



SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Wednesday, 23rd October, 2024 at 10.30 am

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

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr S Ali	- Beeston and Holbeck
Cllr B Anderson	- Adel and Wharfedale
Cllr L Cunningham	- Armley
Cllr L Farley	- Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
Cllr S Golton (Chair)	- Rothwell
Cllr K Haigh	- Farnley and Wortley
Cllr A Hannan	- Headingley and Hyde Park
Cllr N Harrington	- Wetherby
Cllr Z Hussain	- Roundhay
Cllr M Iqbal	- Hunslet and Riverside
Cllr A Maloney	- Beeston and Holbeck
Cllr A McCluskey	- Farnley and Wortley

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 \(Environment, Housing & Communities\) - 23 October 2024](#)

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

A G E N D A

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

3

LATE ITEMS

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

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

4

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

5

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

MINUTES - 19 SEPTEMBER 2024

5 - 12

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2024.

7

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REVIEW UPDATE

13 - 40

To receive an update from the Director (Communities, Housing & Environment) on progress with the Review of Community Committees, including recommendations that have emerged from the work to date and an accompanying work programme.

8

PLAYFUL GREEN SPACES PLAN

41 - 48

To receive an update from the Chief Officer (Climate, Energy and Green Space) on the proposed approach for the future development of a Playful Green Spaces Plan.

9

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR LEEDS FROM JANUARY 2027

49 -
56

To consider the proposed approach to securing a replacement Grounds Maintenance Contract for Leeds from January 2027, as set out in the accompanying report from the Chief Officer (Climate, Energy and Green Spaces).

10

WORK SCHEDULE

57 -
80

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2024/25 municipal year.

11

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place at **10.30am on Friday 6 December 2024**. There will be a pre-meeting for all members of the Scrutiny Board at **10.00am**.

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor S Golton in the Chair

Councillors A Maloney, A Hannan,
A McCluskey, S Ali, L Cunningham,
L Farley, K Haigh, Z Hussain, C Anderson,
R Jones and S Seary

34 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection documents.

35 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

36 Late Items

There were no late items.

37 Declaration of Interests

No members made any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

However, two members requested that non-pecuniary interests be noted in relation to item 8 Food Strategy Progress Update:

- Cllr Cunningham is a Director of Armley Action Team – a hub that set up a community fridge and food pantry, alongside Climate Action Armley.
- Cllr Golton is Vice President of Leeds Allotment Federation.

38 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from the following Scrutiny Board members:

- Cllr Barry Anderson (Cllr Caroline Anderson attended as a substitute)
- Cllr Norma Harrington (Cllr Simon Seary attended as a substitute)
- Cllr Mohammed Iqbal (Cllr Raymond Jones attended as a substitute)

39 Minutes - 18 July 2024 and 31 July 2024

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meetings that took place on 18 July and 31 July 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 23rd October, 2024

40 Waste Strategy Update

Individuals in attendance for this item were:

- **Cllr Mohammed Rafique** (Executive Board Member for Climate, Energy, Environment & Green Space)
- **James Rogers** (Director, Communities, Housing & Environment)
- **John Woolmer** (Chief Officer Environmental Services)
- **Phil Turpin** (Senior Business Officer)
- **Matt Birkett** (Service Manager)

The Chair welcomed the early engagement with the Scrutiny Board on proposals relating to the introduction of food waste collections and an associated '3 bin solution' for Leeds.

John Woolmer was invited to introduce the paper. He provided an overview of progress in the development of national policy and legislation, including information relating to extended producer responsibility, deposit return schemes and separate collections of household waste.

He went on to set out proposals for managing household waste in Leeds in a way that seeks to meet recently introduced national Simpler Recycling requirements and helps Leeds residents to reduce the amount of waste they produce that is not re-used or recycled.

An update was provided in relation to the recent introduction of glass into green bins. It was confirmed that, measured by weight, the amount of waste being collected in the first few weeks is up by 30%, with around 700 tonnes of glass being separated for remelt and recycling in August. This is anticipated to increase as awareness improves. Further analysis will be required to determine the proportion of glass being diverted from black bins or bottle banks. John explained that the greater environmental and financial benefits would be achieved through diverting glass from the black to the green bin, as incineration would have no recycling or energy recovery benefit. He outlined plans to focus on changing customer habits in the areas of the city where glass is predominantly placed into black bins and said the service would welcome help from ward members in sharing this message.

Concern was raised about the spillage of glass on the road in some areas of the city. Members were asked to highlight examples of this with the team to help identify the cause of the problem – for example, this may be related to specific collection vehicles.

John specifically sought the views of the Scrutiny Board in relation to a proposed '3 bin' approach to enable residents to recycle more at home while minimising the need for more bins.

John confirmed that no further information has been received about annual, revenue funding for a new food collection service. However, Leeds has been

allocated £7.1m capital monies via DEFRA to support the purchase of infrastructure such as new vehicles, bins and caddies.

John informed members that the expectation from DEFRA has moved towards comingling of food and garden collections where that makes most sense locally and supports the Simpler Recycling aims. However, weekly collections still currently remain a future national requirement for food waste. It was noted that this is despite mixed garden and food waste collections being successfully delivered on a fortnightly basis in other places such as Hull and the East Riding. John confirmed that initial proposals for Leeds would therefore represent an interim step towards those requirements.

Referring to proposals for the introduction of separate food waste collections, John noted that affordability and infrastructure factors would determine what options were possible and reiterated that no details or confirmation of the Government funding for food waste collections has been provided. He explained that as the largest provider of a garden waste collection service in the UK, Leeds was in a strong position to utilise existing infrastructure to introduce food waste collections by adding food as a waste item within the brown bin. The high-level modelling undertaken by the service indicates that this could be delivered within existing revenue resources, utilising the capital grant to pay for new wagons, caddies and bins.

The preferred proposal would see households with a brown bin collection increased from 220k to 291k, representing 80% of properties. Those households with a brown bin would receive a year-round fortnightly collection. It would be the choice of the household if they used the brown bin for food waste as well as garden waste. The report explained that this could increase the city's recycling rate to over 50%.

A future solution for food waste collections would then be explored for the remaining 20% of properties, which includes areas of high-density housing and places where the number of bins is already a problem. Residual waste would be collected on a minimum fortnightly basis, with weekly collections continuing in areas of high housing density.

Members sought reassurances about the level of staff required to support the introduction of enhanced brown bin collections. In response officers provided assurance that additional staff were part of current modelling which is indicating that somewhere in the region of 3-4 additional crews will be required. That will potentially include a 'spare' crew to enable more rapid collection of any missed bins and additional resources in peak periods of demand.

Officers also responded to concerns about new collections in areas of high-density housing noting that any national learning would be incorporated into subsequent phases of food collection roll outs and local members will be consulted on possible solutions.

Other matters raised by members included:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 23rd October, 2024

- Anticipated take up rates for the new service.
- Infrastructure requirements including whether the use of inserts for food waste within brown bins would be beneficial, the provision of liners to residents and the capacity to move to smaller vehicles to enable dedicated food waste collections should that be required.
- Concerns about smells and pests if food waste is left out for collection in areas of high-density housing and where communal bins are used.
- The availability of local contractors to process the increased yields of waste.
- Clarification about the anticipated outcome of recycling food waste.
- Potential spillage of food waste.
- The impact on levels of residual waste at the RERF and any contractual implications.
- Provision of brown bins to new housing developments.

John noted that more detail will be included in the proposals as they are developed. However, the aim will be to encourage rather than compel residents to engage with the new comingled collection. He also noted that officers are seeking to learn from colleagues in East Riding and Hull, as well as Manchester and Cheshire, where comingled food collections are already in place and working successfully.

Phil confirmed that projected yields of food waste are based on WRAP guidance. The WRAP data has been developed using information from local authorities who have operated a food waste collection and is based on kilograms per household.

Members were informed that there are different practices with regards to the provision of caddy liners. The expectation in Leeds is that liners will be provided to residents using new burden revenue funding.

Members were informed that it is anticipated that the mixed garden and food waste will be composted. However, a procurement process will be undertaken shortly to determine the options available.

The Chair sought clarity about whether a formal evaluation of learning from the extended pilot of food waste collections in Rothwell was available. It was also noted that the Rothwell pilot involved dedicated collections of food waste caddies.

A formal evaluation of the Rothwell pilot was not available. However, John confirmed that affordability would prevent the introduction of dedicated food waste collections in 2025, as was the model for the Rothwell pilot scheme.

To deliver a model on that basis would mean delaying the introduction of a food waste collection until sufficient additional funding was available to cover the collection and infrastructure costs. Officers set out how the way in which comingling could make best use of current infrastructure to deliver an interim solution at an earlier stage. Officers highlighted that comingling would expand

the garden waste collection to an additional 70k households, and provide the added bonus of expanding garden waste to an all-year-round collection.

John reminded members that food is already collected in black bins so issues linked to spillages should not be significantly different if that is collected in the brown bin. However, he noted learning from other areas - such as turning off the drain on wagons to avoid waste spilling from the vehicle.

Officers confirmed that projected yields for food waste do not suggest there would be concerns about going below the contracted minimum volumes for the RERF. Had projections suggested there would be an adverse economic impact due to the contractual relationship with the RERF, an exemption to food waste collection requirements would have been sought from the Government.

It is anticipated that in future brown bins will be provided as standard to new homes alongside black and green bins as kerbside food and garden waste collections become a statutory requirement from 2026. John also explained that the proposal would require the design of new collection routes citywide before implementation and that would take into account known housing developments.

Members sought and received reassurance about the education and information programme that will support the introduction of new comingled collections, particularly in new communities where English is not the first language of many residents.

The Chair noted that without more detail the Scrutiny Board was not able to fully endorse the proposed approach, but members welcomed the early engagement and look forward to further information as the proposal is developed.

RESOLVED:

The Scrutiny Board noted and provided comment upon:

- a) the updated national position in relation to implementing the national Resource and Waste Strategy, revised/new recycling collection requirements set out in the Environment Act (2021) and the associated Simpler Recycling policy.
- b) progress made so far in Leeds in meeting the Simpler Recycling requirements; including the recent introduction of glass bottles and jars as items now accepted in the green, household recycling bins;
- c) the option presented for a “3 bin” approach for inclusion within the Leeds Household Waste Strategy, including adding food waste to the list of items allowed in the brown bin.

41 Food Strategy Progress Update

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 23rd October, 2024

Individuals in attendance for this item were:

- **Cllr Mohammed Rafique** (Executive Member for Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space)
- **Polly Cook** (Chief officer Climate, Energy & Green Spaces)
- **Andrew White** (Senior Project Manager)
- **Claire Dalton-Nobbs** (Senior Project Officer)

The Chair introduced the item, noting that the full Food Strategy Progress Update had been considered by the Executive Board on 18 September, and has previously been considered by the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

Andrew White was invited to provide an overview of the report highlights, noting that the Food Strategy was introduced in 2023 in collaboration with partners and stakeholders. He highlighted that the Scrutiny Board was being asked to consider the report so far as it related to the remit of the Scrutiny Board including matters linked to food poverty, sustainability and resilience in the context of the Council's Climate Action Plan.

Andrew set out the aims of the strategy, key areas of progress over the first twelve months and anticipated next steps, noting the key performance indicators designed to measure delivery and outcomes. He highlighted the cross-council approach to the food strategy and the extensive collaborative with partners across the city.

Members sought clarification about the data that underpins the concerns raised in the report about lower income households struggling to access healthy food.

In response, the Scrutiny Board considered the impact of limited access to supermarkets in some communities, particularly where car ownership is low.

Members noted that it would be helpful to understand whether a reduction in the number of adults meeting the '5 a day' fruit and vegetable target represents an ongoing trajectory or a short term event.

Cllr Rafique emphasised the importance of collaboration and influence as many of the levers for achieving the overall ambitions for the city are outside of the Council's control.

Concern was raised about access to unhealthy foods including take aways for children and members sought advice about whether any national legislation is anticipated to regulate access to these products.

Andrew White informed Board members that there is an appetite to regulate where possible. The Government recently announced a ban on junk food advertisements before 9pm and online adverts for products high in fat, salt and sugar will be banned altogether.

In response to member concerns, Andrew outlined work between planning services and public health colleagues to review the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Hot Food Takeaways.

Members endorsed the cross-council approach to the Food Strategy given the way in which priorities are connected to the ambitions of different service areas.

Members sought clarification about support to reduce food waste, citing the Real Junk Food Project as an example of that approach.

In the context of food inequalities members highlighted concerns about access to fresh foods via food banks and challenges with access to white goods.

The Chair sought further information about how the principles of Asset Based Community Development are informing the approach to the Food Strategy. Members recommended exploring relationships with community committees with a view to them helping to empower communities to provide a response to the challenges they identify locally.

Andrew noted that discussions with community committees to date have focused on issues such as community growing and composting. However, officers would be happy to expand that work to include food education. It was agreed that it would be important to share best practice across different areas.

Officers outlined the work of the third sector to secure access to food from retail and hospitality venues, which would otherwise be thrown away.

Members explored the challenge of food poverty and support for private sector initiatives to reduce food waste.

Andrew set out how colleagues are working together to incorporate the food strategy into wider work across the city – for example, incorporating the strategy into the city's submission as part of the Global Destination Sustainability Index.

Members noted that they would welcome access to the mapping of food deserts in the city to inform their work in those localities.

The Chair provided an update on regional work within West Yorkshire Combined Authority in relation to food security, including areas identified as for collaboration.

Members requested further information about demand for allotments in different areas of the city.

RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report.

42 Work Schedule

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 23rd October, 2024

Members were asked to note and provide comment on the draft work schedule at page 119.

The Principal Scrutiny Advisor highlighted the additional working groups taking place in the Autumn:

- 09/10/24: Sim Spec Walk
- 17/10/24: Social Progress Index update
- 23/09/24: Budget working group (all scrutiny members), providing context ahead of individual board consultation process.
- 12/12/24: budget consultation working group, focusing on proposals that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Board.

It was noted that a further working group is due to be confirmed in relation to a post consultation update on Housing Allocation Policy.

RESOLVED: Members noted the work schedule.

43 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) will take place at **10.30am on 23 October 2024**. There will be a pre-meeting for Scrutiny Board members at **10.00am**.

Community Committee Review Update

Date: 23rd October 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

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

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Community Committees were established in June 2014 to improve the way the council works locally. They form a part of the Council's Constitution and play a key role to give local people a greater say in Council affairs. All of the City's 99 Councillors sit on one of the 10 Community Committees, which operate across a geography covering 3 or 4 wards, covering inner and outer parts of the city.

The Committees provide the infrastructure through which the council executes one of its democratic functions and community engagement ambitions. As formal council meetings held in public, they are one of the few structures through which the council has delegated its decision-making powers to the local level, and they play a key role in helping to address a range of locally identified priorities that help to improve the places where people live.

Together, the committees create an invaluable city-wide network, through which communities are encouraged to engage and influence how the Council and its partners delivers its business functions.

In June 2023, the Council's Executive Board supported a recommendation to undertake a full review of Community Committees involving all 99 Councillors, facilitated through the Council's Scrutiny structures. This report gives the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board an update on the progress of the review, to date.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to note the content of the report and:

- a) Support the review of Community Committees and their constitutional role in helping to shape and influence place.
- b) Provide their endorsement of the recommendations and accompanying work programme, as set out in appendix 1.

What is this report about?

1. This report gives the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board an update on the progress of the Community Committee Review as agreed by the Council's Executive Board in June 2023.
2. Further reports to the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board in July and December 2023 and March 2024 set out in more detail the work aligned to the review from September 2023, in which five specific workstreams were identified:

✓ **Executive Delegated functions:**

[S3Da Community Committee Executive Delegation - Issue 1 Last amended on 26th May 2022.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#), currently:

- Well Being; covers a range of delegated budgets
- Community Centres
- CCTV
- Neighbourhood Management and Coordination
- Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services
- Community parks, cemeteries, closed churchyards, recreation grounds, urban woodland, natural areas, maintenance of roundabouts, other floral features and local green space
- Community Infrastructure Levy; Neighbourhood Fund

✓ **Delegated budgets:** Wellbeing Fund and Youth Activity Fund.

✓ **Community engagement and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD):** linked to the Local Government Association Peer Review and Member Development.

✓ **Community Committee Champions:** review of current themes, with a proposal to change Jobs & Skills to Cost of Living, or link to Inclusive Growth.

✓ **Governance and Meeting Structure:** review of reports and agenda structure and review of links to other related locality working arrangements e.g., Local Care Partnerships and School Clusters.

3. This report updates specifically on the progress made through the three Task & Finish Working Groups that have been established: Community Chairs and Champions, Delegated Budgets and Community Engagement & Empowerment. It also provides next steps in terms of approvals for the proposed changes as well as providing an update to the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board on proposals for Workshop 4, which will take place on 13th November 2024 and will seek comments from all 99 Councillors on the proposals to re-design the Community Committees based on the feedback received from Elected Members throughout the review process.

Elected Member Working Group

4. The fourth meeting of the Member Working Group took place on 3rd October 2024. At this meeting the proposals were shared around the new vision for the Community Committees, with a number of options appraisals also presented for consideration in relation to the CC Review recommendations. A further meeting/reconvene of the Member Working Group will take place on the 14th October, where discussions will be finalised regarding the review recommendations.

Community Committee Chairs

5. A meeting with Community Committee Chairs took place on Wednesday 9th October 2024. At that meeting the proposals were shared around the new vision for the Community Committees, which Community Committee Chairs were broadly supportive of.

Member Workshops

6. Following on from Full Council on the 13th September 2023 and the conversation regarding the Community Committee Review, the themed workshops in relation to specific workstreams aimed to engage and seek feedback and ideas from Elected Members. All Councillors have had the opportunity to attend and participate at the workshops.
7. Each workshop was organised and facilitated by the Communities Team and included input from the Executive Member for Communities, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles and Leader of Council. Highlighted below are some headlines that emerged from workshop sessions. These comments were fed into the Member Working Group for consideration.

Community Committee Champions Workshop

8. The Community Committee Champions Workshop was held on 25th October 2023, with 30 Elected Members participating = 60% participation rate (only Champions were invited to the session). The feedback from the workshop and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:
 - ✓ Review of the Champion role profiles.
 - ✓ Review the Champion themes of work.
 - ✓ Review the themed sub-groups.
 - ✓ Review the learning and development available for Champions.

Delegated Budget Workshop

9. The Delegated Budgets Workshop was held on 15th November 2023, with 40 Elected Members participating = 40.40% participation rate. The feedback from the workshop, conversations with Elected Members and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:
 - ✓ A need to review the customer experience in applying for funding and support from Community Committees.
 - ✓ To consider the possibility of some delegated budgets, namely Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), taking place at ward level.
 - ✓ Develop and strengthen links with other external funders.
 - ✓ Consider the implications of merging the Youth Activity and Wellbeing Funds.
 - ✓ Consider how Community Committees can influence other Council funding streams.
 - ✓ Consider how Community Committees can income generate within wards.

Community Engagement & Empowerment Workshop

10. The Community Engagement & Empowerment Workshop was held on 17th January 2024, with 45 Elected Members participating = 45.45% participation rate. The feedback from the workshop, conversations with Elected Members and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:

- ✓ The structure of Community Committee meetings should be reviewed
- ✓ Create some clear engagement principles for Community Committees.
- ✓ Consider how the current format of the Community Committee could alter to allow more flexibility and meaningful community conversations to take place.
- ✓ Consider the current agendas for Community Committees and the relevance and importance of the reports presented.
- ✓ Provide ABCD training for Elected Members and relevant frontline Council services.
- ✓ Hold an annual Community Committee Summit for all Elected Members.
- ✓ Develop a Chairs Role profile highlighting the key leadership role and responsibilities. Member development/training is key
- ✓ Consider funding cycles and priority setting
- ✓ Consider the use of IT to improve engagement with residents

Delegated Functions Workshop

11. The Delegated Functions workshop was held on the 6th March 2024 with 39 Elected Members participating = 39.39%. The feedback from the workshop, conversations with Elected Members and from the Elected Member Working Group highlighted some key areas of focus:

- ✓ *Improved communication and engagement with key services.*
- ✓ *Following Housing Advice Panels being disbanded there needs to be a place for Elected Members, Housing and residents to continue to work together.*
- ✓ *S106 funding how to make it more flexible to changing local needs.*
- ✓ *Community Committee delegations to be reviewed and if no longer relevant be removed.*
- ✓ *Delegations should reflect the scope of influence of the Community Committee.*
- ✓ *Lettings procedures for Community Centres to be reconsidered.*
- ✓ *CCTV costs and relevance of cameras to be considered.*
- ✓ *Services work collaboratively with the Committees to consider implementation of a new initiative or strategic change to delivery.*

12. The feedback from this workshop has been shared with Senior Officers, the Council Leader and relevant Executive Members and it has been agreed, that due to the significant number of service reviews that are currently taking place across the Council to address the current budget pressures, that this work will be paused and revisited at a later date.

General feedback/comments regarding the Community Committees

13. The workshop sessions have been well attended and Elected Members have provided excellent feedback on how they have been engaged and listened to throughout the review process. Further opportunities to comment through ward and specific briefings with officers have been offered to those members who were not able to attend the scheduled workshop sessions.

14. Elected Members have also fed back that they have welcomed and enjoyed the opportunity to get together with other Elected Members from other Community Committees and share good practice, as well as the opportunity to listen to new ideas and different approaches. This led to the proposal to consider an informal annual summit to allow this to continue.

15. In the interests of being open, honest & transparent, all comments/feedback regarding the Community Committee Review (over 674), have been recorded from workshop sessions,

emails to communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk, as well as other meetings and these have been shared with the Member Working Group.

16. Feedback from the 4 workshops has highlighted a strong desire for the committees to work differently.

A summary of verbal member feedback includes:

- ✓ Community Committee agendas should be focused on local issues.
- ✓ The current structure of Community Committees does not encourage resident participation and the formality of the meetings is not engaging for local people.
- ✓ Housing Advisory Panels no longer exist – what are the opportunities to continue to engage with Council tenants.
- ✓ Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) –could be a focus for committees, but more work is required to ensure that the relevant Council services adopt these principles and ways of working.
- ✓ Leadership – Members want to provide greater local leadership and be better engaged with services, many voicing that services failed to fully engage with them on local issues. This resulted in missed opportunities to deliver better local services and better support use of local resources.
- ✓ Community Committee Chairs – Committee Chairs are keen to see the meetings operate in a different way.
- ✓ Delegations – Members want meaningful delegations to committees where they can add value and make best use of their local knowledge.

Draft Recommendations

17. Draft recommendations were agreed with the Member Working Group on the 26th February 2024, (recommendations were also discussed with Community Committee Chairs on the 28th February 2024).
18. Task & Finish Groups have been working on these recommendations since April 2024 to provide more detail and procedurals to be created for implementation subject to required approvals being sought and given and a detailed plan of change can commence. An update on progress is attached at Appendix 1

Next Steps

19. Proposed next steps for the Community Committee Review, which have been discussed with the Member Working Group are as follows:
 - ✓ Proceed with approvals where appropriate for the draft recommendations.
 - ✓ The Task & Finish Groups to continue to work through the recommendations with Elected Members and council officers.
 - ✓ Proceed with the forward work programme with timeline to agree recommendations, seek relevant approvals and plan implementation.
 - ✓ Member development opportunities to be discussed with Governance and Committee Chairs.
 - ✓ A final workshop will take place on the 13th November 2024 to outline the proposed redesign of the Community Committees and provide an opportunity for all 99 Members to comment and influence the proposals, prior to work commencing to implement the changes from the start of the 2025/26 Municipal year.

- ✓ Organise an annual summit for the Community Committees to meet and discuss topics of interest taking suggestions and ideas from the Community Chairs from 2025.

Forward Plan

20. A Forward Plan for the municipal year, 2024/25, is attached as Appendix 2 with this report.

Other Considerations

21. The Community Committees provides an infrastructure through which the council executes its democratic renewal ambitions, by bringing Elected Members and service providers closer to residents, to help shape and influence the places they live.
22. They are formal council meetings held in public and form a key element of the council's constitution and hold devolved powers from the council's Executive Board. Public attendance however at committee meetings in some areas is low and there is a danger that opportunities are being missed to fully engage with the public about the issues that matter most to them, in the areas where they live and work.
23. The review will need to consider therefore how the Community Committee infrastructure can improve community engagement and better empower local people, so that they can become more involved in their community and influence how services are delivered at a local level.
24. Elected Members will be fully aware that the council is under increasing pressures due to a range of factors. This includes the ongoing financial challenge, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the current cost of living crisis, as well as demographic changes which bring increased demands upon local services. The Community Committee Review must also consider effective use of public resources to deliver better outcomes for the residents of Leeds.
25. For any Elected Member that has been unable to attend any of the workshops, there have been other opportunities to engage with the Community Committee Review. The Safer Stronger Communities Team have offered individual briefing sessions to all Elected Members and a dedicated email address has been set up to capture feedback and thoughts regarding the review: communitycommitteereview@Leeds.gov.uk
26. The review will support the delivery of actions identified through the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review, specifically:

Theme

Locality and Community Working
Supporting our city ambition to tackle poverty and inequality

Recommendation

- Use the Peer Review recommendation to take stock of Locality and Community approaches with a focus on People, Assets and Governance, using this as the primary vehicle for delivering the Best City Ambition right across the city.
- Consider how to further strengthen place-based networks.
- In this context, review and develop the community committees and draw on the work of the Social Progress Index to measure progress.
- Invest in member development on strengths-based community development. Councillors' ambitions for their communities are clear but as the council's

resources reduce members have an important role to play in supporting communities to be able to do more for themselves.

What impact will this proposal have?

27. Community Committees play an important role in understanding and addressing issues of concern to local people. One of the many ways they do this is by funding projects that address local priorities. In 2021/22, this was once again apparent as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect Leeds. With it came some very specific and immediate needs for our communities; challenges that the Community Committees addressed by funding much needed projects that tackled the immediate effects of the pandemic in each of the 33 wards in the city.
28. The commitment to locality-based working continues to be demonstrated in the broad range of projects that the Community Committees fund, spending nearly £1.7 million in 2023/24, totalling just over 450 separate grants that were provided to local grass-root organisations, voluntary groups and charities, to tackle the immediate and specific needs of our communities.
29. The work that takes place through our Community Committee structures proves invaluable in making sure our approach is tailored to meet the direct needs of our local communities in a responsive and effective way, therefore the review will need to take into consideration any impact that changes may have.
30. In addition to this, as the Community Committees have an engagement function, the review will need to consider how any changes will affect local communities in Leeds. The Community Committee Facebook pages and the social media activity that takes place through the Community Committee structures, ensure we reach a large number of residents every month through local stories and conversations.
31. During the pandemic our Community Committees played an essential role in providing a responsive information service to all our diverse communities in the city, by being a key source of reliable and up to date information. The Coronavirus Help Facebook Groups were set up as a way of promoting services, supporting communities and cascading information in an attempt to tackle the pandemic. The pages were also there to generate discussion and debate but also facilitate conversations around being neighbourly during the national pandemic and assist in some of the volunteering efforts in the city.
32. A universal approach continues to be delivered using the city-wide Community Committee infrastructure, to ensure that all parts of the city continue to benefit from the learning, experience and improvements delivered through the model of Locality Working. As such, a new Communities Team structure is now in place, providing a more integrated and flexible approach to Locality Working around the citywide, targeted and seasonal and responsive work strands.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

33. The Best Council Ambition reflects the current post COVID-19 and cost of living context, while maintaining the three pillar priorities of inclusive growth; health and wellbeing; and climate change, under the overarching priority of tackling poverty and inequalities. These nationally

significant issues continue to have a huge impact on all areas of the Best Council Ambition, with the economy, employment, education, community resilience and health and wellbeing all detrimentally affected by the pandemic, which will undoubtedly limit progress towards our ambitions.

- 34. Community Committees will be a key factor in guiding the response to the multiple challenges the city faces, particularly as we begin to better understand the long-term health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.
- 35. Swings in climate and more extreme weather will create inequality, as financial disparity creates pressures between those able to invest in measures to maintain comfort, diet and activity that may be denied to those least able to afford it. A range of initiatives within the Community Committees supports the climate emergency agenda, including creating pocket parks, hanging baskets, planting additional trees, as well as creating areas of greater natural biodiversity that all help to improve air quality, by working with 'In Bloom' and 'Friends of groups throughout the city; also work to improve greater energy efficiency in buildings.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 36. The Community Committee Review was approved by Executive Board on 21st June 2023. A meeting of the 10 Community Committee Chairs took place on the 3rd July 2023 to canvas their feedback on the scope and timescales for the review.
- 37. Consultation has also taken place with strategic leaders and service managers.
- 38. The review will seek to consult with both attendees of committees, including co-opted members, where these exist and non-attendees. Further discussions will take place with the Member Working group to agree the best way to deliver this aspect of the review.

What are the resource implications?

- 39. The work articulated through the Community Committees and the Locality Working approach makes best use of existing resources already working in neighbourhoods and seeks to do things differently by making best use of the leadership role and knowledge of locally elected representatives; working with residents to shape their neighbourhoods and inform service re-design to address the needs of all our communities in Leeds. It also seeks to help communities to be more resilient and strengthen cohesion.
- 40. The council is under increasing pressures due to a range of factors. This includes the ongoing financial challenge, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the current cost of living crisis, as well as demographic changes which bring increased demands upon local services. The Communities Team structure provides an integrated and flexible approach to Locality Working around the citywide, targeted and seasonal and responsive work strands.
- 41. The Community Committees review must therefore consider the effective use of public resources to deliver better outcomes for communities. Aligning the distribution of Community

Committee funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

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

42. The city's community committee structure provides an infrastructure through which the Council executes its democratic renewal ambitions, by bringing elected Council members and services providers closer to residents to help shape and influence the places where they live. They are formal Council meetings held in public and form a key element of the Council constitution and hold devolved powers from the Council's Executive Board. However, public attendance at committee meetings in some areas is low and there is a danger that opportunities are being missed to fully engage with the public about the issues that matter to them most in the areas where they live and work. The review will consider how the Committee infrastructure can improve community engagement and better empower local people so that can become more involved in their local community and influence how services are delivered.
43. The Council has determined a risk to community cohesion, and it has established this risk on its corporate risk register. It has also been discussing a need to change radically the way we work in localities and implemented a new approach to locality working in November 2017. Pressures in some of our most challenged and disadvantaged neighbourhoods are now greater than ever due to a range of factors. The communities of Leeds have changed rapidly over the past decade, this is much more apparent in the city's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A failure to fully engage and be inclusive to all the communities of Leeds may result in increased tensions leading to a sense of alienation and isolation.
44. These fractures may increase the city's risk of becoming more susceptible to the influences of those who want to divide our communities, making them more polarised and vulnerable to extremism and other harmful influences. The locality working approach through the Community Committees, seeks to engage with all communities, with a strong focus of the work on strengthening communities and building self-reliance and resilience.
45. Resources in many front-line operations have already been deployed on a needs-led basis with limited capacity from simply shifting where staff work to another area. Additionally, the agility of organisations to respond in the context of broader economic changes could challenge the pace of improvement. Locality Working through the Community Committees cannot just be about addressing poverty but also about more effective use of resources with all our communities, delivering better outcomes. Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to local priorities will help to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.
46. Failure to fully engage and get 'buy in' from a range of partners and council services to support the work of the Community Committees and the delivery of the locality working approach will hamper the council's efforts to deliver significant and sustainable change in our neighbourhoods. It is therefore imperative that we maintain and build on the whole Council approach, working with local communities to drive change and much needed improvements. An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening document is included at **Appendix 1**.
47. Risk implications and mitigation are considered on all Community Committee funding applications. Projects are assessed to ensure that applicants are able to deliver the intended benefits.

What are the legal implications?

48. Community Committees are a constitutional function of Leeds City Council. As such they are written into the Council's constitution. Any changes to the way that the committees operate therefore, will need to be reflected in the Council's Constitution, under Article 10 (committee procedure rules and terms of reference).
49. There are no exempt parts of this report so there are no access to information issues.
50. There are potential legal implications for the work articulated in this report subject to any recommendations that the review makes. Officers from Governance services will be involved in the review and advise of any potential legal implications should they arise.
51. This report is eligible for call-in.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

52. The recommendation in the reports to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board and Executive Board, is to evolve the way that we work through the Community Committees, through a refreshed framework that enables greater impact and outcomes, delivered through a collective focus on all our communities in Leeds.

How will success be measured?

53. With IMD data only published sporadically, we have previously struggled to measure the impact of local intervention. However, with the publication of the Social Progress Index (SPI) for Leeds, this has changed. The Social Progress Index (SPI) is a tool that helps measure how well Leeds is doing in terms of Inclusive Growth. It helps us understand what's happening in different areas of the city, on a ward-by-ward basis and by looking at multiple indicators and offering us a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city. A link to Social Progress landing page can be found here: [The Leeds Social Progress Index | Inclusive Growth Leeds](#)
54. The SPI compliments the IMD data, allowing us to compare each ward against its peers, as well as allowing us to track change over time. The SPI is made of three main parts: Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing and Opportunity. The various indicators measure specific outcomes, with the scores of each area showing on a scale from 0-100. This makes it easier to understand how well the city is doing and where our strengths and weaknesses lie.
55. In addition to this, each year the Community Committees produce an Annual Report: [2 Annual Report 2023 24.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#). By listening to their local communities, the report has in the past, stated that the committees were able to allocate resources and funding where it was most needed; helping to protect the most vulnerable, helping to keep people safe from harm, assisting people with financial hardship and helping tackle social isolation and inequality. It also references wherever possible, Leeds City Council's Best City Ambition and the 3 key strategic pillars; Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and Zero Carbon, by linking projects funded through the committees to the strategies: [Leeds Best City Ambition.pdf](#)

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

- ✓ **July 2023:** Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board agreed review scope.
- ✓ **September 2023:** 1st Member Working Group meeting (Elected Member workshops TBC). Up to 4 member workshops to be developed between September 2023 and February 2024, to engage and seek feedback and ideas from Elected Members.
- ✓ **February 2024:** Working Group recommendations presented and approved.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Community Committee Review Recommendations.
- Appendix 2 – Forward Work Programme 2024/25.

Background papers

- None.

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: Safer Stronger Communities Team	Service area: Communities
Lead person: Liz Jarmin	Contact number: 07891 278078

1. Title: Community Committee Review
Is this a: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
Community Committees were set up in June 2014 to improve the way the council works locally. They form part of our commitment to involving our residents more closely with the priorities for their local area and decision-making on funding and services, contributing towards the Best Council Plan and the council's overall aim of creating safe, strong communities. The committee's role and purpose have not been reviewed for a number of years, therefore the review of the Community Committee's role, purpose and governance arrangements, involving all 99 Councillors, will aim to use the scrutiny process as a mechanism for engagement and accountability.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council’s strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community, city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?	x	
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 	x	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above, please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and:

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

Community Committees and use of the Social Progress Index

All Community Committee funded projects are assessed in relation to Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration. In addition, the Communities Team ensures that the funding process complies with all relevant policies and legislation.

From this year, 2023/24, we will also be using the Social Progress Index (SPI) for Leeds as an additional tool to measure impact and progress of our work with the committees. SPI is a tool that helps measure how well Leeds is doing in terms of Inclusive Growth.

It helps us understand what's happening in different areas of the city, on a ward-by-ward basis, by looking at multiple indicators and offering us a clear and unbiased measure of overall wellbeing in the city. The SPI compliments the IMD data, as it allows us to compare each ward against its peers, as well as allowing us to track change over time.

The SPI is made of three main parts: Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity. The various indicators measure specific outcomes, with the scores of each area showing on a scale from 0-100. This makes it easier to understand how well the city is doing and where our strengths and weaknesses lie.

Recent events, such as COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis, continue to have a hugely significant impact on all areas of the Best City Ambition, with the economy, employment, education, community resilience and health and wellbeing all detrimentally affected by the pandemic, therefore, research and development and effective monitoring of impact on equality will form a focus of work going forward.

As part of the delegated budget workstream in relation to the Community Committee Review, specific focus will be on refining the criteria for wellbeing funding, to include a greater emphasis on the cost of living crisis, as well as the equality, diversity & inclusion agenda, in addition to the cohesion agenda.

Communication and Community Engagement

The Community Committees currently utilise a variety of engagement methods/tools, including face to face meetings, online meetings, social media, local engagement plans and email distribution lists.

During COVID-19 all Community Committees had to amend their engagement approach, with varying amounts of participation, however COVID-19 has provided a real opportunity for the committees to look at how they actively engage in the future with a much wider audience and discussions are ongoing around future meetings, looking at alternative ways of engaging with the public.

The proposal through the Community Committee Review is that we will review our engagement approach through research/sharing good practice, to identify the most appropriate channels and platforms to use and how these could be incorporated to create more inclusive engagement work; looking at how 'in person' and digital approaches could blend together to make effective and accessible engagement.

We are also aiming to look at agendas and reports that are taken to the Community Committee meetings; looking at how we can re-shape the Update Report to be more engaging; how we can better demonstrate the value and impact of projects taking place in their respective wards in reports that go to the committee; how they can link up with

Priority Ward Partnership Plans and how they can look more attractive and visually appealing to encourage people to read them.

Identify potential barriers on who may be affected

Work continues to take place in Leeds to understand and get a picture of the disproportionate or differential impact on inequality that is happening due to COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. However, the emerging evidence highlights that both of these have further exacerbated social and economic inequalities and we need to better understand what these impacts are on communities in Leeds. What it tells us so far mirrors national evidence and the local narrative that major events such as these do have a disproportionate and differential impact based on where you live, your gender, your ethnicity and your job.

The key issues pertinent to all communities of interest and the general public include:

- Navigating information & guidance: Challenges around accessing accurate, appropriate, and accessible information in a rapidly changing scene, littered with mis/dis-information and complex communications.
- Access to essential provisions and services: Challenges in gaining/maintaining access to food, essential personal and household items; and accessing support necessary to protect health, care, and wellbeing.
- Social isolation & boredom: Challenges around the loss of social bonds, relationships and contact; the loss of physical and intellectual stimulation.
- Mental Health – low level anxiety to crisis: Challenges around management of pre-existing mental health issues and the emergence of new concerns.
- Abuse, domestic violence and safeguarding issues: Challenges around imposed segregation of perpetrators and victims, accessing support whilst experiencing violence and abuse.
- Concerns about restrictions being lifted: Challenges around managing change uncertainty and the concerns and anxieties which this brings.
- Digital Exclusion: Communities and individuals having limited/no access to equipment and/or data thus exacerbated barriers to accessing information, support and social connection.

• Key findings

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The following paragraphs provide examples from the Community Committee Youth Summits to overcome inequality.

Youth Summits

A key objective for the Community Committees is that we engaged with a wide variety of young people and that this engagement reflected the true diversity of the city, not just young people who are academically inclined, or naturally engaged with these types of events.

With this in mind the Communities Team attended the SEND Youth Summit, alongside the Voice & Influence Team, to consult with young people that have special education needs & disabilities. At the SEND Youth Summit which took place in November 2022, the Community Committees engaged with 56 young people that have special educational needs & disabilities.

We're aware that at one of the Youth Summit events that took place, we had a small number of young people that were home schooled and this is an avenue we would like to explore for future events.

The Communities Team also delivered a Youth Summit to young people from the LGBTQ+ community and at this event in March 2023 there was 15 young people in attendance.

The Community Committee Youth Summits engaged with 57 young people that are identifiable as being entitled to free school meals (this number will increase as we are still awaiting data from events).

Youth Activity Fund Consultation

Alongside the physical Youth Summit, the Communities Team created a consultation survey for young people, as another objective is that we, "consult with as many young people as possible (hybrid approach), by ensuring that alongside the summits, other consultation is coordinated; for example, online consultation, Breeze Summer Events": <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/YouthActivities2022/>

The online survey had 2340 responses, with an additional online survey being created to engage with young people that have special educational needs and disabilities. In relation to this survey, we had 144 responses (in total = 2484 across both surveys).

• Actions

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

The Community Committees Annual Report covers some of the progress of all ten committees and demonstrates how they helped provide local residents with a voice. It also provides examples of 'real life' human stories and how some of the projects the committees have funded have benefitted local communities across Leeds, contributing towards the Best City Ambition and the council's overall aim of creating safe, strong communities.

All projects that are funded by the Community Committees are measured for outcomes, in accordance with localised priorities that have been agreed with each individual committee. Aligning the distribution of Community Committee funding to address local priorities helps to ensure that the maximum benefit can be provided.

Feedback and monitoring information is gathered upon completion of each project that is funded by the committees and this is provided as updates to Elected Members in their respective Community Committee meetings. Case studies are also regularly obtained from partners in various service meetings.

5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.

N/A

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:

N/A

Date to complete your impact assessment

N/A

Lead person for your impact assessment

N/A

(Include name and job title)

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name

Job title

Date

Paul Money

Chief Officer - Safer
Stronger Communities
Team

June 2023

7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** screening's should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date screening completed

13th June 2023

If relates to a Key Decision - **date sent to Corporate Governance**

N/A

Any other decision – **date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)**

N/A

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Community Committee Review 'Draft' Recommendations for Approval

RAG Rating = **Green** (official approval not required); **Amber** (official approval required); **Red** (unable to implement)

Recommendation	Approval needed (Y/N)	Progress to date	Work programme to be developed/ implemented	RAG	Notes
Champions Role					
Review Champions role/role profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify clear accountability. Responsibilities. Boundaries. Link to the committee Chair. Linked to strategic aims locally. Pre-agreed level of service support. 	Y	<p>Initial generic Champions Role profile drafted covering all Champions. Feedback taken from CC Support Team and Chairs Forum.</p> <p>Champions profile developed further into x 4 individual Champion profile templates, with space for detail to be included from each service lead.</p> <p>C&YP Champions Profile has reached final draft (attached as appendix 1).</p>	Autumn 2024	Amber	Approval by Executive Board.
Review of sub groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership. Terms of reference. Frequency. Efficacy. Links to other themes. Any potential budget? 	Y	'Sub Groups' rebranded as 'Delivery Groups' with revised objectives/approach as set out in new terms of reference document (attached as appendix 2).	Summer 2025	Amber	Chairs Forum.
Development & learning for Champions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a learning and development package for new Champions. Look at a mentoring/peer support network. 	Y	Discussions are taking place with service leads on the best way to support Champions.	Summer 2025	Amber	Chairs Forum.

		<p>Key resources and information to be embedded within each Champion profile.</p> <p>Reference to Councillors Code of Conduct within Champions and Chairs Profiles.</p> <p>Extent of learning and development package yet to be determined, according to individual needs.</p>			
<p>Create Chairs Role profile for the committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify clear accountability. • Responsibilities. • Boundaries. • Link to the committee Champions. • Pre-agreed level of service support. • Training. 	Y	<p>A Chairs Profile has also been created. Following feedback from various sources, the document is now at final draft after being discussed with CC Chairs on the 26th July (appendix 3).</p>	Summer 2025		Chairs Forum.
Delegated Budgets					
<p>Review full customer journey when applying to committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form (1 for all budgets)? • Funding deadlines (cycles)? • Cross committee applications/economies of scale. • Due diligence process. • Funding agreements. • Supporting documentation. • Monitoring process (inc. interim monitoring/project visits). • Evidence required. 	Y	<p>New application form has been drafted.</p> <p>Funding cycles proposals (attached as appendix 4, options appraisal).</p> <p>Working on process for monitoring based upon resource of the team.</p> <p>Other funding opportunities suggestion i.e. match funding dealt with on case-by-case basis, to be considered within the internal funding process.</p>	April 2025		Chairs Forum.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process to ensure other funding opportunities shared with organisations. • Can we make the funding process less bureaucratic for organisations? 		<p>Localities Officers to continue to support organisations through the application process.</p> <p>Following discussions with Legal, the advice is that we should continue with the current funding process.</p>			
<p>Review localised committee decision making process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deferments (do we limit this)? • DDN's. • Finance meetings pre-committee. • Finance Sub Groups. • CIL arrangements, are monies allocated to wards where money is generated, or divided equally across all committee wards? 	Y	<p>Deferments to continue as before, following Legal advice.</p> <p>Looking at what exceptional circumstances would be required for a DDN & how we communicate this.</p> <p>Finance meeting pre-committee (attached as appendix 5, options appraisal).</p> <p>CIL arrangements currently decided on an individual committee basis. Any changes to this would need to be made by the respective committee.</p>	Summer 2025		Following consultation with Legal no further actions.
<p>Agree local priorities for Community Committees at start of each municipal year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support/fund communities in capacity building as LCC has adopted the ABCD approach. • Look at social value. • Review every year. 	Y	<p>Refer to suggested new ways of working for Community Committees.</p> <p>Development of a Forward Plan for each committee in the future, in line with the agreed priorities set out at the start of the municipal year.</p>	Summer 2025		CC's have the authority to set a community plan, which setting priorities falls within, so on advice of Legal, no approvals required.

<p>Improve links with other funders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve links with Parish & Town Councils (CIL). • Mayor's Office (Safer Communities Fund). • West Yorkshire Combined Authority. 	Y	Refer to suggested new ways of working for Community Committees.	April 2025		No approvals required as internal process.
<p>Look at how committees can influence other council funding streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action Grants. • S106. • How this influence can also link to specific Champion themes. 	Y	Refer to suggested new ways of working for Community Committees.	April 2025		No approvals required as internal process.
<p>Look at how committees can become more enterprising/potential income generators.</p>	Y	Consideration at Chairs Forum around shared learning & successful projects.	April 2025		No approvals required as internal process.
Community Engagement & Empowerment					
<p>Gather feedback and opinions from existing attendees and non-attendees on their local committee and how they can work better/improve their reach</p>	N	Ongoing action, feedback being collated.	Ongoing		No approvals needed as internal process.
<p>Consider how committees can further support the work of the 3rd Sector, particularly in relation to sector resilience and empowerment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider 3rd Sector residence as a key theme for 1st CC Summit. • Consider the role of the LCAN network as potential co-optees. 	N	We are looking into the co-opted member role to see if this can be changed to incorporate local community and/or third sector organisations (attached as appendix 6, options appraisal).	Summer 2025		<p>CC Procedure Rules already permit co-optees on committees, so they can take part in all business (except regulation or control of finances), as they have no voting rights.</p> <p>If want to change the voting rights this is approved with a report to General Purpose Committee and then full council (any changes to paras 3.1-3.5 and s8 of these rules can be amended</p>

					by the Leader (as they relate to executive functions)).
<p>Create clear engagement principles for committees/engagement offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters. • Flyers. • Social media. • Mailing lists. • Use of technology to live stream/webcast committee meetings (mobile device equipment). 	Y	<p>Options appraisal created for use of social media marketing which has been through the Communications Team for advice/changes (attached as appendix 7).</p> <p>Live streaming can be done for all committees if held at Civic Hall, where there is the IT support.</p>	April 2025		No approvals required as internal process.
<p>Look at structure of committee meetings to allow for more meaningful engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a name change for the Community Committees. • Listen to residents (what would they like to see discussed at meetings). • Co-optees for all committees? • Open Forum/resident participation, more flexibility needed. • Ensure agendas reflects different wards. • Theme for each meeting, working with the relevant Champion & services. • Consideration given that the Community Committee visits each committee ward in turn. • Use of technology to live stream/webcast committee meetings (mobile device equipment). • EDI agenda, ensure all protected characteristics are considered when arranging meetings/preparing reports. 	Y	Refer to suggested new ways of working for Community Committees.	Summer 2025		General Purposes Committee & report to full council.

<p>Look at structure of committee reports to allow for more meaningful engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Report. • Update Report (repurposed, or removed altogether)? • Review use of language (plain English, no technical jargon). • Better use of pictures & social media to make reports more visually appealing. • Sharing success/good news stories. 	Y	Refer to suggested new ways of working for Community Committees.	Summer 2025		Chairs Forum.
<p>ABCD training for identified groups/organisations across Leeds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with Adults & Health. • Links with Voluntary Action Leeds. • Links with Local Community Anchor Network (LCAN). • Links with other third sector organisations. 	Y	<p>Sessions have been arranged for frontline services.</p> <p>How does your application support the ABCD approach across the city.</p>	To be discussed with Adults & Health Service		No approvals required as internal process.
<p>ABCD training for all Elected Members.</p>	Y	2 x ABCD training session have been arranged for Elected Members; one is a virtual meeting (23 rd Sep) & one is an in person meeting (9 th Oct)	To be discussed with Adults & Health Service		No approvals required as internal process.
<p>Annual Community Committee Summit.</p>	Y	For discussion at Chairs Forum.	Feb/Mar 2025		Chairs Forum.
Delegated Functions					
<p>Review delegations to ensure they are still relevant, as well as looking at others that could be in scope.</p>	Y	LJ having initial discussions with services on what the relationship looks like going forward.	Summer 2025		<p>Amending executive functions delegated to CC's requires approval of Executive Board.</p> <p>Amending executive functions delegated to the Director of CHE is via the Leader of the council</p>

					with an advisory report on that decision.
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Community Committee Review

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Community Committee Review 2024/25 – Timeline & Forward Work Programme

Date	Work Programme
26 th Jul 24	CC Chairs Forum
3 rd Oct 24	Member Working Group (check in on Task & Finish Groups)
9 th Oct 24	CC Chairs Forum
23 rd Oct 24	Scrutiny Board (update on MWG/Task & Finish Groups)
13 th Nov 24	CC Review Workshop (feedback on discussions following earlier workshop conversations)
Dec 24	Member Working Group (check in on Task & Finish Groups)
Dec 24	CC Chairs Forum
Mar 25	Member Working Group (final check in on Task & Finish Groups)
Mar 25	CC Chairs Forum
2 nd Apr 25	Scrutiny Board (update on Task & Finish Groups)
Apr 25	CLT Cabinet feedback
Apr 25	Communicate recommendations
23 rd Apr 25	General Purposes Committee (report for approval of work from Task & Finish Groups where appropriate)
23 rd Apr 25	Exec Board (report for approval of delegated functions)
22 nd May 25	Full Council Annual Meeting (approve arrangements where appropriate)
May 25	Councils Constitution/Community Committee Procedure Rules documents updated
Jun 25	All new Community Committee arrangements commence

Operational Task & Finish Group meetings with LCC Officers will be undertaken in the background, alongside other CC Review work taking place. These will feed into the MWG with Elected Members, as above.

Community Committee Chairs will be kept updated on the CC Review as a standard agenda item, in Chairs Forum meetings.

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An overview of the approach to developing a Playful Green Spaces Plan

Date:

Report of: Chief Officer Climate Energy and Green Space

Report to: Scrutiny Board Environment, Housing and Communities

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

When undertaking research on the council's approach to assessing play sufficiency, a young person in the city said that "play makes life amazing". Emerging from that strategy was a priority to improve access to nature based play environments. Leeds has 4000 ha of parks and greenspaces and this report to scrutiny board provides an overview of how we will develop a Playful Green Spaces Plan that seeks to remove barriers to access and provide opportunities for young people of all ages and abilities to play.

Recommendations

- a) For Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board to support and endorse the development plans and outlined consultation process for the creation of a Playful Green Spaces Plan.
- b) For Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board to provide feedback of the process outlined in the report and to suggest areas for continued data gathering and research.
- c) Note the contents of the report and future development of a Playful Green Spaces Plan.

What is this report about?

- 1 The importance of play is set out in the Play Sufficiency report to Executive Board. This report provides an update on the subsequent development plans for a Playful Green Spaces Plan that will focus on ensuring our green spaces enable playfulness and that barriers to young people accessing them are removed, supporting Leeds to be a Child Friendly City and the best city for children and young people to grow up in.

- 2 This report sets out timescales and plans for the next 18 months for the creation of a Playful Green Spaces Plan , recognising play sufficiency priorities, supporting Leeds Quality Parks assessments, as well as the Leeds Health and Well Being Strategy and the Best City Plan.
- 3 Recognising the importance of play in the lives of children and young people, families, and communities and how the service will deliver the best play opportunities in our Green Spaces across the city will be at the heart of the plan.

What is play and why does it matter?

- 4 A significant proportion of the population in Leeds are children and young people with an average of 18% of the population are age 0-14 years, and in some wards this increased up to 27% therefore it is imperative that we are meeting the play needs of children in our green spaces.
- 5 *Play encompasses children's behaviour which is self-directed. They have the freedom to choose how and when they play, without agenda, set goals or reward. Play is the way children interact with (and make sense of) the world: it is an innate desire to explore, socialise and have fun and involves a process of observing, testing, imitating, and enjoying the environment they are in and people they are with.*
- 6 *Children have a right to play- Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) creates a specific right for all children to have rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to their age and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.*
- 7 *Out of the 2007 Play Strategy came the [Leeds Commitment to Play](#), which outlined aims to increase opportunity for children to play; create time and space to play; ensure the recognition and understanding of children's play. Within this, was a call for a citywide Play Partnership. Play Sufficiency is responding to these recommendations and supports the aims previously agreed by the Executive Board in 2019.*
- 8 *Research at a national and global level has proven that play is fundamental to the healthy development of a child. It is the framework through which they learn and strengthens children's mental health. Through play, children become able to:*
 - *build and sustain relationships with people and place*
 - *challenge the limits of their physical selves and environments*
 - *problem solve effectively*

Most importantly, having sufficient opportunities for play is a key indicator of a happy child: play is pleasure – it contributes to quality of life and sense of well-being.

Table 1: Play sufficiency, a population health priority: benefits and consequences of play

Benefits of playing:	Consequences of not playing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Pleasure & enjoyment + Peer & place attachments + Physical activity + Emotion regulation + Coping mechanisms + Motivation + Self esteem + Growth mindset + Autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Depression o Isolation & detachment o Inactivity o Frustration / anger o Inability to cope (anxiety) o Lack of motivation o Low self esteem o Fixed mindset o Dependency
= Resilience & Wellbeing	= Vulnerability & Poor Health

- 9 The Playful Green Spaces Plan will support the delivery of the following Play Sufficiency Priorities endorsed at Executive Board in December 2023;
- o **Priority 1:** Facilitate the cross-service endorsement of Play Sufficiency and embed key principles within Leeds City Council departments.
 - o **Priority 3:** Grow a play workforce of adults whose work directly and indirectly impacts upon children and their play.
 - o **Priority 5:** Enable sufficient time, space, design and attitudes to play for children with protected characteristics.
 - o **Priority 7:** Improve the variety of spaces available for play for all age groups within close proximity of children’s homes (including informal and designated spaces).
 - o **Priority 8:** Improve access to nature-based play environments.
 - o **Priority 9:** Improve the perception of teenagers and improving their opportunities to play and hang out.
- 10 The Playful Green Spaces Plan will ensure the delivery, systems and monitoring of the following within Parks and Green Spaces Strategy goals;
- o To have child friendly parks and green spaces.
 - o To have a wide range of good quality play facilities for children of all ages and abilities across the city.
 - o To ensure there is good provision for teenagers in our parks and green spaces.
 - o For there to be clear information available on the internet about facilities for children and teenagers in our parks and green spaces.
 - o For our green spaces to feel safe and welcoming for girls and women.
- 11 The Green Spaces Service are key providers of opportunities for children to play. The service manages and looks after over 4000 hectares of green spaces, 7 major parks, 200 grass football pitches, 156 nature conservation sites, 63 community parks, 170 playgrounds, 24 skate parks, 2 zoos and 1 farm. All of which are locations for children and families to enjoy.
- 12 There are however many examples of playful spaces that do not include fixed playground equipment in parks for example; den building in woodlands, mazes through long grass, stepping stones, dry river beds or rain channels.



- 13 The development of the plan will cover the following themes creating principles, frameworks and processes within the appropriate areas;
- Agreed definition of play and play opportunities for children and young people across the city within our green spaces.
 - Quality standard/measure and process for the development of new and improved play opportunities for fixed play and the broader offer of nature-based play in parks and green spaces. This will include design principles for the creation of playful spaces.
 - Consultation framework for all playground improvements and new playgrounds.
 - A measure of playfulness within Leeds Quality Parks assessments
 - Accessibility and inclusion for all, including safety of women and girls
 - Information available for play opportunities across the city in Green Spaces
- 14 As part of developing the plan, data held by the service on playground condition will be reviewed. In terms of fixed assets such as playgrounds, MUGAs skate parks etc there are 298 site sites that could be used as a playful space for young people and families. This constitutes 8261 fixed assets that require regular inspection both independently and using inhouse resource. It is anticipated that these sites as a whole have circa 8 years on average in terms of remaining effective use.
- 15 The plan will include playgrounds and play in the broadest sense but will also provide an opportunity to look at location, volume and functionality of existing fixed play provision. The first phase of the plan's development will include a series of focus groups across a range of localities that are designed to determine what barriers exist to greenspaces being used by young people. This will involve engaging young people and parents to better understand

perceptions of risk. These focus groups will also be used to shape a consultation and engagement framework that sets out a new and improved approach to consultation when seeking to enhance the playfulness of the city's green spaces.

16 Consideration will also be given to how the service reprocures its playground equipment supplier to ensure that it meets our developing needs. Whilst the existing procurement arrangement is with a single supplier, it does not limit options and it is feasible to be contractually compliant and access the whole of the market when needed. Any future arrangement will seek to maintain that level of flexibility. Furthermore, the service now has an established in house design resource meaning there are enhanced options for a broadening on the fixed play options.

What impact will this proposal have?

17 The proposed development of the plan will co-ordinate and combine strategic objectives for play in the city providing clear standards and processes for the development and improvement of playfulness in green spaces across the city.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

18 Providing the best play opportunities for all children and young people supports all three pillars of the Best City Ambition through supporting a child friendly city where children will have the best start, a mentally healthy city for everyone, strong, engaged, and well-connected communities with safe, sustainable, places that protect and promote health and wellbeing and a city where everybody can be more active more often.

19 Having thriving and animated green spaces supports inclusive growth in our economy that works for everyone.

20 Creating green spaces sustainable for future climates where biodiversity, increased tree cover and environmentally considered equipment will enhance natural play environments for children's play in our green spaces.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: ALL

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

21 The Playful Green Spaces Plan will have a consultation period where ward members are consulted, and children and young people are involved in the process. In addition, the service will seek to identify a contact list of key stakeholders in terms of both locality, interest and specifically to ensure that EDI groups are represented and provided a voice. Furthermore, the service have an extensive mailing list of both individuals and organisations with an interest in inclusive play who already provided valuable feedback in terms of major redevelopments and moving forward will have the opportunity to comment on strategic direction.

22 Consultation on all local play projects within our parks and green spaces involves the engagement and involvement of local ward members and children and young people. Part of the plan will be to consider the services approach to play consultation with a view to refreshing methodologies, audiences with the objective of maximising inclusivity and playfulness of the whole space looking beyond the boundaries of the fixed play area.

23 The service has already embarked upon an extensive review and consultation on community park design and layout with a view to succinctly capturing feedback and action planning within a plan on a page. This evidence base will feed into the plan's consultation process.

What are the resource implications?

24 The development and creation of the Playful Green Spaces Plan will focus resources and systems for children's play in green spaces across the city ensuring children have the best play opportunities across the city.

25 The budget limitations of playground equipment in terms of capital, maintenance and inspections means that all solution cannot be fixed play centric. Furthermore, to do so would restrict the level of playfulness within greenspaces unnecessarily. Therefore, a focus of the plan will be the need to develop natural playful environments for all children that look at the greenspaces holistically and removes barriers to accessing these spaces for playfulness.

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

26 Play is inherently risky and indeed is essential in terms of young people's growth and development. Furthermore, fixed play will always have a central role in greenspace design and development. Consequently, the absence of a playfulness plan would be that parks and greenspaces are negatively used by young people which could lead to an increase in antisocial behaviour.

27 If the city's play offer is limited and contained only within the limitation of the curtilage of the city's fixed play spaces then play in the city will be limited. The aim of this plan is to ensure that the authority's officers provide a voice and influence for as many people and groups as possible on how greenspaces can be improved in terms of playfulness via a coordinated and collection of voices.

What are the legal implications?

28 As the plan emerges it will include the involvement of stakeholders this will include the legal department. We do not expect any significant legal implications with the development of the plan.

Options, timescales and measuring success

The following milestones set out the timeframe and process for the development of the Playful Green Spaces Plan.

- Data collection and research - September to December 2024
- Development of draft plan – January – April 2025
- Consultation phase with stakeholders, elected members and children and young people – June – August 2025
- Develop final draft – September – October 2025
- Executive Board – November – December 2025

What other options were considered?

29 Due to the significant role Green Spaces plays in providing playful spaces in communities across Leeds it is prudent to keep up to date with strategy, policy and new opportunities to ensure we provide the best play spaces for children and young people across the city.

How will success be measured?

30 The creation, approval and implementation of a Playful Green Spaces Plan will be a success measure.

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

31 The timetable above outlines the time scales for implementation will be delivered by the Greenspace team including the Parks Technical Manager responsible for the development of the plan and Chief Officer for Climate Energy and Greenspace responsible for the services overall strategic direction.

Appendices

-

Background papers

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Grounds Maintenance Contract for Leeds from January 2027

Date: 23rd October 2024

Report of: Chief Officer Climate Energy and Green Spaces

Report to: Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report sets out the background and progress for delivery of a replacement contracted arrangement for street-scene grounds maintenance following the end of the current contracted arrangements.

The report gives Scrutiny Board the opportunity to comment on and provide scrutiny of the approach to secure a replacement Grounds Maintenance Contract for Leeds from January 2027.

Recommendations

- a) That Scrutiny Board considers the information in the attached report.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report seeks to set out the background and progress for delivery of a replacement contracted arrangement for street-scene grounds maintenance from 1st January 2027 following the end of the current contracted arrangements.
- 2 From January 2027 suitable provision will need to be in place to continue service delivery at acceptable standards as well as being affordable in the context of known budget pressures and the medium-term financial plan (MTFP).

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3 This report gives Scrutiny Board the opportunity to comment on and provide scrutiny of the approach underway to secure a replacement Grounds Maintenance Contract for Leeds from January 2027. All available options to extend the current contract have been exercised on the basis that contractor performance was high and value for money was being achieved when compared to other tendered rates for the work.
- 4 The current contract arrangements were established in 2012 by the then Housing ALMO organisations and Highways and Transportation. The contract is managed on behalf of stakeholders by Climate Energy and Green Spaces (CEGS) as officers within this service have the technical knowledge and experience to direct and instruct horticultural maintenance operations.
- 5 The majority land holding within the contract bill of quantities (BoQ) is associated with Housing Leeds properties and residential areas (Including those areas identified as 'retirement life'). However, highway verges and arrangements for the maintenance of sight lines form an important part of the schedule.
- 6 Over the life of the contract several changes to specification and activity have been introduced to reflect the changing requirements of the council and to respond to community aspirations, for example responses to the Big Climate Conversation conducted in 2019. Notable examples of changes introduced include:
 - i. Increasing the frequency of shrub maintenance visits from 2 to 4 per annum.
 - ii. Increasing the frequency of mowing for Amenity Grass (majority of mown areas) from 13 to 14 per annum
 - iii. Introduction of Premium Amenity mowing in areas around '*retirement life*' properties with a frequency of 28 per annum
 - iv. Introduction of relaxed mowing areas adjacent to higher speed highways to support biodiversity and respond to the climate emergency.
 - v. The removal of sight line mowing to in-house delivery
- 7 The current typology and frequency over-view is set out in the following table:

Typology	Description	Frequency
Amenity Grass	The majority of grass within the contract, typically located within housing estate communal areas or roadside verges	14 visits between March and Oct. Visit intervals reflect seasonal growth patterns and are longer in early and late season weeks

Premium Amenity Grass	Typically located in communal areas around 'Retirement Life' properties	28 visits between March and Oct. Visit intervals reflect seasonal growth patterns and are longer in early and late season weeks
Primary Network (relaxed mowing)	Verge land adjacent to higher speed highways that require lane closures to undertake maintenance	1 visit per annum conducted late summer to support biodiversity
Planted Borders	Shrub and rose beds located within housing areas or adjacent to the public highway	3 visits April to Oct to address problematic growth (impacting footpaths or access) or weeds. 1 visit Nov to March to undertake pruning and weeding
Hedges	Hedges located in communal space around dwellings or adjacent to the highway. Hedges around individual residential properties are not included and are the responsibility of tenants.	3 visits annually. Late winter, spring and 1 late summer. Visits are conducted outside of bird nesting season (Mar – Sept) unless compelling safety risks are present

- 8 The existing contractor notifies CEGS via electronic data of daily activity against instruction. This allows contract managers to assign inspection tasks for performance monitoring purposes using real time data. Random sample inspections are undertaken with spatial distribution across the city to examine performance and this is supplemented by targeted sampling informed by previous performance, complaints to the council, elected member observations and resident enquiries. This balance of approach gives high levels of assurance and ensures that payment is only made for work successfully completed at first visit or where corrective action is taken by the contractor following instruction for rework.
- 9 The revised contract will provide an opportunity to adjust the specification of work to balance the council's aspirations for quality of provision, mitigation for climate change, supporting biodiversity as well as recognising the significant pressures in the MTFP.

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

- Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 10 It would be possible to include provision in the new arrangements for local employment, training standards and apprenticeship minimums; to seek a commitment to paying the Real Living Wage or parity with the Leeds Living Wage; alongside targets for carbon reduction to support actions to address the climate emergency and support biodiversity.
- 11 Local employment, minimum standards on training and development, and reducing the use of temporary and seasonal employment contracts are areas that the existing contractor has proven open to engagement on. It is anticipated that tender evaluation models could encourage high standards in these areas from any new provider, however, any conditions imposed as part of the specification would of course be reflected in tendered rates.
- 12 The Big Leeds Climate Conversation (2019) engaged with over 7000 Leeds residents from across the city with over 97% saying they worry about the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and the frequency of extreme weather events. A similar proportion of respondents supported council actions to change its land management approach to address these concerns.

13 The Environment Act 2021 (and subsequent regulations) have set legally binding biodiversity targets for England and nature recovery is one of five priorities for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) as the responsible government department.

- i. to reduce the risk of species going extinct in 2042, compared with 2022
- ii. to create or restore 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitats by 2042
- iii. to ensure overall species abundance is increasing rather than decreasing by 2030, and increases by 10% by 2042, compared with 2030

14 Previous adjustments to the contract specification introducing relaxed mowing have supported other council actions in this area such as the city-wide woodland creation programme. These changes have created areas of species supportive habitats distributed across the city including in areas of high urban development. Consideration of further opportunities to support this important area of work will be included as part of specification design.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

15 Consultation proposals are being developed that will seek to gather a broad range of views to inform specification design for future services. It is anticipated that a range of consultation approaches will be utilised including face to face, via existing forum such as Community Committees and tenant and residents groups, as well as using the online portal common place. This latter mechanism allows for responses from the public at their convenience via the internet and has a mapping function supporting a 'dropped pin' feature whereby respondents can easily suggest areas of land for changed management approaches.

16 The requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act will in future require increased engagement by service providers in reporting resident satisfaction for any service that impacts social housing properties. Whilst the level and frequency of ongoing consultation required by the act remains unclear at this time, it is anticipated that as a minimum annual data gathering and reporting on satisfaction and performance will be required.

What are the resource implications?

17 The annual value of the current contract is £3.7m with a split 70/30 Housing Revenue Account / General Fund respectively. It is recognised that when the existing contract was established it secured favourable terms for the council and these have been realised over the life of the contract and via the extension options exercised. It is anticipated that market rates available currently will see increased pressures on revenue budgets from this base position.

18 The contract management team, officers within Housing Leeds, Highways and Transportation and the council's procurement team will take forward the work to develop revised arrangements.

19 Any changes to operations such as mowing frequency or land areas included in the BoQ will have a direct impact on the overall costs of the contract. Proposals will have to be considered in the context of the current significant resource pressures facing the council and those future pressures identified in the MTFP. It is therefore highly unlikely that the new arrangements will be able to include increases in activity without equivalent value reductions elsewhere.

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

- 20 There is a risk that no suitable provider is available to undertake the work for the council or that tendered bids are unaffordable within the context of the MTFP. However, there is an existing mature market of providers available in the UK and once specification standards for future provision are better known, soft market price testing will be conducted with the sector to establish the likely financial liabilities and inform future decision making.
- 21 The current specification has a large seasonal imbalance with the majority of hours required during the spring and summer mowing periods. This type of operation tends to require the use of seasonal labour resources that does not foster a sense of pride and ownership in output standards and encourages a high turnover of staff resource that impacts on the quality of provision. The UK is currently experiencing a very 'tight' labour market and seasonal work contracts are challenging to recruit to as there is choice available to potential employees. To mitigate for these issues the council will need to consider what opportunities exist to provide sufficient work, at the required point in the calendar (November to January), to enable continuity of employment and a reduction in the use of seasonal staff. Some mitigation is currently provided by utilising the contractor's labour resource to support leaf fall operations within Cleaner Neighbourhoods and by operating a 'winter works' programme that addresses site restoration tasks within residential estates. Putting these or similar activities into more secure contractual arrangements would reduce the need for contractors to utilise seasonal staff with consequential improvements to quality, security of employment and training and development.
- 22 There are also structural problems with regards to the approach taken to managing litter on contract assets. The responsibility for litter removal is retained by the council with the contractor responsible for addressing incidental litter removal immediately prior to their operations. An informal 'rule of thumb' has been established with the current contractor that defines incidental litter by the time needed to remove it. Where that time exceeds that required to mow the grass (or where waste is clearly fly tipping, is contained within bags etc, or forms heavy soiling with animal waste) this is reported to the council using existing daily task reports and the individual plot involved is either part mown or bypassed. These reports are circulated across internal teams as required. This approach has previously created tension between the council and its provider particularly where elected members and residents do not fully appreciate the nuances and contractor performance is called into question where the initial problem lies with council or resident activity.

What are the legal implications?

- 23 The new contract will be offered to the market using established procedures supported by specialist officers within the Procurement and Commercial Services team. Given the scale of the contract and the anticipated spend levels, this contract will be rated as '*strategic*' within the definition of the Procurement Act that becomes operational from April 2025.
- 24 To meet the obligations of the Procurement Act, the council has developed a new Contract Management Framework using sector best practice that seeks to:
- Support contract managers with contract management duties
 - Improves the council's contract management activities
 - Provide assurance to the public that we are using public money well
 - Achieve better outcomes for the council and the communities we serve

25 The framework will introduce:

- Proportionate contract tiering where contracts are rated on value and complexity / risk.
- Balanced scorecard templates will be issued to contract managers quarterly, allowing reporting on the performance of the contract
- Through a Contract Management Assurance Board the council will have oversight of contract performance

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

26 All available options to extend the current contract arrangements have been exercised and a new arrangement is therefore required.

27 There is no capacity within existing council resources to undertake this work in house. To do so would require addressing a number of significant problems.

- i. There is insufficient capacity within council depots to accommodate the additional staff and equipment required to deliver these works. A minimum of two depot facilities (east/west or north/south) to accommodate staff welfare facilities would be required for a peak workforce of around 148 in addition to secure storage, parking for machinery and vehicles and fuel storage capacity. Due to the slow road speed of self-propelled equipment utilised for mowing a single location 'super depot' would not be sufficient.
- ii. Management and support structures would be required to organise work delivery and undertake employment related tasks (annual appraisal, attendance management etc.) for a large expansion of workforce.
- iii. There would be a requirement to procure large numbers of mowers, tractors and vehicles along with smaller powered equipment necessitating a review of the capital programme for machinery replacement focussing more on equipment suited to verge mowing. An expansion in machine numbers on this scale will also require a suitable location and workshop capacity which is not currently planned for. In addition, more workshop technicians (who are specialist and difficult to recruit) will be required to undertake routine servicing and timely repairs.
- iv. The seasonal imbalance of works within the current contract schedules can only efficiently be undertaken using a proportion of temporary staff and council's recruitment processes are not geared towards for this type of recruitment meaning a higher proportion of permanent staff would need to be retained under an in-source model reducing financial efficiency.
- v. Finally, there is a risk that integrating street scene grounds maintenance within CEGS operations will increase pressure to divert resources from parks at the seasonal peak period and thus negatively affect park quality. During the period 2004 to date when these works have been externalised the 63 community parks have seen an increase in those achieving Leeds Quality Parks standard from 23% in 2006 to 77% following the most recent assessment. This could also have associated negative consequences on recruitment and retention of skilled horticultural staff and attracting apprentice gardeners (who do not see cyclical grass cutting as attractive employment).

How will success be measured?

28 New contract will be secured by May 2026 to allow sufficient time for incoming contractor mobilisation ahead of a go live date of 1st January 2027. This mobilisation period meets the recommendations of Scrutiny Board activity that have previously examined these contract arrangements.

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

29 The Head of Bereavement Services and Workshop has contract management responsibilities for this area and will be responsible for project management.

30 The following table sets out the interim key milestones.

Milestone / Gateway	Commencement Date	Completion Date	Commentary
Establish project team and project lead, process design and resource planning	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Commenced
Stakeholder engagement (Highways, Housing, BITMO, Community Committees, Scrutiny, public, contractor)	Oct 2024	Jan 2025	Commenced
Service design or specification changes and draft tender documents	Jan 2025	March 2025	Planned
Soft market test	April 2025	May 2025	Planned
Tender Document Revision	May 2025	July 2025	Planned
Tenders out to market (including bidder days)	July 2025	Oct 2025	Planned
Tender Return		Nov 2025	Planned
Evaluation (including presentations and interviews)	Dec 2025	March 2026	Planned
Decision to award		May 2026	Key milestone to commit to future pathway
Award of contract		June 2026	Fixed deadline for start date of 1st January 2027
Contractor mobilisation	July 2026	Dec 2026	Reflects previous Scrutiny Inquiry finding
Contract live	1 st Jan 2027		

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

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Work Schedule

Date: 23 October 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

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

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

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 2024/25 municipal year.

What is this report about?

1. A draft work schedule for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) 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. Members are asked to note the addition of a remote working group at **10am on 18 October 2024** to update the Scrutiny Board on the outcome of the recent consultation on housing allocation policy. This was requested by Scrutiny Board members in June 2024.
3. The Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 18 September 2024 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

4. 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.
5. 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?

6. 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

7. 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

8. 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?

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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?

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

What are the legal implications?

13. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work schedule of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 18 September 2024.

Background papers

- None.

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Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

Scrutiny June	July	August
<u>Thursday 20 June 2024 at 10.30am</u>	<u>Thursday 18 July 2024 at 10.30am</u>	No Scrutiny Board meeting
Annual administrative reports: Co-opted Members (DB) Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB) Sources of Work (DB) Performance Update (PM) Radon Gas – Phase 1 Testing Update (PSR)	WY Police and Crime Plan (PDS) [WYCA] Police Overview Community Safety Strategy Refresh (PDS) Safer Leeds Annual Update (PSS)	
	<u>Call In Meeting: Wednesday 31 July 2024</u>	
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



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<u>Thursday 19 September 2024 at 10.30am</u>	<u>Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 10.30am</u>	No meetings
Future Waste Strategy for Leeds (incl. Glass recycling) (PSR) Food Strategy Progress Report	Community Committee Review: Update on Task and Finish groups Green Spaces Play Strategy (PDS) Grounds Maintenance Contract (PDS)	
Working Group Meetings		
	11.30am-12.30pm 9/10/24: Sim Spec Walk (IN PERSON) 1-2pm 17/10/24: Social Progress Index (all scrutiny members - REMOTE) 10am – 11am 18/10/24: Housing Allocation Policy (post consultation update) – REMOTE	

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Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

December	January	February
<u>Friday 6 December 2024 at 10.30am</u>	<u>Thursday 23 January 2025 at 10.30am</u>	<u>Thursday 20 February 2025 at 10.30am</u>
Tackling Hate Crime Leeds Poverty Truth – Resourcing the City Household Waste and Recycling Centres Climate Emergency – Annual Update (PSR)	Performance report (PM) 2024/25 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) Housing Performance – Repairs and Maintenance	Third Sector Role & Resilience in Leeds Welfare Review Selective licensing (PDS)
Working Group Meetings		
12/12/24 2.30pm – 4pm: Budget Working Group (REMOTE)		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

March	April	Notes
No meetings	<u>Wednesday 2 April 2025</u>	To be scheduled
	Annual Update - Parks and Greenspaces Strategy Community Committee Review: Update on task and finish groups Locality Working Update End of year statement	Clean Neighbourhood Teams
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 SEPTEMBER, 2024

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

34 Chair's Opening Remarks

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chair highlighted that this was the first Executive Board meeting since Mariana Pexton's recent appointment as the Council's Interim Chief Executive and welcomed Mariana in her new role.

Also, the Chair noted that this would be the final Executive Board meeting attended by Martin Farrington, the Director of City Development, prior to his retirement. The Chair paid tribute to Martin for his efforts and achievements throughout his time at Leeds City Council.

35 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

36 Late Items

There were no late items of business submitted to the Board for consideration.

37 Declaration of Interests

Regarding the report entitled, 'Leeds City Council's Response to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Mass Rapid Transit Public Consultation', Councillors Lamb and Lewis, in the interests of transparency, both respectively drew the Board's attention to their positions on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Board. However, both Members confirmed that it did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion at today's meeting in their capacity as Executive Board Members (Agenda Item 18, Minute No. 51 refers).

38 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th July 2024 be approved as a correct record.

COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

39 Safer Leeds Annual Update

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report presenting the annual update from the Safer Leeds Community Safety Partnership, which in Leeds is the Safer Leeds Executive. The report highlighted the progress which had been made over the past 12 months on

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 16th October, 2024

the key deliverable actions arising from the 9 priority areas as included within the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan 2021 – 2024.

The Board welcomed Chief Inspector Jonathan McNiff, West Yorkshire Police to the meeting, who was in attendance for the consideration of this item.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the progress being made together with the developments in relation to the key priority areas. Emphasis was also placed upon the leading role played by the Safer Leeds Executive in the partnership working undertaken in this area. The Executive Member highlighted how this report should be considered alongside the respective Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board and Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership annual reports on today's agenda, given the significant partnership work being undertaken across those bodies.

The Executive Member thanked all Council officers involved in this service area, partner organisations for the key role they played and also Councillor D Coupar for her leadership throughout her time as Executive Member with responsibility for community safety.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, an update was provided on the work being undertaken following the disorder experienced in Harehills on 18th July 2024. Emphasis was placed on the significant short, medium and long term actions being taken to support the Roma community together with the wider community of Harehills. The ongoing citywide approach being taken towards the promotion of community cohesion was also highlighted. The key role played by local Ward Councillors, Council staff and partner organisations both on the evening of the disorder and following that was highlighted, with thanks being extended to all of those parties for their continued efforts in this area. Further to this, Councillor S Arif highlighted the positive relationship established between the Council and the Romanian consulate. In conclusion, it was noted that the Council would work with West Yorkshire Police on a formal debrief of the incident, with any findings being shared appropriately.

In response to a Member's enquiry, an update was provided on the effectiveness of the community safety policies and procedures in place in Leeds. Emphasis was placed on the need to strike the correct balance between improving residents' confidence in services in order to encourage them to report issues when they are experienced, whilst at the same time working to reduce the prevalence of incidents taking place. The work of the performance and analytical team was highlighted, which produced the relevant data sets that sat behind the policies. It was highlighted that such data had illustrated that the procedures in place were effective. It was undertaken that further detail could be provided separately to the Member in question through Council officers, the Executive Member and Chief Inspector McNiff.

Chief Inspector McNiff and Councillor Coupar reiterated the strong partnership working regarding community safety which was established in Leeds.

In response to a Member's enquiry, further detail was provided on the scrutiny of the Mayoral Policing function. It was noted that the Council worked closely with the Mayor's office, with there being an effective and strong working relationship in place, and whilst there were challenges, these were no different to other partnerships of this nature. Specific examples of effective partnership working in this area were provided. It was undertaken that if the Member in question had any specific enquiries on such matters, then these could be responded to in more detail separately.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the submitted Safer Leeds annual update report, together with the full overview document, as presented at Appendix 1, be noted.

40 Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-2027

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report presenting the proposed Leeds Community Safety Strategy for the period 2024-2027. The report highlighted how the strategy would provide strategic direction for the Leeds Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which in Leeds is the Safer Leeds Executive. The report sought the Board's endorsement of the Strategy with the recommendation that it is referred to Full Council for approval and formal adoption as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

The Board welcomed Chief Inspector Jonathan McNiff, West Yorkshire Police to the meeting, who was in attendance for the consideration of this item.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted that the proposed strategy would replace the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021-24) and that it had been informed by strategic intelligence assessment and through a wide-ranging consultation exercise. An overview of the strategy's key priorities was provided. It was also noted that Leeds had been awarded £600,000 from the Government's Community Recovery Fund.

Members were supportive of the proposed strategy.

The Executive Member and the Chief Officer (Safer, Stronger Communities) extended their thanks to all involved in the compilation of the strategy and the associated consultation exercise.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-2027, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be endorsed, with the Board's agreement that this Strategy be referred to Full Council with a recommendation that it be formally adopted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment will lead and implement the Strategy, which will supersede the Leeds Community Strategy 2021 – 2024;

- (c) That it be noted that this Strategy forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework and therefore the above resolutions are not eligible for Call In.

(As indicated in resolution (c) above, given that the above decisions were being made in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, they were not eligible for Call In)

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AND CULTURE

41 Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board - Annual report 2023/24

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report presenting the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) annual report for 2023/24 together with the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board's Strategic Plan. The annual report provided an update on the work of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board, the steps taken to implement the Board's strategy, together with an outline of the findings of any Safeguarding Adults Reviews held during 2023/24.

In presenting the report the Executive Member advised that whilst the Independent Chair of the LSAB, Richard Jones CBE, could not be present at the meeting, it was noted that two key themes that he would have raised were the collaborative working which had taken place to embed safeguarding across partner organisations, and also the invaluable work of the city's frontline staff in this area.

The Executive Member provided an overview of the Board's key ambitions, with the range of actions being taken around the citizen led approach towards safeguarding being specifically highlighted. The Independent Chair of the Board, together with all of the Board Members were thanked for their role in this important area.

The importance of the LSAB Strategic Plan (April 2023 – March 2026), which was also appended to the report, was highlighted. It was noted that the strategic plan presented all related objectives and actions that respective agencies were contributing to.

Responding to a Member's specific request, it was undertaken that periodic meetings would be arranged between that Member and the Independent Chair.

In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with further detail regarding the statistic that 32% of safeguarding concerns arose from care home settings, with information being provided on the sources of those concerns, together with the actions which were being taken to address such matters and to ensure that people were being cared for in the most appropriate way. It was also noted that it was common for care home settings to have a higher number of referrals. An update was also provided on the work being undertaken with the whole range of care providers in Leeds, including home care providers, in relation to the reporting of safeguarding concerns.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received an update on the work which continued to be undertaken to review data around referral levels of safeguarding concerns. It was identified that there were lower levels of referrals experienced in certain geographical areas with ethnically diverse communities. The range of work being undertaken as a result to increase awareness and share information across all communities was noted.

In conclusion, the Chair extended his thanks to Richard Jones CBE, Independent Chair of the LSAB, together with the other Board Members for the role they played in this important area.

RESOLVED – That the contents and recommendations of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2023/24, as submitted to the Board, be noted.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- 42 Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report 2023/24**
The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2023/24. The report outlined the activity that had taken place during the year in relation to the Safeguarding Partners' statutory duties to work together in exercising their functions of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Included within the update were details regarding developments in practice, and the progress made in relation to priorities, learning, scrutiny, inspections and statutory responsibilities.

The Board welcomed David Derbyshire (Independent Scrutineer), Gill Marchant (Head of Safeguarding/Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Adults, NHS) and Superintendent Dan Wood (West Yorkshire Police) to the meeting for the consideration of this item.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted how the LSCP annual report provided an overview of the city's arrangements for safeguarding children during 2023/24. It was noted that such arrangements had been reviewed over the past year, a process supported by the new Independent Scrutineer, David Derbyshire. The positive outcomes from the recent Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) into serious youth violence were highlighted, including the strong multi-agency relationships of the LSCP partners.

The Director of Children and Families highlighted that the submission of the annual report was in line with the reporting requirements as set out in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 statutory guidance. It was also noted that the report provided an update on the progress made against the agreed priorities during 2023/24 and also on the work undertaken to review safeguarding arrangements to ensure that they were in line with statutory guidance. The commitment to continued improvement in this area was reiterated.

Thanks was extended to all those involved in the crucial work of safeguarding children throughout the city, including frontline practitioners and their managers.

David Derbyshire, Independent Scrutineer, addressed the Board, providing an overview of his experiences since taking up this role nearly one year ago and highlighting the key points arising from his statement as included within the LSCP annual report.

A Member highlighted the progress which had been over the past year, the work which had been undertaken and the positive way in which challenges had been responded to.

Responding to an enquiry regarding unregulated care homes in Leeds, it was undertaken that the Director would meet with the Member in question on this issue to provide further detail. However, assurance was provided that the Council did work closely with Ofsted on such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the work undertaken to further strengthen the safeguarding children arrangements in Leeds, as set out within the submitted report, be endorsed;
- (b) That the Board provide its continued support for the city's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children and young people.

43 Youth Justice Service Plan - 2024-2027

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the refreshed Leeds Youth Justice Service Plan for the period 2024-27 and provided an update on the work undertaken and progress made in respect of the previous plan which covered 2021-24. The report sought the Board's endorsement of the plan with the recommendation that it is referred to Full Council in November 2024 for approval and formal adoption as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that the plan had a strong commitment to a 'child first' principle. The impact of poverty and deepening inequalities were highlighted as key issues, with the report setting out the work being undertaken to address such matters.

Responding to a Member's request, the Director undertook to provide the Member in question with a briefing on the issues covered in the submitted report.

In response to a Member's enquiries regarding the re-offending rates and also first time offender rates presented, further information and context was provided on those statistics, together with details on the range of actions and interventions being taken in this area in order to reduce offending behaviours in children across the city.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Leeds Youth Justice Service Plan, as submitted to the Board, be endorsed, with the Board's agreement that the Plan be referred to Full Council in November 2024 with a recommendation of approval and formal adoption as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework;
- (b) That it be noted that the responsible officers for the implementation of such matters are the Service Delivery Manager, Leeds Youth Justice Service; and the Head of Service, Children Looked After and Youth Justice Service. That it also be noted that the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board has statutory responsibility to monitor performance, ensuring the delivery of service improvements and the meeting of local priorities.

(Given that the above decisions were being made in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, they were not eligible for Call In)

44 Outcome of consultation on proposals to expand Broomfield South SILC by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting proposals to expand Broomfield South Special Inclusion Learning Centre (SILC) by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and through the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision. Specifically, the report provided details of the outcome from the public consultation undertaken and sought the Board's approval to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposals.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the key aspects of the proposal. It was noted that whilst the Council had established 450 specialist learning places across the city since 2020, the need for specialist education in Leeds continued to increase.

Members highlighted their support for this proposal.

In response to a Member's enquiry, an update was provided on the arrangements in place regarding associated consultation, and it was confirmed that local Ward Councillors were supportive of the proposals.

Also, responding to an enquiry regarding how the proposals may impact upon post-16 transport costs, it was noted that any impact would be dependent upon where children and young people using the facility lived. However, it was felt that the benefits which would be realised by the new provision would significantly outweigh any potential risks caused by potential increased transport costs in the future. It was thought that in terms of post-16 transport costs, the proposals were likely to be cost neutral.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the public consultation undertaken for the proposals, as presented within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the publication of a Statutory Notice on the proposals to expand Broomfield South SILC by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and establish a permanent satellite site of Broomfield South SILC for post-16 provision at Arlington Business Centre, White Rose, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the implementation of the proposals will be subject to the outcome of the proposed Statutory Notice and future decisions by Executive Board;
- (d) That the intention for a further report to be presented to the December 2024 Executive Board meeting detailing the outcome of the Statutory Notice, be noted;
- (e) That it be noted that the implementation of the rebuild and expansion of Broomfield South SILC will be subject to the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications, as indicated in paragraphs 26- 29 of the submitted report;
- (f) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Deputy Director for Learning.

45 The Child Poverty Strategy For Leeds

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an overview of, and a further update on the Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds and the work undertaken as part of the strategy, including the actions being taken in response to ongoing post pandemic and cost of living priorities.

The Executive Member provided an overview of the key aspects within the report, highlighting the consultation work undertaken as part of the refresh process, and noting the Government's establishment of a task force on child poverty and its plans to publish a national Child Poverty Strategy.

Members supported the proposals and the need to focus on the actions to eradicate child poverty in the city.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the refreshed and ongoing strategic framework in place to mitigate the impact of child poverty, and the work being undertaken by the Council and other partners in the key areas of activity, as detailed within the submitted report, be endorsed;
- (b) That the need to promote the work of the Child Poverty Strategy across the city and across Council directorates, and also through our wider city partnerships in order to highlight the impact of poverty on children and their families, be acknowledged;

- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Deputy Director, Social Care, Children and Families.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

46 Leeds Joint Strategic Assessment 2024

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report presenting the Leeds Joint Strategic (Needs) Assessment (JSA) 2024 report, following Health and Wellbeing Board's consideration of the JSA in July 2024. The report noted that the Council and the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board have an equal and joint statutory requirement to work through the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board to produce a JSA, with the purpose being to assess current and future health and social care needs in Leeds in order to inform the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, shape priorities and guide the use of resources.

The Leader introduced the report, highlighting how the data within the JSA would be used to inform decision making moving forward, with the aim of addressing the challenges which have been identified as part of the process.

The Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing highlighted how the JSA had been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board and would be used throughout the Assessment's lifespan, as it allowed the city's health needs and challenges to be clearly identified. As such, it was reiterated that the JSA would be used to inform priorities with the aim of addressing identified challenges and needs. It was noted that the report also provided details of work undertaken across the city to address the policy implications arising from the previous JSA published in 2021.

A Member highlighted the importance of the JSA, the need for it to be integrated into the work of the Council moving forward and the value of Scrutiny Boards considering it. It was noted that Scrutiny Board Strategy and Resources had considered the JSA on 16 September 2024, and that other Scrutiny Board chairs had been in attendance at that Scrutiny Board meeting.

In conclusion, the Board's thanks was extended to all partners who had been involved in the co-production of the JSA.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Joint Strategic (Needs) Assessment 2024 report, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, including the policy implications drawn from the analysis, be noted;
- (b) That the areas for further exploration and integration into future JSAs, as set out in paragraph 9 of the submitted report, be agreed;
- (c) That the comments made during the Board's discussion on such matters, be noted.

RESOURCES

47 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2029/30

The Chief Officer, Financial Services submitted a report presenting an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2025/26 – 2029/30, and which provided details of both the context and the factors that influence the shape of the strategy. The report noted that the intention was to submit budget savings proposals to future Executive Board meetings in advance of the proposed 2025/26 budget being submitted to the Board in December 2024.

The Executive Member introduced the report, highlighting the currently estimated General Fund budget gap which existed over the 5-year period that the Strategy covered, including the budget gap relating to 2025/26. Further details were provided on the context and the associated challenges that the Council faced, including inflationary pressures and also increased demand regarding adult and children's social care. It was noted that the Strategy also covered the Council's Capital Programme, Housing Revenue Account and Dedicated Schools' Grant.

Members discussed the budget gap detailed within the report relating to 2025/26 and the liaison taking place with Government regarding Local Government finances.

Responding to a Member's specific comments regarding the high costs of external residential placements for children looked after, the Board received an update on the current position in Leeds in relation to demographic and demand pressures, with it being highlighted that this continued to be a significant national issue. Further detail was provided on the Council's sufficiency strategy and the work that continued in Leeds to develop in-house residential care provision. It was noted that the Council continued to work closely with Ofsted on such matters. Members also received an update on the recent announcements made by the Government aimed at tackling national issues regarding children's external residential placement provision.

Members noted the actions that continued to be taken to reduce associated pressures where possible and to address the General Fund budget gap detailed with the report. Whilst it was noted that proposals to contribute towards addressing this position would continue to be submitted to Members for consideration, the significant scale of the challenge faced was emphasised. With regard to related proposals being brought forward, it was noted that there was a clear timetable in place for Member engagement and Scrutiny consideration.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025/26 to 2029/30, as presented in the submitted report and appendices, be noted;

- (b) That it be noted that budget savings proposals will be received at future Executive Board meetings in advance of the Proposed Budget for 2025/26 being received by Executive Board in December 2024.

48 Financial Health Monitoring 2024/25 - July (Month 4)

The Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report presenting the Council's financial performance against the 2024/25 revenue budget, as at month 4 of the financial year. The report also provided an update on the month 4 position in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG) and the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points in which it was noted that as at month 4 of the financial year, the Council was forecasting a General Fund overspend of £22.2m. The key areas of overspend were noted together with the reasons for those. The Executive Member also highlighted the range of mitigating measures being taken to address the overspend.

The scale of the challenge being faced in terms of addressing the General Fund budget gap, as discussed under the previous report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy was reiterated, with it being highlighted that nationally Local Authorities continued to experience similar challenges.

In considering this matter, the Board acknowledged that a number of matters linked to the information within this report had already been discussed as part of the previous agenda item on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That it be noted that at July 2024 (Month 4 of the financial year), the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is reporting an overspend of £22.2m for 2024/25 (3.6% of the approved net revenue budget) after the application of reserves and within a challenging national context. That it also be noted that a range of actions are being taken to address the position as detailed within the submitted report;
- (b) That it be noted that at July 2024 (Month 4 of the financial year) the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is reporting a balanced position;
- (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 have been incorporated into the reported financial position. The position assumes a pay settlement of 3.5%, with the final pay award for 2024/25 yet to be agreed. That it also be noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available, and 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 as agreed by Executive Board in February 2024 through the annual Revenue Budget report;
- (e) That it be noted that the reported position reflects that the budgeted contribution to the General Reserve of £3m will be reduced to £1.5m and that the budgeted contribution of £3m to the Strategic Resilience Reserve will not be made in 2024/25, with it also being noted that these planned contributions have been applied to the in-year position to reduce the overspend due to the significant financial pressures that the Council is facing. That it also be noted that provision is made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for a base budget contribution of £3m to each reserve from 2026/27.

49 Core Business Transformation Programme - Progress Update

The Chief Officer, Financial Services submitted a report which provided an update on the progress of the Core Business Transformation Programme - a programme aimed at transforming and modernising 'back office' services and underpinned by a technology refresh. The update report looked to provide the Board with the latest position and assurance in respect of the programme delivery framework, programme and workstream management and governance arrangements.

The Executive Member presented the report, providing an overview of the programme's objectives and an update on the progress being made. It was highlighted that the programme was not only about introducing new digital solutions, but also about refreshing the Council's approach to become more efficient in its delivery of its core business.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiry regarding the implementation of the Council's new payroll system, the Board received assurance that the delivery of this system was on track and, whilst some contingency had been used, it was also on budget. It was noted that whilst delivery was slightly later than originally planned, this was due to the processes in place to learn from others and also to ensure a robust testing process was completed prior to implementation, given the significance of introducing such a critical system. It was also highlighted that this matter had been considered by the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and is scheduled to be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Board also.

The Member in question was offered a further briefing on such matters, if required.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the submitted report, together with the details provided in the progress report as presented at Appendix 1, be noted, with it also being noted that a further update will be provided in 6 months.

50 Recognition of Inspirational Women

The Director of Strategy and Resources submitted a report which sought approval for the installation of panels within the Civic Hall Council Chamber commemorating six inspirational women from the city's past. The report outlined the outcomes from the consultation undertaken on this proposal and also recommended that consideration be given to how more women could be recognised in the future, and that moving forward such recognition be increasingly reflective of the city's diversity.

The names proposed to be initially installed on the plaques in order to recognise their contributions to the city were:

- The Barnbow Lasses;
- Leonora Cohen OBE;
- Gertrude Paul;
- Alice Bacon CBE;
- Beryl Burton OBE; and
- Ivy Benson.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member thanked all Members of Council for the cross-party support for, and engagement in the development of the proposals. Thanks was also extended to all officers involved, with specific reference to Tom Riordan, outgoing Chief Executive, for their roles in this initiative.

The importance of recognising the inspirational women of Leeds in this way was highlighted, together with the overwhelmingly positive response to the public consultation which had been received. The Board confirmed its support for the proposals and welcomed that further work would be undertaken on a cross-party basis so that the role of more inspirational women could be recognised moving forward, in order to further reflect the diversity of the city, and which it was hoped would prove to be inspirational to future generations.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the results of the consultation undertaken, as detailed within the submitted report and appendix 1, be noted;
- (b) That the proposals within the submitted report for plaques to be installed within the Civic Hall Council Chamber, be approved, subject to listed planning consent being received;
- (c) That the proposals within the submitted report for further work to be undertaken in order to recognise further inspirational women in future years, be approved, with approval also being given for this recognition to be increasingly reflective of the diverse nature of the city.

ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

51 Leeds City Council's Response to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Mass Rapid Transit Public Consultation

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) proposals for West Yorkshire and which sought the Board's endorsement of the Council's proposed response to the consultation exercise being undertaken by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) on the proposed routes for phase one of the MRT scheme.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the Council's support for WYCA's plans to bring mass transit to West Yorkshire and provided an overview of the proposals set out in the report together with details of the Council's proposed response to the consultation.

The significant importance of introducing mass transit to the city was emphasised, together with the with economic impact and associated opportunities in areas such as housing growth it would generate.

In supporting the development of an MRT network, a Member highlighted that whilst the lines initially established as part of this scheme would not run directly through all areas, there was a need to ensure that the wider benefits arising from the establishment of an MRT system were effectively communicated to all communities in Leeds and West Yorkshire. The Member then suggested that this aspect be included within any response provided to WYCA.

Responding to the comments made, Members discussed the approach being taken by WYCA on the current public consultation exercise. Further to this, the following was highlighted:-

- that the proposals currently being consulted upon were seen as the beginning of an MRT network for West Yorkshire and not the end;
- in respect of mass transit, it was acknowledged that West Yorkshire had a lot of progress to make when compared with other areas of the country;
- that the establishment of an MRT network would be alongside other initiatives, such as the delivery of bus franchising in West Yorkshire;
- in terms of public engagement, in addition to WYCA's public consultation on MRT, the Board's attention was drawn to the consultation exercise being undertaken on the Local Transport Plan which was wider in scope.

In response to a concern raised regarding the capacity of WYCA in delivering this initiative alongside other ongoing projects, it was highlighted that the Council, through the Highways and Transportation team was providing its full support to WYCA on this matter.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiry, it was undertaken that the Member in question would receive further information outside of the meeting

on the current position regarding the White Rose Railway Station, Leeds Bradford Airport Parkway and Thorpe Park Railway Station.

In conclusion, the Chair acknowledged the comments which had been made during the discussion.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's overall support for the proposals as outlined within the submitted report, be noted, with it being recognised that this is early consultation. That the key points in the submitted report regarding areas where the Council will need greater clarity as the MRT scheme is developed, be noted;
- (b) That Leeds City Council's preference of route option L1 via Calverley Street and Infirmary Street and L6 via Elland Road, Elland Road Stadium and Ring Road Beeston in the Leeds Line corridor, be endorsed;
- (c) That the Leeds City Council response that further discussions are required with WYCA in respect of the route options on the Bradford Line in order for Leeds City Council to state a preference, be endorsed;
- (d) That Leeds City Council's broad support of the Sustainability and Placemaking strategies, be endorsed, whilst noting that further discussion is required with WYCA to develop the detail, and how it will be implemented through the design;
- (e) That the response to WYCA's public consultation on the MRT scheme (being undertaken by WYCA in its role as sole promoter), which is presented at Appendix A to the submitted report, be endorsed.

CLIMATE, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACES

52 Leeds Food Strategy - Report on Progress

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report providing an update on the delivery of the Leeds Food Strategy, which was a long-term vision for the sustained provision of healthy and affordable food in the city. Through the strategy delivery plan, the report drew Members' attention to several key areas, with the report also seeking the Board's approval of the governance, delivery and key performance indicators relating to the strategy, together with amendments to both the objectives and action plan.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key elements within the strategy and the key actions being delivered, highlighting how the strategy closely aligned with the three strategic pillars of the Best City Ambition. The cross-directorate approach being taken in this area, together with the partnership working with the third sector was noted.

Responding to a Member's comments about the resource implications arising from the strategy and whether the aims and outcomes could be achieved in a more efficient way, it was clarified that there were no additional costs to the Council arising from delivering the strategy. It was also noted that the aim was to deliver outcomes through existing Council services and external organisations and helping them to work more collaboratively and towards the strategy's objectives. The importance of promoting the strategy's aims within communities was also highlighted.

In response to a further enquiry about how outcomes would be measured, one specific example was given regarding the routine data which was now received around the proportion of adults reporting to eat 5 fruit or vegetables a day.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the governance, delivery and key performance indicators of the Leeds Food Strategy, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be approved;
- (b) That the progress made against the actions in the strategy, as presented in the submitted report / appendices be noted, and that the amendments to both the objectives and action plan, as detailed, be approved.

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LAST DATE FOR CALL IN OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS: 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER 2024