

Report of the Directors of Resources & Housing and Communities & Environment

Report to Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board

Date: 9th January 2020

Subject: Performance Report

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

This report provides a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city and other performance areas relevant to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board.

2. Best Council Plan Implications

This report provides an update on progress in delivering the council priorities in line with the Best Council Plan.

3. Resource Implications

There are no specific resource implications from this report, although some performance indicators relate to financial and other value for money aspects.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to

- Note the Quarter 2 performance information in this report and Appendices 1 – 3 and the issues which have been highlighted and consider if they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of 2019/20 Quarter 2 performance data (unless otherwise stated), and provides an update on progress in delivering the relevant priorities in the Best Council Plan 2019/20 to 2020/21.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Members will note that the Best Council Plan (BCP) sets out the council's key objectives and priorities. This report provides an overview of the relevant Environment, Housing and Communities performance relating to this plan, enabling the Scrutiny Board to consider and challenge the council's performance.
- 2.2 This report includes three Appendices showing a summary of Quarter 2 performance information (unless otherwise stated) relevant to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Appendix 1 shows the Quarter 2 performance data relating to Housing priorities. Members will see that some of the indicators are designed to track trends rather than report against specific targets, and for these reasons the trend indicators have not been rated. Appendix 2 relates to Community Safety and Appendix 3 relates to Waste and Environmental priorities. Members will note that there is no appendix in relation to Communities priorities and all information relating to these priorities is contained in the main body of this report. The main performance issues arising from these progress reports are given below:

3.2 *Housing (Appendix 1)*

- 3.2.1 Housing's performance is monitored against three areas:

- HRA Business Plan Indicators – measuring the health of the HRA Business Plan
- Housing Strategy Indicators – measuring progress in delivering Housing Strategy priorities
- HCA Regulatory Framework – measuring performance of Council Housing in meeting the 4 HCA Consumer Standards

- 3.2.2 Members' attention is drawn to the following performance areas:

HRA Business Plan PIs:

a) Rent Collection

Rent collection remains a key priority for Housing Leeds. Rent collection at the end of September increased to 96.37%, 1.20% higher than at the end of the first quarter. This is lower than the 97.25% target, but is a positive position given the significant increase in the numbers of tenants moving to Universal Credit ("UC") since October 2018. The service has continued to undertake a range of actions to ensure a strong focus on rent collection and reducing rent arrears. There has been particular focus on working on reducing cases where the tenant owes 7

weeks plus and supporting tenants to secure unclaimed income and benefits. The service has continued to promote direct debit take up. This is reflected in direct debit increasing to 40.64% at the end of September 2019, up from 39.89% in March 2019.

The service has continued to support tenants claiming Universal Credit, and those affected by the benefit cap and the under occupancy charge.

- The number of tenants claiming Universal Credit has increased to 7,713 at the end of September 2019, up from 4,224 in March 2019.
- 199 tenants on Housing Benefit have been affected by the benefit cap.
- There have been 3,313 tenants on Housing Benefit affected by under occupation as recorded by the benefit service.

The decrease in the numbers affected by the benefit cap and under occupation have reduced, but this is mainly the result of tenants moving to Universal Credit. When this happens the HB claim ends and the service no longer has this information.

In preparation for the launch of UC Full service in October 2018 the service delivered an extensive programme of staff training, targeted tenant communications and extensive partnership working with other agencies, including DWP. This has ensured that there are well trained staff able to fully support tenants through the process of claiming UC. The service offer, which allows for triage to focus support on those with the greatest needs, has been delivered despite higher than expected numbers of UC claimants. This has been achieved through the mainstreaming of more general UC work such as rent verifications, allowing Enhanced Income officers to focus on supporting tenants directly. The service is working closely with Enhanced Income Officers to ensure they get the ongoing training and support required to continue this good work.

b) Former Tenancy Arrears

Former Tenant Arrears at the end of September 2019 were 2.22%, the same as at the end of March 2019. It should be noted that there has been a delay in processing some accounts towards the end of September; it has been estimated this has had an impact of around £100k. This has now been rectified and the service is back on track. As at the end of September 2019, the service has collected £342,136.80 in former tenant arrears. (This compares with £252,247.46 at the same point in 2018.)

Former tenant arrears are actively pursued wherever possible and the service has delivered a range of actions designed to support collection of former tenant arrears. These have included continuing to be pro-active in contacting former tenants who have arrears, working with the Housing Registrations Team to more pro-actively identify those applicants who have former tenant arrears at the point of applying to join the housing register and devising processes to deal more effectively with Universal Credit at the end of tenancies.

c) Void Properties

Overall the number of properties untenanted continues to remain low and under the 1% properties untenanted target. The service will continue to monitor the number of empty properties to ensure it continues to remain under target.

d) Right to Buy Sales

Right to Buy applications have decreased slightly compared to this time last year but numbers of completed sales are higher so the service is projecting an increased number of Right to Buy sales in 2019/20.

e) Disrepair

Over recent months there has been a decrease in the number of disrepair claims received when compared with Quarter 1. For Quarter 2 2019/20, there has been an average of 48 new cases per month.

Ongoing activity is taking place to ensure that disrepair cases are being dealt with robustly, with joint work taking place across Housing and Legal to further refine and improve internal processes to meet the Court Protocol, improve overall performance and reduce external costs. This robust approach is realising an average saving of 48% on compensation and 35% on costs claimed, both of which represent an increase compared to Quarter 1 and evidence the robust approach to claims the council applies.

The Disrepair Prevention Action Group, with lead officers from key service areas, continues to look at monitoring progress against a joint action plan that has been developed as part of the preventions strategy.

Housing Strategy PIs:

f) Council Housing Growth – New Build Programme

As previously advised to Scrutiny Board, the changes to HRA funding regulations announced in October 2018 have afforded the council an opportunity to commence an ambitious new programme of housebuilding from 2019/20 onwards. The council has quickly mobilised a dedicated cross sector team to begin delivering against its aspiration to directly build an average of at least 300 new council homes per year for the next 5 years and beyond.

During 2018/19, 69 new council homes were completed, and the council currently has a further 766 new homes at various stages of development as shown in the table below (188 Extra Care, 562 general needs, 16 working age adults bungalows).

Scheme status	Number of homes
Homes under construction	59
Homes awaiting planning permission	28
Homes out for procurement	227
Pre-procurement	452
Total homes	766

The 766 new council homes currently in the pipeline represents significant progress towards the target of 1,500 new homes over the next 5 years, and the service is continuing to proactively seek additional sites to bring into the programme. All Leeds City Council new build homes will be offered at rents that are genuinely affordable for our tenants, and well below market rates.

The above information relates specifically to new build council housing. The Council Housing Growth Programme also includes a smaller property acquisitions workstream, which is currently focusing on re-acquiring former

council houses bought by tenants under the right to buy regime. To date, this project has repurchased 28 properties over 2018/19.

g) Empty Homes – all sectors

The Core Planning Strategy set a target to reduce the number of empty homes by 2,000 between 2012 and 2017. The target figure for the end of March 2017 was 3,777 private sector properties that have been empty for longer than 6 months. The actual March figure stood at 3,340.

Since April 2017 the Empty Homes Strategy's target has been to maintain the number of empty homes below the 3,777 homes target (3,776 or less) as per the Core Planning Strategy.

At the end of September 2019 the number of empty homes was 3,206, representing a positive net decrease on target of 570. This figure has a tendency to fluctuate throughout the year and can go up or down.

h) Private Sector Inspections

The half year performance figures for 2019/20 show that a total of 1,452 inspections were carried out by the service on private rented properties against an annual target of 2,500. These were carried out following either a complaint from the tenant (this forms the majority), a referral from another agency (Police, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service or social services etc.) or as a result of proactive enforcement actions taken by services such as the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach Team in Holbeck or the Rogue Landlord Unit.

For the first half year the total number of legal notices served against private rented properties amounted to 950 compared to an annual figure of 1,740 in 2018/19. The Notices served are all part of formal enforcement activity – they cover a wide range of actions from Improvement or Prohibition Orders to Power of Entry Notices and other building legislation. The increase is mainly due to an increased inspection target but also a more robust enforcement policy – the worst properties are targeted and moves to enforcement are being done in a more streamlined way. As a result of all interventions against private rented properties, the service removed / reduced a total of 1,002 hazards in the first half year compared to an annual total of 1,666 formal hazards in 2018/19, thus improving the living conditions of the occupying tenants. The top hazards identified through formal inspections relate to falls, fire safety and excess cold.

The service has also seen a move towards the use of Civil Penalties as an alternative to formal prosecution. For the first half year, 9 Civil Penalties have been processed, for a variety of reasons including: non-compliance with Improvement Notices, failure to License a property, and breach of licensing conditions; this is again a reflection of a more robust enforcement policy. This action is only taken when a landlord has failed to comply on this informal basis and the service has sufficient evidence to prove an offence has been committed. Civil Penalties are equivalent to prosecutions – they are an alternative type of action that has been recently introduced.

In addition, this year has seen the culmination of proposals to introduce Selective Licensing in some areas of the city. The council's Executive Board approved the business case for such schemes for Harehills and Beeston in June 2019 and both these schemes will become fully operational from 6th January 2020. Future reports will provide updates on the progress of both schemes.

i) Housing Association Nominations

377 households were re-housed by way of a nomination to Leeds City Council from Registered Providers during the first two quarters of 2019/20. The overall performance percentage is taken from the ratio of 'true lets' to Nominations. A 'True Let' is defined as a genuine new or re-let, discounting such lets as internal transfers, mutual exchanges and decants.

The service is still expecting some outstanding returns so the Quarter 2 total is likely to change.

j) Homeless Preventions

The successful prevention rate continues to be around 80% which is the service standard for good performance – The figure for September 2019 stood at 82%. The service is aware that the majority of those for whom a positive prevention is not achieved are applicants with whom the service has lost contact. The 80% prevention rate in Leeds compares very favourably with the national average of 57%.

k) Temporary Accommodation

There were 51 households owed a housing duty as a homeless household in emergency temporary accommodation at the end of September 2019. This compares favourably to Birmingham with 2,447 placements and Manchester with 1,971 placements. No homeless households were placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation in Leeds (364 in Birmingham and 173 in Manchester). The low number is a result of effective prevention and move-on work. The service has seen a slight increase in numbers for this quarter due to additional provision in St. Georges Crypt and the Somewhere Safe to Stay hub at St. Annes. This increase in service provision is in line with the work being done to reduce rough sleeping.

l) Adaptations

The Government best practice guide on adaptations continues to suggest that housing authorities should aim to achieve 95% completion within target timescales. The targets remain unchanged for 2019/20 at 70 calendar days for Urgent cases and 170 calendar days for Non-urgent cases.

The private sector achievement remains high with the service not falling below the target of 95%. The public sector achievement has fluctuated and for September 2019 it stands at 81%. The service is continuing to work with Leeds Building Services (LBS) to support improvements against the target.

HCA Regulatory Framework Performance Indicators:

m) Decency

The government's Home Standard does not set out a specific target but refers to a requirement to "ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance 1 and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard". In practice, the service is aiming to keep the level of decent homes above 90%, although it is accepted that there will be fluctuations year-on-year.

The level of homes meeting the standard in September 2019 stood at 92.30%.

n) Responsive Repairs Completed Within Timescale

Citywide performance against this indicator stayed below the target of 99.00% over the reporting period. Recorded performance was July (97.17%), August (96.14%) and September (94.59%) which shows a steady decline over the period. Both LBS and Mears experienced an increase in orders over the period, which impacted on resources, with both providers reporting an increase in plastering orders as a particular pressure. In addition, LBS reported IT problems with the Total Mobile system which impacted on the day to day operational scheduling of jobs and affected jobs being issued and closed down.

Both LBS and Mears are currently trying to recruit additional trade resources to accommodate demand levels, particularly additional plasterers. However, current workforce market conditions are slowing this down and therefore both providers are maximising sub-contractor resources as a means of temporarily servicing demand.

In addition, LBS are focusing on the following improvement actions:

- Reorganising planning team resources to ensure that improvements to the planning function are realised and resource productivity maximised.
- Alterations to the Total Mobile system to ensure more dynamic scheduling in geographical areas as it has been identified that changes to the original Optimise system settings can be improved.

o) Responsive Repairs Completed Right First Time

Citywide performance against this indicator remains high and exceeded the target of 90.50% throughout the reporting period. Performance of 93.51% (July), 94.76% (August) and 93.02% (September) was achieved.

p) Satisfaction with Responsive Repairs Completed

Citywide satisfaction with completed repairs performance exceeded the target of 90.00% with levels of 95.29% achieved in July, 97.42% in August and 97.78% in September. Performance for both LBS and Mears has exceeded the target of 90% for 10 consecutive months.

q) Capital Works - Satisfaction

The satisfaction rate for Quarter 2 2019/20 was 93.29% and has been above the target of 90% for the last two quarters. This was also an increase on the figures for the same periods in 2018/19.

r) Gas Services Completed on time

As previously reported to this Board, performance on domestic gas servicing remains strong and within target. In all cases where dwellings do not have a valid gas safety certificate, the external contractors have followed the agreed process and made multiple attempts to gain access, and legal proceedings are now in process. These proceedings cannot commence until after expiry of the Landlords Gas Safety Record. At the end of Quarter 2 there were zero cases of properties more than 45 days overdue.

s) Average Relet Times

Overall, Housing Leeds has seen a reduction in the time taken to relet a property over the last few months. In September 2019 the average relet time stood at 31.89 days and Housing Leeds continues to work with contractors to identify any service improvements. Operational meetings are taking place on a regular basis to monitor and manage performance and this is embedded across the service.

t) Mutual Exchanges

The drop in mutual exchanges compared with last year continued through Quarter 2. The higher figures in previous years can partly be attributed to work done through the Incentive Scheme (which began running in April 2015), which encouraged moves of under-occupying and overcrowded tenants. The planned promotion for the current year has not been achieved due to having to focus on core CBL (Choice Based Letting) business and integrating the new CBL and Housing Register modules.

u) Annual Home Visits

Over 67% of AHVs were completed by the end of September, very close to the 68% target for the end of September. The service has continued to place a particular focus on gaining access to the small number of properties which have not been visited for the last 2 financial years – this reduced to 27 properties at the end of March. More intensive action and support is now taking place for each of the tenancies where the service has had no access.

The AHVs continue to provide vital information to enable Housing Management to respond to particular tenant issues, or to understand tenancy trends. 33% of tenants report that they are not confident that they could make a benefit claim online; a slight reduction from last year. This information, along with feedback on whether the tenant could manage benefits on a monthly basis, is helping to identify which tenants need additional support when moving onto Universal Credit. 20% of tenants report that they do not have access to the internet, a continued reduction from 22% last year. More detailed questions have been asked this year to help the service to support tenants to get online as much as possible. 3,657 tenants told the service that they had an outstanding repair, enabling arrangements for such repairs to be made or a surveyor's appointment made. AHVs helped to identify 41 safeguarding cases, 162 hoarding cases and 547 cases where a new support referral was required during the first half of 2019/20.

v) Complaints

At the end of Quarter 4 2018/2019, the response rate to complaints within timescales was at 84% - an improvement of 15% on the previous quarter (Q3 2018/19). However, this improvement hasn't been sustained and response rates have fallen during Q1 and Q2 2019/20, with an average of 80% of complaints responded to within timescale. Current performance should be put into the context of the enhanced service standard within Housing, working on a 10 working day target as opposed to the corporate 15 working day. Performance based on a 15 working day target is much more favourable - at 91.84% on average.

Over the last 12 months a number of processes have been put in place to improve response times and the quality of responses to customers. Weekly spreadsheets continue to be sent to teams to show numbers of complaints that are open and whether or not they are within timescale. Ongoing joint work between Housing Leeds and the Customer Relations Team continues to implement better communication channels and provide support and assistance to Investigating Officers.

A review of complaint handling has recently been completed by Housing Leeds and the Customer Relations Team. Expectations are being developed for Investigating Officers as well as further guidance and training to ensure that they have the right skills and experience to provide a high quality, customer-focused response.

The Government's recent Green Paper on social housing has prompted a national conversation about the quality of social landlords' complaints handling. Further actions are anticipated in relation to this.

3.3 Communities

3.3.1 Broad, high level information is included in relation to Customer Access, Council Tax and Welfare, and Safer and Stronger Communities. This is supported by further detailed observations which can be made available should Members find additional information useful. Members' attention is drawn to the following performance areas:

3.3.2 Customer Access

a) Face to Face

Helping People into Work – In the first quarter of 2019/20 there were 1,593 new customers registered at a Jobshop. This is an increase on the same quarter last year (1,463). In the second quarter, 1,094 new customers were registered, which is a decrease on the same period last year. This is due to Community Hubs closing for refurbishment due to the hub development programme. In terms of job gains, 592 gained employment in the first quarter of this year and 629 gained employment in quarter 2. This is an increase compared to the same periods last year (571 and 557 respectively).

Enquiries – Since the decommissioning of Siebel (Customer Relationship Management application) it has not been possible to provide data on the number of visit to Hubs. However, due to the introduction of a new recording system (CATS), the service is now able to provide details of footfall within the Hubs. In Quarter 2 of this year (the first full quarter of recorded data) there were 206,642 transactions recorded on CATS. Further to this, the number of unique users of self-serve IT stations in Hubs continued to increase with the first 2 quarters of this year recording 7,035 users compared to 4,101 for the same period last year.

Library Usage – There were 1,007,301 visits to Libraries recorded in the first 2 quarters of 2019/20, which is a reduction of 104,027 from 1,111,328 in the first 2 quarters of 2018/19.

Through these visits, customers borrowed 1,061,507 items during the first 2 quarters of 2019/20, down from 1,099,001 in 2018/19, and used the library public PCs 223,160 times, compared to 226,769 in 2018/19. These figures include all Library usage, not just those located in Community Hubs.

The reduction in library usage follows a sustained national pattern which was exacerbated locally by the temporary closures and relocations of some sites to allow for major refurbishment works as part of the Community Hub development programme. The library service is working on a 5 year strategy which will seek to deliver modern, flexible and responsive services which drive engagement with libraries.

b) Contact Centre

Emails - the Contact Centre answered 54,162 emails in the first 2 quarters of this year which is a decrease of 1,604 from the same period last year. This is a continuing trend and is due to two changes; firstly the creation of on-line forms that integrate with back office systems and negate the need for e-mail and, secondly, the development of form-to-mail solutions which ensure that correct information is captured at the first point of contact, reducing the number of repeat emails regarding the same enquiry.

Telephone Performance - In the first quarter of 2019/20 the Contact Centre answered 84% of calls with an average wait time of 7 minutes 29 seconds. This compares to 85% of calls answered, with an average wait time of 6 minutes 37 seconds, for the first quarter in 2018/19.

In the second quarter of this year 84% of calls were answered with an average wait time of 6 minutes 40 seconds. This compares to 85% of calls answered with an average wait time of 7 minutes 22 seconds for the second quarter of 2018/19.

Additional funding has been provided for this year and next year to improve performance on the Housing lines and this has started to pay dividends with performance in Quarter 1 being 93% of calls answered with a wait time of 6 minutes 44 seconds and in Quarter 2, 98% of calls answered with a wait time of 1 minute 52 seconds.

Further improvements are planned with the introduction of new technologies in Housing and Registrars but the service continues to face delays in their implementation.

c) Digital - Web/Online Development

Unique visits to the top ten pages of the LCC Public website was 729,329 in Quarter 1 and 705,302 in Quarter 2 2019/20. This is a reduction from 741,573 in Quarter 1 and 712,967 in Quarter 2 2018/19, because Museums and Galleries figures are no longer being included as the site is now externally hosted.

3.3.3 **Welfare and Benefits:**

a) Universal Credit

The full digital service for Universal Credit has been in place in Leeds for a year, meaning that all new benefit claims from any new claimant are for Universal Credit. Up to the end of September 2019 there were approximately 26,613 people claiming universal credit in Leeds. Approximately 31% of claimants are in work (8,265) and 69% (18,353) are not in employment, 47% are male and 53% are female.

As of April 2019 Universal Support for those seeking to claim Universal Credit has been delivered by Chapeltown Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Leeds through their 'Help to Claim' services. Previously this support was delivered by the council's Customer Access team in the Community Hubs.

b) Welfare Advice

The number of customers assisted between 1st April 2019 and 31st October 2019 was 20,459. This compares to 22,130 in the same period in 2018/19, a decrease of just over 7%. This drop is mainly due to tenants of council housing being referred to Housing Leeds for advice, which has enabled the Welfare Rights Team to focus on more specialised tribunal work. In addition, there was also a period, between approximately April and September 2019, where the DWP saw a noticeable downturn in the number of claim forms being sent out as part of the DLA to PIP migration. This may have been due to DWP staff being diverted to do other work; one example being an administrative exercise they had to carry out to review 1.6m decisions following a court case.

c) Benefits Gains

The total amount of benefit gains for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st October 2019 was £11,892,060.30. This compares to £12,260,523.82 for the same period in 2018/19, a decrease of £368,463.52. Therefore, although the number of clients assisted has decreased by 7% the benefits gained has decreased by 3%.

d) Welfare Rights Satisfaction Rating – Client Satisfaction

Client Satisfaction - Despite the service not being able to offer a full service to everyone in relation to appeals, 91% of clients using the Welfare Rights Team said the service was excellent and 8.5% felt the service was good.

The service continues to assist as many people as it can and is also referring council tenant form filling to the Housing Income Team to maximise the number of clients being assisted to claim benefits. Disability benefit appeals continue to be an area of concern as it is taking up to a year for an appeal to be heard leaving the client in a destitute position.

Law students from the University of Leeds continue to provide assistance with PIP form completion which is much appreciated and a good development opportunity for the students.

It is estimated that the number of appeals will remain high due to the ongoing migration of DLA to PIP and also due to the volume of clients on PIP and ESA being reviewed on a very regular basis.

e) Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support

Following the introduction of Universal Credit Full Service in Leeds, there continues to be an ongoing decline in the Housing Benefit Caseload for Working Age claims.

This "natural migration" to UC, when an HB customer has a change in their circumstances that meets the DWP's criteria to warrant a move to UC, will continue until "Managed Migration" which will see all the remaining Working Age HB claim move to UC en-mass.

This change remains scheduled for somewhere between 2019 and 2023. After this has happened, there will remain HB claims in respect of Pension Age customers and those Working Age customers who have been exempted from UC.

Since the introduction of Natural Migration in October 2018 there has been an average monthly decrease of 982 HB Claims. In October 2018 the HB caseload was 59,259, and by the start of October 2019 this had reduced to 47,235.

The majority of claims that have moved to UC have continued to receive Local Council Tax Support (LCTS). Accordingly, the number of claims for LCTS Only has increased from 12,692 in October 2018 to 20,727 in October 2019

For the same period the total of all LCTS Cases has gone from 65,190 in October 2018 to 63,096 in October 2019.

HB Expenditure for 2018/19 was £246m. The Mid Year estimate for HB spend for 2019/20 is £209.5m. This decrease being primarily due to the decrease in caseload as detailed above

LCTS expenditure for 2018/19 was £49m, the estimated expenditure for 2019/20 is approximately £50m.

f) Speed of Processing Housing Benefit

Speed of Processing Housing Benefit (average no. of days) for the first quarter 2019/20, published by the DWP, shows:

	Speed of Processing Quarter 1 2019/20	
	New Claims	Changes
Great Britain	19	6
England	19	7
Yorkshire & The Humber	18	8
West Yorkshire	17	7
Leeds	15	7

g) Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

DHP can be awarded to customers in receipt of Housing Benefit, but whose HB doesn't cover their rent in full. Awards are primarily made to customers adversely affected by Welfare Reform.

DHP can also be awarded to customers who have moved on to Universal Credit where the part of their UC Award in respect of Housing Costs is less than their rent.

In 2019/20 the total budget available for DHP, which includes both a central government contribution and a contribution from Leeds HRA, is £2,347,615. The contribution from the HRA remained at the same level as in 2018/19 whilst the Government Contribution decreased by £338,432

At the end of the second quarter 2019/20 it is estimated that the total budget will be spent.

h) Local Welfare Support Scheme

LWSS can be awarded to customers in receipt of qualifying benefits who face crisis or are in need of essential household items which they cannot afford. Awards are primarily made to customers adversely affected by Welfare Reform.

The 2019/20 budget for the scheme remained unchanged from the previous year at £600k.

At the mid-year point, it is estimated that the budget will be spent in full.

i) Leeds Credit Union

Membership for the quarter ending September 2019 in Leeds stood at 31,981 (37,188 total members). Cash withdrawals totalled £5,127,335 and the value of “financially excluded loans” totalled £732,409. The total gross loan book for Leeds Credit Union has increased from £8m in 2012 to £9.8m this year.

LCU has recently committed to a new campaign which will include a range of marketing channels and aims to increase membership numbers through targeting key audiences, and improving business to business relationships.

j) Gambling Related Harm

The council is co-ordinating work to support those suffering from, or at risk of, gambling related harm. Work to raise awareness of the issue continues through the ‘Beat the Odds’ marketing campaign.

The new NHS Northern Gambling Clinic and Problem Gambling Support team led by Gamcare launched their services in October 2019. Both services are using the council’s network of community hubs to deliver support and treatment.

Training and engagement sessions are also being delivered to Council departments and partner organisations across the city, to raise awareness of the issue and of the new services available.

k) Local Government Association: Reshaping Financial Support Action Learning Programme

Leeds City Council has been successful in its application to take part in the LGA’s Reshaping Financial Support Action Learning Programme. The programme is designed to support selected local authorities to further develop, coordinate, share and evaluate their existing work on financial support.

The council will work with the LGA over the next 18 months on a range of projects with particular focus on improving customer interactions through adopting behavioural insight techniques and reviewing its approach to Corporate Debt.

3.3.4 **Communities Team:**

a) Priority Neighbourhoods Programme

A comprehensive report on the work in priority neighbourhoods is being developed for the scrutiny board for its meeting in January 2020 and will be distributed separately rather than being covered in this section.

b) Migration and Strengthening Communities

- Extensive work has continued to inform and raise awareness of the EU Settlement Scheme and to help to address concerns and misinformation in the community amongst organisations. The council has grant funded 6 community organisations to deliver outreach support and 5 community hubs are offering digital assistance and ID checking services.
- The 10 year anniversary of the Equalities assembly was celebrated in November 2019. This year's celebratory assembly was designed by the equality hubs themselves and a video captured the significant achievements over the last decade and entertainment provided by members of the hubs. The feedback on the event has been fantastic.
- The religion and belief hub supported and promoted the delivery of a successful 'Safe and Prepared Faith Communities Event'.
- The LGBT+ Hub supported a brilliant Leeds Pride 2019 with some 60,000 attending the city centre procession and Leeds City Council being well represented by staff and councillors on two buses at the front of the parade.
- A framework for the capturing of intelligence and the monitoring of community tensions has been developed. It is envisaged that the council and partners, including the third sector, will be able to contribute to an evolving picture of the relationships between different communities in the city to inform an approach to strengthening communities and their relationships.
- Two new Twitter social media sites have been developed. These are @cohesionleeds and @leedsinclusive. @cohesionleeds brings together work on strengthening our communities and community relationships and @leedsinclusive brings together the city's work on equality and the work of the equality hubs in one place. Members are invited to follow both social media handles.

3.4 **Community Safety (More detail is provided at Appendix 2)**

3.4.1 Members' attention is drawn to the following performance areas:

a) People in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go

Safer Leeds strategic focus is on: Keeping people safe from harm (Victim); Preventing & reducing offending (Offender); and Creating Safer, Stronger communities (Location).

The West Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner 'Your View' survey responses to September 2019 reported that 82% of Leeds respondents felt 'safe' or 'very safe' in their local area (4,373 of 5,333 question respondents). Leeds feedback was the second most positive within the West Yorkshire Police force (West Yorkshire Police district level responses ranged from 74% to 84%).

Recent / Emerging Activity:

- The Leeds Reducing Offending Board has been reconfigured and set out a refreshed strategic intent, in line with the West Yorkshire Reducing Offending Strategy. Locally the Integrated Offender Management service has been

recommissioned and will work even more closely with partners in the criminal justice service and voluntary and community sector.

- Preventing Youth Violence: A strategic group has been established to respond to drivers of youth violence and to influence positive change. The early intervention fund is providing support to develop additional capability. The work is focused with five grass roots organisations: Chapeltown Youth Development Centre, BHI, Getaway Girls, CATCH and the street team.
- City centre community safety: A city centre strategy has been developed, and the Safer Leeds City Centre board has been established. Work will focus upon people and place.

b) Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic Violence and Abuse remains a priority for the city and the service's approach focuses on: Supporting victims (adult, children and families); Changing attitudes and perceptions (individuals and communities), Challenging behaviours (working with perpetrators), and Enabling effective change (workforce and organisational responses).

The victim self-reporting rate is a Safer Leeds indication of victim confidence to report Domestic Violence and Abuse. 32% of 22,038 domestic incidents were victim self-reported; this is stable as a proportion of all domestic incidents.

Recent / Emerging Activity:

- Front Door Safeguarding Hub: An independent review was undertaken in response to the increasing volume of referrals from all agencies. A programme of work has been implemented to test solutions, change ways of working, improve outcomes for victims and families, and increase the provision of effective interventions with perpetrators.
- Domestic Homicide Reviews: Recent learning has affirmed the benefits of the long-standing Leeds approach, which recognises that health care professionals are ideally placed to deliver effective domestic violence and abuse interventions. Work with health partners has been pivotal in developing initiatives to promote early identification and testing new initiatives.
- Early Help Hubs: A single point of contact for Early Help is being developed to enhance services to children and families. Workers will be co-located within multi-agency settings including specialist staff with expertise around domestic violence, substance misuse and mental health. Hubs will be sited at Albion House in West Leeds, Cottingley Children's Centre in South Leeds and at the Compton Centre in East Leeds.

c) Anti-social Behaviour

The Leeds Anti-social Behaviour team (LASBT) delivers a multi-tenure service operating across Leeds in partnership with a much broader range of agencies and support services. LASBT will typically deal with behaviour that cannot be reasonably resolved through tenancy management, or mediation.

15,803 incidents of ASB were recorded by Police in Leeds; this has reduced by 19%. Youth nuisance represented a high but reducing proportion of incidents, (5,122 youth nuisance incidents reported, reducing by 27%).

Recent / Emerging Activity:

- Anti-social Behaviour Strategy: The Leeds ASB Strategy redefines the way in which LASBT operates, complements the council's inclusive growth strategy, and works with children's services, and adult social care, to support vulnerable families. A key aspect of the ASB Strategy is the introduction of a triage system to identify and assess risk from the first point of contact. The Triage team has planned to become operational in 2019.

d) Hate Crime

Hate crimes and incidents can have devastating consequences for victims and their families, and can frighten and divide communities. The priorities and response in Leeds reflect national guidance by focusing upon: Preventing hate crime; responding to hate crime; increasing the reporting of hate crime; improving support to victims; and building our understanding of hate crime.

There has been stability in Police reported Hate incidents. The majority of reported hate incidents refer to harassment, verbal or written abuse. Hate incidents may be identified with multiple hate strands (for example one incident may encompass both race and faith hate).

Recent / Emerging Activity:

- Islamophobia: The Runnymede 20th Anniversary report 'Islamophobia: Still a challenge for us' identifies areas where Muslim communities face disadvantage and discrimination. A consultation exercise will be undertaken in Leeds to ascertain lived experience, and develop a grassroots solution based approach. Progress on the development and delivery of an action plan to tackle Islamophobia will be governed by the Hate Crime Strategic Board.
- Hate Crime Operational Group: The re-established Operational Group has co-ordinated action including: an online resource pack; a Police led disability hate pack; Hate Crime awareness training to Social Work teams; and work to raise awareness of the school Hate Incident reporting process (HIRS process).

e) Street Support

Leeds City Council is obliged by the government to carry out full city rough sleeper headcounts every two months. The latest figures for 2019 are: May = 50; July = 54; September = 45; November = 40. The official November headcount for 2019 continues the reducing trend from earlier this year. The count was carried out in the early morning of the 26th November and has been officially verified by a member of Homeless Link: an independent charity commissioned by government to carry out the count verifications as well as a local independent organisation from Leeds.

The definition of a rough sleeper is that a person is 'bedded down' or 'about to bed down' in the open air, doorway or building / structure that is not designed for sleeping accommodation. A person with a tenancy who is sleeping out will therefore be counted whereas a person who is known to be of no fixed abode but is found walking the streets would not be counted. A headcount is a snapshot of rough sleeping on a particular night and does not constitute a comprehensive identification of the rough sleeping population.

The multi-agency Leeds Street Support Team has now been operational for just over 12 months and a number of positives steps have been made. 322 rough sleepers have been rehoused during this time, to the end of October 2019, with a

total attrition rate of c30%. The number of people returning to the street after being rehoused has also dropped by 5% during 2019/20 so far, including a significant decrease from LCC tenancies. This is an indication of positive work undertaken by the team and by 'navigators' who work with people in the cohort to help them sustain their tenancies.

Many 'street users' (which includes people who rough sleep and / or those who beg) have experienced some form of 'trauma' in their lives (be this as a child and / or as an adult) before ending up on the streets. A high proportion of 'street users' also suffer from mental ill-health, physical ill-health, and addiction issues, and this brings challenges for this cohort in accessing mainstream health services. The work of the Street Based Health Team is key in assisting many individuals, including numerous cases of potential (and evidenced) sepsis, epilepsy and cardiac problems, to seek treatment and support. Rough sleepers die from a number of causes and this includes preventable illness such as sepsis, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease and the service is making improvements where there are concerns about these problems. The need to safeguard the welfare of those who on the street remains paramount.

Recent / Emerging Activity:

- Leeds has recently been successful in securing additional funding (MHCLG: Cold Weather Fund 2019/20) to enhance existing support services until the end of March 2020. This includes providing daytime provision at St George's Crypt so that no one has to leave the emergency Hub in the morning and for Sunday daytime and Bank Holiday opening for women at the St Anne's Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub. There will also be some practical items and additional hours to support people placed in SWEP (Severe Weather Protocol) beds across the three Beacon ISEs (Intensive Supportive Environments), and the Street Outreach team will have additional capacity with specialist language skills (Czech, Polish and Lithuanian) to help understand and better assist Eastern Europeans who are street based.

3.5 Waste and Environment (More detail is provided at Appendix 3)

3.5.1 Members' attention is drawn to the following performance areas:

a) Bin Collection Rate

The collection rate for period 8 (ending October 2019) stood at 99.94% which is broadly similar to the same period last year and was the lowest number of missed bins in 2019/20. Period 4 (June) saw a slight increase in missed bins contact for garden waste (a collection rate of 99.80% as compared to 99.81% for period 4 last year). Period 6 (August) also saw a slight increase for residual bins (a collection rate of 99.91% as compared to 99.93% for period 6 for each of the previous 4 years). These were in part due to seasonal pressures which have become more difficult to manage at peaks times - the underlying issues are of course complex and are subject to the full service review currently being undertaken; but include a combination / coincidence of factors such as end of life fleet, out of date routes, more new builds and an increasing amount of access problems caused by inconsiderately parked cars, etc. The review and the issues identified are subject to an ongoing enquiry by this Scrutiny Board, with a progress update due to be provided at this Board's December meeting.

(Please refer to the table in Appendix 3 for a breakdown of type of missed bin per period.)

b) Recycling and Landfill (*Unverified figures – Verification by the Environment Agency to follow after year end.*)

The amount of waste landfilled remains better than expected and much better than Quarter 1 last year. Only 1.74% of household waste collected by Leeds City Council has gone to landfill so far this year (compared to 2.44% for quarter 1 last year). This is mainly due to contractual changes and the continual move away from landfill usage.

Overall, citywide recycling performance remains below target and 0.94% below that achieved for last year in quarter 1. This is primarily due to a reduction in garden waste tonnages, which can vary greatly depending on weather conditions (for example tonnages were down in May due to a relatively wet / cool month), and a small reduction in kerbside dry recycling. A reduction in residual kerbside waste, and therefore overall waste arisings, has also had an impact on the overall recycling percentage. The underlying trend though remains a performance of around 39%.

c) Street Cleanliness

The cleaner streets survey results are in for summer 2019/20 and show that 95.4% of streets surveyed had acceptable levels of litter, this compares to 95.1% last summer – so a slight improvement to what is already a high score. A very even spread of wards was surveyed this summer, with one from each of the 5 IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) groupings, which provided a good balance.

d) Parking Functions

The service has 3 main areas of responsibility:

- Parking administration including permit schemes;
- Enforcement of parking and bus lane restrictions; and
- Managing the council's on and off street parking operation.

Parking administration including Permit schemes:

- In Leeds there are currently 133 Resident Permit areas. Each resident in a zone is entitled to a permit for each vehicle registered to the address plus a transferable permit for visitors. Residents' permits are free. They are issued for 3 years and renewed on a cycle so the administration work is evened out throughout the year.
- The council runs a permit scheme for ULEV (ultra-low emission vehicles) which gives free parking in all our spaces. There are currently 929 permits. There are also 12 charging points at Woodhouse Lane Car Park which are free to use.
- The service also runs chargeable permit schemes for businesses who need to access residents' zones and for essential workers such as health visitors. These cost £80 a year reduced to £60 for charities. There are 3,942 of these permits.
- The service has been working to reduce the number of phone calls. For legal and audit reasons it is not possible to apply for a permit or appeal a penalty by

telephone and calls can often lead to customers becoming frustrated. We received 66,420 calls in 2018/19 which is a significant cost and diverts resources from actually dealing with the enquiries. We have invested in improved customer facing ICT and a number of initiatives are in place to automate processes and encourage self-service. Since the introduction of a new phone system in May the number of calls has reduced by 27% with 6,300 fewer calls in the first half of the year.

- The service received 20,478 items of correspondence in Quarter 2, 95% of which related to penalties.

Enforcement of parking and bus lane restrictions:

- The number of penalty charge notices issued by traditional foot patrols in Quarter 2 was 46,300. This represents 47% of the estimated annual total of 98,652, slightly fewer than would have been expected at this point, meaning that the projected total will be below forecast by about 1,000. The CCTV enforcement vehicle has issued 1,916 tickets which is 30% fewer than in the same period in 2018/19. The vast majority of the offences detected (97%) are in city centre bus stops. As deployment has not changed this indicates a significant improvement in the behaviour of drivers.
- The first red route in Leeds has been introduced outside Leeds Bradford Airport and is being enforced with fixed cameras rather than the CCTV vehicle. This began in October so will be reflected in the next period. (Red routes are major roads on which vehicles are not permitted to stop.)
- Camera Operated Bus Lanes - The council currently enforces 29 bus lanes using cameras. The number of offences has increased slightly with the projected revenue £20,000 higher than last year. This is due to a new camera site at Park Row which has resulted in a high number of offences, indicating widespread disregard for the traffic restrictions and increasing pressure on bus routes through the busy Boar Lane / Railway station area. Offence levels have now dropped at this site by half and this is a continuing trend. Besides this bus lane there has been a significant reduction in offences across all the other sites. Offences are now at such a low level in several areas that the cameras will be turned off to save maintenance costs. Again this represents a significant improvement in the observance of traffic regulations by the motorist. The revenue from Bus Lane penalties is £1.1m.
- The team have been operating a zero tolerance policy on blue badge abuse for the past three years. Leeds City Council carries out more prosecutions than any other local authority and has been commended by the Department for Transport for its approach. As a result the number of offences has reduced with 19 prosecutions so far compared to 30 in the same period in 2018/19.

Managing the council's on and off street parking operation:

- The council controls about 2,400 on street pay parking spaces with a revenue of £4.5m. This is split between cash payment in parking machines and card payment through the mobile phone payment system. The phone

system is increasingly popular and now accounts for 57% of revenue, up from 51% in 2018/19.

- Due to the theft of over half of the parking machines in 2017/18 a number of outer areas no longer have payment machines. Although a working machine has been retained in each tariff area, in some streets the only available method is mobile phone payment. There is also a continuing problem with petty theft from the machines by blocking the coin chutes. There are no plans to withdraw cash payment in the central area where the intention is to buy new machines that have better security features.
- On-street income has been significantly affected with the loss of spaces for building development, roadworks and events and is currently 10% below expectations. Car parks are performing very strongly and are expected to exceed estimates by a similar amount. Overall the budget is expected to exceed the estimated revenue. A small price rise is scheduled for the new year. The revenue for car parks is £4.2m; 57% of this comes from Woodhouse Lane multi storey. The service also provides a further 3,000 spaces in 39 district car parks which are free except for 3 sites in Otley.

3.6 *Parks and Countryside*

3.6.1 Members' attention is drawn to the following performance areas:

a) Grounds Maintenance

The grass cutting season in 2019 demonstrated the significant effect that weather can play on performance and quality of finish. There was significantly higher rainfall from June onwards that resulted in sustained grass growth that persisted to the end of the cutting season that extended into November to complete the programme. This presented challenges for both the contracted verge and internal Parks and Countryside teams. The extended period of wet weather also impacted on streetscene weed control as application has to take place in a period of dry weather. The spraying programme has now been realigned to prioritise those areas of the city featuring flagged paving and priority neighbourhoods as these traditionally show higher levels of weed growth.

b) Parks and Green Spaces

With regards to parks and green spaces the service is currently consulting on a new 10 year parks and green space strategy for Leeds from 2020. A consultation workshop session took place in September with the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum which was well attended by a range of 'friends' and other interest groups. This was followed by a public exhibition and consultation workshop held in the city museum in November with around 900 attending providing valuable input to inform the priorities and emerging strategy themes. Further consultation is planned to the end of February 2020 including community committee environment sub-groups, parks staff, and stakeholder departments. The strategy will be published in 2020. The council secured grant funding of £171k from lottery funded NESTA Rethinking Parks programme to support the development of the Leeds Parks Fund and research to underpin future work has now been published by the University of Leeds. Two staff have been recruited to

promote opportunities for giving to the fund and the first grant application round opened for applications between £500 and £2500 to support community group projects. This funding round closed in October and applications are currently being evaluated. Leeds Quality Park assessments are nearing completion and will be published in the new year. A report to Executive Board in September highlighted the approach to be adopted in adapting parks and green spaces for climate change, including relaxed mowing, rewilding, supporting more sustainable habitats, flood alleviation and tree planting.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. However all performance information is published on the council's website and is available to the public.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 This is an information report and not a decision so it is not necessary to conduct an equality impact assessment. However, some of the data provided will link to wider issues of equality and diversity, and cohesion and integration, and there may be occasions when Scrutiny Board members will want to look more closely at these issues, and may request further information to inform their investigations.

4.3 Council Priorities and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 This report provides an update on progress in delivering the council priorities in line with the Best Council Plan.

4.3.2 Climate Emergency

The council declared a climate emergency in March 2019 with the stated ambition of working to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 for the city. Parts of the above performance information are linked to actions taking place to address climate emergency and will feed into an assessment of how on track the council is in achieving the target. Services will provide updates to the Board on specific work they are carrying out with regard to this priority; separate reports are being brought to this meeting on Energy efficiency in Council House Stock and Fuel Poverty.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 There are no specific resource implications from this report, although some performance indicators relate to financial and other value for money aspects.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 All performance information is publicly available and is published on the council website. This report is an information update providing Scrutiny with a summary of performance for the strategic priorities within its remit and as such is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There is a comprehensive risk management process in the council to monitor and manage key risks. The council's most significant risks are available and can be accessed via the council's website.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This report provides a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city related to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are recommended to:

- Note the Quarter 2 performance information in this report and Appendices 1 – 3 and the issues which have been highlighted and consider if they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 Best Council Plan 2019/20 to 2020/21

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.