

Report of Head of Equalities

Report to Director of Communities and Environment

Date: 18 March 2020

Subject: Disability Equality Improvement Work

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| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Will the decision be open for call-in? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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

- Leeds City Council has a leading role in the city to promote equality and value diversity as one of the largest providers of public services, as well, as being one of the largest employers in the City.
- The Best Council Plan 2019/20 to 2020/21 maintains our long-term ‘Best City’ strategic focus on tackling poverty and inequalities through a combination of strengthening the economy and doing this in a way that is compassionate and caring, allowing us to support our most vulnerable children and adults.
- One of the key Best City strategies is the council’s Equality Improvement Priorities 2018/22. The council’s Equality Improvement Priorities have taken into account the protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010. Our priorities do not include all our work across all the protected characteristics, but highlights those areas where there are significant differences in outcomes for people due to those characteristics. We believe that by addressing these areas we will make Leeds a better city for everyone.
- Addressing and tackling disability inequality, supporting disabled people and making services disability accessible is integral to the equality work the council undertakes on tackling inequality.

- A wide range of work has been undertaken over the last few years to start to address some of the key challenges facing disabled people across a whole range of services outlined within the report.
- This is the first time the council has reported on the range of work taking place to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible. The report outlines work that is carried out across council directorates on disability equality and disability inclusion.

2. **Best Council Plan Implications** (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The work set out in this report contributes to the Best Council Plan focus of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities, and achieving the council's ambition for a strong economy and compassionate city. The activities set out in this report support the Best City Priorities of Safe, Strong Communities, Inclusive Growth, Health and Wellbeing, Child-Friendly City, Age-Friendly Leeds, Housing and Culture.

3. **Resource Implications**

- All of the work-taking place across the council to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible referred to in this report are being undertaken within current budgets and there are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

The Director of Communities & Environment is recommended to:

- a) Note the current and ongoing work undertaken across the council to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible.
- b) Endorse the continuation of the council's approach to tackling disability inequality and improving disability inclusion.
- c) Endorse work to develop a cross council action plan on Disability Equality with an annual progress report to be considered by Executive Board in March 2021.

Responsibility for the recommendations and the development of the Disability Equality Action Plan will rest with the Director of Communities and Environment.

1. **Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report outlines the range of current work that is taking place across the council to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible.
- 1.2 The disability community in Leeds is very diverse and meeting needs can be complex and challenging for service providers and policy makers. This update is not intended to give a comprehensive view of all the work that is being undertaken but provides an overview and examples from across all directorates.

- 1.3 The report also highlights that there has been significant progress across the council on disability equality and accessibility and ensuring that services meet the needs of disabled people.

2 Background information

2.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation; and to deliver a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

2.2 To meet compliance with the Equality Act 2010 the council's Equality Improvement Priorities 2018 - 2022 were developed and approved by Executive Board in July 2018. The priorities were developed to complement the Best Council Plan priorities and help to underpin the ambition for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate and caring with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces inequalities.

2.3 There are some specific priorities, which focus on addressing disability inequality. These are:-

- Ensure fair and equal access to taxi and private hire services for disabled people;
- To enable older and disabled people to remain in their homes as long as they wish;
- Improve the customer experience for Deaf people;
- To improve the quality of parks in Leeds with a focus on community parks that provide and develop facilities and activities available for everyone who wishes to visit. Particularly for BME people, people of faith, younger and older people and disabled people;
- Provide effective support to disabled people and people with long term health conditions with a focus on those with poor mental health to access the labour market and sustain employment; and
- Reduce the gaps in learning outcomes for vulnerable learners including Children Looked After and children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities including Social, Emotional and Mental Health

2.4 The Equality Improvement Priorities also recognise poverty as a barrier that limits what people can do and can be. As a result, priorities were included that address poverty as the council recognises that a number of the protected characteristics are disproportionately represented in those living in poverty. From work undertaken on budget reductions, we know that resource implications will impact on all communities but those who have been identified at being at the greatest potential risk of negative impact include:

- Disabled people – including all impairment groups; and
- Low socio-economic groups (within this group, there is over-representation by disabled people) who have been directly impacted by benefit changes, for example, Universal Credit

2.5 Progress against the disability focused and all Equality Improved Priorities are reported annually to Executive Board at their July meeting.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Disabled people still face barriers when accessing services and they also face disproportionate social isolation, prejudice, stigma and disability hate crime.
- 3.2 Research carried out by the EHRC states ‘that disabled people are being left behind in comparison with others in society and some groups of disabled people – in particular those with mental health conditions and learning disabilities – experience even greater barriers. More families that include a disabled person live in poverty; access to mental health care is inadequate; and housing and transport fail to support disabled people to live independently and fulfil their potential and aspirations.’
- 3.3 However, there has been significant progress across the council on disability accessibility and equality and ensuring that services meet the needs of disabled people. There is no direct count of disability for the whole population in the City, but the Census 2011 collected information about ‘long term health problems or disability’. In Leeds 83.3% of people said that their day-to-day activities are not limited by long-term health problems or disability, 7.9% said they are limited a lot and 8.9% said that they are limited a little. In addition, the council employs 14,901 people, of these 6.01% have declared that they are disabled.
- 3.4 This report provides an update on the range of disability equality improvement work taking place across all council directorates and synthesises the experiences to address disability inequality/widen disability inclusion. This includes the work that contributes to the council’s Equality Improvement Priorities. This work is undertaken with a range of external partners from across a range of sectors.

Disability Equality Improvement Work Adults and Health Directorate

- 3.5 The vast majority of the work within the Adults and Health Directorate is around supporting disabled people. This is particular the case when taking a broad, social model approach to disability. This would include people with physical or sensory impairments, people with mental health needs, people with a learning disability, people with autism, people with long term conditions (such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Coronary Heart Disease etc.), older people living with frailty, and people living with Dementia.
- 3.6 Due to the breadth of the work, which is outlined below there, are several reporting routes to capture key information, both proportional to the activity and to the nature of the service provided. This covers both the governance of the work and ensuring the receipt of appropriate and timely information on areas, such as, number of people using the service, outcomes, quality of service, financial information and individual case studies.
- 3.7 Monitoring reports for in house and commissioned services are considered by the Directorate Leadership Team. As well, as to a range of established partnership boards where work contributes to, for example, the Leeds Mental Health Strategy, Being Me’, the Leeds Learning Disability Strategy, the Leeds Carers Strategy and the Leeds Dementia Strategy. The Adults and Health Directorate also work closely with independent bodies, such as, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch. Many key services, such as, Home Care and Care Homes provide regular information for Scrutiny Board. In addition, the Adults and Health Directorate

produce and publish an annual 'Local Account', which highlights how well they are doing as across a number of social care services and key performance indicators with a strong focus on feedback from users of services and family carers.

Reablement Service

- 3.8 The council home care reablement service is known as the Skills for Independent Living Service (SkILs). The service provides short-term support to people at home at a point when they are at risk of needing an ongoing home care service to stay in their own home. This might be after a period of ill health, including a hospital admission, or a change in their circumstances, such as the death of a partner, which has affected how they manage day-to-day activity. The SkILs service agree the outcomes to be achieved with the person at the beginning and visit for up to 6 weeks to support people to return to carrying out their daily routines, including personal care, household tasks and social activity. The support is reduced over time with 65% of people not needing home care as they leave the service and others needing less support than they do at the beginning of reablement. The service works with people with physical sensory and cognitive impairments, and with all adults, although the majority of people are older people.

Community Equipment and Telecare Service (LCETS)

- 3.9 The Leeds Community Equipment Service delivers a service to disabled adults and older people on behalf of the council and the Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group. A wide range of community equipment from basic items such as walking sticks, to more specialist products, such as, profiling beds and pressure relieving mattresses, are provided free on loan.
- 3.10 Assessments are made by health and social care assessors and the NHS and the service delivers 5,000 items a month, refurbishes, and reuses 77% of returned items.
- 3.11 Tele Care provides remote monitoring for people with social care needs through the installation of telecare equipment recommended by health and social care assessor for people without family or friends to respond to emergencies.
- 3.12 Tele Care is used by adults of all ages including people with physical, sensory or cognitive impairments though the majority of customers are older people. The service currently supports 10,000 people who may live in owner occupied, council or private rented housing. The Tele Care alarm-receiving centre also supports people in Housing Leeds sheltered schemes and telecare equipment is provided for people in care homes.

Day Opportunities

- 3.13 The Care Delivery Service has a Physical Impairment Service at Osmondthorpe Hub and Holt Park Active. Osmondthorpe Hub is a long established service and supports disabled adults with a range of impairments including Acquired Brain Injury and neurological conditions. The buildings are fully accessible and staff provide support with personal care as required. The service runs a variety of group activities, including, pottery, literature, computing and arts and crafts, confidence building, health and wellbeing and social activities.

- 3.14 Osmondthorpe Hub operates a 2-tier service - building based and community based. The community tier of the services operates in Crossgates, Richmond Hill and Holt Park. In this tier staff work in customers localities, delivering person centred support in the community.
- 3.15 The service at Holt Park Active, which was developed with Active Leeds, is located in a Health and Wellbeing Centre. It has a strong focus on hydrotherapy, gym activity, activities linked to good nutrition, how to keep yourself well and social activities. Holt Park Active offers a fully accessible building with Changing Place facilities.
- 3.16 The service based at Osmondthorpe Hub has been working collaboratively with colleagues in City Development to provide a joint service at the proposed Fearnville Wellbeing Centre, which is due to be operational in 2022. Work will begin with people who access the Osmondthorpe Hub to co-create how best to use the space available and the service offer.
- 3.17 Specific design features have already been taken into account with the surveyors to ensure the building is fully accessible to meet the needs of all communities, including, accessible garden space, raised flower beds, disabled parking.

Shared Lives

- 3.18 Shared Lives is an alternative approach to traditional residential respite and day services. It offers care and support for adults and Carers, including disabled people. Trained shared lives carers from the community provide short breaks and day support to clients in their own homes, helping people achieve independent and fulfilling lives.

Rehabilitation Officers

- 3.19 Adults and Health have six members of staff who have a qualification as a Rehabilitation Officer for Visually Impaired People (RO). These workers see people who are identified by an Ophthalmologist as being sight impaired or severely sight impaired. With the person's agreement, the RO places the person on the council's register of visually impaired people, which allows the person to access a range of benefits. There are currently 5,730 on the register. The RO also provides specialist advice and information, mobility training and rehabilitation. They have strong relationships with the commissioned Leeds Sensory Service who work with people with visual and/or hearing impairment.

Occupational Therapy

- 3.20 Adults and Health have 60 staff in the Occupational Therapy Service. There are also smaller occupational therapy teams in Children's Services and Health and Housing who are professionally supported by the registered Occupational Therapists who manage the Adults and Health service. There are also strong relationships and joint service development activity with Occupational Therapists in the NHS and third sector in Leeds. Three teams of occupational therapy staff work alongside the social work teams and have a particular focus on supporting disabled people and their carers to be able to live safely at home and be able to do the things they want and need to do, including using equipment and housing adaptations.

- 3.21 Occupational Therapists work with the customers at the three Recovery Hubs as part of the staff team and link people back to their own homes as they are discharged. A small team of four staff work in residential and nursing homes in the city both with individual residents and in advising care home managers and staff. These teams receive 9,500 referrals a year.

Blue Badge

- 3.22 The Blue Badge Eligibility Assessment Team see adults and children who have applied to the council for a disabled parking badge and do not have automatic entitlement for a badge. The team receive 150 applications a week from people with a physical mobility difficulty that they deal with either by a telephone assessment or see face to face.
- 3.23 From 30 August 2019 the eligibility for a Blue Badge was extended by Department for Transport to people with “non-visible disability” which includes for example people with autism who experience psychological distress, or are at risk of serious harm, while walking, and new and different arrangements for decisions on the issue of Blue Badges to these applicants is in place

Social Work

- 3.24 Social workers support people with a range of needs including physical and sensory impairments. There is a commissioned service that specifically supports Deaf and Hard of Hearing People (DALES). The Community Teams including the Hospital Social Work Teams and those co-located within the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams support older people and people with a range of needs including physical impairment.
- 3.25 The strengths based approach used by Adults and Health means that they work with people and their aspirations and support them to live the life they wish to have. This includes supporting people to access a range of community activities in line with their interests and ambitions. An early conversation is offered through Talking Points which means that someone can see a social worker within a couple of weeks of making contact (if the need is urgent there are Rapid Response teams who respond in the same day).

Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

- 3.26 If you are 18 or over and eligible for social care and support, you can be given a personal budget. Whilst available to all those eligible for Adult Social Care the largest take up is by disabled people. Following an assessment, a personal budget is the amount of money the council decides is required to meet eligible care and support needs. With this, the disabled person can plan the support that will best help live a life that is as full and safe as possible.
- 3.27 A social worker or social care worker will talk with the disabled person about the options for arranging support using the personal budget, including receiving this as a direct payment or agreeing for the council to arrange the support for you. A person can choose to have a direct payment instead of letting the council arrange their support. Direct payments give control over the persons care and support; they can decide how their needs are met and buy the support that suits the individual best to meet their needs in the care plan.

Public Health

- 3.28 Public Health largely focuses its work on the overall population, but with a particular focus on ensuring all programmes are accessible and acceptable to people whose voices are sometimes less heard or considered including disabled people. Also for the work on Age Friendly Leeds, there is a focus on 'Healthy Ageing'. Issues for older people with physical and sensory impairments will be a key work stream in 2020 for the work on making Leeds the Best City in the UK to Age Well.

Home Care

- 3.29 Home Care is support at home, designed to enable service users to remain in their own home and support them to live independently for as long as possible. A range of external providers are commissioned to provide different types of services, for example, personal care, community support, financial support, domestic tasks, and support with health. The aim is for the majority of homecare providers across the city to have the skills required to meet a range of physical impairment or frailty needs as part of their regular work.
- 3.30 Work also takes place with specialist external providers where this is required to meet people's needs. For example, work with a homecare agency who provides support for people with learning disabilities whose staff are BSL-trained to provide specialist, person-centred support for service users with a learning disability and hearing impairment.

Care Homes

- 3.31 The Adults and Health Directorate aim to ensure that all disabled and older people receive the support they need to remain as independent as possible in their own homes. At times, people do need a higher level of support including 24 hour residential and nursing care and to meet these needs, the directorate commission placements within residential and nursing homes on a 'spot' purchase basis.
- 3.32 In addition, 'Terry Yorath House' is commissioned to provide services. Terry Yorath House provides residential and respite care for 12 adults aged between 18 – 65 who have physical and/or learning disabilities. It also provides two respite beds used by up to 12 people.
- 3.33 Adults and Health has recently received funding to refurbish the building incorporating IT resources that enables residents to be more independent in accessing the building without the needs for staff assistance. Plans for the future include developing greater levels of community involvement and exploring the use of volunteers and befriending within the service. The provider is keen to work with the council to look at the long-term accommodation needs of working age adults with physical impairment, as there is a gap in the housing market for this type of accommodation.

Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS).

- 3.34 Adults and Health Directorate commission Leeds Centre for Integrated Living, a Leeds based, user led organisation to provide Direct Payment Support Service. These enable local disabled, older people and families with disabled children to

take control of and manage any support they need with personal care, daily living tasks and accessing mainstream communities.

3.35 The service comprises of a universal information and advice service on all aspects of direct payments and a more intensive service to eligible customers who wish to use a Direct Payment to employ a Personal Assistant. Payroll support is also available to calculate staff wages, and other financial deductions.

3.36 In 2018/19, the service received over 2,000 enquiries regarding information and advice and received over 350 referrals to support individuals wanting to employ a personal assistant. The service supports over 800 individuals with a direct payment and provides payroll support to over 1,200 personal assistants.

Sensory Impairment

3.37 Adults and Health Directorate commission Leeds Hearing and Sight Loss Support Service (LHSLSS) to provide a range of services for people affected by sensory loss. The provision includes-

- Single point of access;
- An Eye Care Liaison Officer at St James University Hospital and Seacroft Hospital in partnership with Leeds clinical services;
- Subcontracted arrangements with key organisations in the third sector, such as the Association of Blind Asians to ensure key groups of communities/individuals who have a higher prevalence of sensory loss are targeted and supported;
- A specialist social work team who are also co-located within an Area based Social Work Team to ensure strength based person centred practice, knowledge and skills are maintained;
- Hearing Aid Services at 21 city wide locations;
- Access to assistive technology and equipment;
- Communicator Guide Service;
- Employment Advice;
- Equipment support;
- Transition and Young Person service;
- Peer Support/Volunteer services;
- Mental Health Peer Support Service;
- Lip Reading Classes;
- Locality Based Social Groups (nine groups presently);
- Interpreting Service; and
- Coproduction and service design in collaboration with Federation for the Blind and Deaf Forum

Information and Advice

3.38 The Leeds Directory is an online source of information about a range of local community care and support services, activities and events that support people to live the life they want to live. As well as the website, a telephone helpline operates weekdays 9am to 5pm. Information from the website can be printed and sent to customers, as can braille or audio information on request. The website font size and colour contrast can be altered to meet the needs of people with visual impairment. The website also supports text to speech technology and, it can be translated into numerous languages.

- 3.39 There are over 1,400 organisations and services listed on the directory that support people in a variety of ways to live more independently: For example, services to help maintain the home and garden or equipment and technology that can be used around the home to help with daily living tasks like cooking or getting washed and dressed.
- 3.40 Around 1,400 users a month currently use the directory. Users include health and social care professionals, contact centre officers, members of the public – for themselves, those they are caring for, other family members or friends and neighbours.
- 3.41 In addition, Adults and Health are working to meet the Accessible Information Standard, which means disabled people receive information in the format they wish, for example, braille, large print, easy read.

Advocacy

- 3.42 A jointly commissioned service with the Clinical Commissioning Group 'Advonet' provides an accessible, single gateway advocacy service for eligible people who live in the Leeds Local Authority Area. Advonet delivers a number of statutory advocacy services including: Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA), NHS Complaints Advocacy service (in Leeds this is called Leeds Independent Health Complaints Advocacy LIHCA), Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA) and Care Act Advocacy, as well as directly delivering independent, short term issue based advocacy.
- 3.43 Through client led advocacy, the service helps to overcome the difficulties experienced by citizens who are disadvantaged through poor physical and mental health and socio-economic circumstances to access and benefit from appropriate support to enable them to seek out solutions to improve health and reduce negative living conditions where possible. The service also seeks to build capacity and mental resilience to help equip people to articulate and negotiate their own support and care needs.

Disabled Living Centre (William Merritt Centre)

- 3.44 This is jointly commissioned by Adults and Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The William Merritt Centre offers impartial and professional advice for disabled children and adults. They carry out assessments for clients, healthcare professionals and members of the public for daily living aids. They offer a 'try before you buy' ethos allowing clients to identify individual needs to enhance their independence.
- 3.45 The centre are also an accredited member of Driving Mobility (Commissioned nationally by Department of Transport) offering medical fitness to drive assessments, passenger access assessments and vehicle adaptation assessments.

Shopmobility

- 3.46 Shopmobility provides wheelchairs and powered wheelchairs/scooters for disabled people. The new service will be delivered by the William Merritt Centre, is placed in a shop within the Merrion Centre and is supported by Adults and Health.

Housing/Independent Living

- 3.47 Adults and Health have undertaken supply and demand analysis to help understand the future requirement for specialist housing across the city, which indicates a significant unmet need for housing with support services for disabled adults.
- 3.48 The council are currently developing specialist accommodation for working age adults with a physical or sensory impairment on the Throstle Recreation site in Middleton as part of a wider mixed development. This will also include elements of general needs housing and a 65-bed Extra Care scheme. The M4 Category 3 wheelchair user dwellings will be designed around the principles of flexible accommodation, manageable private amenity space, good levels of daylight, and can be adapted to support more specific service user requirements including aids, adaptations and assistive technology.
- 3.49 Given the proximity to the adjacent Extra Care scheme there is also, a significant opportunity to design integrated care services with co-located support provision to meet the needs of all residents and provide a more holistic place based approach, which encourages community building.

Third Sector Infrastructure

- 3.50 As part of Forum Central, (the umbrella organisation for the Health and Wellbeing Third Sector in Leeds) Adults and Health commission the Physical and Sensory Impairment Network. The network is made up of dozens of small to medium third sector organisations and groups in the city supporting disabled people

Engagement

- 3.51 The Adults and Health Directorate ensure effective engagement with disabled people in all its work through ensuring disabled people's representation at key meetings and involvement in decision-making. This includes disabled people's membership of the Better Lives Board (which oversees the Better Lives Strategy), involvement in relevant commissioning work, and standing groups, such as the Community Equipment Users Reference Group. The work is supported by the commissioning of Leeds Involving People.

Children's and Families

- 3.52 The Leeds Children's and Young People's Plan 2018-2023 has a focus on a stronger offer to improve social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and well-being. This includes the redesign of the whole system of SEMH and wellbeing support, and create simple pathways with clear points of entry to an integrated offer from education, health and social care services, which is personalised to individual needs.
- 3.53 Children's and Families have an Access Officer who provides advice on building adaptations and changes to the building or school premises, for example, ensuring that doorways are wide enough for wheelchairs, provision of ramps, installing lifts to access different levels within the building, providing care suites with hoists and the provision of additional quiet spaces and Safespace Units. This also includes assistance in accessing funding for adaptations where the setting is eligible to do so by applying to the Access Working Group, for example, a ramp extension and

improvement has recently been approved for Beeston Primary School in order to make it more accessible for wheelchair users.

- 3.54 The Access Officer provides assistance with the completion of Accessibility Audits required by schools in order to meet their duty under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 3.55 The Access Officer manages all requests for specialist equipment required to meet the needs of individual children and young people in educational settings, as well, as nurseries and child minders. For example, specialist software for students with visual or hearing impairments, specially adapted seats and standing or walking frames for students to use in school. The equipment is provided in conjunction with Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and specialist teachers for deaf and visually impaired children and young people.
- 3.56 There are challenges around schools not having sufficient funding available to contribute to the adaptations and specialist equipment provision. As well, as the increasing numbers of children and young people requiring adaptations and specialist equipment.
- 3.57 Safespace Units are now installed in seven primary schools, White Laith, Mill Field, Manston, Carlton, Westbrook Lane and St Margaret's in Leeds and the feedback has been very positive. Feedback has been positive and the Head Teacher at Carlton Primary School has stated-
- 3.58 'Our Safespace was installed on the final day of the summer term so it has been in use for 2 months now and it has made a big difference to the lives of a number of children'.
- 3.59 A Safespace is an alternative to building a permanent structure in school buildings and the benefits are the units take approximately 4 – 6 weeks to manufacture and when no longer needed can be removed and re used at another site.
- 3.60 Improving social, emotional and mental health is one of the eleven priorities of the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2018 – 2023. Improvement work includes MindMate Champions as part of the School Wellbeing Service.
- 3.61 MindMate Champions was designed to promote and develop evidence based best practice for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) skills and provision in universal settings, as well, as training the workforce.
- 3.62 It is funded by Leeds Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) with other partners such as Public Health who invest staff time. It is delivered in partnership between the Health and Wellbeing Service and Northpoint Wellbeing. Following consultation with schools and Children's Centres the programme provides:
- Free access to the SEMH section of the Healthy Schools School Health Check and action planning tool or Children's Centre Self-Assessment Tool;
 - Access to MindMate Lessons: a new and modern emotional literacy and mental health curriculum for KS1 – 4 - includes 66 core lessons and a series of focus modules on specific topics;
 - Free validation visit and consultant support;
 - MindMate Friendly award and opportunity to become a MM Champion setting;

- Regular updates to MindMate links on the current Future in Mind Leeds (SEMH) strategy; and
- Access to SEMH news and resources

- 3.63 My Health and My School Survey (MHMS) is a pupil perception survey that asks children and young people (CYP) a range of questions under eight key themes: All About Me, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Sport, PE in School, Drugs Alcohol and Tobacco, Sexual Health, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and My School/College. The survey is available to years 3, 4 (PE in school only), 5, 6, 7, 9 & 11, Post 16 and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) students. This ensures that there is a large amount of data capturing the perceptions of our children and young people. This data set can also be compared year on year and can be compared between year groups and genders, with resources available to action plan for improvements to the data in certain areas.
- 3.64 A headline report on the results of the survey is then produced. These results are then communicated across Leeds schools and to the Children and Families Service Leadership Team to identify improvement work.
- 3.65 The Early Years Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team is part of the council's Complex Needs Service. The team includes Specialist Teachers (Area Special Educational Needs Coordinators: Area SENCos) and Inclusion Support Workers. The team provide advice and practical support to early years settings about approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice which includes:-
- Support to SENCos to ensure arrangements are in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
 - Support the links between the settings, parents/ carers, schools, social care and health services;
 - Develop and disseminate good practice;
 - Deliver training both for individual settings and on a wider basis;
 - Working with settings to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes;
 - Signposting parents/ carers to support services; and
 - Help with applying for certain Early Years Funding for inclusion for children and young people if they meet the criteria
- 3.66 Learning Inclusion service deliver services to children and young people aged 0-25 as per the Children and Family Act 2014 and the SEND code of practice. These relate to children and young people who need their specific needs met in order to access and make progress in learning. The continuum of provision to meet learning needs in the City that include inclusion provision in mainstream education through to specialist provision with further building and development projects in process.
- 3.67 High Needs Top Up funding is available over and above the core or place funding a school receives, to enable a pupil or student with high needs to participate in education and learning. Schools can apply for high needs funding if a child needs more than £6,000 spent on them to meet their needs. This is only for children in mainstream schools and sixth forms, including free schools and academies. All Primary and secondary schools are required to meet the first £6,000 of additional

support for each child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities before any additional funding is provided.

City Development

Employment and Skills

- 3.68 The employment and Skills Service have established arrangements with two Local Care Partnerships (LCPs) in Harehills and Armley to support the better integration of health and work services. LCP's are clusters of locality services led by a GP Practice but include other health partners, for example mental health services, and a wider stakeholder network including Community Hubs and third sector delivery partners. Although primarily health focused, they are seeking to develop a broader response to the health and social needs of the local population.
- 3.69 The most developed of these is in the east of the city and a package of support, known locally as 'Developing You' has been devised by the service and piloted from January 2020. This is targeted to patients registered at a local GP surgery presenting with poor mental health, social isolation who could benefit from an informal package of different interventions. Key objectives are to raise self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem; increase coping, managing, goal setting and job search skills and increase readiness to take up opportunities and open horizons.
- 3.70 Commissioned and delivered by the Employment and Skills Service, the Employment Hub is a suite of employability programmes for people aged 16 plus. There are currently 3 programmes which offer targeted support to a range of customer groups including young people in education who are risk of becoming NEET, young people identified as NEET and unemployed adults. Of the 1,139 people who are currently accessing support through these programmes, 3% have declared a physical impairment and 15% have declared mental ill health. All programmes involve personalised support delivered through a key worker model and thus are particularly appropriate for those experiencing complex and or enduring barriers to work. A range of community settings are utilised for delivery and access to specialist services are included within individualised programmes. Recruitment for the team of keyworkers has resulted in a number of appointments of disabled people.
- 3.71 Another example is Workplace Leeds, commissioned by the service from Leeds MIND to work across three Jobshops in Armley, Reginald and Dewsbury Road. The 18-month contract completing in 2018 delivered specialist services to Jobshop customers presenting with low-level mental ill health but crucially, delivered a programme of staff development to build and sustain the capacity of Jobshop staff to continue this service offer following the end of the contract. Part of the contract legacy is restorative practice sessions, focusing on positive resolutions for customers. Adopting this model has enabled the wider team to discuss, and co-produce solutions for the more complex situations.
- 3.72 The first conference of the national SEND Employment Forum was held in Leeds on 27 February 2020. This promoted best practice in delivering supported internships and featured the Lighthouse Futures Trust and their work with businesses in the City.

- 3.73 The Employment and Skills service is represented on the City's Employment Task Group, the operational Group working alongside the strategic Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and is represented on the Steering Group of the city's new Recovery College offering co-produced and co-delivered sessions for people seeking support with mental health issues.
- 3.74 Over the last year, over a 100 skills courses exclusively for adults with learning disabilities have been commissioned by the Employment and Skills service through the Leeds Adult Learning Programme. 665 people attended courses that covered a range of skill areas from creative media and computer skills to programmes that develop skills for work including Life Skills, Welcome to Volunteering and Job Clubs.
- 3.75 Many other learners who self-identified as having learning disabilities also engaged in the wider Leeds Adult Learning course offer. The specialist sessions focus on developing confidence, social skills and promoting independence. Learners have access to individual and tailored advice to help them secure supported volunteering opportunities or paid work. The intended destination data collated from learners in 218/19 indicated that 70% plan further learning at the end of their course, 2% will seek part time employment, 2% will undertake volunteering and 26 % had no plans.
- 3.76 Jobshop services in Community Hubs have been accessed by 5,745 people over the last 12 months. Of those, 3% declared a physical impairment, 6% poor mental health and 1% a longstanding health condition. This self-declaration picture has remained reasonably static over time but it does not reflect the experience of front line staff.
- 3.77 This indicates a steady increase in the number of people presenting with poor mental health, estimated at nearer 50%, which more closely mirrors the condition analysis of those individuals receiving out-of-work benefits due to a health condition. The network of Community Hubs works in partnership with a number of specialist organisations supporting those people experiencing mental ill health. The arrangements with some of these organisations - Remploy, Scope and Touchstone – include a presence in Hubs to make access to services more open and immediate.
- 3.78 A review is underway to improve how the council manages, promotes, co-ordinates and secures positive outcomes from its work experience offer. Led by the council's Human Resources service and supported by the Employment and Skills Service, the key purpose of the review is to ensure that the council improves the consistency, quality and accessibility of work experience and placements and better connects those furthest away from employment. This will identify new opportunities and build on the many placements that are offered across a range of services and better connect these with the city's key employment support programmes and providers.
- 3.79 Disabled people will be one of the groups prioritised for support through this new approach to work experience. A 'one front door' approach will be promoted to all organisations supporting this priority group so that more individuals are able to take advantage of the offer than is currently the case. The review also includes a focus on improving the quality of work experience placements by developing good practice models and exploring ways of tracking progress into work so that impact can be measured. The new approach is planned for roll out from spring 2020.

- 3.80 The Employment and Skills service has been awarded £2.91m to deliver a European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) funded programme of support for young people with mental ill health, which commence in April 2020. This will support at least 1,700 individuals across Leeds and Bradford and will build on existing local good practice to deliver a new integrated employability programme for jobseekers and those not currently active in the labour market. It will deliver flexible interventions to address complex barriers to employment; raise aspirations; deliver skills and training, and broker opportunities with local and national employers. There will be an emphasis on mental wellbeing in addition to general employability support recognising that health, including mental health are vitally important to creating a happy and productive workforce.
- 3.81 Work is also taking place on establishing a baseline data position to enhance the quality of and access to the data Adults and Health Directorate has on the employment status of working age service users with learning disabilities. This will provide better intelligence on an individual's status relating to type, duration, remuneration and aspirations for employment to shape their individualised support.
- 3.82 The Employment Task Group, which comprises a range of public and third sector organisations representing people with learning disabilities, will embark on a draft strategy for consultation at its next meeting in April 2020.
- 3.83 The Employment and Skills service is providing grant support to progress the establishment of a dedicated website focusing on employment sharing information on employment support services, skills training and employment opportunities available, in Leeds, across public, private and third sectors. This will provide better co-ordination across services and agencies by pulling information, networks, support and opportunities together in one place, to support access to employment. Work has begun with Connect in the North to establish a web presence for consultation
- 3.84 The council, Jobcentre Plus, Leeds City College and a number of other partners have delivered the Hidden Talents Employment Fair for the last three years. Focusing on adults with autism and building on previous success, with circa 200 people attending each Fair, this year's event in October, will again attempt to replicate the positive engagement from some of the city's key businesses and attract a significant number of disabled jobseekers
- 3.85 The Employment and Skills service is working with the council's Human Resources service to collaborate with two organisations supporting people with learning disabilities to test new approaches to recruiting into council vacancies. The pilot is focusing on a small number of flexible and part time roles available with an ambition to grow these to other roles. The new approach will include on site work experience, shadowing and specific skills development opportunities and coaching. This is a way of working that must be highly personalised and therefore the support to sustain someone in the role will be built around their needs. This may include a 'buddy', skills portfolio building and workplace easy read resources as appropriate and necessary.
- 3.86 The Employment and Skills Service is also planning to work with Leeds Beckett University Business School and CHANGE (the national learning disabilities charity) to explore the potential for developing "job crafting" to improve employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities. This is a progression from "job

carving” and shifts the balance from a process, which looks at separating out parts of an existing role for someone, to one, which puts the employee at the heart of the process, creating a role, which capitalises on their strengths.

Highways

- 3.87 The Highways Service provides disabled parking spaces in residential streets by application. As part of the Local Transport Plan Allocation, the service also delivers a programme of targeted small-scale interventions aiming to make the public highway more accessible to disabled people.
- 3.88 The interventions include the provision of accessible dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and alterations to existing pedestrian crossings where an access issue has been identified, improvements to bus stops, steps and handrails. The Highways and Transportation Access and Mobility officer works directly with disabled residents to identify locations, which are currently a barrier for disabled people and where there is current demand from disabled users.
- 3.89 The annual Highways Maintenance Programme also includes the provision of accessible dropped crossings as part of the full street refurbishment and the maintenance team are often able to accommodate additional requests for dropped kerbs and other access improvements.
- 3.90 A new accessible design for an anti-motorcycle barrier has been developed and the service have successfully piloted its use. The barrier will enable users of all wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted bikes access to ginnels, shared use paths and greenspace.
- 3.91 In addition, the annual Pedestrian Crossing Review assesses locations for the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities. Although these are not specifically delivered for disabled people, they specifically benefit that user group; the assessment process takes into account and weighs positively factors such as evidence of disabled users or older people.
- 3.92 The Highways and Transportation Access and Mobility Officer undertakes a lot of direct engagement with disabled residents in a number of formats, including by telephone, by letter, e-mail and face to face. This includes visiting disabled residents in their home or joint site visits and meetings; with representatives of other parts of the service as appropriate, to fully understand their needs and concerns.
- 3.93 The Highways Service have worked closely with the Access and Use-Ability Group on ensuring upcoming transport schemes, especially the City Centre gateways and proposed innovations (scramble crossings), are fully accessible. They have also reached out to the seldom heard from groups, including disabled people’s organisations, through close cooperation with Leeds Involving People, on all Connecting Leeds projects.
- 3.94 The direct engagement with disabled people is working well and it ensures two things: one that the resources are targeted on areas of demand and two, that the locations or solutions proposed fully (or as much as possible) meet disabled people’s needs. Joint site visits are particularly beneficial for understanding the needs and constraints, and agreeing solutions. For blind and partially sighted

people, it may also be the best way of presenting proposals as it aids special understanding of the changes for those unable to see and read a drawing.

- 3.95 Following a Deputation to the Full Council, the service are also undertaking a piece of work around a potential Street Charter for Leeds, which aims to create a set of principles helping to make our streets more accessible. Issues affecting disabled people include enforcement of obstruction to the public highway caused by unlicensed street cafes, inappropriately placed A boards and street furniture, overgrown hedges and vegetation, parked vehicles and bins, as well as discussing the provision of new cycling facilities.
- 3.96 These issues are jointly examined by service providers and disabled people and a working group has been set up between disability organisations and representatives of the key areas of the service including Street Cleansing, Environment and Neighbourhoods, Urban Traffic Management and Control, Traffic Engineering, Transport Strategy, City Centre Management and Network Management. Work is also taking place on looking at the accessibility of the council's reporting mechanisms for the above issues.
- 3.97 Engagement on the potential future Street Charter involves the following disabled people's organisations: the Guide Dogs, National Federation for the Blind, RNIB, members of the Access and Use-Ability group, Volition, Older People's Forum, Deaf and Blind Society and the Access Committee for Leeds.
- 3.98 The service are also looking to set up a dedicated phone number for disabled people to be able to report faults with tactile/ audible signals at pedestrian crossings and all our new crossing equipment will be able to automatically detect and report these faults.

Active Leeds

Leisure Centre Programmes

- 3.99 Active Leeds undertake a range of work on disability accessibility and equality. In 2019, there were 55,115 visits to council leisure centres and 2,206 members identified themselves as disabled. All sessions are open to disabled people and we will adapt sessions / provide support where possible
- 3.100 Sessions which are specifically for disabled people include:-
- Adapted bikes sessions at the John Charles Centre for Sport and Adult Social Care utilise the bikes 3 times a week on the track;
 - Disabled swimming hubs, which continue to grow. Recent successes include pupils in competing in Liverpool and the Special Olympics. There are six disability-swimming sessions a week across the City;
 - Active Leeds have a disabled swimming lesson and performance programme. To join these lessons children are required to be assessed and will then be placed in the most appropriate group for their ability. There are five options available and we are able to accommodate most children's needs. Sessions run at Aireborough Leisure Centre, Armley Leisure Centre, Fearnville Leisure Centre, Holt Park Active, Wetherby Leisure Centre;

- Wheelchair racing and bowling for people with visual impairments are held at John Charles Centre for Sport;
- Gymnastics programme for disabled at Holt Park;
- Leeds Spiders Wheelchair Basketball club plays at Morley Leisure Centre;
- Hosted an event for Disabled Access Day in March 2019 at John Charles Centre for Sports;
- Boccia at Armley Leisure Centre;
- Disability Recreation Education and Advisory meetings (DREAM) are held monthly at Aireborough Leisure Centre. Activities include a chair based exercise session, Boccia, Polybat, New Age Kurling and skittles;
- Fun Physio4Kids use Armley Leisure Centre and run exercise classes for children with mild disabilities and those who struggle in Physical education or with physical activities. These sessions are led by qualified physiotherapists and they work on balance, co-ordination, strength, fitness and fun for children aged 7 to 10;
- Weights and fitness activity for people with a physical injury or disability, specialising in mobility and co-ordination are held at Armley Leisure Centre;
- Leeds fencing club meets at Kirkstall Leisure Centre with wheelchair fencing available by arrangement;
- The West Yorkshire Goalball club meets at Armley Leisure Centre;
- Leeds Disabled Sports Association meets at Armley Leisure Centre and offers swimming, Boccia, gym and social;
- People in Action runs Leeds Stars swimming club for people with learning disabilities at Kirkstall Leisure Centre;
- Disability Outdoor Activities Clubs are run at the Sailing and Activity Centre during the summer, which are suitable for adults and children, individuals or groups. Individual or multi activity sessions available. Activities include sailing, kayaking and canoeing, off road biking, mountain trikes (mountain bike wheelchairs), orienteering (level route), traversing wall (low level) and unique indoor cave (with accessible flat lower level);
- The Leeds Rhinos Wheelchair Tag Rugby League Club play at Morley Leisure Centre;
- The Multiple Sclerosis society run sessions at Armley Leisure Centre. Targeted exercises and games are held to improve muscle strength and flexibility. The class is specifically designed for people with Multiple Sclerosis but is also suitable for people with reduced mobility resulting from a neurological condition or impairment; and
- Wheelchair tennis and tennis for people with a disability is delivered at John Charles Centre for Sport

Yorkshire 2019 Para-Cycling International

3.101 Active Leeds were heavily involved in supporting the inaugural Para-Cycling international which was held alongside the UCI Road Cycling World Championships in September 2019. Working with colleagues in other council departments and external partners, they delivered a memorable race, which started in Wetherby and facilitated additional riders through the town with all additional races passing through the centre.

3.102 Active Leeds also managed an inclusive sports zone in Wetherby Town, enabling come and try sessions of adapted mountain biking, Boccia, wheelchair tennis, adapted table tennis and disability cycling. This highlighted the vast range of disability and adapted sports available in Leeds, with hundreds of local families and spectators taking part.

Leisure Centre Facilities

- Holt Park and Armley Leisure Centres have hydrotherapy pools that can be booked by the public;
- 12 Active Leeds gyms plus fitness classes which are suitable for ages 12+ at any time unsupervised (excluding Fearnville and Wetherby LC's where use for 12 to 15 year olds is at staffed times only). Carers are given free access to the gym and a free induction;
- Ergometer bikes (hand-cycles) are available at Armley, Rothwell, Pudsey, Morley, Aireborough, John Smeaton, Scott Hall, Holt Park, John Charles centre for sport and Garforth Bodyline gyms;
- Adapted rowing seats are available at most Active Leeds gyms;
- Dual assisted pulley machines which can provide a full body workout and are accessible to wheelchair users, and recumbent bikes are available at all Bodyline gyms;
- Changing Places facilities are available at a Armley, Morley, Middleton, Holt Park and John Charles;
- Disabled changing rooms are available at all sites;
- Induction loops are available on receptions;
- New reception areas include lower areas for wheelchair users and iPad access;
- Carers can access facilities free of charge when accompanying a disabled person;
- Swimming and gymnastics teachers have had MAKATON training;
- A number of swimming teachers have undertaken deaf awareness training;
- Swimming pools have pool hoists with 4 new hoists installed in 2019; and
- A Leeds Inclusive Sports Programme is produced annually

3.103 In addition, Active Leeds are developing the brand and identity of new and refurbished leisure centres to make them more accessible. The most recent are Holt Park and Aireborough Leisure Centres.

Holt Park Leisure Centre has:-

- Different coloured rooms to allow for people who find reading signs difficult;
- Motor scooter and wheelchair parking areas;
- Mini bus drop off areas for social care users;
- A garden that is used by people with learning disabilities, older people and people with physical disabilities – including raised beds so they can garden themselves if they wish;
- Lower reception with a hearing loop;
- 2 lifts;
- A hydrotherapy pool and stepped access into pools;
- Signage with pictures as well as words;

- Ceiling hoists in a number of rooms; and
- A training kitchen and laundry which is used for use by social care and Aspire

Aireborough Leisure Centre has:-

- A new access ramp;
- Lower reception with a hearing loop;
- Additional disabled parking;
- Changing places facility, as well as, accessible toilets and changing rooms;
- Seats in shower areas;
- A pool hoist;
- Signage with pictures as well as words;
- Seating with or without arms;
- Steps into the pool; and
- Various sized lockers including tall ones near the entrance to the pool for prosthetics and raised ones for wheelchair users

Planning Service

- 3.104 The Planning service has a full time Access Officer who supports Building Control and Planning functions to deliver accessible developments (to reflect Legal and Policy requirements). The role is a clear commitment to delivering access and inclusion and advising the building control team on matters relating to access and use of buildings in accordance with Approved Document (Part M) of the Building Regulations. For example, there is an exemption of building control fees on housing adaptations undertaken to accommodate a dwelling used by a disabled person and their family.
- 3.105 The Access Officer acts as a consultee on a variety of planning applications in particular to buildings and spaces, which will have public access. As well. As promoting guidance in Accessible Leeds and the most recent British Standard BS8300:2018-1 &2 and other good practice guidance.

Event Support

- 3.106 Advice is provided on events to ensure that they are inclusive reviewing provision of facilities, such as, accessible toilets, raised viewing platforms, changing places facilities and BSL. This has included:-
- Supporting Disabled Access Day in March 2019, which included promoting inclusive transport, an exhibition on the Headrow proposals and an inclusive sport event at the John Charles Centre for Sports;
 - Supporting the delivery of an inclusive International Para cycling event in September 2019 alongside the UCI World Championship Race;
 - Providing advice to Leeds Pride on how access arrangements could be embedded and improved;
 - Supporting DAWN (Disability and Wellness Network) which is the council's disability staff network;
 - Facilitated a session on deaf awareness in the workplace as part of the celebration of International Day of Disabled People in December 2019; and

- Supporting the Human Resources Service to meet needs of disabled staff and acting as the 'equality champion' in City Development to promote not only disability but also all the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

Service Support

3.107 The Planning Service provide service support advice including:-

- The Access Officer acts as an advisor to the Disability Hub and Access and Use-Ability Group to obtain end user feedback and consultation on proposed schemes, for example, Leeds Playhouse, Victoria Gate shopping centre and the Leeds General Infirmary proposals;
- They also work with 'Pavements for People' following a deputation Full Council to listen and share ideas about how to make the public realm and streets inclusive and remove barriers;
- Working closely with City Development Highways Service on developing a Street Charter for Leeds;
- Worked with the Tropical World Project Team by setting up user consultation sessions to help inform the scheme, which included listening to disabled children and their parents about what they need in such a setting;
- Supporting 'Connecting Leeds' which are the strategic highways projects to ensure equality considerations are considered;
- Providing advice to the team commissioning public artworks on how to make such installations inclusive;
- Assisting the project team at Leeds Playhouse and Leeds Grand Theatre on the works specification in order to improve access;
- Advising the project team for the Town Hall refurbishment and the proposed Leeds Train Station entrance at Bishopsgate;
- Access advice on the provision of Changing Places facilities in the City Museum. Leeds now has 40 Changing Places facilities which is largest provision of Changing Places facilities in the North of England; and
- Supported the council's Licensing Team to inform policy revisions in 2019 to include accessibility.

Museums and Galleries

3.108 Museums and Galleries run and host a range of disability accessible events and exhibitions across a range of sites. Work has been taking place on improving accessibility of venues, which takes into account the historic nature of the sites.

Love Arts Festival

3.109 Leeds City Museum hosted the Love Arts Festival with the theme of 'A Celebration of Creativity and Mental Well-being in Leeds'. There were six exhibitions in all, dotted around the museum. Highlights, included banners hanging from the first floor in the Brodrick Hall, a large dome shape installation on the map in the Brodrick hall and Yarnbombing on the banisters at the main entrance.

International Day of People with Disabilities

3.110 Museums and Galleries have hosted the 'International Day of People with

Disabilities' event for several years at the Leeds City Museum working closely with a number of organisations who support disabled people and the council's Communities Team who commission the event.

3.111 The initial event had a theme of Inspirational Women, which tied, in with the Suffrage Commemorations taking place across the City. Four speakers were chosen to talk about their lives and careers and how they had overcome significant barriers to realise their potential. Guest speakers included Kare Adenegan, a Paralympian who won the Young Sports Personality of the Year award in 2018, Susan Hanley the Chief Executive of LEEP 1 (a Leeds social enterprise run for and by people with learning disabilities), Hayley Mills Styles a local artist with mental health issues and Sue Horan who achieved a BA Hons degree in art from Bradford College during the period when she lost her sight.

3.112 The event was well attended and the women were truly inspirational, one blogger commented after hearing Kare speak :-

'As her segment drew to a close, she said one thing which I found incredibly relatable; "Disability has allowed me to have so many opportunities that I wouldn't have without it". This is a sentiment I have expressed several times before, and I agree whole-heartedly.'

The service will host the event again in 2020 and are working with Forum Central on ways to improve the delivery of the event. The service are also looking at recommendations and feedback from the events about ways to improve access, especially, for people with visual impairments.

Leeds City Museum

3.113 A range of events for disabled people take place at Leeds City Museum and include:-

- Signing workshops in the exhibition spaces for under 5s with hearing impairments;
- An access programme for blind and partially sighted visitors of all ages, including a touch collection and regular multi-sensory sessions;
- Two wheelchair sculptures were decorated by young disabled people from Broomfield South, Green Meadows and West Oaks in association with the Can Do programme and artist Sally Barker;
- Going Sane – a specially commissioned community display on the subject of mental health; and
- Arts to Share (a blind and partially sighted group participated in several workshops including a Costume and Textiles 'Hats' workshop)

Abbey House Museum

3.114 This is a family and community museum, so we take great pains to be active in all areas of the community. Disability accessible work includes:-

- 'Relaxed Santa' sessions for children with additional needs and their carers, a toy appeal and special Christmas celebration for children in care and a special Christmas event for isolated older people;

- The annual Mindfulness Festival, which always heralds World Mental Health Day started a fortnight of activities including sessions on secular and spiritual mindful practices, yoga, mindful colouring, and meditative walks including a mindful poetry reading and walk through Kirkstall led by Clare Wigzell, and a meditative walk through the Abbey led by sufi dancer Adam Hussain in which participants connected with the ruins in their own way;
- Reminiscence boxes and reminiscence sessions for older people in care, living with dementia, or attending local elderly action groups;
- The 'I am me' photography event in partnership with Sunshine and Smiles to celebrate World Down's Syndrome Day; and
- The Kirkstall Abbey Gardening Group, funded through Live Well Leeds and led by Claire Doble of Hyde Park Source provides weekly Wednesday afternoon sessions for adults with mild to moderate health needs. The group has begun to plant and grow fresh vegetables in the raised beds in the grounds of Kirkstall Abbey and have cleared beds in the walled garden in the grounds of Abbey House Museum. Other sessions include indoor sessions on wreath making, outdoor cooking and a tour of the museum for those who have never previously visited Abbey House Museum. There is now a large floating membership of regular and semi regular participants, all of whom have mild to moderate mental health issues and many of whom are referred through Live Well Leeds using the social prescribing model.

Leeds Industrial Museum, Armley Mills

- 3.115 Armley Mills Gardening Project is delivered in partnership with Hyde Park Source, which is an environmental improvement charity. This project helped create a separate group of volunteers looking into the use of natural plant dyes, grown in the garden at the museum, fitting both the heritage of the site as a textile mill and community engagement goals. This led to a successful exhibition, and the continued engagement of both groups, who meet every Thursday afternoon. The scheme engages people who experience or are at risk of mental health issues and is advertised to reach the greatest cross-section of the Leeds community.
- 3.116 They have also delivered four new work experience placements for pupils with SEND. Placements have run every week since October 2019 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. This has culminated in 85 hours of work experience this quarter. For the first time in the Careers for All project, we have work experience opportunities at Abbey House Museum. These placements have increased confidence and life skills of the young people involved.
- 3.117 A key partner is Pyramid of Arts (a Leeds based art collective who work with people with a learning disability) who have developed a positive relationship with Leeds Industrial Museum, enjoying workshops there, devising and performing their own dramatic pieces and creating a permanent sculpture in the grounds. Pyramid of Arts contributed to the newly opened 'Leeds to Innovation exhibition' and 'see the Industrial Museum' as a safe and secure space.

Leeds Art Gallery

- 3.118 In 2015 prior to British Art Show 8 the Art Gallery carried out a detailed access audit that informed the programme of events and activities and ensured access was maximised for all audiences.

- 3.119 Work has been undertaken with the council's Access Officer to improve access and toilet provisions for the Art Gallery, Art Gallery Shop and the Central Library.
- 3.120 The curatorial engagement, education, youth and community team work together to ensure access and diversity are embedded at an early stage. Many exhibitions and activities are co-produced with diverse communities including disabled people and have commissioned work from a range of artists, including, Pyramid of Arts, Arts and Minds, Inkwell, Art Doctors and more recently with Vocal Eyes, Combat Stress, Mental Health, Maggie's NHS Partnerships and Hello Yellow, Young Minds.

Lotherton Hall and Temple Newsam House

- 3.121 The YMCA Pottery Groups at Osmondthorpe Hub (Centre to support Adults with Physical Disabilities and Head Injuries) engaged with Leeds Pottery at Temple Newsam House and Burmantofts Pottery Collection at the Discovery Centre. Individuals produced amazing creative designs based on the Leeds Museum and Galleries Collection and produced a Community Pottery Exhibition that went on display at Temple Newsam House. They have since worked to create decorations for Lotherton Hall Christmas Experience and made pieces in response to other decorative arts at the House. The YMCA Pottery Group at Osmondthorpe Hub, Pottery also visited Lotherton Hall for a Picnic in the Park in summer 2019.
- 3.122 A group with additional learning needs attend regular sessions at Temple Newsam House to explore the House, the gardens and learn about the history of the House
- 3.123 Pilot of music therapy, dementia friendly workshops Lotherton Hall and Remembrance, (Music and Memories)
- 3.124 A pilot workshop run by a professional music therapist at Lotherton Hall was attended by 17 visitors with their carers. The workshop structure developed organically around the songs as people shared memories of favourite songs and the discussion points were sometimes suggested by the therapist and at other times volunteered by group members. The aim was to use the Hall as a therapeutic and cultural environment and connect to Lotherton Hall's story, promoting well-being, counteract loneliness and isolation, and provide sensory and mental stimulation. Singing provided opportunities for creative expression and communication, connection with others and with past memories and present experiences. Following the success of the pilot, the workshops are continuing at Lotherton Hall on a regular basis.
- 3.125 There has been an ongoing programme of infrastructure improvements across Museum and Galleries sites. Most sites have accessible toilets. Sites in historic buildings such as Lotherton and Temple Newsam have had lifts and/or chair lifts installed and mobility scooters are available for the estates. The capital refurbishment of the Town Hall, which is currently at an early design stage, will incorporate improved accessibility.
- 3.126 The City Museum and the Discovery Centre are fully accessible. Some sites include induction loops and many sites provide multi-sensory and interactive spaces. A British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter arranged in advance of a visit (subject to availability and enough notice of the visit.)

- 3.127 A Changing Place facility was installed in the Leeds City Museum in July 2019. Leeds Museums and Galleries now has Changing Places facilities at four sites. These four sites attract 1.2 million of Leeds Museum and Galleries 1.7 million annual visitors.
- 3.128 At the five sites who charge for admission free admission is offered to carers of disabled visitors.
- 3.129 Museums and Galleries also work with a range of disabled charities who produce products which are sold at various sites:-
- Best years who is a supplier of knitted toys works with a Vietnamese Disabled Group to produce the products;
 - The equilibrium range of poppy jewellery supports BLESMA (a disabled veterans charity) with every purchase; and
 - Selling a brand new postcard in conjunction with Pyramid of Arts Next Step Project, which is the work of the disabled artists highlighting what they love most about Leeds. These are for sale in the Art Gallery and City Museum shops.

Communities and Environment Directorate

Communities Team

Involvement and Engagement

- 3.130 The Equalities Assembly was set up in 2009 to ensure the council involves its diverse communities. It is a forum made up of Equality Hubs, which helps the council to engage and involve the full range of citizens that live in Leeds in the decisions it makes. It offers all equality groups the opportunity to meet and work together to let the council know the issues that affect them.
- 3.131 The Equalities Assembly currently has seven active hubs:
- Age Hub;
 - Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Hub;
 - Carers Hub (this is a virtual Hub);
 - Disability Hub;
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans(LGBT+) Hub;
 - Religion or Belief Hub; and
 - Women's and Girls Hub
- 3.132 Engagement work on disability equality is led by the Disability Hub. Hub meetings are open to everyone who identifies as disabled or who works on the disability equality agenda. Hub meetings aim to be accessible for all, information is provided in a range of formats including easy read, and BSL interpreters are present at meetings where required. The meetings give a wide range of services from the public and Third Sector the opportunity to come and engage with the disability community. This also gives members of the Disability Hub a platform to voice issues and challenges faced by disabled people accessing services.
- 3.133 The Disability Hub has worked with a range of services, for example, Taxi and

Private Hire Licensing, Adult Social Care and Public Health, Welfare Rights, Children and Families services, Culture, Sport, Parks and Countryside, Housing and Community Safety. The Disability Hub also works to raise awareness of the contributions of disabled people to the City. As well, as highlighting the barriers disabled people still face by supporting events around the International Day of People with Disabilities, which takes place in December every year. The Disability Hub also works with the many Third Sector organisations in Leeds and the wider region who campaign for disabled people's rights and provide support and advice services to disabled people.

- 3.134 The Disability Hub will undertake a specific piece of work to support the development of the Disability Equality action plan. This will ensure meaningful involvement of disabled people so they are able to influence and challenge progress.
- 3.135 The Access and Use-Ability Group (AUAG) is a sub group of the Disability Hub and is a cross 'protected characteristic' group. The AUAG was set up provide further advice and guidance on equality issues during the implementation/delivery stage of substantial projects of major significance in the City with a focus on highway and planning projects.
- 3.136 The Group provide specific equality advice on usability issues, which will ensure that all issues of access and the needs of different user groups are considered further during the development process.
- 3.137 The AUAG also undertakes regular site visits to discuss upcoming plans for developments and give feedback to ensure that the access needs and use ability of schemes is considered for everyone at every stage in the development process. The group has provided advice on a range of developments including the Victoria Gate development, Leeds Playhouse, Connecting Leeds and the City Centre Gateway.

Taxi and Private Hire Licensing

- 3.138 The council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Team have a specific Equality Improvement priority, which has a focus on improving disability inequality. The priority is-
- Ensure fair and equal access to taxi and private hire services for disabled people and will continue to work towards addressing the challenges they have identified.
- 3.139 The council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing teamwork to make sure people taking taxi and private hire journeys are safe. The service are aware from the most recent Department of Transport (DfT) taxi statistics report produced in September 2019 that disabled people are likely to take more taxi and private hire journeys than people without those characteristics. In addition, the number of journeys disabled people using taxis and private hire services has increased from the previous DfT survey.
- 3.140 To make taxi and private hire journeys in Leeds safe and accessible the service review policies, consult and engage with stakeholders and carry out test purchases and mystery shopping, including on areas linked to disability equality. For example, the service are prosecuting seven drivers for breaches of the Equality Act 2010,

which arose from incidents in 2019. Four of these are guide dog associated breaches and three for wheelchair user breaches.

- 3.141 Following complaints that have been received owners and drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles are undertaking additional training to assist wheelchair users. Later in 2020, the service will be rolling out new wheelchair training to applicants.
- 3.142 A working group is currently examining operator conditions. This also includes a review of whether larger operators, for example, those with more than 100 vehicles should be required to operate a percentage of wheelchair accessible vehicles as part of their service.
- 3.143 The current provision of wheelchair accessible hackney carriages in the City is 50%. This provides a highly visible service in Leeds City Centre. However, the number of wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles in Leeds is comparatively low at around 2% of the fleet. The service are looking at ways to encourage increased provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Some disabled passengers report a reduced availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles outside the City Centre, and in some cases, drivers have failed to adequately secure the wheelchair in the vehicle.

Parks and Countryside

- 3.144 The council's Parks and Countryside Service have a specific Equality Improvement priority, which has a focus on improving disability inequality. The priority is:-
- To improve the quality of parks in Leeds with a focus on community parks that provide and develop facilities and activities available for everyone who wishes to visit. Particularly for BME, people of faith, young and old, disabled people.
- 3.145 The Parks and Countryside Service undertake a range of disability specific work. This includes the provision of all terrain' mobility scooters and wheelchairs which are available to hire free of charge from Roundhay Park and Tropical World, Lotherton Hall, Golden Acre Park, Temple Newsam, Chevin Forest Park and Middleton Park. Instructions are offered to users on collecting the scooter so that first time users can make the best use of the scooter whilst remaining safe.
- 3.146 Cafés run by Adult Social Care operate in two of the City's parks, providing a service for local communities and an opportunity for people with learning disabilities to develop their skills in running a catering business.
- 3.147 There are over 800km of public rights of way (PROW) across Leeds, and in many cases, paths run through parks and green space sites. Not all of these are fully accessible for people with restricted mobility. However, the PROW team have a policy in place to improve accessibility wherever possible and when funding permits.
- 3.148 People with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well, as people with other physical impairments, such as, spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis often need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. These needs are met with the provision of Changing Places toilets at Temple Newsam, Lotherton Hall Estate, Otley Chevin and at Golden Acre Park. Plans are also being developed to add additional changing places facilities connected to the proposed new indoor play facility at Tropical World.
- 3.149 Allotments are provided specifically for people with physical and sensory

impairments at Brooklyn Terrace (Armley), Calverley, Clarksfield (Beeston), Lady Pitt Lane (Beeston), Alderton Place (Moortown), Roundhay Park, West Dale (Pudsey) and Woodhouse Moor.

- 3.150 Facilities continue to be upgraded across the City to improve access. These are subject to funding being available. As an example of this, a dementia friendly garden was developed at Springhead Park, in partnership with Rothwell Dementia Friendly, Rothwell Live at Home Scheme and the council. The cost of the project was £34,000, which was funded from a range of sources and donations and opened in 2017. The new indoor play facility at Tropical World is also being designed to incorporate accessible play.
- 3.151 Consultation on the new Parks and Green Space Strategy started in autumn 2019 and is planned to end in early spring 2020. As part of this work, the Disability Hub was approached in October 2019 for their views on how best to involve disabled people in the consultation process. The service then attended a Disability Hub meeting in January 2020. There is also a planned meeting to be held in February 2020 with the Federation of the Blind and Leeds Older People's Forum. A further meeting is planned in March 2020 with parents of children with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND).

Council Tax and Benefits Service

- 3.152 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support are means tested benefits but there are provisions set by the Department for Works and Pensions, such as, additional premiums in the applicable amounts for a disabled person. Most disability benefit incomes are ignored or not treated as income.
- 3.153 The Discretionary Housing Payment, which is administered by the Council Tax and Benefits Service also directly, supports disabled people, for example, people with adaptations who are affected by the Governments spare room subsidy rules. In addition, there is provision in Council Tax regulations for discounts due to disability related issues, such as, adaptations.
- 3.154 Information is available in alternative formats, such as, large print and braille and home visits are available where required, particularly, for disabled customers. There is also the provision for paper forms rather than online claims if required for vulnerable people.
- 3.155 The council's Local Welfare Support scheme works with specialist organisations supports disabled people by acquiring items suitable for their needs and to meet their requirements.
- 3.156 In addition, the service works with the Alzheimer's Society to better promote Council Tax discounts and exemptions and the council are perceived as England's lead council in supporting this activity.

Customer Access

- 3.157 In 2019 the Department for Transport (DFT) introduced new legislation which entitles customers with non-visible disabilities (in addition to those with visible disabilities) to apply for a Blue Badge. The Development Team, the Blue Badge

team, Adult Social Care and Digital Information Services (DIS) worked in partnership to ensure our Customer Contact Management system (CCM) met these new requirements to enable us to be able to deal with these new applications for the go-live deadline.

- 3.158 A GOV Pay system was introduced which enables a person who is applying for a blue badge to pay online when completing their application form. There is also the option to pay later over the phone, if preferred. Support is also offered to disabled people who are unable to complete an online Blue Badge form themselves in the council's Community hubs where a staff member will complete the form on their behalf.
- 3.159 A number of digital development projects have gone live over the last few years in the Blue Badge service as a result of the Department for Transport's shift to move blue badge applications online. Whilst online take up of blue badges is exceedingly high (over 90%) the service are looking to review the customer experience of applying for a blue badge across all our different contact channels (online, face to face, contact centre) in 2020.
- 3.160 Research has been undertaken to inform the Adults and Health section content that is provided on the council's website. A user centred approach has been used which focuses on ensuring that the content meets customer needs. This involved meeting with representatives from a range of networks including:-
- The Dementia Café;
 - The council's Carers Staff Network;
 - VOLT – Retirement Life (sheltered); and
 - Carers Leeds
- 3.161 It is important that feedback be received from the people most likely to use the Adults & Health content on the website. In February/March 2020 the service will be testing the new content with customers, including, Peoples Voice Group, Health Watch Leeds, Dementia Memory Café and Carers Leeds.
- 3.162 Customer Access have a Customer Experience Group of over 700 members who have agreed to participate in user research and testing opportunities. Information on the digital abilities of members is captured. However, the service is aware that the group could be more representative.
- 3.163 Work to improve the diversity of the group is underway which includes reviewing the recruitment process, which currently takes place online.
- 3.164 From April 2021, the Customer Access service will be undertaking some specific research looking at how people with barriers access the council's website. This will involve working with a wide range of networks across Leeds and making use of facilities such as NHS Digital's Empathy Lab, which enable us to test out a range of different software, such as, screen readers.
- 3.165 In September 2018, new European legislation came into force to ensure access to services via public sector websites was equally available to all citizens irrespective of impairment. (It was subsequently passed as UK law.). The legislation states that all public sector organisations websites and apps need to be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust.

- 3.166 Improving our users online experience is embedded into all online content standards, design and management work. A schedule is now in place for all council sites/systems to be audited. The follow-up reports from this work will highlight what work needs to be done to comply with the accessibility standard.
- 3.167 Work is also taking place to reduce the use of documents on council websites. This is because they are currently produced in a format that is non-compliant and research undertaken shows that website users prefer not or do not use the documents.
- 3.168 To help increase awareness of Web Accessibility workshops will be held to raise awareness. The first session is will take place in late February 2020. Promotion of these sessions will take place through DAWN (the council's Disability and Wellbeing Network) and the 2020/21 staff appraisals.
- 3.169 Work is well underway to ensure that the council website complies with accessibility legislation by September 2020. This involves reviewing all the current content with a particular focus on ensuring all online forms and documents are fully accessible.
- 3.170 A range of services are provided across all Community Hubs. These include British Sign Language (BSL) Video Interpreting, services to help disabled people find employment, home visits for welfare benefit issues, appeals service for Personal Independent Payments and preparation of appeal ready for Tribunal Hearings. They also provide a service to help residents make blue badge applications, provide drop in centres for Mental Health Support, private rooms are used for IAPT sessions, books on prescription are available to help people with issues. There is also a range of social activities, such as, chair based exercise and activities to help with anxiety and mental health issues and hearing aid clinics are hosted at some centres for consultations for people facing difficulties with their hearing aids.
- 3.171 The refurbishment of Community Hubs and Libraries has improved access for visitors with mobility issues. Larger Community Hubs include changing places toilets, hearing loops and there is a mix of seating to suit different peoples need. They are also Safe Place venues, there is adjustable furniture at computer stations and some of the staff have undergone Mental Health Awareness training Also when there are theatre productions in Libraries they have a relaxed performance and a BSL performance.
- 3.172 The council's Customer Access Service also have a specific Equality Improvement priority, which has a focus on improving disability inequality. The priority is:-
- Improve the customer experience for Deaf people
- 3.173 When a deaf or hard of hearing customer wanted to contact the council they had to request a face to face British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter or communicate by writing information down and pass between themselves and the officer.
- 3.174 The council would need to book a face-to-face BSL Interpreter to interpret due to the high demand and availability of BSL Interpreters. This meant the customer's enquiry could not be resolved at first point of contact and they had to return on the appointment date.

3.175 Work took place to introduce a BSL video interpreting service and this service is now accessible from Community Hubs across the City.

Electoral Services

- 3.176 All premises the council use as polling stations go through a suitability assessment for disability access before they are designated as a polling station. They are then assessed again at each election by the Presiding Officer in charge of the polling station and a Polling Station Inspector who visits stations throughout polling day.
- 3.177 There are a number of polling stations where temporary ramps are provided by Electoral Services and removed following an election. In addition to this, each polling station has a wheelchair accessible voting booth, large print copies of the ballot paper and tactile voting templates, which blind or visually impaired voters can attach to their ballot paper to assist them to vote independently.
- 3.178 Also ahead of the General Election in December 2019, the Cabinet Office ruled that blind and visually impaired people were able to use tools, such as, mobile phone apps or video magnifiers in the polling booth to help them read the ballot paper.
- 3.179 The number of users accessing polling stations each election averages out at around 270,000. We do not have any data relating to users of the service that have a disability.
- 3.180 Improvement work has been identified to improve access for disabled electors who live in an area where their designated polling station is a portable building. The door width of cabins currently provided is restrictive. This is a particular issue for disabled people who use mobility scooters and motorised chairs.
- 3.181 An exercise is being undertaken to look at alternative provision to the portable buildings that are currently used of which there are 50 at present. The most desirable solution would be to identify permanent buildings for them all. There has been extensive research of the portable buildings used, which is being evaluated to identify if access can be improved for future elections.

Environmental Services

- 3.182 An Assisted Waste Collection service is provided for disabled residents unable to present their waste at the kerbside for their routine collection. Over 5,000 households in Leeds receive an enhanced 'wheel-out and return' service to ensure their waste is collected and removed.
- 3.183 Materials used in association with domestic refuse collections are provided in various formats to broaden their use. This includes e-forms on the council's website, which can be completed, by relatives or carers and 'browse aloud' technology that can read the website. The service also employs Waste and Recycling Advisors who offer face-to-face guidance to disabled residents when it is needed.
- 3.184 Staff at the council's Recycling and Waste Centres are trained and are expected to actively offer assistance to customers who are less able to lift or carry waste into the site receptacles. Recently redeveloped centres now have ramps up onto the raised areas to deposit waste and kerbs and potential raised hazards are painted in bright colours to make them more visible.

3.185 Certain containers (Bottle Banks and Tetrapak Banks) have multiple apertures at different levels on some sites, allowing wheelchair users to access the lower aperture without assistance. The standard of accessibility is not consistent across all Recycling and Waste Centres and an access survey will be undertaken in 2020 across all sites in order to understand and prioritise further improvements to accessibility.

Community Safety

Domestic Violence

3.186 Funding from central government has been used for 2018/19 and 2019/20 to help improve service responses to victims of domestic abuse with complex needs across West Yorkshire. The council have explicitly defined disabled victims (physical, sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability) as beneficiaries of this funding. In Leeds, the funding was used to employ Complex Needs Practitioners in commissioned Domestic Violence service.

3.187 This has improved access to refuge, outreach and resettlement services to victims who would not usually be able to access these services because of their complex needs or the risk they pose to others. The approach taken has been underpinned by the social model of disability and has been trauma informed.

3.188 In addition, the specification for commissioned specialist service requires refuge services to provide accessible units for disabled victims as well as holding drop in services in a range of accessible venues such as health care settings.

3.189 Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews has been disseminated widely in the City. This has partly involved a focus on mental health issues and the impacts of domestic abuse on victims' mental health. Equally, learning has highlighted learning around perpetrators' mental health. This learning has been integrated into the team's workforce development programmes to improve practitioners' understanding of how some victims may present and how to assess risk effectively when mental health is a feature. It has also influenced commissioning activity of Complex Needs work.

3.190 Equality issues are integrated into domestic abuse training so that the additional issues for disabled victims are considered. For example, participants explore the additional issues for disabled women living with domestic abuse and examine the additional barriers they face when seeking help (attitudinal, physical, structural and systemic barriers).

Modern Slavery

3.191 Home Office funding was used in 2018/19 and 2019/20 to commission Palm Cove to work with victims of Trafficking and Modern Slavery. The majority of the 60 victims they worked with were disabled. Sometimes as a result of physical injuries and / or sometimes because of the effects of trauma on their mental health. Palm Cove worked with the council and other partners to provide help with accessing health care, counselling, accommodation, housing and benefits.

Disability Hate Crime

- 3.192 Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (LASBT) provides support services to disabled people. This is undertaken through case management specifically where disability hate crime has been identified. In addition to this Safer Leeds including LASBT joint chair the Hate Crime Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
- 3.193 The launch of National Hate Crime Awareness Week in 2019 included a joint conference with United Response (a Third Sector disability charity). This involved key speakers across the region from Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, Police and Crime Commissioner, Skills for People, Skills for Justice and representation from all authorities across West Yorkshire at a senior level.
- 3.194 Following the event, United Response joined The Operational Hate Crime Group and this has supported the development of a specialist disability third party reporting centre in the Boggart Hill area of Seacroft, which is one of the council's Priority Neighbourhoods.
- 3.195 The citywide launch of Safemark created increased provision for supporting individuals with hidden disabilities. The Safemark is a scheme adopted from the help mark scheme in Japan to raise awareness of hidden impairments in public places. This scheme has raised awareness of disabled people with hidden impairments across public transport providers with the aim of ensuring disabled people are given more time and compassion when accessing services without having to divulge their impairment.
- 3.196 A variety of training sessions have been delivered focusing on hate crime (including disability) to colleges in social care, NHS digital and NHS equality network. This has seen an increased awareness for partners in disability related hate crime.
- 3.197 Officers in Leeds Watch also review cameras across the City to identify issues where people may be vulnerable. This includes work with Metro and links to Safe Places and Safe Mark.

Resources and Housing

Human Resources

- 3.198 The council's people vision is 'we want to be the best place to work for everyone. We acknowledge that this requires the best employee experience, the best leadership and the best organisational values and culture. We have placed inclusion and diversity at the heart of the 'best employee experience' recognising that every member of staff should be valued for who they are.'
- 3.199 To generate a real shift in diversity requires real change. Change that affects policy, process and activities throughout the whole employment lifecycle. It also requires managers to understand and address not only the diversity deficits within their services but also the diversity dividend.
- 3.200 Human Resources continue to work to improve inclusion across the board for all staff aiming to ensure a best employee experience consistently for all staff throughout the organisation.

3.201 Employment policies explicitly state the council's commitments and set out everyone's roles and responsibilities clearly. In addition, a full Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken when any employment policy is developed or revised, including consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

3.202 A range of benefits are available to staff. These include:-

- An Employee Assistance Programme, which provides specific services, which are there to support all staff. They can be particularly beneficial to people with long-term health conditions or disabilities. This includes Counselling, Support and Advice, as well, as Occupational Health Services and easy to access physiotherapy;
- There are over 100 Wellbeing Champions at all levels of the organisation. Wellbeing champions provide a range of options, pathways and information to support colleagues in making healthy choices, to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing and to provide information in confidence to colleagues to ensure that they are enabled to reach their full potential at work;
- Mental Health First Aiders who act as a point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. The council has exceeded the target it set and have trained over 500 Mental Health First aiders by the end of 2019;
- Promotion of an easy to read guide to Access to Work to support both employees with long-term health conditions or impairments and their managers; and
- Introducing initiatives, such as, a 'reasonable Adjustments Passport'. The passport system will mean that disabled employees who move roles, or have a change of line manager do not have to re-explain or renegotiate their reasonable adjustments

3.203 All recruiting managers must complete 'inclusion essentials' and 'understanding unconscious bias's training before they start any Recruitment and Selection exercise. The council's accessible job vacancy website is a key point of contact for people searching for job opportunities. It makes it clear that arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be put in place to support disabled candidates in the recruitment process.

3.204 A fair and consistent application of the principle of Human Resources policies and procedures policies are applied fairly and consistently, whilst allowing people to be treated as individuals and diversity valued.

3.205 Human Resources have undertaken specific consultation with disabled staff on the development of policy and systems, for example, the Managing Attendance Policy, Special Leave Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy and E-Recruitment System.

3.206 External accreditation and Awards also help Human Resources to benchmark the progress made and provide a critical eye from experts in particular areas. Examples of these which are relevant to disability equality are:-

- The Government's Disability Confident Scheme is designed to help employers recruit and retain disabled people and staff with long-term conditions. This accreditation recognises that the council draws from the widest pool of talent, secures, retains and develops disabled staff. The leader status recognises that

the council acts as a champion for Disability Confident with local and business communities, encouraging and supporting other businesses in the supply chain and networks to become Disability Confident. The council were awarded Disability Confident Leader in October 2019;

- The council have been a Mindful Employer since 2011 and are only the second local authority to have a Mindful Employer Co-ordinator with a citywide brief who has established a networking group of employers in the City, which meets regularly; and
- The council were highly commended in the Excellence in People Management Awards 2019 run by the Public Sector People Manager's Association for "Most Effective Mental Health Initiative"

3.207 The council's staff Networks are going from strength to strength. Employees often find the support of peers beneficial and staff networks help to eliminate barriers, celebrate differences and play a role in influencing policy and systems. Staff networks are championed by senior leaders and elected members.

3.208 The Disability & Wellbeing Network (DAWN which was formerly the Disabled Staff Network) was re-launched in November 2018. DAWN's ambition is to make the council an organisation in which disabled people want to work, while supporting and enriching all who either get involved or benefit from their work. DAWN encourage membership from both disabled and non-disabled staff, as well, as allies, ambassadors and associate external partners.

3.209 Healthy Minds Peer Support Network -The "Healthy Minds" group provides peer-to-peer support, information and training on mindfulness. The network also run events and workshops on mental health awareness throughout the organisation.

Housing Leeds

3.210 Housing Leeds provides a range of services that are accessed by and impact on the quality of life of disabled people, from across all housing tenures. One of the principle teams that provides services to disabled people is the Health and Housing Service.

3.211 The Health and Housing Service was formed to promote independent living and support more people to live safely at home in appropriate and accessible accommodation. The target population is anyone who is disabled or vulnerable regardless of age. The service works with a large number of partner organisations to keep families together in a secure and stable home environment.

3.212 The service is jointly funded by Central Government (via the Better Care Fund) and the council. The budget is predominately provided for the council to meet its duties to provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for adaptations in private homes of disabled people. The council also provides a budget to the Health and Housing Service from the Housing Revenue Account to provide a comparable service for council tenants who would qualify for DFG's.

3.214 Access into the service is via the Social Care call centre who pass full details onto local Disability Teams. These teams prioritise applications and arrange for an Occupational Therapist to visit the applicant at home. All clients that enter the service are assessed to judge whether they require adaptations to their existing

home or for a number of reasons may have their needs better met by a planned move to a more suitable property.

- 3.214 Around half of the staff in Health and Housing work directly on installing adaptations into people's homes via a DFG. The other half of the staff provide a comprehensive service that helps and supports disabled individuals be re-housed into accommodation that is more suitable. The team use a wide a range of professionals that give medical priority, support applicants to register, search for new homes and ensure that any potential new home is safe and accessible for now and in the future.
- 3.215 In the last 3 years the national budget for DFGs has risen from £220 million to well over £500 million as the Government recognises that adaptations supports disabled people to maintain independence, reducing admissions to Accident and Emergency while keeping people out of expensive residential care.
- 3.216 Health and Housing spend over £17 million a year on the provision of adaptations and maintaining independence. The increased funding now allows Health and Housing to run a discretionary programme that enables staff to look at an extremely wide range of funding solutions to help keep people in their own homes. Every case that is identified for funding is submitted to a weekly Review Panel where decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and stand on their own individual merits as a 'spend to save' initiative.
- 3.217 Last year over 180, payments were made to individuals for a variety of reasons and the service had a number of schemes underway working jointly with other departments, external agencies and third sector organisations. For example, funding for individuals to help mend a broken stair-lift or pay a bond for rented accommodation. Funding for partners and other external organisations to provide new adaptations. Site improvements to Gypsy and Traveller sites and adaptations in homeless hostels and accommodation.
- 3.218 Last year, Health and Housing exceeded the Government's performance targets for DFGs by achieving 98% of adaptations delivered within the prescribed times. Leeds is one of very few local authorities around the country that achieves the provision of adaptations within timescales. The service is currently registering a customer satisfaction rating above 99%.
- 3.219 In the last 12 months the service has:
- Delivered approximately 4,000 adaptation schemes per year and assisted over 200 disabled customers into more suitable accommodation;
 - Spent over £17 million across all tenures across the city;
 - Installed a wide range of adaptations including ramps, wet floor showers, stair lifts, hoists, through floor lifts and adapted kitchens;
 - Completed over 40 extensions to existing homes; and
 - Carried out over 1,500 medical assessments not including hospital discharges
- 3.220 Other activity within Housing Leeds to support disabled residents and provide more accessible services includes:-

- Providing bespoke homes for certain customer groups as part of the Housing Growth Programme. This includes the design and build of new council homes tailored to suit the specific needs of disabled applicants. The specification of new build homes is also enhanced above standard building regulation requirements. Features include wider doors, level access to all external doors, future wet floor shower provision, future installation of through floor lift, fused spurs to suit stair lifts or automatic door openers, thermostatic radiator valves at the top of the radiators and flush handles rather than push button which are more user friendly. These make future changes to the home easier, less disruptive to the tenant and more cost effective for the service.
- The Housing Growth Team are also working closely with Occupational Therapists helping to select components for new homes at the design and construction stage to make new homes match the needs of incoming disabled tenants from the very beginning of the tenancy.

The first major development of 59 homes is currently under construction in the Beeches and Neville's area of Osmondthorpe in East Leeds with occupancy expected from March 2020 onwards. This includes one 3-bed bungalow, and one 2-bed house, designed and built specifically for wheelchair users and their families.

- To help comply with enhanced public sector website accessibility standards Housing Leeds have reviewed and launched new website content for council tenants in September 2019 and a completely updated the Housing section of the council's website in November 2019. Working with the Digital Access Team and applying 'User Centred Design' principles, to design website content from a user's perspective the content is clearer for all tenants to access and is more user friendly for those who use screen readers or other assistive technology.
- During annual home visits to council homes, housing support needs are identified. Housing Officers currently visit each home to check the status of the tenancy and to identify any support needs that if unmet, may affect the health and wellbeing of the tenant or put the sustainability of the tenancy at risk.
- Between April and December 2019, housing staff made 722 referrals for tenants to receive some kind of support, with 31% of these being made in households where at least one tenant has declared as being disabled. This is indicating a slightly higher level of un-met support need for disabled tenants compared with the 27% of the general tenant population that has told us they are disabled. Referrals for additional support include a broad range of issues, including mental health, debt advice, alcohol or other substance misuse. The service would like to undertake more equality analysis in this area to understand the experience of disabled tenants in terms of support more widely.
- During Diversity Month Housing Leeds, hold training and staff awareness sessions on a number of equality themes. For September 2019, Diversity Month Housing Leeds held 22 different sessions, including, two training sessions from Leeds Autism Services with 44 staff, 12 staff learnt more about deaf awareness and 16 staff learned more about dementia. This is alongside work throughout the year to promote staff participation and awareness of DAWN and updates for

staff on disability related equality news or information through Housing Leeds Matters.

- A Disability Hub representative also has a specific position on VITAL (the Voice of Involved Tenants across Leeds). This is the services strategic tenant consultative body to help co-create policy and process. This helps to ensure disability issues are taken into account in the design and formulation of future policy and ways of working.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 Work on Disability Equality is carried out across all Directorates and consultation and engagement is undertaken during the development of services.

4.1.2 This report was originally due to be considered by Executive Board at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday 18th March 2020.

4.1.3 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was cancelled, and replaced instead with an informal meeting of the members of the Executive Board, with members dialling in remotely.

4.1.4 Under current legislation, as members were not physically present in one location, it was not a properly constituted Executive Board meeting and therefore cannot take decisions.

4.1.5 The decisions outlined in this report will now be taken by the Director of Communities & Environment through a delegated decision.

4.1.6 Executive Board members made a number of recommendations, which are reflected in the recommendations of this decision:

- That the current and ongoing work being undertaken across the Council to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible, as presented within the submitted report, be noted;
- That the continuation of the Council's approach towards tackling disability inequality and improving disability inclusion, be endorsed;
- That work to develop a cross-Council action plan on Disability Equality be endorsed, with an annual progress report being submitted to Executive Board in March 2021;
- That it be noted that the responsibility for the resolutions above and the development of the Disability Equality Action Plan will rest with the Director of Communities and Environment.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 Disability equality improvement work is in place to provide focus to address issues of disability inequality. They are based on evidence of disproportionate outcomes, which we are seeking to challenge and change.

4.2.2 The tools and mechanisms that the council use will continue to play a pivotal role in identifying and addressing disability inequality. Equality Impact Assessments continue to take place and will inform further disability equality work.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The work set out in this report to improve cross council disability accessibility and equality plays a key role in achieving the Council's ambition to build a compassionate city and tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. The overarching aim of the Best Council Plan is 'Tackling Poverty and Reducing Inequalities'. The work set out in this report support the Best City Priorities of:-

- Safe, Strong Communities
- Inclusive Growth
- Health and Wellbeing
- ,Child-Friendly City
- Age-Friendly Leeds
- Housing
- Culture.
- Climate Emergency

4.3.2 Examples of the cross council work that is being undertaken to address and improve disability inequality are outlined in each of the Directorate updates provided in this report.

Climate Emergency

4.3.3 A specific focus on this emergency aims to embed sustainability considerations into all aspects of the council's equality improvement work. As such, there are no implications for the climate emergency resulting from this report. However, for any disability equality improvement work that takes place individual services will address this as part of project planning work. The Disability Hub has agreed a focus on the climate emergency as one of its current work priorities. They will consider what the potential implications are for disabled people in the City.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 All of the projects and services referred to in this report are being undertaken within current budgets, there are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications or access to information issues with this report.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 There are no specific risk management issues with this report.

5. Conclusions

5.1 This report demonstrates how the council is working together, across directorate teams and with partners to ensure disability accessibility and equality and helps the council to focus on areas of disproportionality and tackle inequalities

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Director of Communities & Environment is recommended to:-

- a) Note the current and ongoing work undertaken across the council to support disabled people and to make services disability accessible.
- b) Endorse the continuation of the council's approach to tackling disability inequality and improving disability inclusion.
- c) Endorse work to develop a cross council action plan on Disability Equality with an annual progress report to be considered by Executive Board in March 2021.

Responsibility for the recommendations and the development of the Disability Equality Action Plan will rest with the Director of Communities and Environment.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None

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.