

COUNCIL

10TH JULY 2019

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS LETTER

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Democratic & Central Services

Governance Services

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To: All Members of Council

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Our Ref: A61/kjt/quest

Date: 1 August 2019

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING – 10TH JULY 2019

At the above meeting, the thirty minutes of Question Time expired with questions 9 to 27 unanswered. Council Procedure Rule 11.6 requires that each Member of Council is sent responses to such questions.

- Q9** Does the Leader of Council agree with me that following the granting of planning permission for over 2000 new homes on Morley greenfield sites that Morley needs a new primary school to provide additional school places?
- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – The Site Allocation Plan (SAP) Infrastructure Background Paper provided an assessment of school needs arising from the Plan (Appendix 2 - School Background Paper) which was prepared in partnership with Children's Services. In the Morley Primary Planning Area, a total of 2.6 Form Entry primary need was identified. The Housing Site HG2-150 Land East of Churwell, was identified to provide a new 2 FE primary school. The remaining 0.6 FE of need would be met via provision within existing schools. The requirement to retain part of the site is applied to housing allocation HG2-150, unless the school is already delivered on site HG2-149 (Lane Side Farm, Morley), which was granted outline planning permission on 19th October 2017 for 550 units (ref 16/02988/OT). This application reserves land for school use as part of the Section 106 Agreement. Site HG2-149 is subject to a current reserved matters application (ref 19/01998/RM), which retains the reserved area of land for a school. Children's Services have been consulted on the applications.

Q10 Councillor A Smart - Please could the Executive Member for Communities provide an update on the positive work being done to support the Third Sector and Faith Communities in our city?

A Councillor D Coupar (Executive Member for Communities) – I welcome the opportunity to respond to your question.

I am proud to be part of an administration and a City which values the Third Sector and Faith Communities which recognises the positive contribution they make to the City and Citizens of Leeds.

Third Sector Work

The arrangements that we have in Leeds around support for and collaboration with the third sector are envied by statutory and third sector partners in other cities. Our third sector partners tell us this and I hear it directly from colleagues in other cities.

I Chair the Leeds Third Sector Partnership which brings together colleagues from the Council, the NHS, the University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett and the Third Sector. The Partnership works hard to ensure that we create the conditions for a thriving third sector that can deliver for Leeds. The focus is on the policy and the operating arrangements, the relationships and the investment e.g. Last year saw the development and implementation of a Commissioning Code, which is a joint council, NHS and third sector developed guide for all partners around the commissioning of third sector organisations. The Code is helping to strengthening consistency across the NHS and the council and the joint commissioning between the NHS and the council. This Code has benefit for the Third Sector but has resonance across all commissioning work.

The council has produced an Annual Analysis of Investment in the Third Sector since 2009. The 2017/18 published analysis included NHS investment for the first time to give a more comprehensive picture. The analysis and the details of individual investments is always in the public domain and is published on the Leeds Data Mill

- The Council directly invested £125.1 million in over 1600 individual third sector organisation in 2017/18.
- We are constantly striving to strengthen our understanding of the focus and impact of our investment so that money is invested wisely and makes maximum impact
- The investment in the Third Sector by the Council has been broadly maintained. This is despite 'austerity' since 2010/11 and the loss of £251m funding from Central Government and whilst the authority has had to manage significant demand led pressures and reductions in other income, delivering savings in total of over £512m.



Unlike other Cities, Leeds did not choose to cut funding to the third sector as austerity budget pressures mounted. Our choice was to invest, support and develop the sector, which has enabled us to respond successfully to many of the pressures of an ageing population, demographic change and poverty. The nationally acclaimed Neighbourhood Networks, the ABCD approach in communities are examples of approaches that are delivering for Leeds. The investment in and partnership with our third sector colleagues was central to our successful progress towards 'outstanding' for our children's services. Colleagues locally and nationally have noted that this approach has served Leeds well though austerity and puts us in a stronger position than many cities to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The Council has also recognised the importance of maximising the external investment brought into the third sector. We have taken action to significantly strengthen the information and support available around funding to help groups make more successful bids.

This includes:-

- the support and development of the Funding Leeds Partnership (the council, Leeds Community Foundation and Voluntary Action Leeds)
- investment in and development and promotion of the Funding Leeds website (a comprehensive searchable database of national, regional and local funding)
- the production and wide circulation of a weekly Funding Update (which goes to every elected member through me)
- the launch of the Funding Leeds twitter account with several weekly updates about funding and training
- the development of the LCC Funding Support Scheme, where we match up Council Staff, who use their 10 hours of employer supported volunteering hours entitlement, with small local groups to give them help with their funding bids

The council also invests in the infrastructure support that groups and organisations need to get started and to develop and to have a voice, including investment through the third sector in the equality structures, like the BME Hub and Women's and Girls Hub, that ensure that as a council we are able to meet our statutory equality obligations.

Investment and practical support is important, but we also recognise as a council, that sometimes we also have to publicly say thank you and acknowledge the good work that the thousands of people involved in small community groups make to people's lives every day. One example of the way we do this is through the Lord Mayor's Small Groups and Charities Celebration Event. This year over 200 people from almost 90 groups received certificates from the Lord Mayor, Cllr Eileen Taylor. We also take this opportunity to ensure that groups can find out about the funding and support that is available to help them thrive.

There is much more that we do and of course more that we can do, but we are clear about our ambition to have a diverse and thriving third sector that can deliver for Leeds.



I can share some recent quotes from colleagues about the Leeds approach to partnership with the third sector.

Quote from Chris Hollins, Chair of Third Sector Leeds

The past decade has seen a re-shaping of the long relationship between statutory organisations and the third sector in Leeds and elsewhere. Leeds is a city which sees partnership as the way that the fruits of success will, rightly, be shared by all its citizens, and a recognition that this does not happen of its own accord.

The Third Sector has its distinctive role to play. In the face of deep austerity Leeds City Council has maintained the levels of financial support for the sector, whilst managing a 40% cut in its funding. The strength of the statutory support to the Third Sector in Leeds and the growing partnership between agencies is to be greatly welcomed.

Quote from Anthony Cooke, Chief Officer Health Partnerships, Leeds City Council

'Evidence shows that strong community services and a thriving third sector have a positive impact on people's health. Increasingly, colleagues from outside Leeds are noting the impact of austerity and third sector cuts at the same time as Leeds has continued to invest in third sector services. We invest significantly every year in the third sector, and the recent CQC report into the Leeds system noted the importance of this resource in delivering effective prevention and early intervention'

Faith Work

The council are committed to work to support Faith Communities and recognised that there were gaps in their understanding of Faith issues. As a result in 2013 the council commissioned a report from the University of Leeds looking at the local authority's relationship with faith communities in the city. The report sought to identify barriers to working together and suggested solutions to overcome these.

The report – entitled – 'Leeds City Council – Taking Religion or Belief Seriously', found that:

- In the light of cuts to government funding it was essential that the council worked with all its partners in the city to make the best use of reducing resources to continue to support our communities and in particular those with the most need.
- That there was a degree of resistance from Council staff to working with faith communities for fear of causing offence, a lack of religious literacy and a commitment to the 'secularism' of the Council as a public body.
- That although the council had a long history of working with faith communities this was patchy and much more could be done to strengthen the relationship.
- There are a number of practical actions the Council could take to demonstrate its commitment to working with faith communities and enlist their help in delivering solutions to some of the problems facing the city in an era of austerity.



Work has been taking place since then to take these actions forward this includes:-

- The development of a 'Covenant' between the Council and the faith sector (a statement setting out the relationship between the council and the Faith sector)
- The identification of elected member and officer champions in fact Cllr Mohammed Iqbal has been the Councils 'Faith Champion' for several years now).
- Training for council staff on faith issues and faith awareness

In the Autumn of 2016 the council held a strategic faith leaders event at the Civic Hall where these ideas were progressed and an action plan for the Councils Religion or Belief Hub (as the vehicle to progress this work).We consult regularly with members of Faith communities through this forum.

Work has been taking place to develop the Hub over the last three years focusing on some of these identified priorities which has included making better use of social media, celebrating best practice where we work well together, raising awareness of the work faith communities are doing, focusing on the issues affecting young people and women in faith communities and ensuring communities are resilient in times of crisis.

In March 2019 a really well attended women in faith event was held where women had a really fantastic and positive discussion around the challenges that Women of Faith face and how these can be overcome.

In June 2019 an event called Handling Times of Crisis Together – Safe and Prepared Communities was held. This was co-ordinated by the Communities Team and colleagues from Public Health, the Resilience and Emergencies Team and West Yorkshire Police Counter Terrorism Team. The event we looked at what communities can expect from the in the event of a terrorist incident, public health crisis or natural disaster such as the terrible floods that affected the city on Boxing Day in 2015.

It was also an opportunity to discuss what communities can do to assist and what we would like to see from faith communities across the city in the case of these events happening.

Finally we are preparing to launch an online map of faith assets in the city via the Councils website which will enable people from across the City and beyond to gain a better understanding of the Leeds Faith Sector.

This important work will continue.

- Q11** Councillor M Robinson - In March this Council declared a Climate Emergency, recognising a need to do more to tackle climate change, which is particularly pertinent to young people who will have to live with the ramifications of inaction. Can the Executive Member say if solar panels and making the school carbon neutral were considered as part of the roof repairs to Scholes Primary School?



- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – The roofing repairs for Scholes Primary involve the replacement of flat felt roofing, and not therefore ideally suited to solar panels.

The council has already invested in major solar PV installations at school sites such as Weetwood Primary, Horsforth High and most of our leisure centres including Holt Park, Morley, Armley, John Charles and John Smeaton. The business case at the time was based on FiT income and relied on matching the supply from solar panels to the demand of the building. It's not easy to do this at schools as a very significant amount of energy is generated during the school holidays and weekends when demand at the school is low.

However, as solar costs fall, we are considering other business models where we export electricity generated by solar panels to other sites or store electricity in batteries. In addition, we are focussed on reducing energy demand in all our buildings and have helped 24 schools to install LED lighting in recent years. We are also commissioning deep dive energy audits for 6 major buildings to identify how they can become carbon neutral. This will help inform our maintenance programme for all buildings, including schools.

- Q12** Councillor C Campbell - Following the decision by First Bus to put its UK operations up for sale could the Chair inform Council when the Authority will follow Glasgow's move to take West Yorkshire's buses back into public ownership?

- A** Councillor K Groves (Chair of Transport Committee West Yorkshire Combined Authority) – As Cllr Campbell points out First PLC have announced that it is considering placing its UK Bus operations up for sale. I have had a meeting with Giles Fearnley the Managing Director of First UK Bus to discuss the implications of this announcement for our region however discussions to date have been short on detail. Like our colleagues in Scotland, the Combined Authority will explore options for some form of public ownership. However the legal position in England is complex. The Bus Services Act made by parliament in 2017 expressly prevents the City Council or the Combined Authority from establishing a company to run buses. The Combined Authority is obtaining legal advice on the options available to it.

- Q13** Councillor S Arif - Could the Executive Member for Children and Families please comment on the benefits of Sure Start centres?

- A** Councillor F Venner (Executive Member for Children and Families) – The early years are a crucial period for a child's development and Children's Centres have a vital role to play in this. Our Children's Centres act as a 'one stop shop' for families with young children – providing services such as childcare, early education, healthcare, parenting support and employment advice. Their overall aims include improving children's school readiness, health, and social and emotional development through providing a holistic approach and access to a range of services under one roof within the community.

A recent report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies highlighted that Sure Start centres reduced the likelihood of hospitalisation among children – saving the NHS approximately £5million annually.



Children's Centres are an effective 'invest to save' model that offer a vital opportunity for us to engage with children and families at the earliest possible stage to help build solid foundations for later life.

Sadly, Government-imposed cuts to local authority funding have left councils facing the difficult decision of having to cut or lose early help services such as Children's Centres. Up and down the country, we have seen news stories showing councils' plans to close significant numbers of their centres – to the detriment of local communities.

The most disadvantaged families have been shown to benefit most from Children's Centres, and councils are effectively being forced to close more and more as resources are stretched ever-thinner. These closures will disproportionately affect more disadvantaged families – just like other policies that have been implemented by the current Government. Policies that have seen child poverty rates sky-rocket.

In Leeds, this administration took the decision to protect its Children's Centres – we have 56 in our city and I am incredibly proud that this number has remained consistent throughout the turbulent times of relentless Government cuts.

During this time, we have seen a significant reduction in the rate of childhood obesity – the only English city to achieve this. Our success in this area would not have been possible without delivering the HENRY programme through our Children's Centres – highlighting the tangible benefits of Children's Centres here in Leeds.

Children's Centres also have a positive impact on maternal mental health, parental income and safe parenting practice – which will benefit the whole family – supporting our Think Family approach.

I am delighted that Leeds City Council continues to invest in prevention and early intervention despite the challenging context in which we work. We want Leeds to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in, and I strongly believe that our commitment to retaining Children's Centres will ensure that our youngest residents get the best possible start in life and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Q14 Councillor A Blackburn - Can the Executive Member please tell me how many vacancies exist currently in the refuse collection teams?

A Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) – The current budget allows for a total of 333 operational staff for the refuse collection service (including kerbside collection of all waste streams and medi-waste).

Currently we have 325 staff in post. So we have 8 vacancies to which we are currently recruiting to.

We are also currently looking to increase the level of our permanent staff so that there is a "pool" of permanent staff able to provide cover for absences (leave/sickness etc).

Q15 Councillor J McKenna - Could the Executive Member please outline the benefits from Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2?



A Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) – The Government’s latest position on funding for the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 is that it is unable to provide any further funding above the £65 million already committed until the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). Rather than delay the project, on 13 February 2019 an Executive Board report was approved to separate the project into two steps. The first, using secured funding, uses raised defences to provide a 1 in 100 year standard of protection upstream of the train station - together with catchment wide Natural Flood Management (NFM) to reduce the impacts of climate change. The second step, subject to further funding, is primarily to provide a flood storage area between Horsforth and Apperley Bridge. This will increase the standard of protection of both the ‘Step One’ area and the completed Phase 1 project, downstream of the train station, to a 1 in 200 year standard of protection.

In accordance with the agreed stepped approach, the ‘Step one’ works received planning approval at the 6 June 2019 Plans Panel. In turn the detailed design and construction contract was awarded in late June 2019, as per the delegated authority to spend in the above Executive Board report.

Our appointed joint venture, BMMjv, are currently working on the detailed design for Step One and construction is currently programmed to start in October 2019.

It should be noted that the city council’s aim is to provide a scheme that mitigates against the devastation caused by flooding on Boxing Day 2015. This was a 1 in 200 year flood event and as such a number of funding sources are currently being progressed, including seeking further funding from Government, to ensure ‘Step Two’ is also delivered as soon as possible. Delivering both steps is the city council’s strategic aim and as such this is reflected in the many benefits of the scheme listed below.

- Provision of a 1 in 200 year standard of flood protection with climate change resilience to the year 2069
- Flood reduction to in excess of **1000** residential properties
- Flood reduction to in the region of **500** businesses
- Over **150** new jobs created
- Over **11,000** jobs safe guarded
- Catchment wide planting of up to **2 million** trees to help tackle the impacts of climate change – the largest Natural Flood Management (NFM) project in the UK
- Increasing the standard of protection of the completed Phase 1 project from 1 in 100 year to 1 in 200 year
- Contribution to the government’s **25 year Environment Plan** and the Northern Forest
- Restoration and creation of new habitat, increased biodiversity resilience and improved water quality



- Circa **£90 million** of benefits through carbon sequestration
- Unlocking land for **1600** new homes
- Better flood protection to a key commuter **rail** route into the city
- Better flood protection to the **A65** Kirkstall Rd, a key commuter route and an important link to Leeds Bradford Airport

Q16 Councillor R Stephenson - Can the Deputy Leader of Council detail how many employees of the authority receive salaries in a) cash; b) by cheque; or c) by BACS payment into a non-UK bank account?

A Councillor J Lewis (Executive Member for Resources) – Our payroll records show we have made no salary payments by cash or to a non-UK bank account.

We have made 3 salary payments by cheque, of these 2 were a one off payment, and 1 a temporary measure which will revert back to payment by BACS.

We pay salaries by cheque by exception, the reasons for doing so include: where our employees are homeless, for a death in service where a payment is made to the next of kin, where this is the first payment and the bank account details cannot be confirmed.

Q17 Councillor C Hall - Given that the Council recently unanimously declared a Climate Emergency what is it planning in the short term to improve waste collection specifically kerb side glass collections and food waste?

A Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) – A new Waste Strategy for the city is due to be considered by the Executive Board this month. The Strategy considers issues and proposals currently out for consultation in the Government's own national Resource and Waste Strategy. That consultation includes changes to what may be required of councils in terms of kerb side collection/recycling, and funding made available for any such changes (both in terms of infrastructure and running costs - but from 2023). There is also a clear shift to placing more responsibility to the producers of packaging - both through a "tax/levy" type approach and incentives to introduce deposit return schemes for glass bottles etc. In addition there is an indication of a move away from judging the success of reducing environmental waste from weight based recycling totals/percentages to carbon impact/reduction measures. The Council's own Strategy proposes a similar move away from weight based recycling to a much greater emphasis on reducing waste in the first place and focusing on those materials that have the greatest carbon impact. In that context, there is no immediate plans to increase kerb side collections of glass or food; however, work is ongoing to understand how each waste stream fits within the changing agenda, for example in terms of contribution to carbon reduction, what is likely to be required of us by Government and that we may expect to be funded to deliver from 2023, what will the effect be on waste streams such as glass by deposit return schemes, and what would have the greatest effect in helping reduce the amount produced in the first place (for example food waste).



Q18 Councillor C Knight - Please can the Executive Member update Council on the delay to implementation of the Clean Air Zone?

A Councillor J Lewis (Executive Member for Resources) – The delay to the launch of the Clean Air Zone is extremely disappointing, as the Council now finds itself in a position where we were ready to launch, but can't as centralised digital systems will not be ready on time. Council officers continue to regularly liaise with central government to work towards a new go live date, however as of now, the length of the delay is currently unconfirmed although it is still envisaged to be in 2020. As soon as Central Government agree a revised go live date, communications will be issued through all of the usual channels so that everybody is kept up to date with developments. In the meantime the Council continues to prepare for implementation; the first ANPR cameras have been installed, and the first batch of road signage has been ordered. Financial support packages have been launched and money has started to be allocated to businesses to help the transition to cleaner vehicles in advance of going live with the Clean Air Zone.

Q19 Councillor R Stephenson - What action is the Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment taking to connect school leavers with Autism to jobs in Leeds?

A Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) – The Council has been working in partnership with Leeds City College to offer supported placements to students with special educational needs and disabilities including autism. This pilot approach has supported young people to undertake a placement and receive support from the HR service to match them to potential employment opportunities.

The Council will be launching 'Start in Leeds', the city's Information Advice and Guidance Charter for young people in Leeds along with the roll out of the localised digital platform to support Careers Education in September. The promotional material for this will feature and speak to all young people including those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The annual Leeds Hidden Talents Employment Fair sponsored by DWP and the Council which will be held in October. This open to autistic adults and provides the opportunity to meet with employers and employment support workers and find out more about jobs on offer locally.

Q20 Councillor C Hall - Given that LCC has been badly let down by central Government in its timetable to clean up the city centre via the Clean Air Zone are there any plans to introduce vehicle free days at least on a once a month trial in the short term to improve air quality for all citizens, but specifically those who live and work in central Leeds?



A Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – We are very disappointed that the Government has not delivered as promised on the key steps we need for us to fully activate the Clean Air Zone. Particularly when we are making good progress on delivering our elements. This is disappointing for us and very much so for the people of Leeds who are waiting for air quality improvements. We have pressed the government hard concerning this failure and we will continue the implementation of the Leeds project package for delivery on time at the end of the year as we have committed. During this period we shall press the government to do everything in its power to get the necessary systems up and running as soon as possible.

Through Clean Air Day we have publicized the issues and used some road closures including to support the messages and our Clean Air programme. We will continue to look at how events can be used to reinforce and encourage low carbon and low emission vehicle use which will no doubt include more temporary road closures. Although we need to keep the city moving, as the strategy for the climate emergency develops new initiatives for promoting travel change and low carbon travel across the city in our communities as well as the city centre are being followed through. We will be guided by the work of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee in this regard.

In addition to this, the council has taken on the bold target of closing City Square to general traffic by 2023, rather than introducing individual car free days. This permanent change is part of a package of works to remove a significant portion of traffic from the city centre completely, including permanently removing traffic from Cookridge Street and New Briggate, to create a healthier, cleaner and more inviting environment for the people that live, work and visit the city centre. This work will complement and support the significant pedestrianized zones we already have in the city centre which has been a priority for a number of years, including Millennium Square and Briggate.

Although individual road closures in the city centre would be welcome, we are focused on creating permanent and lasting changes to the city centre environment that will create a greater impact and overall benefit for the cities citizens and air quality.

Q21 Councillor C Anderson - Would the Executive Board Member with responsibility for the city centre please tell me what strategy is being deployed to deal with the current number of empty shop units which are blighting the look of the main shopping areas such as Briggate?

A Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) – We have a planned approach to support property owners and agents when a property is left empty for any length of time in the city centre. The objective being to make the empty spaces attractive with a view to accelerating occupation. This approach is detailed in the appendix provided.

Additional information – see below



CONTEXT:

The retail high street nationally, continues to face challenges from increasing demand for Internet online trading, leading to consolidation of retail estates on the high street by retailers. High street retail spend in itself is barely holding up, with resulting store closure plans of retailers to reduce their exposure to rental leases. This includes retailers such as House of Fraser, Marks & Spencer, Debenhams, Mothercare, Poundland, Pateserie Valerie, Arcadia, HMV and many more.

LEEDS CITY CENTRE POSITION

Leeds City centre fairs better than most other competing cities on the issue of empty business units. The Leeds city centre average vacancy rate is 11%, compared to a national average of 12.7% . Additionally, the Leeds figure compares well to cities of a similar size. (Local Data Company).

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Leeds City Council does not own many retail units in the city centre. Our role, in support of the city centre's economic sustainability and to maintain the city centre as a vibrant location has been to proactively encourage Landlords and agents to better manage the issue and help them provide opportunities for meanwhile use whilst the search for a tenant continues.

HOW

Some empty retail units in the city centre have been left in an unattractive and uninviting condition when vacated by tenants, with undressed windows exposing an untidy and disused interior. In some cases, empty units can attract alternative unwanted uses such as rough sleeping in doorways; collection of litter and a general unkempt state. This affects the aesthetic and attractiveness of the city centre's main shopping area, and with the national picture being a difficult one on this issue of empty units, this is an issue that City Centre Management continuously seeks to address. City Centre Management has undertaken a commissioning exercise to collect a database of local artists, who are directly commissioned to create artistically-designed window vinyls once permissions have been gained from building owners. The process of gaining permission from building owners and property management companies is lengthy and most owners/management companies are very reluctant to permit access or use of the building façade in case they incur costs going forward.

To simplify the request and reduce the risk to building owners/property management companies, City Centre Management simply ask for permission to place removable vinyls on the outside windows of empty units, which means no access to the building is required. The cost of install and removal is covered by City Centre Management.

OUTCOMES

This small scheme of works contribute towards maintaining Leeds City Centre's status as the region's most attractive retail destination. City Centre Management also believe this will increase the desirability of empty unit take up, in key locations for prospective tenants.

The main challenge with this scheme is gaining permission from building owners and property management companies to install vinyls or often simply to maintain the aesthetics of their unit whilst untenanted. However, City Centre Management are continuously seeking to address empty units on the high street with this approach.



What follows below is examples of before and after images showing the important impact of this scheme for Leeds city centre.



Commercial Street



Kirkgate



New York Street



Lands Lane

Q22 Councillor M Robinson - Residents in parts of my ward have raised concerns about the blanket coverage of 20mph zones in some villages. Can the Executive Member confirm that their concerns or objections will be listened to and adhered to?

A Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – The 20mph speed limit programme is currently being delivered as part of a City wide road safety initiative. This particular programme of works was the result of a deputation to the City Council by the “20 plenty” road safety campaign group. The Council’s Executive and Scrutiny Boards considered this deputation, the road safety benefits and improvements to how people feel and interact within their communities by having a lower speed limit and endorsed a city wide 20 mph speed limit programme of works.

This programme is now nearing completion and the ward of Harewood is included in this final phase of works and/or certain elements of the proposals. We are aware that Ward Members, some Parish Councillors and residents are opposed to the introduction of a blanket 20mph speed limit. It should also be noted that some residents are supportive of the project and the 20mph speed limits which have been proposed.

All representatives will be detailed in a report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) and the Executive Member for their consideration before a final decision is made.

The current programme is to produce the report in July/August to allow completion of the works on site in this financial year.

Q23 Councillor C Anderson - Would the Executive Board Member with responsibility for Climate Change confirm that all staff in the Council have received a briefing on Climate Change and have been advised what impact it will have on their way of working and any decisions they make?

A Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – All management teams and the whole Chief Officer Group have received presentations on the climate emergency declaration and discussed the implications for their service. The intention is for this to be cascaded to teams. However, the council is also looking to develop an E learning tool that can be rolled out to all staff and used in Let's talk sessions for staff who are not on line to supplement these initial presentations.

In the short term the Sustainable Energy and Air Quality team will support anyone writing an Executive board report in the development of the Climate Emergency section. Over the summer, guidance will be produced that guides staff whilst developing their report about what are the potential implications in light of the Climate Emergency.

Q24 Councillor M Robinson - Can the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development confirm when the next round of the Local Centres Programme funding will open?

A Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – As members will recall this administration has committed £5m of capital funds to the Local Centres Programme (LCP) to prepare and implement projects in local and neighbourhood centres to support the viability and sustainability of local shops and services. This work involves:

- **Engaging local businesses and communities to create viable local centres** that are accessible, safe, resilient and fit for the 21st century;
- **Providing employment opportunities and the re-use of vacant spaces**, especially within traditional buildings;
- **Encouraging innovation in the use of buildings and spaces** to encourage appropriate commercial uses including digital inclusion and business support;
- **Introducing physical improvements** that support access to jobs and housing and which create a local environment that directly promotes well-being and more resilient communities;



The development of the projects within the Local Centres Programme is going well with schemes being created in partnership with ward members, businesses, voluntary groups and other stakeholders across the city. Over 50 projects were received through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process in Spring 2018, offered to all 33 wards across the district. In response, Executive Board approved projects in 12 wards as part of this Round 1 call.

Project development requires detailed work with many of the same considerations and safeguards as those much larger in scale. Therefore, the officer time commitment is significant, but worthwhile given the need to bring the benefits of inclusive growth to centres across the Leeds MD. Officers have continued to work with members and others to develop schemes in readiness for a further round of funding and as such, there has been no disadvantage to any wards where Members are seeking to bring forward ideas under the programme.

An announcement about the Round 2 Local Centres Programme (LCP) is expected in the autumn.

Q25 Councillor C Anderson - Would the Executive Board Member with responsibility for Climate Change please advise why, when this Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency, taxis are still allowed to have their engines idling whilst waiting on a fare, within the taxi rank areas of the city?

A Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – This week anti idling signs will be installed at all taxi ranks across the city. Until these are in place no enforcement can take place. The legislation enabling enforcement of stationary idling vehicles is by way of fixed penalty notice and the enforcing officer is required to provide the driver with a warning where there is reasonable cause to believe there is idling before any enforcement action. In practical terms and taking into account the circumstances, clearly if an enforcement officer were to ask someone to turn off their engine or face enforcement, it would be rare that this would then lead to enforcement action. The primary purpose of the signage is therefore to promote awareness and to drive behavioural change.

Q26 Councillor M Robinson - Can the Leader of Council confirm if she has had discussions with other Yorkshire leaders, officers and national politicians about bringing forward a devolution deal covering Leeds City Region & North Yorkshire as is the case under the Business Rates agreement?"

A Councillor J Blake (Leader of Council) – Discussions regarding devolution are ongoing.

Q27 Councillor P Wadsworth - Could the Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles confirm how many white single use plastic bags are used by the Council's litter collectors on the Highway each week and how many are given out to voluntary groups?

A Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) – It is not possible to quantify numbers of bags used by operatives each week. The number varies from week to week based on local circumstances.



We provide bags free of charge to numerous known and established voluntary groups from across the city on request from them, once again this number cannot be quantified.

In the 2018/ 2019 financial year the environmental action service purchased a total of 1,134,000 white bags although this cannot be taken as an accurate figure for bags used in 2018/2019 as we maintain reserve stock levels for white bags.

Our white bags are manufactured with 50% recycled content.

All white bags are processed at our contractors materials recycling facility and currently used to produce refuse derived fuel for a local power station.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Tomkinson
Principal Governance Officer

