



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2022 – 2023



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Section 1: Introduction and context of Leeds

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 Three 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 – 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.

The Equality Improvement Priorities 2021 - 2025 have been produced to ensure that the council meets its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to compliment the Best City Ambition. The council's equality improvement priorities have considered the protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010. We continue to recognise poverty as a barrier that limits what people can do and can be. We have, therefore, included priorities that address poverty as we recognise that several protected characteristics are disproportionately represented in those living in poverty.

We are conscious that there is not an equality priority for every protected characteristic, but all characteristics are considered. We are committed to equality for all our citizens and believe that improving a service for one community will have a positive impact for all communities. We will continue our work across all the protected characteristics, whether there are specific equality improvement priorities which are explicitly focussing on them. We will consider all communities when we give due regard to equality at both strategic level and operational activities.

Demographics: A Changing Population

The population of Leeds as of the most recent release of data from the 2021 census is 812,000, an increase of 8.1% from 2011 when the population was 751,000. This is the third largest rise in Yorkshire and the Humber behind Selby (10.2%) and Wakefield (8.4%). The Y&H average is 3.7%. The increase in population of England and Wales overall is 6.3%. Leeds remains the second largest local authority area by population after Birmingham. In Leeds there has been an increase in the population aged 65 and over of 15.7% (compared to England and Wales at 20.1%) and of children aged under 15 years of 12.4% (compared to England and Wales at 5%).

Looking at the projected population 2018 to 2028:¹

- Over the 10 years 2018 to 2028, the peak of those primary age increases will start feeding into secondary school, with a large increase in the number of teenagers in Leeds. There are projected to be 12,500 more young people aged between 11 and 17 by 2028 (21.5%).
- In the next 10 years, the increase in the older population is projected to be even bigger with 20,000 more people aged 65 and over resident in Leeds in 2028 than in 2018.

¹ ONS 2016-based projections

- The Leeds population overall is predicted to continue to grow, reaching 830,500 by 2028; a 41,300 (5.2%) increase from 2018. The working age population will have a smaller percentage increase (2.6%) than both the population of 0 to 15-year-olds (6%) and those aged 65 and over (15.3%).

The makeup of the city is outlined below (please see appendix 2 for further detail):

- Leeds continues to become more ethnically diverse. The national 2021 Census showed that the proportion of the population from non-white British backgrounds has risen from 18.9% of Leeds population to 26.6%.
- According to the 2020 School Census the proportion of the school population from ethnically diverse backgrounds has nearly doubled since 2005, increasing from 17.9% in 2005 to 35.5% in 2020.
- The greatest ethnic diversity is in younger age groups, with 36.6% in primary schools and 33.6% in secondary and post-16 settings.
- In 2020, 20.5% of Leeds school pupils spoke English as an additional language, with the top five main languages being Urdu, Polish, Romanian, Arabic and Panjabi.
- According to the national 2021 Census, the population aged 65 and older is less ethnically diverse than younger age groups, but the proportion from ethnically diverse backgrounds will increase as people who settled in Leeds, as young adults grow older.
- The religious profile of the city is changing. The proportion of the population who say they have a religion fell from 65% to 54%. The numbers of people identifying as Christian fell by 76,479 but at 419,790 still make up the largest identifying group. The numbers of people identifying as Muslim rose by 22,282 to 63,054 and Muslims remain the second largest self-identifying religious group in the city. All other religions measured in the census increased in number except for the Jewish community where a small decrease of 580 was recorded.
- For disability 6.9% of the population said their day-to-day activities are limited a lot (down from 7.9%) while 9.8% said their day-to-day activities were limited a little (up from 8.9%).
- The 2021 Census collected information on sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time. 4,754 people answered no to the question is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth. 4.3% of the population identified as non-heterosexual.

Socio-economic analysis (notably the analysis based on the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation and the 2019 update of the council's Poverty Fact Book) show that a range of inequalities persist across the city and linked with deprivation levels, are particularly concentrated in specific localities with long-term related challenges such as access to employment, housing, language and literacy, skills, health, and care responsibilities.

A significant number of people in Leeds were already being impacted by low income and poverty before COVID-19 took effect in March 2020. The slow economic recovery alongside reductions in public spending has significantly impacted the poorest members of society. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 show the geographic concentration of deprivation in the communities of Inner East and Inner South Leeds, confirming the wider analysis of poverty and deprivation undertaken in the Joint Strategic Assessment of 2018.

Based on the IMD 2019:

- Leeds has 114 neighbourhoods (24% of its 482) in the most deprived 10% nationally. Although the IMD is based on neighbourhoods and is designed to identify pockets of deprivation, the government also publish summary measures for larger areas like local authorities. There is no single 'best' local authority measure, and the ranking of Leeds varies depending on the measure used.
- Local authorities are often ranked on the proportion of neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% nationally. Leeds is ranked at 33 out of 317 local authority districts (1 is most deprived) on this measure. However, there are two measures which identify local authority districts with large numbers of people experiencing deprivation. These are the income scale and the employment scale. The income scale ranks local authorities on the number of people experiencing income deprivation. Leeds had the 4th highest number (with Birmingham ranked 1, Manchester ranked 2 and Liverpool ranked 3). The employment scale ranks local authorities on the number of people experiencing employment deprivation. Leeds had the 3rd highest number (with Birmingham ranked 1 and Liverpool ranked 2.)

Section 2: The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Action Plan

A refreshed approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, including a Vision Statement and Action Plan, have been developed to move us 'up a gear' on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda and were agreed by Executive Board in February 2023. It supports the strategic policy and governance already in place around this agenda including our Equality and Diversity Policy, Due Regard (Equality Impact Assessment process), Equality Improvement Priorities and Equality Annual Report, the Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board and policies around employment, procurement and partnership working.

Our ambition is for Leeds to be a city that is fair and just, that recognises and embraces people's different needs, situations, and ambitions. A city where the barriers that limit what people can do will be removed, and everyone will be enabled to be their best. For this to happen, we all need to take responsibility for our actions and behaviours and contribute positively to change. Although the council has legal responsibilities concerned with Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, we want to do more on this agenda because it is the right thing to do and there is a need to do more over and beyond statutory requirements. Delivery of a successful programme around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is essential to support our Best City Ambition. The Best City Ambition is our vision for the future of Leeds. At its heart is our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds their home.

There has been a notable societal shift with significant events over the past two years, not least the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement, the increasing awareness of violence against women and girls, the inequalities exacerbated and exposed by the Coronavirus pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, the ongoing impact of Brexit, and a significant rise in the reporting of hate crimes against protected characteristic groups. This has raised expectations, with strong calls for greater and faster change. We see this shift as a positive opportunity, and we are keen to **move up a gear**.

As an important next step, the Vision Statement and accompanying action plan sets out **three areas for action** covering the council's role as:

- **An employer** driving the workforce agenda based on the council's values.
- **A service deliverer/provider**, including commissioning and contracting, based on the council's values.
- **A partner in supporting communities to thrive**, based on the Best City Team Leeds approach.

By building on the good work, we already do and using the insight from a broad range of stakeholders, we aim to target our actions and resources in the right areas. The views of Leeds communities, local people, our partners, council teams and employees are crucially important to success. These views have shaped the action plan and will continue to do so moving forward, with our Equality Assembly, Equality Hubs and Staff Networks playing a key role alongside the many valuable and varied engagement channels that we have in Leeds.

The action plan will be kept under regular review to ensure it stays relevant to the changing times we live in. **We will report progress against the action plan every year via this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Annual Report and the first part year (February to June 2023) updates can be found below.** Updates on our progress against the Equality

Improvement Priorities have been incorporated within the section on service delivery through the council. It will remain **a fluid document** to account for any significant events that require a more tailored and specialist intervention.

Results from the 2021 census show that the city is **becoming increasingly diverse** with more people from ethnically diverse communities, larger numbers observing diverse faiths or identifying with no faith, more people who were born overseas, significant numbers of disabled people and, for the first time, data on sexual orientation and gender identity showing an above national average number of people as identifying as LGBT+.

The last decade has seen the city and nation face **multiple significant challenges** which have often **impacted disproportionately** on people from protected groups including economic challenges resulting in austerity, Brexit and community tensions, a rise in hate crime, the pandemic, and the current cost of living crisis.

The Equality Act has been in place since 2010 and **communities expect a faster and more clearly outcome-based focus** moving forward. Disabled people still struggle to access buildings and services because barriers remain in place. Discrimination against people based on race and sexual orientation continues to take place in society. Women and girls face increasing discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. People from across the protected characteristics are still under-represented in positions of authority and in multiple sectors of the economy and society.

Section 3: Update on progress against the People and Communities pillar of the Action Plan

The Action Plan identifies 5 high level priorities against the People and Communities strand and an update against each of these is provided below:

1. **Strengthen and develop our community engagement approach** including the review and development of the Equality Assembly and Equality Hubs.

The council has equality consultation and engagement forums for the main protected characteristics (the Equality Hubs) for LGBT+, Religion or Belief, and Disability which are facilitated directly by the Safer and Stronger Communities Team and for Race (the Culturally Diverse Hub), Women and Girls, and Older People which are facilitated on the council's behalf by Voluntary Action Leeds, Women's Lives Leeds and Leeds Older Peoples Forum respectively. Collectively, these Hubs are known as the Equality Assembly and have been in place since 2009/10.

The Hubs are led by 'Hub Representatives' who are members of communities with support from the council and our partner organisations. They meet throughout the year and are a platform for council services and other organisations to get advice, guidance, support, and constructive challenge around the development of service delivery. As well as the meetings, the Equality Assembly and Hubs have an extensive mailing list and social media to communicate with members.

During 2023, a review of the Assembly and Hubs is planned to ensure that governance arrangements and support remain fit for purpose, especially considering the different way that communities are engaging post pandemic.

2. **Celebrate the diversity of our city** and its people and communities through supporting a programme of activity for International Months, Weeks, and Days.

For several years, the council has been lighting the civic buildings and encouraging other building owners and managers in the city with the capacity to light their facilities as well to celebrate a wide variety of international days (alongside national civic and local charity events). In addition, flags are raised for a variety of days from the Civic Hall or Town Hall including for LGBT+ events, International Day of Older People, Interfaith Week and Windrush amongst others. A process for assessing these requests is in place through the council's governance team supported by Safer and Stronger Communities colleagues.

Starting in 2022 a new programme of lighting civic buildings was agreed in conjunction with Leeds Faith Forum and Concord Interfaith to celebrate important faith days which has been very well received by faith communities.

The Equality Team also hold a budget for supporting activity throughout the year delivered either directly by Safer and Stronger Communities Team, third sector partners or frequently a collaboration between both. Some examples of this include:

- Leeds Pride, LGBT+ History Month, Bi Visibility and Trans Days of Visibility
- International Day of Disabled People
- Interfaith week
- Refugee Week
- World Aids Day
- International Day of Older People
- Black History Month
- International Women's Day
- Hate Crime Awareness Week and Islamophobia Awareness Month
- Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembering Srebrenica

3. **Develop our third sector infrastructure** which focuses on equality, diversity, inclusion, and migration and hate crime.

In addition to the work on EDI, progress is also taking place against the Hate Crime agenda. The Hate Crime Strategic Board and the Operational Group provide strategic leadership and operational capacity to deliver the city's Hate Crime Strategy. Key outputs in the last 12 months have included:

- Review of the hate crime reporting platform for schools which is now delivered by our commissioned partners Stop Hate UK
- The adoption of the Coventry University report recommendations based on the findings of our survey on Islamophobia
- The successful adoption of a definition of Anti-Muslim Prejudice to build on our previous work adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition on anti-Semitism
- The establishment of an Anti-Muslim Prejudice Working Group and Community Reference Group
- The development of an action plan for the review and expansion of the city's third party hate incident reporting centres and signposting centres

The Equality Team work closely in partnership with colleagues who support the third sector and share resources and capacity between both functions which assists with the important collaboration on building third sector EDI capacity.

Current examples of development work in this area include work to support the city's ambition to have an LGBT+ Resource Centre through Pride of Place and working closely with Women's Lives Leeds in collaboration with colleagues in Safer Stronger Communities around the consultation and engagement platform that is the Women and Girls Hub. In addition, the Equality Team have worked closely with Leeds Faith Forum to refresh and relaunch the Faith Covenant between the council and faith sector and to support the development of Leeds Faith Forums organisational forward plan to strengthen their capacity.

4. **Widen our partnerships** at city, West Yorkshire, regional, national, and international level to ensure we can continue to be a leader in EDI and associated work and incorporate best practice wherever possible.

We have significantly strengthened our partnerships during the last 12 months around the EDI and associated agendas and examples of this include:

- Hosting a visit from the Director of the Auschwitz – Birkenau Memorial Museum in January 2023 which included community visits and his attendance and speaking at the city’s annual Holocaust Memorial Day event. The council has also launched a new partnership with the Museum to develop and promote their new online tours of the museum complex. The Director also visited the Holocaust Centre North in Huddersfield which was founded by the Leeds based Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association and with whom the council continues to have a close working relationship.
 - Joining the new ‘Working Together for an Inclusive West Yorkshire Forum’ with the other West Yorkshire councils, Mayors Office and West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
 - Planning to restart with partners the Leeds Equality Network and re-establish meetings of the Core City Equality Group.
5. **Deliver a cohesion strategy** for the city that brings together key stakeholders and agendas and builds on our work around the Intercultural Cities Programme.

2022 saw a delegation from the Council of Europe visit Leeds to assess our previously submitted application to become an Intercultural City. Despite this being significantly delayed due to the pandemic, the visit was a significant success with delegates giving very positive feedback via their final report on our overall approach as well as some useful feedback for areas of improvement.

A public survey went live during the first quarter of 2023/24 which has been extensively promoted asking for citizens input to the proposed new Cohesion strategy which will be developed using the results later in the year before submission separately to Executive Board.

Section 4: Update on progress against the Service Delivery pillar of the Action Plan

The Action Plan identifies 5 high level priorities against the Service Delivery strand and an update against each of these is provided as follows:

- 1. Review and strengthen our approach to ‘giving due regard’** to equality, diversity, and inclusion with an improved focus on monitoring outcomes and reporting these.

The council’s approach to giving due regard is delivered via our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Impact Assessment (EIA) process which is required under both law and council policy for all decision making. It is well developed and well used. However, training for officers has not taken place since before the pandemic and we need to revisit this in the context of the wider EDI training programme for staff as we seek to maintain and strengthen the quality as well of the quantity of due regard being given.

It is proposed later in 2023 to establish a light touch audit process of the quality of EIAs at all levels of decision making as well as bring together key council stakeholders involved in the governance process from services through to the corporate centre to ensure that we reinvigorate the check and challenge element of the process and staff have the necessary knowledge to undertake due regard in an effective way.

- 2. Deliver the councils Equality Improvement Priorities**

Colleagues across the council have detailed their progress against the equality improvement priorities to assist with the development of this annual report and these can be found further below in this service delivery section.

- 3. Strengthen our governance arrangements** at all levels of the council and improve transparent and accessible reporting so we can clearly show progress against our priorities.

The council has established a range of governance arrangements across all levels of the organisation for both officers and Elected Members and these include:

- Corporate Equality Board - the Board is chaired by the councils Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion manager from Safer and Stronger Communities Team and is made up of officers from Safer and Stronger Communities, Human Resources, and the chairs of the Directorate Equality Boards. The Board has reviewed and strengthened its terms of reference in the last year and has a direct link into CLT via the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the City Solicitor who chair the Adult Social Care and Public Health and Strategy and Resources Equality Diversity and Inclusion Boards respectively. Key messages from the boards work are passed to Corporate Leadership Team bi-monthly.

- Directorate Equality Boards - these are chaired by directors, deputy directors or chief officers and include representatives from every council service area. A role description for members of these boards is being developed currently.
 - Equality Lead Members meetings - Equality Lead Members from the Labour Group are in place for the protected characteristics, and they meet quarterly with the Executive Board Member for Communities who leads on Equality. A role profile for the Lead Members has been developed and was agreed early in 2023.
 - Member (Equality) Champions meetings - the cross-party Member Champions Working Group includes representatives from different parties in the council chamber and meets bi-monthly to provide check and challenge around progress against the councils Equality Improvement Priorities.
- 4. Improve how we communicate key messages, priorities, and programmes** to all council staff to ensure everyone can contribute to the equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda.

Work is currently taking place to review and strengthen all the content on the Equality Toolkit on Insite which provides information to staff on the EDI agenda as well as the content on leeds.gov which provides information to citizens.

Work is also taking place to review the social media accounts used to promote the work of the Equality Assembly and Equality Hubs across various platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

A communications plan for Equality Diversity and Inclusion including the outward promotion of all International Days, weeks and months is being developed between Safer and Stronger Communities Team and Corporate Communications Team.

The first edition of a quarterly newsletter on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been produced by the Safer and Stronger Communities for staff during quarter one of the 2023/24 municipal year.

- 5. Focus on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis** and the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on people and communities through all our service delivery.

Elected Members took part in the state of the city event where the focus was on the work being undertaken to provide support to citizens through the cost-of-living crisis.

The Equality Assembly Conference which took place in March 2023 also had a focus on getting the views of diverse citizens on the support available and what more can be done to help people during the current crisis.

Health and Wellbeing

Equality Improvement Priority: Support the protected characteristics and demographics most affected by COVID-19 to become or remain physically active to decrease health inequalities.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Free parks tennis bookings system and coaching was implemented at Armley Park with 56.85% of bookings from people within Index of Multiple Deprivation 1-3.

A subsidised tennis coaching programme was delivered at Woodhouse Moor Park.

Food Bank Fun Runs were delivered over Christmas and Valentine's Day; supporting an asylum seeker run group in South Leeds; supporting Recovery Runners (mental health/addiction); organising a Disability/Guide runner course with England Athletics and supporting the Leeds network group of guides and VI runners.

Three rounds of Leeds Sports Equipment funding grants were allocated to 55 clubs and individuals, with a particular focus on priority groups and localities.

Non-turf cricket pitches were installed at two locations supporting local South Asian cricket groups.

Falls Prevention Programme for Older Adults with Frailty was delivered across Leeds in priority areas of deprivation including Armley, Burmantofts, Middleton, Beeston, Harehills, Tinshill and Holbeck.

Working with Neighbourhood Networks & partners, Leeds Girls Can - developed "Limitless", co-designing a physical activity intervention involving and aimed specifically at South Asian girls (13yr-18yrs) based and delivered in the Chapeltown & Harehills areas.

For International Women's Day, Leeds Girls Can delivered a mindfulness event with women across the city with funding from Safer and Stronger Communities Team.

Active Leeds Children and Young People/Positive Futures team supported with the physical activity element on the healthy holidays programmes throughout the year alongside working with Children Looked After at 10 residential homes across the city. This included mentoring and support with activities, support with kit, conversations around physical activity opportunities with both young people and staff and upskilling Active Leeds Staff around Trauma informed practice.

The Get Set Leeds Local project was used to research, evaluate, and present, children's opportunities for play in Leeds, with over 50 hours listening to children's experiences, along with parents and practitioners. Findings were presented at a strategic level to begin to influence how people see play within their services and the importance everyone plays in this.

Pudsey Leisure Centre initiated reduced rate holiday physical activity programmes for children and young people. Additionally following a request from users, the centre trialed low sensory sessions in the gym with reduced noise and lighting, and John Charles Centre for Sport re-introduced female only swimming lessons. The centre was also one of the host venues for the British Transplant Games.

Active Life Classes across leisure centres were co-produced with older people (from under-represented groups) for example Holt Park Active increased the number of group classes specifically aimed at older people, such as aqua aerobics and gentle aerobics.

John Charles Tennis centre hosted ten special educational needs tennis events; weekly wheelchair and learning disability coaching sessions; two national disability tennis tournaments; two Learning Disability Great Britain selection camps and had 40+ weekly social tennis players attending sessions aged 60+.

LGBT+ badminton sessions delivered by Bad Mittens were hosted at Armley, John Smeaton, Morley, and Kirkstall leisure centres.

Work took place with the traveller community to offer free swimming lessons at leisure centres.

3000 children received free swimming lessons via the healthy holidays programme.

2,635 of the 6,289 coats, hoodies and fleeces given out during the Zero Waste Leeds Winter Coat appeal were donated via four participating leisure centres - Wetherby, Garforth, Morley and Holt Park.

Active Leeds membership levels grew to over 25,811, which is more than pre covid-19 levels. NPS Survey results saw a 47.1% response rate from ages 55+ and 64% responses from women.

New Active Leeds campaigns launched aimed to be as diverse as possible in terms of age, race, size, and sex, using people that were 'real' and relatable.

Membership passes were offered to LGBT+ refugees.

Children's swimming lesson numbers increased to over 12,000, which is higher than pre covid-19 numbers.

Nine leisure centres ran disability swimming hubs with an average of 95 weekly attendees.

The Active Leeds EDCI Working Group met monthly to champion equality issues and work areas across the service, including a critical assessment of internal training courses and workshops; revision of policies such as guidance on transgender and non-binary people accessing sports facilities and supporting the Leeds Intercultural cities network and visit.

The Leeds Everyone Moving More Leadership Group was established in August 2022 with the purpose to champion and influence change in line with the physical activity newly proposed vision: "Leeds is a place where everyone moves more every day".

Active Environments and Active People were selected as initial priorities within the Physical Activity Ambition.

Sport England Active Lives adult data showed a reduction in the percentage of adult population in Leeds doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week, at 23.3% in 2020-21 compared with 25.6% in 2019-20.

The service worked in partnership with a range of internal and external partners to provide Ukrainian refugees the opportunity to access Active Leeds services at no cost.

The difference we have made

A free tennis coaching programme and equipment at Armley Park targeting local residents.

Four times as many under 18's engaged at Woodhouse Park compared to the previous year. Refugee group "Running Free" were supported and nominated for Leeds Sports Award – which they won. They will go on to be part of a national refugee run club network.

Articles were written on Run Leeds website devoted to highlighting and supporting under-represented groups such as South Asian women.

Leeds Sports Equipment grants supported a higher number of applications from inner city wards and specific groups (particularly women and girls clubs and individuals) than in previous years.

Falls prevention programme provided inclusive opportunities for 241 older people into health-benefitting physical activity (from 583 referrals), with Specialist Exercise Instructors providing free evidenced based Falls Prevention programmes for older people with frailty.

Leeds Girls Can "Limitless" project gave over 40 teenage South Asian girls a voice over 30 sessions, empowering them to make the change they wanted to see.

Healthy holidays programmes supported families living in the 1% most deprived areas of the city to have a nutritional meal throughout school holidays and take part in physical and cultural activities. There were 3,083 attendances during Summer and Christmas, with 100% of children and parents agreeing this had a positive impact on their summer, and 10 out of 11 children stating they would attend again.

Our work with children looked after has provided a positive experience of physical activity to young people involved and allowed our staff to gain a deeper understanding of barriers faced. Get Set Leeds Local work on play sufficiency has enabled us to shine a light on ways our city can support children's play opportunities, to improve holistic development and positively impact on both mental and physical health.

Children's holiday programmes at Pudsey Leisure Centre returned to pre-covid levels because of implementing discounted rates. The low sensory gym session trial was a success with these now part of the regular timetable. As a result, these low sensory sessions were then also rolled out at the John Charles Centre, Middleton, and John Smeaton leisure centres, and have been used in the UK Active disability activity report as a best practice example.

John Charles Centre for Sport female only swimming sessions have improved participation rates amongst women, providing a private space for approx. 130 women.

Holt Park Active additional classes specifically supporting older people have proven incredibly popular amongst local participants.

Active Life Classes have enabled reduced cost sessions and social support for those 60+.

At the John Charles Tennis centre, a player who previously attended the mainstream classes several years ago had an accident resulting in her now becoming a wheelchair user but has returned to tennis and has re-found her love for the sport again through the wheelchair tennis programme delivered weekly.

Active Leeds membership levels showed 20% of members being children and young people. Sport England Active Lives adult data showed a clear improvement in Leeds (2.2% decrease) and particularly in comparison to the Yorkshire and England averages (23.3% adults doing less than 30 mins physical activity per week versus 28.4% Yorkshire and 27.2% nationally). Ukrainian refugees have been supported to become active and engage in a range of physical activity opportunities such as access to a free of charge leisure pass for Active Leeds facilities, and local community opportunities enabling them to stay active, improve physical health and support positive mental health outcomes.

What we still need to do

Run Leeds and Leeds Girls Can aim to increase the number of Couch 2 5K programmes aimed at women; continued support for targeted vulnerable groups e.g. Refugees and Progress to Change; and continued use of showcasing inclusivity in articles on Run Leeds website and socials. To showcase and influence different strands across the city, to think of play within their strategies, along with supporting schools and communities to create a variety of opportunities for play for children. We plan to work closely with the DFT funded project to design and create a play trail in Lincoln Green.

To explore further links with schools in the city who have children looked after students, providing support directly through the school setting, to also include children in residential homes and foster care.

Falls prevention demand modelling demonstrated that the 583 new referrals between April 2022 to March 2023 exceeded our expectation and capacity. The programme was set up to expect 300 referrals annually, which demonstrates the need for this programme to be expanded across the city, particularly with the impact of deconditioning from covid-19.

Pudsey Leisure Centre will continue to look at pricing points to ensure affordability and to seek funding from additional areas to allow this.

John Charles Centre for Sport will seek expansion of less traditional swimming opportunities, particularly disability programmes.

Holt Park Active will be looking to expand on the number of group classes supporting older people.

John Charles Tennis Centre will expand the already comprehensive offer for disability tennis across different impairment groups. Low sensory sessions will be rolled out in additional Active Leeds gyms across the city.

A mapping tool will be created to assess where each Active Leeds customer lives to allow us to identify areas for service improvement.

Active Leeds EDCI working group will continue to drive the equality agenda through the service.

To continue to utilize the Sport England Active Lives data as a benchmark to measure progress in physical activity and inactivity rates in Leeds.

To embed the revised vision for physical activity in the city- “Leeds is a place where everyone moves more every day”.

To continue to support Ukrainian residents (and other refugees) into sustainable physical activity opportunities in the city and ensure that they are well connected to the full range of physical activity opportunities.

A new Active Leeds service strategy will be developed with everything we do being underpinned by a focus on Reducing Inequalities, and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Equality Improvement Priority: Review and respond to the impact of COVID-19 on communities and communities of interest with a focus on health inequalities.

Key actions:

- Work with Community Health development providers to understand the impact of COVID 19 in inner city wards.
- Develop the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) pathfinder programme, expanding the reach across the city
- Support the development of asset-based community development across the Council and wider health and care system.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Asset Based Community Development Pathfinder Programme:

A key focus of the past 12 months has been strategic development and delivery against our ambition. Work has been undertaken to define the key priorities of the ABCD programme i.e.: To expand Asset Based Community Development across Leeds, shifting power to people and supporting communities to thrive, with a focus on social capital, community building and neighbourliness to reduce health inequalities.

Progress has been made in relation to expanding the ABCD Pathfinder model across Leeds to 14 ABCD sites based and working in a range of diverse communities with a strong equity focus. Eight ABCD Pathfinder sites are within the top 1% deprived priority wards with three more in the top 2% of most deprived wards, the remaining three are in the top 10%.

ABCD Pathfinder sites have been offered EDI training, guidance and support to ensure the ABCD Community Builders they employ offer an inclusive approach to community development We have seen a focus this year on Community Builders working with communities post pandemic to re-build connections and resilience through arts based and cultural activity projects with Ukrainian refugees, intergenerational projects, Autism Friendly Board Games sessions for adults and community music projects seeking to bring together as many of the 170+ nationalities in our city to share and make music together.

We have been excited to work in partnership with Leeds 2023, whose mission is to play an active role in the city and region's social, economic, and cultural recovery from the pandemic. Community Builders have trained the 33 Neighbourhood Hosts to connect with people in neighbourhoods and communities across thirty-three wards to discover and explore the gifts, skills, and assets since the pandemic. We will continue to work with Leeds 2023 to explore opportunities to engage marginalised groups post Leeds 2023.

We have secured the Levelling up Shared Prosperity Fund for three years that will fund a new pathfinder site through a Tenant Management Association Organisation in Belle Isle, focusing on work to address domestic violence and intergenerational projects. The 'Hey Neighbourhood' scheme and a Neighbourhood Volunteer matching scheme will both be developed in the priority neighbourhoods.

We have further developed our ABCD training activity with an offer for Leeds City Council staff and partners in the Third and public sector. We have also developed an ABCD Learning Collective, a space held for shared learning. An ABCD Local Care Partnership Training pilot

in 4 LCPs across the city has been delivered and we are in the process of creating an ABCD Toolkit for other LCPs in Leeds with a focus on health inequalities.

The difference we have made

The stories below highlight how ABCD has had a positive impact on individuals and communities:

A resident in Holbeck recently arrived back from Ukraine and Slovakia, where he was working with young people and families. He made artworks based on his experiences during the early days of the invasion and organised an evening of celebration for people of different communities could meet each other. Ninety-four people attended, sharing stories and international food.

Community Builders in Beeston joined up with Forum Central, Healthwatch and Live at Home Scheme to talk about creating a community wellbeing event, as residents in the community had been telling the builders they were feeling uncertain about what health services were available after the COVID pandemic. The community wellbeing event was held in January, residents remarked on how informative and positive the event had been and would like to see more of these.

A man with learning disabilities volunteers and opens the Natter Café in Horsforth every week. A gentleman who has recently lost his father and is trying to rebuild his confidence and connecting with the community after being a carer has been a couple of times to the Natter Café and has said it has helped him to feel less isolated and part of the community. He has now also connected with the SHED project at St James Church and attends the Horsforth Community Café.

A member of the Roma community has said that since connecting with the Community Builder she has been able to use her gifts and talents of sewing to share with the other people in the Romanian Community. She has created a sewing and walking group with others and the group have told the community builder since attending these groups they feel more connected to where they live, happier and feel that since the pandemic they have “come out of loneliness.”

One of the volunteers working with LS14 Trust to create food and art packs for families isolating asked the community builder about setting up an inclusive craft group for people to share their skills in craft making and crocheting. The Seacroft Hookers group was created as a result. The group is now a self-sustaining group running weekly, with ten members and growing. A quote from a member said: “It’s massively important to me personally. I only knew a couple of people coming out of lock down, and now I feel a massive sense of belonging and community. Our sessions are such a safe and funny space, peer led, and we all support each other, not just in technical ways, but also emotional. It’s bloomin’ lovely.”

What we still need to do

- Deliver the ABCD key priorities in line with the Best City Ambition
- Work to secure investment into the ABCD programme
- Continue to strengthen and develop wider networks and partnerships, with a strong focus in the Third Sector and the top 1% priority areas

- Develop the ABCD training and Learning Collective for Leeds City Council staff and the Third Sector to embed and strength-based ways of thinking and working across the city

Age Friendly City

Equality Improvement Priority: Ensure everyone can benefit from an age friendly city where people age well, regardless of where they live or their protected characteristics, enabling older people to be valued, feel respected and appreciated, and are seen as assets.

- Influence across the Council and wider partners to ensure age, as a protected characteristic, is considered in strategic priorities and plans.
- Recognise the barriers faced by older people who are, or are at risk of, being vulnerable, marginalised or disadvantaged, and put interventions in place to remove or reduce these barriers.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Developed a greater understanding of the needs and barriers faced by older people through:

- Refreshing of the Age Friendly strategy and action plan, including consultation with key elected members, representative groups such as Age Friendly Ambassadors, Leeds Older People's Forum, and Community Committees.
- Ongoing sharing and use of the *State of Ageing in Leeds* report which includes information on the needs and barriers experienced by older people.
- Initiating a Task and Finish group under the Falls Steering Group to understand inequalities in needs in relation to falls and inequities in access to services.
- Sharing of older people's mental health data with the Mental Health Strategy Priority 7 group, to help shape plans.
- Using learning from the Time to Shine programme.
- Working with the third sector and Health Protection team to understand needs and barriers faced by older people regarding the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Influenced across the Council and wider partners to ensure age, as a protected characteristic, is considered in strategic priorities and plans through:

- The Age Friendly Board preparing a response to Best City Ambition Consultation, the Leeds Local Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Securing funding from Adults & Health for the Friendly Communities Programme (Leeds Older People's Forum) to support Council and partners' services to become Age Friendly and provide an older peoples' response to consultations.
- Providing Public Health leadership for key actions within the priority 7 workstream of the Mental Health strategy which focusses on ensuring older people have access to information and services that meet their needs.
- Contributing to the development of the Leeds Food Strategy (2022-2030) to ensure older people are considered, particularly around health and wellbeing. Supporting the consultation to ensure that older people's views were captured.
- Leading the Dying Matters Partnership which focuses on communities talking about death and dying, which supports the End-of-Life Population Board with outcomes regarding compassionate conversations across a range of protected characteristics. Attendance at the Leeds Palliative Care Network sub-groups for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Informatics and Metrics.

- Contributing to the Leeds Public Health Winter and Heat Plans ensuring that older people are considered and protected during times of adverse weather.

Put interventions in place to remove or reduce barriers faced by older people through:

- Working with Commissioners/services and the Friendly Communities team (Leeds Older People's Forum) to develop and implement age friendly principles to ensure services are accessible and inclusive of older people and those with protected characteristics by:
 - Promoting the Age Friendly Ambassador programme e.g. through the Age Friendly bulletin and the Wise Up to Ageism training.
 - Implementing Age Friendly across Local Authority leisure centres.
 - Facilitating Council sign up to the Centre for Ageing Better's Good Recruitment for Older Workers pilot which aims to reduce ageism in recruitment.
 - Supporting the Council to adopt the Age Friendly Employer Pledge, working towards creating an age friendly culture, hiring age-positively, being flexible about flexible working, encouraging career development at all ages, and ensuring everyone has the health support they need.
 - Continuing to fund the Shine magazine, an electronic and printed magazine in Leeds sharing older people's stories.
- Working with partners to ensure a preventative approach is taken in later life to address individual risk factors as well as the wider determinants focusing on those who are more likely to experience inequality to ensure they age well through:
 - Planning and delivery of the falls prevention programme and oversight of falls steering group (including initiation of data and prevention services mapping), commissioning strength and balance sessions, Dance On, strengthening campaign (aged 40+), commissioning Home Independence & Warmth.
 - Initiating a review of needs relating to healthy ageing.
 - Providing Lunch Club annual grants to promote and support voluntary groups who provide a hot, nutritious meal, warm welcoming space, and activities to reduce social isolation for older people.
 - Delivering targeted initiatives to ensure that older people are considered and protected during times of adverse weather e.g., additional winter funding for lunch club grants and Stay Well This Winter grants, workforce, public facing Winter Friends campaigns and fuel poverty videos providing key messages in community languages (for Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities) shared via WhatsApp groups within the target communities by the community leader.
 - Culturally diverse work such as funding Leeds Irish Health and Homes, working with communities to translate materials during the cost-of-living crisis.

The difference we have made

Examples to demonstrate the impact of the work include:

- A total of 200 Age Friendly Ambassadors and 100 Age Friendly Businesses have been recruited.
- Wise up to Ageism training has been delivered to 150 Leeds City Council staff.
- Between April 2022 and March 2023, 241 older people attended a falls prevention programme, with 145 of these completing the programme. The programmes have demonstrated improved falls-prevention outcomes across several measures.

- The Shine magazine has delivered over 100,000 copies of the magazine to older people in Leeds who are isolated or lonely since 2020.
- Home Plus Service – 1181 households assisted to reduce fuel poverty; 3132 assisted to reduce falls risks. Good access across some target groups.
- Twelve Dance On groups have continued across the city with good adherence levels and increased physical activity and wellbeing amongst participants.

What we still need to do

Develop a greater understanding of the needs and barriers faced by older people through the:

- Age Friendly Board - monitoring mid-term actions within the strategy and action plan and strengthening approaches to amplify the voices of older people.
- Complete review of needs relating to healthy ageing.
- Identify and complete analysis of inequalities in relation to falls and inequities in access to services (Falls Steering Group Task & Finish Group).
- Mental Health Strategy Priority 7 – identify data needs to inform plans.
- Contribute to the West Yorkshire Health Needs Assessment for End of Life and conduct Dying Matters Survey.

Influence across the Council and wider partners to ensure age, as a protected characteristic, is considered in strategic priorities and plans through:

- Developing a forward plan of key consultations for response of the Age Friendly Board and working with LOPF Age Friendly Steering group to amplify the voices of older people.
- Wrap up of Centre for Ageing Better Partnership and Legacy Report
- Providing bi-annual updates to Adults & Health Directorate Leadership Team.
- Engaging with the Health & Wellbeing Board to further embed Age Friendly in the strategy review and the development of associated plans.
- Contributing to the development of action plans in response to the Leeds Food Strategy (2022-2030) to ensure older people are considered, particularly around health and wellbeing and food security.

Put interventions in place to remove or reduce barriers faced by older people through:

- Working with Commissioners/services and the Friendly Communities team (Leeds Older People's Forum) to develop and implement age friendly principles to ensure services are accessible and inclusive of older people and those with protected characteristics by:
 - Implementing Age Friendly principles across key health, care and community settings.
 - Working with Adults & Health to monitor the grant agreement for the LOPF Friendly Communities Programme e.g. Age Friendly Businesses, Age Friendly Ambassadors, AF Steering Group, Wise Up to Ageism training.
 - Supporting businesses in Leeds to adopt the Age Friendly Employer Pledge, working towards creating an age friendly culture, hiring age-positively, being flexible about flexible working, encouraging career development at all ages, and ensuring everyone has the health support they need.

Working with partners to ensure a preventative approach is taken in later life to address individual risk factors as well as the wider determinants with a focus on those who are more likely to experience inequality to ensure they age well. Examples of this include:

- Review of falls and healthy ageing needs & inequalities in Leeds to inform future priorities. Including inequities in access to falls prevention services (e.g. Strength & Balance) and mapping primary and secondary prevention services/support. Plans of Falls Steering Group and Healthy Ageing Programme to be informed by review.
- Recommissioning the Home Independence & Warmth Service including equity measures.
- Support the further development of the referral and triage into strength and balance as part of falls pathway development.
- Delivery of Improvement Programme for Strength & Balance programme: targeted marketing, implement new delivery model. Roll out and evaluate strengthening campaign.
- Develop and deliver a training programme aimed at the wider workforce to support the identification of and support for reducing deconditioning and improving reconditioning.
- Ensure services/physical activity programmes meets the needs of older people at risk of poor health due to falls risk.
- Review delivery of lunch clubs and amend as necessary to ensure the provision of grants continue to focus on reducing inequalities, tackling social isolation and loneliness and improving nutrition for older people
- Lead a programme of work to support in the wider workforce capability to identify and support the nutritional needs of older people.
- Facilitate multiagency partnership working to lead relevant actions as identified in the Food Strategy for Leeds.
- Delivery of actions in the priority 7 workstream of the Mental Health to ensure older people have access to information and services that meet their needs.
- Lead Dying Matters Partnership programme to develop actions responding to survey.
- Further develop fuel poverty videos providing key messages in community languages (e.g. for Roma communities).

Sustainable Infrastructure

Equality Improvement Priority: To ensure that work to deliver the city's climate ambition of net zero provides opportunities for and is inclusive of all communities, including those characteristics protected by law under the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Energy and efficiency

The following was completed in our energy and efficiency work stream:

- Enabled low income and vulnerable residents to receive energy efficiency, fuel bill and income maximisation advice and heating repairs/small energy efficiency improvements through Home Plus
- Provided heating and energy efficiency measures to households suffering cold related illness through Warm Well homes.
- Locally administered and promoted the Government's Energy Bill Support Scheme and Alternative fuel payments for residents without an energy contract.
- Completed the local authority delivery scheme installing energy efficiency measures in low-income private homes.
- Supported installation of energy efficiency measures in the homes of council tenants through ERDF and SHDHF funded schemes.

Electric Vehicle charging

In summer 2022 a second phase of 27 dual charge point installations (54 charging bays) across 9 car park sites were granted funding through central government's On-Street Residential ChargePoint Scheme (ORCS). These charge points will be installed in July/August 2023 following completion of leases and internal governance approvals. These sites are distributed across Leeds in a variety of wards including areas of multiple deprivation to ensure that a wide range of resident demographics are being supported in the transition to electric vehicles.

Communications and engagement

We continue to make sure that all of our digital communications (such as the Leeds By Example website and information on www.leeds.gov.uk) comply with accessibility regulations to ensure that it can be accessed and understood by people of different reading ages and languages (using translation software), and is also compatible with equipment to read-out text for those with visual impairments. In all our consultation and engagement on projects we always ensure we reach as broad a cross section of the Leeds community as possible.

Leeds Food Strategy

Leeds currently holds the 'Sustainable Food Places' Bronze award and work is now beginning, alongside Food Wise Leeds, towards the Silver and Gold awards. A fundamental part of this was the preparation of the Leeds Food Strategy in 2022 led by the team who worked with council colleagues and a wide variety of stakeholders to produce the strategy. The vision is for Leeds to have a vibrant food economy where all sections of the community can access local healthy and affordable food. Delivery of the strategy aims to improve health

outcomes and tackle food security, which if successful would have the effect of contributing to reduced economic and health inequalities in Leeds.

White Rose Forest

Tree planting has taken place in the last 12 months to increase tree canopy cover in the most deprived wards in Leeds. The Woodland Creation Scheme, which contributes to the White Rose Forest saw specimen trees (2.5 metres high) and saplings (450 -600mm high) planted in the following areas of multiple deprivation and lowest canopy cover: 117 specimen trees in Beeston and Holbeck, 3700 saplings and 18 specimen trees in Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, 2,674 saplings in Armley, 4,892 in Gipton and Harehills, 1564 and 58 in Hunslet and Riverside, 57 specimens in Little London and Woodhouse Moor in the 2022/23 period.

The difference we have made

Energy and Efficiency

- Assisted 1,181 low income, vulnerable residents in fuel poverty through Home Plus.
- Assisted 399 households with a cold related illness with heating interventions through Home Plus
- Assisted 39 residents with cold related illness with large energy efficiency/heating measures through Warm Well Homes.
- Processed 819 payments to residents without an electricity contract through the EBSS AP scheme.
- Installed 417 energy efficiency improvements in the homes of low-income households through the Local Authority Delivery scheme.
- Assisted Housing Leeds to install energy efficiency measures on/in several hundred properties.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

Continuing use of charge points installed through the management of the council continue to improve the air quality in the city for all sectors of the community especially those in areas of multiple deprivation who tend to be in close proximity to sources of air pollution.

What we still need to do

Across all the workstreams, we will look to improve our equality monitoring to ensure we better understand the distribution of grants and services to allow us to take targeted action where required to improve representation.

Energy and efficiency

There is a need to commence installations on the Home Upgrade Grant scheme to install energy efficiency, low carbon heating and renewable energy measures in low-income households that don't currently benefit from gas central heating.

EV Charging

A third phase of ORCS sites are being identified and will be bid for in summer 2023 with install expected to be achieved in winter 2023/24 to continue the roll out of EV charge points and ensure that the ever-increasing number of electric vehicles are catered for in Leeds. This will continue to have the effect of improving air quality across the city for the benefit of all.

A city-wide plan for EV charge point installation through the LEVI scheme will be produced to ensure that all areas and demographics of the city are supported on the transition to electric

vehicles. This opportunity will be delivered through strategic planning to identify city-wide gaps in charge point provision and ensure that those households without the means to charge at home are supported through the appropriate delivery of infrastructure.

Tree planting

The Trees for Streets initiative will launch imminently to encourage residents and businesses to sponsor trees in their street or neighborhood. There will be a focus on areas of multiple deprivation by partnering with business. Through the ongoing review of the council's rural assets, it is hoped to release large areas of land for tree planting.

Equality Improvement Priority: Deliver well designed transport infrastructure, streets and public realm that is inclusive, people focused and accessible to all.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Within the last 12 months the Connecting Leeds (H&T Communications team) has worked on the consultation, communications, and stakeholder engagement for a number of Highways and Transportation schemes, including:

Active Travel Neighbourhoods in Chapel Allerton, Wortley and Armley.

Genuine local focus group co-design engaging different demographics and enabling people to design sustainable travel solutions for their own streets, with a special focus on reaching under-represented people via Leeds Involving People and via our consultation.

The A660 Corridor

The plans support road safety and inclusive growth ambitions and include widening footways, creating safer cycle lanes, prioritising buses, and making junctions safer.

The stakeholder engagement was Connecting Leeds' most inclusive consultation to date, reaching over 1,700 respondents across three wards. The team engaged with or attempted to engage with over 17 different special interest groups, or groups representing those with protected characteristics. Where feasible, changes have been made to the scheme proposals to reflect the needs of these citizens and the lessons learned from this project will ensure this becomes best practice for Highways and Transport.

Starship trial consultation

Access group engagement including multiple site visits with blind, elderly, and disabled citizens enabled successful Starship robot trial, a first for the North of England.

LPTIP project completion celebration event showcasing the projects' social values held.

City Centre

The city centre transformation package is ambitious and numerous access groups have been engaged, including Leeds City Council internal networks and external groups to ensure the changes are safe, construction and wayfinding is clear, and the end result delivers accessibility benefits for the people of Leeds, such as improved infrastructure and access to key services.

A significant achievement was the communication of a key network change (1 way traffic to two-way traffic) on King Street. H&T Comms Team ensured that extra measures such as innovative location-based Spotify advertising, extra visual/arrow-based signage and an on-street presence were in place to improve health and safety for those with protected characteristics and the general public.

The difference we have made

The key priority from the 2021-2022 report was to engage more females in consultation and communications. The team first met this target on the Connecting West Leeds campaign (and an even split between males and females for first time) and will continue to meet this

priority where possible. This increased female feedback has and will allow H&T colleagues to design a more female-friendly scheme.

Internal improvements

In addition, the H&T Comms team has undergone a recruitment drive and internal process refresh. This has resulted in significant and numerous improvements to diversity within the H&T Communications team. These include:

- Two new hires from diverse backgrounds (Sikh)
- New cultural celebration/occasion calendar / event showcasing, and regular D&I focused slot at team meetings
- Review of accessibility features used in consultations – introduction of QR codes for language barrier mitigation, increased use of visuals as well as text for wayfinding, etc.
- Strengthened and growing accessibility and diversity stakeholder group network across Leeds.
- Implementation of advanced Commonplace features to improve user experience for those who are time-poor, for example (skippable pages)
- New targeting in place when commissioning Leeds Involving People and advanced D&I reporting, which supports scheme development. See below example:

Gender	Male 138	Female 135
Ages (approx)	U20 69 20-39 141	40-69 51 70+ 12
Visible Protected characteristics	Physical Disability South East Asian 3 Asian 13 Eastern European 3 Western European Elderly 12 African 9 Afro Caribbean 8	Elderly Asian Elderly Carer Pregnant LGBTQ2+ 3 Carer Covid: Isolating Shielding
English as a 2nd language 8	Interpreter	Got by without 8

Engagement to come includes the below and will continue this focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

- City Region Sustainable Transport Schemes
- Active Travel Fund Tranche 4
- Local area Transport Plans

What we still need to do

- Continue to engage with and grow Leeds’ access and diversity networks when consulting on schemes
- Deliver on the new H&T ‘Be your best’ EDI action plan – developed to stage 4 by end of May 2023
- Focus on emphasising the social values of H&T schemes in communications.

Culture

Equality Improvement Priority: Create and enable new opportunities to increase engagement with culture by Leeds' diverse communities through Leeds Culture Strategy, Leeds 2023, and the council's existing cultural and grants programmes.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

The Culture Service – Arts Events and Venues, Culture Programmes and Leeds Museums and Galleries – delivered a wide-ranging programme of activity through which the equality improvement priority is promoted and progressed. This summary provides a snapshot of activity, including LEEDS 2023 which sits within the Leeds Culture Strategy.

- Delivered the arts@leeds funding round for 2023/24 with an emphasis on 'People, Communities and Place'. Diversity characteristics and geographical reach across the city were priorities in the decision-making process for 2023/24 resulting in an increased diversity of programmes and target communities.
- Cultural grants and/or in-kind infrastructural support, enabled community-led festivals including Leeds West Indian Carnival and Leeds Pride which were supported to return to live, large-scale event delivery following the Covid restrictions of 2020 & 2021.
- With Council support, LEEDS 2023 achieved diverse community representation for year of culture programmes including:
 - My World, My City, My Neighbourhood (MWMCMN)
 - Hidden Stories – arts, heritage, and community collaborations
 - WOW Barn – engaging women, girls, and non-binary people to create a safe space, both physical and psychological, for sharing, celebration, discussion and learning.
 - My Leeds 2023 appointing 33 Neighbourhood Hosts, one for each ward, partnered with local anchor organisations, collectively representing the demographics of Leeds
- Through the Leeds Inspired What's On Promoted 'free to access' cultural and creative activities available across the city during school holidays
- In collaboration with centre for Cultural Value and University of Leeds, commenced work on improving data collection – including better demonstrating impacts and benefits for Leeds' diverse communities.
- During Refugee Week, Leeds Museums and Galleries increased its provision for people seeking refuge or asylum including:
 - Introducing free access to ticketed LMG sites for anyone seeking refuge or asylum in Leeds.
 - Communicated through translated flyers in partnership with The Refugee Council.
 - Delivered an ambitious project at Leeds City Museum to engage Ukraine communities and refugees.
- Culture Programmes co-delivered major events to promote the city's diversity – Little Amal and The World Reimagined.
- Carriageworks Theatre delivered relaxed and dementia friendly performances and launched a new weekly group, Carriageworks Young Theatre Makers with targeted engagement by children who are eligible for Free School Meals and/or are care experienced.

- Overlooked, an exhibition at Leeds City Museum (LMG), is highlighting the voices of people whose stories have been largely disregarded. The exhibition was successfully conceived, researched, and written by The Preservative Party; a group of volunteers aged 14-24yrs.
- Leeds Art Gallery's Shifting Perspectives exhibition, produced in collaboration with members of Leeds communities, explored and challenged representations of people of African, Caribbean, and Asian heritage within the collection of Leeds Art Gallery.

The difference we have made

Leeds International Concert Series (LICS):

- 2% increase in works programmed by female composers – from 11% 2021/22 to 13% from 11% in 2022/23
- 3% increase in works programmed by composers of the global majority – from 8% in 2021/22 to 11% in 2022/23
- 8% increase in works programmed by living composers – from 12% in 2021/22 to 20% in 2022/23

Carriageworks Theatre (CWX)

- CYTM Generate – the new weekly youth theatre group, achieved majority engagement by children who are eligible for Free School Meals and/or are care-experienced.
- CWX Programme – Strong feedback received for the dementia friendly and relaxed performances at the venue.

Leeds Museums and Galleries' Overlooked exhibition delivered:

- First deaf led tours with 22 attendees and with reach as far as South Yorkshire
- LMG volunteers and staff have started to learn BSL
- Oral histories and new acquisitions gathered from these community partners
- The Preservative Party, the Museum's young volunteers, won 'Volunteers of the Year' at the Museum and Heritage Awards in London in May 2023: [2023 Winners – Museums + Heritage Awards \(museumsandheritage.com\)](https://www.museumsandheritage.com/2023-winners)
- The Care Creatives – a group for Care Experienced young adults at Leeds Art Gallery. The group were the Yorkshire regional winners at the national Marsh awards for volunteering in December 2022: [Gallery's young volunteer group scoops top museums award \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/gallery-young-volunteer-group-scoops-top-museums-award)

Leeds 2023 – My World, My City, My Neighbourhood the community-based project rooted in co-creation with local communities. The overarching programme delivered a wide-ranging collection of projects across different areas of Leeds such as:

- setting up community art clubs in Garforth and Swillington
- the history of the textile industry in Guiseley
- untold stories of Bangladeshi women in Beeston
- creating a printing press in Headingley
- a photography project along Meanwood Road.

As well as geographical communities, some projects based their work around communities of interest or shared identity such as the Skateboarding community or the Irish community across the city. Outcomes include:

- 165 artists were involved in the delivery of 22 projects across the programme.

- 2,105 participants took part in the 22 projects as participants, with an additional 3,735 taking part as audience members (e.g. at community sharing events or performances).

What we still need to do

- More work is needed to develop more robust and coherent approach to data collection and analysis e.g., in relation to programming, audiences and grant funding. In collaboration with the Centre for Cultural Value and University of Leeds, the Culture Programmes team is exploring the development of a ‘cultural impacts framework’ – including an emphasis on improved monitoring of access and engagement by protected characteristics.
- A refreshed Cultural Investment Programme in 2023 will, more effectively, monitor access and engagement, aligned with the Council’s core EDI strategy. This should include retention and analysis of unsuccessful applicant data to identify themes and better understand barriers to access.
- The culture service will continue to demonstrate EDI at the heart of programming – including publishing policies on service websites.

Housing

Equality Improvement Priority: Ensure that consideration of equality and the characteristics protected by law is a key focus of our delivery of Housing services with a focus on:

- Delivering a Housing Growth Programme that provides housing of the right quality, type, tenure, and affordability in the right places
- Providing the right housing options to support older and vulnerable residents to remain active and independent
- Improving energy performance in homes, reducing fuel poverty
- Minimising homelessness through a greater focus on prevention

Equality Improvement Priority update:

What we have achieved

Housing Growth - 115 new build homes, and 61 homes have been acquired, refurbished, and let to customers - these include apartments, bungalows, semi/detached and terraced properties. Ten of these properties were specifically to support rough sleepers into sustainable accommodation. The team worked with Housing Management to ensure schemes align with demand in the local areas. Bespoke properties have also been delivered to meet the needs of specific families. Over the last year, the Housing Growth programme has focused on designing schemes with a 'no gas' approach. This is helping to address the Council's targets for a low / no carbon city by 2030. The properties aim to reduce energy bills for residents. The first 'no gas' scheme was delivered in June 2022; learning from this has helped shape the strategy for future developments. A further 3 'no gas' schemes are due to be handed over during 2023

Improving housing options for older and vulnerable residents - In partnership with Leeds City Council, Home Group opened a 62-unit Extra Care Scheme in Seacroft in October 2022. Work has progressed on the construction of a 60-unit scheme and 12 bungalows for working age disabled adults in Middleton. The city-wide Extra Care Eligibility Criteria and Process has been reviewed to ensure a consistent approach across all providers and schemes. Planning has been submitted for a 65-unit Scheme in Armley, with plans to be on site in January 2024. The Health & Housing service delivered more adaptations than ever last year. The team also launched several initiatives to promote independent living which included a scheme to carry out repairs, insulation measures, and upgrades to heating systems for the homes of disabled and vulnerable people. Alongside £18 million spent on adaptations, the service continues to support disabled and vulnerable customers with rehousing.

Reducing fuel poverty in homes - In 2022/23, work was completed to over 1,500 homes. This included Ground Source Heat Pumps installed to 22 high-rise blocks, benefitting approximately 1,000 flats; installation of external wall insulation to 126 back-to-back homes; and installation of external wall insulation to 150 non-traditional homes. Work to install external wall insulation to seven high-rise blocks has commenced, with 240 flats benefitting from the work to date

Minimising homelessness - Our Leeds Housing Options team offer support to people who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or those who need general advice on their housing situation. Teams offer bespoke advice and support to those suffering from domestic

abuse, young people, Armed Forces veterans and their families, customers leaving hospital, asylum seekers and refugees, rough sleepers, and members of the LGBT+ community. In July 2022 the service launched Advice Aid - an online tool allowing customers to access tailored advice. The service continues to manage Evict Alert – a free service for landlords to help resolve tenancy issues as an alternative to eviction. The Landlord's Lettings Scheme and Bond Support Scheme continues to support matching customers in housing need with private landlords. The Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme now has 22 units with personalised support in place.

The difference we have made

Housing Growth - 176 additional individuals and families in housing need have been provided with secure accommodation. Homes have been designed to optimise efficiency and minimise tenant's utility bills. The homes meet Secured by Design (SBD) standards, ensuring safety, security, and improved visibility, with Heights Lane achieving a Gold Standard rating. The new build properties feature biodiversity measures such as bat and bird boxes, alongside good-sized secure rear gardens, with patio areas and sheds. One of the families moving into a bespoke new-build property told us that it *"Feels like a fresh start... and has changed our lives"*. Contractors involved in the construction of the new homes have brought additional benefits to the areas, including providing defibrillator equipment at a local community centre and engaging with local schools to offer assemblies and site visits. Two of our schemes were shortlisted in the CIH Northern Awards 2023 for 'Excellence in Community Investment' and included within the CIH [Good Practice Compendium](#)

Improving housing options for older and vulnerable residents - Community-based activities, impacted by covid commenced at Wharfedale View Extra Care Scheme with a craft club and bingo run by volunteers; a new mother and toddler group; and Guiseley Community Foundation running a games afternoon and an exercise class. A daughter of a resident told us how happy the family are to have him in a safe environment *"If we had not got a place for dad, I was close to packing in my job and moving back to the UK to be with him as we were getting so desperate"* The Health and Housing Service completed 955 Disabled Facility Grant applications, 746 adaptations in council homes and 2089 minor adaptations to council homes. The team attended 2,346 viewings and made 1,458 awards for medical priority to support disabled people to move. Over 70 families were supported to move to suitable homes saving the Council around £1.5 million in not having to provide adaptations. About the new housing repair, insulation, and heating upgrade project, customers have told us: *"I was very relieved and found everyone involved in the repairs very nice... [I was] really taken care of, it really improved my quality of life"* *"The work... has been life changing... All I want is for my mum to be safe in her home, I don't want her to go into a care home..."*

Reducing fuel poverty in homes - Ground Source Heat Pumps use less energy to produce the same amount of heat as electric storage heaters, reducing fuel bills by 30% on average against last year's kWh levels. Homes that have benefitted from external wall insulation will see a reduction in heat loss, and an increase in thermal comfort. Residents will see a reduction in energy consumption, and therefore energy bills helping reduce fuel poverty and lessen the pressure on household budgets. Tenants have told us how pleased they are with the works and that *"finished properties look fantastic"*. Tenants have also advised that *"it's definitely money well spent from the council in tackling fuel poverty"*. A resident living in a block with a ground source heat pump told us they're *"well pleased"* to see their quarterly electric bill in credit and that the works have been *"well worth the installation"*

Minimising homelessness - The team completed 3,250 assessments for customers with a housing need and accepted a duty to assist 4,885 households who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. They helped prevent homelessness in 78% of cases. This included: over 450 moves into private and Housing Association accommodation; advice and support to over 830 customers suffering domestic abuse; advice to over 450 prison leavers and through the Accommodation for Ex-Offender Scheme, supported 22 prison leavers into settled accommodation. The team also supported: over 170 asylum cases; over 100 refugee families into accommodation; continue to support a further 100 refugee families; over 230 families in temporary accommodation into sustainable tenancies. A customer who was supported through domestic abuse, was able to take her child to the seaside for the first time. The trip gave her and her son a real boost to their wellbeing.

What we still need to do

Housing Growth - deliver c800 new affordable homes per year over the next 3 years across all sectors. Carry out analysis of the heat pumps installed in new build homes to improve energy saving for customers. Complete the final 8 homes in the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme by March 2024

Improving housing options for older and vulnerable residents - fully deliver five Extra Care Schemes by January 2024 and develop plans for a further two schemes by end of 2026. Two new hospital caseworker posts will be created to improve the discharge pathway from hospital to help free up acute hospital beds in a timelier manner.

Reducing fuel poverty in homes - install Ground Source Heat Pumps to another two high-rise blocks and install Air Source Heat Pumps to six high-rise blocks

Minimising homelessness - review data to help identify groups disproportionately impacted by homelessness and engage with these groups and communities to intervene at an earlier stage. Capture lived experience to help shape future service design for the LGBT+ community. Build partnerships with private sector landlords and providers to increase availability of housing for those in need.

Inclusive Growth

Equality Improvement Priority: Ensuring equality is a key focus of supporting Inclusive Growth and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and building economic resilience for Leeds and everyone living and working in the city.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Leeds Social Progress Index

The Social Progress Index (SPI) is a measurement framework model that was designed by the Social Progress Imperative. It is a tool that helps measure how well Leeds is doing in terms of Inclusive Growth. The SPI is built on three themes: Basic Human Needs; Foundations of Wellbeing; and Opportunity. We now have a first iteration of the Leeds Social Progress Index (SPI), produced in partnership with the Social Progress Imperative which can be seen here: [The Leeds Social Progress Index | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#).

Future Talent Plan

In September 2022, we launched our new Talent and Skills Plan, aiming to help the city respond to a rapidly changing labour market and ensure that nobody is left behind. The Future Talent Plan sets out ambitions to improve talent and skills in Leeds and seeks to bring together businesses, education and skills providers and organisations to deliver these ambitions. The future Talent Plan consultation was structured in a way to help us ensure we had contributions from across the city. The team attended the Equality Assembly Conference in March 2023 to discuss the plan further with diverse communities.

Health Foundation Work – Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures

Funding received through the Health Foundation is being used to build relationships between Leeds Inclusive Anchors and the most disadvantaged communities in the city, specifically through building relationships between large Anchor organisations and the Leeds Community Anchor Network. This programme of work aims to increase the positive economic impact of Anchors on communities in Leeds experiencing economic and health inequalities.

The Anchors Network

The anchors collectively employ about 60,000 people in the city and more than half of their discretionary spend, over £1bn, is retained in Leeds. Examples of recent work include:

- Leeds College of Building is developing a new approach to delivering adult learning provision, working with community organisations to identify local skills needs and delivering tailored courses within community settings.
- Northern Gas Networks have trained their frontline workforce in the ‘making every contact count’ approach to enable staff to support vulnerable customers and signpost to further support, particularly around the cost of living.

100% Digital Leeds

Leeds’ flagship 100% Digital Leeds programme has made a national mark in digital inclusion and is being used as a model for others to develop their own initiatives through funding by the Local Government Association’s Digital Pathfinders Programme.

Economic Policy Team EDI Plan

The Economic Policy Team has developed an EDI Plan with the aspiration of working in a genuinely inclusive way, by taking measures to remove barriers that perpetuate racism, sexism, ableism, and any other discriminatory behaviours. The plan has 3 main objectives – to deliver inclusive events, to champion inclusive workplace culture and to clearly communicate our commitment to EDI through how we engage with our colleagues and external partners.

CLES Gender Inclusion Work

The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and Women’s Budget Group (WBG) are working in partnership with Leeds City Council to better understand how gender inclusion can be prioritised in the development and implementation of economic strategies to support local wealth building. A workshop was held with internal colleagues in March, with plans to engage with businesses and community organisations in the next few months.

The difference we have made

Leeds Social Progress Index

The Social Progress Index has been shared with elected members, the voluntary and third sector and with LCC colleagues. This has enabled them to identify patterns across different wards in Leeds and will help inform how they target interventions in communities.

Future Talent Plan

Significant progress in delivering the Future Talent Plan has already been achieved. For example, we held our first Digital and Creative Careers Festivals which included community and school roadshows and culminated in recruitment events at Leeds First Direct Arena, as well as a brand-new SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Next Choices event also at Leeds First Direct Arena.

Health Foundation Work – Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures

Listening exercises have been delivered in three priority neighbourhoods, led by trusted local organisations, and the findings will be reported to Anchors Executive Group, and used to develop approaches to co-production between Anchor organisations and communities.

The Anchors Network

All Anchors complete the Progression Framework to self-assess their progress across the themes of employment, procurement, assets/environment, service delivery and civic behaviour. The Progression Framework assessments are benchmarked across the Network, and going forwards, will provide insight into good practice in terms of delivering the Inclusive Growth Strategy, and areas that need more focus.

100% Digital Leeds

An example of work undertaken through the 100% Digital Leeds programme is the growth and expansion of the Older People’s Digital Inclusion Network, helping organisations who work with older people to deliver the skills, confidence, and tools they need to support people to use digital technology. Six organisations have become Digital Health Hubs, places in the community where people can get online to improve their health and wellbeing.

What we still need to do

Refreshing the Inclusive Growth Strategy

Work is underway to restate our commitment to inclusive growth and refresh our Inclusive Growth Strategy. This will be completed by September 2023. It will help us build resilience and respond to trends including making rapid progress towards addressing the climate emergency and the major economic, social and health challenges the city is facing. It will bring together relevant projects and policies as well as raising our ambition in key areas. Some examples include:

Future Talent Plan

Going forwards, we are continuing our work focusing on spotlight sectors. For example, our Green Skills Plan will support the transition to net zero by 2030 and adapt to climate change, raising aspirations for a more inclusive workforce by targeting under-represented groups to gain employment and upskilling opportunities.

Future of our City and Local Centres Work

In July 2021, a report was brought to Scrutiny Board in July 2021 outlining work looking at the future of our city and local centres. The Inclusive Growth Strategy will drive this work forward, building on the priority to strengthen the role of city and local centres. A number of areas of focus have been agreed, for example, continuing to identify and deliver transformational projects across the city, linked to external funding streams.

Health Foundation Work – Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures

Through the Health Foundation funded ‘Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures’ project, a playbook will be developed to highlight the importance of anchor organisations and the role they can play in supporting communities to thrive and grow by using their spend to challenge health and economic inequalities.

Leeds Anchors Network

A Business Progression Framework is also currently under development. It is based on similar principles as the Anchor Progression Framework, we are expecting to launch this tool at the same time as the refreshed Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Leeds Social Progress Index

Completing an update of the Social Progress Index in Summer 2023 and exploring options for automation working with the Office for Data Analytics. The index will help us measure our progress in delivering the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

CLES Gender Inclusion Work

CLES Gender Inclusion Workshop with business and community organisations in Leeds who mainly support women. The plan is to create focus groups with local women they will seek to understand the barriers and enablers of female economic participation for a range of women that reflect the diverse demography of Leeds.

Equality Improvement Priority: Supporting businesses and residents to improve skills, helping people into work and into better jobs.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

The Employment & Skills service has delivered or partnered in several targeted programmes, initiatives and events which progress the equality improvement priority:

- The Employment Hub offers tailored 1-2-1 support via several different employability programmes which cater for people with a range of disabilities.
- The Mental Health Programme supports disadvantaged young people (15-24) in Leeds, Bradford and Kirklees who identify as having mental health issues.
- Developing You (DY): pre-employment support course mixing modules around wellbeing and employability, targeting people with common mental health disorders such as anxiety and low mood.
- Learning Disability DY: a learning disability-bespoke version of DY has been co-produced with the Employment Task Group (ETG) as part of the Being Me Strategy to meet the needs of residents with a learning disability who are “starting to think about work”
- Employment Hub Mental Health - Primary Care pilot: a referral pathway from primary care into the Employment Hub Mental Health was set up to target a gap in provision: individuals with common (and sometimes complex) mental health disorders managed in primary care who don't meet the thresholds for employment services offered by Workplace Leeds or Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service.
- Connecting Communities to Health and Care focuses on adapting recruitment methods and building on the good practice models in the health and care system to target residents in the most deprived areas of Leeds, a proportion of whom (7%) have declared disabilities.
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Next Choices event took place at Leeds First Direct Arena and this was the first time a city-wide event had been held aimed at supporting young people who have SEND.
- The Leeds Inclusive Employer Network (LIEN) has been established through the ETG and is a group of over 100 employers who have expressed an interest in employing and/or supporting neurodiverse employees.
- The Adult Learning programme has supported 2710 learners across several informal learning opportunities and of these 22% declared a disability, 54% of which was in relation to mental health.

The difference we have made

- As per the table below, there has been an increase in the number of people with a disability accessing services, moving into work, and improving skills (our 3 key performance indicators).
- There was a significant increase of 3% for disabled people improving their skills and a 1% increase in those with a mental health disability improving their skills.

Measure	Total	Disability total	Disability %	Mental Health as % disability
People accessing services	10,623 (9,387)	1538 (1,226)	14% (13%)	55% (58%)
People into work	2,239 (2,563)	218 (170)	8% (7%)	51% (53%)
People with improved skills	2,948 (2,397)	593 (400)	20% (17%)	57% (56%)

During the period:

- The Employment Hub has supported 3598 residents of which 965 were disabled which represents a 7% increase on last year. There has also been an increase in the number of customers with mental health conditions (433) compared to the previous year (335).
- The Mental Health Programme has supported 501 young people, 46 have achieved job outcomes and 45 have progressed into education and training.
- Developing You has supported 151 people, 123 improving skills (81%) with 14 people moving into employment (11%).
- Two cohorts of the 12 week Learning Disability Developing You programme have been delivered: 19 people have started the course, 8 of whom have successfully been supported into volunteering.
- The Employment Hub Mental Health Primary Care Pilot has supported 31 people of which 1 has achieved an employment outcome and 2 have moved into education or training.
- The Connecting Communities to Health and Care programme has supported 337 people, 126 of which have improved skills, 140 have gained employment and 46 are being supported to improve functional skills to achieve the required level to move into employment
- SEND Next Choices: 1,800 young people attended to learn about job offers, apprenticeships, volunteering, and training opportunities from 66 employers.

What we still need to do

- Through delivery of the Future Talent Plan the service will maintain its focus on improving employment outcomes for disabled residents and will continue to expand and align programmes in the city according to funding and capacity.
- An impact report has highlighted that a more targeted, modular approach to Developing You, mixing internal and commissioned delivery will help the programme continue to reach its target audience as part of an Adult Learning extended skills programme. This will begin with some consultation and engagement work Q1 23/24.
- The Learning Disability Developing You programme has been awarded ongoing funding due to the positive outcomes and conversations are underway exploring an autism-bespoke version.
- The Leeds Supported Internship Programme will utilise Department for Education Section 14 grant funding to access, establish and/or develop SEND employment forums and to build capacity within local small and medium size enterprises to host placements for supported interns and improve Supported Internship provision in their local area. Leeds City Council's HR, Children's and Employment & Skills Services are working with partners including the Lighthouse Futures Trust to deliver the project which runs until end March 2025.

- National Institute of Health Research – Development Awards: The Work & Health Programme has attracted interest from a Professor of Psychological Medicine & Occupational Psychiatry, University of Leeds, who is looking to partner in a bid for National Institute for Health Research funding worth up to £2m. The planned intervention would target “3+1” cohort (i.e. people who have (1) diabetes, (2) cardiovascular disease, (3) renal disease and (+1) a mental health condition) where these people are struggling in work or have recently fallen out of work as a result of these conditions.
- Improving Access to Employment: project established to explore best practice around SEND recruitment within LCC, linking appropriate council and anchor roles into the learning disability focused Being Employed Leeds website.
- Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures: Health Foundation funding to strengthen the relationship between anchor organisations and the communities they serve; will create employment and skills opportunities through adopting a joined-up approach to people’s health and their employment.
- Employment Hub Mental Health: continuity funding being sought via Mental Health Transformation budget to continue delivering this service.
- SEND Next Choices: second event to be held building on success and learning from first event.

Safe Strong Communities

Equality Improvement Priority: Improve equality outcomes across Safer Stronger priorities and programmes of work. Being responsive to local needs, to create thriving, resilient communities, promoting respect and tackling the causes of poverty. Key actions:

- improve the approach to migration in Leeds
- keeping people safe from domestic violence and abuse
- prevent and reduce levels of hate incidents by ensuring victims witnesses and third parties of hate incidents are supported, and offenders are brought to justice
- improve equality outcomes in the council's approach to Locality Working with a focus on addressing inequality and poverty
- helping people out of financial hardship by tackling the financial challenges of poverty, deprivation, and inequality

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Migration

The considerable focus over the past 12 months has been responding to global emergencies that have impacted the city locally. People fleeing the war in Ukraine began to arrive in Leeds in March 2022 under the Family Visa Scheme, and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme which the council are responsible for delivering. The Ukraine Strategic Partnership was established for cross statutory services to oversee the work around the welcome hub, housing, safeguarding, safety, health, fundraising and grants. Afghan refugees arriving in Leeds have also been supported through access to services, safeguarding, strengthening partnerships, and building capacity to support integration.

The Migrant Access Project continues to be a key bridge between new communities and services. The Leeds Strategic Migration Board is a key driver consulting with services across the council, private and third sectors. Leeds Migration Partnership, a network of migrant third sector organisations and individuals, continue to work jointly. An introduction to migration training has been delivered in partnership with Migration Yorkshire to council staff and key services. The Council of Europe visited Leeds as part of the council's membership to the Intercultural Cities network.

Domestic violence and abuse

Domestic Violence and Abuse can affect anybody regardless of their equality characteristics. However, there are statistical differences between equality groups and their experiences of DVA. The service offer around support in safe accommodation has been expanded to a range of equality groups including LGBT+, older people and culturally diverse communities. The refresh of our workforce development offer in the city now includes a briefing on Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage – issues that are more prevalent in some communities and through those briefings, we are also raising awareness of cultural aspects of abuse.

Hate incidents

The Hate Crime Operational Group has worked on behalf of the Hate Crime Strategic Group and Safer Leeds Executive to progress activity against the priorities in the Hate Crime Strategy. The Anti-Muslim Prejudice Working Group are working to adopt the recommendations of the report of Islamophobia including developing an Action Plan,

adopting a Leeds definition on Anti-Muslim Prejudice and work to establish a Community Reference Group.

The team are taking steps to refresh third party reporting centres by bringing together a working group to establish a successful model of support for these. A new reporting process hate incident reporting in schools has been established. The team have worked with colleagues in Safer Leeds Intelligence to produce detailed hate crime reports. Activities and events have taken place on key dates including Hate Crime Awareness Week and for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. A suite of marketing materials has been produced.

Locality working

A whole city focus continues through the locality working model. Work is ongoing to review the current practices of the Community Committees, in order to build on learning and existing good practice to develop a Prioritisation Framework to support the allocation of Wellbeing and Youth Activity Funding and develop the role of Community Committee Champions and the Community Committee Sub-groups. Engagement activity has taken place including the first round of Youth Summits held since the pandemic, supporting the citywide SEN Youth summit, and facilitating a Youth Summit for the LGBTQ+ community.

The work of the Neighbourhood Improvement Board continues to grow as part of the city-wide strategic approach to tackle inequality and poverty. The current geographical remit for priority neighbourhoods to the 12 most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Leeds is expanding and a more focused approach across the 6 most disadvantaged wards is developing. This work is supported by the new Locality Working Delivery Group.

Financial hardship

Multiple projects and strategies based on strong evidence-based approaches and collaboration with partners continue to mitigate the impact of poverty and inequality. This includes partnership working with advice agencies and support organisations. Service user voice via partners ensures that initiatives are directed and influenced by residents.

A key area of focus for the Financial Inclusion Team continues to be the provision of welfare & debt advice in the city. Money Buddies have also been funded by Leeds City Council to deliver face to face advice services. Long term projects have continued including the Money Information Centre (MIC), the Leeds Poverty Fact Book, Healthy Holidays Programme, support for the Leeds School Uniform Exchange, work to address Gambling Related Harm and delivery of training around financial inclusion. The Leeds Financial Inclusion Steering Group and Leeds Food Insecurity Taskforce also continue.

The Cost of Living & Welfare Breakthrough Project has brought together partners. There has also been a review of the Local Welfare Support Scheme, piloting a cash first option; delivery of Household Support Fund rounds; and support for the Warm Spaces Project.

The difference we have made

Migration

Providing sanctuary to people fleeing war and persecution has delivered against the Leeds vision of being a welcoming and compassionate city. The Intercultural Cities Network programme has increased awareness across services of the council's approach to wider work around equality, diversity and interaction and will influence future work on cohesion.

Partnership working has enabled the city to respond to community needs through shared understanding and collaborative approaches and has improved service delivery. The Migrant Access Project Cancer Awareness project trained 18 Migrant Community Networkers (MCNs) representing 12 countries. 14 MCNs successfully bid for funding to deliver outreach activities. This led to open discussions and the confidence to take action.

Domestic violence and abuse

The Voices scheme has been expanded and staff have been recruited to ensure the voices of children and the LGBT+ community are being heard and their experiences are shared with the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. Ethnically diverse victims-survivors are regularly represented on the board and through the victim-survivor forum have had opportunities to speak directly to senior police officers about their experiences.

Hate incidents

There is increased capacity to focus on the hate crime agenda with a dedicated Hate Crime Officer been recruited by the team. Actions taken between 2022-2023 have led to increased and enhanced partnership working with the third sector. The new schools hate incident reporting mechanism has allowed for a focus on this issue in schools. New marketing materials have resulted in improved awareness of Hate Crime.

Locality working

The new model continues to build on the good work that has taken place previously, by working more intensively in targeted areas of the city to reduce poverty and inequality through the delivery of a range of new ways of working. The model has increased the footprint for working in priority neighbourhoods to cover all 12 (1%) most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, whilst also retaining a focus at the ward level on the 6 Priority Wards.

The new Communities Team structure provides a more integrated and flexible approach to Locality Working around the citywide, targeted, and seasonal and responsive work strands. A universal approach continues to be delivered using the city-wide Community Committee infrastructure, to ensure that all parts of the city continue to benefit from the learning, experience and improvements delivered through the new model of working.

Financial hardship

Leeds City Council was allocated £7.1 million via the DWP's Household Support Fund 3 for local authorities with funding to support those most in need. This funded support to Housing Benefit recipients not eligible for the £650 DWP Cost of Living payment; the Local Welfare Support Scheme; payments for Council Tax Support recipients and people claiming Discretionary Housing Payments; children's services for foster carers, care leavers and section 17 funding; and third sector support through Voluntary Action Leeds, Forum Central, Leeds Food Aid Network and advice organisations.

In 2022, Healthy Holidays included attendances by 24,537 Children and young people and provided 170,499 portions of food. Financial Inclusion Training in collaboration with partner organisations has led to staff, volunteers, frontline services, and elected members increasing their understanding of the experiences of people in poverty.

What we still need to do

Migration

The next 12 months will focus on understanding and responding to the national and local agenda on migration such as the Afghan bridging hotels, streamlined asylum process, and

the priorities of the migration strategy, working in partnership with the council, statutory services and the third sector. Future introduction to migration training in partnership with Migration Yorkshire, will be delivered to council staff, statutory and wider services to support the delivery of the migration strategy.

Domestic violence and abuse

The domestic violence and abuse workforce development group will be reviewing it's content and how well it addresses equality issues with the potential to develop new learning modules.

Hate incidents

Third party reporting centres and signposting centres will be relaunched. The team will organise a series of events and training during National Hate Crime Awareness Week including a launch conference focusing on LGBT+ related Hate Crime and deliver a program of events for Islamophobia Awareness Month. The team will also run two Hate Crime marketing campaigns. A multi-faith event focused on Anti-Muslim Prejudice and anti-Semitism is also being planned. A specific hate crime webpage on leeds.gov.uk will be established with up-to-date information and details on how to report.

Locality working

Key actions include to develop Priority Ward Partnership Plans, which identify shared priorities as a focus for partners' collective endeavour; to ensure locality working can be supported by other Scrutiny Boards and that their role and influence can add value to the work of the Neighbourhood Improvement Board; and a review of the Community Committees including their delegated functions is scheduled for 2023/24.

Financial hardship

The focus for the team will continue to be tackling poverty and inequality across the city, for all Leeds residents. Key workstreams for 2023 will include continuing to support the Cost of Living & Welfare Breakthrough Project; continuing to deliver financial inclusion training and presentations; the cost-of-living dashboard; the warm spaces project; updating the Money Information Centre resources; delivering the Household Support Fund 4; review of the Local Welfare Support Scheme; delivery of Healthy Holidays and support for the Leeds School Uniform Exchange and the Food Insecurity Taskforce.

Child Friendly City

Equality Improvement Priority:

- **Strategic Approach to Racial Equality in Learning Settings**

Learning settings, both locally and nationally have tried in vain to source training and development to deliver statutory equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) objectives. The quality of assurance of EDI educational offers is variable with high associated costs and often minimal impact. As part of the Refreshed 3As Plan, the needs of the sector, and to achieve a relatively low cost and high impact EDI framework, Leeds Beckett University has been chosen as a collaborator and provider. The collaboration has secured and shaped a free Leeds anti-racist offer to all learning settings.

- **Educational Attainment**

We recognise that children from some backgrounds protected by equality law have poorer educational outcomes. The purpose of this priority is to address this inequality of outcome, reducing its impact and prevalence so that all the youngest citizens of Leeds do well in learning and have skills for life. In all our work, we will be particularly mindful of race-based inequalities to align with the approach to race equality in learning settings.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

The Refreshed 3As Plan recognises the Leeds vision set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy to tackle poverty and reduce inequalities that still exist. It is vital that all settings in Leeds equip their children to live, learn and work in multi-ethnic Britain and to prepare staff and pupils to be racially literate. Through collaboration with The Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality Centre (CRED) based at Leeds Beckett University, an anti-racism network was set up to provide support and guidance to enhance the knowledge and understanding of leaders on race and racism in education. Towards this aim, the programme began in September 2022 with 67 schools in Leeds signed up to the anti-racism network. The termly training sessions were delivered on key areas of focus. The sessions were attended by 25 schools on the theme of Governance, Leadership & Strategy and The School Environment.

The CRED anti-racism training programme engaged 18 schools in a training session called 'The Hidden Curriculum, Pedagogy & Curriculum and Working with Parents, Carers, and the Community'. This training was conducted alongside the work of the Learning Improvement team in providing schools with support to develop their inclusive and decolonized curriculum. The importance and focus of the work in this area was further highlighted in the 2023 curriculum conference aimed at primary and secondary schools to promote the theme of 'diversifying and decolonising the curriculum' which enabled over 190 colleagues from schools and settings across the region to understand the importance of a balanced global curriculum within culturally responsive schools. In addition to this work, as part of the Leeds commitment to equality and diversity, the Cultural Cohesion Quality Mark (CCQM) continues to deliver Unconscious bias and race-focused training to governors, schools, and teams across the council.

The link between quality first teaching and improved outcomes is well established in education research. The EDINA CPD module outline has been developed for delivery to

mainstream teachers. The outline supports specialist practitioners in schools to deliver quality English as an Additional Language and race-related professional development to mainstream staff in schools and settings with the aim of closing the skills gap. In four units contain 24 modules that schools can use to continue to develop the expertise skills and practice of their staff. The modules provide staff with knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils including how to support pupils at risk of race-based inequalities.

Leeds facilitates termly primary, secondary, and supplementary schools EAL and ethnically diverse network meetings. The networks, in addition to the access to learning team training courses, newsletters and web resources, equip staff to increase the capacity of schools, parents and communities to accelerate outcomes for EAL learners and enhance culturally responsive practice.

In addition, schools across the city continue to experience an increase in pupils that are new to the country, and who are also refugee and asylum seekers. To alleviate the challenges that particularly schools who were new to this category of pupil may face, a New Arrivals Programme and support offer was developed to deliver online modules for schools in each half-term. As part of the programme, schools can discuss concerns, and obtain advice and resources to provide best practice and provision for these pupils.

Leeds is committed to developing and promoting a trauma informed plan of support for refugee and asylum seeker pupils, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups that may be experiencing racial trauma and toxic stress. Two current programmes delivered in collaboration with the International Rescue organisation provides face to face and online training and resources to Leeds schools. The trauma informed schools programme explores the causes, consequences, and ways to support refugee students to cope and overcome trauma and toxic stress and to thrive in school.

The difference we have made

Equality of educational opportunity - Leeds is committed to ensuring the equality of educational opportunity for all children, young people, and families in the city through the delivery of a two-week summer school for newly arrived pupils. Pupils from 15 schools across Leeds attended the sessions that were held in a Leeds primary school. The aim was to provide a meaningful way for newly arrived pupils to settle, meet other refugees, provide initial EAL teaching and gain an introduction to learning in the UK. The programme was well received and feedback from the pupils and families was positive in that pupils felt more confident about attending a new school in a new country and less worried about the school environment and being able to access learning in lessons.

Cultural cohesion and reducing inequalities - Fourteen schools and teams have engaged in CCQM training during the 2022-23 school year, to develop understanding of how bias affects attitudes, behaviours, practices, and structures with a view to find ways to mitigate bias that creates barriers to equitable practice and decision-making. One of the successes of the initiative is the Introduction to unconscious bias training which has a wide reach across Leeds services and partner organisations and receives excellent feedback from schools, teams, and services. Feedback from individuals and organisations on the CCQM journey reflects evidence of a shift in thinking and practice in both professional and personal life. Participants comment on the effective challenge to think about and change their practice and proactively mitigate against biases, they value the format and systematic approach to themes and topics

covered and the valuable opportunities to have open and honest discussions within brave, safe spaces.

Achievement and attainment for all - one strategic approach to raising the achievement and attainment for all has been through increasing the expertise of staff. In 22-23 the 0-19 learning improvement team engaged in three informative EDI Cultural identity, diversity, and inclusion training sessions. This has impacted on the inclusiveness of the advice, training and courses delivered by the team. The impact has been noted, through open discussions by senior leaders reflecting on their behaviours and practices prior to and after the sessions and colleagues expressing their reflective tasks to update the resources they use in schools. The feedback indicated that many colleagues are more confidently innovating, diversifying, and decolonising their curriculum to reflect the local and global communities. The results of this will be seen through increased engagement of pupils in learning, improved motivation to learn, wellbeing and attendance, and ultimately outcomes.

Supporting learners of English as an Additional Language (EAL) - through the EAL Champions Programme Leeds are supporting children who have English as an additional language achieve their full potential. Last academic year 21 schools took part and 13 schools so far this year have engaged in the Programme which is aimed at strengthening the leadership of EAL across schools. In addition, 37 consultant school visits have led to an increase of staff knowledge and improvement of practice.

Participation and engagement in learning - We have increased the number of children and young people participating and engaging in learning through the nine primary schools that engage in a writing project and have taken part in the Arooj creative writing competition this year. Ethnically diverse pupils in Leeds schools authored stories, poetry, and calligraphy on the theme of Dreams and were recognised and rewarded through publication in an Anthology that is available in Leeds libraries. Pupils and parents were inspired by the recognition of their heritage cultures and languages as being an important part of learning and education. The feedback was incredibly positive, with one child thanking the project and expressing that she would 'never forget the day for the rest of her life'.

What we still need to do

The forward plan is to consult, share and build the Closing the Gap strategy to accelerate the progress and attainment of vulnerable learners from ethnically diverse backgrounds and those learning English as an Additional Language; raise awareness of and reducing barriers to achievement; and promote the benefits of diverse, linguistically, and culturally cohesive and responsive schools and settings; within the refreshed 3As objectives.

The aim is to make progress in the three areas by:

- Enhancing the cultural proficiency of services, teams, colleagues to support the change of attitudes, behaviours, practices, and structures that sustain inequality through continued CPD.
- Increasing access to learning for pupils with English as an Additional Language.
- Improving the health and wellbeing of learners at risk of marginalisation.
- Developing targeted strategies to increase the achievement and attainment of the most vulnerable EAL pupils and those at disproportionate risk of race-based inequalities.

- Developing a suite of guidance for racial literacy, decolonising the curriculum, defining Anti-racist policies and practice and parent/carer engagement.
- Improving literacy and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency across the curriculum.
- Researching and sharing good practice on supporting the development of increased diversity in school leadership and governance.

Equality Improvement Priority: Supporting Families. We recognise that children from some backgrounds protected by equality law are at risk of having a poorer start in life and are at more risk of being in state care or in custody. The purpose of this priority is to address this inequality of outcome, reducing its impact and prevalence so that all the youngest citizens of Leeds are protected, grow up having fun and are supported in their family wherever possible.

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Revision of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)

During 2022/23 work has been done to refresh to acknowledge the significant changes and challenges that have occurred in the last few years, and to ensure that the plan remains relevant and appropriate to improving outcomes for children and young people, to help them realise their potential, offering opportunities for play and fun whilst at the same time continuing to provide the support needed to keep children and young people safe from harm. The plan set out how Leeds want to be an inclusive and welcoming city for all children and young people and the work of the CYPP aims to reduce inequalities and eliminate the discrimination that continues to exist within some of our communities in Leeds.

Thriving Strategy - since its launch in 2019, the 'Thriving Strategy' has focused on mitigating the impact of poverty experienced by child and young people across the city. The board established to deliver the strategy, has diligently progressed the seven priority areas of focus which include Best Start, Housing and Provision, Readiness for Learning and Financial Health and Inclusion. Progress on work undertaken within each priority area, are regularly provided by the priority lead at board meetings chaired by Cllr Venner. In 2022 a new priority was introduced relating to access to Green Spaces. This issue came to light following the release of survey results of children's experiences during lockdown and our understanding of the importance of play in a child's life. In 2022 the Board also reviewed their priorities and focus areas within the strategy to ensure they reflected the needs of the city post pandemic and because of the cost-of-living crisis.

Early Help

Work continues to better understand the challenges families are experiencing.

Early Help forms – new forms for recording early help on Mosaic on 9th Jan 2023. To better understand the issues families are experiencing new needs codes were introduced. The codes are shaped around themes in line with the national supporting families framework ([Chapter 3: The National Supporting Families Outcome Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)) and use more strength based language. In addition the, Formulation approach to working with families ([Rethink Formulation.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)) has been embedded throughout the workflow on Mosaic including the contact, assessment, plan and review work steps.

Mosaic Ethnicity recording – some analysis of ethnicity recording for Early Help was undertaken between January 2022 and December 2022*. The analysis found that around 1 in 3 Early Help contacts did not have ethnicity recorded, this improved slightly in Early Help assessments where was around 1 in 5. In addition, a potential under representation was also

identified, including Black or Black British children. There was also an over representation of White British children.

(*Note: this analysis only focused on early help recorded on Mosaic and that it does not represent all early help services across the city.)

No Recourse to Public Funds Panel - The panel, which meets monthly, consists of specialists from Children' and Families Services, welfare rights, legal, housing and migration to consider those families in Leeds who have no recourse to public funds. The aim of the panel is to ensure there is consistent advice and that support across the city is equitable. Over the last twelve months, the panel has approved payments to 55 families and 34 of those have been provided with essential accommodation.

Disproportionality of Black and Mixed Heritage Boys in Youth Justice Service (YJS) and other statutory services in Children and Families services and their under-representation in the provision of early help services - in May 2021, Leeds Youth Justice Service was one of nine YJ Services in the country subject to a thematic inspection carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The inspection explored the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the criminal justice system.

The inspection noted that black and mixed heritage boys are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system compared to their representation in the population. Inspectors found that the boys in the cases they inspected faced multiple disadvantages including exploitation, school exclusion, racial discrimination, and disability, but many were only receiving support for their needs once they had entered the criminal justice system, and they were less likely than their white peers to be referred to Early Help services.

In response to the inspection findings, in 2022 the C&FS Equality and Diversity Board ask for some initial research to be undertaken to determine whether this finding was also the case across the directorate's other statutory services and early help related services. This initial research did find that there is potentially a disproportionality issue of those young people in receipt of the statutory service particularly black and mixed heritage boys, and those in receipt of early help services. Consequently, further research was requested to determine to what extent this was the case across all C&FS and gather data to evidence this.

Another area of work addressing the over representation of black and mixed heritage boys in the YJS specifically is the Turnaround Project. The YJS are in the initial stages of structuring how to deliver the Ministry of Justice funded Turnaround Project in Leeds. The ethos of the project is to target children on the cusp of the youth justice system to avoid future offending. The service is aware, from its data and reviews of custodial episodes, that black and mixed boys are over-represented in custody, and through tracing their journey back, under-represented in terms of having their welfare needs identified and recognised at the earliest stages. The Turnaround team will be focusing on the areas where it is believed the most difference can be made, particularly with first time out of court disposals and early ASB involvement, and to ensure that priority is given to speech and language, educational needs, and parenting support. The hope is to creatively deliver strengths-based interventions to more children and also build more links with the 3rd sector to sustain their progress.

The difference we have made

Leeds believes listening to the voices and views of children and young people is at the heart of making Leeds a Child Friendly City. When Leeds first set out its vision, work was done to listen to the views and ideas of thousands of young people of all different ages. Young people told us what they thought would make Leeds a better city for them to play, live and grow up in and their feedback was grouped together to form [our 12 wishes](#).

Celebrating its 10th birthday in 2022, Child Friendly Leeds has reviewed the feedback from local and city-wide consultations, surveys, and ballots over the last 3 years, capturing the views of 80,000 children and young people in the city to identify the current top issues and priorities. The Child Friendly Leeds Team and Voice and Influence Team used the key findings and data to update and develop several new CFL wishes. Amongst the new wishes include

[Wish 4](#) - Differences are celebrated in Leeds so children and young people feel accepted for who they are. They do not experience bullying and discrimination

[Wish 8](#) - Leeds is a city that reduces the impact of poverty and helps families who need it (The delivery of Wish 8 will be picked up under the work of the council wide cross cutting Child Poverty Strategy currently known as the 'Thriving Strategy').

Child Poverty Strategy - examples of Child Poverty Strategy outcomes are significant, and some key highlights include:

Healthy Holidays - Leeds City Council leads the Healthy Holidays programme, which has been running since 2018, in partnership with Leeds Community Foundation. Funded by the DfE for the programme provides enriching activities and healthy food to school aged children who are eligible for Free School Meals across the city. Healthy Holidays programmes in 2022 took place within 120 schools, 52 third sector organisations and 19 Council provisions within Community Hubs, Breeze and through the Youth Service.

Over the course of Easter and summer and Christmas 2022, Healthy Holiday provision in Leeds reached over 24,250 individual children and young people. During summer provision this number included 1786 children and young people with a special educational need or disability. Across Easter, summer, and Christmas 2022, 169,000 portions of food were served. Over Christmas, there was a target to reach 4,500 children but over 5800 children and young people actually took part in Healthy Holiday activities and over 29,000 portions of nutritious, predominantly hot meals, were served across the programme.

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

Uniform exchange promotional events supported by ZWL now take place across the city, during half term and seasonal periods. Various regular weekly exchanges have now also been established, alongside other support services such as food pantries. In addition to the

uniform activities, ZWL has also coordinated a Winter Coat Campaign and established the 'Together for Sport' project, for the donation and distribution of sport kit and equipment

Other areas of focus within this strategy include Supporting Families in Council Tenancies to Maximise their Income, ensuring career information, advice and guidance supports young people to move into Education, Employment or Training (EET) from school, which includes supporting schools, graduate fayres and apprentice fayres plus an employment and careers fayre specifically for SEND.

Early Help

Fairer Start Leeds - Leeds has entered into a long-term partnership with Nesta alongside York and Stockport. The partnership, called Fairer Start Leeds, is a three-to-five-year innovation partnership with an aim to work together so that all children have a brighter start for a stronger future. The partnership centres on a shared commitment to reimagining early years support to deliver tangible improvement to the lives of disadvantaged children. There is a greater focus on collaborative working with York and Stockport, sharing the learning across the partnership.

Work has been done on the Data Accelerator Project to develop the relationship with Leeds Office of Data Analytics (LODA) to design initial specifications for a child and family data platform. The intent of the project is to bring data from different systems together around the child and the family. It will be a long-term project but will support services to build a more comprehensive view of what our data tells us.

Work has been and continues to be done to raise awareness of ethnicity recording issues and the instilling the importance of recording it to increase confidence in what the data shows and therefore be able identify the areas of work for improvement.

The No Recourse to Public Funds Panel supports families through a rigorous consideration of their personal circumstances whilst awaiting Home Office decisions regarding leave to remain. This support has ensured that 55 families who received approved payments last year, were not destitute and were not prejudiced by receiving no financial support. The panel requests regular updates from allocated social workers to ensure there is ongoing consideration of individual needs. This balances the cost to the local authority and provides necessary challenge whilst ensuring the needs of children and families are met.

Disproportionality of Black and Mixed Heritage Boys in Youth Justice Service (YJS) and other statutory services in Children and Families services and their under-representation in the provision of early help services - The broader and most in depth research was undertaken in the later part of 2022/23. Findings from the more in-depth research have recently been analysed and have been presented to the C&FS Equality Board in April 2023. The research exercise, whilst not inclusive of all services due to a lack data, has been helpful in identifying further questions to investigate. However, the data from the receives, supports the hypothesis of Black and Mixed Heritage boys being under-represented in support services. Further evidence is required to determine if black and mixed heritage boys are over-represented in all C&F's statutory services.

Turnaround Project - the Project is in its first quarter and therefore it is too early to evaluate progress however the Ministry of Justice are collecting reoffending data and carrying out research to determine what interventions work. The YJS are in the process of fully staffing the project team to have in place case managers, an education officer to link into schools and a family practitioner.

What we still need to do

Launch and Delivery of the Children and Young People Plan - the CYPP is a supporting plan for the three pillars of our Best City Ambition, ensuring a focus on delivery for Leeds' children and young people. The refreshed CYPP will be adopted by full council on 12th July. The CYPP will drive the work of Children and Families Services and its partners to continue to deliver the ambition of making Leeds a Child Friendly City for all its young people and their families.

Delivery of CFL Wishes - in the early part of 2023/24, the leads for the CFL Wishes will be identifying the work that needs to be done to achieve the delivery of their wishes. The initial work will include aligning the relevant strategies / key priorities and/or projects to each wish and then developing between 1 – 3 short term goals that can be fulfilled within a year to demonstrate the progress being made. There are plans to hold an event in July 2023 to share the planned work to deliver the wishes.

Child Poverty Strategy - the Thriving Strategy, now going to be known as the Child Poverty Strategy, is in the process of being refreshed. In the Summer / Autumn of 2023 there are plans to hold consultation events with children and young people across Leeds to ensure their voices are heard and that the strategy continues to reflect their own and their families' needs and views.

Early Help - moving forward there is a need to work with our partners to ensure that we are focusing the intervention at the right level in the city and so will have ongoing discussions with Early Help managers, the police, and Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team. There is a need to actively monitor the profile of the cohort that we are working with to ensure we are targeting interventions to meet their needs i.e., age, ethnicity and learning needs.

Capturing data through accurate recording - specific work will include:

- monitoring the recording that is taking place and feedback to services around both the completeness of recording and what the data shows, in terms of gaps, when compared to census and other data, and
- continuing to increase the uptake of early help services using Mosaic so we can get a fuller picture of early help to understand who is/isn't accessing it. This will include looking at onboarding of Children's Centres to Mosaic.

Fairer Start Leeds - the Partnership that started on 24th November 2022 will build on the learning found from the discovery phase. The initial priority going forward is to look at speech, language and communication for those children who are on the waiting list for speech therapy. This work will involve the mapping of referral data, parent engagement and work

done with libraries and children centres to explore what support would be most helpful for families and to improve the outcomes for those children.

No Recourse to Public Funds Panel – future work will include progressing discussions relating to the lack of housing options for families, which often leads to costly accommodation; considering the training options for allocated social workers when working with families who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF); and considering the pressures on area social work teams and how early help can support families who have NRPF.

Turnaround Project – going forward work will involve having ongoing discussions with Early Help managers, the police and LASBT. In addition, there is a need to actively monitor the profile of the cohort that the project is working with to ensure that interventions are being targeted to meet the needs of the young people i.e. age, ethnicity and learning needs.

Disproportionality of Black and Mixed Heritage Boys in Youth Justice Service (YJS) and other statutory services in Children and Families services and their under-representation in the provision of early help services - the research undertaken in the latter part of 2022/2033 found that there are further areas that require further investigation, for example, on referrals and outcomes to determine if we are offering the appropriate services to children, young people and families and engaging with them effectively. Other further data questions have also been identified.

Moving forward it is likely that a working group will be established to look into these findings further and determine the next steps to address any inequalities in the delivery of services and to achieve the ultimate aim of ensuring all children and young people, regardless of their ethnicity receive the right services at the right time.

Cross Council - Budget

Equality Improvement Priority: To ensure that in the determination of the annual revenue budget appropriate consideration is given to ensuring that it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and that financial spend is increasingly aligned with the council's strategic aim of reducing inequalities

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

To ensure that in the determination of the annual revenue budget appropriate consideration is given to ensuring that it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

A full Equality, Diversity, Cohesion, and Inclusion (EDCI) Impact Assessment was undertaken on the budget proposals for 2023/24 which accompanied the Executive Board Report. In addition to this all-service review, proposals were required to have an EDCI screening attached to them. A service review group from across the council including staff from services and corporate functions considered each service review proposal including the potential EDI implications and this fed into recommendations to decision making groups.

Financial spend is increasingly aligned with the council's strategic aim of reducing inequalities.

The total General Fund Revenue Budget 2022/23 is shown in the table below.

	<u>Net Budget (£m)</u>
Adults & Health	197.64
Childrens & Families	133.03
City Development	33.37
Communities, Housing & Environment	85.05
Resources	78.35
Strategic & Central Accounts	-5.49
	<u>521.95</u>

Resources Directorate: Leeds Building Service (LBS) – Net Managed Budget (-£9.854m) -

LBS is the Council's internal service provider for building related activity. The service delivered by LBS supports the Council's ambition for Leeds to be a compassionate and caring city that tackles poverty and reduces inequality, by making sure that our tenants, including some of the most vulnerable people in our city, can live in safe, accessible and well-maintained homes.

Catering – Net Managed Budget (£1.639m) -

Catering Leeds provides a welfare catering service to schools, early years centres and adult social care settings for Leeds residents, serving an average of 28,000 meals per day across 200 settings. The service delivers fully inclusive meals, ensuring that all dietary needs are catered to, whether this is in relation to: religious provision e.g., halal, egg free; medical dietary need e.g., nut free, gluten free, soft food meal; or for more general dietary restrictions such as vegetarian, vegan. To improve this service for schools, procurement commenced in 2022/23 for the implementation of a catering ICT system.

Presto – Net Managed Budget (-£0.084m) - The PRESTO Meals at Home service delivers over 450 hot meals a day 365 days a year to some of the city's most vulnerable and includes a quick welfare check for the client. This service is also fully inclusive to ensure all dietary needs are catered for.

Passenger Transport – Net Managed Budget (-£0.074m) - The service provides home to school transport to just under 3,000 SEND children and young people who qualify for transport assistance, this can range from one-to-one transport to a place on a minibus with a majority of routes scheduled with Passenger Assistants. In addition, the service also provides adult social care transport to various centres cross the city for vulnerable adults.

The Council (lead by CH&E) has adopted a collaborative approach with partners across Leeds to try to mitigate the impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis for people who call Leeds their home. This has involved ensuring that funding is targeted to support a wide range of low-income households and included:

- Household Support Fund (£14.197m) which support households on the lowest incomes with support for food fuel and essential items. A proportion of the funding has been directed through third sector organisations to ensure pensioner households, households where people have a disability, and ethnically diverse households received support.
- Holiday Activity and Food Funding (£3.661m) provides activities and hot food for children and young people on free school meals over the Easter, Summer, and Christmas holidays. The programme supports a wide range of families on low incomes including specifically designed activities and groups for children and young people with disabilities.
- West Yorkshire Mayoral Fund (£0.323m November 2022-April 2023) - funding was primarily used to support the citywide network of faith based and third sector warm spaces, focused on helping those most at risk during the cold weather – i.e. those affected by fuel poverty, low income, and related issues. The funding also provided a necessary uplift to organisations delivering the Leeds advice contract to help mitigate the impact of the cost of living and inflation on service delivery. Advice partners report women, ethnically diverse groups and disabled people/people with a long-term health issue are groups which all represent for advice at higher proportions than they do in the wider Leeds population.

The difference we have made

To ensure that in the determination of the annual revenue budget appropriate consideration is given to ensuring that it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

The consideration of EDCI within the relevant governance around the annual setting of the budget provided decision makers with the statutory due regard to EDCI information as required under the Equality Act 2010 and gave decision makers important information to shape the final outcomes of the budget proposals for the council.

Financial spend is increasingly aligned with the council's strategic aim of reducing inequalities
Leeds Building Service (LBS): Net Managed Budget (-£9.854m) - The service to residents is the same across all areas covered by LBS. From an employment point of the view the service has recognised that diversity and inclusion is an area for development and following work undertaken with Leeds Building College, a number of ethnic minority and female apprentices

have recently been appointed during the last financial year and this approach is to continue which will over time have a significant impact on the representation within the service.

Catering: Net Managed Budget (£1.639m) – The service served over 5 million meals in the last financial year, the majority to pupils eligible for free school meals or universal infant free school meals. Meals served were nutritious and tasty, ensuring that children received food which will help them grow, develop and be ready for an afternoon of learning. We will continue to grow meal numbers and maintain the healthy balance of our meals in the future. The service also plays a key role in the Healthy Holiday Programme which takes place in Leeds. This work supports food and activities to enable vulnerable children to have access to food, fun activities, learning and support for their families during the main school holidays. This programme was instigated due to the recognition of a large number of school children in Leeds who go hungry in the school holidays as families struggle to meet the costs of feeding their children without the support of free school meals. During 2022/23, Catering Leeds provided over 35,000 meals during the school holidays.

Presto: Net Managed Budget (-£0.084m) – The PRESTO Meals at Home service helps Leeds residents stay independent and in their own home for longer and the welfare check provides real reassurance, support and contact for service users.

Passenger Transport: Net Managed Budget (-£0.074m) - This vital transport service ensures the most vulnerable in the city can attend schools and settings to access education and enrichment.

The Council's collaborative approach to mitigate the impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis for people has benefited different groups of people who live in Leeds.

What we still need to do

To ensure that in the determination of the annual revenue budget appropriate consideration is given to ensuring that it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

We will continue to develop and shape the process of undertaking an annual EDCI Impact Assessment to ensure that across all the protected characteristics due regard is given and that implications for diverse communities of budget proposals are considered at the earliest possible stage of the decision-making process.

Cross Council – Procurement

Equality Improvement Priority: Budget impact on equality and procurement: To ensure our contract processes have a positive impact on the council's equality and diversity aims and objectives through the money the council spends via its contracted arrangements

Equality Improvement Priority Update:

What we have achieved

Procurement and Commercial Services (PACS) aims to promote equality and diversity in the procurement process by using the National TOMs framework to measure the social value of its awarded contracts with the goal of reflecting the demographics of the city of Leeds. The framework provides a set of themes, outcomes, and measures that PACS can use to set clear social value objectives for each contract, monitor and report on social value, and encourage innovation and collaboration among suppliers. By adopting this framework, PACS can ensure that its contracts have a positive impact on the community this may include measuring the impact of a contract on different groups of people, such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds or minority groups, and assessing its contribution to broader social and environmental outcomes.

PACS has recently updated its core tender documents to ensure that public money is not being spent on practices which lead to unfair discrimination by reporting on the following measures:

- Percentage of women (Full Time or Equivalent) hired on the contract
- Percentage of employees (FTE) ethnically diverse hired on the contract
- Percentage of LGBTQ+ employees (FTE) hired on the contract
- No. of disabled employees (FTE) hired on the contract as a result of a recruitment

During the last period, the Council decided to change its external Social Value partner and appoint a new partner who's able to embed the agreed recommendations as defined above. Furthermore, PACS has undergone a re-structure, and due to the importance of 'the golden thread' approach of Social Value being at the center of our contracts, a newly formed Social Value team will be operational late spring 2023.

Even though there has been an impact on the reporting of results, the main goal is to have a robust system in place that will enable the new social value team to input and report on the Equality Impacts. The reporting of Real Living Wage that encourages contractors and their suppliers to pay the Real Living Wage to all their employees as a minimum, including the steps the Council takes to reduce the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain, when we buy goods and services from external businesses and organisations through our procurement processes, has also resulted in a system change of our e-tendering platform. The e-tendering platform was procured under a regional Yorkshire and Humber collaborative procurement exercise. A new e-procurement partner and system came online in January 2022 that impacted on the reporting of the Real Living Wage and Modern Slavery outcomes. As a result of changes to the Council's Social Value partner and the e-tendering platform, PACS has implemented a new add-on module to capture reporting of the Real Living Wage and Modern Slavery outcomes.

The Social Value team has been earmarked to input the outstanding data into the e-tendering portal once the team has been established in order to report meaningful equality data that

reflects the Council's position. It was unfortunate the new regional e-tendering platform could not record the above reporting requirements because the system had to satisfy all member Authorities.

Good industry / working practice is best or common practice that includes standards, practices, methods, and procedures conforming to the contractual obligations and all applicable law and regulatory requirements. Comprehensive and detailed service specifications are the foundation of good industry working practices and should conform to contractual obligations as well as all applicable laws and regulations. PACS provides guidance on drafting specifications that reflect equal opportunities legislation and good industry practices. For example, to consider and reflect legislation, guidance, and good industry practice in respect of equal opportunities and in the preparation of Equality Plans should be set out in the service specification.

The Contractor must provide an Equality Plan detailing how they will provide and maintain an Equality Plan in respect of the service. The specification template outlines the requirements for an Equality Plan, which should be contract-managed by the responsible service lead throughout the duration of the contract.

Contracts Procedure Rules (CPRs) have been updated and strengthened each year to reflect changes in legislation and Council policy. Prior to taking the decision to commence a procurement in line with CPR 3.1.7, the Authorised Officer will complete an equality impact assessment to analyse the potential impact of their policies, practices, and decisions on different groups of people and to identify any potential negative effects on certain groups. The overall result of the equality impact assessment will enable the Service Lead to make any necessary amendments to policies, practices, or service specifications before proceeding with a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with CPRs.

The difference we have made

Awarded contracts (completed procurements) which included the updated Equality measures are located on the Council's e-tendering system. The Council's new Social Value partner, on PACS request, has modified the Social Value platform to enable PACS to report on the equality outcomes that will be managed by the new Social Value team. The data will be entered into the new platform for reporting purposes.

The Real Living Wage and Modern Slavery reporting will also be managed by the same team with appropriate management information available in the future.

The Council's Terms and Conditions of contract has been amended to reflect that the contractor shall comply with all relevant Equality legislation as set out in our terms and conditions therefore, they are contractually obliged to adhere to the legislations and specific requirements as detailed in the service specification that should cover (as a minimum) the following:

- The contractor to identify the specific equality activities they will undertake.
- The contractor to identify how compliance with the Equality Plan will be evidenced.
- The contractor to identify which equality issues are specific to the contract or the council, which the contractor is required to follow as per the provision of the contracted service.

The service lead is responsible for ensuring compliance with the above requirements.

What we still need to do

Monitor compliance: regularly monitoring compliance of the contract terms and conditions will ensure that all parties are treated equally and fairly.

Training: to seek training opportunities for contract managers via the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team on diversity and inclusion to ensure that they are aware of the issues and can identify and address any biases in the contract management process.

Encourage diversity amongst suppliers: encourage the inclusion of suppliers from diverse backgrounds and ensure that they have an equal opportunity to bid for contracts.

Section 5: Update on progress against Workforce – The Council as an Employer pillar of the Action Plan

Over the past 12 months, Leeds City Council has progressed significant work and delivered outcomes for our workforce on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). This work was underpinned by our **refreshed shared EDI vision for the city**, with workforce EDI forming a significant part of delivering outcomes. Consequently, the year has seen a significant focus of actions through 2022-2023, on workforce EDI. There has been a renewed **clarity of purpose**, the establishment of **five distinct priority themes**, alignment to our **People strategy** for the organisation and developed **collaborative approaches with stakeholders**. The prime driver was embedding **culture change** approaches in the organisation, ensuring that we actively demonstrated what change we needed to bring about, what success looked like, by who and by when. This focussed planned approach to **treating people fairly** as an employer meant the organisation has been able to deliver **positive steps**, contributing strongly to the citywide strategy on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Whilst recognising that **satisfactory progress was made in 2022-23** which will be outlined in the sections to follow, the organisation is not complacent on this agenda, and we continue to remain focussed on the ongoing journey of improvement on workforce EDI.

The summary position of the 2022-2023 equality annual report on workforce EDI therefore acknowledges that we have started **a good change programme on treating people fairly** and workforce EDI. We have **engaged and co-opted** support and action across the organisation from colleagues, staff, Councillors, staff networks, our managers and leadership teams. We have begun making EDI **the golden thread** that goes through what we do, and we are on a journey to weave it into all our workforce activity. **There is more to do**, and we know we need to go **further and faster**. We also accept that this will take time to be delivered properly and collaboratively if we are to ensure delivery of **actions beyond words**.

In looking to the future, we have set **a sturdy base in 2022-2023**. The reappraisal and a complete refresh of the way in which we deliver EDI in the organisation fitting into a wider city approach has given **clear strategic focus** to this agenda. To this end, the leadership of the organisation, both members and corporate leadership team of executive officers have been clear. They have set the tone by actively leading the change journey and directing managers to be accountable for progress and to embrace the necessary change.

Numerous change delivery sessions with our **appraising management cohort of 2.400 managers** including a **mandatory EDI programme** of change has then cemented our approach in doing things differently in the organisation. The management cohort have been tasked with local leadership and visibility of this agenda, to continue the change journey with their teams and to ensure we embed the change we have all agreed is needed.

Having set the change process underway the future focus will be to ensure we are measuring impact, understanding our challenges better and reviewing progress with managers in their teams on an ongoing and frequent basis.

Finally, early indications through the **feedback loop of our corporate staff survey** this year, looking back over last year points to strong positive change on workforce EDI as an improved measure. This supports the assertion that the delivery of workforce EDI plan from 2022 is converging into good outcomes for the organisation. The appointment of a Head of HR in the

organisation, leading the workforce EDI portfolio, has added effective capacity to this important agenda in the past year.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF OUR 5 EDI WORKFORCE PRIORITIES

In setting up a clear Workforce EDI plan from 2022, we gave an unequivocal undertaking that we would establish clear priorities. This was to enable the organisation to direct resources and activities in a coherent, thought-through and strategic way. We also wanted to ensure that we would maximise the opportunity for real change where needed most. We established five workforce EDI priorities as follows:



1. Recruitment and initial welcome

Actions under this strand focussed on making our approaches more inclusive and the welcome journey into the organisation more open, fair, and transparent. In 2022 – 2023, we completed the following activity.

- The setting up of a corporate EDI recruitment task & finish group with the remit of reviewing our recruitment practices through the lens of EDI, suggesting, and producing approaches to further improve inclusive recruitment to positively impact representation and diversity in the organisation. The group has been functional and brought forward practical policy changes to the organisation which has been adopted.
- Overseen the introduction of a diverse and inclusive recruitment and selection guidance for all recruiting managers and diverse panels
- Overseen the introduction of guidance on EDI centred recruitment practice for recruitment managers
- Provided positive check and challenge capacity to human resources recruitment processes.

Work is continuing by the task & finish group to develop an approach on anonymous shortlisting, providing quality feedback for unsuccessful candidates and to improve the overall experience of recruitment for the organisation.

2. Progression

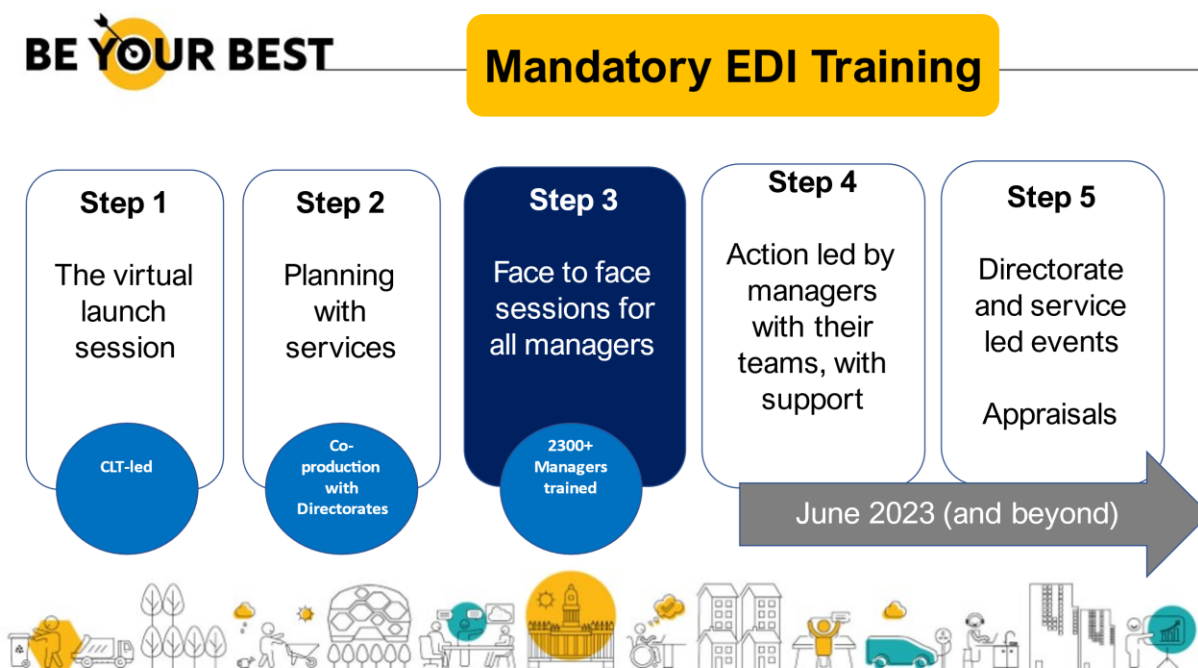
Supporting people to progress in an equitable, fair, and transparent way is the second strand of work on workforce EDI. The main activity under this strand last year has been the ongoing development of a positive action framework to enable managers to act in a clear, supported, and transparent way in ensuring opportunities for progression exists for all.

More work needs to be progressed under this theme as the least developed from last year of the five priorities. This area of work is going to be given more focus in the coming year as equality embeds in the organisation.

3. Training for staff and managers

This strand has been the most developed area of focus in 2022-23. We are determined to bring about positive change on our workforce EDI by ensuring our managers have the right tools and support to lead and embed our values in treating people fairly. To this end we undertook to develop and deliver a 5-step programme of EDI change to all appraising managers. The programme is illustrated below. To date, the organisation has:

- In 2022—2023 trained 2,300+ appraising managers across the council on EDI.
- Run over 90, 2.5hr mandatory face to face sessions on EDI for managers.
- Enabled the space, confidentiality, and time for all managers to learn together.
- Provided a comprehensive manager’s resource toolbox to support their learning.
- Trained the corporate leadership team and senior councillors on the same programme



Currently, managers are preparing STEP4 which is action to be taken by them through their objectives and the appraisal process to build in key EDI outcomes to be achieved with their teams.

4. Speaking up and zero tolerance

Part of our core work on EDI is to tackle discrimination and unacceptable behaviour. Specific actions concluded in this regard in 2022-23 include:

- Appointment of a senior role in the council of a Freedom to speak up guardian. This independent role provides colleagues in the organisation with a fully independent route to raise any concerns they may have. It is the first of its kind by

a local authority in the country, and further affirms our resolve to tackle discrimination of any kind in our organisation.

- Completed a full organisational review of our grievance practice, leading to a comprehensive report of seventeen executive findings and fifteen recommendations. These recommendations are now being run as a pilot in one of our directorates to improve the experience that colleagues have when raising a grievance.
- Set out our clear approach and strong will to act on discrimination through a Council statement jointly issued by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council. This statement to all staff made it clear what was expected of them as employees of Leeds City Council and potential consequences that may follow if discrimination were to occur.

5. Data and Monitoring

We made a commitment that we will be clear about the difference we are making. To do this we committed to developing data analysis on EDI and monitoring our progress through the data. We were clear that we would be data led, and “go where the data points to” to tackle our challenges. In 2022-2023 we have been able to:

- Develop a data dashboard for EDI that will enable useful analysis of representation down to service level, mapped alongside the 2021 census data and overall Leeds City Council data. This will enable action and appropriate resources to be directed at the most critical areas of priority. The dashboard is in its final testing phase, with implementation to follow.

Additional areas of progress from 2022-2023

- The council’s strategy & resources scrutiny board, lead members and executive board members have regularly asked for a progress report on the workforce EDI action plan. Regular briefings through last year ensured that the plan and its progress received appropriate scrutiny, stayed on track, and continue to be an ongoing priority.
- Staff Networks of which there are seven representing the protected characteristics on EDI work with the workforce EDI agenda both as a positive challenge and collaboratively.