

Report of the Director of Communities and Environment

Report to the Executive Board

Date: 21st October 2020

Subject: Understanding and progressing the city’s learning of the experience of people living a street-based life in Leeds

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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

- One death as a consequence of a street-based life is one too many, and no-one should lose their lives in such circumstances. This report documents the key findings and recommendations from the independent review of people living a street-based life in Leeds, as detailed in the Executive and Oversight Report which is attached. The systemic learning themes for the city are clustered around the three pillars of Prevention, Intervention and Recovery; indicating specific recommendations around leadership and system change.
- Addressing the health inequalities of people who live street-based lives is complex, and it demands a truly integrated systems perspective. Like all population groupings, those on the street are not homogenous, they are people first with unique personal experiences, histories and circumstances. Many have multiple, complex and highly dynamic needs, spanning across local systems: housing; physical and mental health; substance misuse (tri-morbidity); care experience, historic trauma; welfare; education; employment; criminality; environment; and community/ neighbourhoods.
- In September 2018, the Executive Board agreed to the establishment of multi-disciplined Leeds Street Support Team, to focus on the specific issues of street use and develop new responses and approaches to address rough sleeping, begging, substance misuse and addiction, criminality, anti-social behaviour and other related issues, in recognition of the vulnerability of people on the street. Through the Street

Support Partnership and network much has been achieved over the last 2 years as part of the city's person-centred response.

- Covid has brought significant challenges for this population and as a consequence to service delivery in Leeds. Colleagues from all sectors have worked tirelessly, flexing to ensure as many people as possible have and continue to be supported and assisted in moving away from the streets, into safe, temporary accommodation and securing their personal move-on plans. It has also provided evidence of opportunities to move forward and change requirement needed to take the next step change.
- Locally, there is a real recognition that more needs to be done and a real willingness to continue a programme of change on this complex agenda, at strategic and operational level, including across and connected to city wide boards. The issues at a population level cannot be solved quickly and the solutions will require a long term and sustained commitment. As a compassionate city with a strong partnership, the collaboration and cooperation highlighted here will aid future work around transition and recovery plans moving forward. The voice of people with lived experience is being listened to and is shaping future plans.

2. Best Council Plan implications

- Leeds has an ambition to be a compassionate city supported by a strong economy, with an overall aim to reduce poverty and inequality. It is well documented that a sustained street lifestyle is inherently harmful to the health and wellbeing of individuals. The recommendations in this report will make a positive and specific contribution to our priorities around: health and well-being, housing, safe and strong communities and inclusive growth. The issues sit across a number of directorate portfolios. The recommendations also provide an opportunity to increase the collective emphasis on 'upstreaming' of our prevention work, particularly with those most at risk.

3. Resource implications

- As we are at this stage receiving the outcomes of the independent review there are no direct resource implications arising from this report. However, in responding to the recommendations, consideration will need to be given to the resourcing implications which will include assessing the ability to realign existing resources to key priority areas as well as bidding for new funds to support critical activity.

4. Recommendations

- Receive the outcome of the independent review of people living a street-based life in Leeds as outlined in the appended Executive and Oversight Report, noting the key findings and recommendations;
- Note that the Director of Communities and Environment will take lead responsibility for considering the recommendations and progressing any changes proposed in accordance with council governance arrangements, working closely with other Directors and partners as required, through agreed governance arrangements.
- Acknowledge the excellent work of officers and partners across a range of services and sectors connected to the Street Support Partnership and the wider homeless network, during this difficult time for many.
- Request that the Council's Leadership Team receive an annual report on progress.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report summarises the findings of the independent review of people living street-based lives in Leeds which is appended to this report at appendix 1.
- 1.2 The Executive Board is receiving this report due to its significance to the council and the city and to ask officers to proceed with developing an improvement plan in response to the recommendations made. The review highlights key learning for the city, it also sets out the city-wide context, highlighting other relevant learning and information.
- 1.3 In addition, within the context of the review the report summaries some of the key progress made by the Leeds Street Support Partnership, two years on since its launch and the work undertaken by this partnership as a response to Covid-19. It outlines the plans for the next step change to aid people in temporary safe emergency accommodation and/ or on the streets, to aid their personal move-on, within a transition and recovery framework.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The *Thematic Review of People Living Street-based Lives in Leeds* was commissioned by the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and undertaken in response to concerns raised at the LSAB about those living street-based lives in the city, who had sadly died.
- 2.2 The LSAB led this review in partnership with Safer Leeds. While Safer Leeds has overarching strategic and operational accountability for the multi-agency Leeds Street Support Team (SST), the independent review has been conducted under Section 44 (5) of the Care Act 2014, using the Safeguarding Adults Board's powers, (rather than duties) to conduct such a review.
- 2.3 The review was led by an independent consultant with extensive local authority and national experience in housing and homelessness matters, Neil Reveley of Reveley Consultancy Ltd., (RC Ltd.). Mr Reveley was supported during the review by a national charity, Homeless Link and its Expert Link group, which provided the review with an understanding of lived experience of those living street-based lives.
- 2.4 The review focused on the 'systems' in Leeds and considered how effectively they achieve positive outcomes for citizens in Leeds. Its purpose was to "*Assess the experience of those with street-based lives who have died in Leeds; (covering the period October 2017 to December 2018)*" to:
 - *understand how the safeguarding system, in its widest sense works for people in those circumstances in Leeds, examining the strengths and areas for development;*
 - *Identify best practice in Leeds and across the country, and;*
 - *Identify learning for Leeds and propose systemic developments that will help the City achieve its ambition of being a compassionate city.*
- 2.5 The terms of reference that underpinned this work were: '*To review the city-wide response to risk and vulnerability experienced by people living street-based lives in Leeds by:*

- *Understanding how we prevent the deaths of adults living street-based lives in Leeds;*
- *Considering the impact of physical or mental impairment or illness, including substance dependency and self-neglect on the risks experienced by adults who live street-based lives and;*
- *Evaluating the effectiveness of multi-agency working to support adults living street-based lives.*

2.6 Reveley Consultancy Ltd carried out the review via a combination of stakeholder interviews, including people with lived experience, a desk-top review of policies, procedures and strategies in Leeds, and using examples of national good practice in this area. The Independent Review has been supported by a multi-agency steering group of frontline managers who have ensured that the thinking has been reflective of their experience and that of those they work to support.

2.7 There was a delay in the actual report going through the LSAB governance arrangements as unfortunately, Mr Reveley was unable to complete the full report due to ill health. The LSAB have therefore produced an Executive and Oversight Report of his findings, to support the city's response to identified learning. Mr Reveley presented his findings to the LSAB Executive Group and representatives from Safer Leeds and the Report was 'signed off' formally by the LSAB on the 16th July 2020.

3. Main issues/ findings

3.1 The review has identified a number of areas of learning and these are summarised here as three key systemic learning themes for the city, based around the three pillars framework followed by Safer Leeds:

- ❖ **Prevention**: Leadership; the importance of building on good leadership arrangements within key agencies to develop the coordinated strategic leadership in partnership, allowing us to work together on good practice and shared solutions.
- ❖ **Intervention**: Multi-agency service delivery and support in accommodation and communities; supporting effective front-line provision commissioning and multi-disciplinary working to provide effective services and accommodation within citizens' communities that compassionately address inequalities and enable recovery.
- ❖ **Recovery**: Pathways to recovery and support; identifying those living street-based lives in Leeds as a distinct population with particular needs, addressing these together through jointly commissioned services. In recognition that this agenda is complex, cross cutting and a whole city issue, the review identified areas for development in Leeds around the whole system. These can summarised as follows:

i. Developing a whole city Leeds Street-Based Lives Strategy with clear governance

- The Leeds Street-based Lives Strategy should have clear governance in place that is entirely multi-agency and is focused on care and support as well as criminal justice and community safety responses. That

governance structure should also identify how the strategy links with the rest of the city's strategic partnerships.

- A joint commissioning approach, possibly with pooled budgets could be considered, or at least aligned budgets around the pathways

ii. *Recognise those living Street-Based Lives as a priority group for recognising and addressing health inequalities*

- The city should recognise and respond to those living street-based lives as people for whom many inequalities apply, including those around social care, criminal justice, welfare benefits and physical and mental health

iii. *Agreeing terminology that makes sense to everyone*

- The system should promote a consistent description and understanding of the needs and circumstances of people living street-based lives.

iv. *Seeing the person and their strengths through the lens of Multiple Exclusion Homelessness*

- Work should be undertaken across agencies in Leeds to develop a system-wide protocol with accompanying practice guidance and development opportunities to enable frontline practitioners to manage dis-engagement effectively.
 - Developing an effective multi-agency approach to provision of intensive support to ensure tenancies are sustainable.
 - Supporting effective information sharing across services
 - Access to services to support effective intervention.

v. *Safeguarding adults*

- The system in Leeds should ensure the needs and eligibility of those living street-based lives for care and support is better understood (by all concerned) and the referral pathway for social care assessments is straightforward for practitioners across the city.
- Agencies [supporting adults with care and support needs who live street-based lives] should better understand their duties in respect of adult safeguarding and also the meaning of the criteria for S42 Care Act 2014.
- The LSAB should ensure that those working with adults living street-based lives should be a fundamental part of the development of city-wide approaches to supporting adults who live in self-neglectful circumstances and be able to access its learning and development opportunities.

4. Contextual 'step changes' and developments of significance

- 4.1 As referenced in the Executive and Oversight Report, with an increased prevalence of people in need on the streets during 2017/18, Leeds agreed a 'step-change' in how the city collectively approaches issues relating to 'street users' and associated activity. As a result, the multi-agency Leeds Street Support Team was established and launched in October 2018, with the governance and accountability arrangements through Safer Leeds Executive, to focus on the specific issues of street use and develop new responses and approaches to address rough sleeping,

begging, substance misuse and addiction, criminality, anti-social behaviour and other related issues, in recognition of the vulnerability of people on the street. The Team's approach is based on: High Support/ High Challenge ('People and Place') and the management of the day-to-day function and delivery of services of people who are presenting as high risk/ high harm, with a focus on safeguarding a highly vulnerable population through a compassionate response and address associated anti-social behaviour and/ or criminality Through the Street Support Partnership and network much has been achieved over the last 2 years as part of the city's person centred response.

4.2 In the two years since the team was mobilised and through the Leeds Street Support Partnership much has been achieved. In brief, the focus on people first has seen:

- A reduction in the number of people rough sleeping
- An improved understanding of the cohort, including sharing of information to aid appropriate response to people's needs
- An increase uptake of people seeking treatment for drug and alcohol use
- Improved pathways including prisoner releases and hospital discharges
- An increase in the number of people supported into accommodation, and
- A reducing trend of people returning to the street

4.3 The period from March 2020 to current time, due to the Covid pandemic has been significant for this population group. On the 26th March, the government sent out an 'Everybody In' directive, instructing local authorities to accommodate everyone who was rough sleeping, living in night shelters or in hostels (where they could not self-isolate), into emergency self-contained accommodation. In Leeds, at the highest point there were over 220 persons in safe, alternative temporary accommodation and of that, over 70 were known rough sleepers, who without intervention would have been either on the streets sleeping rough or moving from place to place, finding very short term accommodation fixes and as such, at increased risk from the virus. Colleagues from all sectors have worked tirelessly, flexing to ensure as many people as possible have and continue to be supported and assisted with their move-on plans.

4.4 Whilst in the safe, alternative temporary accommodation many people have made very positive headway to aid their recovery. For those in the accommodation, three meals a day were provided through Leeds City Council and the Leeds Food Aid Network, and wrap around support to meet their needs and address behaviours via commissioned and voluntary sector services. Although the initial stages were hampered by the introduction of smooth processes linked to the delivery of food, medical intervention and treatment services, a truly concerted effort and exemplary partnership working between the city council departments and our key partners resulted in a very successful delivery and real positive outcomes for many. As of now, the numbers in safe, alternative temporary accommodation has been reduced to under 85 and of that number less than 30 are known rough sleepers. There has not been a significant migration to street-based living but a movement into more settled accommodation, where on-going support is expertly delivered by our

commissioned services. This is evidenced by our most recent count showing a return of 30 persons with an average of around 25, approaching half of where we were only twelve months ago.

- 4.6 In June 2020, as requested, by the governments Rough Sleeping Taskforce lead, we developed the 'Leeds Asks' of next steps to achieve better outcomes for rough sleepers, co-produced in through the Street Support Partnership. In late July, the MHCLG announced the 'Next Steps Accommodation Programme' funding and Leeds through the local authority have submitted a funding bid (revenue and capital) on the 20th August. This is made up of 3 parts:
1. Short term: to be spent by 31 March 2021
 2. Capital assets: to be spent by 31 March 2021 but with a long term (30 year) legacy
 3. Medium term: to provide support to the capital assets element of the bid through to 31 March 2024

To date we have been informed of the short-term funding allocation up to the end of March 2021 and will hear about the outcome of the 2 other elements in the near future.

- 4.7 The independent review highlighted the good practice of the Leeds Street Support Team and the wider partnership and network. Locally, there is a real recognition that more needs to be done and a real willingness to continue a programme of change on this complex agenda, at a strategic and operational level, including across and connected to city wide boards. As a compassionate city with a strong partnership, the collaboration and cooperation highlighted here will aid future work around transition and recovery plans moving forward.
- 4.8 The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a focus on reducing health inequalities and has a bold ambition that people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest. NHS Leeds CCG are committed to playing their part to deliver this ambition for this population group.

5. Corporate considerations

5.1 Consultation and engagement

- 5.2 The methodology for the review is outlined in the Executive and Oversight Report; and included significant consultation with wide range of stakeholders, including people with lived experience, who use street homeless services in Leeds.

5.3 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 5.4 The report has focused on listening to the views of the key stakeholders as identified, to improve learning and is outlining a set of key recommendations which would seek to sustain and improve the current arrangements across the city.
- 5.5 Addressing the health inequalities of people who live a street-based lives is complex; it demands a truly integrated systems perspective. This population have multiple, complex and highly dynamic needs, spanning across local systems: housing; physical and mental health/disability; substance misuse (tri-morbidity); care experience/historic trauma; welfare; education; employment; criminality;

environment; and community. These complex needs can be further impacted by characteristics such as race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or sex.

5.6 Any proposed changes to service provision or policy will have due regard to equality through the Equality Impact Assessment process and in accordance with council governance arrangements, working closely with other council services and partners as required.

5.7 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

5.8 Leeds has an ambition to be a compassionate city supported by a strong economy, with an overall aim to reduce poverty and inequality. A key dimension of this is around addressing the needs of people who find themselves on the street. It is well documented that a sustained street-based life is inherently harmful to the health and wellbeing of individuals, as evidenced in the Executive and Oversight Report.

5.9 The City's Best Council Plan sets out the vital importance of health and wellbeing for all of the citizens of Leeds. The Executive, Learning, and Oversight Report supports the Plan's underpinning ambitions of:

- Reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the poorest the fastest
- Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles
- Supporting self-care, with more people managing their own health conditions in the community
- Working as a system to ensure people get the right care, from the right people in the right place.

5.10 Climate Emergency

5.11 The report is asking the Executive Board to receive the findings of independent review and ask officers to take forward the recommendations. There are no climate emergency implications.

5.12 Resources, procurement and value for money

5.13 As we are at this stage receiving the outcomes of the independent review there are no direct resource implications arising from this report. However, in responding to the recommendations, consideration will need to be given to the resourcing implications which will include assessing the ability to realign existing resources to key priority areas as well as bidding for new funds to support critical activity.

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

5.15 There are no legal implications at this stage and the report is open for call-in.

5.16 Risk management

- 5.17 The review process was inclusive of all key community stakeholders, wider partners and with people with lived experience; and it is important that the findings are reported in an open and transparent way.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 We would like to thank those who participated and provided open, honest and constructive feedback as part of the review, which demonstrates the maturity of the partnership we have in Leeds.
- 6.2 The independent review of people living a street-based life in Leeds provides valuable insight to aid Leeds in moving forward as part of our local transition and recovery framework. As a city we have '*not stood still*' waiting for the publication of the report, much has moved on through effective learning in the last 2 years via the Street Support Partnership and through the last 7 months during Covid. There is however, a real recognition that is more that can be done and there are opportunities to make lasting and sustainable change through strong and effective partnership, on this whole city issue. The recommendations highlighted in the report provides a clear focus, and as part of our ongoing improvement we will continue to learn, listen, evolve and change.
- 6.3 Like all population groupings, those on the street are not homogenous, they are people first with unique personal experiences, histories and circumstances. We will continue to develop our strengths-based model and ensure that it is person centred, and one that aids and supports individuals to recover and help turn around individual lives.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Members of Executive Board are recommended to:
- a) Receive the outcome of the independent review of people living a street-based life in Leeds as outlined in the appended Executive and Oversight Report, noting the key findings and recommendations;
 - b) Note that the Director of Communities and Environment will take lead responsibility for considering the recommendations and progressing any changes proposed in accordance with council governance arrangements, working closely with other Directors and partners as required, through agreed governance arrangements.
 - c) Acknowledge the excellent work of officers and partners across a range of services and sectors connected to the Street Support Partnership and the wider homeless network, during this difficult time for many.
 - d) Request that the Council's Leadership Team receive an annual report on progress.

8. Background documents¹

8.1 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.