



SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, 1st Floor West, LS1 1UR on
Friday, 8th December, 2023 at 10.30 am

There will be a pre-meeting for Scrutiny Board members at 10.15am.

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr N Buckley	– Alwoodley
Cllr B Flynn	– Adel and Wharfedale
Cllr M Foster	– Ardsley & Robin Hood
Cllr J Garvani	– Horsforth
Cllr S Hamilton	– Moortown
Cllr A Hussain	– Gipton & Harehills
Cllr S Lay	– Otley & Yeadon
Cllr A Marshall-Katung (Chair)	– Little London & Woodhouse
Cllr M Millar	– Kippax & Methley
Cllr M Shahzad	– Moortown
Cllr N Sharpe	– Temple Newsam
Cllr I Wilson	– Weetwood
Vacancy	
Vacancy	

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: We strive to ensure our public committee meetings are inclusive and accessible for all. If you are intending to observe a public meeting in-person, please advise us in advance by email (FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk) of any specific access requirements, or if you have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) that we need to take into account. Please state the name, date and start time of the committee meeting you will be observing and include your full name and contact details'.

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.

[Scrutiny Board \(Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth\) - 8 December 2023](#)

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 Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>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.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <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>	
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	

4

DECLARATIONS 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 - 1 NOVEMBER 2023

5 - 12

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023.

7

LOCALITY BUILDING REVIEW

13 - 22

To receive an update from the Director of City Development on the current review of the Council's estate.

8

BUSINESS SUPPORT IN LEEDS

23 - 36

To receive an update from the Director of City Development in relation to the Council's support to businesses in Leeds.

9

WORK SCHEDULE

37 - 60

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2023/24 municipal year.

10

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next public meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) will take place on **10 January 2024 at 10.30am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board Members at **10.15am**.

THIRD PARTY RECORDING

Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice

- a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor A Marshall-Katung in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, B Flynn, M Foster,
J Garvani, S Golton, S Hamilton,
A Hussain, M Millar, A Rontree, M Shahzad
and N Sharpe

44 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

45 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

46 Late Items

There are no late items.

47 Declarations of Interests

There were declarations of interest.

48 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Cllr Wilson (Cllr Rontree attended as a substitute) and Cllr Lay (Cllr Golton attended as a substitute).

49 Minutes - 27 September 2023

The Scrutiny Board approved the minutes of the ordinary meeting held at 10.30am on 27 September 2023 and the minutes of the call-in meeting held at 1.30pm on the same date.

50 Matters Arising

In relation to minute 32 the Chair confirmed that letters had been sent to Mark Harper MP (Secretary of State for Transport), Louise Haigh MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Transport) and Iain Stewart (Transport Committee Chair) in relation to road deaths and injuries involving young people.

It was noted that Richard Holden MP had responded on behalf of Mark Harper MP but that this did not address the issues raised in the original correspondence.

Cllr Marshall-Katung and Cllr Hayden therefore agreed to write back to Richard Holden MP to reiterate their original concerns and will seek the agreement of Dr Ian Greenwood to write jointly as in the first instance.

51 Future of Bus Provision in Leeds

The Chair noted that in recent years Scrutiny Board members have requested an annual update on the future of bus provision in the city.

The Chair considered the increased importance of engagement with the Scrutiny Board in light of the challenges and opportunities facing the bus sector post pandemic, including new trends in patronage and bus revenues.

The Scrutiny Board noted that West Yorkshire Combined Authority is currently conducting a statutory consultation on proposed bus reform, which will run until January 2024.

Members welcomed the “data rich report” that had been prepared for the meeting.

The following individuals attended the Scrutiny Board meeting for this item:

- Cllr Helen Hayden (Executive Member)
- Gary Bartlett (Chief Officer, Transportation & Highways)
- Cllr Peter Carlill (Deputy Chair of WYCA Transport Committee)
- Dave Haskins (WYCA Interim Director Transport Operations & Passenger Experience)
- Rachel Jones (Interim Head of Mobility Services)
- Dwayne Wells (Head of Commercial, Arriva)
- Andrew Cullen (Managing Director, First Bus)
- Kayleigh Ingham (Commercial Director, First Bus)
- Brandon Jones (Head of External Relations, First Bus)
- Paul Turner (Commercial Director, Transdev)
- Andrew McGuinness (Regional Manager, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK)
- Darren Rushworth (Regional Officer Unite the Union)
- Andy Dyer (Branch Secretary Unite the Union)

Current Position

Dave Haskins introduced a report produced by West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). He noted that the process of reviewing and adapting networks post-pandemic is on-going. There remains some uncertainty as to whether travel behaviour changes will become permanent.

The bus network has reduced over the last decade but not to the extent of most other major conurbations including South Yorkshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester.

West Yorkshire has a consistently lower level of bus passenger journeys per head than England as a whole. The Scrutiny Board was informed that between June and September overall bus patronage was 78% of baseline levels.

Cllr Carlill welcomed the reduction in volatility over the last year, noting an increase in patronage and the introduction of some new services.

Representatives from the bus operators welcomed increased stability in the network and highlighted close partnership working with WYCA.

Dwayne Wells provided an overview of the experience of Arriva over the last twelve months, informing members that services have been enhanced between Leeds and Shipley to better connect residents to employment hubs.

Dwayne Wells highlighted overall positive recovery in patronage, particularly amongst young people, but noted that concessions remain at 65% of pre-pandemic levels. New services were introduced to the network in September and work is ongoing to recruit new drivers.

Andrew McGuinness emphasised the importance of stability in enabling operators to deliver reliable services and highlighted growth in longer distance services. He provided an overview of the benefits to localities of small, local operators and set out how the sector has worked with WYCA to support improved driver recruitment, training and retention.

Andrew Dyer welcomed improved industrial relations over the last twelve months and the pay award received by drivers. He raised concern about the frequency of changes to the network and the associated uncertainty for drivers. He and Darren Rushworth highlighted the challenge of the current cost-of-living crisis for employees.

Performance – Punctuality and Reliability

The Scrutiny Board was informed that overall performance in relation to reliability and punctuality is below target. Scrutiny Board members queried whether this information could be broken down to provide more detail about localised performance – to identify potential ‘hot spots’ for delays or particularly challenging circumstances for drivers.

Rachel Jones confirmed that WYCA is already considering how such data could be provided following a request from members of the WYCA Transport Committee. Members noted the importance of reliability for those using the bus network to access employment, education and/or health services.

An overview was provided of the priorities upon which the 2022 Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding award was premised.

All operators highlighted the challenge in ensuring reliability and punctuality while city centre road works are taking place, particularly on Whitehall Road. Paul Turner highlighted the impact on drivers where services run late.

Gary Bartlett underlined the close working relationship between Leeds City Council and WYCA, informing the Scrutiny Board that representatives meet regularly to address areas of concern and congestion 'hot spots.' He highlighted the extensive investment in bus priority schemes on the highway delivered via the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme.

Gary Bartlett advised the Scrutiny Board that congestion in Leeds remains lower than in most other Core Cities. There has, however, been an increase in network openings over the last twelve months – typically 30 – 35,000 openings would be anticipated in that time but there has been in the region of 50,000. Disruption to the network can be caused by factors beyond the control of the Council including maintenance works and emergency repairs by utility providers. Disruption will continue to occur given the levels of investment and development in the city.

In response to concern about congestion in the city centre Gary Bartlett offered to review the available data with partners in the urban control centre with the aim of facilitating improvements to the issues identified.

Cllr Hayden reassured colleagues that the Council works with developers to ensure disruption to the highway network is minimised but reiterated the importance of development and major events to the local economy.

It is hoped a mass transit system will be progressed in the coming years to further improve integrated transport services in the city.

Safer Travel

Concern was expressed about increased levels of anti-social behaviour post-pandemic, which puts drivers and customers at risk. The Board welcomed the establishment of a Safer Travel team, which will include 15 PCSOs - 10 of which are funded through BSIP monies.

A collaborative approach to tackling anti-social behaviour from bus operators, WYCA and West Yorkshire Police aims to reduce crime and protect women and girls, and the young and vulnerable. A reduction in anti-social behaviour at Ossett bus station was provided as an example of successful partnership working in this area.

Mayor's Fares

Further work will be taking place to assess the impact of the Mayor's Fares initiative on patronage. The Mayor's Fares have been funded through BSIP. However, the Government has recently announced a national £2 flat fare scheme, so WYCA is currently engaging with Government to clarify what that means for West Yorkshire.

Real Time Information

Members sought more information about why disparities occur between real time information boards, transport apps and customer experience of local services.

Dave Haskins acknowledged that real time information is often raised as a concern by customers. WYCA and bus operators have been working collaboratively to remove inconsistencies from the system. Some of the technical challenges relating to providing real time data were outlined. In addition, the Board was informed that manual changes are required to reflect rapid decision making where routes are not running on time or have to be cancelled.

Kayleigh Ingham noted the need for 5G technology on board buses to improve connectivity. She informed the Scrutiny Board that a trial of 5G technology has taken place at Stourton park and ride and does appear to have improved the reliability. However, significant investment will be required to roll that out to the whole fleet.

Bus Reform

The current consultation on proposed Bus reform will close in January 2024 and an announcement regarding the outcome of that process is anticipated in spring 2024.

The implications of proposed bus reform were discussed by the Board with clarity sought about the future ownership of assets including zero emission buses. Cllr Carlill set out the key differences between bus reform based upon franchising and an enhanced partnership model.

Kayleigh Ingham raised concerns about short term uncertainty relating to asset ownership if the West Yorkshire Mayor determines that bus franchising should be progressed. She noted that there would be challenging decisions regarding ongoing investment in the network in the 3-5 year period between an announcement and franchising being fully implemented.

Andrew McGuinness added that an unintended consequence of bus franchising in Manchester has been the exclusion of small operators from the network. He informed the Scrutiny Board that CPT will be submitting a formal consultation response to WYCA in relation to bus reform and that will reflect concerns about the impact of franchising on small operators in Leeds.

Investment in Infrastructure

The report presented to members set out proposals for investment in capital infrastructure, which aims to improve bus service delivery. This includes bus priority measures on the highway to improve reliability, punctuality and journey times.

Zero Emission Buses

Further information was provided about the West Yorkshire Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Programme, which will see the introduction of between 200 and

270 zero emission buses. An overview of the three phases of this programme was provided. Members sought more information about funding arrangements being put in place to secure additional zero emission buses.

Brandon Jones set out the ambitions of First Bus for decarbonisation. He noted that Bramley bus depot is under construction and will be fully electrified by March 2024. He suggested that local and national commitments to decarbonisation may be accelerated further through the enhanced partnership proposal.

Andrew McGuinness highlighted that even the Euro6 diesel vehicle has lower emissions than a car - and that is before adding in 70 passengers.

Park and Ride Services

An update was provided in relation to park and ride services with queries raised about the response of the operator to changes in patronage and customer behaviour post-pandemic.

Gary Bartlett informed members that performance is monitored across all three park and ride sites. Stourton is performing very well, as is Elland Road. There is some concern about Temple Green, where performance is lower. However, performance had been predicted to decrease once Stourton opened.

There are ambitions to deliver a further park and ride service in the north of Leeds but funding will need to be secured in order to deliver that site.

Data and Transparency

Members queried whether more Leeds-specific information could be provided in future reports. Members were informed that the cross-boundary nature of many services and the involvement of multiple operators makes this challenging. It was also noted that many small operators do not have real time information available.

Concern was expressed about the way in which decision makers at WYCA ensure local accountability and engage with local representatives to understand community priorities about bus provision.

Further information was sought regarding the transparency of decision-making processes and the circumstances in which equality impact assessments would be conducted in relation to route changes.

Route Changes

WYCA and bus operators highlighted the challenge of long-term planning for the whole network in an environment where there is often significant uncertainty over sources of funding and access to that funding is fragmented.

The process of an operator removing a route and the subsequent consideration of that decision by WYCA was set out for members.

The Scrutiny Board was informed that many routes continue to be provided by operators to ensure the resilience of the overall network, despite being unprofitable when considered in isolation.

Driver Retention

Members sought a view from representatives from Unite the Union about driver retention. In response, they were advised that the situation for drivers has improved but long hours and disrupted schedules were creating a difficult environment for drivers to work within.

The Chair thanked all the guests for attending.

David Spereall was thanked by the Scrutiny Board for his work as a local democracy reporter and councillors wished him well in his new role with the BBC.

RESOLVED:

Members agreed that a further update should be provided in the next municipal year, including detail on the implications for bus provision in the city following the West Yorkshire Mayor's decision regarding bus reform in the Spring.

52 Work Schedule

Members considered the draft work programme for 2023/24.

Members were asked to note that an additional remote working group has been scheduled for **1 December 9.15am-10.15am**. This will provide further opportunity to discuss the nature of employment data held by the Council ahead of January's meeting at which performance reports will be discussed.

53 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place on **Friday 8 December 2023 at 10.30am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board members at **10.15am**

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Locality Building Review

Date: 8th December 2023

Report of: Chief Officer Asset Management and Regeneration

Report to: Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Council has progressed a programme of rationalisation of its operational estate over the last 11 years, focusing primarily on buildings which provide back office accommodation for staff. This has reduced our estate by over 125 buildings, contributed over £8m of revenue savings and generated over £25m of capital receipts through asset disposals. However, the Council's estate remains substantial with in excess of 900 individually listed assets ranging from individual storage containers through to a range of buildings for example leisure centres, libraries, community centres, offices and Adult Day Centres.

Many of these buildings are located outside of the City Centre and within local communities and have not previously been comprehensively reviewed. Following the outcome of the Local Government Association Peer Review, and in the context of the Council's current financial challenge, an overarching review of our estate is underway informed by and informing service transformational changes. This paper sets out the approach being undertaken and future work in this area for comment and input from Scrutiny Board.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board for Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of this paper and the review being undertaken around the Council's locality buildings
- b) Note that this work is being undertaken in parallel to a wider review around the delivery of locally delivered services
- c) Comment on the approach being taken and proposed next steps to further inform the work being progressed.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report sets out the work which is currently ongoing to review the Council's locality buildings and the way this is being undertaken hand in hand with a review around the way locality based services are provided across the city.
- 2 The Council has a substantial operational property portfolio of in excess of 900 individually listed assets, made up of a wide range of properties from buildings such as the Civic Hall through to Leisure Centres, Community Hubs, Sports Club Changing Facilities, and a large number of smaller assets within parks including storage containers. Since 2012 there has been an estate rationalisation programme which has primarily focused on back office accommodation and has successfully seen the closure of over 125 properties, delivering in excess of £8m of revenue savings per annum and over £25m of Capital Receipts through the sale of properties. There has also been a focus on reducing the number of leased in properties to maximise the level of revenue savings.
- 3 This work has been accompanied by considerable investment in our retained office accommodation which has been refurbished to modern standards through the Changing the Workplace Programme, which adopted principles around more flexible use of office spaces, and digital investment to support hybrid ways of working. Most notably the refurbishment of Merrion House allowed a number of buildings to be vacated including 2 Great George Street, the Leonardo and Thoresby Buildings. In addition there has been investment in the creation of 26 Community Hubs across the city to provide improved access to Council services and advice.
- 4 Although there has been substantial estate optimisation and rationalisation work undertaken, to date this has not seen a comprehensive review of our locality based buildings. As such our estate remains too large, has substantial backlog maintenance pressures, is not fit for purpose and can not be afforded. It is therefore imperative in the context of the Council's Financial Challenge and the recommendations of the Local Government Associations Peer Review of the Council which took place in November 2022 and are set out below, that a comprehensive review is undertaken of the Council's operational locality assets:
 - Review locality working to improve clarity and coherence for the council, partners and communities
 - Ensure shared understanding of priority areas, underpinned by work on indices of deprivation
 - Map out services and existing assets, and through a collaborative process review locality arrangements to potentially cluster and consolidate where this would add value and efficiency
 - Review and align service provision geographies with health, education/clusters, and the voluntary sector
 - Consider how to further strengthen place-based networks.

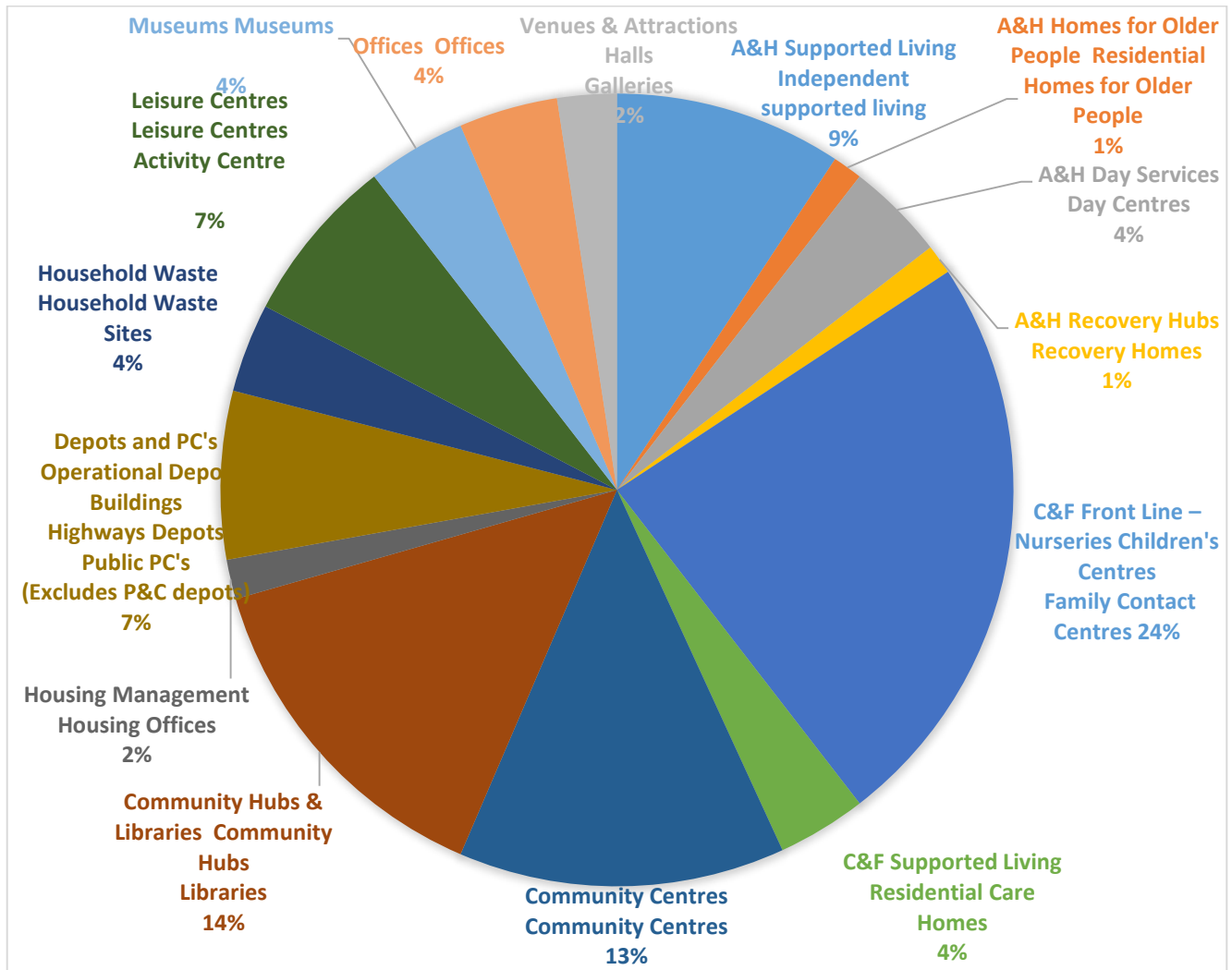
Locality Estate Overview

- 5 Our operational locality buildings consist of a wide range of asset categories. These are listed in Fig 1, noting that this excludes smaller assets such as storage containers; Housing Revenue Account assets; sports and recreational facilities such as bowling pavilions and changing facilities; and structures found within parks and gardens for example. The categories set out below are then represented against our wider estate in Fig 2.

Fig 1 – Locality Assets

Asset Category	Assets Includes	Total Number
A&H Homes for Older People	Residential Homes for Older People	3
A&H Day Services	Day Centres	10
A&H Recovery Hubs	Recovery Homes	3
C&F Front Line	Nurseries Children Centres Family Contact Centres	59
C&F Supported Living	Residential Care Homes	9
Community Centres	Community Centres	33
Community Hubs & Libraries	Community Hubs Libraries	35
Housing Management	Housing Offices	4
Depots and PC's	Operational Depot Buildings Highways Depots Public PC's (Excludes P&C depots)	17
Household Waste	Household Waste Sites	9
Leisure Centres	Leisure Centres Activity Centre	17
Museums	Museums	10
Offices	Offices	10
Venues & Attractions	Halls Galleries	6
Total Operational Assets		249

Fig 2 – Breakdown of Leeds City Council Estate



- 6 Of note is that our office estate now only represents 4% of our total estate with the largest asset areas being Children’s Centres and Nurseries, Community Hubs & Libraries, and Community Centres.
- 7 A map showing the distribution of assets across the city can be found at Appendix A, showing that whilst there are significant clusters of assets within inner areas, there are some parts of the city which have very few operational properties which impacts upon the approach to service delivery.
- 8 The use of our locality buildings varies substantially between categories of building and by location. Some Community Centres for example are well used and active throughout the day and into the evening, whereas others have little overall use. This is a trend that can also be found in Children’s Centres. That said Community Hubs have become a recognised and well established front door for Council services. It is estimated that our locality buildings are only utilised for 30-50% of their capacity during their existing opening hours whereas our target for office space utilisation is 80%.
- 9 Our buildings also have a range of opening times and different periods of peak use. For example leisure centre sports halls are often well used at evenings and weekends but during the daytime are underutilised. Equally, many of our buildings close at the end of the working day, meaning that they are not available for broader use in the evenings.

Review of Locality Estate

- 10 The review of locality buildings is drawing on information held around tenure, use (including by third parties), running cost, backlog maintenance and the sustainability/ carbon footprint of buildings. In addition the level of investment made into properties, their flexibility to facilitate a wider range of uses, location, potential value/ opportunity to realise a capital receipt or potential to be leased out are also important factors.
- 11 Despite the information already available, additional due diligence will be required to determine whether there are any title restrictions preventing disposal or particular uses and where there has been grant funded investment, whether there are clawback provisions.
- 12 The Council's buildings are an enabler for service delivery and as such any changes to buildings will impact upon how or where services are delivered. Whilst work has been ongoing to consider our locality buildings this is in parallel to emerging reviews around the way in which the Council delivers services in localities. This is a cross Directorate review being led by the Director for Communities Housing and Environment. A Locality Service Transformation Board has been established to oversee this important area of work which seeks to:
 - a) Build on existing complementary approaches, sharing infrastructure, resources, and workforce to deliver better, more efficient, more effective outcomes which bring about change, especially in our most challenging areas of the city.
 - b) Integrate and embed multi-disciplinary teams, with a focus on preventative and targeted service delivery within communities.
 - c) Focus on a Strengths-based approach. Building community wealth, through a focus on EDI and the involvement of those with Lived Experience and supporting the development of community capability, capacity and assets.
 - d) Express the city ambition through local plans, developed with the community and for the community, to secure better engagement and ownership.
- 13 A phased approach to the Locality Building Review is being progressed.
 - Phase 1 involves the identification of buildings which can be released based upon their utilisation, condition and ability to relocate services into alternative buildings which are reasonable and appropriate. It should be noted that this does not involve a change to how services are delivered.
 - Phase 2 will see additional building releases but this will come forward as a result of locality service transformation.
- 14 Using the information available, the intention is to RAG rate buildings on the following basis:
 - a) Green – Core buildings to be retained
 - b) Amber – Buildings still to be reviewed or subject to wider service transformation/ review – Phase 2
 - c) Red – Buildings which can be released – Phase 1
- 15 Whilst buildings identified as 'Amber' remain under review, it may be appropriate for these to be retained in preference to a building currently identified as 'Green', subject to service delivery changes. As such the list will remain 'live' and subject to change due to the complexities involved.
- 16 A workshop of Best Council Leadership Team members was held in September to explore the opportunities and how this might impact upon our estate and the way in which buildings are

used. A Locality Service Transformation Board has also been established to oversee this important area of work which will inform and be informed by the locality building review.

17 In addition, given the Council's financial position there have been a range of individual service reviews under consideration which have an impact upon estate requirements and individual buildings. As this intelligence builds, this will feed into the proposals around estate changes.

Locality Building Principles

18 In order to guide this work a number of principles have been established which are set out below:

- a) Retained buildings will have a utilisation rate of at least 80%
- b) A working target of a 60% reduction of locality buildings has been established based on the intelligence to date and affordability with a focus on retaining the best condition, best located and most flexible properties
- c) That a Corporate Landlord approach will be adopted and therefore there will not be single service managed properties
- d) That buildings will be multi-use providing a single front door to Council services allowing a more simplified navigation of services by customers and communities with an integration of Family Hub services within Community Hubs.
- e) That we will have a range of Community Spaces which are more easily hired than dedicated Community Centres
- f) That we will strengthen and broaden the use of cultural/ leisure facilities (Leisure Centres and Leeds Museums and Galleries) to make better use of these significant facilities
- g) That partner, third sector and schools are utilised where appropriate to support service delivery and promoted for community use to enhance their sustainability.

19 It is important to note that residential accommodation (Assisted Living/ Homes for Older People) are not included within the Locality Building Review. In addition, separate reviews are being undertaken around our depot facilities, informed by the fleet review and sports and recreational facilities and as such are excluded from the terms of the Locality Building Review.

Process to release operational properties

20 Release of surplus properties will be carefully managed to ensure that services are reaccommodated within our retained estate. It is recognised that in order to achieve this, there may be a requirement for modest investment to ensure our retained buildings are fit for purposes. However, this will be kept to a minimum at this time and there will need to be an acknowledgement by services that there will be a need for compromise. Therefore, a longer term investment plan will be required into our retained buildings to address backlog maintenance issues and further improve the flexibility of buildings.

21 Securing vacant possession for buildings requires significant resource. The approach has been refined over the last decade through the release of office buildings with a multi-disciplinary team involving Asset Management, Facilities Management, Information and Digital Services (including records management) and Human Resources. The pressure and impact on services is also acknowledged given the disruption caused through relocation. However, it is recognised that the approach for locality buildings will be more nuanced due to the nature of uses with use

by community organisations or third parties needing to be brought to an end as well as the relocation of services and staff.

- 22 There are a variety of methods to release surplus properties. Disposal as part of the Capital Receipt Programme will be a primary route for release. However, in some cases it may be more appropriate to lease properties out on a market rent generating revenue income to the Council. In addition, properties or sites will be considered for use to support wider Council priority programmes such as Council Housing Growth, learning places or other emerging programmes.
- 23 Community Asset Transfers (CATs) could provide scope for Communities to take over the running of buildings with a long standing community use for continued community benefit. However, this will only be possible with buildings which meet current Minimum Energy Efficiency standards which must be met for all commercial lettings, as well as having the ability to meet future requirements. This currently requires an EPC rating of an 'E', but is expected to increase to a 'B' by the end of the decade. Given the Council will not have the financial ability to invest into properties, community organisations will need to make provisions in their business plans and provide a strategy as part of their CAT proposal as to how the required investment can be made. In addition, buildings which have substantial backlog maintenance will not be offered as a potential CAT as the level of investment required would overly expose community organisations. Finally, buildings will only be made available where they are not required to support the Council's budget position.
- 24 The Council has mixed experiences of CAT's with some notable successes such as Bramley Baths and Yeadon Town Hall, but also enquiries which have not ultimately been completed for a variety of reasons, including realisation by organisations around the complexity, capacity and considerations of taking on a building, or weaknesses in business cases. The approach the Council takes to promote opportunities will therefore be amended and discussions are taking place with Voluntary Action Leeds to better inform the process. However, a clear timescale will need to be set for promoting opportunities, receiving and assessing bids and entering into leasing agreements, which will take on a standard format. In addition, a clear assessment criteria will also be needed. It is time consuming and resource intensive for community organisations bringing proposals forward for CAT's and the level of resource and capacity is often underestimated. A key element to this is the support that can be given to organisations progressing bids. This is not currently provided by the Council and opportunities are being explored for organisations such as Locality to provide this role.
- 25 It is anticipated that the number of operational properties being released will be substantial over the coming years and the impact of void properties both on localities and the liability, risk and cost of such properties to the Council is acknowledged. As such, a programmed approach to releases is proposed to be developed which will seek to minimise the amount of time properties remain void, therefore reducing the impact of vacant properties upon localities. It may therefore in some cases be beneficial for properties to remain operational at very reduced levels until the time of disposal or lease. Additionally, some properties may be demolished utilising funding from the demolition capital programme scheme to manage risks, but this will only occur where properties can not be disposed of or released in a timely way, or where there is a financial advantage to disposal.

Next Steps

- 26 In order to progress the review, work will continue over the coming months to identify the RAG rating of properties. Proposals for changes will then be promoted to Executive Board for

consideration on a phased basis informed by the programme which will be drawn together defining the timescale for securing vacant possession and securing a disposal or future use.

- 27 In addition to building releases, a programme of immediate and future investment will also be defined for our retained estate. Furthermore, there will be a requirement for specific workstreams such as the provision of a new booking system for 'community spaces' which will allow for both internal service booking, as well as a simple to use external interface and linked payment system.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 28 There are a number of impacts that the locality building review will have. First and foremost the intention is to reduce the size of the Council's operational estate to ensure it is affordable within the medium term financial plan. In addition, there is scope to improve the customer and user experience of accessing the Council's services and estate, as well as opportunities to realise service integration efficiencies through the transformation of services and improved co-location including with partner organisations.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 29 This area of work will support all three pillars of the Best City Ambition through improved access to services, reducing the Council's carbon footprint from its operational buildings through the reduction in the size of the estate and investment into retained buildings. In addition through the release of surplus properties via disposal, lease or redevelopment in support of priority Council programmes has the potential support the Inclusive and economic growth of the city.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Citywide

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 30 The review is citywide and therefore impact will be seen in all wards. Ward members will be briefed on proposals as they emerge and will have opportunity to comment on proposed approaches to release properties. Engagement will take place separately in relation to the Locality Service Transformation proposals.

What are the resource implications?

- 31 The locality review and delivery of property releases will require substantial resource from within existing teams across Asset Management, Facilities Management, Information and Digital Services and Human Resources. However, given the broader service integration opportunities input and resource requirements from a broader range of services will be required. That said, the intention is for this to support the wider transformation of the Council, supporting work around its future organisational design as well as ensuring its estate is affordable. Through this area of work specific revenue savings will be secured through the release of operational properties and income will be generated through the disposal or letting of properties. Additionally, liabilities associated with backlog maintenance and decarbonisation investment into our estate will be reduced as properties are released.

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

32 The risks associated with this area of work will be further scoped as work progresses. However, the notable risks are around the ability to release properties at pace to meet the Council's budget provisions as well as market conditions which will impact on the Council's ability to dispose of properties and achieve acceptable receipts. There are also substantial risks around securing vacant possession, the ability to bring together the timescales of delivering service transformation with estate rationalisation and wider communication messaging and managing public expectations and perception.

What are the legal implications?

33 There are no specific legal implications in relation to this paper. However, as noted earlier within this report, it will be necessary to undertake a range of due diligence in order to explore potential property releases.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

34 As set out in this paper, it is essential that the Council reviews the size of its operational property portfolio and therefore doing nothing is not an option. Approaching this in parallel with wider service transformation is essential but in some cases it will be necessary for asset based decisions to take a lead. The review will consider a range of options for individual properties and the release method where this is to be recommended.

How will success be measured?

35 The main measure of success will be seen through a reduction in the size of the Council's operational estate in a managed way which maximises capital receipts, minimises the impact upon communities, improves the customer journey and supports wider organisational and service efficiencies.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

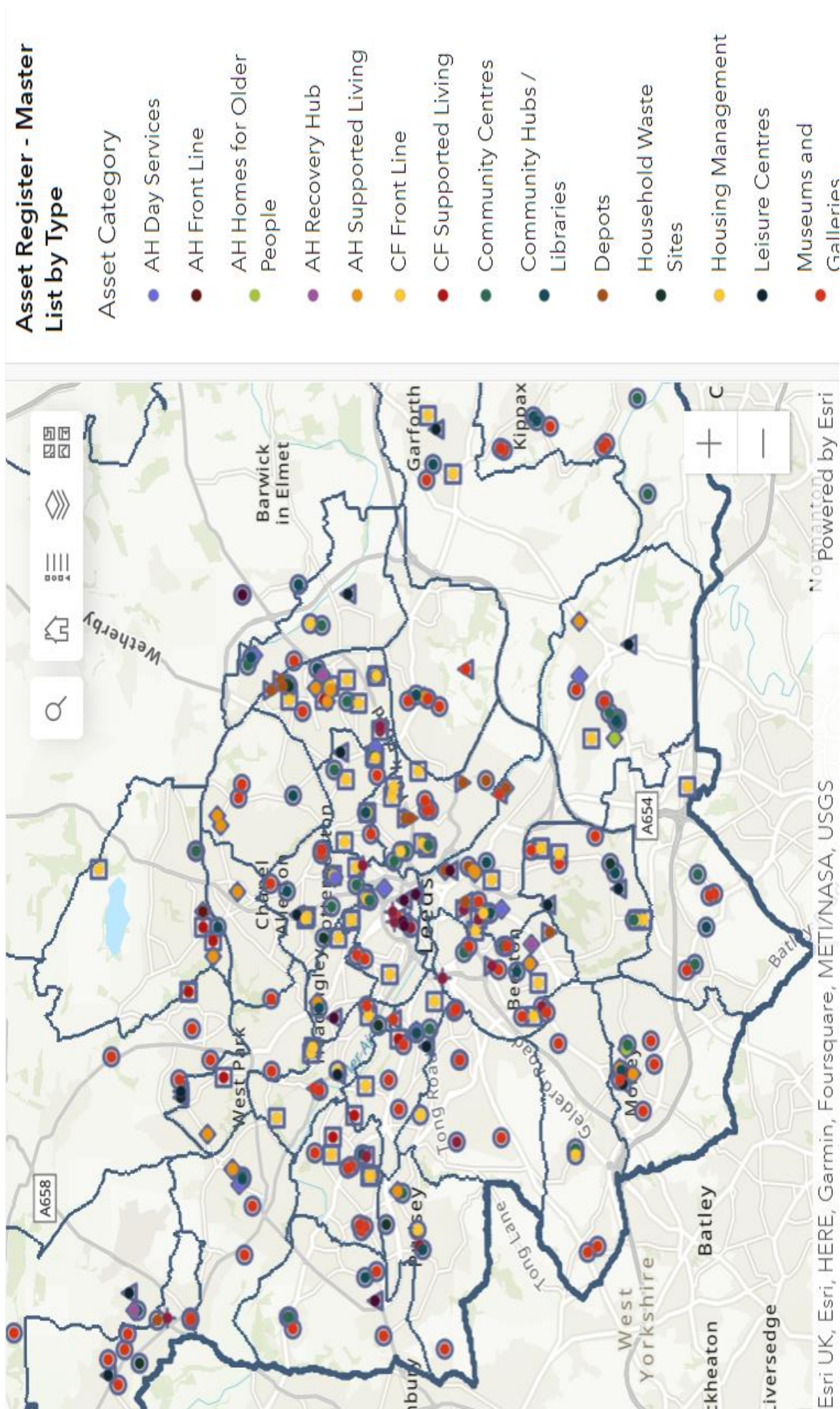
36 Work is ongoing to identify specific proposals around properties to be released, however it is anticipated that proposals will be recommended on a phased basis to Executive Board for closures to progress over the next three financial years.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Mapping of Locality Assets

Background papers

Appendix A – Mapping of locality Assets



Overview of the Council's Support to Businesses

Date: 8th December 2023

Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report provides an overview of the Council's support to businesses. Business Support forms a key component within the productivity theme of the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy. A vibrant business base is essential to both create and retain good jobs in the Leeds economy and is vital in creating the necessary tax revenues to support the costs of high quality public services.

The report provides case studies of businesses assisted in Leeds, details of current challenges faced by businesses and support programmes designed to support start up, survival and growth.

Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to note the content of this report and agree any appropriate Scrutiny Board actions.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides an overview of the Council's Business Support Service. The Council has worked proactively to support Businesses for over 30 years. There are 34,540 private sector businesses in Leeds, with 97% having less than 50 employees. The Council's focus over many years has been to provide support to businesses with the potential to grow above the VAT threshold of £85,000, expand into business premises and create new employment opportunities.
- 2 National Research from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB April 2022) shows that 61% of all private sector employment and 52% of business turnover is generated by Small /Medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Small businesses (those employing less than 50 staff) generate 48% of all private sector employment and 36% of business turnover. The latest West Yorkshire business survey carried out by the Combined Authority is showing a small improvement in business confidence compared to 2022 with the key barriers to growth being a potential decline in consumer demand (linked to the cost of living & economic climate), rising energy costs (of particular concern to manufacturing & hospitality businesses) and concerns related to the availability of skilled labour & finance to support growth.
- 3 Over the last 10 years Business Support has predominantly been delivered across the Leeds City Region/West Yorkshire with the Council working in partnership with neighbouring local authorities and other partners.

The Council's current portfolio of Business Support Services consists of the following:

Business Growth Service (BGS)

BGS was established in 2015 as a local authority partnership across the City Region. The Service consists of a central hub based at the combined authority which operates a business enquiry service and centralised support while spokes in each local authority provide a proactive key account management approach through a network of 20 Growth Managers (with 4.5 based in LCC). The Growth Manager role is predominantly around building a working relationship with SMEs with between 5 and 100 employees and over time aiming to help them survive and grow. BGS aims to facilitate growth by encouraging SMEs to take up publicly funded Business Support products and services which traditionally have been accessed by a relatively small number of businesses. The Leeds team over the first two quarters of the current financial year have engaged with 168 businesses, some recent case studies are included in Appendix 1. Through Business Engagement the BGS team also support the Leeds Manufacturing Alliance and the delivery of the Leeds Manufacturing Festival. The team work proactively with our Employment & Skills Service to help businesses to recruit new staff and inspire the next generation to consider a diverse range of careers. BGS also hosts a start up manager role funded through WYCA with a specific remit to provide 1-2-1 advice to prospective new businesses and to provide some enterprise outreach in Leeds.

Key Account Management (KAM)

The Council aims to engage with up to 100 large businesses (those employing more than 250) operating in the city. The KAM service aims to build ongoing working relationships with businesses for the wider benefit of the Council and City. KAM strives to engage with businesses which are receptive to having a long term relationship with the Council and those where there may be a risk of dis investment from Leeds. During the covid pandemic the Council convened regular Zoom calls with top 100 business leaders. These were critical in sharing information & ensuring that best practice in managing Covid risks was disseminated quickly. KAM is coordinated by two staff with input from senior Council officers on particular business issues which may be acting as a restraint on growth.

Ad:Venture Business Growth Programme

Ad:Venture is a £5m business growth programme delivered across West Yorkshire. The programme is managed by LCC on behalf of a partnership of WY local authorities, The Prince's Trust and Business Enterprise Fund (a Community Development Finance Institution which is a subsidiary of West and NY Chamber of Commerce). The programme is aimed at young businesses trading less than three years who have the potential to employ staff and generate a turnover in excess of the VAT threshold of £85,000. The programme aims to support 2,400 businesses by 31 March 2026, generate £6.4m in loan/grant finance to support growth and create 610 new jobs.

Digital Enterprise

Digital Enterprise is a £4.67m business grants programme which aims to support 480 SMEs across West Yorkshire to invest in new digital technology by 2025. The programme aims to generate in excess of £4m of private sector investment in digital technology projects, to help at least 120 businesses to adopt new products/ processes and create 120 new jobs across West Yorkshire.

Inclusive Growth Rate Relief

Inclusive Growth Rates Relief is a business support project which aims to harness Leeds City Council's discretionary rate relief scheme to assist 100 SMEs by 2025. The focus of the project is proactive work to identify and support SMEs with rate relief applications who are in one of the following categories :

- A) SMEs trading less than three years who can demonstrate a need for support with their business rates to help to facilitate business growth.
- B) SMEs who are constituted as social enterprises/the wider third sector who deliver social value but don't qualify for statutory rate relief schemes.
- C) SMEs who operate childcare day nurseries which help to support working parents
- D) Existing SMEs who can demonstrate a need for rate relief and wider social value benefits through the provision of financial support

The offer consists of 50% rates relief up to a maximum of £15,000 per SME in 2023/24 and/or 2024/25. The project will aim to generate up to £1m in rates relief for SMEs over the period 2023-25 and create 25 new jobs.

Hyper local UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Programmes

The Council is currently seeking to invest some of its Hyper local UKSPF allocation in a small portfolio of projects which add value to the mainstream business support offer provided on a West Yorkshire basis. To date the Council has been working on the following Hyper local UKSPF projects :

- a) *Start Up and Grow – Business Support on the Leeds High Street*
Start Up and Grow will provide support for people from diverse backgrounds across the city to turn their business ideas into potential new businesses. It will engage with existing young businesses to enhance their financial resilience and sustainability, to improve their chances of success. This will be achieved by establishing a coordinated network of business support offers available on the local high street through 34 libraries across Leeds, as well as the library outreach location at Kirkgate Market. The delivery model will be through a local hub and spoke approach led by the Business & IP Centre (BIPC) in Leeds Central Library.
- b) *Be Your Own Boss Programme (BYOB)*
BYOB is a 12 week programme of online support to help potential entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds to start up on their own. The programme is specifically targeted at those who find it difficult to commit to a traditional "in person" support programme due to caring responsibilities, ill health or disability and is delivered through a local social enterprise Trust Leeds.
- c) *Inclusive Growth Rates Relief*
Dedicated officer resource is being provided through Hyper local UKSPF to deliver the inclusive growth rate relief offer (see above) to target businesses.

d) *Northern Max Accelerator*

Working with Bradford Council Leeds plans to use a UKSPF contribution to fund a business accelerator programme aimed at digital technology businesses. The programme aims to provide intensive support for 20 businesses.

e) *Innovation@Leeds*

In 2022/23 twelve projects were supported which helped to strengthen the local entrepreneurial ecosystem in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Digital Sport and Music Intellectual Property. Further assistance is planned in 2023/24 to support entrepreneurs in the finance & professional services sector and to help Leeds stay in the forefront of work associated with net zero, business productivity and diversity. For more information please see [Innovation@leeds | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#)

f) *Employment and Skills service*

Recruitment assistance is available to help businesses to meet immediate needs and future skills planning to meet longer term requirements. Support is also available to help businesses to inspire the next generation, to increase diversity and to operate on a more sustainable basis. Over the last year the service has worked with over 500 employers and helped to recruit more than 3,000 people into jobs and apprenticeships.

For more information please see [Support For Employers | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#)

In addition to Council delivered business support programmes there are a wide range of business support programmes which are delivered and/or funded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority. For more information please see [West Yorkshire Business and Skills Support - West Yorkshire Business and Skills Support \(wybusiness-skills.com\)](#)

What impact will this proposal have?

Independent evaluation of the Council's business support programmes have found the following :

The Ad:Venture programme delivered 1,678 net new jobs across the City Region over a seven year delivery period (2016-23) with a forecast net addition to Gross Value Added (GVA) to the City Region Economy of £254m. A return of £12.05 for every £1 spent on the programme. For more information please see [AD:VENTURE - Ad:Venture Business Support \(ad-venture.org.uk\)](#)

The Digital Enterprise Programme delivered 665 net new jobs across the City Region over a four year delivery period (2019-23) with a forecast net addition to GVA to the City Region Economy of £170m. A return on investment of £9.70 for every £1 spent on programme delivery. For more information please see [Digital Enterprise | Invest in Digital](#)

The Business Growth Service over a three year delivery period (2019-22) is forecast to deliver a net addition to GVA of £38.6m. A return on investment of £11.40 for every £1 spent on programme delivery.

The Business Support team led a £2.1m project to refurbish Leeds Media Centre. Independent evaluation concluded that the project had significantly improved the centre's financial & environmental sustainability and is forecast to generate a net addition to GVA of £54.5m over the next 15 years. A return on investment of £6.90 for every £1 spent on delivering the project.

In addition the Council's key achievements in Business Support include helping 4,457 businesses during the Covid pandemic and providing £29m in discretionary grant aid alongside £270m in statutory grant aid provided through Business Rates to help businesses survive.

The Key Account Management Service has enabled us to develop strong partnerships with some of Leeds strategically important employers. This has enabled us to create the Leeds Business Anchors Network, whereby we invite businesses to work together, and with other partners in the city, to understand and unlock their potential to maximise their Leeds Impact. As part of this work we have introduced the [Business Anchors Progression Framework](#) to help businesses to self-assess how they are contributing to Inclusive Growth in Leeds. The consultancy company Arup

(480 employees in Leeds) have used this tool to assess their impact and work is ongoing to maximise their local impact by working with the Council.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 4 This proposal is in line with the Best City Ambition and its mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life; focusing on an economy that works for everyone; improving the health of the poorest the fastest and improving standards of living in all the city's communities.
- 5 Business Support forms a key component within the productivity theme of Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy. A vibrant business base is essential to both create and retain good jobs in the Leeds economy. Business Support contributes to the Council's Zero Carbon agenda through work helping businesses to reduce their carbon emissions with specific support provided through the Combined Authority's Sustainability Service.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 6 Much of Business Support is funded and delivered at a West Yorkshire level with consultation & engagement operating through the Combined Authority's Committee and Advisory group structures. Lead Members in Leeds are consulted on a regular basis on Business Support.

What are the resource implications?

- 7 Since 2008 the Council has had very limited resources to invest in Business Support activities. The current Business Support Service is primarily funded through government grants devolved to West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The current service has a modest LCC staffing budget of £365,000 in 2023/24. The service has no operational LCC budget with operational budgets and the majority of staffing costs covered by government grants. The Council budget for this Service has reduced from £1.2m in 2007/8 to £365K in 2023/24 (a reduction in real terms of 80%). A further reduction in the LCC budget of @11% is planned for 2024/25.

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

- 8 The Key risks for the Service relate to a heavy reliance on external grants which are often short term in nature. These risks are mitigated through the experience of the Business Support team, the excellent track record on service delivery and by working in partnership with West Yorkshire local authorities and other partners involved in delivering Business Support.

What are the legal implications?

- 9 The Council has the powers under the Localism Act 2011 to perform the duties and responsibilities outlined in this report.
- 10 In administering Business Support funds, the Council has an obligation to ensure that any support provided is compliant with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The Subsidy Control Act 2022 provides a legal framework for public authorities to award subsidies to businesses in line with the UK's domestic and international obligations. Any subsidies provided to businesses under the Council's Business Support programmes will be provided under the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) regulations as set out in the Subsidy Control Act 2022. MFA allows public

authorities to award low-value subsidies (up to £315,000) without the need to comply with the majority of the subsidy control requirements. Subsidies of more than £100K will be published on the BEIS Transparency Database.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

11 n/a

How will success be measured?

12 n/a

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

13 n/a

Appendices

- Please see Appendix 1 for examples of recent case studies, Appendix 2 provides data on the current business stock in Leeds.

Background papers

None

Appendix 1 – Case Studies

Business Growth Service

Boot Repair Company secures £300K NPIF investment

Leading footwear brand Dr Martens has launched a new ‘back to factory standard’ repair service in partnership with the Leeds-based Boot Repair Company (BRC).

The Boot Repair Company will now provide an exclusive UK-wide repair and ‘re-ware’ service for Dr Martens as well as handling online re-sales of reconditioned boots.

Originally set up as a joint venture providing boot repairs for the military, BRC has been working with footwear brands to develop sustainable alternatives to disposal of used footwear.

In collaboration with major outdoor footwear brand Vivobarefoot, BRC has developed the ‘ReVivo’ service, offering UK customers a full range of repair, reconditioning and resale services. Launched in July 2020, the service saw orders totalling £250,000 taken in the first week.



ReVivo has transformed BRC, taking turnover from just over £400K in 2020 to £1.25m the following year. The workforce increased from 14 to 33 over the same period and brought BRC to the attention of other major footwear brands.

BRC is now viewed as the market leader in sustainability for the footwear industry and expansion of contracts with other footwear brands is forecast to see turnover reach £3.7m for the current financial year.

Rapid expansion of the business made relocation a priority and the company subsequently moved to a 15,000 sq ft unit at Hunslet Trading Estate in September 2022. The workforce now stands at around 40.

Expansion has created financial pressures, with relocation and growth to date funded through cash reserves and working capital. Costs associated with relocation were in the region of £150K, with a further £160K invested in wages, accommodation, travel and training for staff employed to fulfil the Dr Martens contract.

Some financial support has been provided by Leeds City Council, Leeds City Region LEP and through WYCA-funded business support programmes. BRC benefitted from LCC business rate relief and a grant of £10,762 from the WYCA Business Productivity Service.

Recognising the need for an injection of cash, growth manager David Baggaley introduced the directors to Mercia Asset Management to explore options for borrowing to finance growth.

A £300,000 investment has now been agreed over a four-year term through the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund to replenish cash reserves and top up working capital to fund future growth of the business.



Quality Bearings bids to lead industry in carbon reduction

Quality Bearings Online Ltd (QBOL) is a worldwide distributor of bearings for the engineering and manufacturing sector, with 80% of sales going to US and Canada. The business posted turnover of £5.5 million to year end 31/3/23 and is forecasting growth to £7.5 million for next year.

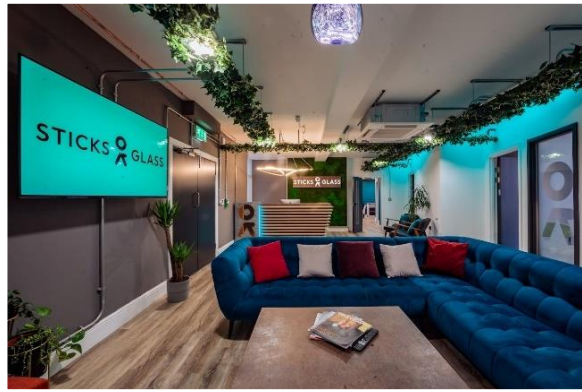
The company relocated from shared offices and warehousing last year to larger premises with secure warehousing and all staff now operate from the same site. The move will provide space for greater stock holding to reduce lead times and provide a platform for future growth.

The company is embarking on a digital transformation project which will see a new CRM system implemented to drive sales, a new website plus fully automation of dispatch and returns processes.

Working with the Business Growth Service the owners have accessed a range of business support including:

- grant funding of £9,484 towards the new website and CRM through Digital Enterprise.
- Consultancy support through the Business Productivity Programme to help develop a productivity improvement plan for the business.
- enrolled on the Help to Grow leadership programme at Leeds University Business School.
- Signed up to the 'Mindful Employer' charter
- Met with WYCA's business sustainability service to begin the process of mapping carbon footprint and environmental impact.

QBOL is committed to an active CSR programme and earlier this year QBOL achieved the silver Investors in People standard. A key ambition for the business is to become carbon neutral as this is now a key requirement for supplying into the defence and aerospace sectors. The company is exploring a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Leeds Beckett University to take this net zero work forward.



Post-production facility ready for further expansion

Sticks and Glass, a post-production facility serving the broadcast media, has been awarded a grant worth £37,250 towards investment totalling £149,000 which will see expansion of its studios in Leeds city centre.

Founded by Adam Bennet and Verdy Oliver and now in its fifth year of trading, the business currently has five editing suites, a colour grading room, dubbing suite and voice-over booth.

But with significant interest from broadcast clients including BBC, CBS, NEP, C4 and NBC, Adam and Verdy now plan to expand the facility, with an eye to doubling revenues over the next 12 months and creating new jobs.

Working with Growth Manager Haroon Qammar, they identified several key opportunities and challenges:

- knowledge gaps with staff
- increase in competition from bigger and more established post houses
- energy costs were a big risk to the business as their servers are on constantly 24hrs a day and need to be kept cool
- better uses of data to measure productivity and efficiency
- a significant investment in new technology and increased capacity

Haroon has brokered in support from the Skills4 Growth service to address the knowledge gaps and the Business Productivity Service (BPS) to help structure their approach to productivity.

BPS has since supported the business to develop a productivity improvement plan which has identified the following key areas of business performance to maximise efficiencies and revenues from the company's facilities.

Following development of the productivity improvement plan the company was awarded £37,250 grant support towards expansion, new equipment and fit-out of premises, with the investment totalling £149,000 and creating 2.5 x FTE jobs



Matt Pallister And Janet McGlaughlin Of Marmion, Front, With Bipin Mistry Of Leeds City Council And Gary Whitaker Of Mercia, Back.

Leeds-

based recruitment agency Marmion has received investment worth £150,000 to support future expansion, following an introduction to the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund by growth manager Bipin Mistry.

The 'ethical' recruitment firm specialises in working with fast growing start-ups, recruiting to permanent roles at all levels and prioritising the interests of both the employer and candidate to ensure successful placements.

Founded in 2016 by Janet McGlaughlin, by the time Marmion was introduced to the Growth Service in July last year, the business had reached a turnover of £500,000 and employed a team of ten.

Working with the management team, Bipin led a session using the business orbit tool to establish the current position of the business and a vision for where they want the business to be over the next 12-24 months.

It was clear from this that finance would need to be raised to support the strategy for growth so an introduction was made to Gary Whittaker of Mercia Asset Management and NPIF, with the business securing £150K funding to support investment in people, technology and marketing.

Referrals were also made to the LEP Skills for Growth team and Digital Enterprise.

With the business now forecast to turnover £850K in 2023, rising to £1 million next year, and staffing set to reach 17 FTEs, the search for new premises needs to begin soon as the company will quickly outgrow its Thorp Park offices.

Key Account Management (KAM) Service

Schneider Electric (SE)

SE is a French multinational manufacturing company that specialises in digital automation and energy management. They employ 555 people in Leeds (4468 UK / 167,000 Globally) and contribute £335k per annum to our Rates income. SE were looking to expand their factory in Leeds or Hungary and create up to **110 new jobs** by the end of 2032. If they choose Hungary, this most likely would have resulted in the closure of their operation in Leeds at the **loss of 555 jobs** in the city. To secure this investment in Leeds, the Council awarded SE £315k in rates relief and agreed to provide them with significant employment & skills support to ensure that local residents would benefit from the 110 new jobs being presented to the community by SE.

Stepchange Debt Charity

StepChange is the UK's leading provider of free debt advice and solutions to people within financial difficulty and has been described as an essential national service. It provides help to around 600,000 people per annum, as well as managing solutions for around 200,000 people and helping those clients repay nearly £500m from their debts each year on an affordable basis. StepChange were planning the consolidation of its three Leeds offices into a single office HQ. They requested that we provide them with discretionary rates relief to do this project in Leeds rather than at one of their other sites outside the city. To secure this investment in Leeds, the Council awarded Stepchange Debt Charity £180k in rates relief. This **safeguarded 950 jobs, created 180 new jobs over 3 years** and ensure that the Council would net £576,000 in business rates income over the term of their lease.

Maximus

MAXIMUS UK is part of Maximus Inc. with over 5,000 employees operating from 240 locations across the UK. They have six contact centres in the UK. MAXIMUS UK have secured a significant national contract from Migrant Help (a charity specialising in helping migrants) on behalf of the Home Office for up to six years to handle all logistical matters related to UK's refugees' basic needs. To manage this contract, the company must significantly expand their call centre capacity by adding 50 new call handlers to their team at one of their sites in the UK. Migrant demand is expected to continue to rise, and the company expects further expansion of resource for this contract in the future. Two sites were shortlisted; Leicester, which is also where the company is headquartered; and Leeds, which was at risk of closure. To secure this investment in Leeds the Council offered MAXIMUS UK rates relief for 1 year only to expand their call centre in Leeds and **create 50 new jobs in the city**. The actual cost to the Council for doing this was just £17,709.50.

Digital Enterprise

White Label Loyalty

Leeds-based [White Label Loyalty](#) received a Digital Enterprise grant of £8,000 towards bespoke software development. The additional development allowed White Label Loyalty clients to fully customise their own loyalty microsites.

Achille Traore, CEO and Founder, shared his insights and practical tips on leveraging digital technology to help improve performance and productivity at Digital Enterprise's recent showcase event, he commented: "The financial grant support from Digital Enterprise and the advice we received from our Digital Growth Advisor allowed us to accelerate and achieve significant growth in White Label Loyalty and deliver a great experience for our customers.

"I was delighted to talk about our experience and encourage other businesses to see how they can benefit from Digital Enterprise support. In our case, grant funding helped us to simplify the build process to make it more user-friendly, as well as speed up the implementation and on-boarding of new clients. Without a doubt, this has led to increased productivity at White Label Loyalty and created more jobs. I'm very proud of the fact that we've achieved this growth while staying headquartered in the city of Leeds."

VTR North

[VTR North](#), is an award-winning, TV production company, which was able to achieve its growth goals with support from Digital Enterprise. Already successfully providing production and post-production services for Channel 4 and Sky Bet, VTR North wanted to expand into the world of audio podcasts.

With a Digital Enterprise grant of almost £10,000, the company completed a studio fit out with the hardware and software required to give them the ability to live webcast and produce high-quality podcasts.

Spencer Bain, MD at VTR North, explained “The new podcast service has created a real buzz with existing clients and new opportunity for us. Being able to offer this podcasting service creates another revenue stream which is instrumental for the continued growth of the company, as well as hopefully creating a few more jobs at VTR North.”

[Podcast popularity streams growth opportunity \(digitalenterprise.co.uk\)](https://digitalenterprise.co.uk)

Involution

To support the growth of the business Leeds-based workwear, clothing and merchandising specialist, Involution, realised they needed to streamline their operations, and began looking at Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and CRM software that would enable the full business to be run and managed online. But there was nothing on the market that suited Involution’s needs so the team decided to make their own.

To develop such a system Involution applied to Digital Enterprise and was awarded a grant of over £12,000 to support the business with project costs.

Nathan Cookson, Operations Director, explains: “We’ve been on a journey towards building a fully bespoke ERP and CRM system that manages the entire business, from a customer ordering online all the way through to production, planning, stock, accounts and then out of the door.”

Looking ahead, Involution will continue building out its end-to-end ERP and CRM system. Digital adoption has been a big part of why turnover has increased 250% over the last seven years, enabling the company to onboard 30 new hires. And the company has a keen eye on reaching the £10 million turnover mark by 2025.

[Digital Revolution under way at Involution | Digital Enterprise](#)

Ad:Venture

Little Bao Boy

A street food company which has expanded into wholesale markets and currently employs 22 people. Ad:Venture provided a growth grant of £25,000 to expand the business

<https://www.ad-venture.org.uk/news-case-studies/LittleBaoBoyADVENTUREVideoCaseStudy/>

You Bee Media

A digital marketing agency established in Morley, Leeds. Ad:venture provided access to a business accelerator programme called Northern Max and grant support to help the business to fit out premises and employ staff.

<https://www.ad-venture.org.uk/news-case-studies/YouBeeMediaADVENTUREVideoCaseStudy/>

Amity Brew

A Brew pub established in Farsley, Leeds. Ad:Venture helped with business advice and introduced the Business Enterprise Fund who provided low cost loans to help establish the business. Grant support was provided by Ad:Venture to fund business expansion

<https://www.ad-venture.org.uk/news-case-studies/AmityBrewCoADVENTUREVideoCaseStudy/>

Appendix 2 – Key Statistics on the Leeds Business Stock

Recent WYCA research has identified that the business stock in Leeds is growing at a faster rate in Leeds than other WY districts and above the England Average. The Business Stock has grown by 12% over the period 2016-22.

A detailed breakdown of the business stock is listed below with a small fall recorded for micro businesses in 2022 & 2023. This mirrors the England wide average with three quarters of the fall due to a reduction in micro businesses in transport and storage (principally self employed couriers associated with internet deliveries)

Number of Local Units for private businesses (Office for National Statistics 2023)

Date	Total	Micro (0 to 9)	Small (10 to 49)	Medium-sized (50 to 249)	Large (250+)
2010	25,510	20,510	4,020	820	160
2011	25,475	20,570	3,955	810	140
2012	26,205	21,215	4,010	820	160
2013	26,530	21,405	4,115	850	160
2014	27,625	22,335	4,255	860	170
2015	31,455	25,965	4,440	885	170
2016	31,475	25,875	4,535	900	165
2017	33,530	27,820	4,610	930	170
2018	33,705	27,880	4,705	950	170
2019	33,905	27,980	4,785	965	175
2020	35,600	29,605	4,855	960	180
2021	35,750	29,775	4,835	970	175
2022	35,535	29,505	4,865	1,000	170
2023	34,540	28,380	4,985	1,000	175

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Work Schedule

Date: 8 December 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- 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'.
- Reflecting on the information in this report and information presented as part of other agenda items at today's meeting, Members are requested to consider and discuss the Board's work schedule for this municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Consider the draft work schedule for the 2023/24 municipal year.

What is this report about?

1. A draft work schedule for the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) 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 specific member requests for individual work items.
2. The Executive Board minutes from the meetings held on 18 October 2023 are also attached as Appendix 2. 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.

Developing the work schedule

3. When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
 - Avoid unnecessary 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.
 - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
 - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
 - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
4. To deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits. Additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board may also be required.

What impact will this proposal have?

5. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

6. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

7. To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to maintain 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?

8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should consider the criteria set out in paragraph 3.

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

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

What are the legal implications?

12. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work schedule of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 18 October 2023.

Background papers

- None.

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Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

Work Schedule for 2023/24 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 10.30am	Wednesday 19 July 2023 at 10.30am	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Performance report Annual reports: - Sources of Work - Terms of Reference - Co-opted members	Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Annual Update 2022 <i>[deferred from 2022/23 & to include an update on Park and Ride]</i> Sustainable Travel Gateway Scheme – Update on Progress	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

Work Schedule for 2023/24 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Wednesday 27 September 2023 at 10.30am	No meeting	Wednesday 1 November 2023 at 10.30am
<p>Leeds Safe Roads Vision Zero 2040 strategy.</p> <p>Future Talent Plan (including green economy work)</p>		<p>Bus Service Provision</p>
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

Work Schedule for 2023/24 Municipal Year

December	January	February
Friday 8 December 2023 at 10.30am	Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 10.30am	Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 10.30am
Business Support in Leeds Local Asset Review	Performance Monitoring Financial Health Monitoring Initial Budget Proposals Leeds Affordable Housing Growth Delivery Partnership Plan update Planning Portal – Outcome of 6-month trial	Leeds Transport Strategy Update Flood Risk Management Annual update
Working Group Meetings		
1 December 9.15am-10.15am: Employment Data working group (remote) 14 December 9.30am – 11am: Budget consultation working group (remote)		
Site Visits		

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Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

Work Schedule for 2023/24 Municipal Year

March	April	Notes
No meetings	Wednesday 3 April 2024 at 10.30am	
	100% Digital	Highways changes – contribution to net zero ambitions
	Inclusive Growth update	Support for Town and District Centres
	Social Progress Index Update	Connecting Leeds – how to build on strengths for future engagement & consultation
	End of Year Summary Statement	To be scheduled following consultation: Leeds Local plan Update 2040
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

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Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, D Coupar, M Harland,
H Hayden, A Lamb, J Lennox, J Pryor,
M Rafique and F Venner

- 45 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**
RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication 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 public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-
- (A) That Appendix C to the report entitled, 'Future of Six High Rise and Resident Rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange', referred to in Minute No. 49 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that it contains information relating to financial valuations of the land per site to support the options appraisal content (Appendix B to the submitted report). It is designated as being exempt from publication because disclosure would be likely to adversely affect the commercial interests of the Council. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at present; and
 - (B) That Appendices B and C to the report entitled, 'Accelerated Property Releases and Disposals', referred to in Minute No. 58 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that these appendices contain information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council including valuation details for the properties included within the submitted report. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at present.

46 Late Items

Late Item of Business – Agenda Item 10 – ‘The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds’

With the agreement of the Chair, a late item of business was admitted to the agenda entitled, ‘The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds’.

This was due to the fact that the submitted report was in response to the recent Government announcement regarding Network North, and as such the report was not able to be included within the agenda as published on 10th October 2023. However, given the significance of this announcement, it was deemed appropriate for the matter to be brought to the attention of Executive Board at the earliest opportunity. (Agenda Item 10 and Minute No. 53 refers).

47 Declaration of Interests

Agenda Item 9 (Transpennine Route Upgrade – Transport and Works Act Order Representation)

Both Councillors J Lewis and M Harland drew the Board’s attention to the fact that, in their respective capacities as Ward Councillors, they have both had significant engagement on issues around Peckfield level crossing. However, Councillors Lewis and Harland both respectively confirmed that they were approaching the consideration of this report as part of the Executive Board agenda with an open mind.

Agenda Item 7 (Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation))

Councillor A Lamb drew the Board’s attention to the fact that he attended the recent Development Plan Panel (DPP) meeting that considered the Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation). However, Councillor Lamb confirmed that he had abstained from voting on this matter at that DPP meeting and was approaching the consideration of this report as part of the Executive Board agenda with an open mind.

48 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

HOUSING

49 Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report regarding the future of six high rise blocks within the Council’s housing estate. The report noted that as significant investment work would be needed to ensure the long term future of the blocks, including intrusive and costly strengthening works, an options appraisal had been undertaken. The report presented the recommendations arising from that appraisal, which were for all residents to be rehoused, with appropriate support for those who needed it, and for subsequent demolition to clear the sites. The report noted that this

would enable the development of new modern housing in the future on the sites, whether by the Council or other parties.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the report including the options appraisal work that had taken place and the recommended next steps.

In considering enquiries regarding the potential impact that the proposals may have upon the current demand for social housing and also regarding the potential future use of the sites, it was acknowledged that whilst there may be a short term pressure on demand as a result of the proposal, it was felt that this would be manageable as part of the Council's wider social housing estate. It was also noted that the ultimate aim of the proposals was to increase the number of social housing units available in Leeds for the longer term and also to deliver a beneficial outcome for the current residents of those blocks. Furthermore, it was noted that the considerable timeframes involved in the delivery of the proposals were with the aim of ensuring that a managed approach was taken, and that liaison with partners on the opportunities regarding the future use of the sites would be ongoing.

In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further detail on the consultation and engagement processes which have taken place with residents of the blocks to date.

As part of the discussion, a Member acknowledged that whilst action was needed and that refurbishment of the blocks was not a viable option, they confirmed that they could not support the recommendations without further assurance around the future plans for the sites, or that all residents were supportive of the proposals, and as such, recommended a deferral so that further detail could be obtained. In response, further information was provided on the timeframes involved and the reasons for the proposed actions, with it being reiterated that the intention was to deliver a greater number of social housing units on these sites in the longer term. It was undertaken that further information on such matters could be provided to the Member in question, if required.

Following consideration of appendix C to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the rehousing of residents of secure tenanted flats in the blocks (Bailey Towers, Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Raynville Grange), be approved, and that approval be given for Home Loss and Disturbance payments to be made to qualifying residents; with this resolution being supported by ongoing engagement with residents during implementation;

- (b) That approval be given for the awarding of 'Band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants of the blocks;
- (c) That the suspension of lettings to the flats and garages be approved, with any void properties being taken out of charge;
- (d) That approval be given for the negotiation and undertaking of the re-purchasing of any leasehold flats, with approval also being given for compulsory purchase to be pursued if a voluntary approach is unsuccessful;
- (e) That it be agreed that the buildings should be safely demolished, creating clear sites;
- (f) That it be noted that activity will be progressed to explore options for the sites - for example, for development by the Council, or with other parties, or for sale;
- (g) That spend of £5,267,600 from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, be authorised, to deliver rehousing and building emptying activity; and
- (h) That agreement be given for the Initial Demolition Notices and Final Demolition Notices to be served by the Council at the appropriate times.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

50 Local Plan Update 1 (Pre-Submission Changes Consultation)

Further to Minute No. 46, 21 September 2022, the Director of City Development submitted a report setting out a number of changes proposed to the Local Plan Update following detailed consideration of consultation responses to the publication draft policies. The report requested endorsement of the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs of the Local Plan Update 1 and sought approval to undertake a further period of public consultation.

The Executive Member introduced the report, providing an overview of the changes proposed and highlighting the key role played by the Plan in the actions being taken in response to the Climate Emergency.

Members extended their thanks to officers for the work which continued to be undertaken in getting the plan to this advanced stage.

A Member raised a concern regarding the proposed changes and how they could dilute the Council's existing commitments in relation to the Climate

Emergency, with it being acknowledged however that at this stage, the Board was being recommended to approve a further consultation exercise where the public could submit their views on such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs of the Local Plan Update 1, as set out in **Appendix 1** to the submitted report, and as a schedule of changes in **Appendix 2** and the Sustainability Appraisal, as set out in **Appendix 3**, be endorsed;
- (b) That 6 weeks consultation of the proposed Pre-Submission Draft changes and supporting paragraphs, as set out in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2**, together with supporting technical information (comprising Sustainability Appraisal at **Appendix 3**, Habitat Regulations Assessment at **Appendix 4**, Report of Consultation at **Appendix 5** and Duty to Co-operate Statement at **Appendix 6**), be approved, with it being noted that that this will be accompanied by additional draft supporting consultation documentation, including the Council's evidence base and background papers alongside accessible summary material for consultation purposes;
- (c) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, to approve any detailed technical or drafting amendments to the consultation material in advance of public consultation;
- (d) That it be noted that the Chief Planning Officer is responsible for the implementation of the resolutions set out above.

(The matters referred to within this minute, given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In, as Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1.2 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

51 Morley Town Deal grants and general project progress

Further to Minute No. 103, 16th December 2020, the Director of City Development submitted a report summarising the progress made on the Morley Town Deal since the Morley Town Investment Plan (TIP) was approved in principle by the Government in March 2021, with associated capital funding to invest in projects intended to deliver transformational regeneration of the town. The report outlined six projects which were now moving forward to delivery and sought the Board's approval of several associated recommendations.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview on the key points within the report and highlighted the effectiveness of the Board and how it was regarded as an exemplar in terms of Town Deal Boards.

Gerald Jennings, Chair of the Morley Town Deal Board was in attendance to provide Members with an overview of the progress being made by the Board and an update on the most recent key developments. The ongoing work being undertaken to maximise the benefits from the Town Deal funding was highlighted, via initiatives including engagement with the private sector and also through the sourcing of other funding streams, where available. Regarding the Board's membership, it was noted that work had been successfully undertaken to develop the inclusivity and diversity of the Board. The good working relations between the Board and the Council were reiterated, with it being highlighted that work needed to continue at pace and with purpose in order to deliver the projects within the required timeframe.

Several specific enquiries were raised by a Member on the progress being made in relation to Morley Town Hall and in terms of the associated governance arrangements for the Town Deal Board and its decision making. Assurance was also sought that the projects were delivering the community's priorities. In response, Members received a detailed update on the Morley Town Hall project, and also received further information on the range and extent of public consultation and engagement which had been undertaken and which was planned moving forward, both for the Town Hall project and the others within the wider programme in order to inform the delivery of those projects.

Members thanked officers for the work that continued in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the subsequent Town Investment Plan bid approval by Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which sets the context for the forward delivery of the capital projects, as outlined within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That approval be given for the Director of City Development to use delegated powers to approve all project capital spend, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, and the Morley Town Deal Board;
- (c) That approval be given for the Director of City Development to use delegated powers to authorise entering into appropriate contracts or grant agreements required for delivery of the Heritage Investment Programme, White Rose Innovation Hub and Morley Learning and Skills Centre, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, and the Morley Town Deal Board.

52 Transpennine Route Upgrade - Transport and Works Act Order Representation

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an overview of the development of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) and which set out the Council's response to the Secretary of State for Transport in respect of

a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) submitted by Network Rail for the TRU east of Leeds. The report referenced the 'holding objection' that had been submitted to the Secretary of State in response to the draft TWAO and noted that whilst the Council recognised and supported in principle the benefits of TRU, it detailed the reasons for the submission of the 'holding objection'. Further to this, the report also made a recommendation to Full Council to approve the submission of a formal objection to specific elements of the TWAO for the Leeds to Micklefield part of the TRU.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's overall strategic support for the outcomes proposed from the Transpennine Route Upgrade, be noted;
- (b) That the contents of the submitted report, be noted; and that the 'holding objection' submitted by the Council to the Secretary of State in response to Network Rail's application for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) also be noted, together with the justifications for this;
- (c) That Full Council be recommended to approve the submission of the formal objection to specific elements of Network Rail's Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) for the Leeds to Micklefield part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, pursuant to s239 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- (d) That Full Council be recommended to delegate the necessary authority to the Director of City Development, to enable the Director to continue negotiations with relevant stakeholders in order to seek to agree the withdrawal of the objection should sufficient agreement on the issues raised be reached, in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure;
- (e) That approval be given for the resolutions above to be exempted from Call In pursuant to paragraph 5.1.3, Part 4 of the Council's Constitution on grounds of urgency, as set out within paragraphs 35 - 38 of the submitted report.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (e) above, and for the reasons as set out within sections 35 - 38 of the submitted report)

53 The Implications of the Network North Government Announcement for Leeds

The Director of City Development submitted a report in response to the Government's recent announcement and publication of the Network North document, which cancelled HS2 Phase 2, HS2 East and the Integrated Rail Plan study into how to bring HS2 trains to Leeds, and committed to invest

£36bn in alternative transport schemes across the country. The report presented the references to Leeds within that document and considered the interfaces and impact that these may have upon existing infrastructure programmes, and also the operation and growth of the city.

With the agreement of the Chair, the submitted report had been circulated to Board Members as a late item of business prior to the meeting for the reasons as detailed in Minute No. 46.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within it, including an update on the current position following the Government's Network North announcement on 4th October 2023, and highlighting that whilst the Network North document made reference to Leeds, further detail was required on such matters in order to better understand the implications for the city.

In terms of next steps following this announcement, emphasis was placed upon the importance of ensuring that a collaborative, cross-party approach was taken on such matters and when engaging with Government in order to deliver the strongest case for the city and the wider city-region in securing the required funding moving forward.

The Chief Executive provided an update to the Board regarding the National Infrastructure Commission, which had today launched its second national infrastructure assessment report, in which it had backed the case for major investment into England's largest regional cities, including Leeds, to improve public transport provision. It was also highlighted that the additional station in Leeds was still deemed to be crucial to the future of the city, and moving forward, emphasis was placed upon the Council's commitment to working closely with Government on such matters with the aim of delivering those key infrastructure improvements for the benefit of the city and the whole network.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the implications of the Department for Transport Network North (document as at Appendix A to the submitted report) Government announcement for Leeds, be noted;
- (b) That Government assurance be sought that the rail commitments in the Integrated Rail Plan and Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline will remain commitments apart from HS2 Phase 2; and that the Board's endorsement be given to the Council writing to Government seeking clarity regarding the proposed Leeds Area Study which incorporated a study into Leeds Station Capacity and which is still required to understand how to accommodate the revised services referenced by Network North, including whether a T-shaped station is required;
- (c) That the Board endorse a continued collaborative approach to development and implementation of the detail behind the proposals in the Network North document, the development of a new Leeds Station Integrated Masterplan and Integrated Transport Growth Strategy,

which is critical to ensuring that Leeds remains a resilient, globally competitive and investible city that continues to operate for all our businesses and residents.

- (d) That further reports be brought to Executive Board as more information becomes available, including safeguarding and future consenting strategies.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

54 2022/23 Leeds City Council Local Account for Adult Social Care

The Interim Director of Adults and Health submitted a report presenting the 2022/23 Local Account of Adult Social Care for citizens in Leeds. The report noted that the Local Account reviewed the performance of the Council in its delivery of social care services and support to the adult population of the city.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that this was the first Local Account publication following the pandemic, covering the period April 2022 to March 2023 and which detailed the progress being made, the Council's priorities moving forward and the challenges that continued to be faced.

The key nature of the Local Account document was highlighted, as it formed part of the suite of documents that the Care Quality Commission would consider when inspecting the Authority against its statutory duties.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted how, in this case, he felt that the representations made to Government regarding the funding of Adult Social Care were beginning to make a positive impact and which illustrated the benefit of a co-ordinated approach on such matters and which could continue to be applied to areas such as the resourcing of Children and Families services.

RESOLVED – That the production and publication of the 2022/23 Leeds City Council Local Account for Adult Social Care, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be agreed.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

55 Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Further to Minute No. 111, 8th February 2023, the Chief Executive submitted a report presenting an overview of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report, which outlined the findings of the one-day follow-up visit made by the Peer Challenge team on 11th September 2023. Appended to the report was the full LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report, and also a document presenting the recommendations of the LGA Peer Challenge, a progress update on those recommendations together with proposed next steps.

In presenting the report, the Leader noted that the proposal was to refer the progress review to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board for consideration, and in welcoming the progress review, highlighted the importance of receiving and acting upon the outcomes from the external scrutiny of the Council by partners in Local Government.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the findings of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Report, as appended to the submitted report, which followed the Peer Challenge team's revisit on 11th September 2023, be noted;
- (b) That the progress made against the original LGA Peer Challenge recommendations from November 2022, be noted, together with the findings of the peers following their revisit in September 2023;
- (c) That the proposed next steps developed in response to the findings of the peers following their revisit in September 2023, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted;
- (d) That the findings of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report be referred to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board's December 2023 meeting.

RESOURCES

56 Financial Health Monitoring 2023/24 – Month 5 (August)

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting the Council's projected financial health position as at month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year in respect of both the General Fund revenue budget and the Housing Revenue Account

The Board was requested to note the following correction to the submitted report:

Regarding the reference on page 1396 of the agenda pack (paragraph 3.11.1 ('Reserves') of Appendix A) which read, '*...£0.8m Leeds Older People's Forum for delivery of the Age Friendly programme which is funded by Health*'. This was to be amended to, '*...£0.8m Leeds Older People's Forum for delivery of the Enhance Programme commissioned by Leeds Community Healthcare (LCH) and delivered by the Third Sector*'.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points, which included the current forecasting of an overspend of £29.6m for the General Fund as at month 5 of the financial year. The Board was also provided with an update on the work that continued in respect of managing in-year pressures.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding the refund of transport levy reserves, as one-off funding from WYCA (West Yorkshire combined Authority) to each of the 5 West Yorkshire Local Authorities. In Leeds' case this was a sum of £17.7m. It was noted that this sum would be returned to the Council's

General Fund. It was also noted that this sum would be factored into future Financial Health Monitoring reports submitted to the Board moving forward.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That, subject to noting the correction as detailed above, the contents of the submitted report be noted, and that it also be noted that at Month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £29.6m for 2023/24 (5.2% of the approved net revenue budget) within a challenging national context, and with it also being noted that a range of actions are being undertaken to achieve a balanced budget position;
- (b) That it be noted that at Month 5 of the 2023/24 financial year, the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of £3.0m for 2023/24 (1.09% of the approved gross expenditure budget);
- (c) That it be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care and known impacts of the rising cost of living, including the employer's 2023/24 NJC pay offer of £1,925 and the JNC pay settlement of 3.5%, have been incorporated into this reported financial position, with it also being noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available. That it also be noted that proposals would need to be identified to absorb any additional pressures;
- (d) That it be noted that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, are required to present action plans to mitigate their reported pressures and those of the Council's wider financial challenge where possible, in line with the Revenue Principles agreed by Executive Board in 2019;
- (e) That following WYCA Members' approval of a refund of transport levy reserves to the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities on 12th October 2023, it be noted that this one-off injection will be used in Leeds to add to the Strategic Contingency Reserve.

57 Revenue Savings Proposals for 2024/25 to 2026/27

Further to Minute No. 40, 20th September 2023, the Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report providing an update on the actions being taken in response to the Council's estimated revenue budget gap. Specifically, the report presented a number of savings proposals - a collective term used in this context to apply to efficiencies, income generation and accounting measures – to contribute towards addressing that budget gap over the three-year period (2024/25 to 2026/27).

In presenting the report the Executive Member highlighted the unprecedented financial challenges that continued to be faced across the sector and by this Council, and it was within this context that the submitted proposals were being presented to the Board as part of the wider approach being taken to manage

such challenges. The Board also noted the Council's recent issuing of a Section 188 notice, which was a process to instigate collective consultation with the Council's recognised Trade Unions to avoid, reduce and mitigate the potential risk and consequences of compulsory redundancies.

In considering the report, a Member highlighted the challenge that continued to be faced nationally in terms of the resourcing of services for Children and Families. Whilst the Member highlighted the importance of the Council continuing to take action in this area, it was acknowledged that this was a matter which required a national response and continued communication with Government.

In addition, as part of the consultative process on proposals around managing the financial challenge more generally, emphasis was placed upon the benefit of involving communities and Members across the Council on such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the financial position for 2024/25 to 2026/27, as outlined within the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that further savings are required to deliver a balanced budget position for 2024/25 and to contribute to closing the projected gaps in the following two years;
- (b) That the 'Business as Usual' savings put forward, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions);
- (c) That it be noted that additional savings proposals will be brought to Executive Board for consideration at its meeting on 13th December 2023.

58 Accelerated Property Releases and Disposals

The Director of City Development submitted a report which, in considering the Council's in-year budget position and medium-term financial plan, presented proposals regarding the potential to accelerate the release of a number of operational properties in order to deliver in-year additional capital receipts, and also with regard to proposals relating to further work being undertaken around the potential disposal of let out properties, as identified within the report.

Members welcomed the proposals within the submitted report.

Following consideration of appendices B and C to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which were considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the accelerated release of the properties set out in Table 1 of the submitted report, be agreed, and where identified, agreement also be given for their inclusion within the Capital Receipt Programme for disposal;
- (b) That agreement be given for further exploration being undertaken into the disposal of the properties identified in Table 2 of the submitted report;
- (c) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Director for City Development, to enable the Director, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and the Chief Officer Financial Services, to take decisions as to which of the properties identified from the Investment Portfolio in Table 2 of the submitted report should be progressed for marketing; and that subject to the value of the offers received, the final decision to sell be delegated to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources;
- (d) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Director for City Development to enable the Director to agree the terms of the disposals which are agreed as part of the submitted report;
- (e) That it be agreed that the receipts as set out in Table 2 of the submitted report be exempted from the Capital Receipt Incentive Scheme.

ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

59 The Annual Standards Report

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the Council's Annual Standards Report which provided an overview of the educational outcomes for Leeds following the statutory assessments and examinations which took place in 2022.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that these statutory assessments and examinations were the first to be undertaken post-pandemic which weren't under teacher assessed grades. In addition, the Executive Member drew the Board's attention to a number of key progress measures featured within the report and extended thanks to the city's schools and school staff for the achievements recorded within the report.

Members welcomed the submitted report, with a suggestion that it may be beneficial for Scrutiny to consider the significant detail within it.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the performance against headline measures for pupils in Leeds in 2022 when compared with national data, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted;

- (b) That the actions taken by the Local Authority to improve outcomes in Leeds, be noted, together with the planned actions for the coming year.

60 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) - Review Process

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report providing an update on the current position regarding Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) both locally and nationally. The report noted that in relation to Leeds City Council, a 60% post-pandemic increase in applications for EHCPs had been experienced. Given this, it was noted that a review was being undertaken into the Council's approach towards EHCPs by external consultants in order to provide independent challenge and insight. The report also provided details of the related work which had been undertaken to date and further proposed as part of the review process.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the significant increase in demand for EHCPs which had been experienced post-pandemic both nationally and in Leeds and highlighted the range of reasons why an individual may need an EHCP. The importance of the review process being undertaken by external consultants was emphasised in order to ensure that the process was as effective as possible, and it was noted that the submitted report was the first of two scheduled reports, with this initial report providing detail on the work done to date, emerging findings and opportunities for change. The second report is scheduled to be submitted to the Board in December 2023.

The Board welcomed the submitted report and the priority that was being given to this important area.

A Member highlighted how this process affected many young people and their families in Leeds and emphasised the importance of the Council's relationships with those key stakeholders. In response, the Director of Children and Families emphasised her absolute commitment to ensuring that improvements were made to the EHCP process and to the experiences and outcomes for young people and their families. The Director highlighted the integral role that key stakeholders, including young people, parents and carers would play in that improvement, alongside the external consultants undertaking the review. Emphasis was also placed upon the clear objectives for the next phase of the process, which included that the Council achieved full legal compliance in its statutory duties; and that moving forward clear performance metrics around timeliness of assessment and issuing of EHCPs were developed together with a robust management framework in order to measure and scrutinise progress in a timely way.

It was noted that the Children and Families Scrutiny Board was also considering these matters in parallel to the review work being undertaken, and that overall, the aim was to ensure that a 'Leeds approach' is established in response to the issues being experienced nationally in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the prevailing situation nationally in relation to EHCPs, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the work undertaken to date to improve performance in Leeds, be noted;
- (c) That the review work instigated, as referenced within the submitted report, be endorsed; that it be noted that the review seeks to highlight areas of opportunity and improvement; and that the key lines of enquiry which the work to date has generated also be noted;
- (d) That the proposed 5 key principles, as referenced within the submitted report, which will form the basis of more detailed organisational and process design over the next six months, be agreed;
- (e) That a further report be submitted to the December 2023 meeting of Executive Board around detailed planning for future arrangements.

COMMUNITIES

61 Annual Update on Migration in Leeds

Further to Minute No. 74, 19th October 2022, the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented the key developments and progress on the migration agenda over the last 12 months by Leeds City Council and its statutory and non-statutory partners. The report also highlighted the challenges associated with delivering a range of migration programmes to families and individuals across the city.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within it, including the approach being taken in Leeds in response to national and international developments during the course of the year. Also, the Board noted the approach being taken by the Council in working towards joining the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network, which followed a related deputation to full Council in September 2023.

Members extended their thanks to a range of Council officers and the third sector partners for the work which continued in this area.

Responding to a specific enquiry, the Board received further information on the actions which were being taken with partners around the promotion of access to employment for migrants and improving their employability.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted annual update report on migration, together with the full overview and insight as presented at Appendix 1, be noted;

- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is responsible for leading this work through the Council's Safer Stronger Communities programme;
- (c) That it be noted that the Chief Officer for Safer, Stronger Communities is responsible for leading the work of the Leeds Strategic Migration Board which oversees delivery on the strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach towards migration in Leeds, and the work of the Council's migration and resettlement team to provide strategic and operational direction for the city;
- (d) That the Council's approach towards becoming a member of the national Local Authority of Sanctuary Network, be endorsed;
- (e) That the issues raised in the submitted report which impact current and future Leeds residents as part of the review of the Best City Ambition, be noted.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 20TH OCTOBER 2023

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2023