

COUNCIL

11TH JULY 2018

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS LETTER

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Democratic & Central Services

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Date: 24 August 2018

To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING –11TH JULY 2018

At the above meeting, the thirty minutes of Question Time expired with questions 10 to 35 unanswered. Council Procedure Rule 11.6 requires that each Member of Council is sent responses to such questions.

Q10 Councillor A Garthwaite - Please can the Executive Member comment on the progress so far on the ongoing Phase 1B Connecting Leeds Transport Consultation?

A Phase 1 b of the Connecting Leeds stakeholder engagement focuses on the plans to transform the bus network. The following schemes form part of the exercise;

- Plans to improve the Adel to Leeds bus route via Weetwood and Headingley. These plans include major changes at the Otley Old Road and Lawnswood roundabout junctions.
- Plans to improve the Wakefield to Leeds bus route via Robin Hood and Hunslet.
- Plans to transform the city centre covering 9 key locations and plans for high quality new bus shelters/stops.
- Plans to expand the Elland Road Park & Ride (550 new spaces)

Stakeholders from across the city were invited to a launch event at the Leeds Corn Exchange on Wednesday 20 June. Since the launch date 15 public meetings, drop in sessions and promotional events have been held along the two bus routes. As of 9th July over 450 members of the public have attended the meetings to talk to team members and complete feedback forms. An additional nine events are planned before the phase 1b consultation periods ends on Friday 27 July.

Over 3,500 people have visited the Connecting Leeds online engagement portal (hosted by Commonplace) and viewed the proposals. To date over 3,000 contributions have been received. It is anticipated over 5,000 will be received by the 27 July end date.

In addition to the above, the Connecting Leeds team are continuing their work engaging seldom-heard groups in society such as the Leeds Society of the Deaf and Blind, people living with autism, non-English speaking residents and other key groups. This work is being undertaken by Leeds Involving People.

Also a drop in-session is being held on Thursday 12th July between 5pm – 8pm at West Grange Church, for the proposed Park and Ride site at Stourton.

Q11 Councillor G Wilkinson - Will the Leader of Council inform us what events are planned in the city to mark the centenary of the armistice in 1918? As at the date of this full council meeting, there are 4 months left to November including the summer holiday period.

A The current picture regarding the WW1 events programme is as follows:

War memorials. As this coincides with remembrance Sunday, there will be formal remembrance activities in Victoria Gardens and elsewhere across the city.

Leeds Town Hall and Howard Assembly Rooms. To commemorate the Armistice, the Council will be working with Opera North and West Yorkshire Playhouse on a cultural programme which will link in with other activities across the council and the city. This will consist of a series of events taking place in Leeds Town Hall and the Howard Assembly Room, in memory of World War 1, and looking more generally at the aftermath of conflict. Over a period of four weeks in late November and December 2018, these themes will be explored through existing works, newly commissioned and innovative forms of music theatre, and a significant 21st Century opera expanded to reflect and include the local community.

The programme's range takes in symphonic concerts, opera, music theatre, digital and participatory work. Community involvement and the development of young artists ensure that the impact of the Leeds WW1 project extends beyond conventional audiences, while the collaboration between the Council, West Yorkshire Playhouse and Opera North will provide a legacy of partnership working and shared ambition.

The programme will consist of:

17th November, Britten's War Requiem, Leeds Town Hall

25th November, a dramatic production of Michael Morpurgos's War Horse at Leeds Town Hall with the Orchestra of Opera North



29th/30th November/1st Dec x2 “Not Such Quiet Girls” at the Howard Assembly Room. This is a new work with an all-female cast and largely female creative team, the project aims to tell lesser-known stories about women in wartime.

30th November/2nd/6th/7th December - Silent Night Leeds Town Hall. This Pulitzer Prize winning opera by Kevin Putts and Mark Campbell, will be receiving its first performance in the UK. It tells the story of the truce when soldiers from all sides fraternised in no-man’s land on Christmas Eve 2014.

1st December - Orchestra of Opera North Concert, Leeds Town Hall. This will include Songs of Love and Battle, by Will Todd, a new Commission for Youth Chorus and Górecki’s Symphony No. 3

8th December - Last Days, Howard Assembly Room. This will be a fully staged song project devised by Tim Albery and directed musically by David Cowan, which showcases the young artists from the National Opera Studio in a programme that features songs of the First World War period including music by composers such as Berg, Gurney, Poulenc and Butterworth.

Leeds Museums and Galleries will be delivering two projects. Firstly, an Armistice Flags project, echoing what happened in Leeds in 1918. When Armistice was declared in 1918, many men and some women were still mobilised and away from Leeds, so the responses were led by workers (particularly women) and by some students. Many made or bought flags to wave. This was a spontaneous and jubilant celebration of peace, rather than the more sombre official commemorations that took place in 1919.

Following the recent rediscovery of one of the original flags at a house in Hanover Square, we will be working in partnership with Leeds University and groups around the city on some community art activities to create textile banners, and reflect upon this and other peace processes within their communities and their lives. The finished works will go on display in the Broderick Hall at Leeds City Museum Leeds City Museum on the day and the following week.

Secondly an interfaith event at Kirkstall Abbey to echo the ecumenical services of intercession held at the Abbey 100 years ago during the following week. Local artist Suman Kaur is being commissioned to make portraits of WW1 soldiers from the different faiths involved.

Additionally, we have been contacted by the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra – an educational programme run by music professionals offering opportunities for current or recent students at Yorkshire colleges and universities – to perform WW1 influenced music in the Broderick Hall on 11 November. St Peter’s Singers of Leeds, a chamber choir based at Leeds Minster directed by Dr Simon Lindley, will be performing a new work at one of our venues on or around that time.

The Council is also encouraging people around the city with any very local events to let us know and where possible we intend to list these on a What’s on Guide.

- Q12** Councillor S Lay - Could the Executive Member for Communities inform members of the number of reported incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour in cemeteries, crematoriums, closed burial grounds and other areas of dedication run by the Council?



- A** Records have been kept by Safer Leeds specifically for cemeteries and related sites from May 2018. There have been ten recorded incidents since then mostly from proactive patrols undertaken by LeedsWatch, although one was of anti-social behaviour reported by a member of the public. Data will continue to be collected in order to provide an evidence base that could be used to support any legal action that might be appropriate.

Parks and Countryside are aware of specific issues at Yeadon Cemetery where there have been recent examples of inappropriate behaviour by those wishing to view activity from the nearby airport. It should be noted that this type of behaviour might be deemed appropriate in a park or other public space, but is considered disrespectful in a cemetery or crematoria site. Bereavement services staff in Parks and Countryside are working with elected members, colleagues in community safety and the police to come up with a range of options to address this behaviour including if necessary any legal action that could be taken once evidence is available.

- Q13** Councillor E Tunnicliffe - Please can the Executive Member comment on the National Audit Office's report into the Financial Sustainability of Local Authorities?

- A** The National Audit Office's March 2018 report focused upon the financial sustainability and value for money within Local Authorities.

The Council has established an effective financial control environment and specifically robust arrangements for strategic financial planning. These include ensuring that the Chief Financial Officer has adequate resources to undertake his Section 151 duties, that he attends the Council's Leadership teams, has advance notice of documents/meetings at which a binding decision may be made and reports annually to the Corporate Governance and Audit committee regarding whether the arrangements are satisfactory and have been complied with. With regard to strategic planning a Medium Term Financial Strategy is received at Executive Board annually and this sets out both the Council's resource position for the forthcoming three years which is then compared to projected expenditure and income assumptions.

The Council complies with relevant accounting codes of practice and External Audit (KPMG) provide independent assurance on the Council's accounts and accounting practice as well as the arrangements to ensure value for money and the controls around the key financial systems. The 2016/17 KPMG External Audit report concluded that "the Authority has made proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people."

With regard to the level of reserves that the Council currently holds, KPMG concluded in the same report that "the Authority have demonstrated they have managed the level of reserves effectively in recent years despite the budgetary pressures they face. Overall we consider the Authority to have adequate arrangements in place regarding the management of its financial risks and potential impact on resource deployment."



The Council has a sound framework for reviewing and challenging financial performance and has realistic plans in place to make the necessary savings in the current financial year. Budget management and monitoring is a continuous process which operates at a number of levels through the Council. Financial Health reports are received monthly at the Council's Executive Board and with regard to the most recent financial year, 2017/18, a balanced budget was projected for most of the year and, after taking account of the Sports VAT refund on admission charges, the final outturn position was consistent with this projection.

Q14 Councillor S Hamilton - Please can the Executive Member provide an update on the establishment of a street support team for Leeds?

A Good progress is being made to establish a Street Support Team by early September 2018.

The city centre makes a significant contribution to our strong economy and compassionate city ambitions. Whilst most people will understand the significant economic benefits the city centre brings, some perceive that the local authority is not being as compassionate as it could be, due to the vulnerability of some people who present themselves in the city centre and surrounding areas. Like many cities, Leeds has witnessed a visible increase in the numbers of people street begging and rough sleeping. Despite the good efforts of joint working between council and partner services to address these issues and support people in challenging circumstances, the current approach is struggling to cope with the increasing numbers of 'street users' and associated impact of street activity on service demand.

As part of developing a new community safety architecture for the city centre that will tie in with the wider 'Our Spaces' strategy, our ambition is to create and foster:

- A city that is inclusive and safe for all
- A compassionate city that safeguards the vulnerable, those at risk of and/or who are homeless, and/ or those who are exploited
- A city that challenges and seeks to change behaviours of all users that negatively impact on safer and cleaner streets

The **Safer Leeds Street Support Team** will be a co-located multi-agency team with a primary operational focus around Street Users and associated Street Activity. Working closely with existing service providers and building on the good work to date the team will offer:

High Support/ High Challenge

- Targeted prevention
- Targeted crisis prevention & relief
- Targeted universal service provision



Existing resource are being brought together and this will be supplement with additional staff (where there are current gaps in service provision) boosted by £352K funding (MHCLG) to extend the Housing First model with a focus on reducing Rough Sleeping. This will also include personal budgets for help sustained individual tenancies.

Mobilisation plans are in place to recruit additional dedicated staff including:

- Intelligence Analyst (Safer Leeds)
- Senior Social Worker & (mental health)
- Mental Health Nurse
- Additional Street Outreach worker (CGL)
- In-Reach Worker (VCS)
- Addiction Support Worker (Forward Leeds)
- Housing Support Worker (Beacon)
- PCs (WYP)
- ASB Link Officers (LCC)

We are planning to hold a full briefing, open to all councillors, in the first week of September.

Q15 Councillor M Robinson - A written answer from the 28th March Council meeting said about anti-snap locks that because of existing building regulations it would be "a duplication and unnecessary for conditions requiring security measures to be included at the planning stage". As many new builds are being fitted with inappropriate locks that are easy to break into, what will the Executive Board member do to address this matter?

A Under the Building Regulations, all new properties are required to include measures to prevent unauthorised access up to appropriate British Standards. The former Secured by Design Standards were incorporated into Part Q (Security) of the Building regulations in 2015, taking effect from 1st October of that year. National planning policy is clear that duplicating the Building Regulations or other legislative controls through planning conditions is unnecessary, and to go beyond them would not normally be appropriate. However, I agree that the most effective measures should be installed by developers of new homes, and that their customers should be aware of the standards. As such, I will write to the major housebuilders and their representative forum groups, to promote the benefits of anti-snap locks, which include the marketability of their properties. Further, we will include Informatives on relevant Planning Decision Notices encouraging the use of and providing further information on anti-snap locks for developers and homeowners.

Q16 Councillor C Campbell - Could the Executive Member give Council an implementation date for the "Westons 20mph scheme" in Otley?



A The 20 mph scheme for the Weston Estate in Otley has been developed in conjunction with local people and Ward Members as part of the Council's wider programme budget for introducing 20 mph schemes in local communities across the city. In consultation with Ward Members it was agreed that a number of additional traffic calming measures and a Speed Indicator Device should be included within the scheme subject to additional funding being identified. Although this was outside the scope of the allocated scheme budget, the possibility of further funding to allow this has been identified from the expected Section 106 contribution conditioned for an adjacent development. Officers have been negotiating to bring forward these funds to complete the budget for the scheme, however, to-date release of these third party funds has not yet been agreed with the developer. In view of this officers will be discussing the alternative options for progressing the scheme with Ward Members to allow the scheme to progress and start date to be established for completion by the end of September 2018.

Q17 Councillor J Illingworth - Can the Executive Member comment on the newly launched Being Me strategy and Council chamber takeover?

A The Learning Disability Partnership Board Strategy 'Being Me' (2018-2021) has at its heart a clear vision for Leeds to be the best city to live in for people with learning disabilities and their families. As with the Better Lives strategy the Being Me strategy adopts an asset based approach focusing on what people can do, not what they can't.

The Being Me strategy represents a genuine piece of co-production, every stage of development, from deciding the main priorities to the design, has engaged with and involved the people it will most directly affect; people with learning disabilities and their families. There is only one version of the Strategy that everyone can understand.

The Learning Disability Partnership Board, (people with learning disabilities, family carers, voluntary sector partners, and representatives from statutory and non-statutory organisations including the NHS and Leeds City Council) shared a view that the new strategy should build on the priorities presented in the previous strategy, namely: Being Well, Being Safe and Being Connected.

The strategy was launched at the Council Chamber Takeover event on the 19th June where there was standing room only. The event gave people with Learning Disabilities the opportunity to highlight why the priorities are important to them. The speeches from individuals were inspiring and humbling. The call to organisations in the City to make the vision outlined in the strategy a reality for people with Learning Disabilities was taken up with pledges made to support the work of the Partnership Board and it was great to see members from across the council there in support.

Leeds has declared its intention to be a compassionate city with a strong economy and we continue to progress towards ensuring that we live in a city based upon empowerment, enablement and independence whereby all citizens are able to live a fulfilling life. With these intentions in mind we must ensure that our most vulnerable and often marginalized citizens remain at the front of our minds and their voices are heard. The Being Me Strategy and the Council Takeover event go some way in making this a reality.



Q18 Councillor D Ragan - Please can the Executive Member update Councillors on the #Leedsbyexample recycling campaign?

A The Council is to run a six month campaign starting in the autumn of 2018 (late September) to collect and recycle food drink and packaging consumed on the go. In partnership with the national recycling charity Hubbub who will be working with local delivery organisations. The campaign is being promoted under the banner #LeedsByExample.

The ground-breaking campaign will be focussed in Leeds City Centre and will trial a range of initiatives to improve our performance in this key recycling area including behaviour change, new recycling infrastructure and awareness raising. The campaign will involve collaboration and experimentation and hopefully stimulate a debate by openly sharing results. We will initially work with city centre businesses with 50+ employees by installing coffee cup recycling bins in their premises and participate in other marketing/behaviour change activities that will encourage more recycling. There will be a full evaluation of the campaign at its end.

Q19 Councillor B Flynn - Will the Executive Board Member for Learning provide details of the number of appeals received from families about the change in transport policy for children aged over 16 with special educational needs and disabilities that was originally due to be introduced next September?

A There are 105 young people in the cohort due to commence post-16 education in September 2018.

- A total of 11 stage 2 appeal requests were received.
- Three other cases were discontinued by parents following an informal review at stage 1.
- In total five awards were upheld or partly upheld at stage 1 or 2 of the appeals process.

Q20 Councillor S Lay - Does the Executive Member for Communities think it responsible for Council to sell brown bins for garden waste collection to residents not on a Brown Bin route?

A It should not be possible for a resident to order and pay for a brown bin online or over the phone if they are not on an existing brown bin collection route. The system is set up to prevent that happening. However, if this has happened through some sort of loophole or misinformation, then it would be helpful to make the service aware of the specific case so it can be investigated and any corrective action required taken to prevent it happening again. We would of course reimburse anyone who had purchased a bin from LCC who then found out they could not be offered the service.

Q21 Councillor M Robinson - Can the Executive Board member for Learning, Skills & Employment please supply the GCSE average outcome for children in local authority run schools and the same figure for children in academies in Leeds?



A The most recent Key Stage 4 data, 2017 figures (Attainment 8 and Progress 8, the new GCSE measures) can be found below. This data should be understood within the context of the academy conversion process. Some schools chose to convert to academy status voluntarily, whilst they were good/ outstanding in OfSTED terms, and some can be instructed to convert, for example, where they have received an inadequate Ofsted rating. The Regional Schools Commissioner may also choose to make an academy order for those that meet the coasting definition, and those that have failed to comply with a warning notice.

Therefore, there are academies that are in the top quartile of the performance charts, and academies that are in the bottom quartile of performance charts- just as there are maintained schools in the top quartile of the performance charts, and maintained schools in the bottom quartile of the performance charts. Academies are slightly higher than LA schools, which is as to be expected, given that a significant number of the most successful schools converted to academy status in recent years.

School type	Number of pupils	Average attainment 8 score per pupil	% English & Maths (Grade 4+)
National		46.4	64.2%
Core cities		43.9	57.4%
Statistical neighbours		45.2	61.9%
Leeds	7433	45.1	60.5%
Academies	4060	46.9	62.6%
Academy Converter	2320	52.5	74.4%
Academy Sponsor Led	1740	39.5	46.8%
Colleges	164	14.1	14.0%
LA maintained schools	3117	45.6	62.0%
Special schools	92	1.9	1.1%

Source: DfE revised GCSE results. 2017

Q22 Councillor J Bentley - Does the Executive Board member agree that child obesity in Leeds is really concerning. Has the Manchester scheme of regularly weighing children, which has resulted in children stopping putting on weight, been considered for Leeds primary school children and if not why not?

A Leeds, in common with Manchester, and all Local Authorities in England, takes part in the statutory National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). This involves measuring the height and weight of Primary School Children in Reception and Year 6 in state maintained schools every year. The results help us understand trends in underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obesity in children, and target local action.



In Leeds at the current time, just under 1 in 11 (8.6%) children aged 4-5 years (Reception class) is obese. By age 11-12 years (Year 6) the obesity rate has increased to around 1 in 5 children (19.1%). This compares to Manchester where the rate of obesity for Reception Children is currently 11.7% and for Year 6 children is 25.5%. The Leeds rates are lower than Manchester rates and we have seen a downward trend over the previous 10 years; obesity rates among Reception children in Leeds are now below, rather than exceeding the national average and the obesity rates for Year 6 children in Leeds now mirrors rather than exceeds national rates.

Rates are however unacceptably high and it is important to recognise the burden is falling hardest on those children from low-income backgrounds. Children aged 5 and from the poorest income groups are twice as likely to be obese compared to their most well off counterparts, and by age 11 they are three times as likely. Children from black and minority ethnic families are also more likely than children from white families to be obese.

A more detailed breakdown of the results from the Leeds NCMP is published annually. The most recent report includes the weight status of 17,500 (90 %) eligible children for the academic year 2016 /17.

In Leeds the Health Visiting service have also recently started to monitor the prevalence of obesity among 2 year olds. This reflects a local commitment to work with families from the earliest opportunity to help them raise children to be a healthy weight.

Key local actions to prevent and address child obesity include promoting breast feeding including achieving UNICEF Baby Friendly initiative, providing HENRY (Health Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) groups for parents at their local children centres, and encouraging schools to make it easier for pupils to be a healthy weight through the Healthy Schools Award and Active Schools Initiatives. The Council also commission weight management services for local families. Much of the work is targeted to ensure families from low income and BME backgrounds are prioritised.

As a Local Authority, we are currently in the process of achieving commitment across the Council to adopt the Healthy Weight Declaration, stating as a whole council we will prioritise and work collectively to make it easier for everyone in Leeds to achieve a healthy weight.

Promoting Healthy weight is a commitment within Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Children and Young People's Plan. Leeds Child Healthy Weight Partnership brings colleagues from a wide range of relevant organisations together and is responsible for delivering Leeds Child Healthy Weight Plan. The plan details the wide range of work that is taking place.

While Leeds is making sound progress there is still much to be done. A determined, sustained and collective effort is required if we are to achieve the national ambition to halve child obesity by 2030. (Child Obesity: A plan for Action Chapter2 -July 2018). For further information, including copies of Leeds NCMP Report and Leeds Child Healthy Weight Plan, please contact janice.burberry@leeds.gov.uk



Q23 Councillor M Robinson - Can the Executive Board Member for Resources & Sustainability tell me how much Leeds City Council has spent each year since 2010 encouraging people not to smoke or to quit smoking?

A Leeds City Council took over responsibility for tobacco control in April 2013 following the transfer of public health from the NHS to local Authorities, therefore it is not possible to provide the expenditure for encouraging people to quit smoking before this date. Since this date, the expenditure has been as follows:

2013/14	£917,060
2014/15	£1,028,139
2015/16	£908,717
2016/17	£813,498
2017/18	£394,078 (6 months only)

As a result of a comprehensive approach to tobacco control, smoking prevalence has been steadily declining for a number of years; nationally, regionally and locally. In Leeds, smoking rates have continued on a downward trajectory falling approximately 1% per year, with a high of 23.1% in 2011 closing with 16.7% in 2017.

Q24 Councillor M Robinson - Does the Executive Board Member for Communities agree that where communities commission the Police to conduct speed checks and improve road safety that all fines raised in that commissioned period should be retained in those communities?

A Money recovered from speeding enforcement (fines) are split - allocated to support funding for the Crown Prosecution service and central Government (Treasury's consolidated fund). None of this money is recoverable locally.

With regards Speed Awareness Training (alternative to the Driving License Points system) West Yorkshire Police receive a proportion of the funding generated through this process. Some of the money is also used to finance the Central Process Bureau (administration of enforcement) and pay for the training providers.

The police do work with local communities and elected members through the neighbourhood policing team and the local road safety partnership with regards speeding offences to ensure appropriate measures are in place to try and reduce drivers speed.

Q25 Councillor R Stephenson - s the Executive Member for Resources & Sustainability confident that the Council has a robust policy to take action against drivers of taxis and private hire vehicles who refuse access or impose additional charges to passengers with guide dogs?

A Yes, Leeds City Council is recognised by the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association as being a council which has a strong approach to taxi and private hire licensing and enforcement to ensure that passengers with guide dogs can access taxi and private hire vehicles in Leeds.



Guide Dogs for the Blind have posed the challenge to local councillors across the UK, citing 42% of guide or assistance dog users have been refused access to a taxi or private hire vehicle <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaigning/access-all-areas/>.

It is not a figure relating to the experience of people with guide dogs in Leeds, which we think is significantly better, because of the policies of the council, training of drivers, the support of operators, the council's enforcement approach, and the response the council makes to feedback and complaints about the taxi and private hire trade. Leeds is one of the more proactive councils on ensuring that people with guide dogs can use taxis and private hire vehicles, and the council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing team has strong links with the council's Equality hubs, and with the council's Access Committee. We also have very good working relationships with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association in Leeds and in the Yorkshire & Humber region.

On request, the Executive Member for Resources & Sustainability can supply more information and examples.

Q26 Councillor R Stephenson - Has the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning been in contact with Yorkshire Water to ascertain why infrastructure on Linton Bridge failed last month, just nine months after repairs were completed in conjunction with the re-opening of the bridge in September 2017?

A Following notification from Yorkshire Water that they had commenced emergency works an inspection of the site was undertaken by an officer from Highways and Transportation.

This inspection concluded that the damaged main was not on the section of pipe which was renewed as part of the bridge reconstruction works.

Q27 Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Leader of Council formally welcome the decision by HM Government to support the expansion of Heathrow Airport, which as the UK's largest port by value for markets outside the EU and Switzerland, will help move over 30% of the UK's exports to these vital global markets in 2017, whilst also increasing competition and frequency on existing domestic routes such as the Leeds & Bradford to London service?

A The Council welcomes any improvements to domestic or international routes at Leeds Bradford Airport, which improve access to global markets.

Q28 Councillor B Anderson - Does the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning share my concerns that there is often an inconsistent approach to Planning in that in some instances applications are approved, and in others they are being turned down and there is no coherent explanation from officers why this has occurred which is leading to frustration by local residents in terms of understanding the planning decisions being made under delegated authority by the Council?



A Planning applications must be considered having regard to adopted planning policy, national policy and any other 'material considerations' which can include matters such as the impact on neighbouring properties, highway safety and visual amenity. The officer report formulated for each application, whether dealt with under delegated powers or presented to Planning Panel, sets out the officers reasoning and planning judgement taking into account policy, site circumstances, comments received and material considerations. The conclusion whether to approve or refuse an application must be justified and reasonable. Whilst delegated reports are sometimes shorter due to the less complex or contentious nature of proposals, the reports do still contain the relevant consideration of the Planning matters. These are open to challenge either on appeal or by legal review, and so officers are mindful of the need to for reports to set out the basis of a planning decision.

Officers regularly receive training in report writing, and a further session with colleagues from Legal Services is due to take place soon.

Q29 Councillor B Anderson - Does the Executive Member with responsibility for the Refuse Collection Service share my concern that one of the reasons why the same routes are being missed is cars being parked in the entrances to streets and there doesn't appear to be a coordinated response between all relevant Council departments to address this problem?

A Yes, I share this concern. The problems caused by cars being illegally parked on street corners/entrances and indeed also in narrow back streets is one that has been around for many years. This of course also presents difficulties for our emergency services. I am pleased to say that there is coordinated action being taken between council services to introduce Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) at the locations where council services such as Refuse and Street Cleansing are having the greatest difficulties with access and therefore making the scheduled collections and road sweeps. Yellow lines will hopefully be a strong deterrent but this will enable the Council to take parking enforcement action where it otherwise could not. The first of these new TROs should be in place this year and their effectiveness in dealing with the access/service delivery problem will be assessed. The services working together on this are Refuse, Cleaner Neighbourhoods Team, Highways and Parking.

Q30 Councillor B Anderson - Does the Leader of Council agree with me that an elected member should not be waiting more than 10 days to get a reply to emails, despite promises in the past when this has been raised that the situation would be resolved?

A The council has adopted a set of customer care standards which expect any correspondence to receive a response within 10 working days. Aside from this, any complaint should be acknowledged within 3 days and receive a full response within 15 working days. Freedom of Information requests are governed by statutory response times.

Any correspondence from an elected member should be dealt with in line with the standards above.



Q31 Councillor B Anderson - Does the Executive Member with responsibility for Community Safety share my concern that the delay in appointing a police officer in Adel and Wharfedale Ward to replace the previous police constable is leaving residents exposed and putting undue pressure on our PCSOs to try and carry out an increasing number of tasks?

A The Local NPT Inspector for this area, Andy Loftus is making efforts to fill the vacancy and a number of candidates have expressed interest. An interview process was recently held and an officer was identified for the post (he currently works at the Leeds Bradford Airport) – The Senior Leadership Team at Leeds Police are now arranging for the airport post to be backfilled in order that the successful candidate can be released (the airport officer is in an externally funded post hence the need to prioritise backfill before release can be sanctioned). It is anticipated that the matter will be resolved with a few weeks at the most. In the meantime officers in this NPT are being supported by officers from Leeds District Police when necessary to ensure that residents receive appropriate local policing services.

Q32 Councillor B Anderson - Can the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning Enforcement advise me whether or not he has concluded his review into this section and is satisfied that the needs of the city are being addressed as a result of this review?

A The need for an effective compliance service is recognised and acknowledged. Leeds Enforcement Plan is at an advanced stage and will be considered by members for approval in the next few weeks. It seeks to confirm our existing service standards, give advice and manage expectations of service users. The enforcement process is complex, can be long winded and on occasion is misunderstood. Our actions must operate within the statutory framework that governs it. It is worth noting that in a time of public sector austerity an additional officer is being recruited using the additional planning fee income as part of wider service improvements. This will be a welcome addition. Notwithstanding perceptions, it is notable that Leeds continues to take more formal actions than any other comparable core city by a very significant margin. In the year 2017/18, Leeds served 72 Enforcement notices compared to Birmingham's 35 and Manchester's 33 who were the only comparable authorities to take more than a handful of formal actions.

Q33 Councillor S Seary - Will the Executive Board Member for Resources & Sustainability inform Council what the long-term plan is for Pudsey town hall and what is the occupancy rate of the building at the current time?

A The Council's long-term plan is to retain Pudsey Town Hall. At the time of the last occupancy audit there were 99 Leeds City Council staff based in Pudsey Town Hall with a current capacity of 108 desks. Since the audit in September 2017, no teams have moved in or out of the building. In addition, the building provides a Council Chamber and bookable meeting space both internal and external hire.

As is the case with all council buildings, uses and occupancy change and evolve over time, but the plan remains to retain the building as a council owned asset.



Q34 Councillor C Anderson - Can the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning please advise me what work is being done with Yorkshire Water to get assurance that the three serious mains bursts that happened in June are not going to be a common occurrence in the city?

A An increase in the number of emergency works relating to leaking or burst water mains was identified and officers asked Yorkshire Water to investigate the reasons and provide a response.

Authorities across Yorkshire have been experiencing a similar issue and comments have recently been collated to formally present to Yorkshire Water as a joint report through the established local highway authorities and utilities committee.

Following some incidents in June which were particularly disruptive to traffic, to escalate the matter, a letter has been sent from the Chief Executive to the Chief Executive of Yorkshire Water. This letter asked for an explanation of the apparent decrease in the condition of their underground assets and some reassurance that measures would be taken to halt this decline.

A response has yet to be received from Yorkshire Water; Officers are meeting with senior representatives from Yorkshire Water to discuss the increasing number of incidents and ongoing issues associated with their works”.

Q35 Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Leader of Council act on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of England fans in Leeds and write to her colleague Richard Corbett, Yorkshire MEP and Leader of the Labour Party in the European Parliament, to inform him that football fans in this city found his comments describing the World Cup as "vulgar" and calling on people to support Belgium over England in the recent World Cup group stage match, to be unpatriotic nonsense?

A England fans across the city have been enjoying the national team’s recent success in the World Cup, and overall a vibrant and positive atmosphere has taken over the city.

The council is helping fans to support the team with screenings of England matches on the big screen in Millennium Square – as anyone watching the recent television coverage will have seen highlighted.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Tomkinson
Principal Governance Officer



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