

Updated December 2021

Annex A - Leeds Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan 2021-2022

Purpose: This plan sets out how Leeds will live with Covid whilst aiming to achieve its ambitions, by continuing to roll out the vaccination programme, drive down infection rates, ensure service recovery, and support the local and national economy and communities across the city. The plan was formed across three broad phases, which anticipates the rest of 2021 and early 2022, based on reasonable assumptions. It assumes the 'most likely' scenario, balancing the needs for optimism with the inevitable need to be ready for the worst-case scenario. It also addresses all the proactive work taking place to address service pressures, backlogs, and risks associated with these.

The plan builds on the incredible effort from everyone in the city from the start of the pandemic and learns lessons from our own experience and national good practice. More detailed plans are in place for many of these issues and actions: for example, our Vaccine Inequalities plan ensures no one is left behind and everyone is offered a vaccine, issuing proactive comms which allows people to make informed decisions and clearly promotes vaccines as offering the best protection against the virus. Our Local Outbreak Management Plan is also regularly updated.

Phase: we are currently in **Phase 3**.

Aims: Response and recovery driven by our ambitions of being a **compassionate city with a strong economy**, focused on reducing **poverty and inequalities**, and **mitigating risks** from **service pressures and backlogs**.

Objectives: Continuing to work across the full range of partners to ensure safe travel, safe public spaces in communities, district centres and the city centre, safe delivery of services, safe education and safe working. Maintaining morale and motivation amongst all our workforces and communities will be key to deliver our ambitions.

Principles (guided by our Local Outbreak Management Plan):

- Being **proactive, preventative and positive**, emphasising what people can do to keep themselves and others safe, and recognising that public trust and confidence is key
- Being guided by the **data, intelligence, surveillance, evidence, epidemiology (including for new variants) and good practice** to preventing transmission and control outbreaks
- **Engaging communities from a strength and asset basis and targeting work that prioritises** the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged
- **Communicating key public health safety messages openly** with everybody so that more people do more of the right thing, more of the time, because they choose to
- **Coproducing solutions** with people, communities and partners to build the confidence and trust of the public
- **Leading collaboratively** to engage everyone using all resources and tools available: promoting **vaccines, hands, face, space, fresh air. Supporting testing, tracing & isolating**. These will help us managing outbreaks and transmission; dealing with new variants of concern; and use compliance and enforcement tools where needed
- Using agile and flexible approaches to partnership working to **manage risk and meet the changing circumstances** as the pandemic progresses
- Sharing good practice, **embedding evaluation and learning** to drive continual improvement

Themes: The themes of our broader response and recovery approach are: *Outbreak Management (including inequalities), Health & Social Care (including vaccination), Business & Economy, Citizens and Communities (including education), Infrastructure & Supplies, Organisational Impacts, Communications & Media*. Regular updates are provided to councillors, MPs, partners and staff and regular monitoring reports to Executive Board. Multi-agency command and control arrangements continue to be used to support the activity, where needed.

Key messages: although these vary periodically, here are the core messages:

- Get **both doses of the vaccine and a booster jab if eligible**; this remains the best line of defence against serious illness and death and will protect you and others.
- Continue to follow **hands, face, space**; it is now mandated by law to wear a face mask in certain settings.
- Allow **fresh air when indoors** when possible.
- **Test** regularly, **trace** and **isolate** when required. Take an LFD test in advance of mixing indoors and undertake risk assessments for large gatherings. Follow Government guidance for isolating after international travel.
- **Continue to be kind and patient** – staff are working as hard as they can to help. And **thank you to everyone** who continues to follow the rules and guidance.

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3: Autumn/Winter 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing economic recovery • System-wide pressures, particularly significant in health & care sector • Monitoring infection rates and dealing with outbreaks and new variants – especially if they are stubbornly high • Ongoing monitoring of vaccine uptake • Additional vaccines to YP, teenagers and eligible through booster program • Other impacts to health and care – including seasonal illness such as the flu and winter vomiting bug • Monitoring care homes – infection rates & operational arrangements • Education return – affecting transmission and case rates • Festive season – affecting transmission and case rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage significant pressures on services – including meeting the demands of H&SC recruitment, access to primary care, the wider workforce pressures & deliver service integration • Ensuring mental health and wellbeing being supported • Working to address the wider the financial and budget pressures on the organisation • Continue to closely monitor vaccine efficacy, hospitalisations and deaths, as the link is weakened between the virus and serious illness and mortality • Continue with rolling out vaccine inequalities plan & booster vaccinations in line with national guidance • Managing outbreaks and any variants of concern with a readiness to stand up surge testing • Putting public health at the heart of poverty and inequalities work & regularly reviewing & refreshing inequality plans • Employment & Skills programme around future work trends and skills, particularly green economy, young people and potential growth areas • Developing longer term social care plan, in-line with the Local Government Settlement • Continue to implement learning lessons review undertaken during the summer • Ensuring service resilience & capacity resilience for the future with third sector partners and the care sector • Dealing with potential issues in safeguarding – both for adults and children • Planning public transport funding recovery • Challenging carbon usage post pandemic • Best Council Ambition strategy with partners • Continue to monitor national guidance and headlines, including the Government’s Contain Framework • Ongoing work exploring the recovery and future of our city and local centres • Safe use of public transport in line with demands • Events regularly monitored and risk assessed - at full capacity from the summer

1. Local Outbreak Management- Victoria Eaton- Director of Public Health, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flu, cold and winter viruses in circulation simultaneously • Close monitoring of efficacy of vaccinations • Greater strain on health partners over the winter months • Possible additional restrictions (including the Government’s ‘Plan B’) <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variants continue to emerge – particular risk with the Omicron variant and managing this with possible additional pressures / resources • Impact on infection rates; people spend more time indoors over the winter months; festivity period increasing rates; new variants can increase rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigilance about Flu and Covid outbreaks and emergent Covid variants as winter approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveillance of all infectious diseases of concern including Covid-19 and influenza working closely with UKHSA. Regular updates sent to system leaders to inform decision making ○ Early intervention of outbreak prevention management continues mobilising local health protection, infection prevention and Environmental Health Services as required ○ Close monitoring of VOCs including incident management team approach to mobilise local response • Working closely with communities - continued focus on minimising harm, protecting at risk, making informed decision, hands-face-space messages, tackling any complacency because of vaccination • Preparing proactive comms, reflecting public health messages • Re-adopting any future safety measures or restrictions such as social distancing or face coverings • Continue to provide system leadership for outbreak prevention and management with schools, education settings and universities with risk assessments and outbreak management plans • Continue the Leeds Contact Tracing Service and its Third Sector-led approach to door knocking/outreach. • Provide a local and accessible testing offer In the city monitoring uptake and reviewing location of MTUs to meet local need, informed by the local epidemiology • Regularly review enhanced testing plans to ensure that the system can respond rapidly • Provide leadership to the NHS Covid -19 vaccination programme particularly in relation to addressing health inequalities and ensuring that the local programme is data driven and meeting the needs of those most at risk • Optimising the role of the council in promoting and delivering the Flu vaccine to frontline staff who work with vulnerable people, eligible service users and wider community • Planning for 2022 spring & summer including service recovery work and addressing backlogs • Planning for 2022 autumn & winter months including the dual Covid/flu vaccine roll out with similar pressures to now

2. Health & Social Care (including Vaccination)- Julian Hartley, LTHT/ Cath Roff, Director of Adults & Health/ Tim Ryley, Leeds CCG /Victoria Eaton- DPH

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More stability across the system • Booster vaccine offered with high levels of take up <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in demands on primary care and urgent and emergency care as a result of release of lockdown • Winter outbreaks, Covid variants • Concurrent pressure of flu and Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of flu and covid-19 vaccines – subject to NHSE guidance • NHS England Planning for winter • Focus on population and workforce mental health and wellbeing • Continue to ensure all PCN areas are covered in offering a vaccination service • NHS England Planning guidance and finances for 2022/23 is expected in December • Maximising increased interest in H&SC roles • Focus on longer term health and social care sector resilience and reform • Seasonal preparedness planning across the health and care system • Monitoring Covid variants and case rates and state of readiness for future surges • Continued restoration and recovery of services • Embedding new ways of working and access to health and social care • Continued provision of practical and emotional support for people at higher risk from Covid-19. Specific physical and mental health support and financial advice for people dealing with the impact of shielding for extended periods

3. Business & Economy- Eve Roodhouse, Chief Officer, Culture & Economy, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All sectors able to open, no restrictions <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on economy from tightening of the labour market, inflation, and supply chain issues Employment remains some way below pre-crisis levels (although it is now recovering) driven by higher 'economic inactivity', which is the measure of those not looking and / or not available for work Further job losses, business closures – although risk reduced as impact of the closure of furlough not as severe as anticipated Continued increased inequalities – job recovery predominantly in lower paid sectors, still difficulties with those furthest away from labour market gaining employment Risk of winter outbreaks and consequent restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued business engagement and administration of business support grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCC has distributed more than £290m worth of assistance to the business and charity sector since the start of the pandemic New Discretionary Grant Fund open for businesses and/or charities who continue to be financially impacted by the pandemic and have fixed costs of at least £2,000 between August 2021 and March 2022. Successful applicant will receive a single, one-off payment towards their fixed overheads (up to a max. of £25,000) £16,822,811 has been paid out in total in discretionary grant funding since November 2020 (as of 2nd December 2021) Sector-specific support (e.g. for Retail and Hospitality in the run-up to Christmas) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eg. LCC and Visit Leeds has launched the Winter Favourites campaign – a programme of events across the whole of the city Continued employment and skills support – with a focus on the skills agenda for continued economic recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This includes the return of the Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair on 7th February 2022 Potential actions and interventions based on our city and local centres work, including continuing to identify and deliver transformational projects across the city, linked to external funding streams; work to capitalise on the role of Culture in relation to the future of our centres, such as the opportunities presented through Leeds2023; and exploring how we can facilitate flexible workspaces and wo-working spaces outside of the city centre Future Talent project ongoing, looking at the refresh of the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan. Two online conversations have taken place (in September and November 2021) and the Future Talent Plan is due to be taken to the LCC Executive Board for approval in spring 2022 Commence work looking at the Green economy and the opportunities for Leeds/why it is essential to our economic recovery Inclusive Growth Extended Delivery Partnership event planned for 27th January 2022 Continue work to understand how the economy is recovering and link to future refresh of Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018-2023

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4. Citizens & Communities (including Education)- James Rogers- Director of Communities, Housing & Environment, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of winter outbreaks • Risk of increased homelessness • Increased pressure on DVA services • Risk of increased financial vulnerability within households due to ending of government support introduced during Covid • National shortage of LGV drivers • Contingency planning for remote learning if needed • Delays to repairs to council housing stock due to reduced availability of materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support for schools (cohort assessment in 2022), universities and FE Colleges • Ongoing focus on mental health and wellbeing in children and young people • Respond to potential increase in need (DVA, child exploitation, mental health, unemployment, homelessness) • Community Care Hubs to be a focal point & central to support infrastructure, providing an anchor to any local and national crisis. Funded extended through to the end of March 2022 • Early Help services are now seeing an increase in referrals, as a result waiting times have increase • The Household support Fund will provide additional food and fuel support to under 4's and care leavers • The Stronger Families programme has been extended till March 23. This will enable continued support for families to progress towards work and increase confidence and skills • Early Help expecting increase in referrals once schools have returned, concerns over meeting demand due to capacity issues • Ensure support available within the city to help those individuals and families suffering financial hardship is available and accessible through delivery of the Household Support Fund, Local Welfare Support Scheme, and the continued provision of Self Isolation payments • Waste management services to deal with forecast sustained increase in domestic waste presented for collection as home working continues and/or some restrictions are brought back • Planning winter wellbeing support for Council tenants living in Retirement Life schemes through the winter • Communication strategy in place to manage tenants' expectations where there are delays in ability to carry out non urgent repairs • Environmental Health (EH) supporting LCC Public Health to implement the Covid 19 Response – Autumn and Winter Plan • EH likely to see increased compliance and enforcement responsibilities and public enquiries due to introduction of mandatory face coverings in certain settings • EH resources will be required to support contact tracing of any cases of Omicron Variants identified in, or linked to Leeds • Safer and Stronger Communities are facilitating the Leader and Chief Executive meeting with Strategic Faith Leaders in January 2022 to discuss the sectors current needs and contributions including to covid response and recovery

5. Infrastructure & Supplies- Gary Bartlett- Chief Officer, Highways & Transportation, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway for phase 1&2)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail station footfall continues to increase and exceeding 2019 on occasions • Bus patronage levels, including park and rides, continues to increase but remains below pre-Covid levels • Traffic flow levels on city's roads remain below pre Covid levels: 24hour flows circa 88%, AM peak 74% and PM peak 88% of 2019 levels. Early 2020 percentages are 84%, 72% and 82% respectively • Traditionally busy period on the networks between Sept- Dec • Major developments and other works occurring across the city <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable public transport funding. • Increased congestion leading to adverse comment. • Adverse weather delays schemes • Rail station closure for works over the Christmas holiday period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications plan in development to highlight the outcomes and reasons for works that are due to start early in the New Year. New schemes include Boar Lane, Crown Point Road and Armley Gyrotory • Concluding schemes that are currently on site as soon as is practicable e.g. A61S by end of December, Corn Exchange Feb/ March and Regents Street flyover in Spring • Monitoring road usage and managing the potential conflicts as a result of significant works across the City • Working with Transport partners as volumes increase. • Employment and Skills working proactively with travel companies due to concerns over recruitment, reflecting the national trend – especially HGV drivers • Public transport funding recovery discussions ongoing with DfT, WYCA and bus operators • Communications to continue to promote safe use of public transport, cycling and walking is essential as we see footfall return • Influencing travel behaviour campaigns e.g. Walk it, Ride it stepped up to encourage non car use • Promotion of use of 3 park and ride sites • Continue to monitor PPE levels for the rest of the year

6. Organisational Impact- Neil Evans- Director of Resources, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 Roadmap fully implemented • Monitoring any future restrictions introduced (including the Government’s ‘Plan B’) • WFH order stood up if restrictions are re-introduced <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to revisit Roadmap and reintroduce restrictions • Recruitment issues and retention of staff • High amount of self-isolation and possible sickness resulting in backlogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to office plans, including risk assessments, in place with designated team zones for services. Staff continue to have WFH options around 1-3 times per week • Transition to new ways of working in the office and remotely fully rolled out • City Recovery Plan implemented where required across all services with priority given • Service plans cleared, drawing on learning from the pandemic and organisational planning for resilience and emergencies • Continued wellbeing support for all staff • Ongoing work around the council’s budget, regularly updated to members and staff with any issues clearly communicated • Offer of additional hours and flexible redeployment of staff to services with acute resourcing problems

7. Communications & Media- Donna Cox/ Danni Clayton- Interim Heads of Communications & Marketing, LCC

	Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
Phase 3	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life resets to a different normality under long-term managed pandemic conditions <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer-term behaviour compliance Scaling up of Plan B restrictions or other measures in response to national/local cases and/or variants 	<p><u>Campaigns underway or already in development</u></p> <p>Winter Wellness and Winter Preparedness Face coverings and ventilation New city centre and district signage in light of mandatory face coverings from 4am Tuesday 30 November BOOST programme Flu campaign Evergreen Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air – symptoms, isolate and test</p> <p><u>Campaigns to be developed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended booster programme – comms to support further rollout 12-15 vaccine second dose Contingency plan around further restrictions Targeted campaigns in areas of higher testing/Omicron outbreak TBC Planning for the remainder of 2022