

Report of Chief Digital and Information Officer

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

Date: 16 July 2020

Subject: Digital response to COVID-19

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 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

- Since 2015 the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board has led an inquiry into digital inclusion, highlighting the importance of digital inclusion across the city. The Chief Digital and Information Officer (CDIO) has provided strategic leadership for this work, overseeing the creation of 100% Digital Leeds as part of the Smart Cities programme and bringing annual update reports to the Board.
- This report examines the Council’s and the city’s digital response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Leeds. The CDIO directed and coordinated the work of the Digital and Information Service (DIS), with responsibility for NHS primary care and Council, notably through the City Digital Team and the 100% Digital Leeds Team working together with established community-based partnerships across Leeds. This close coordination and cooperation meant that the Leeds response was open and inclusive while working at pace and at scale across sectors.
- DIS used their convening power to bring people together, enabling through intermediaries to amplify reach and impact. The report features examples of this work, including observations and evidence from partners, stakeholders and people affected by the virus with additional observations on how the Leeds response compared with other places.
- With due regard to the current crisis, the report considers what has been learnt during the last three months and looks to the future with conclusions and recommendations that emphasise the importance of increasing digital inclusion and implementing effective digital solutions as an integral part of the DIS response to the City’s recovery plans and the sustainability of the City and its communities.
- Finally it should be noted that NHS England and NHSX see the importance of digital inclusion to improving health outcomes and are currently engaged with the City Team to

learn from Leeds's 'Whole System Approach'. They have tested a 'Place Based Maturity Model' informed by the Leeds digital work and are looking to prioritise external investment in digital literacy and digital inclusion based on evidence from Leeds. Despite the current crisis and the ongoing uncertainty, NHS Leeds CCG, Public Health, NHSX and other partners are committing additional funds to support and sustain the current DIS model and successful approach in particular the 100% Digital Leeds model.

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

- All of the work outlined in the report plays a key role in achieving the Council's ambition to build a compassionate city, tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. Work discussed is aligned closely with the Best Council plan, the Health and Wellbeing and Inclusive Growth Strategies and the need to address the impact of the climate emergency on those living in poverty, in poor health and facing inequality.

3. Resource Implications

- COVID-19 has already had a huge impact on the Leeds economy and its legacy will be felt for years to come. Alongside the ongoing health implications of the COVID crisis there may be a serious economic downturn with a resultant impact on society and the most vulnerable. The effects of the pandemic will continue to hit services and support groups across the city at the same time that a huge backlog in health and care needs will place additional demand on services. Third Sector Leeds recently released the findings of a [survey of third sector resilience in Leeds](#) showing that 60% of third sector organisations who responded said they may remain financially sustainable for six months or less.
- To ensure that the most disadvantaged are not hardest-hit over the next few years, people and communities need to have the best chance to sustain themselves. Digital inclusion provides the opportunity for people to do that and gives the Council and NHS partners the ability to enable and facilitate better outcomes for people. This can be achieved by convening people and community based assets to coproduce solutions rather than been completely reliant on services traditionally provided by the Council that may be reduced.

4. Recommendations

- a) The current CDIO is leaving at the end of July to be replaced by a jointly appointed post with a continued focus on City outcomes, not just services. As part of the Council's ongoing digital response to the sustainability of the City post COVID it is recommended that the DIS continues to set priorities, direct the work and provide overall governance for Smart Leeds and 100% Digital Leeds, with the DIS also continuing to report progress to this Board.
- b) The central coordination, convening, connecting and enabling role, across public sector partners and the third sector, of DIS, with the 100% Digital Leeds Team as an integral part of that approach, has been essential during the crisis. The 100% Digital Leeds team currently sit on the Library Service structure, it is recommended that this integrated approach must be sustained and strengthened based on the return on public value and outcomes exemplified in this report and previous reports to this Board.
- c) If external funding comes to an end, which is unlikely for the next 18 months, it is recommended that this work and these teams are considered a priority as part of the budget setting process based on the returns on investment to the community, Council and NHS. Detailed evaluation and Return on Investment figures for 100% Digital Leeds featured in the previous report to this Board in February 2020. A summary is included at **Appendix 7** for ease of reference.

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides an update to Scrutiny Board on the Council's and the City's digital response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights the approach of the joint NHS and LCC Digital and Information Service, notably through the Smart Leeds, City Digital and 100% Digital Leeds teams working together as one team with partners across Leeds.
- 1.2 The report highlights the following areas in the context of the digital response to COVID-19:
 - Supporting and developing the 100% Digital Leeds network ([Main Issue 3](#))
 - Working together to strengthen the digital health and wellbeing offer ([Main Issue 4](#))
 - Accelerating the digital robustness of the Third Sector ([Main Issue 5](#))
 - Increasing digital capacity and connectivity in communities ([Main Issue 6](#))
 - Enabling digital services across the council and partners ([Main Issue 7](#))

2. Background information

- 2.1 The most recent digital inclusion [report to Scrutiny Board in February 2020](#) made no mention of the COVID-19 pandemic and no questions were asked about it at the Board meeting. Just one month later the UK went into lockdown.
- 2.2 Although the speed and severity of the crisis were not anticipated in the report, the fundamental principles of the approach outlined in that report included:
 - Convening community based assets to ensure that no-one is 'hard to reach';
 - Working flexibly and responsively;
 - Moving to a whole system approach that enables people to independently look after themselves and improve their lives;
 - Connecting people to their communities and a wider circle of care and support;
 - Co-designing the right interventions with professionals and practitioners, staff and volunteers and people with lived experience.
- 2.3 Those principles proved to be vital in the DIS's digital response to the pandemic. As soon as lockdown was introduced, the DIS teams started working with partners to help people who were digitally excluded and in severe need.
- 2.4 As part of the DIS response to COVID-19 the 100% Digital Leeds and the City Digital teams were directed to extend work and established relationships with third sector, community and voluntary organisations to empower them and their service users to become more digitally included. Support included the provision of data, equipment and devices, grant funding, technical support, Digital Champions training, plus advice on how to tackle digital inclusion issues particular to their own organisation. Organisations were brought together based on common interests or barriers so that they could share their experiences and learn from each other.
- 2.5 First and foremost, COVID-19 is a health crisis and the digital response strengthened the 100% Digital Leeds team's relationships with the City Digital team and partners in health and care settings. The teams worked alongside communities to enable more people and organisations to get online. Evidence is included throughout this report of the impact of the work over the last three months. This coordinated approach across the DIS, including the 100% Digital Leeds team, must continue as a lasting legacy of the work that has made such a difference during the pandemic.

3. Main Issues – Supporting and developing the 100% Digital Leeds network

- 3.1 During the course of a normal year Leeds would welcome approximately 56,000 people to use their public access computers over 430,000 times across Community Hub and Library sites. The closure of libraries during the lockdown period has had a serious impact on these users, not to mention other people who may have wanted to access the PCs for job searches and making applications as the effect on their employment unfolded. With closed doors libraries, like many other services, have sought to address the gap in their service provision by the increase or improvement in their digital offer.

- 3.2 As the library service closed its doors to the public the online library emerged. The Library Service is using digital resources and activities to engage and help bring communities together by developing and expanding their online library offer and looking at introducing new activities to help people develop their digital skills to access services, information, entertainment and to stay connected without the need to visit.
- 3.3 The Library Service introduced an enhanced on-line joining process, re-organised their online presence making it easier to find support for learning, digital skills and business support, introduced PressReader for the provision of online newspapers readable on most digital devices, bought more e-Books and e-Audio books and invested in a new initiative called Niche Academy which hosts online basic tutorials to help those new to these digital services to easily navigate their function and the download process.
- 3.4 To help as many people as possible take advantage of these services the Library Service also introduced new customer support initiatives during April and May:
- #AskALibrarian promotes the role of libraries as a source of non-biased information.
 - Virtual Digi Drop in supports both children and adults to embrace technology and develop their skills.
 - Digital Support Sessions offer customers flexible one-to-one telephone support in using their device to access services and resources and become more connected.
- 3.5 Over 50 Digital Support Sessions have been delivered, supporting customers in accessing e-Books, e-newspapers and other online resources. Over 80 enquiries were met through #AskALibrarian and Virtual Digi Drop in. These new initiatives are supported by librarian teams across the service, who have been enabled by the DIS to work effectively from home.
- 3.6 A fourth initiative, Keeping in Touch, saw the Library Service make almost 6,000 calls to customers aged 70 and over to help reduce loneliness and social isolation. As well as chatting about anything of interest to their customers the telephone calls have been an opportunity to signpost customers to the online services already mentioned, or other support that the Council has been offering which some customers may not have been aware of.
- 3.7 **Quotes from library customers:** *"This is great, we've got lots of new reading material now and since we are isolating it's good that we can get the daily newspaper again. You were brilliant, friendly, clearly knew your stuff and were very patient. So chuffed to have BorrowBox set up and ready to go."* More information about these library service initiatives is at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.8 Other organisations supporting the most vulnerable, isolated and excluded in Leeds have almost universally made digital inclusion a priority since lockdown. For many organisations and those who staff them, Digital Champions training from the 100% Digital Leeds team has been the start of their digital inclusion journey, raising awareness of the barriers their client groups are likely to face as well as simple practical steps they can take to help people overcome these barriers. During this period, Digital Champions training has been delivered via video conferencing, with the content adapted to reflect changing needs.
- 3.9 The adapted Digital Champions training was framed as an introduction to digital inclusion for a client group that is particularly likely to be digital excluded. A series of webinars focused on:
- People improving their mental health and wellbeing;
 - People with learning disabilities;
 - Speakers of other languages;
 - Older people.
- Further sessions are planned after the team were approached by organisations supporting other groups and target audiences:
- [People with sensory impairments](#), in partnership with Forum Central, Healthwatch Leeds, BID Services and Deaf Blind UK;

- ESOL learners, in partnership with Leeds City Council's ESOL Strategy Team, Migrant English Support Hub and the National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages to Adults.
- 3.10 Each webinar advocates the same approach but the digital exclusion picture, case studies and recommended tools and resources are tailored to resonate with the audience and best support the digital inclusion of the audience's client base. Sessions are delivered in partnership with an organisation experienced in supporting the digital inclusion of the target client base and include a case study from an organisation in that field who are further along on their digital inclusion journey. This coproduction fosters local digital inclusion communities and encourages the sharing of skills and best practice.
 - 3.11 Webinars were hosted via Zoom in partnership with mHabitat/CoSpace>North, delivering high-quality content to a professional standard. Each session was [recorded and uploaded to the Digital Inclusion Leeds website](#) for use by those who could not attend or would like to cascade the training, further extending the reach and impact of the work.
 - 3.12 Almost 400 delegates attended the sessions. Alongside people from organisations across Leeds, there were delegates from over 40 cities and towns around the UK. These included representatives from Councils, colleges, Adult Education providers, universities, library services, NHS Trusts, CCGs, charities and third sector organisations. This is an indicator of the national interest in Leeds's digital response to COVID.
 - 3.13 **Quote from Roz Davies MBA FRSA, Managing Director, mHabitat:** *"We have had the privilege of hosting six sell-out training and information digital inclusion webinars with the 100% Digital Leeds team over the last three months. The team itself is highly competent and knowledgeable in the context and the issues, what that means for Leeds and solutions. It is well respected and has built a strong network of community and other partners across the city and beyond. The interest and reach has been outstanding for a small locally based team. We have had delegates from Scotland to Brighton in local and national policy roles including NHSX. The 100% Digital Leeds work is certainly a national exemplar in terms of local approaches to tackling digital inclusion and judging by the wider discussions on digital inclusion prompted by lockdown, I expect a lot of other areas to follow their lead in the coming years. Leeds is fortunate in that it is a long way ahead in tackling a very complex and important inequalities issue. I very much look forward to working in partnership with the team in the future."*
 - 3.14 At an organisational level, the impact of the Digital Champions training and the coordinated DIS approach is illustrated by Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service. They started their digital inclusion journey by borrowing iPads from the tablet lending scheme to support their most vulnerable clients to maintain access to services through lockdown. Digital Champions training put their staff and volunteers in the best position to support the digital inclusion of their clients and helped the service to better understand the wider issues around digital inclusion. The combination of this wider awareness training and the ability to try different approaches to digital inclusion at no cost thanks to the tablet lending scheme has resulted in the development of a digital inclusion strand of Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service's Health Inequalities Action Plan, cementing digital inclusion as an essential element of the service.
 - 3.15 **Quote from Sarah Fox, Coproduction Coordinator, Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service:** *"For me, the Digital Champions training and also just general contact with 100% Digital Leeds has given me an understanding, and therefore confidence, about digital inclusion and the picture in Leeds specifically. Otherwise I don't think I would have offered to lead on digital inclusion for the health inequalities workstream. I think also that the fact I've done the digital champions training, plus your ongoing help and support, means that we'll take a more methodical and systematic approach to digital inclusion because I now understand the different reasons for exclusion. Sometimes I think people too often think it's purely a case of people not having the kit and we could waste a lot of time and money getting equipment when the real issue might be trust."*
 - 3.16 As well as building on established relationships with partner organisations, the increasing importance of digital inclusion over the last three months has seen the development of new

partnerships and work programmes. Gypsy and Traveller communities experience some of the highest levels of inequality in the city and the average life expectancy is just 50 years of age. DIS teams are working with Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (GATE) to support an existing programme where Leeds GATE have identified Health Champions within their communities. The Health Champions will also be trained to become Digital Champions, each Champion will receive a laptop to support their role and DIS are lending ten Mi-Fi units to provide additional data. The Full Fibre programme is being examined for opportunities to offer more permanent connectivity to Gypsy and Traveller sites around the city. Working with Leeds GATE and with Gypsies and Travellers will result in a better shared understanding of the barriers to digital inclusion. Coproducing solutions to these barriers will lead to improved outcomes and the methodology and impact will be shared through the development and delivery of a Digital Champions webinar for other organisations working with these communities.

3.17 Detailed case studies illustrating the impact of the work on organisations and individuals are on the Digital Inclusion Leeds website: <https://digitalinclusionleeds.com/>

4. Main issues – Working together to strengthen the digital health and wellbeing offer

4.1 The COVID-19 crisis in care homes highlighted their vital role in supporting some of the most vulnerable in society. There are 157 care homes in Leeds, run by approximately 96 organisations and providing approximately 5,500 beds to the population of Leeds. The Council currently runs and owns eight homes. NHS England has already started some work to better understand the digital maturity of care homes. Initial observations and anecdotal evidence in Leeds suggests a broad range, with very few that could be classed as digitally mature.

4.2 NHS England, NHSX and others are interested in the DIS's whole system, whole care home, one team approach to increasing the digital maturity, resilience and digital inclusion of staff and residents of care homes. There is an increased appetite from homes regarding connectivity and digital capacity. What that actually means differs by organisation, so a detailed piece of work is necessary to understand what is needed (and by whom). A digitally enabled care home in its widest sense is a better run and more financially stable business, better connected and supported by the community, better informed and therefore delivering better outcomes for residents.

4.3 In response to the Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework, Leeds set up the Leeds Care Home System Delivery Group (pre COVID-19) which is co-chaired by Health and Social Care and has representation from both sectors. Under discussion in the group was the best way to encourage and then support homes to a better level of digital maturity when services were commissioned.

4.4 Although no decisions have been made, the convening role of the DIS could be crucial in bringing together the key local and national stakeholders, enabling a joined-up response across Clinical Commissioning Group, Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, Leeds City Council, Leeds Community Healthcare, Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Public Health and the third sector, thus avoiding different projects and initiatives running separately. This makes it more likely Leeds will be able to access funds and support to develop programmes of work with the care home sector in Leeds, coordinated by DIS.

4.5 COVID-19 further highlighted the digital divide through the implementation of video appointments, online consultations and the greater need for patients in the shielded cohort to self-manage health conditions. During the pandemic, DIS teams worked closely with NHS partners, Leeds Community Healthcare and the third sector to embed digital inclusion within health and care settings. Working together has increased the delivery of digital health champion training, utilised the equipment lending scheme and shared tools and resources to enable health professionals and staff in these settings to embed digital inclusion in their approach. Work has been targeted in priority wards and areas with the highest health inequalities.

4.6 Examples of closer working include:

- Digital Champions training in GP practices to overcome barriers to digital inclusion amongst patients. In a situation where face to face appointments for non-urgent routine checks cannot take place, this has provided a remote option to maintain the continuity of NHS services.
- e-Learning tools developed for the NHS app and remote consultation methods for GP practices to enable greater access to healthcare in the current situation. Working with Woodhouse Medical practice to embed digital inclusion support into patient calls. This aligns with the NHS Long Term Plan and links with Local Care Partnership priorities.
- Embedded Digital Champions training into existing team training sessions with Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, enabling patients to be discharged with digital skills developed while in hospital.
- Implemented the myCOPD self-management app through Primary Care in areas of high prevalence. Delivered virtual e-training for GP practice staff, with 21 Practices trained with embedded Digital Health Champions to support digital inclusion.
- Supported Digital Champions in [Leeds Breathe Easy groups](#) to set up virtual exercise sessions to enable peer-support to continue through the pandemic. Over 40 members across the groups have taken their first steps online to access the virtual sessions and stay connected whilst in isolation. This has boosted self-management, mental wellbeing and enabled them to continue to access Pulmonary Rehab within a peer-support setting.
- Worked with Forum Central and the Healthwatch Digital Inclusion People's Voices Group to embed digital inclusion throughout their work to enable video appointments and online consultations to become accessible to patients who are digitally excluded.

4.7 During lockdown DIS teams delivered three webinars for Commissioners from Adults and Health, Children's Services and CCG. Over 50 attendees heard how the DIS supports partner organisations in developing and delivering the transformative digital elements of the Leeds Plan. This ranges across the spectrum of digital activity from infrastructure work, through digital inclusion, to the design and delivery of person facing apps. Looking ahead to the situation facing Leeds City Council and the wider City, it will be even more important that digital solutions are commissioned and developed effectively and include the most appropriate digital inclusion interventions. The DIS is helping to address these priorities and has already started the conversations with Commissioners.

4.8 The positive impact of this work during the COVID-19 crisis has raised the profile and importance of a whole system, one team approach to digital health and wellbeing. Colleagues in the CCG and Adults and Health are developing Business Cases to increase investment into 100% Digital Leeds. An increasing focus on digital inclusion to improve health outcomes for specific patient cohorts emphasises the importance of the DIS continuing to lead and direct the priorities of the digital inclusion programme as part of one cohesive team effort.

4.9 Detailed information on other strands of work that have strengthened the digital health and wellbeing offer, including the Dementia Pathfinder project, the Digital Health Hub model and Digital Health Champions, are at **Appendices 2 – 4**.

5. Main Issues – Accelerating the digital robustness of the Third Sector

5.1 With many peer support groups, Neighbourhood Network schemes and other community organisations suspending their face-to-face activities, lockdown put digitally excluded people at further risk of social isolation as neither the organisations nor their service users were equipped for the sudden shift in operating model. The Third Sector Leeds Resilience Survey noted that **77%** of third sector organisations said digital exclusion has been an issue for the audiences they work with during this time.

5.2 To support the third sector health and wellbeing response to COVID-19, the DIS launched a grants fund administered and distributed by the 100% Digital Leeds and City Digital teams. Using its convening powers to bring together funders from different sectors, the DIS secured commitments from the Better Care Fund, regional funding from Forum Central, national COVID resilience funding from Leeds Community Foundation and social value

funding from BT as part of their Full Fibre contract in Leeds. Together, these financial contributions created a grant fund of circa £100,000 and was only achieved due to the close cooperation and trusted relationships between the Council, third sector and private sector.

- 5.3 DIS made provisions to speed up the payment process in order to urgently get the funds to small groups without any available reserves. Grants were awarded on a first come, first served basis and some organisations received funding within two days of the fund being launched.
- 5.4 The premise behind the grants fund was to enable organisations to use digital solutions to work more effectively in lockdown or to directly support their service users by providing data packages or equipment. The fund was aimed at organisations supporting health needs with a particular focus on Communities of Interest identified as being most at risk during the pandemic. In a further example of the DIS using its role to support the third sector, some organisations applied for funding to buy laptops for their staff to work from home, Instead, the DIS bought 50 laptops at a more competitive rate and gifted them to the organisations, making the fund more cost-effective and enabling more organisations to benefit.
- 5.5 In addition to supporting the City's efforts in relation to the response to the pandemic, this work meets one of the City Digital Partnerships Team's key strategic priorities for 2020-21, which is to increase the digital robustness of third sector partners in the health and care system.
- 5.6 Around 100 organisations, and the people they support, will benefit from this grant fund. Evidence of the impact of this funding is outlined in a case study from Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network and quotes from some of the other organisations at **Appendix 5** as well as in the example below from Touchstone, who provide mental health and wellbeing services to over 2,000 people a year, whilst also working across communities to grow their confidence and capacity.
- 5.7 **Quote from Touchstone:** *"The mobile phone purchased for a client literally transformed my client's world overnight. I'd been working with a vulnerable, young woman with her small baby. This client speaks no English, has no friends, no TV, no Internet, no books, no possessions and severe mental health problems. Since lockdown, the client had been staring at four blank walls and was spiralling deeper into depression. Much of what we encourage people to do to get better is to connect with the outside world. Unfortunately this was something my client was unable to do for safety reasons. Purchasing the phone with internet service therefore was critical in making those outside connections. Since this point the lives of both her and her baby have been enriched, and although there is a very long way to go, there has been a significant and positive mood increase since the phone arrived. Being able to offer this gift not only assisted their lives, but made the therapeutic process much easier and more successful, enabling the client to stay engaged within the therapy. Hopefully this feedback demonstrates the significance and importance of such a grant and shows what a little money can do to better an individual's life."*
- 5.8 Once again, the speed and collaborative nature of the City's response in coming together to find digital solutions to these issues sets Leeds apart from other places. DIS was asked to contribute examples of their work to a webinar on "Combating digital health inequality in the time of coronavirus". The webinar was delivered by Bob Gann, an independent consultant specialising in digital inclusion and combating digital health inequalities.
- 5.9 **Quote from Bob Gann, Digital Health & Inclusion Specialist:** *"We often hear that COVID-19 is a great leveller: 'We're all in this together'. But there is clear evidence that people experiencing social deprivation are hit hardest by the pandemic, and that includes people who are digitally excluded. The social isolation measures that we need to control the virus impact on every area of our lives: working, studying, shopping, keeping in touch with loved ones, accessing healthcare. Those who can have turned to digital as the means to live their lives. But during lockdown if you're not online you're effectively excluded from society. We may all be hit by the same storm but we're not all in the same boat. Because Covid-19 impacts on every area of our lives we need system-wide, multi-agency responses. Some of the best responses we're seeing to combating digital exclusion in the time of*

coronavirus are joined-up approaches across localities, including in Wales, Sheffield, Birmingham and London. The best example of an ambitious citywide programme is 100% Digital Leeds. 100% Digital Leeds involves council services, local agencies, health and social care and the voluntary sector. And it delivers the range of responses we need, from community grants to device loans, and from online digital champion training to promoting access to digital health tools. It's an example which other cities would do well to follow."

6. Main Issues – Increasing digital capacity and connectivity in communities

- 6.1 During the pandemic DIS teams have worked hard to improve the connectivity of the City's most vulnerable and isolated residents. Since lockdown the tablet lending scheme has been used as a means of meeting the essential connectivity needs of individuals, as identified by third sector partners. In the first few weeks of lockdown the scheme supported 42 organisations to connect their most at-risk clients, directly supporting 179 people with 4G enabled iPads. This is in addition to the 20 organisations who had iPads pre-lockdown and they have used them to support 117 individuals to get connected. Between them the organisations have a city-wide reach and they work with a wide range of client groups including older people, vulnerable women, carers, people with autism, people with long-term physical and mental health conditions people with learning disabilities and migrant groups.
- 6.2 Alongside the existing tablet lending scheme, funding from the Better Care Fund was used to purchase another 50 iPads and 100 Amazon Echo Shows (Alexas with a screen). This equipment is supporting the Council's Care Delivery Service and is on loan to a range of settings including care homes, Transitional Housing Units, Recovery Hubs, hospital wards, Extra Care Housing units, peer support groups, Carers Leeds and Neighbourhood Network Schemes across the City. This has enabled staff to support residents, patients and isolated older people to stay connected with friends and family with video calling during lockdown. Staff have used the Alexas to gain accurate NHS information and updates, to access music and a variety of activities to engage and interact with residents. Resources and 'How to...' guides support staff across these sites to develop their own digital skills and confidence, enabling them to effectively use the digital technology with their service users.
- 6.3 15 Neighbourhood Networks were supported to develop a virtual offer and upskill their staff and volunteers to help them reach their digitally excluded members. Devices have been given to their most isolated members, many with no family, and Digital Champions are now offering 1-1 calls with members to support them to use the devices. The need for many of their service users has been to learn how to order their prescriptions on the NHS app which the staff have supported with, increasing self-management and promoting independence. Alexas have been lent to members to support mental wellbeing and self-management for medication reminders, mood boosting and for video calls with other members and their families. For some, the interaction with Alexa has been the only social interactions they have had throughout the day so they are having a huge impact.
- 6.4 A survey of organisations across the 100% Digital Leeds network asked them to estimate how many people they had supported digitally during the lockdown period. Extrapolating the results of this sample across the whole network suggests that over 4,000 of the most vulnerable citizens are more digitally included thanks to the work of these community organisations over the last three months. DIS teams brought people together, strengthened existing networks, built new relationships and took collective action during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, thousands more people have been able to participate in society via enhanced digital access and skills at a time of pronounced isolation and social exclusion.
- 6.5 An indicator of the national interest in the DIS approach and response to COVID saw Smart Leeds, City Digital and 100% Digital Leeds teams invited to deliver webinars as part of the Digital Leaders Virtual event in June. Webinars on the DIS approach to Smart Cities and Digital Inclusion gained a live audience of over 600 delegates. The 100% Digital Leeds work is one of the finalists in the ['Digital Skills or Inclusion' category of the Digital Leaders Awards](#). This is the only city programme to make the final list of ten, with the other nine finalists operating at a regional, national or international scale.

7. Main issues – Enabling digital services across the council and partners

- 7.1 DIS worked across the City as a whole to lead and coordinate the necessary Digital and Information solutions to underpin the one city approach. Work included:
- Enabling 8,000 colleagues to work from home within two days of lockdown and delivering critical infrastructure upgrades across six weekends up to mid-July to provide additional capacity on the Council network to support increased demand.
 - Continuing arrangements to enable a high proportion of staff to work from home with IT systems running at increased capacity (Skype for Business handling 12,800 concurrent calls at peak times).
 - Supporting teams to increase productivity through further digital transformation.
 - Accelerating the roll out of Office 365 and Microsoft Teams to mitigate some of the issues above.
 - Re-prioritising the portfolio of IT work with COVID recovery and efficiency savings as the prime factors.
 - Establishing the support arrangements and infrastructure for GPs and other primary care staff to work from home, provide online consultations and share resources across practices to support the demand.
- 7.2 DIS also used its convening power to directly support the third sector during the crisis:
- Supported partners without the necessary skills to upgrade their systems.
 - Enabled Voluntary Action Leeds to run a payroll for over 170 third sector organisations in the City with a massive increase in ‘employees’ and ensuring key workers got paid.
 - Rapidly developed new web, service and social media solutions to enable new services.
 - Providing the collaboration technology and tools to enable the third sector to coordinate efforts and enable thousands of new volunteers.
- 7.3 Similarly businesses were significantly impacted by COVID and as well as rapidly developing solutions to enable them to apply and get paid business grants, in days to keep them sustained, the team has been working with Economic Development to provide joined up support to enable businesses to transact and keep in touch with their customers online.
- 7.4 There has been an increased focus on how digital exclusion has impacted on children’s education during the pandemic. DIS worked with the Children and Families directorate and Social Work teams to support the Department for Education (DfE) scheme to distribute devices and connectivity to disadvantaged families, children and young people who do not currently have access to them through another source. Equipment could be requested for care leavers, children and young people aged 0 to 19 with a social worker and disadvantaged year 10 pupils.
- 7.5 Leeds requested 2,181 HP laptop devices and 303 Wi-Fi routers (enabled with 8GB of data per month for six months from activation) to distribute to young people identified for the scheme. DIS worked closely with colleagues in Children and Families, the DfE and Computacenter (the DfE’s delivery partner) to coordinate the delivery and distribution of devices through the child’s allocated social worker.
- 7.6 Mobile data management is currently being provided by the DfE through locally configured security settings and Microsoft Intune. Initially support ran until October 2020, however following meetings with the DfE directly raising DIS’s concerns with this support offer, the DfE have agreed to continue support until March 2021 on all devices.
- 7.7 Discussions are continuing with the DfE to further extend their offer, however this looks unlikely beyond what has been agreed and announced to date. Discussions are underway with Children and Families SLT to consider next steps. Options being considered are:
- ‘Gift’ the device from April to the young people or family;
 - Hand over the devices in April to Leeds schools to be managed as part of their education estate;
 - Work with DIS and the DfE to find a suitable supplier to continue support and maintenance for a further year from April 2021.

7.8 Before the DfE scheme was announced, a community response to the issue was already coming together in the form of Digital Access West Yorkshire. Their aim is to work with community groups and teachers to match donated laptops or tablet computers with those individuals who need them, making sure that more people can connect with others during this difficult time. A detailed case study on their work is at **Appendix 6**.

8. Corporate considerations

8.1 Consultation and engagement

8.1.1 As outlined throughout this report, consultation and engagement with partner organisations and their service users is a constant activity of the work and one of the fundamental principles of the DIS approach.

8.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

8.2.1 The report focuses on actions to reduce and mitigate the impacts of poverty, exclusion and inequalities. By working with community partners this work will strengthen cohesion and integration in Leeds.

8.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

8.3.1 All of the work outlined in the report plays a key role in achieving the council's ambition to build a compassionate city, tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. Work discussed is aligned closely with the Best Council plan and the Health and Wellbeing and Inclusive Growth Strategies.

Climate Emergency

8.3.2 Improving digital inclusion across all communities has the potential to make a major contribution towards overall efforts to tackle climate change. Significant focus across government and the public sector in particular has been given to transforming the way citizens interact with services, moving information and applications online while delivering services in fewer physical locations. For those who are digitally excluded this has created difficult practical challenges and they are also excluded from securing the environmental benefits of these changes. For example, if someone is not able to complete a form online they may have to travel to a physical location, with the nearest one now being a greater distance away than it was previously and requiring a longer, more polluting, journey.

8.3.3 At its core, work to provide people with more digital skills and access equips them with greater choice and flexibility about how they live their lives. As well as having the ability to present more opportunities in social and economic terms, it can also inform and enable people to make more environmentally positive choices in a realistic and practical way.

8.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

8.4.1 Alongside the ongoing health implications of the COVID crisis there may be a serious economic downturn with a resultant impact on society and the most vulnerable. The effects of the pandemic will continue to hit services and support groups across the city at the same time that a huge backlog in health and care needs will place additional demand on services. Third Sector Leeds recently released the findings from a survey of third sector resilience in Leeds showing that 60% of third sector organisations who responded said they may remain financially sustainable for six months or less.

8.4.2 To ensure that the most disadvantaged are not hardest-hit over the next few years, people and communities need to have the best chance to sustain themselves. Digital inclusion provides the opportunity for people to do that and gives the Council and NHS partners the ability to enable and facilitate better outcomes for people. In the current climate the recommended approach to do this is through the Council convening people and community based assets to coproduce and delivery solutions rather than rely on traditional service delivery methods alone.

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

8.5.1 There are no specific legal implications or access to information issues with this report.

8.6 Risk management

8.6.1 While there are no specific risks directly associated with any proposals in this report, it is important to note the risk of failing to deliver the programme and not achieving the ambition of 100% Digital Leeds. This could have a significant impact on partners across the city and on the combined efforts to tackle poverty, improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities. The impact of this could be felt by a significant number of the poorest people and families in Leeds.

8.6.2 Risks are managed, and programme governance is in place, by regular reporting to Smart Leeds Portfolio Board and annual reports to Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth).

9. Conclusions

9.1 The COVID-19 crisis continues to put huge pressure on the Council and partners in the third sector and in health and care settings. The emergency digital response outlined in this report has had a positive impact on the City's most vulnerable residents. Looking to the future and planning for the city's recovery phase with partners, there will be severe budget challenges across all sectors. To continue to deliver an effective digital response, it is even more crucial that the Council uses its convening power to maximum effect. It is essential to work beyond silos and bring people together from across sectors to coproduce solutions from the bottom-up. This approach is well established across DIS and is exemplified by the work of the City Digital team and the 100% Digital Leeds team outlined in this report.

9.2 The Scrutiny Board meeting in February 2020 may not have discussed the COVID-19 crisis but it was prescient in one respect. The digital update report presented at that Board included a summary of the DIS approach and rationale. It is repeated here for emphasis:

9.3 *"The Council cannot meet the demands of the future without change. We want to move to a whole system approach across places that enables people to independently look after themselves and improve their lives, to connect them to their communities and a wider circle of care and support. We can use some of the latest technologies to make this happen, but if we do not tackle digital exclusion then tens of thousands of our most vulnerable residents will be left behind as other areas of the city move on without them. We are working with and within those communities to ensure that everyone benefits from a truly 100% Digital Leeds."*

9.4 This is the ambition moving forwards and should be a foundation of the Council's and the City's recovery plans.

10. Recommendations

10.1 The current CDIO is leaving at the end of July to be replaced by a jointly appointed post with a focus on City outcomes, not just services. As part of the Council's ongoing digital response to COVID it is recommended that the DIS and the new CDIO continues to set priorities, direct the work and provide overall governance for 100% Digital Leeds, with the DIS also continuing to report progress to this Board.

10.2 The central coordination, convening, connecting and enabling role of the DIS, with the 100% Digital Leeds Team as an integral part of that approach, has been essential during the current crisis. Although the 100% Digital Leeds team currently sit on the Library Service structure, it is recommended that this integrated approach is sustained and strengthened based on the return on Public Value and Outcomes exemplified in this report and previous reports to this Board.

10.3 If external funding comes to an end, which is unlikely for the next 18 months, it is recommended that this work and these teams are considered a priority as part of the budget setting process based on the returns on investment to the community, Council and NHS. Detailed evaluation and Return on Investment figures for 100% Digital Leeds featured in the previous report to this Board in February 2020. A summary is included at **Appendix 7** for ease of reference.

11. Background documents¹

11.1 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.

Appendix 1: Library Service initiatives

Keeping in touch (KIT) project

Background

All Leeds Library buildings closed on March 23 2020 due to the coronavirus crisis. The Keeping in Touch project was developed to support some of our more vulnerable residents and was targeted at customers over the age of 70 in the first instance. Specifically calls were made to:

- To help reduce loneliness and isolation
- To update customers on what was happening with the library service (e.g. to reassure customers not to worry about any outstanding library books)
- To Initiate a digital conversation and support customers access online services
- Make referrals to other agencies as necessary.

A draft script was developed to support conversations and a number of staff members were assigned to the project, working in teams and supported by a team leader.

Outcomes

This was an immensely positive experience for both staff and customers. Just under 6,000 calls made and all 6,000 calls included a digital conversation. Many of the queries were about libraries reopening but we were also able to support with a range of other queries ranging from accessing the At Home Library Service, to information about when services such as waste recycling centres would reopen. Staff making the calls were also able to provide information about the Covid helpline and one referral was made to Adult Social Care.

Digital support

Library staff were able to help customers access library online services e.g. e-Books, e-Audio e-Magazine and e-Newspapers. For more in-depth digital support, they were able to refer customers to a 1-1 digital support session with a librarian. They were also able to signpost to Niche Academy, a resource recently purchased by the Library Service which provides access to a range of tutorials to support with digital skills development, e.g. accessing social media, how to set up zoom meetings and how to use Microsoft applications.

Feedback

"My mum was delighted to receive a keep-in-touch call yesterday from her local library. She's already looking forward to the call next week as she finds the long days in isolation can get lonely. Thank you @leedslibraries – this simple thing made an enormous difference" (Isobel Hunter CEO Libraries Connected on Twitter, 29 May)

Appendix 2: Dementia Pathfinder

Before the COVID-19 crisis, DIS teams worked in partnership with Adults & Health, Carers Leeds, Good Things Foundation and NHS Digital to deliver the NHS Dementia Pathfinder.

The programme trialled how digital technology, and increasing digital inclusion more generally, could help people with dementia and their families/carers to manage their conditions. Supporting people with dementia is a key priority within the Older People's Mental Health programme of the Leeds Health and Care Plan. Harnessing digital tools to empower people with long term conditions to take control of their health is a key enabler of the Proactive Care and Self-Management programme within the Leeds Plan.

The legacy and success of the NHS Dementia Pathfinder has been reflected during the pandemic. Many organisations, dementia cafes and carer support groups are now equipped with digital champions, they have equipment to support their service users and have established online support groups to enable support to continue through lockdown. Carers have been able to access closed Facebook groups set up through the project to keep in touch, stay connected and most importantly provide support and advice to each other and communicate with Carers Leeds.

Dementia Cafes borrowed devices from the lending scheme to distribute amongst their most socially and digitally excluded members. Digital champions provided 1-1 support to help them to overcome barriers of confidence and fear in using the technology. Apps have enabled carers to manage their mental health and wellbeing during lockdown and promoted independence and wider self-management for their long-term conditions. Alexas have been lent to members who are isolated and either live alone or with their carers. These are benefiting the dementia carers through increased social interactions. Carers have been using the NHS symptom checker with Alexa, listening to music for reminiscence and using the devices to relieve agitation and anxiety.

Full report available at:

<https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/leedsdementia-report2020.pdf>

'How to...' guide available at:

https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/how_to_use_digital_to_help_those_with_dementia.pdf

Appendix 3: Digital Health Hub

The 100% Digital Leeds team partnered with Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours Scheme to launch the first Digital Health Hub in Leeds last year after a successful funding application to Good Things Foundation. This enabled Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours Scheme to embed digital support and resources into their already successful programme of activities. Their 1,200 members received support on topics such as ordering repeat prescriptions online, making a GP appointment online or using the NHS app to self-manage their long-term health conditions.

The Digital Health Hub model works in partnership with NHS, creating strong links with local GP practices and Social Prescribing teams. There is now an established referral pathway for health professionals and staff to refer patients to the Digital Health Hub for support in accessing online NHS services, and this has continued throughout COVID-19.

Patients can now make GP appointments and order online prescriptions, which has been vital at this time and created a change in lifestyle for patients with the way they engage with health services. This reduced pressures on front-line NHS services and increased uptake of video appointments. Digital Champions are continuing to work with patients and carers to understand and meet their digital health needs, which is a real demonstration of co-production.

In the face of COVID-19 this Digital Health Hub model has shown the key benefits to the framework in providing digital health support throughout the pandemic. The centre is delivering their service by communicating to their members fully through welfare calls and virtual sessions, but established partnerships and collaborative working with local healthcare providers has continued.

The main factors which contributed to this success are:

- The 100% Digital Leeds team working closely with Primary Care by delivering Digital Champion training to local GP Practice staff and volunteers to increase access to NHS services online and self-management apps such as the MyCOPD app. This has strengthened the links between the community provision at the Digital Health Hub and primary care networks, enabling continued referrals for digital support and improving health outcomes for their members/patients.
- Increased communication around NHS communications and Coronavirus updates to members throughout the pandemic. Encouraging members to still access Primary Care when necessary and increasing awareness of access to cancer screenings and other key services.
- An established cohort of staff and volunteers within Cross Gates and District Good Neighbours Scheme who have continued to provide digital support and training with members via telephone calls.
- Key stakeholders across Third Sector, NHS, Leeds Community Healthcare and Voluntary Action Leeds.

Following the success of this first Digital Health Hub in Leeds, this framework will be shared further so that the model can be extended to other Neighbourhood Networks and Third Sector organisations across the city. The council wants to improve health outcomes for all and enable more people to self-manage their health conditions. This model will provide digital support for people by harnessing the tools and resources amongst community organisations, enabling service users to access health information online, online consultations and NHS services. The wider benefits of increasing digital skills include: Increasing social connections, combatting loneliness and promoting independence amongst service users, enabling them to shop and bank online as well as accessing online groups and virtual sessions to support their mental wellbeing.

<https://digitalinclusionleeds.com/2020/03/24/digital-health-hub-cross-gates-and-district-good-neighbours-covid-19/>

https://crossgatesgns.org.uk/news_events/virtual-coffee-mornings/

Appendix 4: Digital Health Champions

346 Digital Champions trained across Health and Care.

One of the main barriers to digital inclusion for digital health is skills and confidence. 100% Digital Leeds deliver Digital Health Champions training with clinical staff and health professionals to support a positive attitude towards technology and innovation. Training is supporting the digital ready workforce programme.

Supporting GP practices across Leeds and working with health champions in practices and across Patient Participation Groups has increased the awareness of the digital tools and resources available. Staff are promoting the benefits of being online when having telephone conversations and appointments with patients, increasing the uptake of video appointments and online consultations.

During the pandemic Digital Health Champions training was delivered virtually with Social Prescribing teams, supporting patients to overcome barriers to digital inclusion. Many of the services and activities the social prescribing teams signpost patients to are now online. Digital champion training has increased access for patients to online resources to support their health and mental wellbeing, such as Active Leeds exercise videos as well as resources through the British Lung Foundation and Heart Foundation websites. Teams have developed virtual sessions for patients to promote positive mental wellbeing and social connections such as Virtual Coffee Mornings.

Digital Health Champions Training has also been delivered to third sector organisations who are supporting their service users with long-term conditions, such as Leeds Involving People and a wide range of Neighbourhood Networks. Where motivation is the most challenging barrier to overcome for digital inclusion, this training has enabled a positive shift for many older people and people living with long-term conditions in embracing digital technology and supporting them to live well whilst in isolation. Active Leeds staff have also received the training which is increasing the use of their online resources to support people to stay active, healthy and living well in isolation, and enabling staff to address digital inclusion barriers within the implementation of these resources.

Promoting non-traditional approaches for healthcare professionals and patients with digital health has been key. It has aligned with the priorities of Shared Decision making, Better Conversations and Collaborative Care and Support Planning, ensuring the offer and patient plan is person-centred. Digital support for health professionals is helping with early interventions, having positive digital inclusion conversations at appointments, diagnosis of long-term conditions and annual reviews to determine the barriers patients may face to digital and how to overcome these at this early stage. This may include recommending a patient start their digital journey using a game app (linked to their hobbies and interests) which then enables them to develop their digital literacy skills and confidence to eventually self-manage their conditions via digital tools, saving time using online NHS services and taking control of their own health and wellbeing.

Expanding the Digital Health Champion training offer across the staff training platforms within Leeds Community Healthcare, Primary Care and with the wider Social Prescribing teams, Community Link Workers and Community Builders is a priority. Embedding this training within Health and Care for the health workforce has increased opportunities for patients to overcome barriers to digital inclusion and increased uptake and access to online NHS resources. Teams are also building wider networks of digital support around ordering prescriptions and making appointments online, increasing support for self-managing health and wellbeing amongst patients.

Appendix 5: Feedback on grant funding from Leeds Asylum Seekers' Support Network and other organisations

“Asylum seekers living in Home Office accommodation do not have access to Wi-Fi. The Home Office allocates asylum seekers £3 a week for communications – a device and a pay-as-you-go sim card with calls and data. Usually this would be supplemented by utilising free community Wi-Fi in council buildings, shopping centres, and fast food outlets – but access has been limited during lockdown.

Government support for asylum seekers comes via Migrant Help, an online platform and telephone call centre, making help and advice inaccessible for those without a device and credit for calls and connectivity. Many asylum seekers do not even have televisions. Before the pandemic asylum seekers in this position would have been able to access support locally through migrant third sector organisations like LASSN, PAFRAS, RETAS, but lockdown has caused all of these organisations to close their doors.

All of these circumstances mean people have not been able to access reliable essential information about, among other things, how to stay safe during the pandemic. This is particularly worrying given that we now know that people who are black or other ethnic minority backgrounds are more at risk of dying from COVID-19. On top of this, refugees and asylum seekers are more likely to be living with long term physical and mental health conditions, making them further at risk of adverse effects from COVID-19.

LASSN have addressed this essential need for connectivity by providing refugees and asylum seekers with phone credit. First £5/month and more recently £10/month, from LASSN's own resource and to the organisation's direct service users. Taking a collaborative approach has made it possible for LASSN to extend this offer to all asylum seekers in the city:

- £1,000 from a successful application to the 100% Digital Leeds grants fund and £3,500 repurposed funds from West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner was used to purchase MiFi dongles.*
- DIS wiped and donated 80 reconditioned smartphones which allowed devices to be gifted to those who do not own a device with the capacity to access the internet.*
- Solidaritech have donated laptops and other devices to support households with children.*
- Each sim/MiFi dongle provides people with three months of data and all equipment is gifted to the beneficiaries.*
- The city's migrant third sector has worked to identify families without connectivity and refer them to LASSN.*

With this approach LASSN have provided over 100 households with internet access. Households are encouraged to share their connectivity within the household and externally where possible, making sure that the maximum number of people benefit from the scheme.

Digital skills support has also been an issue, and engaging with new ways of organisational delivery such as Zoom has been a challenge for all involved, including organisational staff and volunteers. The sector has come together to overcome this barrier too, with organisations creating and sharing support materials in different languages, working together to improve digital literacy for all.

Leeds has an excellent Wi-Fi network but only some people can access it, making those who can afford it more able to access the information and services we all need to keep ourselves and our families safe. Can internet access be made more inclusive? Can we work with corporate partners to try and make things fairer? Can we help LASSN to be able to spend their time and resources on supporting people to claim asylum rather than supporting them to access essential services like Wi-Fi?”

– Jon Beech, Director, LASSN (This case study adapted from a longer [video contribution](#).)

Organisation	Feedback
Shantona Women's Centre	<p>We are based in Harehills (LS8 postcode area). Majority of service users have had some support around digital inclusion. Additionally, staff have had internal training, self-taught and attended zoom information sessions to improve their digital inclusion. We estimate that around 100 service users have been supported to be more digitally included and that about 10 staff have become more digitally included</p> <p>Chrome books have enabled workers to continue delivering support and recording outcomes whilst working from home. Having multi-lingual staff has removed the language barrier so that services users understand how to access and navigate these platforms.</p>
The Joanna Project	<p>We work with women across the whole of Leeds who struggle with addictions and can be of no fixed abode.</p> <p>Chromebook has been used for socially distanced visits to complete new online benefits claims, accessing bank accounts, uploading a sick not and a skype meeting to celebrate a child's birthday who is in foster care.</p> <p>The long battery life, swift launch and neatness, compared to a laptop, has been hugely appreciated. The women we support are often in crisis and very anxious, so these features have meant the difference between a successful intervention, or a failure to help someone in real need.</p>
Leeds Bereavement Service	<p>Operate across the whole of the city. Laptop given to Development Worker, front facing camera made a massive difference. Provided online training sessions and also online support to individuals. Since April 2020 they have helped 69 people.</p>
Leeds Mind	<p>Laptop used by Job Retention Specialists to carry on supporting 20 of our clients across Leeds by transferring the weekly support on Zoom. The Job Retention Specialist helps clients retain their employment if it is at risk whilst they are recovering from their mental health difficulties.</p>
URP Leeds Limited	<p>The laptop you have provided to our company is life-saving. Used to support clients across the city to fill in application forms etc. Since April we have supported 91 clients and among them 18 of them were advised on how to use Zoom and how to use bite size website, and among the participants 6 of them were provided with a Tablet loan. We were also able to give out 4 used laptops which were matched through donation.</p>
Special Autism Services	<p>Specialist Autism Services covers Leeds as a whole (our service users can access from any part of Leeds). We have estimated that we have supported 45 individuals to be more digitally included.</p>
West Yorkshire Family Mediation Service	<p>We provide family mediation services to divorced and separated couples in order to help them with outstanding issues concerning their property, finances and especially their children. Laptops used by mediators to remotely engage with clients and their children via the internet. Since April, we have directly supported in the region of 100 people plus their families.</p>
Trinity Network (Social Opportunities for Older People)	<p>Are encouraging members to use zoom to contact friends and family. Clients, staff and volunteers in the 60+ group are definitely more interested and have been accessing online services and using zoom to engage in quizzes and meetings. I would estimate since April approximately 20 people would have been benefited.</p>
Age UK	<p>I can tell you that we support older people across Leeds – anywhere with an LS postcode. Have supported approximately 2700 older people since the pandemic started. We have worked closely with approx. 20-30 older people to help them learn digital skills to connect with family e.g. Skype, Zoom, on line shopping etc.</p>

Health for All Leeds Ltd	We work across the city as an organisation. Laptops used for our young people and families staff to connect with vulnerable young people and families. Since April have supported over 500 people digitally via zoom calls, telephone chats, online groups, online courses, virtual weekly peer groups. We also support young people and families from Morley and Rothwell. Also used the laptops to support Teenspirit groups, positive destinations group, young parents group, care leavers group and dads group.
Leeds Autism Services	We currently operate across the whole of Leeds. Since April, we've supported around 10 – 12 people to be more digital. However, we envisage that this figure will rise to around 30 – 40 by the end of July.
Dial Leeds	Support people Leeds wide, but been a major focus on Moortown Foodbank due to travel limitations etc recently. Helped 25-30 people pretty regularly with weekly contacts and using digital means to progress such things as food parcel deliveries, energy related issues and issues around mental and physical wellbeing. Laptops have meant that volunteers carry on contacting clients and to keep in touch with the office.
Complete Woman CIC	Laptop used to run daily coffee mornings to catch up on everyone at home to help reduce loneliness for those still isolating. From April 2020 we have been able to support all of our members (60+) to become more confident digitally and to use Zoom and shopping online etc. Have also supported 4 families are being supported with monthly internet vouchers.
Crossgates and District Good Neighbours	We cover the Crossgates area our customers are 65 +. Have trained 45 people to use Zoom and lent 11 people tablets with WiFi. Half of these has never used WiFi before, but are now connecting to church services. Also done 1-2-1 help with phone queries with 15 people who were concerned scams or help with pc. Also run on line IT lessons covering Facebook, Learn my way, WhatsApp, Google photos and backing up photos. The online IT classes have 8 members.

Appendix 6: Digital Access West Yorkshire

[Digital Access West Yorkshire](#) (DAWY) are a group of interested local people who are concerned with the lack of technology provision for young people and the widening of the digital divide. They believe digital access is the ability to fully participate in society. This includes access to tools and technologies that allow for full participation, including laptops, computers, tablets and access to the internet. DAWY are an open, democratic voluntary organisation helping to address the increased needs and greater demands for connectivity during the COVID-19 crisis. Their aim is to match donated laptops or tablet computers with those individuals who need them, making sure that more people can connect with others during this difficult time.

DAWY believe that access to technology and digital skills are not just important in themselves, they are increasingly important for navigating the modern world. The effect of home-schooling has been overwhelming on children and young people during the lockdown. Social connectivity can help them to maintain friendships and belonging throughout this time of isolation. DAWY aim to increase access to technology as much as possible.

There is currently a core group of ten volunteers helping DAWY with everything from technician time, social media support, liaison, logistics and the provision of physical space. They have managed to gift machines to schools, individuals and organisations to support people in specific need. Over the course of the last eight weeks they have seen the pace of donations pick up significantly and have increased volunteer hours and parts purchases in response.

This summer, Leeds Community Foundation will be funding and coordinating another Healthy Holidays programme for schoolchildren in Leeds. The programme enables vulnerable children to have access to food, fun activities, learning and support during the school holidays. This year, many of the activities will be online and many of the children will struggle to take part if they have no devices or connectivity. To help those families, Leeds Libraries and Community Hubs are buying iPads to add to the tablet lending scheme and DAWY are working with Leeds Community Foundation to support the scheme with donated devices.

DAWY is another example of the burgeoning partnerships between the Council and private, public, third and cultural sectors that have developed during the COVID-19 crisis. These partnerships are characterised by the caring and coherent nature of their response to the pandemic. There is also a shared realisation that the response asks as many questions as it answers and, as time goes on, the effects of inequality become both broader and deeper.

Appendix 7: 100% Digital Leeds evaluation and Return on Investment

100% Digital Leeds has an evaluation framework that enables them to measure improved outcomes across a range of indicators. The framework also gives a methodology that can be used to report the return on investment that digital inclusion brings to residents, the Council and the city as a whole.

The evaluation framework includes:

- **Ongoing User Progression Survey** – collects demographic data to measure trends and to build a profile of end users (e.g. age, employment status, if they have a disability/long term health condition, language needs, whether they're a Housing Leeds tenant). The survey also includes attitudinal and behavioural change, and calculation of channel shift savings. This will be rolled out to all of the 100% Digital Leeds partners who offer digital access and support to users.
- **Monthly Activity Survey for organisations participating in the tablet lending scheme**
- **Monthly Activity Survey for organisations benefiting from Digital Inclusion Funding**
Both of these are designed to collect data to provide quantitative evidence of impact delivered by partners in communities and among target audiences, so that we can state, for example, "*x number of organisations in the movement are helping people find employment and saw y amount of people this quarter.*" The digital inclusion team will also contact each organisation quarterly to collect qualitative evidence in the form of user case studies and organisational case studies, featuring quotes and images. These will be organised in categories relevant to specific agendas e.g. health, employment and skills, financial resilience, community integration, reduced isolation or loneliness and greater independence.
- **Ongoing Digital Champions progression survey** – as well as continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of Digital Champions training, the impact of the practical application of training and the engagement of end users by Digital Champions will also be measured and reported.

The report to this Board in February 2020 included data from progression surveys showing annualised savings as a result of behaviour changes and channel shift due to the 100% Digital Leeds programme:

Service	Savings
A&E	£310,426
GP	£230,427
Leeds City Council	£98,686
Other government offices	£72,703
Jobcentre Plus	£69,370
Total:	£781,612

The digital inclusion team will continue to survey partner organisations and end users. The robustness of the data and the values for Return on Investment will increase exponentially as the team continues to expand the digital inclusion network and more responses are collected from beneficiaries.