiversity, while supporting people to make more sustainable choices which can improve their standard of living.

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Improving transport to give people in Leeds a good alternative to car use, creating a safer and more walkable city to reduce unnecessary travel and support people to be physically active, while enabling drivers to switch to zero emission vehicles.
- Promoting a vibrant and resilient food economy for Leeds so everyone can access and enjoy a healthy diet, where more produce is grown locally, and less food is wasted.
- Making the homes we live in and the buildings we use healthier, more environmentally friendly and cheaper to run, helping to tackle fuel poverty and supporting the switch to renewable sources of energy across Leeds.
- Working together with local communities, landowners and partners to protect nature and reverse the loss of biodiversity, adopting innovative and sustainable practices which enable everyone to enjoy the benefits of abundant and thriving wildlife.
- Investing in our public spaces and infrastructure to prepare Leeds for future climate impacts, helping us adapt to climate change in a way which also improves quality of life for everyone.

Achieving our Ambition

Tackling poverty and inequality is at the heart of our Best City Ambition. We know that across Leeds, many issues disproportionately impact some groups of people and communities, and this can make stubborn long-term challenges even more difficult to overcome.

Working with our partners we have developed a set of tools to help us regularly check in on the overall socio-economic health of our city. These overarching measures bring together longitudinal metrics which we can monitor on an ongoing basis to ensure we continue to make progress and adjust our strategies accordingly.

The data and learning from monitoring progress towards achieving the Best City Ambition will be made available publicly on the [Leeds Observatory](#) where everyone can use these tools for themselves. It will be reported annually as a point-in-time snapshot through a new Best City Ambition Scorecard and unpacked in more detail every three years through the Leeds Joint Strategic Assessment.

PROGRESS MONITORING FRAMEWORK:

Best City Ambition Scorecard

We will develop a balanced scorecard of specific indicators (maximum of 20) which will enable us to effectively report headline progress on the Best City Ambition in a clear and understandable way.

The scorecard will draw from the two component parts of the progress monitoring framework – the Leeds Social Progress Index and the range of community engagement activity undertaken in the city – such as the Big Leeds Chat, Leeds Citizens Panel and community conversations led by anchor organisations. It will be incorporated into the council's Annual Performance Report.

Indicators will be linked to the priorities set out under the 3 Pillars – including for example issues like healthy life expectancy, educational attainment and housing sustainability.

Social Progress Index

Leeds is pioneering the use of the Social Progress Index, a tool which can help us monitor our progress towards the Best City Ambition. The SPI looks at the quality of life in different communities, showing whether it is improving each year in allowing for people's basic human needs, supporting their wellbeing, and providing opportunity.

The SPI will help us to understand how well Leeds is doing and where our strengths and weaknesses lie. It enables policymakers, businesses, organisations and citizens to understand wellbeing at a local level, helping us to make better decisions and maximise the use of our resources towards the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition. The SPI will also contribute to the new cross-cutting Marmot City Indicators currently being developed.

Community Voice

Using the data and analysis available to us through the Social Progress Index will be invaluable in measuring our progress – but alone this is not enough. Being the 'Best City' means different things to all of us, so having the commitment and space to reflect on people's individual experiences is crucial in monitoring our progress in the future. We need to understand people's perspectives, to hear real voices and reflections which can illuminate what life in Leeds is like more powerfully than is possible through using only data.

Partners across Leeds are already connecting with communities to do this work, and it will be strengthened further by reforming community committees to make them easier for the public to engage with, and by investing in innovative approaches like the Leeds Community Anchors Network listening exercise model.

AMBITION ENABLER

Fairer, healthier – Leeds becoming a Marmot City

Being a Marmot City means Leeds has made a commitment to building a fairer city and reducing inequalities in health and wellbeing. It is about ensuring everyone has access to the right 'building blocks' to good health, including high-quality and secure housing, better education, reliable and well-paid jobs, and a clean environment. A fairer, healthier city is essential if we are to meet our ambition to be the best city and is connected to all 3 pillars of the Best City Ambition.

We will work in partnership with the Institute of Health Equity, which is led by the world-renowned expert in this field Professor Sir Michael Marmot. Together, we will develop approaches which focus on supporting people at every stage of life and help meet the needs of different communities.

Strategies and Plans

The Best City Ambition sets out our overall vision for the future of Leeds – it is something which people can come together and collaborate around, with a shared sense of direction.

The Ambition is not a delivery plan, but it is underpinned by a range of important strategies and plans for the city, and is increasingly embedded into the business plans of key organisations in Leeds too.

DIAGRAM *setting our key strategies and their associated governance/delivery partnership.*

Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Health and Wellbeing Board
Inclusive Growth Strategy	Inclusive Growth Delivery Partnership
Third Sector Strategy	Third Sector Partnership
Children and Young People's Plan	Leeds Children and Young People Partnership
Age Friendly Strategy	Age Friendly Leeds Board

Further key city strategies and plans can be found here: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies>

AMBITION ENABLER

City Research

Socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors drive the success of our city and the health and wellbeing of our people. Building on the Team Leeds approach taken to the Leeds JSA, we will develop a shared research strategy for the council and city, embedding this within the Best City Ambition and providing a platform for partnership-based conversations about research and evaluation which can improve the positive impact we make.

Leeds has the knowledge across our partnerships to help shape and inform realistic priorities which can be delivered, the expertise to attract significant additional funding into the city, and the relationships to develop a strong strategy rooted in engagement with communities. Embracing research and enabling more people to participate and contribute to it has huge potential to help us maximise resources and ultimately achieve more of the goals set out in the Best City Ambition.

Team Leeds in Action

In this section, we are keen to showcase unique spotlights that demonstrate Leeds leading by example, partnership working across sectors, and not all council-led initiatives.

These will be presented in a visually interesting way, with graphic design support required.

The section will include two parts:

1. An infographic sharing facts and figures about poverty and inequality in Leeds.
2. Examples of partnership working in response.

Being part of Team Leeds is something which can happen at all levels, whether it be local people checking in on their neighbours or key anchor institutions investing in the local economy so everyone can benefit.

The scale of inequality and poverty across the city is challenging, and we must work together to improve lives for people here. There are breakthrough examples of Team Leeds in action right across the city that are making a difference to communities, contributing to Leeds being the best city in the UK. These partnership approaches demonstrate Leeds leading by example, showcasing collaborative and unique initiatives. We can learn from these as we aim to tackle poverty and inequality and find solutions to the challenges that the city faces.

DESIGN WORK TO FOLLOW: Team Leeds Spotlights

- **Healthy Holidays:** Leading community activities, events and providing healthy meals for young people.
In 2023, 26% of Leeds children are eligible for free school meals compared to 22.3% nationally.
In 2021 27,000 children received provisions through the healthy holiday scheme.
- **Child Friendly Leeds:** Empowering young people in Leeds to shape their own future.
1 in 3 children in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived communities.
Over 80,000 children helped to develop the child friendly wishes.
- **Leeds Food Aid Network:** Connecting people and communities to food providers and resources to overcome food insecurity.
Reliance on food aid increased by 42% between 2021-23, to a total of 59,117 food bank accesses.
In 2021, over 64,000 food parcels were distributed via food aid provides (Source: [Food security and economy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/food-security-and-economy))
- **Synergi-Leeds:** Trailblazing creative approaches to tackling ethnic inequalities in mental health provision.
People from an ethnic minority background are up to 2.5 times more likely to be sectioned under the mental health act.
Over 800 people directly benefitted, with a further 5,000 being engaged with projects.
- Leeds emits 4m tonnes of carbon each year.
- 200,000 trees are planted annually contributing to the White Rose Forest.

- **Leeds Pipes:** Delivering a low-carbon approach to affordable heat and hot water to homes and businesses.
15.8% of Leeds households in fuel poverty in 2021.
3,975 tonnes of carbon saved in 2022.
- **Leeds Green Activity Provider Network (LGAP):** Empowering communities to address climate action and improve health and wellbeing through nature-based activities.
- 1 in 4 adults in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived areas.
- **Asset Based Community Development:** Shifting power to local communities and enabling people to make meaningful change.
Social value return on investment up to £14 for each £1 invested.
- **Walk Safe:** Driving a citywide and connected approach to community safety.
84% of women experienced harassment or assault in Leeds
There are over 600 'Ask for Angela' venues driving community safety.
- **Leeds Digital Festival:** Celebrating digital culture and collaboration underpinned by innovators in business, academia, and technology.
A growing festival with over 240 events in 2023.
- **Tackling Homelessness:** Minimising homelessness and rough sleeping through strategic partnerships and investment in prevention and support.
84% of people seeking support received a positive outcome compared to 56% nationally.
- Up to 12 year (men) and 14 year (women) life expectancy gap across the city.
- **Digital Inclusion Networks:** Joins people and services in Leeds to build digital inclusion.
44 organisations across the city are empowering older people to get online through the digital inclusion network.
- **Leeds Carers Partnership:** Building representation for carers in Leeds to strengthen support and promote health and wellbeing.
Of the 74,000 unpaid carers in Leeds, 73% experience negative mental health impacts.

Indicative design for “Team Leeds in Action” section – final design work to follow but included here for illustrative purposes.

#TEAMLEEDS

Being part of Team Leeds is about pulling together to address some of the biggest citywide challenges, whether it be local people checking in on their neighbours or key anchor institutions investing in the local economy. We are actively tackling poverty and inequality, creating a stronger, more resilient city through our Team Leeds approach.

This page showcases some of the best examples of Teams Leeds leading solutions to big city challenges.

Starting Well

Healthy Holidays Leeds

Leading community activities, events and providing healthy meals for young people.



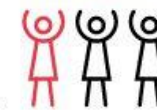
In 2021 **27,000** children received provisions through the healthy holiday scheme.

In 2023, **26%** of Leeds children are eligible for free school meals compared to **22.3%** nationally.



Empowering young people in Leeds to shape their own future.

1 in 3 children in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived communities.



Over **80,000** children helped to develop the child friendly wishes.



Living Well Health & Wellbeing



Leeds Food Aid Network
Connecting people and communities to food providers and resources to overcome food insecurity.

Reliance on food aid increased by **42%** between 2021-23, to a total of **59,117** food bank accesses.



Trailblazing creative approaches to tackling ethnic inequalities in mental health provision.



People from an ethnic minority background are up to **2.5 times** more likely to be sectioned under the mental health act.

Living Well: Climate Change

Leeds emits **4m** tonnes of carbon each year.



200,000 trees are planted annually contributing to the White Rose Forest.



Delivering a low-carbon approach to affordable heat and hot water to homes and businesses.

15.8% of Leeds households in fuel poverty in 2021.

3,975 tonnes of carbon saved in 2022.

LGAP



Empowering communities to address climate action and improve health and wellbeing through nature-based activities.



Living Well Thriving Communities



1 in 4 adults in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived areas.

Asset Based Community Development: Shifting power to local communities and enabling people to make meaningful change.



Social value return on investment up to **£14** for each **£1** invested.

WALKSAFE

Driving a citywide and connected approach to community safety.

84% of women experienced harassment or assault in Leeds. There are over **600** 'Ask for Angela' venues driving community safety.



Celebrating digital culture and collaboration underpinned by innovators in business, academia, and technology.

A growing festival with over **240** events in 2023.

Minimising homelessness and rough sleeping through strategic partnerships and investment in prevention and support.



84% of people seeking support received a positive outcome compared to **56%** nationally.

Ageing Well

Up to **12 year** (men) and **14 year** (women) life expectancy gap across the city.



100% Digital Leeds

Joins people and services in Leeds to build digital inclusion.

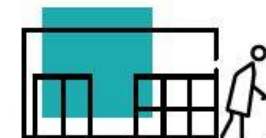


44 organisations across the city are empowering older people to get online through the digital inclusion network.



Building representation for carers in Leeds to strengthen support and promote health and wellbeing.

Of the **74,000** unpaid carers in Leeds, **73%** experience negative mental health impacts.



Provided over **13,000** contacts to support carers across group sessions, in-person appointments and telephone calls.





Appendix 2 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 17 June 2024 at 10.30AM	Meeting Agenda for 22 July 2024 at 10.30AM	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference / Sources of Work / Co-opted members reports (Development Briefings) Performance Report (Policy/Service Review / Performance Monitoring) Staff Mental Health and Well Being (Performance Monitoring)	Financial and Treasury Management Outturn (Performance Monitoring) Organisation Plan Refresh (Policy/Service Review) Digital Strategy Update (Performance Monitoring)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		



Appendix 2 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 16 September 2024 at 10.30AM	Meeting Agenda for 14 October 2024 at 10.30AM	No meeting
Electoral Services Update – 2024 Election Review/Postal Voter Validation (Performance Monitoring) Financial Reporting 2024/25 (Performance Monitoring)	Medium Term Financial Strategy (Performance Monitoring) Information Governance – Performance Update (Performance Monitoring) Procurement Strategy (Policy/Service Review)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		



Appendix 2 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

December	January	February
Meeting Agenda 9 December 2024 at 10.30AM	Meeting Agenda for 13 January 2025 at 10.30AM	Meeting Agenda for 17 February 2025 at 10.30AM
Financial Reporting 2024/25 (Performance Monitoring)	Performance Report (Policy/Service Review / Performance Monitoring) Financial Health Monitoring 2024/25 (Performance Monitoring) The Proposed Budget 2025/26 and Provisional Budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 (Pre-decision Scrutiny)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Update (Policy/Service Review) Procurement Update (Performance Monitoring)
Working Group Meetings		
Budget Working Group - TBC		
Site Visits		



Appendix 2 Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

March	April	Notes
Meeting Agenda for 17 March 2025 at 10.30AM	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.	Items to be scheduled
Financial Reporting 2024/25 (Performance Monitoring) IDS Helpdesk (Performance Monitoring) Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board End of Year Summary Statement		
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		



Performance Report

Date: 17th June 2024

Report of: Director of Strategy and Resources

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report provides a summary of performance against the Organisational Plan for the areas relevant to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board and in line with the [Best City Ambition](#). Appendix 1 includes the latest available performance information. Performance was previously reported to the Board in January 2024.

This report also includes a summary of the measures, contained in the council's report to the Office of Local Government (OFLOG), that relate to the remit of this Board. This initial group of eight indicators are all contained in the Financial Services section of this report and begin at point 10. Members are asked to note that this section remains unchanged since the previous report.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- a) note the performance information contained in Appendix 1, and the issues which have been highlighted, and consider whether they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides members with the opportunity to consider the performance information contained in Appendix 1, and the issues which have been highlighted, and consider whether they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 This is an information report, and does not require a decision, so it is not necessary to conduct an equality impact assessment. However, some of the data provided will link to wider issues of equality and diversity, and cohesion and integration, and there may be occasions when Scrutiny Board members will want to look more closely at these issues and may request further information to inform their work.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 3 This report supports the Council's three pillars by providing performance information for Strategy & Resources Directorate that relates to the economic growth of a healthy city with high quality services. It demonstrates what action is being taken to affect performance (where relevant) and to allow the board to challenge the same and consider whether any further focus should be given to any particular area in supporting these pillars. The council declared a climate emergency in March 2019 with the stated ambition of working to achieve net zero carbon emissions for the city by 2030. All services across the council will be involved with efforts to achieve this ambition, but none of the performance information contained in this report is directly linked to actions taking place to address the climate emergency and, therefore, will not feed into an assessment of how on track the council is in achieving the target.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 4 This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. However, performance information is published on the council's website and is available to the public.

What are the resource implications?

- 5 There are no specific resource implications from this report, although some performance indicators relate to financial and other value for money aspects.
- 6 However, the current financial challenge does carry with it resource implications and the potential for impact on performance is covered further in the key risks section below at point 10.

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

- 7 There is a comprehensive risk management process in the council to monitor and manage key risks that could impact on delivery of the aims set out in the Best City Ambition. The provision of accurate and timely performance information assists the risk management process in functioning effectively, with some of the KPIs acting as 'early warning indicators' that a risk may be increasing in significance or about to occur.
- 8 Without a comprehensive set of performance indicators, regularly reported to the right stakeholders within the council, there is a risk that poor performance may not be identified, and corrective action not taken to address them. This could result in problems with service delivery and an adverse impact against the Best City Ambition.
- 9 The council's Corporate Risk Register includes five risks directly linked to one or more of the KPIs summarised in this report:
- In-year budget
 - Medium-term financial strategy
 - Health & Safety failure
 - Information Management and Governance
 - Workforce planning

10 The current financial challenge does present resource implications and there is potential for impact on our KPIs both in terms of a negative impact on performance and in officer ability to respond to additional requests around the provision of performance information. We will continue to review our framework and processes to identify any efficiencies and ensure we are able to carry on providing a robust performance management framework, focussing on the provision of quality data and information.

What are the legal implications?

11 Performance information is publicly available and is published on the council website. This report is an information update providing Scrutiny Board with a summary of performance for the strategic priorities within its remit and as such is not subject to call in.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

12 N/A

How will success be measured?

13 N/A

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

14 N/A

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Performance Summary

Background papers

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Appendix 1 – Performance summary for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board (Latest available data)

Organisational Plan

The 18 Organisational Plan KPIs, which relate to the portfolio of the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board, are drawn from five service areas:

- Human Resources
- Financial Services
- Customer Relations
- Information Management & Governance
- Procurement & Commercial Services

A further eight indicators taken from the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) submission are included within the Financial Services section.

Human Resources:

There are eight KPIs within this portfolio area:

1 Representative workforce

Demographic comparison of the council workforce against the Leeds working age population from Census 2021	Census Data March 2021	LCC Workforce Data December 2023	LCC Workforce Data March 2024
Female	50.1%	60.3%	60.4%
Older workers (Aged 50-64)	26.3%	38.5% (estimated)	38.7% (estimated)
Ethnically diverse	26.6%	15.9%	16.1%
Disabled	16.7%	6.0%	6.0%
Carer	8.0%	8.8%	8.8%
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other sexuality	4.6%	3.9%	4.0%
Not living in the gender assigned at birth	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%

Council wide workforce representation levels are very static, and our degree of representation varies amongst the protected characteristics. In the case of female staff and older workers, our workforce contains considerably greater proportions than the population as a whole, whereas we have far smaller numbers of ethnically diverse or disabled staff, than are present in the general population. Finally, there are three characteristics – carers, LGB+, and people not living in the gender assigned at birth – where our workforce is reasonably representative.

There are outside factors which could lead to some of these differences. For example, the large number of full-time students in the city, who are of working age but not fully economically active, would lead to a younger demographic in the population compared to our workforce.

Key

	Target has been met
	Target has not been met
	No comparison to target

	Change in the right direction
	Change in the wrong direction
	No change or no material change

Appendix 1 – Performance summary for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board (Latest available data)

Although the demographics of our workforce change very slowly, we are actively working to promote a better understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace. This includes initiatives focusing on five EDI themes:

- Recruitment
- Progression
- Training
- Speaking up and zero tolerance
- Data monitoring

Within the last quarter we launched an Aspiring Leaders programme. This development scheme is a positive action to support staff from under-represented groups to gain leadership experience. We are also sharing a Managers EDI dashboard giving a better insight on workforce diversity profiles.

It is also noted that the council will be reducing its work-force head count to meet current financial challenges. Specifically, a flexible retirement scheme has been launched to allow experienced staff to transition to part-time work whilst retaining skills and experience within the organisation. In some services staff are also being asked to consider leaving under a voluntary leavers scheme. We are expecting an FTE reduction of up to 350 as per the council budget for 2024/25. Decisions on exiting staff will be monitored to see how this affects our profile.

2 Happy and Engaged Workforce

Indicator	Target	2019 staff survey	2023 staff survey	Change
Average score out of ten – “how likely would you be to recommend working for Leeds City Council?”	Increase	7.5 out of 10	7.4 out of 10	=

Members are advised that the results shown were included in the previous report submitted to the Board in January 2024, and no more recent update is available. It is noted however that over the last 12 months chief officers have been reviewing service-level results and sharing action plans to make further improvements with their staff.

3 Healthy Workforce

Average number of days sick per FTE	Target	12 months to end December 2023	12 months to end March 2024	Change
Leeds City Council staff	10 days	12.65 days	12.93 days	+0.28 days
Schools staff	10 days	9.11 days	9.12 days	+0.01 days
Combined	10 days	11.11 days	11.29 days	+0.18 days

Average levels of staff sickness increased considerably during the pandemic, peaking at 13.65 days per FTE in July 2022. This has now been reduced to an average of 10.97 days by the end

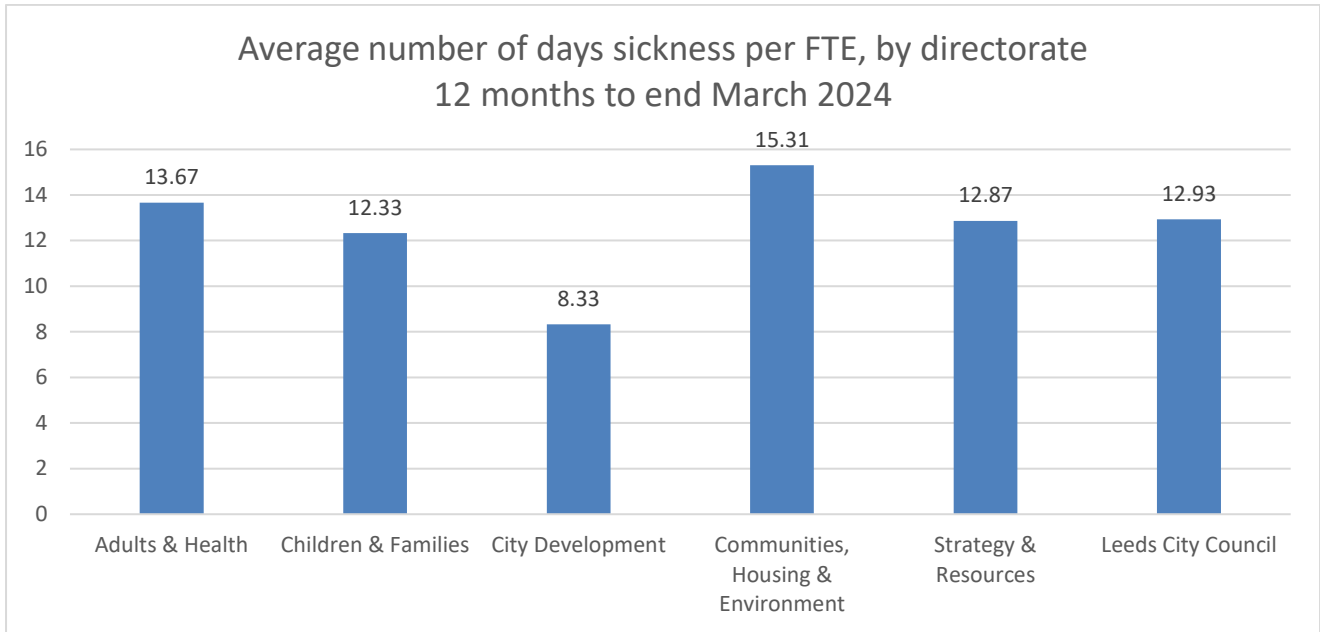
Key

	Target has been met
	Target has not been met
	No comparison to target

	Change in the right direction
	Change in the wrong direction
	No change or no material change

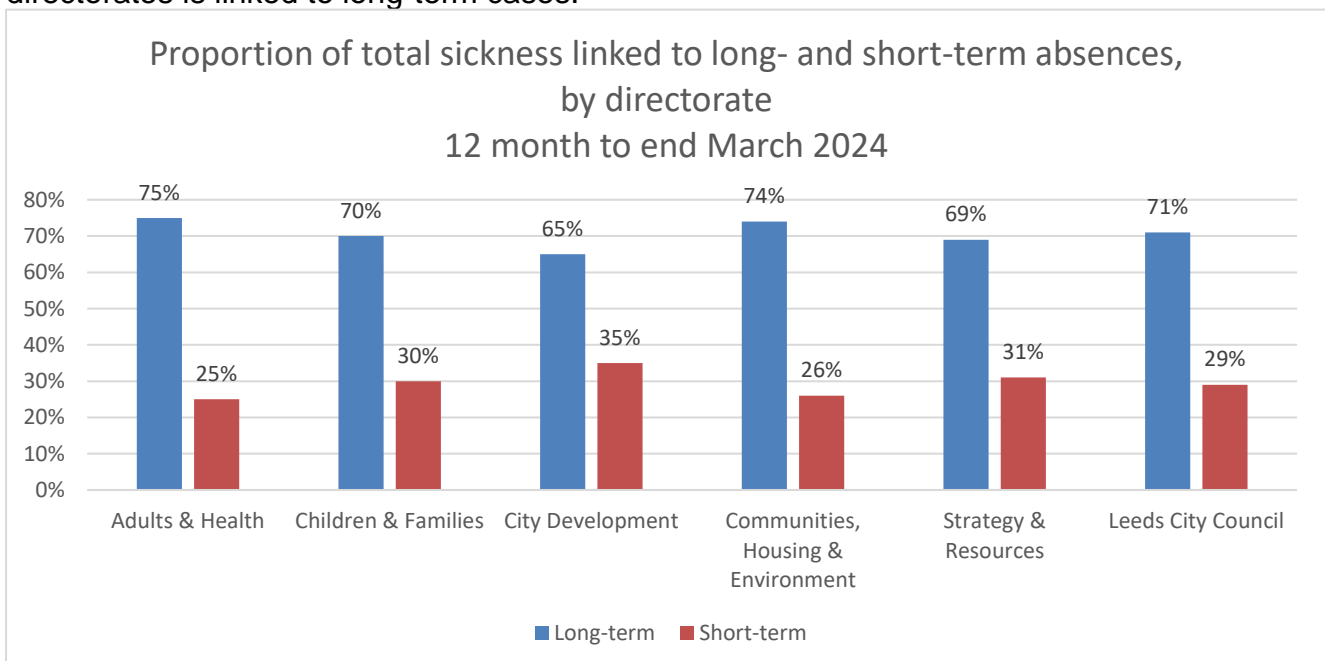
Appendix 1 – Performance summary for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board (Latest available data)

of September 2023. This is a major turnaround of over 2 days. Nevertheless, this improvement conceals variations across the organisation. First, whilst average sickness for staff working in schools is now well within the current target of 10 days per FTE, sickness for staff working within council directorates remains higher. Moreover, as can be seen in the table below, there is variance amongst council directorates:



The council’s Human Resources service provide enhanced levels of advice and support to those services with the highest levels of absence, which have also made some of the highest reductions in the last 12 months. Sickness rates are monitored closely and reported quarterly to Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The HR team also continue to implement various initiatives including reviewing long term absence casework and promoting wellbeing programmes. This is detailed in a separate report also on this agenda.

The table below illustrates that, across the council, between 65% and 75% of sickness in all directorates is linked to long-term cases:



Key
 Target has been met
 Target has not been met
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 Change in the wrong direction
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Appendix 1 – Performance summary for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board (Latest available data)

In the year to the end of March 2024, sickness attributed to key conditions is shown below:

Condition	Total days	Days per FTE	Proportion of total
Mental Health	57,858.62	4.67	36.14%
Musculo-Skeletal / Back & Neck	29,237.66	2.36	18.26%
Heart & Blood Pressure	6,554.79	0.53	4.09%
Coronavirus	6,009.20	0.49	3.75%

The total number of days lost due to each condition remains steady, except for coronavirus which has shown a noticeable decrease.

4 Good Management

Indicator	Target	2019 staff survey	2023 staff survey	Change
Percentage of council staff who feel their manager looks out for their general health and wellbeing	Increase	77%	76%	=

Members are advised that the results shown were included in the previous report submitted to the Board in January 2024, and no more recent update is available. This area is also subject to staff survey action plans as mentioned above.

5 Gender Pay Gap

Gender pay gap across council staff	Target	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	Change
Mean hourly rate *	TBC	3.8%	3.4%	-0.4%
Median hourly rate *	N/A	9.4%	8.5%	-0.9%

* Only the mean hourly rate is used for monitoring purposes and reported as the KPI result

Since 2017/18, all public and private sector employers with 250 or more employees have been required to annually publish data on the gender pay gap within their organisation. The gender pay gap (GPG) is the difference between the average hourly earnings of all male employees in the organisation and the average hourly earnings of all female employees, based on a standard “snapshot date” of 31st March for public sector employers. This information must be published by 30th March in the following year.

The latest published data relates to a snapshot taken on 31st March 2023 revealing a further reduction in the GPG amongst Leeds City Council employees.

The following table shows the percentages of women in each of the four quartiles of salary ranges within the organisation on 31st March 2023. Improvements have arisen through a mixture of improving pay rates for our lowest paid staff, the majority of whom are women and by increasing the proportions of women employed in higher paid quartiles:

Key

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Quartile	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	Change
Top Quartile	60.8%	61.8%	+1.0%
Upper Middle Quartile	52.3%	51.6%	-0.7%
Lower Middle Quartile	57.1%	57.9%	+0.8%
Lower Quartile	72.1%	72.1%	=

6 Opportunities to Develop

Indicator	Target	2022/23	2023/24	Change
Percentage of staff appraisals and mid-year reviews completed	100%	Mid-year: 92% Year-end: 94.4%	Mid-year: N/A Year-end: TBC	N/A
Percentage of staff who agree there are opportunities to progress their career	TBC	New indicator	54% 2023 staff survey	N/A

Mid-year appraisals were not carried out in 2023/24 and, at the time of writing, year-end appraisals are in progress.

Members are advised that the results shown relating to opportunities for staff to progress their career were included in the previous report submitted to the Board in January 2024. Linked to comments made regarding workforce diversity and engagement it is noted that chief officers have been developing action plans to consider and address areas where there is low satisfaction with progression. At a corporate level, we are developing and extending our management and leadership – Be Your Best programmes – to ensure a better and more rounded offer on skills and development. As part of the Age Friendly City employment workplan there is also a focus on career management for older workers who feel there is less opportunity.

7 Workplace Safety

Indicator	Target	Jan to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2024	Change
LCC: Specified (major) injuries	Decrease	12	4	-8
LCC: Over 7 days injuries	Decrease	12	12	=
LCC: Reportable diseases	Decrease	0	0	=
Schools: Specified (major) injuries	Decrease	13	8	-5
Schools: Over 7 days injuries	Decrease	17	31	+14
Schools: Reportable diseases	Decrease	0	0	=

This indicator records the number of both 'specified' injuries (major injuries) and other injuries that lead to absences of 7 days or more, as well as cases of reportable diseases, all of which must be reported to the Health & Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Key

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All RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences) incidents are thoroughly investigated, and any lessons learned are shared and remedial actions taken, such as a review of the risk assessment, further training where necessary, or a review and changes to safe working procedures.

A new incident reporting form and process is currently being trialled across several areas of the council. This new process will speed up the reporting and recording of incidents. New and improved toolkits are also being rolled out on risk management and dealing with violence and aggression. These will hopefully assist with reducing the numbers of reportable incidents.

Financial Services:

There are four KPIs within this portfolio area and a further eight measures that the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) requires all local authorities within England to report:

8 Budget Management

Indicator	Target	Month 9 2023/24	Month 11 2023/24	Change
Percentage of budget overspend	Balanced budget	6.8%	Balanced budget	Improving
Percentage of directorate budget action plans delivered	100% delivery of budget action plans*	78.3%	79.5%	Improving

*Or alternative mitigating savings

Full details are contained in “Financial Reporting 2023/24 Month 11, presented to Executive Board on 17th April 2024, which can be found [here](#). Members are asked to note that the year-end outturn will be formally reported on 19th June 2024 and was not available when this report was written.

9 Income Collection Rates

Indicator	Target	Quarter 4 2023	Quarter 4 2024	Change
Council tax collected	96.11% by year-end	94.98%	94.26%	-0.72% points
Business rates collected	98% by year-end	95.94%	96.37%	+0.43% points

Council Tax: Year-end result is below target and previous year’s outturn – due to increase in level of council tax coupled with the cost-of-living crisis and the backlog of recovery action following the suspension during the pandemic and the restrictions on court availability.

Business Rates: Below target but slight Improvement on previous year. No concerns as trend is still 99% collection within the fullness of time for all previous years with a lower collection rate as at 31st March.

Measures required by OFLOG:

The Office for Local Government (OFLOG) was launched during the LGA conference in Bournemouth in July 2023. Its aim is to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government, and support improvement.

Key

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Appendix 1 – Performance summary for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board (Latest available data)

OFLOG brings together a selection of existing metrics across an initial four service areas: Finance; Adults Social Care; Adult Skills; and Waste. Further service areas are being added, and existing areas expanded, as the metrics are developed.

Amongst the initial list of indicators were eight relating to Financial Services which, therefore, fall within the remit of this Board. Members should note that the OFLOG measures have not been updated since the last time performance was reported to this board and, therefore, the following is reproduced from the report considered in January 2024:

10 Non-ringfenced Reserves

The size of our non-ringfenced reserves, that is money that is not being saved for a specific purpose, compared to our annual net revenue expenditure and service spending, provides an indication of how resilient the council would be in the face of unexpected additional expenditure. The table below shows that our traditionally low levels of non-ringfenced reserves have been increased considerably in recent years.

Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of:	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Net revenue expenditure	12.2%	14.4%	14.0%	34.2%	27.8%
Service spending	10.5%	12.2%	11.7%	25.8%	21.1%

However, in 2021/22 our non-ringfenced reserves stood at a lower level than all comparable local authorities in England, in some cases at a considerably lower level. In terms of non-ringfenced reserves as a percentage of net revenue expenditure, Leeds has the twelfth lowest level of all local authorities in England, and as a percentage of service spend, this falls to the seventh lowest level.

It is important for councils to strike a balance between not locking away money that ought to be used for providing current services and ensuring that they are able to withstand a financial shock if necessary. Nevertheless, Grant Thornton’s (the council’s external auditors) annual audit report for the year ended 31st March 2021 recommended that “the Council should consider the adequacy of its current level of general fund reserves and balances to ensure these remain adequate for its needs and potential unforeseen events.”

Whilst the council maintains a robust approach towards its management of risk, and especially in the determination of the level of reserves that it maintains, it is recognised that our reserves are lower than those of other local authorities of a similar size. Consequently, since the start of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, our general reserves have been steadily increasing from £28m and from 2024/25 onwards we plan to improve this position further with a £3m annual contribution to the General Reserve. As a result, the balance on the General Reserve is projected to be £45.2m by 2026/27 and £48.2m by 31st March 2028.

11 Core Spending Power

The largest single element in CSP is the council tax requirement estimated by government at the time of the last Settlement Funding Assessment carried out in 2013/14. The referendum-based limitations on council tax increases introduced in 2012/13, mean that our council tax income is largely determined by the level of increase permitted by the government. As a

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consequence, those councils, such as Leeds, that historically had relatively low levels of council tax have been unable to increase council tax to correct the imbalance.

The second largest element of the CSP measure is Settlement Funding Assessment. This is fundamentally a measure of relative resources and needs and that exercise was last carried out in 2013/14. Leeds (and indeed the rest of West Yorkshire, excluding Bradford) has historically done very badly out of the formula used in that assessment but, because it has not been updated since, Leeds again find itself 'locked into' a very low starting point.

As percentage of core spending power:	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Social care spending	73.9%	71.1%	73.9%	75.1%	70.2%
Debt servicing costs	8.8%	9.6%	11.1%	15.1%	12.9%
Total debt	Not listed	528.9%	526.3%	516.6%	486.8%

The proportion of Core Spending Power allocated to social care spending is a measure of how much a council has allocated to these services and is also an indication of how much funding it has available for other services. In 2021/22, social care spending in Leeds was the 56th highest amongst councils in England, as a proportion of CSP, the 3rd highest amongst the Core Cities and 2nd highest in West Yorkshire.

Where the council has financed capital spending by borrowing or credit, this incurs debt servicing costs over the period of the loan or credit arrangement. In 2021/22, Leeds had the 34th highest debt servicing costs, amongst English councils, the 5th highest amongst the Core Cities and 2nd highest in West Yorkshire.

The third measure shows the relationship between the capital indebtedness that the council has built up over many years of capital financing decisions and our annual CSP. In 2021/22, Leeds had the 6th highest percentage of debt amongst English councils, and the highest amongst the Core Cities and in West Yorkshire.

12 Total Core Spending Power Per Dwelling

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
£1,554.55	£1,497.48	£1,517.57	£1,534.13	£1,555.43	£1,637.37	£1,667.58	£1,803.16	£1,971.82

In 2021/22 (the most recent year for which comparison is available), Leeds had the 121st highest core spending power amongst English councils. This meant Leeds had the lowest CSP amongst the Core Cities by some considerable distance. Our CSP was closer to other West Yorkshire councils, with the exception of Bradford which was in 38th place.

13 Level of Band D Council Tax Rates

This indicator demonstrates whether a council is able to generate resources through council tax, or whether it is reliant on short-term funding such as grants. Nationally, a reliance on annual grant funding, such as with social care, creates uncertainty for future years.

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2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
£1,169	£1,216	£1,276	£1,340	£1,393	£1,449	£1,521	£1,567	£1,645

Overall, in 2021/22, Band D council tax in Leeds was the 80th highest in England. It was the lowest of all the Core Cities (considerably lower than Bristol, Liverpool and Newcastle whose Band D council tax was ranked 4th, 7th and 8th respectively) and the lowest in West Yorkshire.

Ensuring the affordability of council tax is a policy that the council traditionally pursued, but the referendum limit which caps council tax increases has prevented this being changed to reflect current circumstances.

14 Council Tax Revenue Per Dwelling

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
£894.64	£941.13	£995.43	£1,056.27	£1,118.79	£1,174.03	£1,215.60	£1,278.40	£1,356.74

Nationally, in 2021/22, Leeds had the 81st highest council tax, but had the 2nd highest amongst the Core Cities. The city has a relatively high proportion of dwellings in lower bands for council tax when compared to the national profile which explains its relatively low position nationally. However, amongst the Core Cities, Leeds and Bristol have a relatively high tax base and consequently raise more council tax per dwelling.

This relatively strong tax base compared to the Core Cities has led to Leeds being assessed as having relatively high resources within the formula that has determined Settlement Funding Assessment since 2013/14. Therefore, Leeds City Council receives comparatively less Settlement Funding Assessment to support the Council Tax Revenue raised in the city.

Customer Relations:

There are two KPIs within this portfolio area:

15 Complaints

Indicator	Target	Jan to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2024	Change
Complaints responded to within target timescale	85%	71%	78%	+7% points
Number of complaints with the Ombudsman*	N/A	66	111	+45

* Includes all contacts with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service, although these do not all result in the Ombudsman opening a formal case.

Overall performance against timescale in Quarter 4 improved compared to the same period in 2022/23. However, the 78% of complaints meeting timescale was slightly lower than 79% in Quarter 3.

In the last report to this Board, reference was made to consultation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service on a new joint complaint handling code. However, that consultation has resulted in individual codes for each

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Ombudsman (the HOS code becoming statutory). Actions are being taken to comply with the code (compliance is already strong against most requirements), including requirements on governance and the ‘Member Responsible for Complaints’.

An increase in Ombudsman cases was seen in Quarter 4. This was not isolated to one service, Housing Leeds, Adults & Health, and Children & Families all saw increases in Ombudsman contact.

More detailed performance, covering both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, is given in the table below:

Complaints performance by directorate January to March 2024	Total complaints	Stage 1 received	Within target	Stage 2 received	Within target
Adults & Health	150	134	97%	16	100%
Children & Families	182	142	37%	40	45%
City Development	62	47	57%	15	64%
Communities, Housing & Environment	1,130	921	84%	209	85%
Strategy and Resources	79	75	72%	4	75%
LCC	1,603	1,319	82%	284	79%

Performance remains strong in Adults and Health with 97% of complaints meeting timescale in Quarter 4, and 98% in 2023/24 overall.

There continue to be challenges in meeting timescale in Children and Families. In the previous report to this board, members were advised that three agency resolution officers had been appointed and were having a positive effect on timescale performance for SENSAP complaints. However, these agency workers had to end their contracts at the end of Quarter 3 despite there still being gaps in the SENSAP workforce and, along with a rise in the volume of incoming complaints, this has had an adverse effect on responses within timescale. More recently, a manager from within the SENSAP quality and monitoring service has moved across to complaints work and this is starting to have a positive effect. Also, within Children and Families, a notable number of complaints arise from delays relating to assessments by an educational psychologist (EP). A limited resource from within the EP service is now addressing these complaints and is currently working to timescale.

Performance in Communities, Housing and Environment (CHE) has been maintained since the last report to this board in January 2024. Housing Leeds continued to receive the most complaints across both stages, with 88% of Stage 1 and 91% of Stage 2 complaints receiving responses in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code. 70% of Waste Management complaints received responses in timescale, an improvement from Quarter 2 but a reduction compared to Quarter 3. Volumes of complaints remains low compared to collections – around 57 complaints per month alongside 80,000 collections each day. Volumes in all other areas within CHE are low (the third most being 24 cases for Cleaner Neighbourhoods).

Although the numbers of complaints received are low, performance in Strategy and Resources and City Development is lower than hoped. The Customer Relations team will continue to offer

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support in these lower volume areas. Steps have already been taken to support managing cases where timescales will not be met.

Information Management & Governance:

There are two KPIs within this portfolio area:

16 Access to Information

Indicator	Target	Jan to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2024	Change
Percentage of subject access requests received responded to within statutory timescales	88%	73.33% of 259 requests	89.45% of 311 requests	+16.12% points
Percentage of FOI and EIR requests received responded to within statutory timescales	90%	88.04% of 579 requests	93.49% of 632 requests	+5.44% points

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR) stipulates that Subject Access Requests (SARs) must be responded to within one calendar month from receipt of the request (or two additional months if the request is complex or voluminous), and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) set the statutory timeframe for responding to requests at 20 working days from receipt of the request.

Performance in both areas continues to be strong and considerably improved from the same period last year, particularly in relation to Individual Rights Requests that has seen a 16% improvement in performance compared to the same period in 2022/23. Moreover, the council exceeded target across both request workstreams during every quarter of 2023/24 as well as at year end. This is the first time that the year-end figures have exceeded target across both request streams since 2018/19. This is a council wide achievement and the IM&G service want to recognise the work that services across the council undertake in this area of statutory work.

The FOI/EIR results for the year end are within the target of 90-95% which the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) considers to be “adequate”, however, they remain below the 95% threshold at which the ICO would classify performance as “good”. Development work continues with colleagues in IDS to create the council's new information request Power App and to separately procure new redaction software and it is anticipated that these will go live in Q2 2024/25. These will bring automation and efficiencies to the administration of requests within the IM&G service and the wider council and will contribute to offsetting the increasing number of requests being received (17% increase in the number of IRRs and a 10% increase in FOI/EIRs this year) which is expected to continue into next year.

Key

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Procurement & Commercial Services:

There are two KPIs within this portfolio area:

17 Supporting Local Businesses

Indicator	Target	Jan to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2024	Change
Percentage of orders placed with suppliers based in Leeds	>51.97%	47% of expenditure (£136.69m)	47.6% of expenditure (£124.2m)	=

This indicator measures expenditure with local suppliers as a percentage of the council's overall spending. The percentage of expenditure and the total value reflects the council's continued engagement with local suppliers.

Members were advised in the previous report on performance, presented to the board in January 24, that the top 25 contracts by spend were all awarded prior to 2023 so we are essentially using the same suppliers as last year for the highest value spend. Therefore, the results are virtually unchanged since the same period last year.

18 Doing Business Fairly

Indicator	Target	Jan to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2024	Change
Invoices paid within 30 days of receipt or according to supplier payment terms	92%	95.02%	98.39%	+3.37% points

There has been a marked improvement in the payment of invoices within the standard 30-day payment terms since the Invoice Automation Project went live across the council in April 2022. The project introduced new technology to automate much of the manual process and to centralise and improve the way in which most invoices are received by the council. In 2023/24 alone, the percentage of invoices paid within the 30-day payment terms increased to 98.39% from 95.02% in 2022/23.

Key

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Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing report

Date: 17th June 2024

Report of: Director of Strategy and Resources

Report to: Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Following attendance at Scrutiny Board in October 2023, this report provides a further update on ongoing work across the organisation and within the corporate health, safety and wellbeing team to promote positive workplace mental health and wellbeing.

The report covers:

- progress being made within directorates in respect of the integrated Health, Safety and Wellbeing approach and assurance framework
- valuable work taking place in frontline teams across the Council
- a progress update against key actions in both wellbeing and mental health, led by the corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing team

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- a) Note the content of the report and the ongoing work and progress to promote positive workplace mental health and wellbeing.
- b) Identify any further actions arising from consideration of this report.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides an update regarding the current position in relation to workplace mental health and wellbeing management. Included is an update on the 1) bringing to life of our governance framework and joined-up health, safety and wellbeing approach, 2) important work being undertaken within frontline teams and 3) an update on progress against our priority actions in wellbeing and mental health (each treated separately),

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 This item will allow further scrutiny of the Council's approach to managing workplace mental health and wellbeing, which remains a key priority for Leeds City Council and organisations across the country. It also contributes to LGA Peer Review recommendations in relation to supporting staff health and wellbeing.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 3 The interventions and support offer detailed in this report enable key elements of the People Strategy particularly, 'Being Our Best – you are supported to be well at work' but extends across manager expectations and strengthening our organisational culture and values by providing holistic health and wellbeing programmes. This will therefore support and enable the delivery of the Organisational Plan and Best City Ambitions.
- 4 Post-pandemic, UK workplaces continue to face a significant mental health challenge at work and Leeds City Council is no exception. Absence figures due to mental health mirror a nationwide upward trend. Whilst workforce survey results have generally been encouraging in terms of how members of the workforce are feeling, increased pressure and demanding workloads has consistently come out as one of the themes causing concern. This was highlighted in the five wellbeing pulse surveys conducted during the period May 2020 to March 2022 and more recently in the 2023 staff engagement survey where over a third (38%) of respondents did not agree that their workload was manageable. It was also referenced in the LGA Peer Review Report. Encouragingly, 76% of respondents did agree that their manager looks out for their health and wellbeing.
- 5 Leeds City Council's significant and ongoing workforce financial challenges set against a cost of living crisis backdrop, means that creating an environment and culture where people feel comfortable talking about their mental health and asking for support is key. The Being our best Organisation Plan sets out four key expectations of appraising managers, one of which highlights the importance of managing staff wellbeing. Working together to take action around workplace mental health means that problems can be addressed early or prevented before they even arise. It can also support colleagues that are experiencing difficulties to make a faster and smoother transition back to work after being absent, thereby reducing absence costs and increasing productivity. Working with leaders to champion mental health and wellbeing in their directorates and equipping managers with the resources they need to take action locally in their teams remains a key part of the corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing teams' approach.
- 6 Our governance framework and joined up approach to managing health, safety and wellbeing has been shared, embraced by the organisation and is being acted upon. Each of our five

directors has chosen mental health and wellbeing as one of their key Health Safety and Wellbeing priorities for 2024/25 and has made a personal pledge and commitment. To keep momentum around action being taken, Directors continue to have quarterly one to one meetings with the Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing, using council-wide and directorate-specific data. This enables a tailored, preventative, and evidence-led approach to be taken within directorates and across teams.

- 7 In addition to regular meetings at a director-level, HR Business Partners and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partners are working closely together to provide strong business partnering support at a service and team level in priority areas. This support will be further enhanced by an additional ten in-service Health, Safety and Wellbeing officers who will be mentored and supported by Business Partners in the corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing team and equipped with the tools they need to excel in their role.

Recognition of work being undertaken in services

8. The work of the corporate health, safety and wellbeing team in setting the direction is important but equally important is the focus and drive of local teams. Our wellbeing champions and mental health first aiders work tirelessly in their teams to improve mental health and wellbeing and there is a whole host of value-adding wellbeing-related activity now taking place. Championing wellbeing and self-care is particularly important in our frontline workforces and a few examples of the fantastic work happening in frontline teams are provided below.
9. Within Adults and Health, the Care Delivery Service has implemented support circles, one to one wellbeing conversations, a team walk for the “moving more” themed mental health awareness week, held staff workshops to work collaboratively on service design and set up a “men working in care” peer group.
10. Within Communities, Housing and Environment, the Waste Management Service has been particularly proactive in commissioning and signposting staff to a whole host of wellbeing and mental health activities and support for frontline operatives. This includes “extra-curricular” activities (paid for and organised by staff) such as football, clay pigeon shooting and Thai boxing, as well as a whole host of in work, drop-in opportunities at Newmarket House to speak to specialists in housing, debt management, physical health and mental health, gambling awareness and smoking cessation. To tackle the high rate of musculoskeletal issues experienced by these frontline, operational staff the service have also access to physiotherapy sessions at Newmarket House, through a managed referral process.
11. Within Strategy and Resources, the Leeds Building Service has created two support groups, a “Be kind to yourself” women’s mental health support group and a mental health support group called “Simon’s space” for male colleagues or anyone identifying as male. The service has also highlighted the role of Mental Health First Aiders, promoted lunchtime walking, encouraged use of a “wellbeing room” and regularly engages with the workforce to promote broader wellbeing initiatives and services such as our employee assistance provider and financial wellbeing.
12. Within Civic Enterprise Leeds, a monthly newsletter entitled “Healthtalk” has been developed and has received good feedback from staff, there have been men’s health sessions, a “riddle of the week” to solve, sessions on the difference between food and mood and staff completed a wellbeing circuit walk in Armley Park for Mental Health Awareness week. The service is also collecting and analysing data from risk assessments, reasonable adjustments made and Occupational Health referrals to identify any trends and make service improvements accordingly.

13. Within Children and Families children's nurseries, there has been the promotion of mental health through a newsletter, lots of signposting to support agencies and encouragement to use mental health first aiders within the directorate.
14. Within City Development, a programme of face-to-face training for frontline operatives in depots is underway. Topics being covered include a demo of our employee assistance provider to one hundred and twenty frontline staff, fourteen group listening sessions, sessions on dignity at work, values and behaviours, neurodiversity, equality diversity and inclusion, lots of signposting around mental health support, awareness-raising about stress and a session where staff could meet Vanessa Wenham, our Freedom To Speak Up Guardian.
15. From the selection of in-service wellbeing activity provided above, it is clear that we are starting to see positive outputs from our investment in getting the foundations right. A number of services and teams are engaging with the direction of travel and are keen to not only support staff when they are struggling but also to take preventative steps like health promotion and management upskilling, all of which serves to create a stronger wellbeing culture. Areas where we are not seeing as much activity will benefit from the ten additional in-service Health, Safety and Wellbeing officers, good practice sharing and peer support, and the roll-out of an organisation-wide management standard which will be made available shortly, following a short period of taking feedback. The standard will provide a useful benchmark for services to use and that, along with the positive measures outlined above, will help to make a difference that is seen and felt at all levels of our workforce.

Progress against key actions, led by the corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing team

16. The corporate wellbeing team continues to play a steering role on the journey to excellence through direction-setting toolkits, awareness-raising activity and through developing and supporting key stakeholders based in local teams, like our mental health first aider and wellbeing champion community. The most fundamental role of the team remains to equip managers to make confident and competent decisions, which we know will make the single biggest difference out in teams. Our workplace wellbeing priorities of "Promote", "Prevent" and "Support" continue to underpin our wider wellbeing work programme and work with individual managers and serve as an important reminder of the need for balance in our approach, focussing on preventative action as well as strong support whenever someone is struggling.
17. Since attending Scrutiny Board in October 2023, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team has taken time to reflect on where best to focus its energy and resources. Team members have continued to listen to, and engage with, services and teams, and work closely with Mental Health First Aiders, Wellbeing champions and trade unions to fully understand feelings of staff, particularly those in frontline roles. The team has developed a mission statement with key deliverables and has taken time to share this with the groups mentioned above at collaboration events like the Mental Health First Aider connect events which were attended by over ninety Mental Health First Aiders. A key deliverable within that mission statement is to deliver a clear programme to promote, prevent and support mental health beyond crisis.
18. A "You said, we're doing" document was requested and produced following attendance at Scrutiny Board in October 2023 and the suggested areas of focus by the Board continue to influence the corporate wellbeing teams' work programme. The document has been updated six months on and is provided for reference in appendix one. In addition to this, progress against key actions in both workplace wellbeing and mental health is provided below:

Wellbeing		
Area of focus	Current position	What good will look like
Leadership accountability	Leaders are engaging well with the monthly one to ones and have made personal pledges and commitments.	Leaders leading workplace wellbeing in their areas and taking action in line with their pledges. Wellbeing conversations will happen regularly and naturally alongside regular performance management including appraisal
Introduction of a wellbeing toolkit and in-service wellbeing standard	An in-service wellbeing standard has been developed and is being shared with trade unions before wider release. The standard forms part of a refreshed wellbeing toolkit for all services to use.	The toolkit will be followed by all managers in the management of team wellbeing.
Awareness-raising campaign days and weeks	These are supported to varying degrees presently. We are seeing more joined-up work (joined up financial wellbeing work with anchor organisations, promotion of the Rob Burrow marathon and “Moving more” themed mental health awareness week activity being recent examples)	A clear calendar of events with joined-up activity taking place across the council and beyond, using opportunities presented for working with anchor organisations and other partners
Developing our workplace wellbeing community with a focus on wellbeing champions	Wellbeing champions currently benefit from quarterly connect events. A #BeWell connect event in November 2024 has been planned to bring together all wellbeing champions and mental health first aiders with input from our Occupational Health service and the Healthy Minds Network.	The community will connect regularly, share good practice and have regular opportunities to “decompress”.
Enhancing the management training offer	The training offer for managers has been refreshed and is now available in a clear document. Later this year will see the launch of a core modules “Be Your Best on Health, Safety and Wellbeing” which will cover all essential areas including mental health and wellbeing. Services are being encouraged to focus on management development and utilise the offer available.	Managers will feel confident and competent to manage mental health and wellbeing in their teams and will know where to go to for tools and support.

19. Several of the above focus areas apply equally when looking at mental health. These are therefore not repeated below but instead, specific action taking place around mental health is provided.

Mental Health		
Area of focus	Current position	What good will look like
Joining up internal experts on workplace mental health	<p>A workplace mental health action group, comprised of cross-council representatives and with a clear terms of reference document, is now meeting regularly to connect, collaborate and sense-check our direction of travel.</p> <p>We continue to work collaboratively across organisational boundaries, a recent example being our involvement in the Mindful Employer all day conference event at Leeds Beckett campus.</p>	There is a clear joining up of our internal experts on workplace mental health and this improved joining up drives local work in a helpful and purposeful way.

Introduction of a mental health toolkit	A mental health toolkit has been developed to provide clear guidance and support in managing mental health. The toolkit will be shared with trade unions before wider release.	The toolkit will be followed by all managers in the management of team mental health.
Growing and developing our community of Mental Health First Aiders	The whole Mental Health First Aider community has had an opportunity to learn together at two Connect events in December 2023 and April 2024. Monthly share and learn meetings are now in place and a planned #BeWell event in November will see them come together with wellbeing champions.	There will be a thriving, purposeful community of Mental Health First Aiders making a real difference out in teams.
Prevent and supporting mental health-related sickness absence	Work is underway within services where there are high instances of mental health-related absence including stress risk assessment (individual and team) to unpick causation factors, implement solutions and provide better mental health support whilst colleagues are away from the workplace.	We see less Mental health-related absence but where it does occur, it is well managed.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

20. Consultation and engagement are ongoing with the Chief Executive, CLT, BCLT, Extended BCLT, Cabinet and Lead Member for Resources regarding the actions and initiatives taking place.

Wards affected:
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

What are the resource implications?

21. There are no specific resource implications contained in this report. However, implementation of the framework and approach outlined above requires ongoing input from across the HR service to promote, develop and support Health and Wellbeing initiatives from existing resources. It also relies on service areas recognising the value of investing their own resources.

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

22. A key risk to the organisation is that of increased mental health-related sickness absence and poor culture. This potentially leads to lost productivity and increased costs where services need to secure additional cover to maintain service delivery. There is also a potential risk that staff in work then experience additional pressure if capacity in the team is reduced.

What are the legal implications?

23. This report has no specific legal implications.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

24. The reasons for absence are multifaceted and therefore require a range of interventions which we will continue to develop to respond to matters that are impacting on attendance. Throughout 2024/25 we will focus on the following core interventions with a strong sense of collaboration and ownership throughout all layers of the authority:

- preventing and supporting mental health-related sickness absence is a combined focus for HR teams throughout 2024/25. Leading a targeted business partnering and manager approach to supporting services with high instances of mental health-related absence with manager and colleague support including the stress risk assessment (individual and team) to unpick causation factors, implement solutions and provide better mental health support whilst colleagues are away from the workplace.
- the combined efforts of the corporate and local teams to establish good in-service wellbeing and mental health foundations at service level with key conversations/toolkits covering managing workload and pressures.
- helping managers to Be their Best and have safe and trusted relationships with team members creates a positive culture and minimises the risk of work-related stress, conflict and reduces the risk of stress related absence. The development of managers will raise awareness, increase knowledge, improve team culture and encourage healthier conversations resulting in faster support via simple pathways.

How will success be measured?

25. Success will be measured through:

- quantitative monitoring of managing attendance data, including the analysis of any trends and patterns.
- qualitative monitoring of staff survey results and business partnering case load analysis.
- A programme of frontline staff health, safety and wellbeing audits and conversations.

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

26. Managing attendance is an ongoing process that will always be in place. The intensive support that is currently in place will be maintained to support local managers to build the capacity and capability for the ongoing management of attendance locally. Whilst HR will continue to support services, the accountability of team and service performance remains the responsibility of local management teams. Regular management information will continue to be provided as part of the governance framework mentioned above.

27. Corporate HSW will take a front stage lead on wellbeing policy, steer and engagement with leaders and services to establish good practices and together with HR colleagues analyse data in order to implement further adjustments.

Appendices

- Updated “You said, we’re doing” document.

Background papers

- Not applicable.

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Appendix 1

An update to the document requested at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board 16/10/23



You said, we're doing – workplace mental health

DO NOT

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Area of focus	Position in October 2023	Position in June 2024
<p>How are we making the most of our Mindful Employer status?</p>	<p>We have a really good relationship with Mindful Employer and there are a number of organisational benefits to being a member. <u>Examples:</u> we speak in the promotional video showing our support and speaking of our membership benefits which helps to raise our profile as a good employer. There are great networking and good practice-sharing opportunities, for example, we contributed to the Mindful Employer conference by being on an organisational panel and sharing experiences. We are currently working with a number of Mindful Employer accredited organisations on the upcoming Mindful Employer conference. We have forged good relationships through our membership with other partners across the city which aids collaboration.</p>	<p>We continue to take our Mindful Employer status seriously by being an active member of the recently refreshed Mindful Employer Steering Group and of the Mindful Employer Conference 2024 task and finish group. The latter group worked across organisational boundaries to organise a city-wide conference on 21st May which brought together key employers across the city to connect, collaborate and learn.</p>
<p>We think there are opportunities to improve our menopause offer. Can we make sure the potential impact on Trans staff (who can experience menopause early is acted upon)</p>	<p>We run regular menopause cafes which are really well-attended and we have held bespoke sessions within services with clinical input. We welcome the opportunity via Scrutiny Board members to link in and benefit from broader expertise and contacts. We will make sure that our offer fully takes into account the potential impact on Trans staff. Please note our original guidance has been developed in collaboration with Councillor Jools Heselwood, trade union colleagues and our staff networks. Menopause Awareness Training we deliver to Managers states <i>“Although the majority of people who experience menopause will identify as women, other people – for example trans, non-binary- and intersex people may also experience the menopause. We have used the terms 'women' and 'people who experience the menopause' in this training but, the</i></p>	<p>We continue to build our support package around menopause and it includes Let’s talk menopause – targeted at managers, Menopause cafes (for anyone but often attended by those experiencing menopause) both on MS Teams and in person and there are a whole host of tools and resources available.</p>

<p>What about a menopause network?</p>	<p><i>guidance and the training are inclusive of all people who experience the menopause and applies to everyone.</i></p> <p>The menopause cafes provide a good opportunity for peer support (and have included a clinical element provided by our qualified Occupational Health advisors) There is always more we can do to promote the cafes and increase participation in them, sessions are delivered on teams and face to face. Our women's voice network also discusses a range of menopause related issues.</p>	<p>We are not pursuing a network at this time due to networking opportunities already in place informally through our menopause cafes and training sessions.</p>
<p>What does our training programme for managers look like?</p>	<p>We have a good training offer available to managers which includes let's talk sessions, occupational health-led sessions, sessions led by our Mental Health First Aiders and Healthy Minds network, short online learning modules, and training opportunities for Health and Social Care managers through our partnership arrangements.</p> <p>Wellbeing is a core theme running throughout our Be Your Best offer and it is a theme regularly discussed in our Be Your Best Manager Community.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of updating our Mental Health toolkit on Insite and part of this will involve clearer signposting to the wealth of training available and packaging up of training topics to make our offer easier to navigate for managers. We will bring further detail about our training offer and toolkits at our next Scrutiny Board update.</p>	<p>Our training offer has been reviewed and improved, with a particular focus on improving learning opportunities for managers.</p> <p>Later this year a core module for managers "Be Your Best on Health, Safety and Wellbeing" will be launched which will give all managers a strong foundation in the core areas they need knowledge of.</p>
<p>Do we train on trauma-informed leadership techniques and ACES in our management training programme?</p>	<p>We link up closely with Adults & Health and Childrens' & Families and are in the process of setting up an internal Workplace Mental Health Group to share approaches and benefit more widely from the expertise in Adults & Health and Childrens' & Families directorates and through Public Health partnerships.</p>	<p>Through the establishment of the workplace Mental Health Action Group, we are joining up conversations and working together to make improvements to workplace mental health.</p>
<p>Could we explore offering works' time for short meditations eg. 3 minutes</p>	<p>Some colleagues already benefit from meditation and mindfulness. For example, there is a mindfulness session delivered by a Unionlearn colleague, there have been sessions for Merrion House colleagues and there are also opportunities to access wellbeing-related prompts/videos/apps using Viva insights on MS Teams. We will explore this proposal further with our mental health first aiders and wellbeing champions to understand service/team appetite for this.</p>	<p>We are working closely with services to look at what works for them, paying particular attention to working patterns so as not to create unintended pressure. There are some excellent examples of tailored wellbeing activity for frontline workforces that is making a real difference (examples included in the full Scrutiny Board report)</p>

<p>How will you tackle stigma?</p>	<p>We will update further on this when we return to Scrutiny Board in March 2024 but through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -reinforcement of our values and behaviours -through opening up conversations about mental health at all levels of the organisation -through education and training -through being conscious of the language that we use 	<p>Since the last update, we have held two Mental Health First Aider Connect events which have brought Mental Health First Aiders together to understand our Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing priorities, our shared work programme and provided an opportunity to connect and share. At this event, our Chief Executive talked openly about his personal experiences and reiterated his support for removing stigma wherever possible. A further session is planned with extended BCLT to open up conversations across the wider senior leadership community and examine practice.</p>
<p>Can you tell us more about the counselling/supervision support available for our Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAS)...</p>	<p>We have a mental health first aid steering group which we are growing. We regularly bring together our mental health first aiders to join up, share good practice and benefit from peer support. We are in discussions with our employee assistance programme (VIVUP) to offer individual and group clinical supervision to our Mental Health First Aiders. We are also exploring with partners in Public Health (Caron Walker) the opportunity to enhance our supervision offer by tapping into the support that is offered to our city-wide mental health first aiders.</p> <p>We are working with our Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) to secure a more connected community feeling and explore ways to proactively support colleagues before crisis and ensure our MHFAs receive the support they need too. We also gather data around the interactions they have and the types of issues being raised. Knowing the themes that regularly come up will enable us to better support and/or upskill them.</p>	<p>We are still exploring whether or not our partners in Public Health can offer clinical supervision opportunities for our internal Mental Health First Aider community or if they can tap into something that is provided across the city.</p> <p>For our part, we have set up regular coffee and decompression opportunities at our Belle Isle Hub. We have also held two Mental Health First Aider Connect events where we emphasised the importance of outlets with a dedicated session on Mental Health First Aider self-care. Quality resources like the "self-care wheel" were also shared with the group and the session received good feedback.</p>
<p>Can we make sure we include addiction awareness in our training programme</p>	<p>We provide quality signposting to good resources around addiction. Addiction awareness is part of our Healthy lifestyles programme (a session with various speakers covering food and nutrition, physical and mental health and financial wellbeing) but there is more we can do in this important space and we will review our wellbeing/mental health-related training offers.</p> <p>We work closely with colleagues in Public Health who implement actions as part of the Council's sign up to the Health Weight</p>	<p>The Healthy Minds Network has chosen "Addiction" as its' priority area to work on in 2024 and we are working closely with the network to align our work programmes and do all we can to raise awareness around this important topic.</p> <p>There are opportunities in our planned 2024 #BeWell conference (20th November) to cover this topic and also in our next financial wellbeing week.</p>

	Declaration and will also explore potential action we can take with that group.	
Can we avoid sending out letters to those already absent due to stress	We are looking at this as part of our ongoing work around absence management and will update more fully when we return to Scrutiny Board. We are keen to involve our MHFAs within this process to ensure colleagues receive independent support whilst sick.	This remains under review. Since the last update, work has been undertaken to improve the level of signposting to wellbeing support provided within absence management letters.
How will we reduce stress in the current challenging financial climate	<p>In a number of ways and by using the right approach at the right time. A few examples below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through leading by example • Through clear, open and honest communications • Through employee voice and involvement • Through quality training opportunities like our “Let’s talk stress” (employees and managers) and “Let’s talk supporting staff at work (for managers) • By increasing manager confidence to have regular wellbeing conversations, to carry out robust stress risk assessments (individual and team), to open up conversations about mental health, to be proactive through use of the Supporting Staff at work package • Through supporting individuals to manage their own symptoms (by raising their awareness, Occupational Health-led sessions, local sessions by Mental Health First Aiders and Wellbeing champions) • Through close partnership working (HR/Trade Unions/Health, Safety and Wellbeing team) to better understand the reasons behind stress/anxiety/depression-related absence 	Please refer to the full scrutiny board report which includes further detail about valuable work being undertaken in frontline teams most affected.
Are we aware of those under real stress?	Yes – we are aware of the priority services/teams that need our support and taking action. We are aware of these through some of our workforce survey data but other mechanisms too including, but not limited to: our occupational health referrals, employee assistance data (at a directorate level), absence management information, five wellbeing pulse surveys, our recent staff engagement survey, feedback through our business partnering network, feedback to our Freedom to	

	<p>Speak Up guardian, engagement statistics from VIVUP, mental health first aider and wellbeing champion feedback.</p> <p>Our joint HR/Trade Union wellbeing group meets regularly to discuss mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. A standing feature of that meeting is to discuss the teams most affected.</p>	
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