

**COUNCIL MEETING – 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

NOTICE OF:	Reference No:	Date Received:	Date Forwarded:
White Paper	WP2	7/9/20	8/9/20

Submitted by:	Councillor J Bentley
Relevant Board/Regulatory Panel:	Executive Board
Executive Member/Chair:	Leader of Council
Relevant Director	Chief Executive

This Council welcomes the Government measures such as the Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme brought in to provide financial help for individuals and businesses suffering as a result of the economic crisis caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Council recognises that as the Government’s income protection schemes are wound down, individuals who do not return to their previous employment will suffer significant financial loss. Meanwhile, the millions not covered by the Government’s measures will have endured months of hardship. Additionally, the economy will need a demand boost to avoid a prolonged recession and to give businesses the confidence to reopen and begin hiring people again.

Council recognises that the Covid 19 crisis is taking place at a time of climate emergency, and that there needs to be a Green recovery if Leeds City Council is to meet its target of Leeds becoming zero carbon by 2030. Payment of a Universal Basic Income could be an important factor in providing the stimulus needed within that green recovery, for entrepreneurship and green jobs.

The Council believes that the current benefits system is not capable of dealing with the potential large volume of claims that could arise. It is already failing residents in Leeds, with Universal Credit causing hardship to many communities through the combination of low payment levels, payment delays, sanctions and complex bureaucracy.

Therefore, in order to provide financial security for households during the critical post-Covid period, as well as delivering a vital stimulus to the economy, the Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions proposing the implementation of a Recovery Universal Basic Income which would be universal, individual and unconditional.

Additionally, this Council supports in principle a permanent Universal Basic Income, recognising the need for a radical overhaul of the welfare system and the positive impact this would have on poverty alleviation, inequality, well-being, mental health and the effects on the workforce of increasing use of technology and artificial intelligence.

Council offers to work with government, local authorities, universities, the UBI Lab Network and other institutions to investigate the feasibility of such scheme. With a strong economy, an ambitious Council and a diverse population, Leeds would be an ideal City to choose for the first UBI pilot in the UK.

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Deadlines for submission

- White Papers - 10.00 am on the day before the issue of the Summons  
Questions - 10.00 am on Monday before the meeting  
Amendments - 10.00 am on the day before the meeting  
(including references back)

(All submissions should be made to Governance Services for receipt to be recorded and distribution made)

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