

Updated March 2022

## **Annex A - Leeds Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan 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, particularly those most vulnerable or disadvantaged. The plan had continually developed from March 2020 to now, 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, such as a new variant of concern. It also addresses all the proactive work taking place to address service pressures from increased demands and the 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 such as No-one Left Behind – our vaccines inequality plan and the Local Outbreak Management Plan.

Self-isolation requirements after testing positive from Covid have now come to an end. As the national direction moves away from restrictions, our focus will continue to be to promote good public health behaviour and vaccination, whilst supporting those at most risk from Covid-19. It will be a very different phase of living with Covid safely, but our driving principles that inform our approach with managing the virus remain the same.

**Aim:** Response and recovery driven by our Best City Ambition, focused on reducing poverty and inequalities, and mitigating risks from service pressures and backlogs.

**Principles** (guided by our [Local Outbreak Management Plan](#)):

- being proactive, preventative and positive, emphasising what people can do to keep themselves and others safe, while building public trust and confidence
- being guided by the data, intelligence, surveillance, evidence, epidemiology and good practice to control outbreaks
- strengthening our approach to working with communities, building community resilience and targeting work that prioritises the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged
- communicating openly, promoting good public health behaviours and persuading people to make choices that will keep themselves and others safe
- coproducing solutions with people, communities, community leaders, and partners to build the confidence and trust of the public
- using agile and flexible approaches to partnership working to make the most of the resources available, manage risk and meet changing circumstances
- sharing good practice, embedding evaluation and learning to drive continual improvement

**Themes:** The themes of our 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, in a proportionate way.

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

- Covid rates in Leeds have been gradually reducing in recent weeks similar to the national picture, however, like the national position Covid infection rates are still very high in the city.
- The best way to protect yourself and others around you is by getting two Covid vaccine doses and a booster, keep indoor spaces well ventilated (e.g. opening windows), regular hand washing and using masks in enclosed spaces (where there will be large numbers of people).
- We are asking people in Leeds to still be cautious, taking action to prevent and protect themselves and other people from Covid-19.
- People should continue to self-isolate if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and follow the usual public health advice to avoid passing it onto other people.
- The new developments for [Covid treatment for those who are particularly vulnerable](#) are encouraging.
- We need to be aware that there are a range of different feelings about this next phase, so we time need to allow people time to adjust to the new normal.

<p>From end March 2022</p>	<p><b>Assumptions &amp; Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living with Covid</li> <li>• Ongoing economic recovery</li> <li>• System-wide pressures, particularly significant in health &amp; care sector</li> <li>• Monitoring infection rates and dealing with outbreaks and potential new variants</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring of vaccine uptake across all cohorts</li> <li>• Other impacts to health and care – including seasonal illness such as the flu and winter vomiting bug</li> <li>• Monitoring care homes and other high risk settings – infection rates &amp; operational arrangements</li> <li>• Cost of living pressure</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention challenges</li> <li>• Hybrid working will become the norm</li> </ul>	<p><b>Actions (planned/underway)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to manage pressures on services caused by increased demand – including meeting the demands of H&amp;SC recruitment, access to primary care, the wider workforce pressures &amp; deliver service integration</li> <li>• Ensuring mental health and wellbeing is supported</li> <li>• Implementing future ways of working, including return to the office for those who have been able to work from home</li> <li>• Continue to closely monitor vaccine efficacy, hospitalisations and deaths,</li> <li>• Implementing Best City Ambition</li> <li>• Continue with rolling out vaccine in line with national guidance, including a continued focus on vaccine inequalities</li> <li>• Putting public health at the heart of poverty and inequalities work</li> <li>• Employment &amp; Skills programme around future work trends and skills, particularly green economy, young people and potential growth areas</li> <li>• Engage with the Government’s Levelling Up agenda across all levels – locally, regionally and nationally</li> <li>• Engage with the national Independent Inquiry into Coronavirus</li> <li>• Developing longer term social care plan, in-line with the Local Government Settlement</li> <li>• Ensuring service resilience &amp; capacity resilience for the future with third sector partners and the care sector</li> <li>• Planning public transport funding recovery</li> <li>• Challenging carbon usage post pandemic</li> <li>• Implement findings that explored the recovery and future of our city and local centres</li> <li>• Events regularly monitored and risk assessed - at full capacity from the summer</li> <li>• Managing outbreaks and any variants of concern with a readiness to stand up surge testing in the future</li> <li>• Continue to monitor any national guidance and headlines, including the Government’s Contain Framework</li> <li>• Continue to closely monitor our key metrics that will inform the deliverance of our Local Outbreak Management plan including infection rate, over 60’s rate, positivity, number of vaccines given, vaccine uptake in key demographic groups, patients in hospital and critical care, Mortality, cases and outbreaks in settings.</li> </ul>
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<b>1. Local Outbreak Management- Victoria Eaton- Director of Public Health, LCC</b>	
<b>Assumptions &amp; Risks</b>	<b>Actions (planned/underway)</b>
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flu, cold and winter viruses in circulation simultaneously</li> <li>• Close monitoring of efficacy of vaccinations</li> <li>• Greater strain on health partners over the winter months</li> </ul> <p>Living with Covid strategy announced 21<sup>st</sup> Feb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All general public testing infrastructure to fall away by March 31st (more national announcements to follow)</li> <li>• Testing to protect the most vulnerable and high-risk settings including care homes, NHS and prisons. Awaiting national guidance</li> <li>• Access to CTAS ceases midnight 23<sup>rd</sup> February.</li> <li>• Local authority contact tracing ceases 24<sup>th</sup> February</li> <li>• School testing ceases 24<sup>th</sup> February</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to remain vigilant for new Variants of Concern and managing this with possible additional pressures / resources</li> <li>• Contain Outbreak Management fund uncertainty and reduced for local authorities. The PH grant includes the response to Covid (25 – test, track and trace and outbreak planning 26 – other PH spend relating to Covid 19)</li> <li>• Lack of testing does not identify VOCs early enough.</li> <li>• Reduced level of surveillance available due to reduced testing which may hamper the response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vigilance about Flu and Covid outbreaks and emergent Covid variants               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 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</li> <li>○ Early intervention of outbreak prevention management continues mobilising local health protection, infection prevention and Environmental Health Services as required</li> <li>○ Close monitoring of VOCs including incident management team approach to mobilise local response</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Community champions project will remain with a focus on promoting vaccine uptake</li> <li>• Preparing proactive comms, reflecting public health messages to promote living with Covid such as wearing face coverings in areas of high risk, ventilation, hand washing and vaccinations.</li> <li>• In line with emerging national guidance, we will continue to provide system leadership for outbreak prevention and management with vulnerable settings, care homes, prisons, educational settings with SEN provision. We will continue to offer outbreak management support across the system</li> <li>• Regularly review enhanced testing and vaccination plans to ensure that the system can respond rapidly</li> <li>• Provide leadership to the NHS Covid -19 vaccination programme particularly in relation to the next phase of the programme to ensure that health inequalities are addressed and ensuring that the local programme is data driven and meeting the needs of those most at risk</li> <li>• Planning for 2022 spring &amp; summer including service recovery work and addressing backlogs</li> <li>• Planning for 2022 autumn &amp; winter months including the dual Covid/flu vaccine roll out with similar pressures to now</li> <li>• Robust scaled up arrangements are in place with LCH Infection Prevention Control, Environmental Health and Health Protection until March 2023</li> </ul>

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

<b>Assumptions &amp; Risks</b>	<b>Actions (planned/underway)</b>
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More stability across the system</li><li>• Booster vaccine offered with high levels of take up</li><li>• Revocation of mandatory vaccination for health and care staff from 15 March 2022</li></ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in demands on primary care and urgent and emergency care as a result of release of lockdown</li><li>• Winter outbreaks, Covid variants</li><li>• Concurrent pressure of flu and Covid-19</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivery of flu and covid-19 vaccines – subject to NHSE guidance</li><li>• NHS England Planning for winter</li><li>• Focus on population and workforce mental health and wellbeing</li><li>• Continue to ensure all PCN areas are covered in offering a vaccination service</li><li>• NHS England Planning guidance and finances published in December</li><li>• Citywide recruitment campaign into health and care roles. Significant work on improving system flow</li><li>• Guidance on visiting in care homes</li><li>• Focus on longer term health and social care sector resilience and reform</li><li>• Seasonal preparedness planning across the health and care system</li><li>• Monitoring Covid variants and case rates and state of readiness for future surges</li><li>• Continued restoration and recovery of services</li><li>• Embedding new ways of working and access to health and social care</li><li>• 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</li><li>• Focus on planning for and addressing waiting list and other backlogs in care that have arisen as a result of the focus on Covid</li></ul>

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

Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All sectors able to open, no restrictions</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impacts on economy from tightening of the labour market, inflation, and supply chain issues</li> <li>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</li> <li>Further job losses, business closures – although risk reduced as impact of the closure of furlough not as severe as anticipated</li> <li>Continued increased inequalities – job recovery predominantly in lower paid sectors, still difficulties with those furthest away from labour market gaining employment</li> <li>Risk of winter outbreaks and consequent restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued business engagement and administration of business support grants               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCC has distributed more than £296m worth of assistance to the business and charity sector since the start of the pandemic</li> <li>Over £23.780m has been paid via our Discretionary Grant Fund (DGF) since November 2020, totalling 12,757 grants (up to 2 March 2022)</li> <li>The Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) opened in February 2022 - a new scheme giving Leeds Rate Payers a discount of up to 75% (up to a max. £105k) off their 2021/22 rates bill if they are within an eligible sector (eg. non-essential travel, Hospitality) and not in receipt of other reliefs. Leeds' allocation under CARF is £24.058m and the scheme need to be implemented by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sector-specific support , such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Eat Leeds campaign, aimed at the mid-week restaurant market, is due to be relaunched April 2022 after the success of last summer's campaign</li> <li>The Restaurant Ready programme – Leeds Hotels and Venues Association working with Leeds City College, the Council and Leeds Business Improvement District have created an intense one-week hospitality starter training programme that includes customer service, food safety and barista training</li> </ul> </li> <li>Continued employment and skills support – with a focus on the skills agenda for continued economic recovery. This includes the return of the Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022, which saw over 5,000 attendees and 88 exhibitors</li> <li>Renewed Major Events Framework now approved, focusing on how and what events will be selected for Leeds to host and how they will be funded and delivered, with major event shaving a clear role in supporting the city's recovery</li> <li>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 co-working spaces outside of the city centre – on the latter, we are currently scoping out a small scheme for the remaining Tech Hub Fund that would support this and are aiming to bring this forward spring/summer 2022</li> <li>Future Talent project looking at the refresh of the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan has now moved into a delivery phase, with an Executive Board report being discussed at the March meeting</li> <li>Commence work looking at the Green economy and the challenges and opportunities for Leeds/why it is essential to our economic recovery</li> <li>Leeds Social Progress Index – way of measuring inclusive growth; final model to be ready later this year</li> </ul>

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

Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
<p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of winter outbreaks</li> <li>• Risk of increased homelessness</li> <li>• Increased pressure on DVA services</li> <li>• Risk of increased financial vulnerability within households due to ending of government support introduced during Covid and increases in cost of living</li> <li>• National shortage of LGV drivers</li> <li>• Contingency planning for remote learning if needed</li> <li>• Delays to repairs to council housing stock due to reduced availability of materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued support for schools (cohort assessment in 2022), universities and FE Colleges</li> <li>• Ongoing focus on mental health and wellbeing in children and young people</li> <li>• Respond to potential increase in need (DVA, child exploitation, mental health, unemployment, homelessness)</li> <li>• Community Care Hubs to be a focal point &amp; central to support infrastructure, providing an anchor to any local and national crisis. Funded extended through to the end of June 2022. Work ongoing around development of Community Anchor model to provide a sustainable community infrastructure moving forward</li> <li>• Early Help services are responding to the increase in referrals by working closely with partners to establish and facilitate alternative ways to provide support for children and young people, while on waiting lists ; e.g. school health &amp; well-being drop-ins</li> <li>• The Household support Fund has been distributed to provide additional food and fuel support to under 4's and care leavers</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Ensure support available within the city to help those individuals and families suffering financial hardship is available and accessible through the Local Welfare Support Scheme as the Household Support Fund and Self Isolation payments end</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Planning winter wellbeing support for Council tenants living in Retirement Life schemes through the winter.</li> <li>• Communication strategy in place to manage tenants' expectations where there are delays in ability to carry out non urgent repairs</li> <li>• Environmental Health (EH) will continue to support LCC Public Health to implement Living with Covid plans in 2022</li> <li>• With removal of Covid restrictions and enforcement responsibilities EH are able to fully focus on addressing the backlog of inspections and service requests</li> <li>• Safer and Stronger Communities facilitated 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</li> <li>• Continued support for educational settings in managing the consequences of reduced covid regulation, particularly regarding staff and pupil absence</li> </ul>

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

Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway for phase 1&2)
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rail station footfall continues to increase and exceeding 2019 on occasions</li><li>• Bus patronage levels, including park and rides, continues to increase but remains below pre-Covid levels</li><li>• Traffic flow levels on city's roads remain below pre Covid levels</li><li>• Major developments and other works occurring across the city</li></ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustainable public transport funding</li><li>• Increased congestion leading to adverse comment.</li><li>• Adverse weather delays schemes</li><li>• Rail station closure for works over the Christmas holiday period.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• Concluding schemes that are currently on site as soon as is practicable e.g. Corn Exchange coming to an end soon and the Regents Street flyover in Spring</li><li>• Monitoring road usage and managing the potential conflicts as a result of significant works across the City</li><li>• Working with Transport partners as volumes increase</li><li>• Employment and Skills working proactively with travel companies due to concerns over recruitment, reflecting the national trend – especially HGV drivers</li><li>• Public transport funding recovery discussions ongoing with DfT, WYCA and bus operators</li><li>• Communications to continue to promote safe use of public transport, cycling and walking is essential as we see footfall return</li><li>• Influencing travel behaviour campaigns e.g. Walk it, Ride it stepped up to encourage non car use</li><li>• Promotion of use of 3 park and ride sites</li><li>• Continue to monitor PPE levels for the rest of the year</li></ul>

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

Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Living with Covid-19 safely strategy published</li><li>• Monitoring any future developments, outbreaks and variants that have an impact on the workforce</li></ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need to reintroduce restrictions if infection rates are high or a new VoC identified</li><li>• Recruitment issues and retention of staff – especially for H&amp;SC staff</li><li>• WFH order stood up if restrictions are re-introduced</li><li>• Potential self-isolation and possible high sickness rates if these restrictions are legally mandated again</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return to office plans, including risk assessments, in place with designated team zones for services</li><li>• Transition to new ways of working in the office and remote tech fully rolled out</li><li>• Recovery Fund implemented where required across all services with priority given</li><li>• Service plans cleared, drawing on learning from the pandemic and organisational planning for resilience and emergencies</li><li>• Continued wellbeing support for all staff</li><li>• Ongoing work around the council’s budget, regularly updated to members and staff with any issues clearly communicated</li><li>• Offer of additional hours and flexible redeployment of staff to services with acute resourcing problems</li><li>• Focus on leadership and management development</li><li>• 5<sup>th</sup> Wellbeing survey being conducted</li><li>• Digital agenda being progressed</li></ul>



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

Assumptions & Risks	Actions (planned/underway)
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Life resets to a new normality of learning to live with Covid safely</li></ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perception that Covid has gone away</li><li>• Adherence to longer-term behaviour compliance</li><li>• Guidance fatigue and perception that measures are no longer necessary or relevant</li><li>• Removal of legal restrictions and self-isolation payment removes barriers to non-compliance and makes it easier to return to less safe less preventative pre-Covid behaviours</li><li>• Return to restrictions or other measures in response to new variants</li><li>• Ongoing economic impacts on individuals and businesses coupled with new and emerging impacts caused by cost of living increases</li><li>• The budget secured as part of the Test &amp; Trace expenditure has now all either been committed or handed back to PH; meaning there is no budget for further campaigns or communications work required</li></ul>	<p>Work will continue to promote good public health behaviour and vaccination, whilst supporting those at most risk from Covid-19 as we transition into a very different phase of living with Covid safely</p> <p><u>Campaigns underway or already in development</u></p> <p>BOOST programme Evergreen Extended booster programme Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air – symptoms, isolate and test Living with Covid safely Masks in healthcare settings Business grants £150 council tax rebate</p> <p><u>Campaigns to be developed</u></p> <p>Helping people out of financial hardship Living with Covid safely once access to free testing ends</p>