

# Annual Corporate Risk and Resilience Report

September 2023



## Introduction

Risk is present in everything we do to improve outcomes and deliver services. Local authorities, our communities and partners experience a wide range of significant risks including: adverse weather conditions, safeguarding incidents and cyber-attacks on our digital infrastructure. More recently, pressures from inflation, the increased demand for services and cost of living, combined with a challenging job market in some sectors have impacted on the council's risk profile.

Our Best City Ambition aims to tackle poverty and inequality and improve the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home. Central to this, focus is placed on improving outcomes across the three Pillars of Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero-Carbon. Strong risk management arrangements are essential to minimise the risks of failing to achieve the ambition, outcomes and budget. Our policy is to identify, analyse and manage potential threats and opportunities posed by risks, in line with the council values.

The previous annual corporate risk management report was considered by Executive Board on 27 July 2022. Since then, the corporate risk register has continued to be reviewed and updated in accordance with the council's Risk Management Policy and in line with the Best City Ambition outcomes. The remainder of this report focuses on the management of the most significant risks currently on the corporate risk register and provides additional focus on our emergency planning arrangements that are essential to help us manage our resilience risks.

This report is supplemented by an annual assurance report on the authority's risk and resilience<sup>1</sup> arrangements considered each year by the council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. This report is publicly available and focuses on the policies, procedures, systems and processes in place to manage risk and resilience across all levels within the council and with our partners. The most recent report was approved at the Committee's meeting on 28th November 2022, with the next one due in November 2023.

The council received a Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge which took place in November 2022. Their headline findings were that there is *passion and ambition for the city, with the move to the Best City Ambition helping to further galvanise the city with partners feeling well supported and committed, and that finances are well-managed, but the scale of the challenge is significant, with staff being stretched and priorities requiring even greater focus*. The key messages from the Peer Review covered areas relating to corporate risks, including, partnership working (especially with the voluntary and community sector), progress against the low carbon agenda and the challenges facing the council from financial and staffing aspects.

## Council Values and Behaviours and risk

Linked to the Ambition are a series of shared Values and Behaviours covering aspects related to good risk management such as ethical behaviour and the staff code of conduct. Through the risk management and emergency planning arrangements, the council seeks to embed an effective risk and resilience culture across its values, and in the behaviour of all its staff and elected members. It is important that the strategic ambitions and objectives are aligned to the organisation's risk culture and the Values and Behaviours are followed. Where this is not the case, there would be an increased likelihood of risks occurring and their impact being material, for example through loss of public trust and confidence in the council.

The Being Our Best plan was introduced in 2023 for all managers across the council – over 2,000 in total. The plan, which includes recommendations from the LGA Peer Challenge, helps managers support their staff to be their best. The plan recognises the feedback and concerns about capacity and potential staff burnout as all services deal with the impact of increased demand and complexity, alongside squeezed

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<sup>1</sup> "Risk and resilience" is a term used to describe the inter-related areas of risk management, emergency planning and response, and business continuity management.

council budgets, recruitment challenges, whilst supporting households and businesses during the cost-of-living crisis. Underpinned by our values and behaviours, the plan helps all our managers understand what’s expected of them as we aim to deliver high quality services, as well as change and innovate to meet the upcoming challenges and make the most of digital opportunities and progress their personal development. The Being Our Best plan is linked to the council’s risk management arrangements as none of the corporate risks can be managed and mitigated without effective management skills and knowledge and an awareness of the challenges facing the workforce.

In July 2022, the council became the first local authority to appoint a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian - an independent person who employees can approach to raise any concerns or suggestions they may have about the workplace and how services are being delivered. The Guardian is effectively an early warning indicator that can help identify any risks at an early stage so they can be discussed and treated. Additionally, the staff survey, conducted across the whole workforce, is another way for concerns linked to risks and to the culture of the organisation to be raised, with the first full survey since Covid being completed in 2023.

**The national and regional risk environment**

A wider assessment of the external environment and potential risk factors is constantly undertaken. For example, economic shocks, major shifts in public policy and changes in legislation are monitored.

The risk and resilience arrangements take into consideration the National Risk Register (NRR), published by the Cabinet Office. The NRR is the public facing version of the National Security Risk Assessment (NRSA) which is the government’s assessment of the most serious risks facing the UK. The NRR and NRSA are used to inform the more local West Yorkshire Community Risk Register. Leeds City Council is represented at West Yorkshire Prepared, the local resilience forum (as detailed in the following section of this report), which provides a good conduit for horizon scanning of changes to risks and threats. Together the NRR, NRSA, West Yorkshire Community Risk Register and the work of the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum informs the review and update of the council’s corporate risks on City resilience and Council resilience.

**Risk Management Framework**

The council’s risks are identified, assessed and managed using six steps:



These iterative steps enable us to:

- Understand the nature and scale of the risks we face.
- Identify the level of risk that we are willing to accept.
- Recognise our ability to control and reduce risk.
- Recognise where we cannot control the risk.
- Take action where we can and when it would be the best use of resources. This helps us make better decisions and deliver better outcomes for our staff and the people of Leeds.

The steps are applied across the organisation through the Leeds Risk Management Framework: at strategic and operational levels and for programmes and projects. The adoption of the framework and compliance with it has helped to embed a risk management culture within the organisation. This report considers the strategic level: the arrangements in place to manage the council's corporate risks.

Active membership and participation with professional risk management organisations such as ALARM<sup>2</sup> and the Institute of Risk Management are also help us identify new and emerging risks as well as changes to existing risks facing the council and the city.

## Corporate Risks

### *Defining a corporate risk*

Corporate risks are those of significant, cross-cutting strategic importance that require the attention of the council's most senior managers and elected members. While all members of staff have responsibility for managing risks in their services, each of the corporate risks has one or more named 'risk owner(s)': members of the Corporate Leadership Team (the Chief Executive and directors) and Executive Board portfolio holders who, together, are accountable for their management. The Executive Board as a whole retains ultimate responsibility.

Corporate risks can be roughly split into two types: those that could principally affect the city and people of Leeds and others that relate more to the way we run our organisation internally. An example of a 'city' risk includes major flooding or a breach in the safeguarding arrangements that help protect vulnerable people; these are often managed in partnership with a range of other organisations. An example of a more internal 'council' risk is a major, prolonged failure of the ICT network. The council's organisational plan sets out how we will mobilise our internal resources – our people, money, digital capabilities, land and buildings, communications and engagement. Should any of the internal council risks arise, this would affect our ability to deliver the plan. Some risks clearly impact on both the city and the council – a major disruptive event in the city being a current example.

### *How corporate risks are assessed and managed*

Each corporate risk has a current rating based on a combined assessment of how likely the risk is to occur – its probability - and its potential impact after considering the controls already put in place. When evaluating the impact of a risk we consider the range of consequences that could result: effects on the local community, staff, the services we provide, any cost implications and whether the risk could prevent us meeting our statutory and legal requirements.

A consistent '5x5' scoring mechanism – seen at annex 1 of this report - is used to carry out this assessment of probability and impact which ensures that the risks are rated in the same way. Target ratings are also applied for each risk based on the lowest probability and impact scores deemed viable to manage the risk to an acceptable level given the amount of resources available to deal with it. These are used to compare

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<sup>2</sup> ALARM is a not-for-profit professional membership association that supports risk and insurance professionals.

the gap between 'where the risk is now' based on a reasonable worst-case scenario, to 'how low do we aim for the risk to go' and so help determine whether additional actions are needed to manage the risk down to the target level.

The greater the risk, the more we try to do to manage it if it is in our control and if that would be the best use of resources. The council takes a balanced approach, recognising that the cost and time involved in managing the risk down to nothing may not always be the best use of public money and we factor this in when establishing the target rating and developing our risk management action plans.

Risks are reviewed and updated regularly through horizon scanning, benchmarking and in response to findings from inspections and audits, government policy changes and engagement with staff and the public. The LCC Policy Network, made up of officers engaged in analysis and policy development, is a useful source of such insight.

Managing risk is the responsibility of everyone, is at the heart of the council's culture and values and has to be reflected in the behaviours of staff and elected members. This helps ensure that risk decision making is both open and transparent.

### ***Current corporate risks***

The risk map seen at Figure 1 summarises the risks on the corporate risk register at September 2023 and their current 'reasonable worst-case scenario' ratings based on combined probability and impact scores.

This report provides a summary assurance on how each of the corporate risks currently rated as 'Very High' and 'High' – i.e. those of the highest significance - are managed, and signposts to where further information can be found. An overview of the risks covered in this report is provided at Table 1, detailing their full descriptions and risk owners. Further details about how the risks are scored can be seen in Annex 1 of this report.

### **Emergency planning and business continuity**

The corporate risk register includes several risks of a resilience nature i.e. those relating to major incidents and emergencies that could affect the safety of the citizens, communities and businesses of Leeds. This section of the report provides additional information on how Leeds City Council plays a vital role in preparing for and responding to major incidents.

The council's Resilience and Emergencies Team (RET) have the responsibility of ensuring that our legislative duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 are met. These duties are:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.
- Put in place emergency plans.
- Put in place business continuity management arrangements.
- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination.
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency.
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

The council's emergency planning approach follows the four phases of emergency management:



### ***Emergency Plans***

Leeds City Council has fifteen core plans to respond to the High and Very High risks outlined within the West Yorkshire Community Risk Register, these are: Severe Weather; Flooding; Reception Centre; Recovery and Site Clearance; Mass Fatality; Utility Failure; City Centre Evacuation; Mass Casualties; Reservoir Inundation; Chemical and Environmental Hazards; CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) Response; Fuel Disruption; Outbreak Response; Pandemic Influenza, and Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases.

The plans are produced in consultation with the council services and partners that have a role and responsibility in responding to the activation of any plan.

### ***Warning and Informing***

Leeds' citizens, communities and businesses face a range of emergencies. To provide information on preparing for and dealing with emergencies, the RET maintains the [Emergencies](#) webpage on Leeds.gov. The council uses a wide range of communication methods to engage with the general public and city stakeholders on warning and informing of incidents, including social media channels and signposting to alerts provided by partners such as Gov.uk (flooding) and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Earlier this year, Roundhay Park hosted the Emergency Services Show, an event intended to build the awareness of members of the public about the risks that they face and to enhance their personal resilience.

### ***Business Continuity Management***

The council has classed over 80 of its services as being 'critical', with each one requiring a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) setting out their arrangements for recovering from a disruptive incident back to an acceptable level of service delivery. The RET has responsibility for co-ordinating the annual review and update of the BCPs by their respective owners, with this year's update being completed in June.

### ***Business Continuity Network***

Prior to the pandemic, the RET hosted regular events in the Civic Hall, where local businesses were able to attend and discuss topics relating to Business Continuity Management. The first post pandemic event is planned for 9th November 2023 and will be based around the theme of Counter Terrorism, Protect duty and 'Martyn's Law'<sup>3</sup>. We hope to welcome in the region of 100 businesses to the event.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Martyn's Law' will place a requirement on those responsible for certain venues to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.

## ***Training and Exercising***

All Emergency and Business Continuity plans follow a programme of review, training and exercising. The Local Resilience Forum produces an annual training and exercising programme, summarised in the following section. As part of these exercises the robustness of our local plans can be tested.

### ***West Yorkshire Prepared***

[West Yorkshire Prepared](#) is the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for West Yorkshire. A LRF is a multi-agency forum consisting of key emergency responders, including local authorities, “blue light” services as well as other supporting agencies. Established under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which came into effect in order to ensure the UK is better prepared to cope with potential risks, LRFs require their multi-agency partner organisations to work together to prepare, respond and recover from different major incidents.

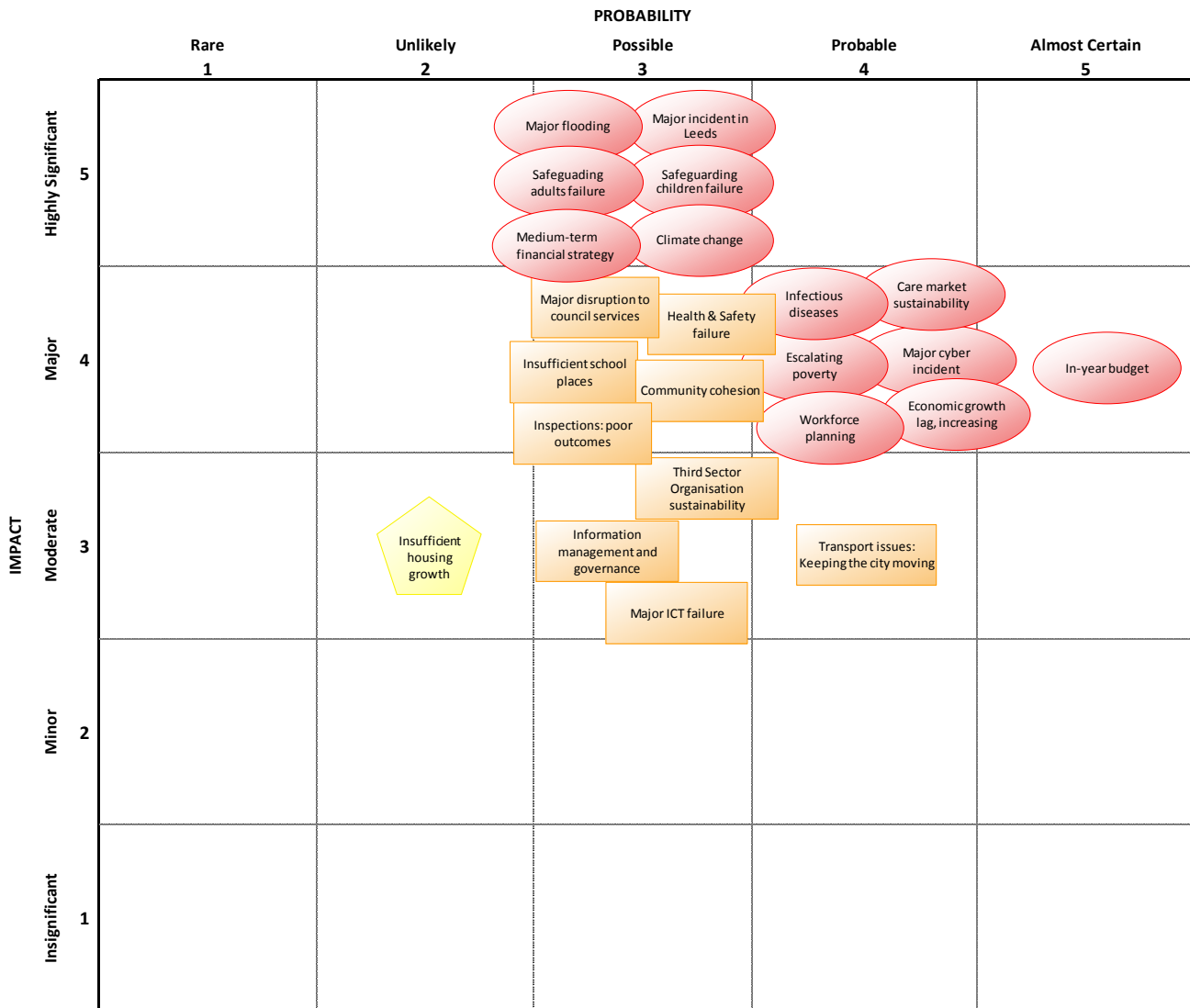
West Yorkshire Prepared produces an annual report which acknowledges the hard work, wider collaboration and achievement of the forum over the previous twelve months. The most recent report covering the 2022/23 municipal year was published in July 2023 and can be seen [here](#).

The Annual Report includes details of the sub-groups within West Yorkshire Prepared which include those for Risk and Capabilities; Business Continuity; Training, Exercising and Development; Severe Weather and Warning and Informing. Leeds City Council is represented at the LRF and its sub-groups. The Director of Strategy and Resources at Leeds is a co-chair of the LRF alongside senior police and fire colleagues.

Training and exercising are an essential part of the work undertaken by West Yorkshire Prepared to ensure all partners are trained and appropriately prepared for a wider range of emergency incidents that may occur in the region. The 2022/23 municipal year saw many exercises take place as well as incidents that required a multi-agency response, and a summary of these can be seen in the Annual Report. Exercises and incidents of note included:

- Extreme Heat during summer 2022, requiring the Severe Weather Plan to be activated.
- Operation London Bridge (response to the Death of HM Queen Elizabeth II).
- Exercise GREX, a no-notice activation to test the ability of partner agencies to mobilise a virtual meeting outside of normal working hours.
- Exercise DARK DAY, a multi-agency exercise to test the strategic response to a Marauding Terrorist Attack at multiple locations.

**Figure 1: Corporate Risk Map at September 2023**  
Supporting our Best City ambitions



Key:

- Very high risk
- High risk
- Medium risk
- Low risk



**Table 1: Overview of significant and ‘standing’ corporate risks**

Risk area	Description	Accountability (Risk owners)		Current Rating
		Senior officer	Member & Portfolio	
<b>In-year budget</b>	The council’s financial position goes into significant deficit in current year resulting in reserves being less than minimum specified by council’s risk-based reserves policy	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	Cllr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	Very High
<b>Escalating poverty</b>	The impact of poverty in the city escalates due to factors such as inflation, fuel, food and energy prices increases	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing & Environment	Cllr M Harland: Executive Member for Communities	Very High
<b>Economic growth lag</b>	Growth in Leeds businesses is slower and less inclusive than the national and international economy, leading to lower wages, fewer jobs and poorer citizens and communities	Martin Farrington, Director of City Development	Cllr Jonathan Pryor: Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education	Very High
<b>Care market sustainability and viability</b>	Without a thriving care market in the city, there is a risk that people in need of care services are not able to access them when needed or that services are not of sufficient quality	Caroline Baria, Director of Adults & Health	Cllr Salma Arif: Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles	Very High
<b>Infectious diseases</b>	Preparedness for new and emerging infectious diseases of concern and outbreaks	Victoria Eaton, Director of Public Health	Cllr Salma Arif: Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles	Very High
<b>Major cyber incident</b>	Risk to citizens, council and city as a result of digital crime, process failure or people’s actions in relation to a major cyber incident	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	Cllr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	Very High
<b>Workforce planning</b>	Workforce resource not in place to deliver the service to the required standard	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	Cllr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	Very High
<b>Safeguarding children</b>	Risk of harm, accident or death to a child linked to failure of the council to act appropriately according to safeguarding arrangements	Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families	Cllr F Venner: Executive Member for Children’s Social Care and Health Partnerships	Very High
<b>Safeguarding adults</b>	Failure a) of staff in any council directorate to recognise and report a risk of abuse or neglect facing an adult with care and support needs in Leeds, and b) of staff adult social care to respond appropriately, in line with national legislation and safeguarding adults procedures	Caroline Baria, Director of Adults & Health	Cllr Salma Arif: Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles	Very High
<b>Climate change</b>	Failure to adapt to and mitigate more extreme weather conditions brought about by climate change, resulting in an adverse impact on Leeds (its people, communities, infrastructure, economy and natural environment)	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing & Environment	Cllr M Rafique: Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space	Very High
<b>Major flooding</b>	Major flooding, especially north of the city centre station, occurs in Leeds that has a significant impact on homes, business, land and infrastructure	Martin Farrington, Director of City Development	Cllr M Rafique: Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space	Very High
<b>Medium-term financial position</b>	The council cannot balance its Medium-Term Financial Strategy	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	Cllr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	Very High

Risk area	Description	Accountability (Risk owners)		Current Rating
		Senior officer	Member & Portfolio	
<b>City resilience</b>	Risk of significant disruption in Leeds (major incident in the city)	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	Very High
<b>Inspections: poor outcome</b>	Poor or inadequate outcome from a service/delivery based inspection	Tom Riordan., Chief Executive, Leeds City Council	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	High
<b>School places</b>	Failure to provide sufficient school places in good quality buildings that meet the needs of local communities	Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families and Martin Farrington, Director of City Development	CLr F Venner: Executive Member for Children’s Social Care and Health Partnerships	High
<b>Community cohesion</b>	Failure to identify and address the barriers to community cohesion and increased tensions in Leeds	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing & Environment	CLr M Harland: Executive Member for Communities	High
<b>Council resilience</b>	Risk of significant disruption to council services and failure to effectively manage emergency incidents (major incident in the council)	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	High
<b>Health and safety</b>	Risk of a health & safety failure resulting in death, injury, damage or legal challenge	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	High
<b>Transport: Keeping the city moving</b>	Failure to adequately maintain and manage the current transport infrastructure to keep the city moving.	Martin Farrington, Director of City Development	CLr H Hayden: Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure	High
<b>Cost of living impact on Third Sector Organisations</b>	There is a risk that Third Sector Organisations will not be able to deliver due to reduced funding and increased demand	James Rogers, Director of Communities, Housing & Environment	CLr M Harland: Executive Member for Communities	High
<b>Information management</b>	Risk of harm to individuals, partners, organisations, third parties and the council as a result of non-compliance with Information Governance legislation and industry standards	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	High
<b>Major ICT failure</b>	Risk that council services are disrupted due to frequent and / or prolonged ICT failures	Mariana Pexton, Director of Strategy and Resources	CLr D Coupar: Executive Member for Resources	High

## Financial management corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The council's current and future financial position is subject to many risks, notably not addressing the financial pressures in a sustainable way so that the revenue budget cannot be balanced and the council's financial position going into significant deficit. The financial position – for both revenue and capital - remains challenging: against a backdrop of uncertainty on Government funding, inflation and cost of living pressures have significant implications for the council's finances and levels of demand. Failing to deliver a balanced budget that addresses these issues both in the short and medium-term will ultimately require the council to consider even more difficult decisions that could have a far greater impact on front-line services, including those that support the most vulnerable. If the council's Chief Officer - Financial Services in their professional opinion considers that the authority cannot deliver a balanced budget position in 2023/24, a Section 114 notice would have to be issued, prompting an emergency budget.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- **Roles and responsibilities** - financial management within the council is delivered by colleagues who report to and are accountable to the Chief Officer - Financial Services (the Section 151 Officer), with clear accountability and training of all budget holders.
- **Strategic financial planning** – focussing on the annual funding settlement from government and wider reform of local government funding.
- **Budget preparation and setting** – revenue and capital budget planning, both for the current budget year and over the medium term. Budget proposals are subject to scrutiny and public consultation and are submitted to Full Council for approval in February.
- **In-year budget monitoring** – financial management and monitoring continues to be undertaken on a risk-based approach where financial management resources are prioritised to support those areas of the budget that are judged to be at risk. Both revenue and capital budgets are continually monitored and reported regularly to senior managers and members, including regular public reports to the council's Executive Board meeting.
- **Closure of accounts** – timely accounts without audit qualification ensure we can properly account for resources used during the year and fully understand the council's financial standing.
- **Audit inspections** – providing elected members and the public with independent assurance that the accounts reflect a true and fair view of the council's financial position.
- **Engagement** – the council value of 'spending money wisely' is part of the organisational culture and, along with the other shared Values and Behaviours, forms part of staff appraisals.
- **Fraud and corruption:** The council has a zero-tolerance stance on fraud, bribery and corruption and is committed to addressing these risks to protect public funds. Controls include fraud awareness training and a whistleblowing hotline

### Further actions planned

- Whilst the council continues to make every effort to protect the front-line delivery of services, the position remains difficult to manage financially. In addition to the inherent pressures due to demand and demography, especially within adults and children's social care, there will be a continued focus on dealing with the financial implications for the council from the economic impact of the rising cost of living, pay and price inflation and the loss of income for services the council provides.
- The council's Executive Board will be receiving a range of financial reports in the current municipal year including those on the Capital Programme and the Treasury Management Strategy, with a further update to the authority's rolling 5-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy scheduled for September 2023.

### More information

Financial information can be seen on the council's Leeds.gov website: [Our financial plans](#) [Our financial performance](#) and the [2023/24 Revenue Budget and Council Tax report](#)

## Escalating poverty corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The council and partners across the city have been recognised for the work undertaken on reducing poverty for many years. Despite this, poverty and financial exclusion have continued to worsen in Leeds and across the UK, and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation has now been further intensified by the cost-of-living crisis. The cost-of-living crisis started to take effect in July 2021 due to global and national supply chain issues, which were impacted by demand on the workforce, energy, fuel, and production of raw materials for food and transport. As lockdown rules were eased and as the world economy began to re-open businesses saw huge demand for goods, which in turn led to global shortages and price increases.

Longstanding barriers including lack of awareness or understanding, and digital exclusion are further compounding the situation and are preventing people from reaching services. With more households experiencing hardship for the first time, and many already below the poverty line facing destitution and desperation, the wide-ranging citywide support offer must be both maintained and enhanced to support Leeds residents and prevent further escalation.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

The council has set out a proposal to create a breakthrough priority with the aim of: “working together across sectors to harness the capacity and capability in the city, its communities and those with lived experience to develop a city solution to welfare provision and addressing the cost-of-living crisis – with a specific focus on food, fuel, housing and digital inclusion”. Building on both the existing citywide support infrastructure and learning from the COVID-19 pandemic emergency response, strategic and operational groups have been meeting since September 2022 to coordinate actions to mitigate as far as possible the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis through a proactive, collaborative approach on key issues relating to food, fuel, housing and digital. The groups all have senior representatives from the council, health, third sector and other key partners. Full details are included in the ‘Cost of Living Update’ Executive Board Reports that have been produced on a quarterly basis from October 2022.

The council’s Financial Inclusion Team works closely across council services and alongside national and local partners such as DWP, Advice Agencies, Leeds Credit Union, Leeds Food Aid Network as well as many third sector organisations, to run initiatives and schemes that reduce the impacts of poverty and strengthen the financial resilience of residents and communities in the city. The team is responsible for the Money Information Centre website and printed resources, the Leeds Poverty Factbook and the Cost-of-Living Dashboard.

### Further actions planned

Developing a city solution to welfare provision and on addressing the cost-of-living crisis. This work is reflected in the ‘Understanding and Addressing the Cost-of-Living Crisis’ report to July Executive Board, with recommendations including “To approve the establishment of a strategic, cross cutting, welfare group with the aim of taking a proactive approach to addressing issues Leeds residents face relating to the cost-of-living crisis”.

### More information

- The Leeds Cost of Living Dashboard draws on data and statistics from a wide variety of national and local sources to provide regular updates on the impact of the Cost of Living for Leeds residents.
- The Leeds Poverty Factbook helps us to understand and document the levels of poverty in Leeds; inform policies and assist in the City’s anti-poverty agenda. The Fact Book contains national and locally sourced data and information to help define and analyse the different themes of poverty.
- Regular reporting to Executive Board on the work undertaken around the Cost of Living. The most recent report from July 2023 can be seen [here](#) (Item 11).

To access this information please visit [Leeds Observatory – Financial Inclusion](#)

In December 2022, the council hosted a “State of the City” event for a wide range of partners including representatives from Third sector organisations, the private sector, [Leeds Anchor Network](#) and elected members. The event focussed on the impacts of the rising cost of living on people and organisations in Leeds. The event was designed to encourage a city-wide conversation about what is already being done in response and where Leeds can work together to go further, within available means and resources.

## Economic growth lag corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Volatility in the global, national and local economic environment all represent threats to the Leeds economy. In particular, our economy has been impacted by the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, the war in Ukraine, high inflation and interest rates and adjustment for businesses arising from leaving the EU. If the council and its economic partners don't understand the current and challenges and opportunities, deliver effective business and skills, and infrastructure support, this will have an adverse impact on the economy, business survival, investment and growth. There will be further longer-term consequences for the city in terms of lack of opportunity, lower wages, falling employment levels and an increase in poverty and inequality.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- The Inclusive Growth Strategy, which is due to be updated in September 2023.
- We work in conjunction with our partners, including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership and the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, on a range of aspects such as supporting inward investment, business growth and enterprise, promoting a thriving and safe city centre and delivering regeneration projects.
- The council has an Economic Development Team that works on a diverse range of projects to support business, create employment and drive economic growth through programmes, including facilitating the Anchor Network.
- A range of performance information used to evaluate the Leeds Economy, including city centre daytime footfall, commuting activity and business growth.
- A Skills and Talent Plan with clear actions to help people adapt to the future of work.
- A programme of work in place to understand the opportunities and challenges for the Leeds economy including:
  - The second version of the Leeds Social Progress Index, a tool that helps measure how well Leeds is doing in terms of Inclusive Growth. The Index helps us understand what's happening in different areas of the city (ward based) by looking at multiple parts and offers a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city.
  - A commissioned piece of work focusing on the city centre and the night-time economy.

### Further actions planned

- Work to publicise and embed the Inclusive Growth Strategy following its update and approval.
- Further development of the Leeds Inclusive Growth website that provide information, guidance and support for local people and businesses.
- Progressing links with central government to promote and maintain lobbying to ensure that the needs of Leeds businesses are fully understood, and programmes can support these.
- The establishment of the Leeds Business Anchors Network in Autumn 2023.
- A communications plan for the second version of the Social Progress Index for Leeds.
- Continue to seek opportunities that enable the delivery of our innovation vision to drive a healthier, greener, and inclusive future for Leeds.
- Developing links with new business start-ups to encourage growth and support survival.

### More information

- The Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy, Innovation Vision and Social Progress Index can be viewed here: [Inclusive Growth Leeds](#).
- Business and licensing information is available on [Leeds.gov.uk](#), including [How to start your own business](#).

## Care market sustainability and viability corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Without a thriving care market in the city, there is a risk that people in need of care services are not able to access them when required or are not able to access quality services when required, placing the council in breach of its legal duty. The availability of staffing within externally commissioned services is still a major concern within the care market. In addition, there are significant financial pressures on the sector particularly in relation to rising energy and fuel costs and the ending of additional funding from the government through the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund and Infection Control Fund.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- Quality frameworks implemented in services commissioned by the authority which include provisions for financial monitoring, business continuity planning as well as monitoring the quality of the service.
- Adult Social Care Provider Forum held with care providers and the wider care sector to discuss wide ranging issues affecting the care sector in the city such as financial climate and workforce.
- Additional funding has been provided for the home care contract to raise the wages of staff in the independent sector to a level above the Real Living Wage to assist providers with recruitment and retention.
- Closer working with the Integrated Care Board (formerly the CCG) to better manage the oversight of the regulated care markets.
- Contract management meetings with individual providers and sector provider forums.
- A plan, including lessons learnt, is in place ready to be used in the event of a care provider failure.
- Liaison with the CQC through regular contact between inspectors and officers and regular information sharing meetings to gather early intelligence on poor quality services being provided.
- Information sharing with the care market through a regular care bulletin and improved care quality website.
- The Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund has supported the completion of a cost of care exercise for older adults care homes and 18+ home care to ensure the rates for commissioning care as far as possible reflect the increased costs within the sector. The reports detailing this work were published in March 2023 and can be seen [here](#).

### Further actions planned

Leeds continues work to support providers recruit and retain care staff both locally and internationally.

Leeds is acting as the host authority for the Yorkshire and Humber regional coordination of the International recruitment fund for the adult social care sector. The fund will help tackle the barriers of international recruitment, while upholding ethical recruitment and employment practices. The key elements of the region's delivery plan are to:

- Develop a local ethical recruitment charter, bursary agreement and fair share agreement, building on the national code of practice.
- Develop and implement an advice and support offer for care providers, to make high quality recruitment easier.
- Provide and manage bursaries to care providers across the region as a contribution towards sponsorship licence costs.
- Bring 360 new international recruits to the region by Summer 2024, and ensure they receive quality support.

A significant programme is underway to recommission home care services in a manner which will establish a more efficient approach to commissioning and delivering care, whilst also aiming to improve career prospects terms and conditions for staff.

Work is continuing to identify and work with the providers who may be more affected by market issues and therefore at greater risk of financial instability.

## Infectious diseases corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

New and emerging infectious diseases pose a threat to the public's health, in particular from serious illness and fatalities, especially in those unprotected by vaccinations. The risk also has adverse impacts on social and economic inequalities as well as the workforce and its ability to deliver essential services. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of local authorities and the public in preparing for and responding to new and emerging infectious diseases.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- The council contributes to multiagency work to prepare for and respond to infectious diseases, including the Health Protection Board (who regularly review risks) and Multiagency Infectious Diseases Review and Response meetings which aim to ensure any outbreaks of concern are proactively managed.
- A Leeds Outbreak Management Plan is in place which incorporates learning from good practice nationally and from the Association of Directors of Public Health. This represents their professional views as the local leaders for the nation's health. This plan is developed with local partners to agree an approach to local outbreaks in Leeds.
- To strengthen the Outbreak Management Plan, a roles and responsibilities document has been developed which looks at responses to scenarios that may occur.
- The council has a good working relationship with the [UK Health Security Agency](#) (UKHSA) to review, plan and future-proof the local health protection system, including local alert systems in place across the health and social care sector to ensure that relevant organisations are aware of current and upcoming threats so that plans to deal with them can be enacted if required.
- Outbreak management response arrangements are in place through local surveillance and the council's Health Protection's Single Point of Contact system, which works closely with the UKHSA, in identifying emerging diseases. UKHSA provides guidance for infectious diseases.
- Close working with UKHSA to review, plan and future-proof the local health protection system.
- An effective partnership with Leeds Community Healthcare to ensure that there is a strong Infection Prevention Control workforce and offer for the city.
- An Incident Management Team with processes established to manage outbreaks or incidents in areas of high-risk e.g. in vulnerable/complex settings.
- Robust arrangements are in place for the anticipation of winter pressures across the health protection system (including surveillance, monitoring and escalation procedures).
- The health protection surveillance system collates outbreak notifications from school and early years, care homes and other settings which allows an effective and proactive outbreak management responses.

### Further actions planned

The Leeds approach to prevent transmission of new and emerging infectious diseases of concern is through intensifying a combination of interventions and measures to minimise harm, keep people safe, protect vulnerable people and minimise poverty and inequalities. Our approach continues to be comprehensive across the whole health care system and is informed by the full range of public health measures from vaccination, infection prevention control, communications, managing outbreaks and preventative activity, including encouraging safe practices and choices.

The Leeds Public Adverse Weather Health Plan (2023) is currently being developed with local partners.

### More information

Leeds' [Public Health Resource Centre](#) which includes information for people working to promote health and wellbeing in Leeds, including details of Public Health campaigns.

## Major cyber incident corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The council's digital infrastructure is under constant attack from malicious sources attempting to disrupt the confidentiality, availability and integrity of our information or bring our systems and applications to a standstill, severely impacting our ability to deliver critical services to the public. Cyber criminals seek to exploit UK public organisations and infrastructure for profit. Their technical sophistication varies from small scale fraud from individuals and gangs to advanced organisations. The world cyber climate also presents threats; following the attacks on Ukraine, the [National Cyber Security Centre](#) (NCSC) called on organisations in the UK to bolster their online defences. Internal threats to cyber security can arise from the inadvertent actions of employees, or from the malicious intent of insiders such as disgruntled or former employees.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- **People** – Roles and responsibilities are clearly set out, including a Senior Information Risk Owner, Data Protection Officer and a Cyber Assurance Lead (a suitably qualified Cyber Security Professional). Mandatory information management and governance training for elected members and staff includes elements on 'cyber'. The message reinforced that this risk is everyone's responsibility.
- **Policies and processes** – An Information Assurance Policy, setting out the council's approach to managing information security and risk, includes cyber-security within its scope. This is complemented by the Remote Working Policy which includes information security measures for staff working at home or offsite.
- **Technology** – Filtering, blocking, scanning, firewalls, encryptions and access controls help prevent breaches of the council's IT network, council devices and systems. Over the last 12 months the level of cyber alerting, which assists the monitoring of cyber security threats for public sector organisations, has increased. The council network is subject to approx. 5 million system intrusion blocks each month.
- **Assurance and Compliance** – Information Assurance (including aspects of cyber) forms part of the council's Annual Governance Statement which reports on the effectiveness of the council's internal controls, reviews and audits and adopting compliance regimes such as the government's Public Services Network (PSN<sup>1</sup>) Code of Connection and the Data Protection and Security Toolkit and cyber essentials plus for Health.

### Further actions planned

- Continue to follow industry best practice and adopt any future updates from sources such as the Information Commissioners Office and the NCSC<sup>2</sup>.
- An enhanced level of cyber security training for digitally enabled employees is being developed.
- Ongoing work to retain the council's PSN compliance.
- Funding from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to improve our cyber arrangements has been received and is being allocated to help implement the ISMS..

### More information

DLUHC is developing a local government cyber security standard, termed the Cyber Health Framework. Further details can be seen [here](#).

An annual report is considered by the council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee which details the steps being taken to maintain and improve the authority's information governance arrangements (including a section on cyber assurance). The report from February 2023, is available [here](#). Cyber assurance details can be found in Section 8 of the report (page 32).

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<sup>1</sup> PSN Code of Connection (CoCo) is an independent security assessment of external and internal network infrastructure and devices.

<sup>2</sup> The NCSC also issues cyber security guidance for public sector organisations.



## Workforce planning corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Workforce Planning is the beginning of the journey to ensure we are clear about the resources we require to deliver the Best City Ambition and organisational plans. Our workforce is one of our biggest assets, therefore we need to ensure we have the right people in place to deliver our services to the required standard. This means having the right people with the requisite skills in the right place, at the right time. Since the pandemic and Brexit, the labour market has changed, within some sectors there are clear skills shortages. In addition, what people are looking for from their role and employer is also changing. If we fail to plan for our future workforce requirements, we may encounter difficulties recruiting to critical roles which will in turn impact on service delivery.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

Our [People strategy 2020 to 2025](#) clearly sets out our vision to be the Best Place to Work. The Strategy is supported by the Being Your Best Plan

The financial challenges experienced by the council over recent years has led to the development of the Medium Terms Finance Strategy (see Financial management corporate risk assurance), which has supported services to think longer term. This helps support the ethos of our workforce planning approach as services need to look ahead to the future in terms of how they will deliver services within budget. The workforce is often one of the biggest costs, we have seen a programme of service reviews carried out over recent years to achieve efficiency savings that has impacted on the make-up of our workforce. Any reductions in staffing have been managed through our Managing Staff Reductions policy. A Supporting Futures Toolkit was developed to support individuals who were/are at risk of redundancy because of a service review or would be interested in alternative opportunities to minimise the risk of redundancy. This has provided an opportunity to retain key skills within the workforce.

The Recruitment and Resourcing Team within the council's HR service are working to increase our maturity as an organisation in relation to workforce planning. The team have a clear support offer for managers, offering different levels of service from providing information and advice, to hands on support from the team to facilitate workshops or bringing in external independent expertise depending on the size and scale of the service needs. We have worked to develop the availability of data that will enable workforce planning discussion within services. We are focusing our effort with services that are looking for support or that have been identified as having hard to recruit posts to help focus future workforce planning, to ensure we have clear talent pipelines developed or identified.

Alongside the workforce planning stream, the team support managers with identifying different entry routes into the organisation and the broader recruitment support. Developing a wide range of entry routes into the organisation will help maximise the diversity of our workforce. This includes running schemes such as the graduate, intern, apprenticeship and T-level programmes. Enabling us to grow our own talent, which if planned can help ensure we have the right skills when we need them. The apprenticeship scheme has also supported many to progress their careers within the council or the city. We regularly engage with partners across the city including colleges, universities, NHS, Health & Care Academy and Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network<sup>3</sup> among others. Particularly looking at our workforce planning approach as a city within the Health and Care Sector.

Once workforce plans are in place and entry routes established, we need a clear approach to the recruitment and retention of our future workforce. A full end to end review of our approach to recruitment has been carried out. Action has already been taken to modernise our approach to reflect the current market, work has progressed to explore innovative ways to recruit and engage with future workforce, further develop our employer brand and help ensure we attract diverse candidates.

### Further actions planned

Our annual staff survey helps identifying the issues facing the workforce that need to be addressed. The key issues from the most recent survey related to career progression opportunities, workloads and the need for quality tools, IT equipment and systems.

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<sup>3</sup> Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network is a group of the city's largest (mainly) public sector employers. They come together and focus on areas where they can make a difference for people as an employer.

## Safeguarding children corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The potential consequence of a significant failure in safeguarding is that a child or young person could be seriously harmed, abused, or die. This is a tragic outcome for all, including the family of the young person. From a council perspective, this could damage public trust and confidence in the council depending on the seriousness of failure and could possibly lead to intervention by Ofsted and/or government. Along with key partners from health, police and education, the council is jointly responsible for adequate provision of services and functions which aim to support children with additional needs both formally assessed and needs not subject to statutory assessment. Increased demand and increased cost of provision coupled with capacity constraints are resulting in a strained system. The work of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LCSP) can be seen in their [Annual Report](#). The Safeguarding children risk is linked to the corporate risk on “Poor outcome from a service based inspection” which is detailed later in this report.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

#### **Early Help:**

Early Help Hubs are multi-agency services located in communities where families live. This ensures that families have access to the services they need to provide appropriate support in a timely and accessible manner. Early Help practitioners from the Hubs work alongside colleagues at the Front Door to better align early help services with Duty and Advice, directly preventing escalation into statutory services where appropriate by offering a timely early help response. The local authority also jointly funds Cluster services with schools and ICB to offer support to families in need in their locality and around their school community. We have also maintained our children’s centres and youth services providing support to pre-school children as well as adolescents.

#### **Front Door arrangements:**

Partners are co-located and work in partnership to safeguard children and young people. Professionals can have direct conversations with qualified social workers, which leads to a better-quality of information sharing at an early stage. These include partnership daily discussions around referrals where there are domestic violence and abuse concerns. Qualified social workers are based at the Front Door along with police and health practitioners as part of the council’s partnership arrangements. This ensures timely multi-agency decisions about safeguarding concerns can be made by the relevant professionals. Out of hours safeguarding concerns are dealt with by the Emergency Duty Social Workers, based with the Police Safeguarding team.

#### **Social work:**

The structure of the Social Work service in Leeds is based on a locality model of delivery close to families and communities. In response to deprivation and need across the city, social work teams are organised across 3 areas of the city, South, West North West, and East North East. There is also currently one Early Help Hub in each area supporting the Early Help provision in the Locality. There are specialist services in relation to Child Exploitation, The SAFE Project, who support work with young people at medium or high risk of harm. The Child Looked After Service and Care Leavers services provide focused long term work to support children Looked After and Care Leavers in line with corporate parenting responsibilities.

#### **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP):**

The council recently commissioned Price Waterhouse Coopers to undertake a review of our [EHCP](#) processes. Regular reviews of resourcing are undertaken in order to try to balance demand issues.

#### **Performance management/quality assurance:**

There is a robust performance management and quality assurance framework in place that ensures management oversight at every level, internal scrutiny and review. This includes a monthly quality assurance (QA) meeting, an annual audit schedule of themed audits, and a weekly multi agency referral review meeting.

#### **Skilled workforce:**

There is a comprehensive workforce development offer and framework in line with national requirements for social workers. This includes additional training and support in the first year of qualifying as well as Advanced Practitioners providing practice support, mentoring and co-working around complex work. The work of social workers is supported by personal and case supervision underpinned by a clear supervision framework.

**Recruitment and retention:**

As nationally, Leeds continues to carry high number of social work vacancies, 70 approximately across the service impacting on caseloads and workers well-being. We have regular case load meetings and checks to look at individual worker level cases and capacity across the service. We have a clear recruitment plan including overseas recruitment and links with our feeder universities. We also have an established apprenticeship programme and are lead LA for Step up to Social Work for Bradford, Calderdale, Wakefield and Leeds. These are all entry programmes to social work. We have appointed some agency workers and also temporary social work assistants in teams where there are vacancy factors to provide support.

**Safeguarding Partnership:**

The responsibilities for safeguarding are collectively held by the council, integrated care boards, and West Yorkshire Police through LSCP. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 lays out the shared responsibility between organisations and agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area. Local organisations and agencies that work with children and families play a significant role when it comes to safeguarding children. The responsibility rests with the three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together. In Leeds the LSCP has close working relationships with a range of organisations, including those from the health, housing and third sectors, and the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board. This enables partners to work towards making Leeds a Safe Place for Everyone. Partnership working also include learning from experience (lessons learned) to improve the way we work.

**Reporting arrangements:**

Clear and well-publicised guidance is available on [Leeds.gov.uk](https://www.leeds.gov.uk) and [LSCP](https://www.lscp.org.uk) websites for members of the public and practitioners on how to report child safeguarding concerns.

**External partners:**

Challenge and scrutiny from external experts, leading practitioners, and the extensive use of research to inform practice. Leeds is engaged in regular regional peer challenges and health checks that provide a strong methodology for support and challenge across the region.

**Plans and strategies:**

Safeguarding is a clear priority in the strategic plans of the council (Child-Friendly Leeds) and relevant partners, in particular the [Children and Young People's Plan \(pp13-14\)](#), which was updated in early 2023 and approved at Full Council on 12 July. Through the council's Safeguarding Policy, all council staff have an obligation to protect all children, and vulnerable adults.

**Inspection:**

The [most recent 'full' Ofsted inspection](#), in February 2022, found services for children to be outstanding, retaining the judgement from the 2018 inspection. This inspection was a full and comprehensive assessment by a team of inspectors looking at the whole system as well as children's case files and speaking with practitioners from across the directorate.

**Further actions planned:**

- Re-structuring Early Help services around Family Help following the recommendations of the National Review of Children's Social Care, *Stable Homes, Built on Love*. This will further strengthen early support to families in need reducing escalation in concerns the need for statutory social work intervention.
- Working with colleagues in the council's Communities Service<sup>4</sup> around our approach to Youth Violence rolling out the success of the East Youth Violence meetings to the South and West of the city. These meetings are chaired by the police and are partnership meetings looking at young people who are involved in youth violence and gang affiliation.
- Reviewing our retention offer for social workers and residential workers.
- Working with the Health and Social Care Academy and Adults and Health around recruitment.

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<sup>4</sup> Responsible for the strategic leadership and direction of the council's localities and communities functions including the locality working agenda, best city for communities' framework, third sector and equality function.

## Safeguarding adults corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The abuse of adults with care and support needs in Leeds can happen anywhere, be committed by anyone and can take many forms. To prevent this type of abuse and to support individuals to meet their desired outcomes should harm take place, a range of safeguarding measures are in place. Should any of these measures fail, an adult may suffer violence, serious harm and/or ultimately death. Such a tragic outcome could represent a failure in the council's legal and ethical safeguarding duties and have significant resource implications including financial costs, ombudsman enquiries and even judicial review. The Safeguarding adults risk is linked to the corporate risk on "Poor outcome from a service based inspection" which is detailed later in this report.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

The [Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board](#) (LSAB) is a multi-agency statutory partnership of organisations, including the council, that work together to both prevent and end abuse of adults with care and support needs in Leeds. The LSAB has a three year [Strategic Plan](#) and produces an annual report which sets out specific actions that help the Board and its partners achieve its ambitions. Other controls in place to manage this risk include:

- Multi-agency [Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures](#), including national and regional guidance.
- Cross-Council Safeguarding Policy: all council staff have an obligation to protect all children, and vulnerable adults. The Policy helps employees to understand, recognise, and report a safeguarding concern.
- The LSAB undertake safeguarding adults reviews (in accordance with the Care Act 2014) and share the learning and associated actions with the council and partners, to ensure lessons are learned.
- The Safeguarding theme runs through the work of [Safer Leeds Partnership](#), the city's community safety partnership. Linked to this, the LSAB has close working arrangements with a range of organisations including the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Checks are made by the [Care Quality Commission](#) (CQC<sup>5</sup>), the independent regulator of health and social care in England on the quality of care in registered services. The council also undertakes contract management and quality assurance of commissioned care services.
- Clear, simple and easy to find information available on [what abuse is and how to report it](#).
- The Front Door Safeguarding Hub, the partnership arrangements through which a wide range of safeguarding partners work to support people who have been subject to Domestic Violence and Abuse.
- A rigorous and tiered training and competency framework for front line staff.
- In 2022 [an Exceptional Risk Forum](#) was established by the LSAB, offering a fresh perspective and multi-agency advice and recommendations as to how a vulnerable person's risk could be reduced. An evaluation of progress to date was presented to the SAB in April.

### Further actions planned

The LSAB's plans for 2023/24 are based around four key ambitions that guide their work as a Board:

- Ambition One: Develop citizen-led approaches to safeguarding adults.
- Ambition Two: Promote awareness about safeguarding within communities and organisations.
- Ambition Three: Develop citywide approaches to safeguarding.
- Ambition Four: Learn from experience to improve how we work.

Further details of how these ambitions plan to be achieved can be seen in [Our Strategic Plan 2023/24](#).

### More information

The most recent Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board annual report (2022/23) is available [here](#).

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<sup>5</sup> The CQC monitors, inspects and regulates services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety. It sets out what good and outstanding care looks like and makes sure services meet fundamental standards below which care must never fall.

## Climate change corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The climate change threat is one of the greatest challenges facing this and future generations across the world. Leeds is already experiencing a warmer climate than the historical average. Further warming is highly likely, and it is important that we take steps to mitigate the impact on the people, communities, infrastructure, economy and natural environment of the city. Whether Leeds experiences the worst impacts of climate change is uncertain and will depend on progress to transition to a net zero<sup>6</sup> economy both locally and globally. The council has a significant role to play in tackling climate change and working towards net zero, leading by example in adapting our own operations to reduce emissions and supporting businesses, households and individuals to do the same, and also in helping to reduce the impacts of extreme weather events on Leeds.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

Some of the controls to mitigate climate change are seen in the city and council resilience risk elsewhere in this report, with additional climate change-specific and net zero orientated controls as follows:

- The Leeds Climate Commission and Yorkshire and Humberside Climate Commission informs the work we do to tackle climate change and work towards net zero. The Commissions bring together key organisations and actors from across the city and region and from the public, private and third sectors and helps Leeds make positive choices on issues relating to energy, carbon, weather and climate.
- Working with West Yorkshire Combine Authority (WYCA) to deliver the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy, which includes the promotion of public transport usage and active travel.
- Increased use of electric vehicles in the council fleet.
- A successful track record of grant applications, with the funding awarded being used to support areas such as electric charging infrastructure, housing retrofit, public building decarbonisation and the expansion of the district heating PIPES network.

### Further actions planned

Reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions from the city to net zero by 2030 by:

- Halving the carbon footprint from council operations to net zero by 2025.
- Supporting businesses and homeowners to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to reduce their own carbon footprints.
- Promoting cycling, walking, the use of public transport and zero emission vehicles. This includes tackling emissions from 'grey fleet' – staff-owned vehicles used to carry out council services.
- Building sustainable infrastructure, including large scale renewable energy projects.
- The council's website will continue to be updated to reflect, and signpost to, current plans and policies in relation to climate adaptation, along with information and guidance for residents and businesses summarising the hazards and how to build preparedness within Leeds communities.
- Deliver enhanced city-wide engagement with every community in Leeds to raise awareness of, and receive feedback on, the council's activity to support climate mitigation and adaptation.
- The actions that the council can take within the current powers and resources at its disposal will not be sufficient to unilaterally move the city to a net zero carbon position. There are areas where government policy changes are required and where further funding is needed. The council will seek to influence national policy through national and regional engagement.

### More information:

Further details about the actions we are taking can be seen in the most recent [Climate Emergency Annual Report](#)

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<sup>6</sup> The term net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it. This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed.

## Major flooding corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Major flooding presents a clear threat to a wide range of stakeholders in Leeds. In recent years, Leeds has experienced several major flooding incidents including Storm Eva on Boxing Day 2015, which affected 3,500 homes and businesses and the more recent major storms of 2020 (Ciara and Dennis) and 2022 (Dudley, Eunice and Franklin).

Specific threats to communities and businesses from flooding include:

- Adverse impact on residents: loss of life or injury; personal distress and/or temporary homelessness.
- Damage to and contamination of domestic and business properties on large-scale.
- Damage to vital infrastructure of district, e.g. roads, rail, power, communications, water.
- Loss of confidence in the ability to cope with flooding leading to a decline in inward investment.

Flooding is the most significant weather related risk we face as a city, but it's also important that actions to address this risk are progressed alongside work that the council and partners are doing across a whole range of other risks so that a more resilient city is developed.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- The River Aire Flood Alleviation Scheme [Phase 1](#) is one of the UK's largest flood defence projects and the first in the country to use moveable weirs as a pioneering solution to flooding. The scheme aims to reduce the risk of flooding in the city centre.
- A range of local initiatives across the city completed in recent years including the Wyke Beck Naturalised Flood Management Programme and Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- Working closely with other local authorities and partners that oversee the investment in flood risk across the Yorkshire region as part of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Together, these form the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum for preparedness to respond to major and often cross boundary emergencies.
- Arrangements are in place to warn and inform the public and businesses about incidents via a range of channels including [Leeds Alert](#)<sup>7</sup>, X: (formerly twitter), @leedsemergency and the Emergencies page of [Leeds.gov](#).
- A Local Flood Risk Management Strategy which outlines the approach the council and other agencies will take. The Strategy contains: the objectives for managing flood risk; measures proposed to achieve those objectives; timeframes for any measures and their costs and benefits and funding plans.

### Further actions planned

- In conjunction with the Environment Agency, the council is progressing the Flood Alleviation Scheme [Phase 2 \(FAS2\)](#). When completed in 2024, FAS2 will see the city move from one with no flood defences to one with 1:200 year standard of protection.
- The development of a capital programme of local initiatives to reduce the risk of flooding across Leeds to improve the resilience and self-reliance of communities including the use of Nature Based Solutions.
- Working with partners across West Yorkshire including academia and West Yorkshire Combined Authority, businesses and other organisations to develop greater resilience in the city.

### More information

- Details of schemes including FAS2 can be seen at [Leeds City Council Flood Resilience](#)
- The most recent [Flood Risk Management Report](#) to the council's Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth Strategy Board in April 2023 (Item 8).
- Leeds.gov, the council's website includes information on how to prepare for and respond to [emergencies](#) including flooding .

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<sup>7</sup> The warning and informing tool for businesses and members of the public to subscribe to.

## City and council resilience corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Leeds, like any other major city, can suffer disruptions caused by the impact of a major incident or emergency. In recent years, Leeds has experienced disruptive incidents including storms, flooding, a heatwave and the pandemic. Should more than one major incident occur in the city at the same time, the risk and its impacts would be exacerbated. The impact of a major incident would be felt externally, by citizens, communities and businesses, and internally, by the services delivered by the council which may be reduced or even suspended. Under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), category 1 responders<sup>8</sup> which include local authorities, have a statutory duty to be prepared for emergencies and to be able to continue to deliver critical functions in the event of a disruptive incident.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- A 'top down' approach to managing risks based on the [National Risk Register](#) which compares, assesses and prioritises all major disruptive risks to the UK's national security. This informs the West Yorkshire Community Risk Register which in turn forms the basis of multi-agency planning between the council and partners.
- Working closely with other local authorities and partners that together form the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum for preparedness to respond to major and often cross boundary emergencies.
- Taking part in national and regional exercises designed to test our plans and cascading outcomes and recommendations into Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Management arrangements.
- Arrangements are in place to warn and inform the public and businesses about incidents via a range of channels including [Leeds Alert](#)<sup>9</sup>, twitter: @leedsemergency and the Emergencies page of [Leeds.gov](#).
- The council and multi-agency partner organisations' ability to quickly assemble a 'Gold, Silver, Bronze' command structure in line with [JESIP](#) (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme) principles.
- Incident Response and Business Continuity Plans that cover both the response and recovery aspects.
- Provision of advice and assistance to business and voluntary sector.
- Working together with partners from the Safety Advisory Group<sup>10</sup> to deliver events safely.

### Further actions planned

- Ongoing work with Leeds' businesses, organisations, communities and the general public to develop greater resilience in the city. This work includes relaunching the Business Continuity Network events held in the Civic Hall, at which presentations are made to organisations on a range of resilience topics.
- Continuing to support national counter-terrorism campaigns and initiatives.
- Continuing to learn from incidents that happen to other organisations and contribute to any lessons learned from them.
- Implementing recommendations from the Government's [Protect Duty](#) consultation – designed to make the public safer at publicly accessible locations.

### More information

The West Yorkshire Police website contains details of the [West Yorkshire Resilience Forum](#) and the [West Yorkshire Community Risk Register](#). The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum [Annual Report 2022-2023](#) summarises the work, wider collaboration and achievements of the forum over the previous 12 months.

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<sup>8</sup> The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires local authorities to provide advice and assistance to those undertaking commercial activities and voluntary organisations in relation to business continuity management..

<sup>9</sup> The warning and informing tool for businesses and members of the public to subscribe to.

<sup>10</sup> SAGs are usually co-ordinated by a Local Authority and are made up of representatives from the LA, emergency services, other relevant bodies and the event organiser. SAGs provide a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event..

## Poor outcome from a service based inspection corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Local authorities are subject to a range of inspections across the services and functions they have responsibility for, in particular for the provision of services to adults (CQC) and children and families (Ofsted and CQC). In a worst case scenario, under the Local Government Act 1999, the Secretary of State has the power to commission an inspection into a local authority which is at risk of failing in its 'best value' duty. Where there is sufficient evidence, the relevant Secretary of State can also intervene in that authority or relevant parts of an authority e.g. children's services.

The risk of the council receiving a poor (inadequate) outcome from an inspection would have adverse consequences across a range of aspects including: the resources required to undertake corrective action and the 'knock on' impact for service delivery; low staff morale and future problems attracting and recruiting staff; the potential resignation of senior officers and the associated loss of their skills and expertise, and loss of public trust and confidence in the council.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- Risks relating to specific inspections e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, are documented and managed by the respective council directorates. There is a clear escalation route up to the council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) should any significant issues need to be raised or require corporate support
- Horizon scanning of inspections and their outcomes undertaken on other local authorities and active participation in sharing best practice through professional networks. The information obtained from this research can help identify aspects of best practice and areas of weakness requiring corrective action prior to any inspection taking place on ourselves.
- Performance frameworks: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other performance information reported to key stakeholders including Directorate Management Teams, CLT, Scrutiny Boards and the council's Executive Board. Regular review and discussion about performance results and their implications on future inspections can help identify any areas of weakness requiring corrective action. In this respect, performance information can be used as an early warning indicator for a potential poor inspection result.
- The council undertakes a staff survey (usually annually) and its results are another way of identifying any significant issues that could contribute to a poor inspection outcome.
- In July 2022, Leeds City Council became the first local authority to appoint a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian - an independent person who employees can approach to raise any concerns or suggestions they may have about the workplace and how services are being delivered. Staff networks are an additional source of insight to help manage risks.

### Further actions planned:

- Preparation activities are taking place within council directorates and services that are expecting an inspection in the near future.

### More information

- Details of Ofsted and CQC inspections can be seen [here](#). A brief guide to the Ofsted new inspection framework can be seen [here](#).
- Annual Corporate Performance Report 2022/23 (on the same Executive Board agenda as this report)
- The risk of a poor outcome from a service based inspection is linked to the corporate risks on Safeguarding adults and Safeguarding children, both of which are detailed earlier in this report.



## Insufficient school places corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Ensuring that the supply of school places meets demand is a statutory duty of local authorities. This duty also includes the promotion of parental choice, diversity and fair access. In terms of meeting demand, local authorities are subject to constraints under the Education Act 2011. The Act requires that, where a need for a new school is identified, the local authority invites proposals to establish an academy or free school, with the decision over whether to go ahead ultimately taken by the Department for Education (DfE).

For schools that are already open - local authority maintained, voluntary aided or academies - they can be expanded through a process of consultation. However, local authorities cannot require academies or free schools to expand. The inherent tension between the statutory requirement for a local authority to provide school places, and the diminishing influence of the local authority in the building/expansion of schools means that there is a greater risk of not meeting the duty to provide sufficient school places in good quality provision that meet the needs of local communities.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- Data modelling undertaken and appropriately refined and tested for projecting school places need.
- Reviewing demographic data and developing action plans.
- Reporting to various internal boards with updates of position and forthcoming actions regarding school places.
- Regular reviews and sharing of school place planning trackers that inform the place planning strategy.
- Relevant school place proposals to the council's Executive Board, Scrutiny Boards and/or Corporate Governance and Audit Committee
- School Place Planning trackers to inform various internal boards as part of managing the risk, that include Good Learning Places Board, Program Risk & Control and School Places Program Board.
- Communication with schools and trusts through family of schools meetings and use of data and information sheets to share future demographic data including planned housing developments to holistically plan places in the short, medium and long term.
- Working with new academies, trust schools and free schools to ensure sufficient school places are commissioned.
- Integrated planning and delivery of SEND provision, implemented through best practice consultation and appropriate statutory processes, where appropriate.
- Working with relevant council functions to identify and review potential new school sites as they become available.
- Consultation and engagement: Carrying out consultation exercises linked to school place provision, for example housing planning. Ensure good practice is adhered to as part of consultation process to help inform a wide variety of stakeholders, including the public and local ward members.
- Continued engagement in Government consultation over methods of funding allocation.
- Capital programme for funding school construction projects: Capital programme limited to the delivery of primary and secondary basic need and SEND provision where necessary. Permission to approve requests for all types of proposals involving capital expenditure (including that for schools) sought from the Executive Board.

### More Information

- All reports that seek permission to consult about the creation of new school places, reports on the subsequent outcomes of those consultations, and design and cost reports basic need projects are publicly available as Executive Board reports, available [here](#).
- The DfE produce statistical first releases on national pupil projections for all local authorities in England. The most recent release is [here](#).

## Community cohesion corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Our Safer Leeds Partnership is accountable for improving community safety and developing stronger, more resilient, and cohesive communities across Leeds. This aligns to our Best City Ambition and Health & Wellbeing ambition, to deliver a safe and welcoming city for people of all ages and from all communities in which residents feel more secure and have good friends. To achieve this ambition, it is therefore vital that we work effectively in partnership in localities across the city to identify and address the barriers to community cohesion, however we are facing a growing number of complex challenges which could potentially increase tensions.

### Key controls in place to manage this risk

The Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021- 24) sets out the strategic direction of Safer Leeds Executive and will guide the work of the partnership and its work with and for communities across the city.

From a community cohesion perspective, the partnership has a statutory requirement to:

- Regular engage and consult with the community.
- Prepare and implement a Community Safety Plan
- Produce Joint Strategic Assessments
- Ensure information sharing arrangements.

Safer Leeds strategic thinking and operational activity is guided by identification and prevention, early intervention and responses, recovery, and resilience. An example of which is the daily threat picture which is used to manage/monitor events/issues which will potentially increase tensions across communities. Areas currently under review are: Gang activity; Serious violence; anti-social behaviour (ASB); Strikes - preventing people from going to work, getting medical treatment etc; Cost of living crisis - people looking for other income streams (e.g., crime) to fund their lifestyles, and Migration & Asylum in the city.

Other examples of related support and work being undertaken to help manage this risk are:

- Leeds Prevent support vulnerable people from being drawn into extremist or terrorist behaviour.
- Neighbourhood Improvement work in targeted wards and priority neighbourhoods.
- Monitoring of public opinion through feedback from Councillors, social media channels. local blogs, Parish and Town councils, or via bespoke events such as the Equalities Conference.
- Commissioned services with 3rd sector to provide community support, mediation and advocacy.

Internally, the council has “Be Your Best on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)” our new mandatory equality, diversity, and inclusion training and development package, which all managers have to undertake.

### Further actions planned

Recognising no single agency can address these complex risks, threats, and harms alone, the following are committed to working collectively through the Safer Leeds Executive, in line with agreed terms of reference and information sharing protocols: - Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds NHS, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, West Yorkshire Probation Services, HMP Service, and the Voluntary & Community Sector.

An intercultural strategy is being developed to address the different challenges in enabling the effective mixing and engagement amongst communities. A survey is to be undertaken to capture views and ideas.

### More information

The report on the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021-2024) can be seen [here](#).

## Health and safety failure corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Should a serious health and safety (H&S) incident arise from the many services that the council provides or commissions, it could result in death, injury or chronic ill-health to a wide range of internal and external persons including service users and staff. If things go wrong, regulatory and enforcement bodies such as the [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) could undertake investigations into the council and this may require the suspension of services or closure of buildings. Civil claims for compensation could also be brought against the council by employees or members of the public injured due to a significant failure in our H&S arrangements.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Strategy** – setting out the council’s commitment to health, safety & wellbeing. The policy and strategy include a set of refreshed priorities, with a focus on occupational stress but also covering violence & aggression, vehicle safety and mental health.
- **H&S training, advice and support** – available for all staff and provided by the council’s Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team and Occupational Health. Regular communications and engagement with staff on health, safety and wellbeing matters. Recent launch of ‘Let’s Talk H&S’ for managers as part of the council’s Be Your Best programme offer.
- **Processes & reporting** – Regular reporting on H&S issues and performance to a range of internal stakeholders, including the Corporate Leadership Team (consisting of the council’s Chief Executive and directors) and the Executive Board. An annual report to the Executive Board is produced which demonstrates how duties set out in the council’s Health and Safety Policy are discharged.
- **Co-operation & consultation** – between managers and employee representatives on H&S issues with various directorate and service level H&S committees. Best practice is also shared between the council and other relevant organisations through our networking arrangements. Additional co-operation on H&S matters takes place with Trade Unions.
- **Working with partner organisations** – essential pro-active maintenance of council buildings, schools and housing stock is carried out with contractors. A Fire Safety Concordat is also in place between the council and the West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority. The Concordat aims to provide a framework to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the two organisations are effectively translated into practical working arrangements.
- **Staff networks** – a wide range of staff network groups; a valuable resource that support and represent staff on issues or topics they relate to or associate with. The networks include the Healthy Minds Group and Disability and Wellbeing Network which are both linked to health, safety and wellbeing.
- **Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (FTSUG) and staff survey:** The council undertakes a staff survey, usually annually, across the whole workforce. The survey is used to identify any concerns around the health, safety and wellbeing of staff. The FTSUG offers a route for employees to raise any concerns or suggestions they may have about the workplace, including health, safety and wellbeing.

### Further actions planned

In September 2023, work will commence to launch and embed the updated Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy and Strategy. Supporting this work are director pledges and service level policies – informed by recently completed risk profiles for each service.

### Further information

The council’s latest [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance and Assurance report](#) was considered by Executive Board in September 2022.

The [Health and Safety Executive](#) website provides H&S information, news and resources to help organisations.

## Transport issues - keeping the city moving corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Failure to adequately maintain and manage the transport infrastructure required to keep the city moving can lead to road closures resulting in reduced capacity on the network; re-routing; increased congestion; longer journey times and damage to the council's reputation. The wider consequences arising from risks materialising with the transport infrastructure include adverse impacts on the climate, the economy and road safety.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- The [Leeds Vision Zero 2040 Strategy](#) - our ambition that by 2040 no one will be killed or suffer serious injuries on roads in Leeds. The strategy outlines the existing and emerging issues facing the city and explains how the council and key partners will attain our stated ambition via a series of actions and priorities.
- Working with a range of partners to ensure the network continues to operate. Key partners include the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, National Highways, Network Rail and utility companies. The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum (see Major Incident risk assurance) also plays a key role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a major incident involving the transport infrastructure.
- Application of Incident Management Protocol and the ongoing review and update of the arrangements to ensure they remain up to date and adequate.
- Arrangements to deal with adverse winter weather that could affect the network include the monitoring of forecasted weather conditions via a range of sources, and maintaining stocks of grit, the fleet and HGV qualified drivers needed to distribute it.
- Ongoing work to identify and upgrade key structures (such as bridges) and network improvement programmes and projects as required, and the financing of these through the capital programme.
- Systems and a central control centre operated by the Urban Traffic Management and Control ([UTMC](#)). These are used to monitor and control traffic signals and to send out automated variable messaging e.g. in response to congestion, car park occupancy, road closures etc.
- Communications with the public and key stakeholders around major projects and changes to the transport network. The Vision Zero Strategy includes a commitment to engage with the citizens and businesses in Leeds to ensure the transport strategy meets their needs. This includes reaching and engaging as many Leeds residents, organisations and businesses in a conversation about the future of transport in the City with a particular focus on diversity and targeting hard to reach groups.

### Further actions planned

- Development of further schemes to deliver the outcomes of the Transport Strategy around improved reliability for buses, safer and more direct cycle provision, improved walking links and crossings.
- Development of a West Yorkshire Mass Transit system, with the first phase focused around connectivity to and around Leeds. Added to the continued improvement to Leeds Station and the heavy rail connectivity, this should deliver a step change in public transport and further reduce reliance on use of private cars.
- Major schemes in progress include: Armley Gyratory, Bishopgate, Neville Street/Victoria Road/Crown Point Road Cycleways, all schemes have on-going communications plans to keep informed as the schemes progress. The development of City Square is ongoing with full closure to through traffic implemented.
- Ongoing work to identify areas where the Climate Emergency, net zero ambition and climatic effects may impact the city's transport infrastructure.
- The launch of e-bike scheme late September to provide people who travel within Leeds (be they residents, workers, or visitors) with an opportunity to access e-bikes and to use those bikes as an alternative to other modes of travel particularly for short distance trips.

### More information

- The [Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy – Action Plan Annual Update](#).
- The [West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Strategy](#) which sets out the delivery of a modern, world-class, well-connected transport system that should make travel around West Yorkshire easy and reliable.

## Cost of living and the impact on the third sector corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

'Third sector organisations' (TSOs) is a term used to describe the range of organisations that are neither public sector nor private sector. It includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives.

In the last five years, there have been a number of major developments in Leeds and beyond that have changed the way that the third sector operates, both in itself and within the wider system in the city. This means that there is a risk that TSOs will not be able to deliver to same level of impact, which will affect day to day locality work and plans. TSO work also relieves the pressure on demand for our statutory services, including those provided by the council, at a later stage, so any reduction in provision will have implications on these already stretched services.

### Key controls in place to manage this risk

To ensure the resilience of the sector throughout the cost-of-living crisis, to enable the third sector to continue supporting communities, Third Sector Leeds<sup>11</sup> published a position statement in September 2022 which led to a workshop being convened with senior officers from key departments across Leeds City Council and health authorities.

The research from the workshop has been used to produce a new third sector strategy which is based on the following principles:

- Working in a way that ultimately benefits people and communities living in Leeds.
- The importance of delivering preventative measures where possible.
- Investment in resilience.
- The importance of working together in partnership.
- A commitment to 'one workforce'.
- The third sector being an equal partner as part of both the WY Health and Care Partnership, 'Team Leeds' approach and WYCA.

### Further actions planned

Planned launch of a TSO strategy from September 2023. The strategy is a shared vision for how the third sector in Leeds should work and what needs to be done to get there. In developing a strategy for investment in the third sector, we are not starting from scratch. There has been a decade of developing trust and understanding and adopting a teamwork approach within the broad framework of the Best City Ambition and its predecessor, the Best Council Plan. This is not just a strategy for the third sector; it's a strategy for the whole city to better understand and support the sector to continue playing a vital role in supporting communities in Leeds to thrive. Third Sector Leeds will be the focus for co-ordinating the third sector "ownership" of the development of the strategy, supported by Voluntary Action Leeds, working closely with key partners.

### More information

Two key pieces of research have been published which have enabled us to better understand our sector sustainability, impact and trends; State of the Sector Update 2022 & [The structure, dynamics and impact of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector report \(2021\)](#)

Information on Third Sector Leeds can be seen [here](#).

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<sup>11</sup> Third Sector Leeds is the leading policy body that advocates for the third sector's values and interests in supporting Leeds' Best City ambition.

## Information management and governance corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

Failure to manage personal information properly could cause serious damage, harm or even death to individuals, with the council facing legal and regulatory enforcement action and fines. The council recognises the need to protect its information assets from both accidental and malicious loss, damage and inappropriate disclosure.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- **Governance and Accountability** – The council’s information governance framework details our governance, reporting, decision-making and information risk management arrangements. This framework sets out the levels of responsibility for and visually shows the relationship between key internal stakeholders: the Information Management Group; the Information Assurance Board; the Senior Information Risk Owner<sup>12</sup> and the Corporate Leadership Team. The Information Assurance Board’s purpose is to set the council’s vision and information strategy in relation to how it manages and protects its information, and to provide assurance to the Senior Information Risk Owner that the council has appropriate arrangements and controls in place.
- **People** – Roles and responsibilities are clearly set out, including a Senior Information Risk Owner, Data Protection Officer and a Caldicott Guardian (a senior person responsible for protecting the confidentiality of people’s health and care information). Mandatory training for elected members and staff and internal guidance on managing information and cyber security is also provided, through which the message is reinforced that this risk is everyone’s responsibility.
- **Policies and processes** – are in place that are fit for purpose and reflect of legislative requirements, in particular the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018), including those for Information Assurance and Information Sharing. The Remote Working Policy for council staff includes information security measures for staff working at home or offsite.
- **Assurance and Compliance** – Information management forms part of the council’s Annual Governance Statement which reports on the effectiveness of the council’s internal controls, reviews and inspections (internal and external) and adopting compliance regimes such as the government’s Public Services Network (PSN)<sup>13</sup> Code of Connection and the Data Protection and Security Toolkit for Health.

### Further actions planned

On-going work to improve the management and security of our information:

- Reviewing the council’s Incident Management and Data Protection Complaints process and associated systems to ensure they remain up to date.
- Undertaking a review of the current Data Protection Impact Assessment<sup>14</sup> (DPIA) process, utilising an appropriate system to maximise business efficiency and assurance.
- The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) is scheduled to undertake a Data Protection Audit in November 2023. This will see the council’s legislative information compliance tested. Any recommendations from the ICO audit will be implemented through an action plan.

### More information

The Annual Information Governance Report, including the Annual Report of the Caldicott Guardian, was reviewed by the council’s Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in February 2023 and is seen [here \(Item 7\)](#).

The [ICO website](#). The ICO is an independent authority upholding information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.

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<sup>12</sup> The SIRO is person responsible within the organisation for managing information risks.

<sup>13</sup> PSN Code of Connection (CoCo) is an independent security assessment of external and internal network infrastructure and devices.

<sup>14</sup> A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process to help organisations identify and minimise the data protection risks of a project. It is also good practice to do a DPIA for any other major project which requires the processing of personal data.

## Major ICT failure corporate risk assurance

### Risk overview

The council's ICT function plays a central role in supporting out Best City Ambition by providing day-to-day support to all council staff who use information, communications and technology to carry out their job. This includes standard office software as well as running major business applications. There are many factors which could trigger frequent or prolonged ICT failure, including loss of power coupled with failure of back-up generators, air conditioning units fail resulting in the data centre overheating and a power down of the ICT server equipment, a loss of internet connectivity and insufficient staffing resources to maintain the infrastructure. Should the risk arise and the digital infrastructure not be restored promptly, there would be a significant adverse impact on our ability to deliver services leading to mass complaints, loss of public confidence in the council and reputational damage.

### Key controls in place to manage the risk

- Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans in place for primary systems, with periodic review and testing. A cross-council Major Incident Management process is in place and would be activated to deal with a major IT failure.
- In the event of a total or partial disruption to the power supply, IT systems are configured to shut down safely. Generators providing an alternative source of power supply are maintained and can be used to support key sites in the event of a mains power failure.
- The Information Security Assurance and Compliance Board, which focuses on ensuring the council's IT risks are being actively managed. The Board's remit includes remediating known security vulnerabilities highlighted through an annual IT health check as well as responding to new threats and attacks. The Board also provides oversight on all IT projects to ensure that security and compliance aspects are considered.
- The implementation of a resilient fibre service between key data centres has reduced the number of hardware failures that can affect service delivery. Improved fibre links enable a quicker offsite backup of data should a major incident occur and data recovery be required.
- IT security measures such as firewalls, anti-virus software, and access controls for staff and contractors in place to mitigate against cyber-attacks.
- Senior managers within the council's Integrated Digital Service (IDS) meet weekly and act as the escalation point for any concerns raised around security and digital service delivery.

### Further actions planned

- Regular work to review, update and test the digital aspects of Business Continuity Plans for the council's critical services.
- Leading up to 2025 there will be significant changes as the national telephony system switches over from analogue (PSTN and ISDN) to digital. A programme is underway to convert the council's phone systems to digital and this includes the identification of any "legacy lines" that will no longer work after the switchover.

### More information

The council's [Digital Strategy \(2022 to 2025\)](#) which explains how the use of digital technology supports the delivery of our services and the achievement of the Best City Ambition.

**Annex 1: Leeds City Council’s Risk Evaluation Matrices**

Risks that have been identified need to be analysed and evaluated (scored) using Risk Evaluation Matrices so that they can be prioritised for treatment. Risks ratings are based on a combined assessment of how likely the risk is to occur – its **probability** - and its potential **impact** after considering the controls already in place to manage/mitigate the risk.

A ‘5x5’ scoring mechanism is used to carry out this assessment of probability and impact which ensures that the risks are rated consistently. Together, these two scores combine to give a risk rating, one that is based on the **reasonable worst-case scenario**, which helps prioritise the risks for review and action.

The scores allow the risks to be plotted onto a risk map (below) used to illustrate and compare a group of risks.

