

**Report of Director of City Development**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

**Subject: Covid-19 Update**

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

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

The report sets out for the Scrutiny Board the main areas of activity of the City Development Directorate (excluding Culture and Sport) in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic since the last update to the Scrutiny Board on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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

The City Development's activity in relation to COVID-19 has implications for a number of priorities detailed in the Best Council Plan 2020-2025 most notably in connection with the priorities around:

- a. Sustainable Infrastructure
- b. Culture
- c. Inclusive Growth

**3. Resource Implications**

This report detailing activity to date has no specific resource implications, all activity will be/has been delivered within existing resources.

## **Recommendations**

The Scrutiny Board is asked to note the activity to date.

### **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Scrutiny Board on key activity carried out in the City Development Directorate in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic since the last update to the Scrutiny Board in July 2020.

### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 City Development delivers services and function across the City, based upon the following Services:

- Asset Management and Regeneration
- Culture and Sport\*
- Economic Development
- Employment and Skills
- Highways and Transportation
- Operations – Markets, City Centre Management and Directorate Change
- Planning and Sustainable Development

\*Other Scrutiny Boards provide oversight of Culture and Sport, therefore their COVID-19 activity is not included within this report.

All Services have been involved in activity relating to the response to and recovery from COVID-19.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The following are highlights of activity undertaken since the last update in July 2020:

#### **3.2 Asset Management and Regeneration**

- 3.2.1 The Council's operational estate is substantial – excluding schools and housing, the Council occupies circa 700 individual operational buildings of which circa 200 are key operational properties including libraries, social care buildings, offices, community hubs, children centres, museums and depots. During the COVID-19 Lockdown period, over 80 of these buildings were closed as services were temporarily closed in line with national guidance and as over 8,000 members of staff took to working from home.
- 3.2.2 The ability for staff to work from home has come about as a result of the Changing the Workplace (CTW) programme which was established by the Council in 2010 and has delivered a transformation for many in terms of agility, and prepared the way for home working and the resilience we needed when services were required to operate remotely. Equally, those staff in the locality offices who had not been through the formal CTW transition have now benefited from the roll out of laptops which has allowed them to quickly transition to working from home. Despite the

CTW programme being in its 10th year there are still a number of services yet to benefit from the adoption of the CTW principles and indeed the estate now needs to evolve further to the rapid acceleration we have witnessed in providing for the physical needs demanded as part of the COVID response.

### **Working From Home Survey**

- 3.2.3 In June, a survey was undertaken and made available to all 8,000 staff who have been working from home during lockdown. Over 5,000 responses were received. There was overwhelming support from staff to continue working from home for greater part of their working week than pre-COVID. In particular, 52% of staff would like to work from home most or all of the time, and over 80% would like to work from home for more than half of their week.
- 3.2.4 There is recognition that the home working experience has varied greatly and that some staff have found it difficult and/or not liked the experience. 12% of staff stated that there were unhappy about working from home in the future. We need to keep all staff in mind, those for and against working from home, as we consider our future plans.
- 3.2.5 Further engagement with staff will help us further understand the array of attitudes, experiences and support needed around working from home – for those in different roles, at different grades and in different parts of the organisation.
- 3.2.6 The working assumption is that more staff will spend more time working from home in the future, hence the need to review our policy and approach.
- 3.2.7 Getting the balance right between working from home and spending time in the office is going to be important, for individual employees and for the business. From the survey, staff say the things they would prioritise with more limited time in the office are:
- Team meetings
  - Collaborating with colleagues
  - Training and development
  - Personal social interaction
- 3.2.8 A wider range of considerations have been outlined to inform our future Working from Home strategy. Areas covered include: eligibility for working from home, productivity and performance, staff wellbeing and inclusion, home work equipment and costs. Further engagement with staff will help us to further understand the array of attitudes, experiences and support needed around working from home – for those in different roles, at different grades and in different parts of the organisation.
- 3.2.9 The provision of the right equipment to allow people to work from home is essential. During lockdown, a HR helpline has been used to capture and distribute kit to people with additional needs and reasonable adjustments. This has involved taking kit from closed buildings, and more recently those with reduced capacity due to social distancing requirements, but some has been newly bought where this is unavoidable. In addition call backs have been undertaken to 300 people who sought additional help through the Work From Home survey and there is work ongoing with the 1 in 6 members of staff who say that their home working environment is poor/ very poor, and anyone experiencing discomfort.

- 3.2.10 We have a duty to provide staff with the right kit to ensure people remain safe and well at home. As we move forward, all staff will be required to undertake an individual online DSE assessment for their home working arrangements. This is provided through Cardinus and will inform any items of equipment required. The basic standard offer is suggested to include a laptop, separate keyboard, separate mouse and chair. On top of this, where a need is demonstrated, we may also include a desk and monitor, as part of our offer. Where staff have benefited from specialist kit and reasonable adjustments, we will need to look to provide, where appropriate, duplicate provision at home to allow effective home working.
- 3.2.11 Currently we have some 1000 desks available in our Covid secure locations across this the City and work is ongoing to bring forward additional safe team working and meeting space to support the ongoing needs of services. Moving forwards our estate must respond to and meet service requirements including the delivery of statutory and front line services as well as back office functions, team working and work with partners. The shape, format and use of the estate will therefore be informed by user needs, will be guided by service reviews and must sit hand in hand with organisational design and the Council's work from home policy/ offer. Rightsizing the Council's estate, focusing on our most efficient, flexible and best quality buildings will reduce the Councils' operational cost, whilst allowing opportunities for capital receipts and support our target of Carbon net zero.
- 3.2.12 The more flexibility that we can create within our retained estate, the more opportunity for our buildings to not only support and facilitate the Council's activities but also open up greater collaboration with partners, community groups and other organisations, therefore creating further enhancing partnership working and improved outcomes for communities and residents. Delivery of the continued estate rationalisation programme and remodel of our retained estate is proposed to progress through the well-established CTW workstreams.

### **3.3 Economic Development**

- 3.3.1 COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the economy locally, nationally and internationally. On 11th August 2020 it was confirmed that the UK economy had entered an official recession for the first time in 11 years, suffering its biggest slump on record between April and June 2020 with GDP shrinking 20.4% compared with the first three months of the year. Forecasts predict it may take between 2021 and 2024 to return to pre-crisis levels. Although there are some potential green shoots, the Bank of England's Chief Economist estimates the UK has already recovered "perhaps half of its losses", going on to state that the recovery in jobs will take longer but the risks to jobs have receded as spending and business confidence has picked up.
- 3.3.2 Locally, we are still seeing an acceleration of trends in the labour market and people's working patterns which continues to affect the city. Leeds city centre still has the highest levels of footfall in Yorkshire but this remains below what we would expect for this time of year, the most recent data shows footfall is approximately 67.5% of normal levels but this is steadily increasing. Nationally, larger cities have seen a higher proportional drop in footfall compared to towns and district centres. This is because in cities, footfall is supported by a greater proportion of office workers, students, events and conferences which have all been affected. Leeds is performing in line with other core cities such as Liverpool and Manchester, and London's West End is faring considerably worse than Leeds in terms of percentage drop. Traffic flows are on average 15% down on the corresponding levels seen in August 2019, whilst rail passengers are approximately 70% lower than they were in

March but are rising. Similarly, the combined level of MCard and concessionary fare use shows a reduction of 66% compared to March levels.

3.3.3 The recent outbreaks across West Yorkshire highlight the continued risk of further shocks and we need to be vigilant to local pressures, a potential second wave and any other disruption which may arise as we end the transition period with the European Union. This is why we are proposing an approach to recovery rather than a plan so we can adapt quickly whilst striving to build more resilience into our economy.

3.3.4 Our recovery approach is centred around the need to:

- Respond - Where required and continue to take immediate actions to support businesses and the economy as we have done since lockdown in March 2020.
- Reset and renew - Ensure we understand the challenges and opportunities that we face in recovery and that we have a clear focus and direction on the projects and partnerships that will address them.
- Build Resilience - Maintain a long-term view of our aspirations to deliver Inclusive Growth, address the Climate Emergency and be the best city for Health and Wellbeing, ensuring that our decisions lead us towards these goals.

3.3.5 In our emergency response, as a Council we have been working hard to ensure that we play our part in providing as much support as we can to the residents and businesses in Leeds that require help and advice. We have carried out the following economic support interventions:

- We have administered Business Support Grants – The Council continues to pay out grants to those who qualify either through the Small Business Grant Fund or the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund immediately. As of 11th September 2020, the Council had paid out £153,460,000 in Business Support grants under the Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) via 12,529 grants. As of 14th September 2020, the Council had paid out £4,928,598 under the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund (DGF) to 503 businesses and charities. This occurred through two phases, Phase one of the DGF closed to applications on Sunday 28th June, with 961 applications received. The approved grants have been across a range of sectors including suppliers to the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sector, manufacturing, business services, medical services, creative and digital, and charities. The scheme reopened for a second round of applications in August, including the revaluation of those in phase one that were unsuccessful against a new more flexible criteria.
- Leeds City Council was informed in late July 2020 that the end date for all of the grant schemes would be 28th August 2020. The Council, along with the other West Yorkshire Authorities, wrote to the Government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to request that payments be processed up to eight weeks after 28th August 2020 as the DGF requires a significantly higher overhead than the first two schemes in terms of set up, eligibility checking and processing payments, meaning that it requires more Council officer time. Confirmation was later provided that payments could be processed up to 30 September 2020. This 1 month extension should enable officers to process c£3m of grant payments throughout September 2020. However, based on the

Government's current position, any monies left in the Fund at the end of September 2020 will be returned to the Treasury. Payments will also continue to those eligible and who applied prior to 28th August 2020 under the SBGF and RHLGF schemes until 30th September 2020.

- We have pivoted our Business Support – The Digital Enterprise team has established a new Digital Resilience Voucher to help businesses invest in vital digital technologies to help them to adapt and the Ad:Venture team, working with young businesses and those wanting to up-scale, moved their events and webinars online. 100% Digital Leeds has administered a fund to support Third Sector organisations in response to the coronavirus pandemic through digital means, such as purchasing equipment and applications. We have also been working to support our tenants as a Landlord including market traders.
- We have provided additional Business Support – such as launching the Leeds MicroBusiness Support Service to support small businesses in the city via online resources, webinars and dedicated one-to-one telephone support sessions. The NextUp mentoring platform '500 mentors' was also launched to help entrepreneurs and leaders from any sector during the COVID-19 crisis. Most recently, the Leeds Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional Entrepreneurial Acceleration Program (MIT REAP) team, which includes the Council, University of Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust, aql, Arup and others launched its LEAP project. The project's ambition is to create an online community for anyone wanting to start a business or with a great idea in the City Region and it includes an e-learning programme and mentoring support through the NextUP mentoring platform. The Rediscover Leeds campaign has been launched to help revive the city's rich Tourism, Hospitality, Leisure, Business and Cultural industries, the first phase will focus on getting Leeds residents back out spending time in their city, as well as encouraging visitors from towns close by such as Skipton, Harrogate, Halifax, Huddersfield and Selby. Later in the year, when the time is right and it is safe to do so, the campaign will begin encouraging a wider audience to the city, including those who live further afield both in the UK and overseas.

### **3.4 Employment and Skills**

- 3.4.1 The latest Universal Credit claimant figures for Leeds for July were published on 11th August 2020. The provisional count of the number of people claiming Universal Credit in July shows a continued increase to 67,174. This is a 90% increase in claimant numbers (both in and out-of-work) between March and July 2020. The greatest impact has been on young people with 19% of claimants aged between 16-24 years, 16% aged 25-29 years and 16% aged 30-34 years. The revised figures for June 2020 show that 42,636 were unemployed, an increase of 80.5% in unemployed Universal Credit claimants between March and June 2020.
- 3.4.2 The Employment and Skills service continues to support a number of companies that are restructuring and reducing staff numbers through redundancies. It is anticipated that as support from government and for furloughed employees tapers, the need for support to staff notified of redundancy will increase. The service will provide an account manager to support managers and staff to connect with

employers recruiting to the same or similar skills sets where possible and access to training and employment support services.

- 3.4.3 Recently released data show that the number of apprenticeship starts nationally reduced by 51% in the initial period of lockdown (23 March to the end of April) compared with the same period in the previous year. Starts for people under-19 yrs were particularly hard hit, falling by 74% on the previous year, with starts for people aged 25 plus fell 42%. In Leeds, there were 7,395 apprenticeship starts in 2018/19 academic year and in the first three quarters (Aug 2019 to April 2020 of the 2019/20 academic there were 4,330 Apprenticeship starts. The figures for quarter 4 have yet to be published and fall in numbers nationally may be reflected locally with college closures and employers unable to start or continue apprenticeships as planned. An increase in apprentice redundancies is anticipated as the furlough scheme comes to an end as well as the possibility of a continued fall in demand for apprentices from employers in some sectors.
- 3.4.4 The service has supported 1,382 people into work during April to July 2020. These include job roles across all sectors with the largest numbers in health and care, food retail, logistics, distribution and transport. The Leeds Employment Hub is currently supporting 1,476 individuals on tailored employment support programmes, 50% of participants are aged 16-24 years, 37% are aged between 25-49 years and 13% are 50 years plus. 32% of participants are qualified at Level 3 or above while 68% of participants have a qualification at Level 2 or below.
- 3.4.5 The new [Employment and Skills Leeds](#) website was launched to provide a single point of access where the service offer is articulated to maximise engagement with key stakeholder groups. The site provides information on jobs, apprenticeships, and courses to residents across the city. Individuals accessing the site can get help finding employment using Leeds Employment Hub, learn more about apprenticeships and view vacancies through the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub or find adult learning courses through Leeds Learning Hub. The website also offers a contact point for employers looking to recruit or upskill their workforce. The site links with our active social media channels which are regularly updated with support, job and apprenticeship opportunities. [www.facebook.com/eandsleeds/](https://www.facebook.com/eandsleeds/) and [twitter.com/eandsleeds/](https://twitter.com/eandsleeds/)
- 3.4.6 Leeds Employment Hub is a single point of contact for a range of employment support programmes and Jobshops enabling tailored and comprehensive support into employment or education for all unemployed Leeds residents. The team of qualified Employment Advisors provide one to one support for eligible residents. In July, we added a new programme offering support to 1,100 young people aged 15 – 24 years identified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). This will provide tailored support to those with poor mental health, including behavioural, emotional and social difficulties to secure training and work over the next 3 years.
- 3.4.7 The phased opening of the Jobshop face to face services has commenced at 7 sites -Merrion House, Dewsbury Road, Compton, Deacon, Reginald, Armley, Headingley. Alongside this we will continue to offer customer support by phone and a number of virtual targeted events and support programmes are being developed and will be communicated throughout the year providing a structured flow of information linked to the website.

- 3.4.8 Contracts have been awarded to 16 Adult Learning providers for the new academic year starting in September with an increased focus on digital skills and work focused courses. Leeds Learning Hub provides access to our Adult Learning courses. While classroom based learning ceased due to social distancing measures across 150 plus community settings, a number of providers received funding to undertake development work to move provision on-line and make use of our established Google Classroom facility. Over 200 adult learning tutors have undertaken additional training and developed over 100 courses, these range from arts and crafts to digital skills, training for work, CV's and on-line job interview preparation. This will enable a blended delivery of on-line and classroom based provision as lockdown measures are eased.
- 3.4.9 Through the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub, we have continued work with our network of training providers to promote apprenticeships, current vacancies and 'how to apply' guides online to schools and college students and working with Children and Family directorate, we have provided dedicated support to young people that need further guidance and support to decide on their next steps after receiving their results.
- 3.4.10 In response to issues raised by the Government's recently published Plans for Jobs 2020, we have now established an Employment and Skills Task Group bringing together public and private sector partners to enable the sharing of information and to align and accelerate current and planned programmes and activities and co-design new measures to meet changing labour market needs, and maximise opportunities that will support recovery and longer term growth. This includes employers from key sectors, Further and Higher Education, DWP and our Inclusive Growth Ambassadors.

## **3.5 Highways and Transportation**

### **3.5.1 Social Distancing Measures**

Additional footway space to support high streets and those businesses that remained open during April and May were delivered initially in city and district centre locations. As more businesses reopened these measures have been reviewed and modified or enhanced to support the return to business.

- 3.5.2 During April a full assessment and rating of key locations across the city was conducted and locations rated using Red-Amber-Green (RAG) system to prioritise. The results of this listing were shared with local Ward Members and this formed the basis for action. Additional supplies of highway barriers were obtained to create a stock of some 3,500 linear metres. Once the emergency has passed these will be retained or recycled either by other authorities or contractors.

- 3.5.3 Measures have been taken in more than 12 locations plus the City Centre, where measures are in place on New Briggate, Great George Street, Mill Hill and Call Lane. In addition the contractor delivering the city centre package for Connecting Leeds accelerated their programme to increase the rate of construction taking advantage of the reduced traffic and footfall. This has allowed earlier completion and availability of widened footways and improved public realm at key locations to assist social distancing, in particular on the Headrow and Park Row. Further works are now being planned and sequenced for the remaining schemes planned for completion in 2020/2021.



- 3.5.4 A policy of Plan, Monitor, Manage is in place for all the social distancing measures. As result, as the social distancing measures have evolved, 3 sites have changed as a result of reviews. In Wetherby where a more extensive traffic management scheme was needed to facilitate measure for the High Street, following local feedback these measures were withdrawn and the situation continues to be monitored.
- 3.5.5 Working with the City Centre Management and the Communities District Centres Liaison Officer measures have been put in place to assist business re-openings. From a highways perspective a key aspect has been to advise on safety measures as described above and the oversight of Temporary Pavement Licences for street cafes under the provisions of the Business Planning Act 2020.
- 3.5.6 Support for Schools  
As schools opened to a wider cohort of primary pupils after the summer half term break proposals for a trial scheme of School Streets was developed to support and encourage more sustainable approaches to travel to school and reflecting the increases in physical activity that took place during the lockdown period.
- 3.5.7 School Streets provide local access restrictions during opening and closing times which enable greater social distancing and space for walking and cycling and enable better management of school gate issues. They have been introduced with Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders with the opportunity for longer term Experimental or Permanent Traffic Regulation Orders to be used for more permanent schemes depending on feedback and monitoring over a more extended period.
- 3.5.8 Six trial sites were put in place at this time and these locations were monitored for the remainder of the 2019/20 school year. Further plans have now been developed for a more extended trial for the 2020/21 school year as described below.
- 3.5.9 Active Travel Measures  
During June a trial scheme, planned prior to the health emergency, was implemented on the A65 Kirkstall Road/ Commercial Road to provide additional segregation of the existing cycle lanes. This is testing physical delineators known as Orcas and Wand which are designed to emphasise the presence of cycle lanes and channel traffic to remain outside the cycle lanes. The first phase of this work is completed and amendments and an extension of the measures to the remaining cycle lanes is planned to take place during September. Monitoring is in place to assess the impact of these measures. Further expansion of these trial measures to the A660 route is now planned as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund as described below.
- 3.5.10 *Emergency Active Travel Measures*  
Following the announcement on 23<sup>rd</sup> May of the Government's £250 million Emergency Active Travel Fund, proposals for measures in the £25 million Tranche1 of the fund which were prepared by the West Yorkshire councils and submitted by the Combined Authority, Leeds has received a capital allocation of £710,000 and £20,000 revenue plus a locally agreed funding contribution of £160,000 from the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan for short term measures for which a timeline for delivery within 12 weeks has been set by the Department for Transport (DfT). Following development and public engagement exercise conducted through the Connecting Leeds website a package of measures has been approved as outlined in the table below for which implementation commenced at the beginning of September. Ward Members engagement on all the proposals is continuing. Within the constraints

of the above conditions where appropriate and using largely remote communication techniques further confirmatory public engagement and communication is being undertaken as necessary during the planning and construction phases. The table below sets out the measures in tranche 1 and these schemes have been consulted on and will be implemented in September/ October 2020.

### 3.5.11 EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND TRANCHE 1 PROPOSALS

<b>Package</b>	<b>Project(s)</b>	<b>Information</b>
Active travel neighbourhoods	Beeston Hyde Park Chapelton	All three locations were identified and progressed because of the feedback received via Commonplace, these areas experience through traffic within the residential streets, they're closely situated to local amenities, existing/planned cycle infrastructure nearby, high percentage of public transport usage and low car ownership.
Temporary widening of footways	City wide – All wards – Several locations have been installed which includes the city centre	Locations have been identified following on site observations, local knowledge and consultation with key stakeholders. The main focus is to provide increased footway space to enable safe social distancing where there are known pinch points.
Segregated cycle provision	Roseville Road (Full length)  A660 (Lawnswood Roundabout to Clarendon Road)	Roseville Road is a key missing link within Leeds City Council's cycle network. It forms part of the Roundhay route on the Core Cycle Network, connects a large employment area to surrounding communities, provides a necessary link to St James' Hospital to assist key workers and is a direct route for active travel to the city centre joining up with the existing segregated cycle provision on Regent Street. The carriageway is extremely wide for the volume of traffic that it carries and in its current form is not an environment where cyclists feel safe.  The A660 has a huge propensity for cycling and is currently one of the busiest cycle and bus corridors within Leeds. Providing wider segregated and protected cycle provision would be an improvement on the existing arrangement of advisory cycle lanes. A continuous segregated cycle route would unlock the potential for active travel and encourage modal shift on what has always been a car dominated route.
School Streets	6 locations have been installed to date and further 10 schools being considered for the Tranche 2 funding	A package of school streets has been progressed as a successful method to support social distancing whilst encouraging more parents and carers to accompany children to school by sustainable means.
Cycle parking (short stay and long stay)	250 sheffield stands Cycle hub (within Leeds Market)	To accommodate the upsurge in cycle which has been witnessed during the COVID 19 pandemic a package of both long stay and short stay cycle parking is being progressed.
Other measures	Bike purchase – 150 bikes	A bike purchase scheme is being progressed that will assist school children that were previously reliant on school buses.

	Off highway cycle route - Otley	Improvement of an existing footpath to enable both walking and cycling to take place within Wharfe Meadows Park, Otley.
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3.5.12 In addition, and not included within the scope of the EATF proposals further attention is being given to the potential for early intervention measures ahead of the longer term plans for the City Square area. This is with respect to the opportunity to bring forward cycle and pedestrian measures to support active travel and social distancing for the Neville Street dark arches route which is being considered for further engagement, for an area where despite reduced peak traffic levels air quality remains a cause for concern.

### 3.5.13 *Emergency Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2*

Second round bids for £225 million balance of the EATF were submitted to the DfT during August and a decision by the DfT is anticipated imminently. It is anticipated that West Yorkshire will receive an allocation of c£12 million of which Leeds share is expected to be c£3 million. The table below sets out the measure included in the Leeds component of the bid, a decision is expected in September 2020.

### 3.5.14 EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND TRANCHE 2 PROPOSALS

<b>North East Package - (Chapelton, Chapel Allerton and Moortown) - a mix of Active Travel Neighbourhoods (ATNs), segregated cycle lanes and road closures (with cycle gates). The sector contains two localised ATNs with measures to promote cycling and walking internally, locally to key educational, employment, retail, leisure and health destinations.</b>	<b>£754,000</b>
<b>East Package - (East End Park) - an Active Travel Neighbourhoods (ATN), with measures to promote cycling and walking internally, locally to key educational, employment, retail, leisure and health destinations. Linked to the Cycle Superhighway, and possible enhancements to that corridor coming through the A64 TCF project into Leeds city centre.</b>	<b>£187,500</b>
<b>West Package - (Armley, Wortley and Copley Hill) - a mix of Active Travel Neighbourhoods (ATNs) and segregated cycle lanes. The sector contains two localised ATNs with measures to promote cycling and walking internally, locally to key educational, employment, retail, leisure and health destinations. Links to planned radial cycle routes into Leeds city centre, including those on the cycle superhighway and through improvements at Armley Gytratory and at the Ledgard Way junction</b>	<b>£511,000</b>
<b>South Package - (Hunslet and Middleton) - a combined package of an ATN (in Middleton) and road space reallocation for cycling (using orcas and wands) on Balm Road to connects to local employment, training and retail designations in Hunslet, as well as connecting onward to the city centre via the LPTIP A61(S) corridor with permanent cycle and pedestrian faculties.</b>	<b>£427,000</b>
<b>Satellite Towns Package - (Otley and Garforth) - the proposals here seek to convert road space to cycle lanes/facilities in two out of town free standing settlements, where there is a high call for cycling, but are overly dominated by car traffic. Measures will improve air quaiity, promote the use of cycling and walking and improve the economic vitality of those towns.</b>	<b>£379,500</b>

<b>City Connect</b> Network Expansion Package - extending the successful City Connect cycle to expand catchments and create wider networks. Specifically the proposals focus on orbital cycle facilities along the ORR in the north west and south west of the city expanding the Leeds Bradford Superhighway, and the Elland Road to Leeds routes. These expansions will result from a mix of road space reallocation and new off highway facilities.	£390,000
<b>Tranche 1 Enhancements Package</b> - Upgrade and making permanent selected Tranche 1 works including school streets, ATN eg Beeston, Hyde Park or Chapletown. Includes works to remove pinch points such as pedestrian islands on cycle routes. Additionally add Shaw Lane junction works to complement Tranche 1 A660 works.	£161,500
<b>E-scooters Cycle Parking and Hub Package</b> - Supporting the trial of e-scooters in the city, continuing the established cycle hub from tranche 1, responding to demands for cycle parking at local schools & major employers, particularly where this can be linked to enhanced or existing route enhancements form catchment areas.	£140,000
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b> - allocation for user surveys and counts.	£75,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,025,000</b>

3.5.15 Similarly to the preparations for Tranche 1 further round of public consultation was undertaken by engagement through the Connecting Leeds website alongside further development of measures that were not practical for reasons of delivery and preparation in Tranche 1. The measures are intended to build on those that will be completed in Tranche 1 to deliver a permanent active travel legacy for walking and cycling and improved conditions for active mobility that complements the mainstream capital investments for cycling, walking and place making that are currently either on-site or at an advanced stage of preparation. These include further phases for the cycle superhighway programme for the A6120 Leeds orbital route (complete), the city centre (on-site) and imminently starting in South Leeds and public realm improvements due on Cookridge Street, New Briggate and the New Market Street/ Call Lane as part of the Connecting Leeds public transport programme.

3.5.16 As with Tranche 1 further development and engagement will take place involving Ward Members, local communities and stakeholders as the projects and refined and developed in advance of the delivery phase due to commence later this year.

#### 3.5.17 Other activities

Officers are working closely with Childrens' Services Directorate the Combined Authority to support the full return to schools including the second phase of the School Streets trail which is expected to engage a further ten schools. Similarly engagement and collaboration is taking place with the Leeds universities to support the return of students and the communications needed to ensure this reflects the imperatives of the health emergency. In this regard the potential for the active travel modes of walking and cycling will be emphasised for the many students who live within reasonable travel distance for these modes to the various HE and FE campuses. Support is also being given to the Combined Authority to ensure as far as possible effective provision for public and school transport is being made.

3.5.18 A proposal was submitted to the Department for Transport in July 2020 for Leeds to host an e-scooter trial based on long-term lease scooters and docked provision

(dockless scooters were not included in the proposal). Participation in the trial requires cycle tracks to be converted into cycle lanes to permit e-scooters to use infrastructure such as the City Connect superhighway, before the scheme can proceed. The ability to do this has raised a number of issues and following advice from Legal Services it was agreed in early September with the Executive Member that the application be withdrawn. DfT have now advised that they are willing to address the issues as other authorities such as TfL are also uncomfortable with the level of risk in converting tracks without a relaxation of design standards. The trial is expected to result in nationwide approval of rental e-scooters and this therefore remains a work in progress for LCC. LCC will monitor the UK trial closely in terms of behaviours, road safety and impacts on other highway users. Particular attention will be paid in this respect to the equality concerns which have been raised both locally and nationally about e-scooter use.

3.5.19 The Elland Road park and ride site, including the car park extension which increases the provision of the site to 1,350 spaces, opened on 24 August running on the regular pre-Covid timetable. Services and the site are being operated in Covid secure manner in accordance with best practice of the bus operator and detailed site assessment social distancing. Demand will be monitored on a continuing basis and this will inform the delivery of the service to ensure passenger safety. No decisions have been taken with respect to a resumption of the Temple Green park and ride service, where the site remains a regional testing centre for the Department of Health. The situation is being reviewed on a monthly basis and any decision will be made based on the emerging evidence of demand from Elland Road and the continuing requirement for the medical testing provision and the provisions within the leasing of the site to DOH.

### **3.6 Operations – Markets, City Centre Management and Directorate Change**

- 3.6.1 The Markets Service has remained operational throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and all markets have operated with an increasing number of traders able to trade as a result of Government restrictions on trade reducing over time. Recognising the impact of reduced footfall as a result of COVID-19 a series of fee reductions (ranging from 25% through to 100%, reflecting differing levels of continuing Government restrictions in trade) have been implemented for the 3 month period covering 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Additional support will be considered as required.
- 3.6.2 All traders have been reminded that the purpose of the government grants and support was to enable traders to meet their ongoing business financial commitments during the pandemic and this includes rental and service charge costs to the Council. Therefore all indoor market arrears built up over the initial three month period (April, May and June) remain payable and traders are required to clear the arrears as soon as possible. Where traders are unable to do so immediately they will be required to enter into a payment plan agreement whereby the outstanding debt is repaid no later than 31st March 2022.
- 3.6.3 Where traders' extenuating individual circumstances prohibited them from trading for a prolonged period, even though Government restrictions allowed their trade line to trade, or traders are facing issues of hardship as a result of the covid situation then these traders have been encouraged to discuss their circumstances with the Market team and as much support and assistance as possible will be offered.

- 3.6.4 Footfall at the Market since the return of retail generally reopening in mid-June has shown a trend of a slow/steady rise in numbers but visitor numbers remain well down on the previous year. There is significant variation in daily numbers but the year on year difference for the period January 2020 to end of July 2020 shows a reduction in visitors of approximately is 40%.
- 3.6.5 Whilst it remains 'early days' in terms of return to retailing a number of businesses (a net reduction of six at the time of report writing out of a total of 245 available units) had terminated their lease/licence to trade at Kirkgate Market.
- 3.6.6 The City Centre Team have been heavily involved in activity to support the reopening of the City Centre including:
- Leading of Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund activity including:
    - signage and banners
    - marketing and promotion of the city centre,
    - hand sanitisation
  - Delivery of Briggate Pop Up Park
  - Co-ordinating a new approach to café licences
  - Co-ordinating daytime and night-time economy stewarding services by mean of temporary provision of City Centre Ambassadors (utilising re-allocated LCC staff) and SIA approved 'Night Marshalls'.
  - Completed the permanent the Greek street pedestrianisation scheme and launched in time to support re-opening of the hospitality sector
  - Temporary pedestrianisation activity (with H&T)
  - Engagement with ancillary activity such as safe travel into the city, engagement with retailers re opening, liaison with the Bid on partnership activity etc.
- 3.6.7 Footfall for the City Centre as outlined earlier in the report continues to show a steady increase in numbers (with some weather and activity led variation e.g. 'eat out to help out'). At the time of writing city centre footfall was recovering and showing an upward trend following the significant reductions at the height of the lockdown period. It should be noted however that there is a marked change in footfall across the City Centre with the main shopping areas attracting visitors whilst the commercial areas have seen significantly less footfall and major employers have not, as yet, returned to office based locations.

### **3.7 Planning and Sustainable Development**

- 3.7.1 During the lockdown period and as restrictions have eased, the Planning Service has continued to operate, albeit with adjustments in place. The majority of Planning and Building Control Staff have been able to work successfully from home, although it has been necessary for the Customer Services and Technical Support Team to return to the office (on a limited basis), to undertake duties which cannot be done remotely. This has been essential, in order to enable other parts of the service to operate and to enable service continuity. This includes the validation of new planning applications, servicing the Plans Panel and in issuing Decision Notices.

- 3.7.2 Following the introduction of the lockdown, as previously highlighted, in consultation with the Plans Panel Chairs and the Executive Member, planning applications in the system were reviewed as a basis to identify, which applications might be delegated for decision (under the scheme of delegation), deferred with agreement or for consideration at a future Plans Panel.
- 3.7.3 In response to the need to adhere to national and City Council guidance for 'safe working', a 'Remote Access' protocol was circulated to all members of Council on 15<sup>th</sup> April, to provide a basis for Virtual Plans Panels to be trialled and to operate until circumstances substantially change. The first Remote Access Panel took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May (City Plans Panel), with the South and West Plans Panel taking place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June. Following this, a schedule of Plans Panel meetings for all three Panels has been put in place and are now diarised into 2021. In support of the Panels, extensive work was undertaken by Governance Services, DIS and support staff, to ensure the technology, training and meeting protocols were in place. A particular challenge has been moving to different virtual meeting platforms and retraining, to ensure that the infrastructure to support such meetings remains fit for purpose.
- 3.7.4 Due to the restrictions in place, the erection of Site notices was temporarily suspended but are now being erected, neighbour notification letters are also being sent out and site visits undertaken, enabling applications to move through the process. The resumption of these activities has followed a stepped and precautionary approach, through the development of Safe Working Practices Notes (for both Planning and Building Control). These have been developed (and are being kept under review), within the context of Government and City Council requirements and engagement with staff, the Trades Unions, Health & Safety and Human Resources.
- 3.7.5 For plan making and implementation there has been a continued focus on delivering the climate emergency and health and well-being agenda through better place making and master planning. The importance of this has been heightened through the lockdown experience and the resilience of communities is a key theme of the forthcoming update of the Local Plan. This has a particular focus on matters such as green infrastructure and town and local centres.
- 3.7.6 In parallel with the above activity, there have been on going Government (MHCLG) reforms to the Planning System. These include lifting restrictions and increasing Permitted Development allowances in response to the pandemic. On the 6<sup>th</sup> August MHCLG, launched the Planning White Paper – 'Planning for the Future'. This reiterates the importance of the use of digital technologies in the delivery of a planning service. At a local level, this reflects how the service has been operating increasingly during the pandemic and also future changes which will need to be made to meet budget challenges.

## **4 Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 The work undertaken as outlined in Section 3 covers a range of Services and functions across the Directorate. Certain specific activity e.g. temporary changes to public realm, will have included consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders prior to implementation.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

4.2.1 A number of the activities undertaken in Section 3 may have the potential to give rise to equality implications, including positive outcomes. All changes undertaken have been taken cognisant of the Council's agreed approach to Equalities and the need to consider the duty to promote community cohesion.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The City Development's activity in relation to COVID-19 has implications for a number of priorities detailed in the Best Council Plan 2020-2025 most notably in connection with the priorities around:

- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Culture
- Inclusive Growth

### Climate Emergency

4.3.2 The work by Highways and Transportation and City Centre Management in responding to COVID-19 and bringing forward changed arrangements in relation to pedestrian/vehicle movements has the potential to bring forward reductions in vehicle emissions with a positive impact on climate matters.

## **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

4.4.1 No implications in relation to activity undertaken. Covid-19 has however had a significant impact on the Directorate's budget position for 20/21 and its forecast position for 21/22.

4.4.2 This is being reported as part of the corporate monitoring processes, including regular reporting to Executive Board.

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

4.5.1 No implications.

## **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 There are no obvious risk management implications.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 COVID-19 remains a significant area of activity and risk for the City and City Development continues to play a leading role in a number of areas of activity.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 Scrutiny Board is asked to note the activity to date as detailed within the report.



## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.