

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Thursday 31 March 2022 at 10.30 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for all Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

B Anderson (Chair)	-	Adel and Wharfedale;
J Akhtar	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
A Blackburn	-	Farnley and Wortley;
K Brooks	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
R Charlwood	-	Moortown;
D Collins	-	Horsforth
R Finnigan	-	Morley North
A Gabriel	-	Beeston & Holbeck
P Grahame	-	Crossgates and Whinmoor
C Howley	-	Weetwood;
M Midgley	-	Kippax and Methley;
D Ragan	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
K Ritchie	-	Bramley and Stanningley
T Smith	-	Pudsey;

To Note: Please do not attend the meeting in person if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and please follow current public health advice to avoid passing the virus onto other people.

Note to observers of the meeting: To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'To View Meeting' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board 31 March 2022](#)

**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Rebecca Atherton
Tel: (0113) 37 88642**

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items have been identified.</p>	

3

LATE ITEMS

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)

4

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

MINUTES - 24 FEBRUARY 2022

5 - 12

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2022.

7

FUEL POVERTY UPDATE

13 - 26

To receive an update from the Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) on progress in reducing fuel poverty in Leeds over the last 12 months.

8

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN COUNCIL HOUSING

27 - 40

To receive an update from the Head of Strategy and Investment on the 5-year investment programme including details of specific projects that will contribute to improving energy efficiency and decarbonising council housing.

9

CARBON REDUCTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

41 - 48

To receive an update from the Head of Private Sector Housing on key areas of Private Sector Housing activity during the last 12 months.

10

WORK SCHEDULE

49 -
84

To consider the work schedule for the 2021/22 municipal year.

11

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will take place at 10.30am on 23 June 2022 at 10.30am. There will be a pre-meeting for all members of the Board at 10am.

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, A Blackburn,
D Collins, P Grahame, K Brooks, T Smith,
C Howley, K Ritchie, R Charwood and
M Midgley

52 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

53 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

54 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

55 Declaration of Interests

No interests were made at the meeting.

56 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Gabriel and Ragan.

57 Minutes - 20 January 2022

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held 20th January 2022, be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

In relation to Minute No.45 – Performance Monitoring, Board Members requested an update on:

- Parking permit schemes. It was noted that a response from the service has been received and will be re-circulated to all members.

58 Standards in the Private Rented Sector

The report of the Head of Service Private Sector Housing provides Board Members with an update on key areas of Private Sector Housing activity during the last 12 months.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Steve Rowley, Landlord Representative
- Mark Ireland, Head of Private Rented Sector

The Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring landlords are responsible, and legislatively compliant, and that there is sufficient investment in PRS properties, to ensure the wellbeing of tenants.

The Head of Private Rented Sector (PRS) introduced the report, and provided a presentation that highlighted the following information:

- The PRS makes up 20% of tenure in the city and is mainly found in pre 1919 stock.
- The accommodation in Leeds is considered good quality accommodation
- Inner-city areas have seen the biggest increase in the PRS, and the poorest quality accommodation is also in inner city areas.
- The aim is to ensure everyone has good quality homes. The Council is working with landlords and continuing to develop the Leeds Rental Standards. The council will also target landlords who fail to meet their legal obligations and will carry out formal action where appropriate.
- An overview on Leeds Rental Standard.
- Physical inspections have been affected by Covid-19, and guidance has largely been provided remotely during the pandemic period. Inspections re-commenced in March 2021.
- 3,000 HMOs are licenced at any one time, and it is coming up to the period of renewals for mandatory licensing. Conditions around ASB are currently being consulted upon and poor standard HMOs are being targeted.
- Rogue landlord unit – targeting criminal landlords in partnership with West Yorkshire Police and sharing intelligence to improve outcomes.
- Leeds Neighbourhood Approach has targeted properties in Holbeck, and provided support in Harehills and Beeston. A holistic approach ensures that residents can access a range of services including employment support alongside ensuring rental standards.
- Selective Licensing area was designated in January 2020. 6309 applications were received, 4530 final licences issued. Proactive inspections ensure people are complying with selective licence.
- It is estimated 500-600 properties remain unlicensed, 62 Civic Penalty Notices have been paid, a further 129 are currently being investigated and 132 are awaiting investigation.
- Homelessness prevention – additional support has been provided to landlords who have assisted the Council in boosting its supply of emergency accommodation for homeless citizens in Leeds. Since March this approach has helped deliver 334 new tenancies
- Concern was expressed about a perceived increase in empty homes in the city centre and student markets.
- Government White Paper – the Council is awaiting further detail on the implications of the Levelling Up white paper, which may affect the private rented sector. There have been indications that further detail

may relate to creating minimum standards, introducing a national landlords register and expanding decency standards to all tenures.

In responding to questions from Members, the following information was highlighted:

- Selective Licensing – clarification was provided about the process of developing a business case around strict criteria where there is a desire to identify an area for selective licensing. Most board members were keen to see the approach expanded into other areas of the city.
- The cost associated with Selective Licences is £825 per property, over a 5-year period. It was noted that accredited landlords signed up to Leeds Rental Standard are offered a £150 discount on licences.
- Consultation has been undertaken with community groups, social media, and hubs. There are no specific tenant groups and associations that are targeted through the consultation process due to the diverse nature of the market.
- Clarity was provided in relation to the application of mandatory conditions for Selective Licences and the weight applied to such conditions when providing evidence to be able to legally remove a licence from a landlord.
- It was acknowledged that some issues relating to fly-tipping and waste, were due to some landlords not understanding where to report issues and further work is required to educate tenants about their behaviour and responsibilities. Members were informed that landlords who are part of Leeds Rental Standard can receive some benefits in terms of depositing waste Household Waste Centres. Leeds Rental Standard is not a Council led scheme; however, the Council promote and encourage accredited landlords to join.
- In response to concerns regarding minimum standards for Permitted Development conversions, the Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate confirmed that a document has been produced on Purpose Built Student Accommodation and HMOs and consultation is expected to take place shortly. Confirmation on the progress of this will be provided in due course.
- Section 21 notices allow landlords to evict tenants without reasons on the notice. It was acknowledged that the Governments White Paper seeks to replace Section 21 notices, and proposals in relation to this are yet to be confirmed.
- Tenants can be moved into properties, prior to a Selective Licence being issued.
- Properties with a licence are inspected at least once. However, where this is intelligence on a property or specific issues, inspections will be carried out more regularly.
- Fee income generation from Selective Licensing and mandatory HMO licencing covers the cost of administering and ensuring compliance of schemes and the fee cannot be used to inspect properties / enforcement. It was noted that income from civic penalties introduced by the Government, allow the Council to retain income and use this for enforcement within the PRS and pay additional legal resources.

- HMOs are targeted based on intelligence, and it is recognised that a number of properties fall below the criteria for mandatory HMO licences.

The Chair thanked those in attendance and reiterated the valuable input of services to improve the PRS.

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the contents of the report, and comments made during discussion of this item.
- b) To note the progress made across the service on housing activity over the last 12 months.

59 LeedsWatch Update

The report of the Chief Officer Safer Stronger Communities provided an update on the implementation of the new model of working at LeedsWatch and a progress report in respect of the implementation of recommendations made by the Review Team.

Appended to the submitted report were the LeedsWatch New Models of Working report, LeedsWatch Structures and Effective Services to the Public – Keeping People Safe & Feeling Safe.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Paul Money, Chief Officer Safer Stronger Communities
- Zahid Butt, LeedsWatch Service Manager
- Sharon Coates, Service Improvement Manager
- Elizabeth Jarmin, Head of Locality Partnerships

The Chief Officer Safer, Stronger Communities introduced the report and provided an introductory presentation. The following information was highlighted:

- An overview of all the services LeedsWatch manage. It was noted that all services run 7 days a week and are based at Middleton.
- The main aim of the review is to improve the working environment within LeedsWatch and to ensure services work efficiently.
- Scope of the initial 2021 review: to consider new service delivery models to ensure a structure which is scalable and fit for purpose, and one that will also allow a better work life balance for employees.
- Staff engagement and working groups were undertaken with key stakeholders to explore different options for service delivery.
- The introduction of a new service delivery model that includes Multi-functional Response Officers, Multi-Functional Control Room Officers and the introduction of a triage and deployment function. This has increased the flexibility and capacity of the service.
- The new model involved the introduction of enhanced service delivery support including the creation of Performance and Relationships Team and standardisation and streamlining of processes.

- An overview of case studies was appended to the submitted report and an example from one of these was highlighted to show early intervention and prevention of crimes.

In responding to questions from Members, the following information was highlighted:

- Patrols of parks and greenspaces are undertaken by foot and aim to reach all parks in Leeds at least once per day, with bigger parks receiving more visits.
- Further work around engagement with Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) will be undertaken, particularly around CCTV hotspots.
- Members referred to information provided as part of Community Committee updates and requested that further information be provided on a regular basis to illustrate ward activity. Officers agreed to work with members to develop a format of reporting that better meets the needs of community committees. Further to this, the Head of Locality Partnerships confirmed that further work to strengthen roles of Community Safety Champions will be considered.
- Engagement with staff on the new model of service delivery, is an on-going process. The new model of working is coming up to its 6-month milestone and officers will therefore be looking again at feedback from staff.
- CCTV footage is provided to West Yorkshire Police (WYP) daily, and LeedsWatch deal with approximately 50 requests per day. It was noted that there is a liaison officer to inform NPTs of CCTV in their area.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and requested that a document be provided setting out workstreams within LeedsWatch, as well as contact details for the service.

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the contents of the report, together with members comments.
- b) To note the progress of implementation on the new model of working implemented by LeedsWatch.

60 Climate Change Update

The report of the Director of Resources sets out the annual review of the work undertaken in response to the declaration of a Climate Emergency in March 2019.

Appended to the submitted report was the Energy Strategy and Action Plan and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Hayden, Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate
- Councillor Walshaw, Chair of CEAC
Neil Evans, Director Resources
- Polly Cook, Chief Officer Sustainable Energy and Air Quality

The Chief Officer Sustainable Energy and Air Quality introduced the report, and provided the Board with an introductory presentation that highlighted the following:

- The Climate Emergency Annual Report has recently been published, as well as the Net Zero: Build Back Greener.
- An overview of activity in 2021, including the expansion of district heating, significant retrofitting of the Council's estate, the creation of new green jobs and the number of skills events being held in the city, as well as tree planting across the Council's estate.
- It was acknowledged that the costs associated with such projects are high but it was further noted that there will be an economic impact if projects are not carried out.
- An overview of the Energy Strategy.
- Developing new guidance to ensure that new homes are more resilient to climate change and that place making reflects the increased likelihood of extreme events such as flooding.
- The Council has committed to buy and source food locally and to reduce the carbon footprint of meals served by 2030. It was confirmed that the consultation on the draft food strategy is expected in Autumn.
- There are challenges surrounding the eligibility criteria for homeowners seeking funds through the Green Home Grants. The Government is being consulted on the criteria.
- Transport targets for modal shifts include increasing rail travel by 100%, cycling by 400%, bus use by 130%, walking by 33% and decreasing car travel by 30%.
- Work with businesses and communities to highlight the co-benefits of climate action and to promote financial and non-financial support.
- An update on the workstreams of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee and its Working Groups: food and biodiversity, planning, energy and buildings, transport and behaviour change and finance.

Members discussed the following matters:

- Concerns with the challenging modal shift targets and uptake with electric vehicles.
- Clarity on the proposals to use the district heating system in greenhouses to produce fruits, vegetables, and flowers. It was confirmed that a feasibility study has been completed with partners to present low carbon growing in the city.
- The importance of visible role models was discussed in relation to positive, individual action on climate change. However, in the case of transport it was acknowledged that there are financial barriers for most households while the cost of electric vehicles remains high and public transport provision inconsistent, particularly in rural areas.
- In discussing a matter relating to gully cleansing, it was confirmed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Board will be informed to consider this as part of their remit.

The Chair thanked those in attendance.

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the contents of the report and comments made during discussions.
- b) To note the annual review of the work undertaken.

Councillor K Brooks left the meeting at 13:00, during discussion of this item.

61 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services introduced the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2021/22 municipal year. Appended to the report included the Executive Board minutes from the meeting held 9 February 2022, as well as a summary of the working group discussion about tree maintenance and a summary of the working group discussion about the Housing Strategy Review.

Members agreed the wording contained in the summaries for both working groups.

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the contents of the report and the work schedule for the remainder of the municipal year.
- b) To note the Executive Board minutes appended to the submitted report as well as both summaries of the working group discussions on tree maintenance and the Housing Strategy Review.

62 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as 31st March 2022 at 10.30am with a pre-meeting for Board Members at 10.00am.

The meeting concluded at 13:05.

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Fuel Poverty Update 2022

Date: 08/03/2022

Report of: Chief Officer Sustainable Energy and Air Quality

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

This report provides an update to the scrutiny board on progress in reducing fuel poverty in Leeds over the last 12 months. It covers:

- Latest fuel poverty data for Leeds and England
- Progress on specific energy efficiency capital projects
- Recent funding awards
- Future funding landscape
- Building on the success of the Holbeck Group Repair project

The detailed update is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The council's work on fuel poverty strongly aligns with the Best City aim of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities through helping residents in deprived communities save money and live in healthier, better quality homes. Making homes more energy efficient also has the effect of reducing the city's carbon footprint and supporting the local businesses who carry out the works, which reinforces the best city priorities of safe strong communities, sustainable infrastructure, housing, health and wellbeing and inclusive growth.

Recommendations

The board is requested:

- a) To note the contents of the report
- b) To endorse the development of a business case for a cross tenure neighbourhood based retrofit demonstrator project, building on the success of the Holbeck Group Repair project, and scaling it up to serve a larger community.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 An annual update on fuel poverty is provided to scrutiny every year, to report on progress tackling this issue, which is underpinned by the Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy 2017-2030.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 2 The report provides an update to the board on work to tackle fuel poverty, providing the opportunity for members to discuss and scrutinise the issues it raises.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 3 No consultation has been carried out on this specific report. Consultation on the projects covered in the report will vary but before work is carried out consultation is undertaken with residents, executive and ward members, delivery partners and funders.

What are the resource implications?

- 4 There are no resource implications to this report

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no legal implications relating to this report

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 The report details several issues that threaten to undo recent progress. These include:
 - a) Recent increases to the cost of living, in particular the energy cap which from April will have almost doubled from its level 18 months ago
 - b) A fractured funding landscape that makes it difficult to fund improvements to certain housing types and tenures that are a priority for the city and to deliver cross-tenure schemes.
 - c) Increased materials and labour costs that make solid wall insulation in particular difficult to deliver within government funding parameters

Risk is monitored on a project by project basis reflecting the specifics of each scheme and requirements of external grant funding. Risk reporting is typically between the contractor and the council in the first instance and then upwards to the funder as part of each projects reporting arrangements. Significant risks will be fed into service and directorate risk registers as appropriate.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 7 The fuel poverty programme supports all three pillars.
- 8 Inclusive growth – improving the energy efficiency of homes in deprived areas reduces fuel bills for residents and increases the amount available to spend in the local economy. Projects also benefit local businesses engaged in delivering the works to homes.
- 9 The health and wellbeing pillar is supported through improved health outcomes to residents who are less likely to suffer from cold related illnesses once their home has been made warmer.
- 10 And by making homes more energy efficient less fuel is needed to heat them which reduces the city's carbon emissions reinforcing the climate emergency pillar.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 11 This is not a decision making report so an options appraisal is not relevant.

How will success be measured?

- 12 Each project described in the report will have its own parameters by which success is defined but there are certain performance indicators that are common to most domestic energy efficiency projects of this sort. These include the amount of carbon saved as a result of the works, the number of homes treated, the improvement in EPC band or SAP score and the savings made to residents' energy bills as a result of the works.

What is the timetable for implementation?

- 13 This is not a decision making report so there is nothing specific to implement arising from it.

Appendices

- 14 Appendix One – Fuel Poverty Update 2022

Background papers

- 15 None

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Fuel Poverty Update 2022

Introduction

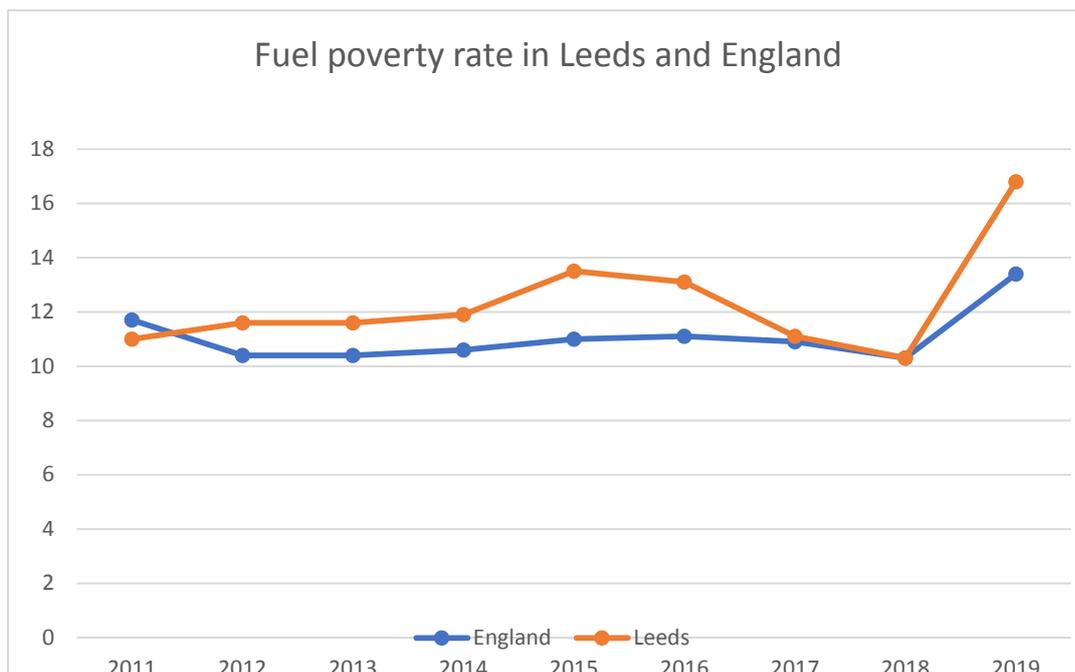
This report is an update to the environment, housing and communities scrutiny board on progress in reducing fuel poverty in Leeds over the last 12 months. Fuel poverty is a longstanding council priority and aligns strongly with the Best City aim of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. Improving home energy efficiency saves residents in deprived communities money, improves the quality of the city's housing, and improves people's health by reducing the prevalence of cold related illness. It also cuts the city's carbon footprint and strengthens the local economy via the local businesses that carry out the work to improve properties.

The report covers the following areas:

- Latest fuel poverty data for Leeds and England
- Progress on specific energy efficiency capital projects
- Recent funding awards
- Future funding landscape
- Building on the success of the Holbeck Group Repair project

Latest fuel poverty data for Leeds and England

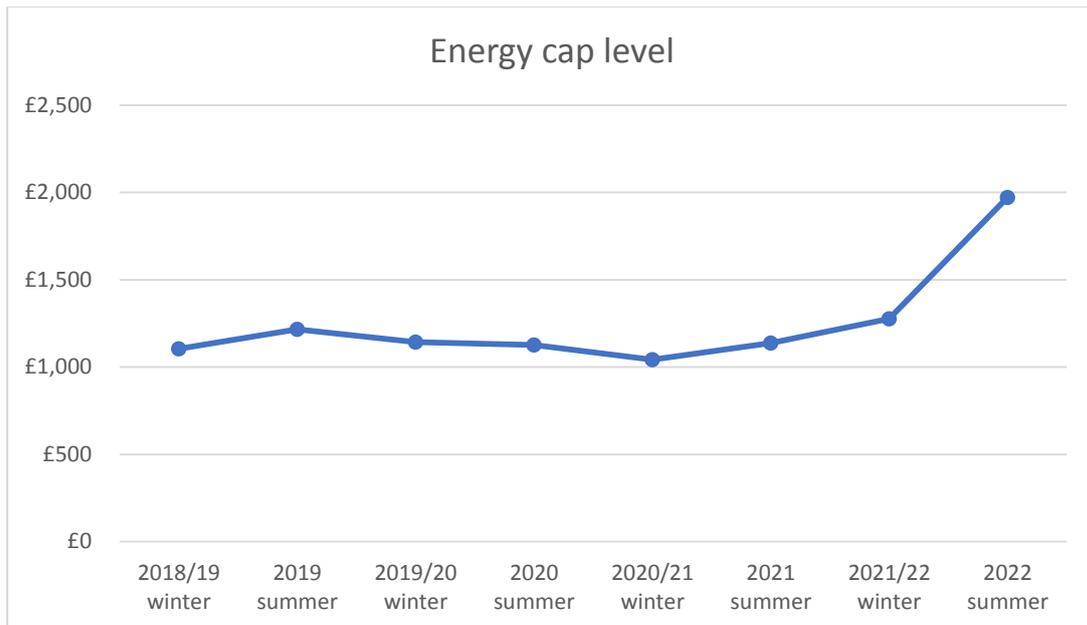
The most recent fuel poverty figures were published in April 2021 and are compiled with data from 2019. The data shows Leeds having experienced a sharp increase in the proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty, rising from 10.3% in 2018 to 16.8% in 2019. In absolute terms 57,492 households experienced fuel poverty in 2019. As the chart below illustrates, this is a reversal of the previous trend of declining fuel poverty which saw Leeds fall into line with the England average in 2018 after several years spent above it. The fuel poverty rate for England in 2019 increased to 13.4% - also a sharp increase, but much lower than that for Leeds. The fuel poverty rates for both Leeds and England are the highest they've been since 2011, when the government first started using its current 'low income, low energy efficiency' measure.



Cost of living crisis

Any increase in fuel poverty is concerning but this is amplified in the context of forthcoming increases to energy bills and a rise in the cost of living more generally. This has been described as a 'cost of living crisis' by a number of media outlets and think tanks, expressing alarm at energy prices and other inflationary pressures, alongside tax rises and benefit reductions that have either been recently introduced or are due to take effect this year.

The largest single contributing factor is the increase to the cost of energy from April, that results from Ofgem increasing the cap on the average fuel bill from its current record high of £1,277 to £1,971, an increase of £693 or 54%. The main driver of this change is the wholesale cost of gas and electricity which has more than doubled from the levels in the previous period from £528 to £1,077. The chart below demonstrates the scale of this increase which is far larger than any other in recent years.



Energy is a significant element of CPI inflation, which is currently 4.9% and is forecast by the Bank of England to reach 7% in April and to stay above 3% until April next year. If accurate this would be the highest CPI rate for more than 30 years. Energy and other housing related services are the largest component of the current inflation rate, but other areas of spending are also seeing significant increases including transport, food, clothing, and furniture and household goods.

Meanwhile, although wages have been rising, they have failed to keep up with inflation, with average pay increasing by 4.2% over the last 12 months. Take home pay will also be affected by the increase in national insurance contributions that will be introduced from April, which will cost an additional £250 a year for someone earning the average wage of approximately £30,000. The national living wage will increase at a higher rate than the national average, rising by 6.6% from April, although still slightly below the BoE's predicted inflation rate.

Benefits are also to receive a below inflation increase, with Universal Credit due to increase by 3.1%, less than half the BoE's forecast inflation rate from April and therefore a substantial cut in real terms.

In response to growing concerns about the impact on households, the government announced a package of support to reduce the burden. This consists of a £200 rebate on energy bills to all households to be provided in October and repaid by households over the next four years, and a one-off £150 council tax rebate to all properties within bands A-D. This will have a significant impact on households, with the Resolution Foundation estimating that it will stop 1 million families experiencing what it terms 'fuel stress' (i.e. spending more than 10% of their household income on energy).

Despite these relief measures, the weight of pressure on household finances is still likely to lead to many more households experiencing fuel poverty. Before the government's support package was announced, analysis by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicated that households on low incomes would spend an average of

18% of their income after housing costs on energy after April. For low-income single families without children this figure was estimated at more than 50%.

Support to residents

The council has for some time offered a range of services to residents suffering from fuel poverty and in need of direct support.

The Home Plus Leeds scheme is managed by Care and Repair, Age UK and Groundwork. It provides energy efficiency advice, small scale energy efficiency measures (such as draft-proofing) and heating repairs to low income and vulnerable residents across Leeds. Support through this scheme is available to 900 residents per year.

Home Plus also provides the gateway to our Warm Well Homes scheme which can provide larger scale heating and energy efficiency improvements to low income, private residents suffering from a cold related illness, i.e. cardio-vascular, respiratory, mental illness or elderly frailty. This is funded through the Housing and Health team and typically assists between 75 and 100 households per year.

This year, Leeds has received an allocation of £339,000 from the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership to assist households at risk of fuel poverty this winter. The funding is being targeted at two types of household. The first group is those where someone is clinically extremely vulnerable. For this group there is solid evidence that the last two years of covid, with shielding requirements and increased costs from staying at home more has disrupted the income of many households. This is particularly true for those in employment whose jobs cannot be carried out from home which often tend to be less secure, lower paid roles.

For the households at risk of hospitalisation due to cold related illness, GPs will identify patients from low-income households at risk of cold-related illness or who are likely to have significantly higher electricity bills due to health conditions (e.g those who use ventilators, feeding pumps or electric wheelchairs). These households will be contacted proactively by the local social prescribing service and then referred on to Home Plus Leeds.

The service estimates that with this £334,000, up to 50,000 households will be contacted to raise awareness of the issue and provide advice on fuel poverty and wellbeing, 450 households will be directly assisted to reduce fuel poverty and 175 homes will be assisted with a heating intervention. There are potentially many more households that could be assisted with further funding - for example there are an estimated 1,000-2,000 severely immunocompromised people who have not been able to work from home for financial reasons and a further 5,000 - 8,000 people at higher risk of other health conditions who are also unable to work from home.

The council also received £2.4 million from the government's Household Support Fund to help families in receipt of Council Tax Support with the costs of fuel and essential household bills.

The council's discretionary fuel poverty fund is a further pot of funding the council can use to match fund other funding sources, such as last year's Warm Homes Fund scheme.

These funds are always over-subscribed and demand is likely to be higher than ever over the coming year due to the pressure on household finances. The Home Plus Leeds service has an annual budget of £60,000 and provides a service to 900 residents at an average cost of £67 per contact. Criteria for access could be widened to a larger group of low-income households and increased funding could in theory allow this to happen, but the current delivery partners do not have sufficient capacity to provide an enhanced service and would need time to recruit and train additional staff.

The Warm Well Homes service is provided on a referral basis and technically doesn't have an upper limit on its budget in the way the Home Plus Leeds service does, rather it is driven by need, i.e. households referred by Home Plus Leeds or other partner organisations because they have an urgent heating need. The value of interventions is typically between £3,000 and £5,000. The service could in theory be expanded to a wider range of referring organisations or eligibility criteria to go beyond the current rate of 75-100 installations per year, but this would need to be very carefully managed to avoid creating more demand than we can fund and to ensure the service continues to benefit those most in need.

Progress on energy efficiency capital projects

The council has been very successful at bidding for funding to make homes more energy efficient, not just for our own stock but in the owner occupied and private rented sectors as well. The highlights are as follows:

We successfully bid for three tranches of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery fund (GHG LAD) which have been in delivery over the last year and will continue until June 2022. The fund is primarily aimed at low income private sector homes although some council and RSL properties have been improved as well. Short bidding and delivery windows and strict requirements around household income, EPC ratings and permitted spend per property has made delivery very difficult for all participants, leading to underspends and several extensions.

Phase 1a ran from late 2020 to September 2021 and was predominantly focused on external wall insulation, along with air source heat pumps and solar panels in 77 properties using £765,382 of government funding.

Phase 1b began in early 2021 and has been extended to the end of April 2022. The council also secured a further £950,822 of unspent funding reallocated from other councils in October 2021. Works consisting mainly of solar PV and external wall insulation have been carried out to over 200 properties so far and the scheme is projected to improve 365 households in total to an overall value of £3.77 million.

Phase 2 commenced in mid-2021 and has now been extended to June 2022. Leeds has been allocated £5.35 million and is due to spend this in full by June 2021 on a mix of measures in over 600 properties across all tenures with the focus primarily on solar PV and external wall insulation.

Leeds secured £2.6m from the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government's Getting Building Fund to deal with disrepair and provide external wall insulation, room in roof insulation, new windows, doors, heating systems and repair

work for private homes in Holbeck. Excellent progress has been made on site with retrofit works completed to 98 properties so far covering all tenures. In all c130 properties will be improved under the scheme with work scheduled to finish around June this year. The project is also forecast to draw in approximately £1 million of match funding from landlords, homeowners, other grant schemes and the council.

Leeds secured £4.1m from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) demonstrator to fund innovative whole house improvements to make 190 council homes net zero carbon. Good progress has been made and the homes in Holt Park are now receiving highly efficient insulation to walls and roofs, high performance windows and doors and air source heat pumps and solar panels.

The council has been extremely successful in securing European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding for low carbon projects and has secured over £26 million of the £31.8 million available regionally. Notable projects that decarbonise council houses include:

- The district heating project in Lincoln Green was completed in 2021, with £7.34 million of ERDF funding received for heating improvements to almost 1,300 flats and external wall insulation on 3 blocks.
- The Transformative Insulation in Back to Backs (TIBB) project to install innovative external wall insulation on 750 council owned back to backs in priority neighbourhoods was delayed by procurement issues but is now on site and due to spend the £5.26 million grant by March 2023.
- The Fitting the Future (FtF) project has been reshaped in agreement with ERDF and now focusses on whole house insulation and solar panels for 160 homes, with an offer of electric vehicle charging points for 50 homes. A contractor is now being procured and we are on track to spend the £2.16 million grant by March 2023.
- The Clustering for Warmth (CfW) project has now been contracted with ERDF to deliver networked ground source heat pumps to 845 flats in 18 blocks, with a project value of £14.8m utilising £7.4 million of grant funding. Work is currently underway on site and will complete in 2023.

Recent funding awards

In February it was announced that Leeds had been successful in two bids that we submitted to the wave 1 of the social housing decarbonisation fund (SHDF) to improve 630 high rise council properties. Both projects will see external wall insulation installed on the blocks, with one scheme covering the Lovells and Moor Grange estate in Little London and the other covering the Parkways estate in Seacroft. In total the bids attracted £9.6 million government grant, with the council to contribute £12 million HRA funding on top of this. Both projects are currently in procurement and will be completed by April 2023.

The government will open further waves of SHDF to bid for from summer this year and we intend to submit further bids to take advantage of this opportunity to improve the council's stock.

Future Funding landscape

Leeds has been very successful in securing external funding to improve the efficiency of private housing, but future opportunities are likely to be limited, in this sector. GHG LAD has been the main source of funding to improve private sector homes but the final round of funding was awarded last year and the government has indicated in the Heat and Buildings Strategy that there will be no further funding rounds.

This leaves the only substantial source of government funding to improve private sector homes as the Home Upgrade Grant, which is restricted to properties not connected to the gas grid, for which we have very few homes in Leeds. Moreover, due to the housing stock profile of Leeds, the most useful measure for tackling fuel poverty is solid wall insulation which tends to cost around £15,000 per property. We were able to fund a number of projects of this sort under GHG LAD, but there will be no further rounds of this grant, leaving us without any means of funding future solid wall insulation schemes to private sector homes.

Shared prosperity fund

Leeds has been extremely successful in accessing EU ERDF and ESIF funds in recent years. In total the council was awarded £73 million from the last round of ERDF and ESIF funding (2016-2020), more than four times the total awarded to all other local authorities in West Yorkshire combined. This has contributed to several major schemes tackling fuel poverty, namely the Lincoln Green District Heating scheme (£7.3 million), Transformative Insulation in Back to Backs (£5.2 million), Fitting the Future (£2.2 million) and Clustering for Warmth (£7.4 million)

Because the UK has exited the European Union, this source of funding is no longer be available in this country and is being replaced with a scheme directly funded by the UK government, the Shared Prosperity Fund. This is in effect a direct replacement of ERDF and ESIF, and they are broadly similar in terms of the amount of funding available and the investment priorities. But there are differences in the way the Shared Prosperity Fund operates. In areas like Leeds, with a mayoral combined authority, the combined authority will be responsible for administering the Shared Prosperity Fund and will be responsible for developing an investment plan for approval by the government and subsequent delivery of the fund, including assessing and approving project applications, processing payments and day to day monitoring. The combined authority can be flexible in how they deliver the fund and can use a mix of procurement, local competitions or direct in-house delivery. The government also expects delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund to align with existing devolution deals. This bodes well for the prospect of continued investment in domestic energy efficiency as the West Yorkshire devolution deal specifically prioritises building retrofit and addressing fuel poverty as a goal within the Climate, Flooding and the Environment priority area. The administration of the fund by WYCA also offers the opportunity to take a more neighbourhood focused, cross-tenure approach than other funding routes may have enabled us to, as this aligns with the WYCA climate and environment plan which endorses the net-zero neighbourhoods approach.

To this end, council has been working with WYCA, Otley Energy and the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership to develop a retrofit capacity building programme called the Better Homes Hub. The hub will support councils and social landlords to deliver retrofit at scale and use this as a means of achieving wider neighbourhood improvement. It will stimulate demand across all tenure types, mobilise the skills and supply chain, and develop the blended funding models necessary to place all homeowners in a position of being willing and able to fund retrofit. As an initial proposal, the hub will work with councils and social housing providers to develop outline business cases for five neighbourhood retrofit schemes covering 13,000 homes across West Yorkshire capable of attracting funding and finance from multiple sources. The board's involvement would be highly valuable in helping to design the funding priorities for this work as it relates to Leeds

Building on the success of the Holbeck Group Repair project

The Holbeck Group Repair phase 2 scheme is an excellent local example of retrofit as the kernel around which broader neighbourhood regeneration can be achieved. The project will improve c130 properties in the Receptions area of Holbeck, which is in the 1% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. The properties are Victorian back to backs and are improved with external wall insulation, new insulated roofs, UPVC windows and composite doors to improve their thermal efficiency, as well as a number of other non-thermal improvements to the building fabric, such as repairs to dormers, chimneys, gutters and waste pipes that enhance the general condition of the building. Existing bin yards are also transformed into communal bin areas with wheelie bins removed from the street.

The project builds on the success of Holbeck Group Repair Phase 1 which improved 153 properties, improving their SAP rating from an average of F or G to B or C and increasing internal wall temperatures by as much as 6 degrees Celsius. So far 98 properties have been completed under phase 2, with the remainder scheduled to be finished by June this year.

The result is that houses are warmer with reduced fuel bills but are also more secure and attractive with an enhanced neighbourhood street scene. The project targets homes of all tenures, as the area contains private rented, council and owner-occupied properties in the same streets. This cross-tenure approach is crucial to its success as the wider streetscene improvements would not be achieved if only a few homes in a street are treated. It also demonstrates a flaw in the administration of many recent government funding sources - because funding pots are restricted to particular tenures or types of property, the opportunity for wider regeneration is limited and the overall value of a project to the neighbourhood is therefore diminished.

So whilst the approach has been a success in Holbeck, it has been difficult to emulate further due to the structure of funding available. The main funding source for the Holbeck works is the Getting Building Fund, which was a one-off pot of funding

for shovel ready projects introduced as part of the government Covid recovery investment package announced in summer 2020 and is therefore not an option for future schemes.

Nevertheless, we feel that the success of this model should be replicated and scaled up in other areas of the city. The introduction of the shared prosperity fund gives a potential avenue to do this, particularly due to its administration by WYCA and neighbourhood-based retrofit being one of the stated policy goals of the mayoral authority.

To achieve this, we propose to develop a business case for a neighbourhood retrofit demonstrator project, building on the success of Holbeck Group Repair. This exercise will look to identify potential areas for a demonstrator project, provide scope of works, estimate the benefits in terms of carbon, financial and social value and any economies of scale that can be identified through operating at a larger scale than the existing Holbeck schemes.

Expansion could be undertaken in the first instance to a further 1,000 properties in Holbeck and then scaled up to a larger area with similar profile of say 8,000 properties. This would require substantial investment – the budget for Holbeck phase 2 was £3.9 million for 150 properties. Scaling up on a simple pro-rata basis to 1,000 properties would require £26m although this doesn't factor in any economies of scale from working in a bigger area that we would expect to be one of the main benefits of taking this approach.

Working at a larger scale should also mean a greater realisation of the wider neighbourhood benefits such as more green jobs and skills and better potential to tie these opportunities to the area in which the work is being carried out. This also applies to the economic and health benefits to the locality and a more visibly transformative impact on the streetscene. As part of the business case we would look to employ an evaluation methodology such as the Build Upon 2 framework for evaluating retrofit projects to rigorously quantify these benefits and provide an evidence base for further schemes. We would look to the Shared Prosperity Fund as an initial source of funding for this work and seek to knit in any suitable additional funding sources.

Truly cross-tenure, neighbourhood-based retrofit is an ambition held by national government, the council and WYCA but has not been achieved at the scale envisaged to bring all the potential benefits. Holbeck Group Repair offers a successful model on which to base a larger scheme. Through developing a business case for a larger demonstrator, we hope to build on its success and demonstrate benefits from working at scale that will serve as a model for future schemes and for attracting future investment into the city.

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Capital Programme Investment to Improve Energy Efficiency in Council Housing Stock

Date: March 2022

Report of: Head of Strategy & Investment

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city and council's ambitions

- To provide continued assurance to scrutiny board that the climate emergency agenda is a key priority in investment to the council housing estate.
- To provide an update on the 5-year investment programme including specific projects that will contribute to improving energy efficiency and decarbonising council housing.

Recommendations

To note the contents of this report

Background – Investment Context

Leeds City Council owns over 54,000 homes in the city comprising of:

- High Rise flats
- Medium/low rise flats and maisonettes
- Traditional build housing including back to backs
- System Built houses

The council invests over £80m annually in its housing portfolio primarily through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The capital programme delivers a range of projects including fire safety, H&S, energy efficiency and lifecycle replacement.

There are several drivers underpinning the current investment programme, including:

- Addressing historic under-investment in high rise buildings
- Prioritising properties with low EPC ratings, obsolete heating systems, and health & safety issues (worst-first)
- Properties requiring lifecycle replacement, urgent repairs (fabric-first)
- Properties that meet criteria for external funding/inward investment
- Homes in priority neighbourhoods (fuel poverty, health and wellbeing)

There is a five-year commitment to increasing the investment in renewable technologies which will improve the thermal efficiency of homes, decrease carbon emissions, and reduce fuel poverty. The investment also aims to bring about a regenerative effect, extending work to include the immediate environment to improve the perception of place and community.

1.1 Overview of the decarbonisation projects

Table A – Retrofit projects that will increase thermal efficiency of low performing properties

Decarbonisation Investment	Complete	On Site	Pipeline	In Planning			Households
				20/21	21/22	22/23	
Shakespeares Project							297
GSHP Ph1 (Heights East & West)							120
GSHP Ph2 (Westerly Rise & Croft)							92
Roofing							471
Air Source Heat Pumps							14
Westons							20
Roxby Close Thermal Efficiency							60
District Heating Network - Leeds Pipes							1,200
GSHP Ph3 (Queenswoods)							92
GSHP Ph4 (Rycrofts)							274
Holtdales							190
TIBB							750
Lovells & Moor Grange Court Project							357
Parkways Thermal Efficiency Work							273
Fitting the Future							160
Marlborough Thermal Efficiency							99
District Heating Clusters							1,483
GSHP Phase 5							1,366
Lincoln Green High-rise project							480
Lincoln Green Maisonettes							60
Marlborough Estate Phase 2							56
Cavity & Loft Insulation							4,000
Back to Back Insulation Phase 2							650
Total Households							12,564

1.2 Decarbonisation of High-Rise Buildings

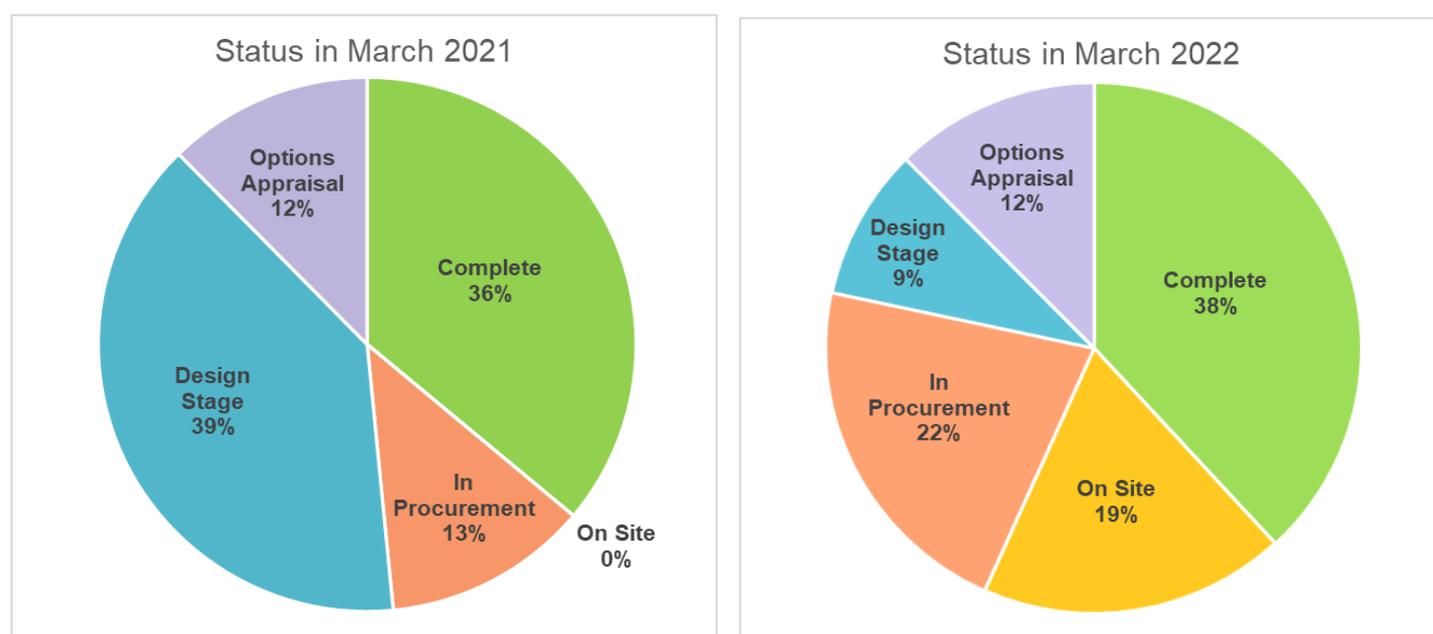
Housing Leeds strategy to decarbonise high-rise buildings has a two-pronged approach. Firstly, by renewing obsolete heating systems with renewable technology. Secondly, to prevent heat loss through installation of a range of energy efficiency measures including external wall insulation (EWI), new roofing and roof insulation, upgrading windows and doors.

Renewable Heating

The HRA has a portfolio of 105 high rise buildings, 8 of which are heated by gas. Of the remaining 97 buildings, 37 have had renewable heating installed and 60 have electric storage heating. See appendix 6 for feedback on ground source heat pumps from residents.

There are 18 high rise buildings where work is currently on site to install renewable heating; these will be completed by June 2022 and the Council will then have 55 high rise buildings with renewable heating installed. A further 30 are at procurement or design stage.

Table B – The installation of renewable heating systems to high rise buildings by status



*Of the 19% currently on-site (18 HRB's) a further 10 will be completed by end of April 2022

Thermal Efficiency Projects

There are several projects to prevent heat loss in high-rise buildings within the current 5-year investment plan. Table C captures the different stages including Design, Pipeline, On-Site and Completed.

Table C – Thermal efficiency projects in high-rise buildings

High Rise	Complete	On Site	Pipeline	In Planning			Households
Project Name	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	2025+	
Shakespeares Project							297
Roofing							471
Roxby Close Project							60
Lovells & Moor Grange Court Project							357
Parkways Project							273
Marlborough Project							99
Lincoln Green High-rise Project							480
Total Households							2,037

Roxby Close Improvement Project

Status: Completed

The £2.0m Roxby Close project has recently completed, improving 60 flats with measures including concrete repairs, external wall insulation, and balcony replacements. Roxby Close is situated in the Lincoln Green area of the Burmantofts ward, a priority neighbourhood area close to the city centre.

It is one of nine high rise buildings in this locality and the ambition is to extend the work to the remaining buildings including the adjacent maisonettes. See appendix 1 for photographs and appendix 5 for tenant testimonials.

Lovells and Moor Grange Court Improvement Project

Status: Design/Pipeline

This project will improve four high rise building including three Lovells in Little London and Moor Grange Court in Kirkstall. The scope of works will include external wall insulation (EWI), concrete repairs and new roofs, installing 729 energy efficiency measures to 357 homes. The project cost will be part-funded through £6.0m of SHDF Wave1. This project will improve the thermal comfort of residents and provide better value heating as well having a regenerative impact to the buildings and local area. Work is due to start in May 2022 and complete in March 2023. See appendix 2 for visuals.

Parkways Improvement Project (PIP)

Status: Design/Pipeline

This project will improve the thermal efficiency of three high rise buildings in the Killingbeck & Seacroft ward. The scope includes EWI, concrete repairs, and new roofs, and residents will benefit from improved thermal comfort which will help support better value heating to properties. The investment will include 564 energy efficiency measures installations to 273 flats that will improve the fabric and aesthetics of the buildings and the perception of the local area. It is part funded by £3.6m of SHDF Wave 1 grant and will commence on-site in April 2022 and complete in March 2023.

1.3 Decarbonisation of Non-Traditional Housing

Housing Leeds strategy to decarbonise system-built properties (non-traditional properties) takes a holistic approach with the focus on undertaking a package of works to each property. There are 26 different archetypes within this category, the aim is to optimise energy efficiency and reduce heat loss. Most of these archetypes are challenging to treat as they are not suitable for traditional cavity wall insulation. The thermal efficiency of these properties is improved by installing external wall insulation which is a much more expensive and intrusive than cavity wall insulation.

There are several projects, at different stages, in the current programme, these are set out in table D below.

Table D - Thermal efficiency projects in non-traditional properties

Non-Traditional Archetypes	Complete	On Site	Pipeline	In Planning			Households
	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	2025+	
Air Source Heat Pumps							14
Westons							20
Holtdales							190
Fitting the Future							160
Lincoln Green Maisonettes							60
Marlborough Estate Phase 2							56
Cavity & Loft Insulation							4,000
Total Households							4,500

Holtdales Project

Status: On Site

This project will improve 190 system-build properties in the Adel and Wharfedale areas of Leeds. The package of measures is the most comprehensive of any project delivered by LCC, it includes Air source heat pumps, EWI, new roofs, ventilation, LED lighting, and smart heating controls, in total over 1,216 energy efficiency measures will be installed to homes. The project commenced in April 2021 and is due for completion by June 2022. £4.1m of grant funding has been secured through the SHDF Demonstrator fund. See Appendix 3 for visuals.

Fitting the Future Project

Status: In Procurement

The Fitting the Future project will improve 150 system-build properties in the Boggart Hill area of Leeds. The scope of work will include EWI to all homes, and Solar Photovoltaic Panels (Solar PV) to homes meeting the orientation and elevation requirements. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points will also be installed to 50 of these properties. Tenants will benefit from improved thermal comfort and affordable warmth. This £4m project includes £2m of ERDF funding and will commence in July 2022 and must be completed by March 2023.

1.4 Decarbonisation of Traditional Build Housing

The TIBB project is currently underway to improve 750 back-to-back properties and a second project is in the planning phase to improve the remaining back-to-backs (650) in council ownership.

Table E - Thermal efficiency projects in traditional build properties

Traditional Archetypes	Complete	On Site	Pipeline	In Planning			Households
Project Name	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	2025+	
TIBB							750
Back to Back Insulation Phase 2							650
Total Households							1,400

TIBB Project (Transformational Insulation to back-to-backs)

Status: On Site

This project includes installation of external wall insulation, roof and bay replacements, new windows, and doors. It covers several areas across the city and will significantly enhance the thermal efficiency of 750 back-to-back homes. The project commenced in November 2021 and is due for completion at the end of March 2023. The total project value is £11.9m, funded by an HRA contribution of £6.6m and £5.3m from ERDF. See Appendix 4 for photographs.

1.5 Funding the Decarbonisation of Council Housing Assets

Decarbonising the Council's housing portfolio is an expensive undertaking and significant inward investment is required to enable the Council to deliver the renewable energy and thermal efficiency projects. Other priority workstream funded through the HRA programme include Health & Safety, statutory compliance, fire safety, and maintaining decency standards.

Since the March 2021 update to Scrutiny Board, the Council has successfully bid for £9.6m from Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), part of £3.8bn programme to improve the energy performance of social rented homes, taking a worst first, fabric first approach. The Lovells

& Moor Grange Court Improvement Project (LMIP) will receive grant funding of £6.0m and the Parkways Improvement Project (PIP) will receive £3.6m.

Details of the inward investment secured to date for decarbonisation projects is provided in Table F below.

Table F – Funding breakdown for Housing Decarbonisation Projects

Project Name	Funding £m			Project Status
	External	HRA	Total	
Leeds Pipes	7.0	13.7	20.7	Completed
Shakespeares EWI	0.7	3.8	4.6	Completed
Air Source Heat Pumps	0.2	0.1	0.2	Completed
Westons EWI	0.1	0.2	0.3	Completed
GSHP Phase 1*	2.1	0.0	2.1	Completed
GSHP Phase 2*	1.7	0.0	1.7	Completed
Holtdales	4.2	4.7	8.9	On Site
District Heating Clusters	7.4	16.8	24.2	On Site
TIBB	5.3	6.6	11.9	On Site
Lovells & Moor Grange Court	6.0	7.9	13.9	In Procurement
Parkways	3.6	5.4	9.0	In Procurement
Total External Funding	38.2	59.1	97.3	

*Initially funded by HRA. RHI income will be claimed over a 20-year period resulting in a net zero cost to the HRA.

All investment planning activity actively considers all external funding streams (including future waves of SHDF, and ECO4), in order to alleviate pressure on the council's budgets.

What impact will this proposal have?

<p>Wards Affected:</p> <p>Have ward members been consulted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

- Installation of renewable heating technologies including Ground Source, and Air Source Heat Pumps will support the decarbonisation of the council housing portfolio. A proactive programme to install a range of energy efficiency measures will improve thermal comfort and help to reduce fuel poverty, supporting Health and Wellbeing.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- Residents are consulted at the appropriate point for each individual project.

The Executive member for Housing was consulted on the 2021/22 capital investment programme and is consulted on individual projects.

The nature in which government funding is made available and must be spent, creates a challenge for early consultation, notwithstanding this, every effort is made to engage with local members and affected residents at the earliest opportunity.

What are the resource implications?

- 4 The delivery of the projects is undertaken by the Strategy and Investment team within Housing Leeds. Some additional resources have been secured through government grants to increase resources for the team. The financing of projects is through a combination of HRA capital finance and government grants.

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no known legal implications of the work being undertaken.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 The following are the main risks associated with this programme of activity:
 - Risk to inward funding if delivery timeframes are not met including supply chain issues.
Mitigation - ongoing dialogue with contractors during procurement phase and through the contract management process to ensure early identification of potential supply chain issues. Other mitigating actions include bulk purchasing and re-design to widen the pool of potential suppliers. There is also regular communication with external funders so that any issues can be discussed at an early stage.
 - Risk of balancing other programme priorities including fire safety and H&S
Mitigation – Regular monitoring of all projects using a risk-based approach. Quarterly updates to Capital Programme Board detailing operational and financial position on schemes. There is experienced leadership overseeing all capital programme functions and clear escalation processes, measurable work objectives and systems to measure and monitoring on-site progress.
 - Risk of insufficient resourcing and skills to meet programme demands and expectations of stakeholders
Mitigation – The team lost both capacity and experience through the Early Leavers Initiative and vacancy levels remained at 24% for over 12 months. The situation has improved significantly, recruitment has resulted in internal promotion and attracted external talent, building back capacity and capabilities to deliver an ambitious programme. The focus on creating a learning and development culture, and supporting professional development is encouraging staff retention. An additional 10% capacity was recently approved to enable government funded projects to be delivered within the requisite and challenging timeframes.
 - Risk of the procurement process and market capacity to respond to timeframes stipulated in government grants
Mitigation – The team is working closely with procurement specialists to ensure all options are explored to enable swift and compliant procurement including the use of established frameworks.
The team will also continue to engage in dialogue with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on SHDF grant funding. Feedback was provided to BEIS on the challenges presented by the tight one-year timeframe to procure and deliver the Holtdales project which was part funded by SHDF Demonstrator grant. Although the one-year timeframe for SHDF Wave 1 funded projects is equally challenging, it was recently announced by BEIS that SHDF Wave 2 would have a three-year timeframe.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

- 7 This programme will support all three of the Council's Key Pillars as detailed elsewhere in this report.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

The declaration of a climate emergency in March 2019 means that maintaining the status quo is not an option.

We are responding with agility to the availability of government funding which has shortened timeframes and undertaking the programme of work over a longer timescale would reduce the Council's access to this external funding.

b) How will success be measured?

- Through robust monitoring of carbon savings in all housing retrofit schemes.
 - 13,356 tonnes per annum achieved in completed schemes
 - Anticipated 3,803 tonnes per annum in schemes currently on site
 - Ensure carbon savings is a key consideration in future schemes
- Improved health and wellbeing and customer satisfaction through better thermal comfort
- Improved affordable warmth and a reduction in fuel poverty
- Improved energy performance rating of council owned stock

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 8 This is a 5-year investment programme which commenced in 2020.

Appendices

- 9 The following appendices are attached with this report
- a) Appendix 1 – Roxby Close photographs
 - b) Appendix 2 – Lovells & Moor Grange Court Project visuals
 - c) Appendix 3 – Holtdale Project photographs
 - d) Appendix 4 – TIBB Project photographs
 - e) Appendix 5 – Roxby Close feedback from residents
 - f) Appendix 6 – GSHP feedback from residents

Background papers

- 10 Report to March 2022 Executive Board – [Capital Housing Investment Programme Update](#)

Retrofit Energy Efficiency Projects

Appendix 1 - Roxby Close

Before and After



Appendix 2 – Lovells and Moor Grange Court Project

Current and proposed (Artist's impression) for the three Lovells buildings



Appendix 3 - Holtdales Project

Before and After (Artist impression)



Appendix 4 - TIBB Project

During the construction phase and After completion of work



Appendix 5 – Roxby Close - Feedback from residents

This project has improved 60 flats with measures including concrete repairs, external wall insulation, and balcony replacements.

Tenant A testimonial

This household comprises of one adult who works full time.

“Visibly there has been a massive improvement. Also, the flat feels a lot warmer with the new insulation compared with before. There has been an improvement on the forecourt as well. The concrete slabs were a trip hazard and have been replaced with tarmac which is level and smoother. The Operatives / workmen were friendly and approachable. Overall, this has been a positive experience.”

Tenant B testimonial

This household comprises of one adult who works full time as a Security Guard.

“The work is quite good. The flat is now warmer with the insulation. The whole block looks much better than before. Also due to the insulation there has been a reduction in the noise levels particularly traffic noise especially at night. This has improved sleep and quality of life. The balconies should have been higher but they’re okay. The only other point is the work took longer to complete than advised”

Tenant C testimonial

“I like the work. The new insulation is good. The flat looks better. The flat is warmer. The balconies are good, and I like the design. The block looks much cleaner and newer. The signs on the building are well designed”

Appendix 6 – GSHP - Feedback from residents

GSHP Phase 1 – Heights East and West

The household comprises a retired couple in their 70's. They have managed with electric storage heating since the beginning of their tenancy in 1995. GSHP was installed October 2020. The GSHP technology within the property took up less space than the traditional hot water cylinder.

- The contractor (Cenergist) liaison team met with tenants to:
 - Provide instructions and demonstrate how to operate the new system
 - offer advice on tariff changes to maximise savings

Tenant A testimonial

“When we had storage heaters, only the living room really got warm but now all the flat gets warm. It’s really nice to have the option to just turn it on when you want it, like on an evening when we’re sat watching TV. The storage heaters didn’t give out much heat on an evening so it’s great to have that. It’s a bit colder today so I might turn it on for a bit later on. It’s a lot easier to use, the storage heaters were awkward to use. I am really happy with the work. The new systems have definitely made a marked and welcome difference to the heating in my flat – just in time for the winter months!”

GSHP 2 Westerley Croft and Rise

Household comprises of two adults mid 30's and one child aged 6. Family moved into the property in 2016, tenant works fulltime as an engineer, currently working from home. Change from electric storage to renewable energy February 2021.

Tenant B testimonial

“The electric storage heaters were a pain, expensive to run, uncontrollable, hard to set to the desired temperature and too hot overnight causing disturbed sleep. The new system is a dream, really happy with it. I was worried it was going to be more expensive but my spend has reduced from £150-180/month to £90/month. It was worth every minute of the disruption. I would have happily paid for the system if I had to. There was minor disruption for a couple of days during the works, but the guys were really helpful, and I was amazed at the speed they worked. They were efficient, clean and made as little mess as possible.”

Carbon Reduction in the Private Rented Sector

Date: 24th February 2022

Report of: Head of Service Private Sector Housing

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report is to provide an update to the Board on key areas of Private Sector Housing activity during the last 12 months including the following:
 - Further investment in the priority neighbourhood of Holbeck
 - Working with landlords to educate and support the sector
 - Use of enforcement powers
 - Lobbying of Government to make changes to legislation to improve the understanding of the legislation for the sector and improve the enforcement of standards
- A detailed update is provided in Appendix one of this report
- Housing is a theme in the Best Council Plan, with priorities to ensure housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places, minimise homelessness through a greater focus on prevention, and improving the energy performance of homes and reducing fuel poverty.

Recommendations

- a) The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board are asked to note and comment on the update on private sector housing activity over the last 12 months

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board requested an update on private sector housing activity as part of its forward plan.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 2 The report will provide an update to the Board on housing activity along with an opportunity for Board members to provide comment and scrutiny.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 3 Regular consultation occurs with representatives of the sector including the Board of the Leeds Rental Standard, Leeds Property Association, Unipol, and the National Residential Landlords' Association as well as neighbourhoods affected by interventions

What are the resource implications?

- 4 Resource implications are linked to the Council's overall financial pressures.

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no legal implications in relation to the update.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 There are several risks which impact on the service which include:
 - COVID has impacted on the delivery of services which has meant a different way of working to ensure safe working practise.
 - Staffing has been affected as support for other priorities including secondments has impacted on staffing levels.
 - Training of new staff into the service has been impacted by remote working.
- 7 The service has its own risk register in place which is overseen by the Head of Service and feeds into the Housing Leeds Risk Register. This is monitored by the Housing Leeds Senior Management Team, with significant corporate risks reported into the directorate risk register. For each of these, risks plans are in place to closely monitor impacts and agree actions to minimise service impacts.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 8 Inclusive Growth – supporting communities to increase financial inclusion through investment in energy improvements to homes and support to maximise income, multi-agency working to provide enhanced support in priority neighbourhoods, maximising social value offered by contractors via procurement and contract management.

- 9 Health and Wellbeing – health and housing is a theme of the Leeds Housing Strategy, with priorities to raise awareness of health and housing issues and pathways across all tenures, addressing issues such as mental health, homelessness prevention, ensuring good quality homes and contributing to improving neighbourhoods.
- 10 Climate Emergency – investment in private sector homes to increase the energy performance of homes in support of the reduction in climate emission targets through investment in insulation and efficient heating systems and the enforcement of standards to improve energy efficiency in the privately rented sector.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

11 This is not a decision report and so consideration of other options was not needed.

b) How will success be measured?

12 As above

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

13 As above

Appendices

14 Appendix One - Private sector Housing Update March 2022

Background papers

15 None

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Appendix One - Private Sector Housing

Carbon Reduction in the PRS

March 2022

1. The private rented sector (PRS) provides just over 20% of all the homes in the city. Over the last 20 years we have seen an increase in homes within the sector mainly at the expense of the owner/occupiers especially in the inner city neighbourhoods.
2. Given the scale of the PRS it is very difficult and complex for the Council to make significant changes in addressing carbon reduction in the sector. There are estimated to be around more than 70,000 privately rented properties in Leeds covering all different rental needs. Whilst there is legislation covering excess cold and energy standards there is no legislation requiring carbon reduction as part of the works. To comply simply installing a gas central heating system would be sufficient. This means that, whilst compliant, gas heating systems emit more carbon than other heating sources. However, to use electric heating systems would increase fuel costs to the resident resulting in an increase in fuel poverty in the sector. This makes the reduction in carbon emissions a real issue for the sector and its residents
3. In parts of the city the private rented sector is the dominant tenure with over 50% of the total market found within the hardest to treat pre-1919 solid walled properties. These tend to be most expensive and difficult to improve in terms of their thermal efficiency and reduction of carbon. It is estimated that 70% of the PRS has an EPC rating of D or below with 15% being F or below. Of all the 3 tenures, based on the 2017 stock condition survey the PRS has on average the lowest EPC rating at 55, compared to 58 for owner/occupiers and 60 for the social sector.
4. Current Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards make it illegal to rent a property with an EPC rating below an E. Whilst this is the case there are exemptions including a limit of £3500 towards the cost of compliance. To comply a landlord who installs gas central heating and/or new double glazed windows post October 2017 is likely to be deemed to have complied due to the cost cap. This means that, whilst compliant, gas heating systems emit more carbon than other heating sources. However, to use electric heating systems would increase fuel costs to the resident resulting in an increase in fuel poverty in the sector. This makes the reduction in carbon emissions a real issue for the sector and its residents
5. Whilst there was Government consultation to increase the EPC rating to a C for a property to be rented to 2025 it remains at by 2030. To achieve this target there needs to be considerable investment in the sector. Given that 70% or around 50,000 PRS properties require improvements to have an EPC rating of C by 2030 (or potential from 2025/6) this is a considerable level of

investment required in the sector to ensure properties comply. The Energy Bill due in June this year will hopefully give more direction on the timeline for achieving the various ratings and standards. Again, any exemptions including cash limits on expenditure would be part of the bill.

6. As part of the Locality Agenda Holbeck has continued to receive investment in improving the energy efficiency of the existing stock. A further £4m has been invested to improve 140 homes to the same standard as previously in phase. This includes new insulated roofs, high thermal efficiency doors and windows and external wall insulation. The outcomes from the scheme are similar to previous schemes with properties brought up to EPC B/C and potential savings in the resident's fuel bills and carbon emissions.
7. However, the last 2 funding streams have been due to the Local Growth Fund and Get Building Fund both linked to employment rather than carbon reduction. Funding is irregular and agenda driven based on issues not necessarily related to carbon reduction but jobs and economic factors.
8. During the period of the scheme the standards required by which such properties in Holbeck need to be improved in the future. The standards have been improved from Public Available Specification (PAS) 2030 to PAS 2035. This will mean more works required on properties such as those in Holbeck to achieve the higher standard. To determine the issues and technical problems this may create a couple of pilot properties are being undertaken as part of the works to get an understanding for future works. It is anticipated there will be an increased cost of £4/6k per property.
9. As part of the ongoing works in Holbeck the project is part of the BU2 project. This is a European wide project looking at trying to determine the actual benefits from schemes by recording data before and after the completion of the scheme. This will help to influence future works. Holbeck is only one of two projects in the country taking part.
10. For such projects, as currently being undertaken in Holbeck, to become the norm then there requires to be long term investment made available to allow better programming of works, improved supply chains and to provide confidence to the industry to invest in long term training and development of the skills required to deliver large scale projects.
11. Part 1 of The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on the Council to address hazards, one being excess cold. Excess cold is always in the top three hazards found by officers as part of the inspections that are undertaken by the service. However, to address this hazard, landlords are more likely to install gas central heating which will increase not decrease carbon emissions.

12. The Government is still reviewing Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. This provides an opportunity to include carbon emissions and to take into consideration the overall cost to tenants as part of the assessment of the works required rather than just removing excess cold by putting in a gas central heating system. This could then help with carbon targets but minimise the potential for increased fuel poverty. The review also provides the opportunity to link legislation together rather than as now them being contradictory. Unfortunately, as with legislation affecting the sector, there is a disconnect between different Acts which makes it difficult for landlords to understand their responsibilities and for Councils to enforce.
13. The Government indicated in the Levelling Up White Paper that there will be a White paper on the PRS itself. One of the proposals is for the Decency Standard to be applied to all tenures. This standard not only includes removal of category 1 hazards but also thermal comfort. The standard requires both effective insulation as well as an efficient heating system. Until the White Paper has been published then it remains unclear as to what the standard may be and how it may impact on carbon savings.
14. The Council has continued to lobby the Government for changes as well as other bodies, such as the Private Housing Officer Group (Core Cities) and the LGA, to provide financial incentives such as the reinstatement of funding such as the Private Sector Renewal Grant; tax changes to make it a viable business option for landlords to undertake works; the linkage of public money such as housing benefit to housing conditions (including the SAP rating) and making the legislation around this matter less complex and more enforceable. This would not just allow Councils to enforce and improve standards but also make it more understandable for landlords and what they need to do to comply with their responsibilities.
15. As part of the educational approach, we continue to work with landlords' association to promote the need to improve properties and to ensure landlords are aware of potential changes which will impact the sector such as the potential changes to EPC rating and the ability to rent homes. This is via landlords' forums, social media, email alerts and the Council's own webpages.
16. Support for residents to reduce carbon emissions is more complex and difficult. As above the main aim of legislation available to the service is to address excess cold and cost of use, which results in gas not electric heating systems installed. As part of the work of officers cross the threshold of properties to not just address standards but also support the needs of tenants. This is an approach that occurs especially with visits in Holbeck as part of the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach and in Beeston and Harehills with selective licensing. By engaging with residents' officers are able to help by working with partners to address help with maximising income, access to help with jobs

and training, work with the colleagues to access energy efficiency and heating appliances if required and qualify for assistance.

Work Schedule

Date: 31 March 2022

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.
- Members are further asked to note the proposed dates for 2022/23 as outlined below for the successor Scrutiny Board.
- For members' information, a summary of the site visit to Headingley Station, which Cllr Anderson undertook on behalf of the Scrutiny Board, is appended. This follows discussions about Network Rail's approach to vegetation management.
- The Board's ongoing inquiry into the future of waste services is still awaiting updates on three pieces of information, which will not be available before the end of the municipal year. The board has therefore been provided with an interim statement of progress for the year end, which draws upon the outcomes of the first working group. It is recommended that the successor board progresses scrutiny of the matters outstanding.
- Attached to the statement of progress is a joint letter from both the relevant scrutiny chairs to George Eustice MP highlighting the need for further detail from Government about the National Resources and Waste Strategy to enable the progression of local service remodelling.

Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to consider and discuss the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2021/22 municipal year (Appendix 1)

- b) Members are asked to note the attached summary of the site visit Cllr Anderson undertook with Network Rail at Headingley Station (Appendix 2)
- c) Members are asked to note the interim statement of progress in relation to the inquiry into the future of waste services. Members are further asked to note the appended letter to George Eustice MP highlighting the need for further detail from Government about the National Resources and Waste Strategy to enable the progression of local service remodelling (Appendix 3 & 3A).
- d) Members are requested to consider the Executive Board minutes from 16 March so far as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Appendix 4).

Why is the proposal being put forward?

1. A draft work schedule for the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in the work schedule are known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, identified Budget and Policy Framework items and recommendation tracking.
2. The Executive Board minutes from the meetings held on 16 March 2022 are also attached as Appendix 4. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and consider any matter where specific scrutiny activity may also be warranted.
3. Members should also note the following dates for Board meetings in 2022/23, these are preliminary at this stage subject to confirmation at the Annual Council Meeting in May:

MONTH	DATE & TIME
June	23 June at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
July	21 July at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
August	No public meeting planned
September	15 September at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
October	13 October at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
November	10 November at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
December	No public meeting planned
January	5 January at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
February	2 February at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am
March	2 March at 10.30am, pre-meeting at 10am

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected: All		
Have ward members been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

4. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year.
5. The draft work schedule is reflective of the views of the former Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

6. In order to enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to establish an early dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

What are the resource implications?

7. Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
8. The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.
9. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:
 - Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
 - Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
 - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

What are the legal implications?

10. This report has no specific legal implications.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

11. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

12. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

Appendices

13. Appendix 1 – Draft work schedule of the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board for the 2021/22 municipal year.
14. Appendix 2 – Summary of Network Rail Vegetation Management Site Visit
15. Appendix 3 – Future Waste Services Inquiry - Statement of Progress.

16. Appendix 3A – Joint letter to George Eustice MP.

17. Appendix 4 – Executive Board minutes 16 March 2022.

Background papers

18. None.



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2021/22 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Agenda for Thursday 17 June 10.30am	Agenda for Thursday 15 July 10.30am	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
<p>*CONSULTATIVE MEETING*</p> <p>Performance Update</p> <p>Parking Strategy and Management update [PM]</p> <p>LASBT Review: update following the introduction of changes to the service in early 2020. [PSR]</p> <p>Terms of Reference Sources of Work Report</p>	<p>*CONSULTATIVE MEETING*</p> <p>Safer Leeds: including Community Safety & Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Updates</p> <p>Domestic Violence – update including impact of CV19 and Domestic Abuse Bill.</p> <p>Co-optees report [<i>roll f/w for June 22</i>]</p>	
Working Group Meetings		
Additional Notes		

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Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2021/22 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Agenda for Thursday 23 September 10.30am	Agenda for Thursday 21 October 10.30am	Agenda for Thursday 25 November 9.45am
Waste Strategy – ToR and supporting statement.	Reducing carbon emissions across the Council's estate	Locality Working & Priority Neighbourhoods [PM]
Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy	Housing Activity Update [PM]	Local Welfare Support Scheme Proposals
Safer Leeds Strategy – post consultation (in line with BPF PR)	Deputy Mayor (Crime & Policing): crime & policing priorities (post-devolution update)	Housing Strategy Review
	Safer Leeds: Final Version for note	Fireworks: incl. update on 2021 experience
	Fireworks response: <i>to note for discussion in November</i>	Referral: tree maintenance (verbal response from officers)
Working Group Meetings		
	19/10/21: draft Parks and Green Space Strategy: consultation	3/11/21 Waste Inquiry Working group 1
Additional Notes		

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PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2021/22 Municipal Year

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December	January	February
No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.	Agenda for Thursday 20 January 10.30am	Agenda for Thursday 24 February 10.30am
	Reducing Poverty and improving Financial Inclusion – update report, including impact of Universal Credit. (PSR) Financial Health Monitoring Initial Budget Proposals [PDS] Performance monitoring [PM] Best City Ambition	Standards in the Private Rented Sector – update [to include Selective Licensing] Climate emergency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CEAC update on progress and activity ▪ Annual Climate Emergency EB report LeedsWatch: Update on the implementation of new model
Working Group Meetings		
10/12/21 – NR Tree Clearance 1-3pm [TBC] 17/12/21 – Budget Working Group 10am-12pm	21/01/22 – Tree Maintenance Working Group	7/2/22 - Housing Strategy Review
Site Visits		

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2021/22 Municipal Year

March	Items for follow up
Agenda Thursday 31 March 10.30am	2022/23
Fuel Poverty Update Energy Efficiency in Council Housing Stock Carbon reduction in the Private Rented Sector [PM]	<i>JUNE 2022: Ensuring the future resilience of the 3rd sector Update (following 2020/21 volunteer hub) – deferred from February</i> Migration (as per ExB discussion Oct21) Safer Leeds: Serious Violence Safer Leeds: Domestic Violence Selective Licensing Police: PCSO resources Future of Waste Services: awaiting detail from Government about the National Resources and
Working Group Meetings	Waste Strategy, assessment of carbon impact of different waste streams & outcome of the route review.
Waste working group 2 - deferred	
Site Visits	



Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board

Site visit: Network Rail Vegetation Management

In late 2021 Cllr Anderson was contacted by residents concerned about the environmental impact of Network Rail's vegetation management programme along sections of the railway in Leeds.

Cllr Anderson met with residents in December 2021 and committed to also meeting with Network Rail to explore the issue further in early 2022.

On 16 February 2022 Cllr Anderson attended a site visit at Headingley station on behalf of the Board to understand the lineside vegetation management process and to discuss the concerns that had been raised with him.

The note below provides a summary of the meeting for Scrutiny Board members.

ATTENDEES

Cllr Anderson	Scrutiny Board Chair
Cllr Walshaw	Headingley ward member & CEAC Chair
Richard Cunningham	Senior Asset Engineer for Lineside
John Keeley	Vegetation Site Manager
Sara Lom	Chief Executive, The Tree Council
Jon Stokes	Director of Trees, The Tree Council
Glen Gorner	Natural Environment Manager
Rebecca Atherton	Principal Scrutiny Advisor

ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1	It is recommended that the Chair attends a further meeting with Network Rail and the Tree Council after an initial growing season to better understand the way in which lineside vegetation will replenish.
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VISIT SUMMARY

1. This visit provided an opportunity to discuss issues including:
 - a. The responsibilities of Network Rail as the statutory undertaker of lineside vegetation management.
 - b. Impact of vegetation management on rail services
 - c. Environmental impact of felling trees
 - d. Community engagement
 - e. Fly tipping and graffiti
 - f. Use of glysohates

Responsibilities of Network Rail as the Statutory Undertaker of Lineside Vegetation Management

2. Representatives from Network Rail provided an overview of the way in which work is planned and delivered, including the process of on-site risk assessments and lineside inspections.
3. As an arm's length public body of the Department for Transport Network Rail is required to comply with Government regulations and guidance regarding the environmental impact of their activity. They also have statutory responsibilities for undertaking lineside maintenance.
4. It remains the case that Network Rail's primary responsibility for vegetation management is based upon a process of risk assessment to ensure the safe running of the railway. However, in recent years this has evolved to encompass wider environmental considerations.
5. The current approach is informed by the findings of a 2018 review commissioned by the Department for Transport. That review concluded Network Rail, as a significant public landowner, should regard lineside vegetation as a natural asset and vegetation management should go beyond purely considering safety and performance to also promote biodiversity and the natural environment.
6. There was agreement from all attendees of the importance of rail corridors in providing valuable habitats for plants and animals. Representatives from Network Rail highlighted the extensive natural seed banks within the lineside embankments and advised that, following the removal of overgrown vegetation, those would now replenish.
7. As was discussed in December with residents, the Council has no powers to stop vegetation management along the railway or to impose any conditions on the work.
8. The councillors were informed that a historic lack of regular proactive vegetation management led to excessive growth, which then posed a risk to those using the railway. However, addressing that growth through clearance can initially result in a stark contrast in the appearance of the lineside for residents.
9. Councillor Anderson sought and received assurances that there is a commitment to deliver proactive, regular maintenance in future to protect green corridors and support biodiversity.
10. Cllr Anderson was advised that at a national level future management of the overall Network Rail estate aims to deliver increased biodiversity.

Impact on Services

11. It was noted that benefits of the programme of vegetation management include improving the reliability of rail services and reducing delays.



12. At Headingley station train drivers had reported not being able to see the station on their approach due to overhanging vegetation and had described an experience “akin to black ice” due to the number of fallen leaves on the line in Autumn.
13. Since the programme of maintenance has been carried out in Headingley several drivers have contacted the team to thank them for improving their experience of working on the line.

Felling Trees

14. Advice was sought about the implications of tree felling, particularly in the context of the city’s wider ambitions to increase tree planting. Cllr Anderson raised concern about the perception that vegetation management is removing green corridors in inner city areas.
15. The Tree Council is one of several independent organisations that engages with Network Rail to support the development of best practice in vegetation management. The Tree Council representatives at the meeting were supportive of the approach taken in Headingley and advised Councillors Anderson and Walshaw that the team working on the lineside at Headingley had been receptive to advice and had made changes to the scheme as a result.
16. Measures used in Headingley to deliver a more sympathetic approach to tree maintenance included coppicing instead of felling. Habitats had been created through log piles and new hedgerows will be planted in some locations. Coppice regrowth was anticipated for the majority of felled trees but future growth would be managed to ensure those trees did not present a risk to the safe running of the railway.
17. Risk assessments had concluded that trees on steep embankments along the lines in Armley posed a danger to safety. The assessment of the risk posed by these trees was supported by the Tree Council and most of those trees had been removed.
18. There remained ongoing concerns about the risks posed by other trees within the Armley scheme that had not been felled as originally planned.
19. The removal of trees due to Ash Die Back was discussed along with the significant leaf fall created through species such as ash. Options for replanting fruiting species such as Hawthorn to encourage biodiversity were discussed.
20. It was confirmed that where there is biodiversity loss due to vegetation management and that cannot be replaced for safety reasons, alternative habitats will be created elsewhere on the Network Rail estate.

Community Engagement

21. Attendees discussed the importance of communication with residents, who need to be given sufficient opportunity to engage with the long-term lineside plans for their areas.
22. In the case of Headingley, councillors were advised that public information events had taken place, lineside neighbours had received letters about the intended work and where concerns had been raised individual visits to those residents had also taken place.



23. As an example of scheme adaptation in response to local concerns, operators had cut some trees in a 'crown' to reduce the stark appearance of felling for lineside neighbours. Several additional trees that were significantly encroaching into properties had also been reduced.
24. It was acknowledged that in some areas of the city there are lessons to be learned about community engagement. It was noted, for example, that some residents in Armley have expressed dissatisfaction about local communication.
25. It was agreed that it is difficult to demonstrate to local people how the appearance of the lineside will improve after several growing seasons. The intention is to record a video in Headingley to show that changing appearance, which can then be used in future community engagement exercises to provide reassurance to local people.

Fly-Tipping and Graffiti

26. Cllr Anderson raised concerns about fly-tipping and rubbish on the line sides. It was agreed that the removal of vegetation often reveals fly tipping that had previously been concealed. Network Rail confirmed that fly-tipping and graffiti is being removed as part of the line management process.

Glysophates

27. The councillors were advised that the use of glysophates has significantly reduced in recent years and alternative management methods are used where possible. Glysophates are, however, still used in some circumstances – for example on the stumps of trees where regrowth would pose a risk to the railway.

Conclusion

28. It was the view of both the Council's Natural Environment Manager and representatives of the Tree Council that the approach to vegetation management in Headingley has been an example of best practice, with the approach adapted in response to expert advice and stakeholder feedback.
29. It was, however, acknowledged that the national programme is delivered by different teams and as a result there may be inconsistencies in the experiences of different communities.
30. Cllr Anderson agreed it would be helpful to attend a further meeting after an initial growing season to better understand how the appearance of the lineside will change over time.



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

scrutiny



Environment, Housing
and Communities

Future of Waste Services: Interim Statement of
Progress
March 2022



leeds.gov.uk/scrutiny



@ScrutinyLeeds



Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

Scrutiny Board Membership (2020/21):

Councillor B Anderson	(Adel and Wharfedale Ward)
Councillor J Akhtar	(Little London and Woodhouse Ward)
Councillor A Blackburn	(Farnley and Wortley Ward)
Councillor K Brooks	(Little London and Woodhouse Ward)
Councillor R Charlwood	(Moortown)
Councillor D Collins	(Horsforth Ward)
Councillor R Finnigan	(Morley North)
Councillor A Gabriel	(Beeston and Holbeck Ward)
Councillor P Grahame	(Cross Gates and Whinmoor Ward)
Councillor C Howley	(Weetwood)
Councillor M Midgley	(Kippax and Methley)
Councillor D Ragan	(Burnmantofts & Richmond Hill)
Councillor K Ritchie	(Bramley & Stanningley)
Councillor T Smith	(Pudsey Ward)

Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board

Focusing on services affecting the lives of citizens living and working in the council's neighbourhoods to monitor progress as a citizen focused city and prioritising environmental sustainability.

Queries in relation to this report can be directed to the Principal Scrutiny Officer supporting the inquiry:

Rebecca Atherton

 Becky.atherton@leeds.gov.uk

 0113 37 88642

Further information about the work of the committee can be found here:

[Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board](#)

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Appendix A: Letter to George Eustice MP



INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

1. Aims of the Inquiry

Best City Ambition – Zero Carbon: In 2030 Leeds will have made rapid progress towards carbon neutrality.

- 1.1 In September 2021 the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board agreed to lead an inquiry into the future of waste services in Leeds, with the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board also taking on additional delegated responsibility for specific aspects of that work.
- 1.2 The Environment Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board determined that its focus would be on a forward-looking review of how recycling services could be enhanced and how waste management services could become more sustainable and resilient.
- 1.3 The Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board would in turn primarily focus on the costs of recycling and the contracts related to the delivery of new services.
- 1.4 Key issues identified as of interest for the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board are summarised below.

- **Current waste management** – examining current volumes and types of waste, considering how it is collected, processed and funded.
- **Changing trends within the city’s waste profile** – examining the changing trends in the presentation of waste since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **National Resources and Waste Strategy** – exploring the implications, challenges and opportunities for Leeds.
- **Climate Emergency** – examining how future waste management services can contribute to the Council’s ambition to with tackling the declared climate emergency in the city.
- **Local recycling** – considering what more can be done at a local level – and in conjunction with local ward members - to boost recycling rates, particularly in communities which have traditionally had lower than average rates.
- **Improving performance** – The Board will also be looking at the ways in which performance can continue to be improved, including consideration of the initial conclusions of the city’s route review.
- **Policy** – the Board will assess and review existing policies and where appropriate make recommendations to decision makers around future policy



INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

2. Purpose of the statement

- 2.1 This statement sets out the Scrutiny Board's progress with the joint inquiry into the future of waste services and the recommendation that the successor scrutiny board continues this work in the next municipal year.
- 2.2 It was originally anticipated that the Board would be in a position to publish its interim conclusions and recommendations at the end of the 2021/22 municipal year. However, several pieces of evidence deemed fundamental to the inquiry are not yet available for consideration by the Board.

- **National Resources and Waste Strategy:** Launched in December 2018 the first round of associated consultations took place in early 2019. The second round of consultations was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the related Environment Bill was delayed three times before gaining Royal Assent in November 2021.

The detail of the proposals within the strategy will have a significant impact on the way waste is managed in Leeds including the materials collected, frequency of collections, infrastructure required to deliver new services and the way in which the costs incurred by the council are funded.

The Council is still awaiting further detail regarding the implementation of the proposals set out within the national strategy.

- **Refuse Service Review:** Delayed due to unprecedented demand on the service during the Covid-19 pandemic, this process is now anticipated to conclude in summer 2022.
- **Carbon Impact of Waste:** The Council has commissioned an analysis of the carbon impact of various waste streams to ensure that future decisions about services reflect the organisation's ambitions for carbon reduction.

Given the information outstanding it is recommended that the successor board progresses scrutiny of these matters in the next municipal year.



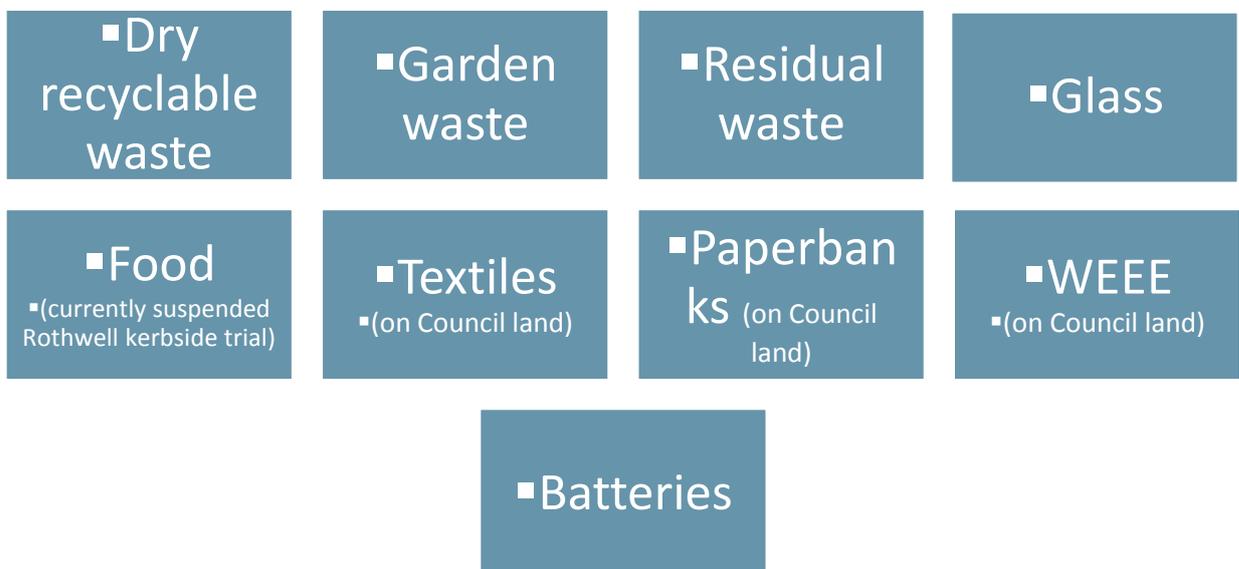
INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

3. Summary of Inquiry to Date

- 3.1 In November 2021 the Board met to progress the first stage of the inquiry into the future of waste services. A full summary of the discussions and initial recommendations that emerged from that meeting was approved as an accurate record by the Board at its meeting on [20 January 2022](#). A brief overview of some of the key areas of consideration is also provided below.
- 3.2 The second stage of the inquiry, which was intended to consider the carbon impact of various waste streams, was recently deferred until the conclusions of the commissioned carbon impact analysis could be provided to the Scrutiny Board.

Summary of key areas of consideration – Inquiry Stage One

- 3.3 The initial stage of the inquiry examined the current waste services provided to the 357,000 households in Leeds.
- 3.4 This included analysis of volumes and types of waste, recycling rates and methods of processing.
- 3.5 Members considered collection and disposal services, and the associated costs in relation to:





INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

Current waste management and changing trends within the city's waste profile

Residual Waste and Recycling Rates

- 3.6 Members considered the city's recycling rate and the amount of waste that the city sends to landfill. The city's official recycling rate is 38% in government defined terms. However, only around 1.5% of waste is currently being sent to landfill – it was noted that this has risen over the pandemic period and is expected to return to less than 1% post-pandemic.
- 3.7 Members explored the process for managing residual waste. All residual waste is collected and taken to the Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF) at Cross Green, operated through a contract by Veolia. As noted above very little, if any, waste goes to landfill.
- 3.8 A small amount of the waste is separated for recycling before incineration (ferrous and non-ferrous metals) and the waste material is then incinerated. The energy created through that process is used to generate electricity that is fed into the national grid. The heat created is used to feed the Leeds Pipes network, which provides heating to households, some public buildings and businesses. The ash that results from the process has further metals extracted for recycling and the remaining material is largely used in construction aggregates, such as for road building.
- 3.9 To avoid duplication, members of the Board noted that the contractual arrangements relating to the RERF – including recycling targets - would be considered in more detail by the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.
- 3.10 The different ways in which residual waste is collected from households were explored by members of the Board. 76% of households have a fortnightly collection of their residual waste but alternative arrangements are in place in other areas of the city. Some time was spent examining the arrangements for 'hard to access' streets with a number of communities identified as having bespoke arrangements in place to facilitate collections.
- 3.11 Members discussed the composition of residual waste and were advised that if recyclables have been correctly dealt with by householders the main contents of a black bin would be food waste, along with items such as non-recyclable plastic and nappies.
- 3.12 It was agreed that further consideration would be given at a later date to the ways in which contamination of recycling bins can be reduced, and the role of ward members in supporting that work.
- 3.13 Specific consideration was given to garden waste. Leeds currently collects significantly more garden waste from households than any other Council in the UK and is one of a minority of Councils that still offers the discretionary service without additional charge. Garden waste is collected from 216,000 households every fortnight with the exception of the winter period.



INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

- 3.14 Members explored the experience of other authorities that have introduced charging for this service, noting the consequential reduction in volumes collected. Members also explored how garden waste is disposed of with the two current contractors providing compost for agricultural use and land reclamation projects.
- 3.15 Members of the board were particularly interested in understanding the city's approach to glass collection. While glass is not collected from households in Leeds, the Council does provide a network of over 700 bottle banks.
- 3.16 Members examined the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. It was noted that glass has been highlighted as an area where it is anticipated the authority will have additional responsibilities under the National Resources and Waste Strategy.
- 3.17 A key consideration for members was the fact that separate glass collection in Leeds, currently reduces contamination. The Board was advised that as a result glass can be recycled more times and has higher financial value.
- 3.18 Food collections were discussed with a degree of frustration expressed by some members in relation to the ongoing suspension of kerbside collections in Rothwell. The Board was supportive in principle of expanding food waste collections in the city, particularly in the context of the anticipated new requirements of the National Resources and Waste Strategy.
- 3.19 The Board noted that further consideration would need to be given to infrastructure requirements should mass Anaerobic Digestion be required by all local authorities. Once more detail is available about statutory requirements – including with regard to the potential co-mingling of food and garden collections – members are keen to scrutinise options available to the Council. It was suggested that food collection may be one of the areas where greater integration of local plans and infrastructure across the region is most likely to be required to fulfil the ambitions set out by Government.

Covid-19 Pandemic

- 3.20 The Scrutiny Board considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on waste services, in terms of current logistical challenges, the legacy of the last two years for staff and the difficulty of progressing wider development projects while dealing with the unprecedented challenge of the pandemic period.
- 3.21 Members sought to understand how trends in the presentation of waste had changed since the onset of the pandemic and the likelihood of some of those trends becoming permanent features of the city's waste profile.



INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

National Resources and Waste Strategy

- 3.22 The Scrutiny Board examined the challenges, opportunities and uncertainties associated with the implementation of the National Resources and Waste Strategy. This included reference to the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility, Government ambitions to collect a consistent range of materials to a minimum standard and the introduction of a deposit return scheme.
- 3.23 The proposals within the strategy will have a significant impact on the way in which waste is managed by local authorities including the materials collection, frequency of collections, infrastructure required to deliver new services and the way in which costs are funded. The requirements around consistency also suggest a greater need for locally integrated waste management plans to ensure complementary decisions are taken around infrastructure and contracts.
- 3.24 The Board noted the Government's stated commitment to fund any new burdens brought about by the implementation of the strategy and the provision of £330m in the Autumn Spending Review. However, without further detail it is difficult to assess the potential impact of new requirements on the Council's finances. Members noted the further challenge of planning future service delivery at a time when the service is being required to deliver additional savings as part of the Council's financial strategy.
- 3.25 The consideration of options relating to glass collections highlighted the importance of understanding all aspects of the National Resources and Waste Strategy before re-modelling individual services. The working group discussed the potential conflicts of introducing a deposit return scheme for glass at the same time as kerbside collection of glass.
- 3.26 Equally members highlighted the need to understand the detail of the Government's approach to the co-mingling of garden and food waste, in order to fully assess the advantages and disadvantages of the future processing options available to the Council.
- 3.27 There have been a series of delays to the implementation of the National Resources and Waste Strategy since its launch in December 2018. This has included delays to the second round of consultations and the progress of the Environment Bill in securing Royal Assent, which was finally achieved in November 2021.
- 3.28 The Chairs of both the Environment, Housing and Communities and Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Boards have jointly written to George Eustice MP in his capacity as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to seek assurance that the Government is committed to providing further information about implementation requirements in the near future. A copy of the letter is attached at **Appendix 3A**.



INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF WASTE SERVICES

Climate Emergency

- 3.29 In the context of the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and the ambition to make rapid progress towards carbon neutrality by 2030, members are keen to ensure that decisions taken about future waste services should take into account the carbon impact of the different types of waste.
- 3.30 The Scrutiny Board welcomed the commissioning of analysis seeking to provide data to support such decisions in future.
- 3.31 Having anticipated that information being available in spring 2022, members requested the second stage of the inquiry be scheduled at that point in the municipal year. Unfortunately, that stage of the inquiry has been delayed as the information cannot yet be provided to the Board.
- 3.32 In their letter to the Secretary of State, the Chairs of both scrutiny boards have sought further assurance that the detail provided by Government will reflect the science of reducing the carbon impact of waste.

Refuse Service Review

- 3.33 Members reflected upon the suspension of the Refuse Service Review in March 2020 following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic response. Although a dedicated team began working on the review again this Autumn, the conclusions of that process are not now expected before summer 2022.
- 3.34 It was agreed that the redesign of routes across the city offered the opportunity to address 'legacy issues' around over presentation on some routes, more consistently and appropriately incorporate new builds into routes and address 'hard to access' streets.
- 3.35 It was further agreed that front line staff must be engaged in the review process and members acknowledged that process requires a degree of capacity in the service to enable crews to take part in engagement activities.
- 3.36 The Board requested that it be updated on the outcome of the review as soon as possible.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Given the outstanding information required to inform further scrutiny of the future design of local waste services it is recommended that the successor board progresses scrutiny of these matters in the next municipal year

Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)
Statement of Progress: Future of Waste Services
March 2022

Report author: Rebecca Atherton



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Councillor Barry Anderson
Chair, Environment, Housing &
Communities Scrutiny Board

Councillor Andrew Scopes
Chair, Strategy & Resources Scrutiny
Board

Scrutiny Service
Civic Hall
Leeds
LS1 1UR

Scrutiny Contact:
becky.atherton@leeds.gov.uk

Date 21 March 2022

Dear George Eustice

Over the last year we have jointly led our respective Scrutiny Committees at Leeds City Council in examining some of the challenges facing the future of waste services in our city.

Scrutiny members are keen to see local modelling of proposals for future waste services progressed at pace to ensure best value and best service to our citizens, as well as alignment with the Council's broader strategic priorities as set out in the recently adopted Best City Ambition.

Achieving meaningful progress towards carbon neutrality in Leeds by 2030 is an integral part of that broad strategic framework and it is the view of both of our cross-party committees that the design of future waste services should be explicitly reflective of that ambition.

Equally, that overarching strategy for the city places significant emphasis on the importance of partnership working. As we look to fulfill local and national aspirations for the future ways in which we manage the city's waste, it is the view of scrutiny members that the Council should be seeking to engage with partners from all sectors.

However, without further detailed guidance from Government about the responsibilities for local authorities set out in the National Resources and Waste Strategy, robust practical planning for future services remains difficult.

The commitment from Government to fund all new burdens on local authorities brought about through the implementation of the national strategy and the £300m included in the 2021 Spending Review have been welcomed. However, decisions about the way in which we reduce, recycle and process our waste will still have a direct impact upon the Council's financial planning, as well as carbon-related implications as we respond to the Climate Emergency declared by Leeds City Council in 2019.

As you will appreciate, regardless of the commitment to respond with urgency to the challenge of re-shaping our waste services, it will inevitably take time to adapt to changes required by statutory guidance, establish the necessary infrastructure to facilitate new collections and frequencies, as well as to communicate changes to householders.

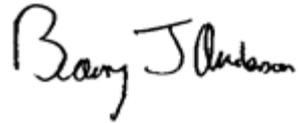
The National Resource and Waste Strategy also puts significant emphasis on the ambition to achieve a more consistent collection offer across the country, which increases the need for updated integrated waste strategies at a local and regional level. It is important that we understand the full detail of the new nationally set requirements so as to be in a position to take complementary decisions regionally about how various services are re-modelled, and about the contracts and infrastructure required to support those changes. For example, in addition to proposals such as a national deposit return scheme (DRS) that would have a significant effect on glass collection, we need clarity about requirements for garden waste collections.

Furthermore, within this context we are also keen to understand the effect of delays in securing Royal Assent for the Environment Bill on key milestones, which had originally been intended to come into force in 2023 – including the introduction of a deposit return scheme, mandatory food waste collections and extended producer responsibility.

Our Scrutiny Committees are committed to ongoing engagement with local services to ensure future waste management in our city delivers the ambitions of the National Resources and Waste Strategy for the benefit of Leeds citizens. With this in mind, we would now like to see any necessary secondary legislation swiftly progressed and clarity provided to local authorities about their specific obligations under new legislation.

We would welcome assurances that the Government is committed to providing that information in the very near future and we trust that any proposals brought forward will be led by the science of reducing the carbon impact of our waste.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Barry Anderson in black ink.

Councillor Barry Anderson
Chair, Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

Handwritten signature of Andrew Scopes in black ink.

Councillor Andrew Scopes,
Chair, Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, D Coupar, S Golton,
M Harland, H Hayden, J Pryor, M Rafique
and F Venner

APOLOGIES: Councillor S Arif

122 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no information contained within the agenda which was designated as being exempt from publication.

123 Late Items

Supplementary Information – Agenda Item 6 – Energy Costs and Purchasing Strategy

With the agreement of the Chair, prior to the meeting Board Members had been provided with supplementary information in the form of an addendum to this report, which provided updated information with regard to energy purchasing for Members' consideration. (Minute No. 126 refers).

124 Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

125 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE

126 Energy Costs and Purchasing Strategy

Further to Minute No. 118, 9th February 2022, the Director of Resources submitted a report setting out the current and future financial implications for the Council in terms of energy usage, to illustrate the potential future risks of different scenarios, and which sought approval of proposed amendments to the Council's existing energy purchasing strategy in order to manage such risks most effectively.

Prior to the meeting, with the agreement of the Chair, Board Members were in receipt of supplementary information in the form of an addendum to this report, which provided updated information with regard to energy purchasing for Members' consideration.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate highlighted the aims of the submitted report which were to take actions in order to help manage the current risks associated with energy costs and

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 20th April, 2022

purchasing. The Executive Member also provided the Board with a summary of the work being undertaken in a number of related areas including the decarbonisation agenda, the tackling of fuel poverty and the initiatives which aimed to reduce energy costs for the Local Authority.

Responding to a Member's enquiries on a number of issues, the Board received further information, as illustrated in the addendum, regarding the proportion of energy that was being purchased in advance by the Council over the coming years, with it being noted that the aim was to strike the correct balance in order to spread the risk created by the current volatile market. Also in response to an enquiry, the Board noted that energy was purchased for the Council as a whole, and therefore there was no risk in terms of an uncoordinated approach being taken across the Authority.

With regard to a Member's comments around the Council's approach towards developing greater resilience in this area and as part of that, the actions being taken by the Authority to generate its own energy, the Board noted several areas where work was being progressed which included investment being made to reduce reliance on energy usage, the development of energy generation schemes within the city and also investment in renewables external to the Council.

It was noted that dialogue on the issue of energy costs and the potential implications it could have across the sector had begun at a national level and would continue. It was undertaken that Members would be kept informed of progress made in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report (including the supplementary information provided in the form of an addendum presenting updated information with regard to energy purchasing), together with the budget pressures and risks resulting from the recent significant increases in global energy prices, be noted;
- (b) That the proposals for a rolling four year forward purchasing strategy for gas and electricity, guided by external market advice, based on the following approach, be approved:-
 - 85% of the Council's requirements to be purchased in advance;
 - up to 65% of the Council's requirements to be secured through longer-term trades (i.e. between 24 to 48 months in advance of when the energy is required);
 - observing the principles, as set out in paragraph 31 of the submitted report.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

127 Update on Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic - Response and Recovery Plan

The Chief Executive submitted a report which outlined both the local and national Covid-19 position, including details of the ongoing recovery activity

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 20th April, 2022

across the multi-agency partnership, the work that continued in response to the evolving situation in the city, which included proposals to update the Leeds Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan.

In introducing the report, the Leader noted that it had been two years since the first Covid update report had been submitted to the Board. In addition, he took the opportunity to highlight that all those from across the city who had died as a result of Covid throughout that time remained in the Board's thoughts.

Members received a brief overview of the key themes within the report, with it being noted that the intention was to bring a further update report in the Autumn of 2022, in order to set out plans for the forthcoming winter.

In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information regarding the plans in place for the return of staff back into the office or their usual workplace. It was noted that, in acknowledging the changes that had occurred over the past 2 years, a period of consultation and review was ongoing which would be used to inform how staff would work moving forward. It was highlighted that the updated approach was scheduled to be implemented from June onwards and was likely to include an element of hybrid working for most. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of taking staff along with the Council as part of that transition.

In addition, the benefits of face to face working were highlighted, with officers acknowledging the request of a Member - that particular consideration be given to the support that younger, or less experienced colleagues required in order to assist with their career development.

Responding to a Member's comments regarding service provision, assurance was provided that the effectiveness of Council services should not be compromised by the ways in which staff were working, and where services needed to be delivered in person to run effectively, then those services should now be doing so.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updates made to the Leeds Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan, as presented at Annex A to the submitted report, be noted, which details ongoing recovery, response, service pressures and wider risks as the Council plans for the remainder of 2022;
- (b) That Annex B to the submitted report, which details the latest Covid-19 Dashboard providing information across the seven themes, be noted, together with Annex C: the updated Leeds Local Outbreak Management Plan, and Annex D: the summary of changes to restrictions announced by the Government, as part of living with Covid-19 safely;
- (c) That it be noted that the next Covid-19 report is planned for September 2022, unless there are significant local or national changes, with it also

being noted that the September report will outline the latest position and plans for winter 2022/2023.

RESOURCES

128 Financial Health Monitoring 2021/22 – January 2022 (Month 10)

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report presenting the current position on the financial health of the Authority in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account, as at month 10 of the current 2021-22 financial year.

In presenting the report the Executive Member for Resources highlighted the key themes. Specifically, it was noted that for 2021/22 the Authority was forecasting a balanced position, as at the end of January 2022 (month 10 of the financial year). In addition, Members' attention was drawn to the lower than expected collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates, with it being noted that this was a matter that continued to be monitored.

Responding to a Member's comments regarding the potential impact of energy costs upon the Authority's financial position moving forward and the reporting mechanisms that would enable Board Members to be kept informed of developments in this area, assurance was provided that the Board would receive regular updates on such matters, as appropriate. As part of this discussion, the Board also received further information on the levels of energy which had been purchased in advance by the Council for use over the coming months.

In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received an update on the progress being made to meet the targets within the Children and Families directorate budget action plan, as detailed at Appendix 2 to the submitted report, with it being noted that progress continued to be made by the directorate in this area. Specifically, it was noted that as part of the actions being taken, dialogue continued with health partners regarding contributions towards placements and similarly, discussions continued with other Local Authorities in relation to the potential income that could be brought into the Council as part of the Strengthening Families programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Authority, as at the end of January 2022 (Month 10 of the financial year), together with the projected impact of COVID-19 on that position, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That for 2021/22, it be noted that the Authority is forecasting a balanced position, as at the end of January 2022.

COMMUNITIES

129 Tackling Inequality and Disadvantage in Communities: Locality Working

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which provided an update on the work that has taken place to date on the city's new Locality Working approach and which presented and sought the Board's support for the next stages of the approach's development, which included the proposal to expand the Locality Working approach to increase the priority neighbourhood footprint in Leeds' most disadvantaged communities to cover all the 12 (1%) most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

In presenting the report the Executive Member for Communities highlighted the involvement of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board in the development of the proposed approach, and also that of Community Committee Chairs. In addition, an overview of some of the key actions taken in communities over recent years was provided and the Executive Member extended her thanks to all those who had been involved in the development of this locality working approach to date. In conclusion, the Executive Member highlighted the desire to continue to engage with Elected Members as part of this approach, including through Community Communities and Scrutiny Boards.

Responding to Members' enquiries regarding the methods of evaluating the success and effectiveness of the approach and the allocation of resources for its delivery, the Board received further detail on such matters.

With regard to the approach proposed to be taken in those communities outside of the priority neighbourhoods, Members received an overview of the evolving approach proposed to be taken in those areas and each community across the city, with the aim of prioritising and addressing the bespoke needs which existed in each locality. Specific examples included the development of the role of Community Committees and Community Committee 'Champions', further embedding collaborative relationships with partner organisations and also via the development of Local Area Delivery Plans. Further detail was also provided on the role of the Neighbourhood Improvement Board as part of the strategic approach being taken.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the continued development of the Locality working approach, be supported, and that the evolving whole city approach towards Locality Working around the more targeted, seasonal and responsive approach, be endorsed;
- (b) That the upscale of the Locality Working approach to increase the priority neighbourhood footprint in Leeds' most disadvantaged communities to cover all the 12 (1%) most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, be supported; with support also being provided for retaining a focus at the Ward level in the city's 6 priority Wards to enable greater impact and outcomes, through a collective focus to

tackle inequality and poverty and build more thriving and resilient communities;

- (c) That work with Elected Members and Community Committees to explore how the role and responsibilities of Community Committees could be even further enhanced through the new Locality Working approach, be supported.

ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

130 Capital Housing Investment Programme Update

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report providing an update on the improvement work which had been undertaken and which was planned for delivery to improve the quality of Council housing stock across the city.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Environment and Housing provided an overview of the key investment activity which had been undertaken in the Council Housing stock across the city and the criteria which was used to deliver such investment.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding potential charges incurred by leaseholders of properties in high rise buildings as a result of improvement works undertaken, the Board received further detail in relation to this, with officers undertaking to provide the Member in question with a further breakdown of the information requested.

Also in response to a Member's specific enquiry, the Board received an update on a proposed scheme which was being developed regarding investment in a number of system built properties.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report, including the investment activity underway to improve the quality of council housing across the city, be noted;
- (b) That the forward programme of investment, which will be implemented by the Head of Strategy and Investment, and which will continue decarbonising the Council housing portfolio and improving the quality of homes in Council ownership, be supported.

ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

131 Outcome of the Consultation on a Proposal to Decommission the Resource Provision at Gledhow Primary School

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the outcomes from the consultation undertaken on a proposal to decommission the Speech and Language Resource Provision at Gledhow Primary School with effect from August 2022. The report summarised the consultation responses received and sought approval for the publication of a statutory

notice on a proposal to decommission the Resourced Provision from August 2022.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That having noted the outcome of the informal consultation undertaken, the publication of a statutory notice on a proposal to decommission the Resourced Provision at Gledhow Primary School from August 2022, be approved;
- (b) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Inclusion.

132 Future Talent Leeds

The Director of City Development submitted a report which presented details of the work undertaken to date to develop a new Talent Plan for Leeds and which sought approval of the proposed Future Talent Plan and delivery approach, including the vision and overarching action framework, as detailed at appendix 1 to the submitted report, which set out the high level action areas proposed to be used to shape the specific projects and initiatives of the Council and its partners.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education highlighted the key challenges currently being faced in the labour and skills market both locally and nationally and provided an overview of how the proposed plan looked to address such challenges.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further detail on the processes which would be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed plan. Information was specifically provided on how outcomes were currently measured in terms of those initiatives delivered by the Council, where Council resource or Council obtained grants were being utilised by partner organisations and via the continued use of data sources in the field of employment and skills. Members also noted the progress being made towards the adoption of the Social Progress Index, which it was noted would be a further source of relevant data.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further detail on the initiatives in place to support existing members of the workforce who were seeking employment or a change in career, with a specific example being provided on initiatives in place to support that cohort in entering expanding industries in Leeds such as the digital sector.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Future Talent Plan and delivery approach, be approved, with the plan being developed online and launched in May 2022;
- (b) That the responsibility for the implementation of the Future Talent Plan be delegated to the Director of City Development, with the exception of any projects or initiatives identified that sit under the delegated

authority of the Director of Resources which will be their responsibility to implement;

- (c) That it be noted that responsibility for any projects or initiatives included in the plan which are to be delivered by the Council's partners in the city will remain with them.

133 Leeds Museums & Galleries Strategy 2022-27

The Director of City Development submitted a report presenting for the Board's consideration and approval the proposed new Leeds Museums and Galleries Strategy entitled, '*Deepening Connections, Widening Impact*', for the period 2022-2027.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education highlighted that the proposed strategy was made up of six key outcomes, with six objectives per outcome. In addition, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key aspects of the Leeds museums and galleries estate, which was spread across nine venues.

Members welcomed the proposals detailed within the submitted report.

RESOLVED – That the new Leeds Museums and Galleries Strategy, as detailed at appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved, and that responsibility for the implementation of the strategy be delegated to the Head of Service, Leeds Museums and Galleries via the Director of City Development, from March 2022.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 18TH MARCH 2022

LAST DATE FOR CALL IN OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS: 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY, 25TH MARCH 2022