

**COUNCIL**

**15 JANUARY 2020**

**UNANSWERED QUESTIONS LETTER**

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**Democratic & Central Services**

Governance Services

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Date: 3 April 2020

To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor

**COUNCIL MEETING – 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2020**

At the above meeting, the thirty minutes of Question Time expired with questions 10 to 32 unanswered. Council Procedure Rule 11.6 requires that each Member of Council is sent responses to such questions.

**Q10** Councillor S Arif - Can the Executive Member for Children and Families update Council on recent national recognition for work within Leeds' Children and Families Services?

**A** Councillor F Venner (Executive Member for Children and Families) - Thank you, Cllr Arif.

We want Leeds to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in and there is some absolutely fantastic work going on across our city to help drive that ambition forward.

I am delighted that Leeds City Council's outstanding Children and Families Services recently won two prestigious national Social Worker of the Year Awards.

The Awards recognise and celebrate great social work across Adults and Children's Services and we were lucky enough to be awarded the winning title in the 'Best Social Work Employer' and 'Creative and Innovative Social Work Practice' categories.

Since embarking on an ambitious improvement journey in 2010, Leeds has prioritised workforce stability by investing in the workforce – including establishing a clear social work career pathway which offers tailored support and development opportunities at every level.

Workforce investment has resulted in significant recruitment and retention benefits for Children and Families Services in Leeds, which has achieved Council savings of over £20m since 2011/12.

Leeds' Futures Service came top in the Creative and Innovative Social Work Practice category. Futures was established in March 2018 to work holistically, therapeutically and intensively with young parents vulnerable to experiencing the repeated trauma of losing children through care proceedings.

Children and Families Services were also recently shortlisted for two coveted Children and Young People Now Awards. Leeds' Child Friendly City Centre project was nominated for the partnership working award, while the Service achieved second place in the Early Years category.

In addition, the Council's Head of Service for Children's Social Work, Gail Faulkner was also shortlisted in the 'Championing Social Work Values' category for her work adopting restorative approaches within practice around domestic abuse.

In Leeds, we have been on an incredible nine-year improvement journey to get to where we are now and I am delighted that we are not being complacent and are continuing to strive for national excellence. I am so proud of these achievements – they really demonstrate our commitment to making Leeds a Child Friendly City.

- Q11** Councillor B Anderson - What proposals does the Executive Member for Resources have to deal with the issues on Main Street in Pool where his administration identified Main Street as an Air Quality Management Area?
- A** Councillor J Lewis (Executive Member for Resources) - Although Pool is situated beyond the outer boundary of the planned Clean Air Zone which is expected to go-live during the summer of this year the requirements and scope of vehicles will provide beneficial effects to the village. The scheme will be closely monitored to assess any impact. Further to this and in the context of the Leeds Climate Emergency the Council is committed to a target of net zero carbon emissions, further work is being undertaken to understand how vehicle emissions can be reduced further and an appropriate policy approach to this. It is therefore anticipated that Pool like all communities in the city both in and outside the present Clean Air Zone boundary will benefit from the strategy of which the national commitments to de-carbonisation of transport will play an increasingly important part. As an authority we will be urging the government to increase their attention to this matter in line with their own commitments and the global climate emergency.
- Q12** Councillor S Lay - Could the Executive Member for Communities provide Members with an update regarding the proposed Homeless Leeds Support Group 'Tented City' and the Council's response to it?
- A** Councillor D Coupar (Executive Member for Communities) - The Leeds Street Support Team leads on Local Authority work to support vulnerable people living 'street based lifestyles' in Leeds.



With regard the recent information concerning a planned tent encampment in the city, officers from the Street Support Team have been engaging with the organiser, Mr David Hedley who is already known to the team due to his involvement in a previous tent city.

The Local Authority takes the problem of persons sleeping rough on our streets and the associated issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, mental and physical health needs and accommodation requirements very seriously as is evidenced by the priority status this issue is now given.

Over the last sixteen months we have invested significantly in this area with a dedicated team working every day to tackle the issue. The team is a collaboration of Council departments working alongside professionals from commissioned services who have a wealth of knowledge and experience in this field. These services cover all aspects necessary to deal with the problem from dedicated outreach work on the streets of Leeds, supported housing providers, physical and mental health experts, social work and key support workers.

The focus of this team is to safeguard vulnerable people in our city and reduce risks associated with such a lifestyle.

This approach is evolving all the time but there have already been a number of successes seen over the past 12 months as a consequence of our work in this area including a reducing rough sleeper count and over 300 people being supported from street based lifestyles into council/partner provided accommodation of various types.

It's true to say that there has never been as much investment in this area as there is now which is being underpinned and supported by funding we are in receipt of from the Government's Rough Sleeper Initiative. Additionally we are forging stronger links with grassroots organisations through the Homeless Charter which is making a positive impact on increasing our accessibility and engagement with some of our most vulnerable and challenged members of our community. This includes where necessary looking to use appropriate enforcement powers on individuals who are considered less vulnerable but are engaged in criminal and/or anti-social behaviour including aggressive begging.

Specifically with regards the tented encampment we know from our experiences that such encampments actually increase risks on individuals due them becoming a focal point for others in our community who prey on the most vulnerable. This was the case last year when Mr Hedley set up the previous encampment that saw individuals linked to organised crime and drug supply associating with those in the encampment. Other vulnerable people across the city including high risk missing people were attracted to the site and were then at greater risk of being exploited and some members of the encampment were involved in crime. At one of the most recent encampments in Penny Pocket Park, drugs and stolen property were recovered from the site.

It is for these reasons the Council are seeking a court injunction to prevent such encampments. The Court in Leeds support the stance we have adopted having been presented with the evidence and has already worked to secure a written undertaking from Mr Hedley to refrain from setting up such an encampment which he has voluntarily provided.



In summary significant evidence exists that shows how such an encampment adversely impacts on the wider community (business and public) as well as adding significantly more risk to an already vulnerable population group who are being engaged and supported routinely by professionals in the most appropriate ways. We are committed to the integrated approach we have developed and will continue to seek new and innovative ways to help those who are extremely vulnerable through our Street Support Improvement Board.

The Council remain completely open to working with others who wish to volunteer their time to work in this field with us and we are committed to continuing our connections with organisations such as St George's Crypt and St Anne's Resource Centre whose support is as strong now as it has ever been. Such an offer has been made to Mr Hedley.

**Q13** Councillor A Marshall-Katung - Could the Executive Member comment on the recent Silver Status awarded to Children and Families from Stonewall?

**A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) - Thank you Cllr Marshall for your question and I would be delighted to update Council.

On 31<sup>st</sup> October last year our Children and Families Services received its Stonewall Children & Young People Services (CYPS) Champions result for the submission we had made against the new award in late July.

I am very happy to say we were awarded the **Silver CYPS Champion Award**.

We are one of three local authorities from across the country to receive the Silver award. As this is the first year of the award, this a significant achievement.

The CYPS Champion award is a unique tool for local authorities to measure LGBT+ inclusion in terms of policy and practice across their Children's Services. It looks at LGBT+ inclusion across five key areas:

- Training
- Strategic support
- Working groups
- Schools and settings
- Celebrating achievements and measuring impact

As well as considering the support the local authorities offer schools and settings. By achieving the **Silver** award, Leeds City Council scored highly in all five areas.

Previously, Leeds participated in Stonewall's **Education Equality Index** which was a comprehensive benchmarking exercise for local authorities, designed to showcase how well they are celebrating difference and tackling homophobia, biphobia and transphobia initially in schools and then later expanded to include other children's settings. Stonewall's CYPS/Education Champions programme, known as the CYPS Champion Award, replaces the Education Equality Index but continues to benchmark policy and practice across the whole of Children and Young People's Services on their support to LGBT+ young people.



Leeds's CYPS Champion's Award submission was drafted through a Stonewall task and finish group. The task and finish group was comprised of representatives from across Children and Families to ensure the submission reflected the wide variety of work being done across services to support LGBT+ young people and their families in Leeds.

In terms of receiving feedback on our submission, Sarah Rose from Stonewall is coming to Leeds to deliver feedback on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Members of the Stonewall task group have been invited along to the meetings so that they can hear the information first hand. The information gained from the feedback will be written up and where areas for development or gaps are identified, an action plan will be drafted to address these areas and monitor the progress of their development/implementation.

Overall, this is a fantastic result for Leeds and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to LGBT+ young people so thank you Cllr Marshall for allowing me to share it.

**Q14** Councillor D Ragan - Can the Executive Member please update Council on plans to improve waste collection in Leeds?

**A** Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) - The service is currently undertaking a review of its operations, working in collaboration with the two main representative unions, GMB and Unison.

The collection routes were last redesigned in 2011 and the city has changed and grown considerably since. Although service performance remains high overall, as measured by the service's formal missed collection KPI, the service is struggling to accommodate the level of new builds across the city within the current routes.

A significant part of the review is therefore a technical exercise to redesign routes across the city so that they are as efficient as possible, but also have a degree of capacity to absorb planned new builds. Opportunity is also being taken to design the routes/service to encourage more local accountability and links, using the Community Committee boundaries. The new routes will be implemented during 2020.

In addition, the review is also looking at those parts of the city where the service has struggled to deliver its "standard" offer; particularly where there is a combination of issues such as high concentration/density of population/housing and transiency of population. Alternative models will be worked up for consideration in these areas. This will include how these areas can achieve better recycling rates. Examples of the areas where this is the greatest issue are the vast terraced housing seen across Harehills, parts of Chapeltown, Headingley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse, as well as the unique challenge of the City Centre and high-rise accommodation across the city. Relevant Ward Members will be involved in this work.

Progress has been made on a number of key review objectives, all of which will contribute towards improving reliability and efficiency. These include:



- (a) **Introduction of a new Crew Chargehand role** to the service – recruitment of existing drivers into this new role successfully implemented over late spring/summer 2019 with 95% take up. A 6 month development programme is currently underway. The current level of in-cab technology use is consistently higher than we have ever achieved in the past, and will improve further as we complete the Crew Chargehand training programme, as well as deal with the hardware and software issues now being identified.
- (c) **End of Day (EOD) Reports** - Contact from Members pointing out streets that have been reported to them but not on the EOD report has fallen considerably. The report itself has been redesigned and a new, consistent format will be introduced shortly. This will include the “carry forward” of any recoveries not made from the previous day’s report. In addition, once the necessary IT changes have been made to the in-cab and the case management system, a more useful range of reasons will be provided to explain why a particular street could not be collected that day. The ambition is to translate this EOD report into something that can be published on the Council website at the end of each day for residents/customers to see too.
- (d) **Fleet renewal** - the replacement of well over half of the existing fleet (45 Refuse Collection vehicles) was achieved by the end of December 2019. These vehicles are all Clean Air compliant. The remainder of the fleet will be replaced in 2020 and 2021. Fleet Services are investigating viable options for electric and/or hydrogen vehicles in future replacement programmes.
- (e) **Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (yellow lines)** – a report was approved by Executive Board this month for a delegated decision to be made through Highways Board for the implementation of an Experimental TRO. This includes approval to allow additional locations to be added to the Order without further reference to Executive Board, subject to any necessary local consultation (inc ward member support). Highways advise the first yellow lines should be expected in Spring 2020 and the works will be prioritised in liaison with the Refuse Service (i.e. start at the locations where the impact is greatest).
- (f) **Increase in items accepted in the green bin** – from last month, residents are now able to put pots, tubs, trays, cartons and Tetra Pak items in their green bin for recycling.

A report summarising the progress made in the review was provided for all Community Committees to consider and comment on during their latest meeting cycle.

**Q15** Councillor R Stephenson - What actions has the Executive Member taken to ensure that nail bars, hand carwashes and similar businesses operating in Leeds are not using exploitative labour, whereby foreign workers are in debt-bondage to traffickers; and does he consider the Council’s planning policy to be sufficiently robust in respect of exploitative labour?

**A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) – Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) – Leeds City Council and its partners are committed to tackling modern day slavery and issues concerned with exploitative labour, prioritising activity to reflect the seriousness of this issue.



WYP have dedicated human trafficking capabilities supported by an intelligence function linking with organisations such as the National Crime Agency and Border Force/Immigration colleagues. They have worked with Safer Leeds from a Leeds City Council point of view on specific operations whereby exploited labour is being taken advantage of, often by organised crime groups. In recent times this activity has been focussed on carwashes, nail bars, illicit cannabis sites and sex trafficking.

More broadly, Leeds City Council through its procurement arrangements have committed to a Modern Day Slavery supply chain statement (not a statutory duty but is considered good practice). The statement is in place but is due for renewal in April 2020. This is a transparency statement that commits the local authority to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of working with, commissioning or supporting any supplier or organisation that may use an exploited workforce. This is an extensive commitment having regard for the fact that LCC commissioned/used 10,723 external suppliers in 2018/19 alone.

From a Leeds City Council Planning point of view, we do have planning policies on guiding the location of retail and employment uses but these are around the type of use and their acceptability in land use terms, rather than their employment practices. As indicated above, the Council and its partners are committed to tackling modern day slavery and issues concerned with exploitative labour, however, where illegal activity exists, enforcement action is best taken through the specific legal powers currently in place.

**Q16** Councillor J Bentley - It is now two years since an explosion destroyed four homes on the Silk Mill Estate. Would the Executive Member please inform Council why they have still not been replaced?

**A** Councillor D Coupar (Executive Member for Communities) - The site was subject to a gas explosion and subsequent demolition of 4 x 1 bedroom apartments at Silk Mill Drive in December 2017. Two of the properties were subject to leasehold agreements. Negotiations with the leaseholders to reach a settlement with both parties took considerable time, and the Council was only able to complete the purchase of these two leases so that whole site was returned to Council ownership on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

In March 2019, following consideration of delivery options, it was agreed that two replacement houses would be built on the Silk Mill Drive site, as a contract variation to a larger project being delivered at Meynell Approach, Holbeck. This provided the most effective delivery route at the time as the Council already had a contractor in place on the scheme at Meynell Approach, compared to undertaking a separate procurement exercise for such a small scheme.

The Meynell Approach scheme secured planning permission in August 2019 but has faced significant cost increases as the extent of site abnormal development costs became clearer as additional surveys and investigations were undertaken. There was then a significant price increase during the Contractor's market testing that meant the scheme was undeliverable in its current form and would not deliver value for money for the Council. As a result the scheme, including the Silk Mill Drive scheme has been delayed as a result.



A cost reduction exercise was needed to achieve significant cost saving opportunities without deviating from the requirements of the Council's output specification which including a requirement to deliver a scheme using modern methods of construction. This was achieved in November 2019, although the contractor is now working with the Council to clarify whether a revised planning approval is needed before work commences on site.

The Council Housing Growth team considered separating the Silk Mill View scheme from the Meynell Approach scheme at the time these events took place and concluded that the most cost effective and quickest delivery method would be through the approach originally agreed. We have sought and obtained assurances from the contractor that the work on the Silk Mill View scheme can proceed quickly and will seek to provide a further update to local ward members in the next few weeks to provide more detail of the proposed delivery timescale.

- Q17** Councillor J Taylor - Will the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development commit to using some of the money allocated for the now cancelled Airport Link Road to fund a signalised crossing on the ring road at Stanhope Drive to help pedestrians including school children cross safely?
- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) – Discussions about the funding which had only been allocated for scheme development by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for connectivity to the North West Leeds employment hub and airport are taking place following approval of the alternative connectivity strategy by Executive Board on the 7 January. The development of proposals for the junction of the Ring Road with Stanhope Drive is continuing. It is recognised that once an appropriate scheme is established funding will be necessary, which subject to approval it is anticipated will be taken forward from resources identified for improving road safety and the provision of facilities to further assist pedestrians at this site.
- Q18** Councillor C Campbell - Could the Chair inform Council the average weekly/annual fare rise for young people using the newly commercialised Connexions / Kilvington school bus service to Prince Henrys Grammar School in Otley.
- A** Councillor K Groves (Chair of Transport Committee West Yorkshire Combined Authority) - The pupils travelling on these services are not eligible for free or subsidised travel under the Council or the Combined Authority's policies and it is not appropriate to continue to subsidise them. Under the new arrangement the average weekly fare will increase by £1.70 (16%). The cost of an annual pass will increase by £85.
- Q19** Councillor C Anderson - Can the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development please advise what the total cost of the consultation is in respect of the Connecting Leeds conversations with residents that have resulted in abolished schemes in the north of the city?



- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) - Consultation and engagement costs for the development of scheme options for connectivity to the North West Leeds Employment Hub and airport has been £205,000. As well as highway options, the engagement also included the proposed rail station which is being taken forward, Alwoodley Bus Lane, and Lawnswood Roundabout. Consultation is an important part of the process to inform decision making.
- Q20** Councillor B Flynn - Will the Executive Member for Learning, Employment and Skills please share with council the details of the progress being made to “close the gap” in academic achievement for disadvantaged children in our secondary schools?
- A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) - We know that the 3As strategy is having an impact on practice in school but what we are looking for is sustainable improvement of outcomes for all over time and that would include narrowing the gap for our disadvantaged groups. The Annual Standards Report will be coming to Exec Board in April and will give full details of areas that have improved and those that are still clear areas for development. We would not expect to see immediate closing of gaps and in fact sometimes improving outcomes for all can open up gaps temporarily. However, the 3As is very focused on our disadvantaged groups within that drive of overall improvement. We also know that improving the data around exclusions and off-rolling will be of real benefit to our most disadvantaged groups as they are over-represented in that data.
- Q21** Councillor B Anderson - At a recent Police & Crime Panel meeting in Wakefield I was asked about the enforcement of 20mph zones. Can the Executive member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development please advise what policy changes she is proposing to make to improve the enforcement of 20mph zones and limits in the city?
- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) - The 20 mph speed limits in the city are designed to comply with the guidelines and advice from the Department for Transport so as to be largely self-enforcing within the parameters set out. New 20 mph speed limits are monitored for compliance with the guidelines and for their impacts on road safety and road casualties. This shows that in general schemes have improved road safety and that most sites meet the guidelines. Where there is significant variance above the target speeds consideration is given as to whether further measures are necessary or appropriate and where appropriate identified for funding consideration. Enforcement of the speed limits could be considered by the police subject to their resources and prioritisation. These schemes have proved popular in the city and are well supported by residents and where issues of speeding are reported these are investigated and discussed with the police to consider whether enforcement or community speed watch actions are appropriate.
- Q22** Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Executive Member commit to expanding Artforms following the delivery of the Conservative government’s manifesto commitment to award Leeds a share of £80 million investment in music hubs; and can he confirm that he has discussed with secondary heads how they intend to use the new arts premium?



**A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) - We are very proud of the excellent service that Artforms provides and the positive impact that has on the children and young people of our city. The 3As strategy has improving opportunities for children in Leeds in sports, arts and positive activities as one of the key priorities and so we welcome the national investment in the arts and look forward to seeing what the actual amount Leeds will receive will be. There are ongoing discussions with Heads/Principals about how they use funding from a variety of pots, but of course those decisions rest with individual schools and governing bodies.

**Q23** Councillor B Flynn - As promised at the last full council, would the Leader of Council please advise me on what action she has taken to ensure the re-start, and speeding up, of the long running harmonisation discussions between West Yorkshire/City of York councils regarding private hire driver and vehicle licensing conditions?

**A** Councillor J Blake (Leader of Council) - The six authorities have agreed to work together on six areas of taxi and private hire licensing harmonisation:

- CCTV in vehicles
- Convictions/suitability
- Cross-border enforcement
- Driver training
- Information sharing
- Vehicle conditions

The chairs of the respective licensing committees have agreed to meet regularly (alternate months, hosted by Calderdale) in 2020 to track progress and discuss new priorities. The licensing managers of the six authorities continue to meet on a monthly basis, hosted by Wakefield.

**Q24** Councillor B Anderson - What proposals does the Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles have for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Environmental Enforcement in the city?

**A** Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) - The Environmental Action service currently has 32 full-time Environmental Action Operatives across the three CNT teams in East, West and South Leeds. These officers deal with a range of environmental related behaviour change activity in neighbourhoods including common issues such as waste in gardens, over-grown vegetation, fly-tipping, littering and bins being left on streets.

Wherever possible and appropriate, staff initially adopt a problem solving approach and work closely with residents and where required with elected members and local partners to resolve issues. Where this does not result in the right outcomes, formal enforcement action is taken using legislative powers usually through the issuing of notices, works in default procedures and/ or fixed penalty notices. Some cases also result in prosecutions through the courts.

We are committed to tackling waste crime and promoting responsible waste behaviours in relation to the environment. As part of this commitment, we have focussed on more face to face engagement activity in relation to 'enforcement' as we have found this is often the best way to secure sustainable and lasting behaviour change and improvements.



Recently, through the environmental action service, we have developed and delivered specific proposals to improve behaviour change and enforcement activity by:

- **Tackling waste crime locally:** delivering locally agreed approaches to tackling and reducing waste crime through localised action plans. These have been developed with input from local elected members.
- **Doing more enforcement through engagement:** 4 new Street wardens are being appointed in the next month to tackle waste crime through better outreach and engagement. There will initially be 1 warden per CNT area (East, West and South). Engagement techniques will include education and awareness activities including letter drops, signage, capture cams and face to face work as well as intensive formal enforcement action where required. One Community Committee has agreed to fund an additional dedicated warden to work in one of its wards.
- **Using New and Extensive signage and visual information to deter waste crime:** at fly-tipping hot-spots, bin-yards, and local street entry points and on LCC environmental vehicles.
- **Using More CCTV:** to tackle and deter waste crime.
- **Rolling out local initiatives such as Love Where You Live:** working with local partners such as Groundwork to engage with communities to help them beautify back-alleys and streets that have become dumping hotspots through community events and creating artwork and installations to prevent fly tipping. These are already underway in Harehills, Burmantofts & Richmond Hill and Hunslet & Riverside and are a good examples of how the Council has supported communities to change poor behaviour in relation to the environmental and re-claim fly tipping hotspots and local problem locations. We will be working with elected members and communities across the city on similar initiatives over the coming months.
- **Using Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's):** which enable dedicated and focussed enforcement activity in relation to bins on streets and containment of waste in particular. So far we have successfully introduced PSPO' in Harehills and Armley where we have made very good progress in this aspect of behaviours change and enforcement. Further PSPO proposals are being developed for the student areas in Inner North West Leeds which will be active later this year.

These proposals are off-course related to the significant work being delivered in relation to the city-wide waste review, the review and promotion of facilities and services offered at the cities household waste sites and the on-going communications activity to ensure responsible behaviour in relation to the environment particularly using social media and short video clips.

- Q25** Councillor R Stephenson - The Children's Commissioner notes that 363 Leeds children in care are living out of area, isolated from family and friend support networks. What action has the Executive Member taken to reduce this figure since her appointment and is she satisfied with her progress?



**A** Councillor F Venner (Executive Member for Children and Families) - It is important that children and young people who have to be looked after are in placements that can meet their needs and that those placements are as close to their families and communities as possible. Leeds is ranked 28<sup>th</sup> out of the 152 local authorities in England for the number of children placed within 20 miles of their home address. The Department of Education uses this measure because it gives a more accurate picture of how far children are from their family rather than simply whether they are in or out of the Authority area. In a city like Leeds it may be closer to the family home for a child from the South of the city being placed just across the border in Wakefield than it is for the child to be placed in the north of the city. Equally in large county councils, children placed within the same authority may many miles from their home community.

There are currently 373 children and young people placed outside of the Leeds area. 91 children are placed with extended family members through kinship care arrangements and 11 are placed with a parent who no longer lives in Leeds as part of a court approved plan for reunification. A further 70 children are placed with Leeds City Council foster carers who do not have a Leeds post code.

119 children are placed within the region mainly with Independent Fostering Agency carers. The remaining 82 children and young people, are placed outside of the region in specialist placements because they have more complex needs. 6 of these young people are placed in some form of secure placement on mental health, welfare or justice grounds which means that the local authority has no say in where they are placed. The remaining 76 children were placed by us in specialist fostering or residential placements to meet their individual needs.

I would like to reassure you that all children and young people are visited regularly by their social worker and are in contact with an Independent Reviewing Officer who ensures that their placement is safe and meeting the individual child or young person's needs. Where it is agreed that a child or young person can return to a local placement that is done in a planned way but as soon as possible.

**Q26** Councillor B Flynn - Will the Executive Member for Learning, Employment and Skills please share with council his views on the city's performance in the recent SATs?

**A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) – We look forward to sharing the full set of validated results across all areas in the Annual Standards Report when it comes out in April. It is good to see some areas of improvement in the KS2 SATS outcomes but of course we are looking to see sustainable improvement over time. There are some very good progress scores, particularly in Maths which is encouraging and we are confident that we will see clearer improvements in 2020 and 2021.

**Q27** Councillor B Anderson - What plans does the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development have for developing a comprehensive highways and transportation strategy for Pool in Wharfedale?



- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) - Officers have been and remain in discussion with local ward members and the Parish Council concerning the future planning and strategy for traffic in the village. the only plan for road investment in the village are as part of an approved housing development to make some passive provision in the access road design for a possible future partial Western Bypass. It is, however, recognised that the location, development pattern and character of the village does not readily lend itself to significant highway improvements with respect to the A658 and A659 routes. It is recognised there is a wish to see some highway measures in the village to mitigate the effects of traffic and provide more readily for local movements and discussions will be continued with the community concerning these matters.
- Q28** Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Executive Member join me in endorsing Green Lane Primary Academy's intention to become an international Green Flag Award Eco-School; and can he set out what actions he has taken to ensure that every school in Leeds becomes an Eco-School?
- A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) - We would certainly join in congratulating Green Lane in their excellent work in this area and their intent to become a Green Flag School. There is a cost element to this scheme and we recognise that not all schools would want to put finance towards gaining an award of this nature. We would, however, encourage all school to consider their carbon footprint and ways in which they can contribute to improving the environment in Leeds and beyond. We have co-ordinated a tree planting initiative which has been offered to all schools and an initial group of 15 have taken this up. We will continue to work with schools on relevant schemes within our overall climate emergency.
- Q29** Councillor B Flynn - Will the Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment please share with council any provisional progress shown in 2018/19 towards improving the outcomes/achievements shown in the previous year's Annual Standards Report?
- A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) -. It is very pleasing that our Progress 8 figure has improved again this year and that now places us 2<sup>nd</sup> in the core cities for that measure and 52<sup>nd</sup> nationally (up from 65<sup>th</sup> Last year). In fact our national ranking has improved in a range of measures, but there is clearly still much more to be done. We look forward to sharing the full picture via the Annual Standards Report in April and the ongoing plans to continue improving outcomes for all children.
- Q30** Councillor R Stephenson - Further to my Question 33 at the November 2019 Council Meeting, and the Written Answer supplied by the Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment on 8th January 2020, what is the rationale behind his belief that Mill Field Primary School needs to convert to academy status in order to secure the improvements required?
- A** Councillor J Pryor (Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment) - The decision to academise is a Regional Schools Commisioner decision and enshrined in law. We do not have power to prevent or ensure it. As a local authority we work with the school, the DfE and any potential providers to ensure that this transition happens as smoothly as possible.



- Q31** Councillor J Shemilt - How does the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development intend to spend monies previously allocated for the Airport Link Road that has been cancelled, and does she agree that this funding should be used to address congestion in the Outer North West area of Leeds?
- A** Councillor L Mulherin (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) - At present WYCA have only approved funding for scheme development. In conjunction with the revised approach to connectivity approved by Executive Board on 7 January, discussions are taking place with WYCA to take forward the provision of a new rail station and the onward highway connectivity to the proposed employment hub and airport site and the early development of other potential highway schemes in the Outer North West area.
- Q32** Councillor D Collins - Can the Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles advise what funding is available for community tree planting, particularly in the Horsforth Ward?
- A** Councillor M Rafique (Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles) - Funding available for community tree planting at a ward level includes MICE monies, community committee funds and allocation of S106 planning gain funds for suitable projects where appropriate. A report to Executive Board on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 approved the allocation of £350k per annum to woodland planting on a city wide basis. This assumed a degree of success in obtaining external funding to complement council capital woodland creation projects which will also be allocated on a city wide basis.

Yours sincerely

**Kevin Tomkinson**  
**Principal Governance Officer**

