

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held remotely via Public-I on
Thursday 9 July 2020 10.30 am – 12pm

(A pre-meeting will take place for all Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

B Anderson (Chair)	- Adel and Wharfedale;
J Akhtar	- Little London and Woodhouse;
J Bentley	- Weetwood;
A Blackburn	- Farnley and Wortley;
K Brooks	- Little London and Woodhouse
D Collins	- Horsforth;
M Dobson	- Garforth and Swillington
A Gabriel	- Beeston and Holbeck;
P Grahame	- Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
A Khan	- Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
P Gruen	- Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
M Harland	- Kippax and Methley;
N Sharpe	- Temple Newsam;
T Smith	- Pudsey;

Note to observers of the meeting:

To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'View the Webcast' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1091&MId=9993>

Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Rebecca Atherton
Tel: (0113) 37 88642

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded). (* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).	
2			EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC 1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows: No exempt items have been identified.	

3		LATE ITEMS To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration. (The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)	
4		DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct.	
5		APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.	
6		MINUTES - 18 JUNE 2020 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020.	5 - 10
7		REFERRAL TO SCRUTINY: NITROUS OXIDE USE AND ABUSE To consider a Referral to Scrutiny in the name of Cllr Matthew Robinson. The Board is asked to determine whether or not its work programme should be amended in order to include a detailed scrutiny session on this topic later in the municipal year.	11 - 16
8		RESPONDING TO THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC - THE VOLUNTEER RESPONSE To consider the report of the Chief Officer for Communities, which sets out the work that Leeds City Council, Voluntary Action Leeds and other organisations undertook to respond community needs in the initial phase of the Covid-19 Pandemic.	17 - 54

9

WORK SCHEDULE

55 -
74

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2020/21 municipal year.

10

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next public meeting will take place at **10am on 24 September**. There will be a pre-meet for all Board Members at **9.30am**.

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 18TH JUNE, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley,
A Blackburn, D Collins, A Gabriel,
P Grahame, A Khan, P Gruen, M Harland,
N Sharpe, K Brooks, T Smith and
M Dobson

CHAIRS COMMENT

Councillor B Anderson, Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) welcomed everyone to this remote meeting of the Panel and explained the procedure to be followed.

1 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

3 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

4 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Under the provisions of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct, the following declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests was made:

With regard to Agenda Item 7, Public consultation on proposals for Temple Newsam (Minute No. 8) - Councillor D Collins, Company Secretary of Zig Zag Lighting, which had in the past and may in the future fulfil contracts for events held within the grounds of Temple Newsam.

5 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Councillor D Coupar.

6 Minutes - 5 March 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held 5 March 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 9th July, 2020

Matters arising

Minute 95 – Housing Repairs Update Report. A Member requested information that set out housing activity figures on a local level basis regarding responsive repairs, voids and rent collection and that these be provided to the Board at a later date.

7 Safer Leeds - Verbal Update

The Chief Officer (Safer Leeds) was in attendance, and provided an update to the Board on the impact of the city's response to coronavirus and the recovery plan, on the work of Safer Leeds.

The following key points had been highlighted:

Street Support

- 220 rough sleepers had been accommodated in safe temporary accommodation across 8 sites and a contract has been secured until end of July 2020;
- Exit strategies are being discussed;
- Pre Covid-19 emergency accommodation including The Crypt has been closed throughout the Covid-19 period due to social distancing issues;
- Of the 220 rough sleepers that have been accommodated, 40 of those would normally have no recourse to public funding (NRPF);
- The current on-street activity is approximately 20 individuals with fewer rough sleepers on streets than previously;
- A draft 'move in/move on' transition framework has been developed with partners and seeks to support and safeguard individuals.

In response to questions, a number of matters were raised and discussed, including:

- *The dispersal of rough sleepers and support provided to those people identified in prime locations.* Members were informed that street support is in place city wide and across various wards and an increase in rough sleeping hot spot locations had been acknowledged and seeking to be responsive with Outreach Services and Local Housing Management Team;
- *Outreach support capacity* hasn't decreased nor increased. Additional support has been utilised from Safer Leeds, across the Council and West Yorkshire Police;
- *The level of interaction with the rough sleeper cohort regarding their future placement.* Members were informed that work alongside the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is currently being developed to secure voices of clients. Questionnaires and exercises are being reviewed to engage 200+ people.

Domestic violence and abuse

- An increase in reporting of incidents since March 2020 - 55-75 incidents every 24 hours being reported to the police;
- Set up a partner group to ensure we can respond to victims of violence and domestic abuse;
- 712 cases have gone through the body of officers mitigating risks within 24 hours - over 700 safety plans have been implemented to ensure families and victims are safe;
- Members were informed of a new legislation that would call for new governance across all Local Authorities to drive more coherent partnerships and engage a broader range of partners.

Anti-social behaviour

Responding to Member's questions, the following was discussed:

- *Spikes in speeding during lockdown including off-road biking and lack of collaboration of 20mph zones.* Members were informed that a Road Safety Partnership Group was being re-established and would include partners from West Yorkshire Police, Highways and Safer Leeds, and Members of the Board would be provided an update in due course of significant progress over the coming weeks;
- *The collaboration of closer working Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Ward Members.* Whilst identifying the good work undertaken by Neighbourhood Policing, a concern was raised regarding an overlap in number of crimes committed in the city centre compared to individual wards. It was confirmed that an update would be provided on those figures in due course;
- *Noise nuisance and neighbour disputes.* Particularly with house parties and large gatherings. Members were informed that as social distancing measures ease, colleagues in the noise nuisance (ASB) team will be able to enter premises to install equipment to measure noise, issue legal notices and enforce more tactical interventions.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer (Safer Leeds) for his attendance, work undertaken and agreed to work collaboratively on the issues raised at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the update, and comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Agreed to identify areas of work for the Board at the upcoming Scrutiny Board meeting for the 2020/21 municipal year.

8 Public Consultation on Proposals for Temple Newsam

Further to minute 58 of the meeting held 3 December 2019, the report of the Director of Communities and Environment outlined the findings of the public consultation on proposals for the land currently occupying the golf course at Temple Newsam Estate.

The following were in attendance for this item:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 9th July, 2020

- Councillor Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Communities
- Councillor Firth, Referrer
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Sean Flesher, Chief Officer Parks & Countryside
- Emma Trickett, Senior Projects Manager

The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside, informed the Board that there had been a general consensus for the golf course to retain 18 holes and two 9 hole golf courses. It had also been reported that an online petition to stop the closure of the golf course, had acquired 2886 signatures.

Councillor Sharpe in her capacity as ward member for Temple Newsam, and on behalf of her ward colleagues had commended the outcome of the public consultation and expressed her view that the proposed facilities would encourage a wider range of age groups to the area.

The Chair invited Councillor Firth to speak, whom had originally presented the request for scrutiny. Councillor Firth informed the Board of concerns regarding the data contained within the report and requested these be re-visited to reflect the future investment of the golf course and the Council's current financial strains.

In responding, the Chief Officer Parks and Countryside informed the Board that the draft proposals had been submitted including details referring to the golf course, and that these would be contained within the report ahead of the future Executive Board meeting.

Members of the Board expressed general concerns regarding the financial aspects of the golf course, specifically in terms of its future investment and affordability. It was requested that information be made clear and available to Members in the upcoming Executive Board report. In responding, the Chief Officer Parks and Countryside explained a draft business case currently under review contained that information, and would be set out in an Executive Board report at a later date. Furthermore, it was highlighted that monies borrowed, wouldn't add to any existing revenue pressures and it was intended that the café would drive a surplus revenue, as would hosting events to drive additional funding.

In summarising his position Councillor Firth reiterated the need for the financial concerns to be addressed, and to understand the sustainability of the golf course. The Chief Officer Parks and Countryside agreed that comprehensive details regarding finance would be included in a future Executive Board report, and that these would be made available to the public.

The Chair sought and received agreement from the Board that the following conclusions should be reflected in the recommendations to the Executive Board:

- The Board welcomed the work and effort of officers to address the issues raised through the Referral to Scrutiny process.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 9th July, 2020

- The Board welcomed the detail provided through the consultation, noting members were satisfied that the consultation had been conducted in a clear, thorough and effective manner.
- Members endorsed the conclusions set out by the Chief Officer for Parks and Countryside in his closing remarks to the Board.
- The Board recommends that the Executive Board report includes clarity regarding affordability as part of the presentation of a robust business case.
- The Board recommends ongoing communication with all local stakeholders to minimise and mitigate any concerns ahead of the Executive Board meeting.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the report, along with members comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Requested that the information relating to finances be reflected in the upcoming Executive Board report, together with clear recommendations for the golf course as set out by the Chair at the conclusion of this item.

9 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's schedule for the initial meetings of the 2020/21 municipal year. Copies of the Boards work schedule were appended to the report, as well as a note from the Working Group – Covid-19 response and recovery held 28 May 2020, and the minutes of the remote Executive Board meeting held 19 May 2020.

Members were advised that there had been a review of all public meetings and in doing so, the Board will receive the work programme for the remainder of the year at the meeting to be held 9 July 2020.

RESOLVED – To note the report, and intention of receiving the work programme at the upcoming SB meeting on 9 July 2020.

10 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as 9 July 2020 at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting ended at 12:10 p.m.

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Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 9 July 2020

Subject: Referral to the Scrutiny Board (Impact of nitrous oxide use and abuse on Leeds' Communities)

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

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present details of a referral that falls within the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities).

2. Background information

- 2.1 In accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, any member of a Scrutiny Board may request that the Scrutiny Board of which they are a member considers a matter relevant to that Board's functions. Such requests are generally considered as part of a Scrutiny Board's standard agenda item to review its work programme.
- 2.2 Any referrals that arise from outside of the relevant Scrutiny Board membership are to be dealt with in accordance with sections G and H of the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules ([Link to SBPR](#)).

3. Main issues

- 3.1 A referral has been made to the Board by Cllr Matthew Robinson. Details of the referral can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, an invitation to today's meeting has been extended to Cllr Robinson as the main 'Referrer' to make

representations as to why it would be appropriate for the Board to exercise its functions in relation to the matter. The Scrutiny Board Chair will decide how much time will be given for the person to address the Scrutiny Board.

3.3 The Scrutiny Board shall consider whether to exercise its power to review or scrutinise the matter referred and may have regard to:-

- Any relevant information provided by or representations made by the Referrer as to why it would be appropriate for the Scrutiny Board to exercise any of its powers in relation to the matter;
- The principles set out within the 'Vision for Leeds at Scrutiny' document as part of Article 6.

3.4 The Scrutiny Board may also wish to consider:

- If further information is required before considering whether further scrutiny should be undertaken;
- If the matters links in with the scope of any current / planned scrutiny inquiries;
- If a similar or related issue is already being examined by Scrutiny or has been considered by Scrutiny recently;
- If the matter raised is of sufficient significance and has the potential for scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to tangible improvements;
- The impact on the Board's current workload;
- The time available to undertake further scrutiny;
- The level of resources required to carry out further scrutiny.

4. Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 The Vision for Scrutiny states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Chief Officer and Executive Member(s) about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

4.1.2 An invitation has been extended to the relevant Chief Officer and Executive Board Member to contribute to the Board's initial discussion surrounding the matter raised as part of this request.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for any work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 Any requests for Scrutiny are dealt with in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules as well as the principles set out within the 'Vision for Leeds at Scrutiny' document.

- 4.3.2 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards also promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.3 Following the Council's Climate Emergency declaration, importance is also placed upon the need to consider the potential climate and sustainability impacts associated with any matters being considered by Scrutiny.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 As set out in paragraph 3.4, the Scrutiny Board is advised to consider any potential impact on its current workload in taking forward requests for Scrutiny, including the level of resources required to carry out further scrutiny.

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

- 4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 This report has no specific risk management implications.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1.1 A referral to this Scrutiny Board has been made by Cllr Robinson. An invitation has been extended to Cllr Robinson as the main Referrer of this request and also to the relevant Chief Officer and Executive Board Member to contribute to the Board's initial discussion surrounding the matter raised as part of this request. The Board will then be asked to determine what, if any, further scrutiny activity is required.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) is asked to determine what - if any - further scrutiny activity is required in relation to the matter referred.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 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.

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Appendix 1 – Original Referral to the Scrutiny Board (Impact of nitrous oxide use and abuse on Leeds’ Communities)

From: Robinson, Cllr Matthew

Sent: 16 June 2020 17:59

To: Anderson, Cllr Barry

Subject: Scrutiny Request - nitrous oxides use & abuse

Dear Barry,

Hope you're keeping well.

In your capacity as Chair of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Committee I am writing to ask your committee to look into the use & abuse of nitrous oxide (laughing gas) in our communities.

The below petition is gathering support to see Parliament debate this matter:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/301247>

However there is no doubt the council can do more to support the police, help users, educate people, tackle the health problems and work to eradicate the empty canisters we find left all over our neighbours.

I hope your scrutiny board will look into this matter and work with our local Police to help address this blight on our communities.

Many Thanks,
Matthew

Cllr Matthew Robinson

Harewood Ward & Shadow Resources Lead

e: matthew.robinson@leeds.gov.uk

Follow me on Twitter: @MrMatt_Robinson

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Report of the Chief Officer Communities

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 09 July 2020

Subject: Responding to the COVID 19 Pandemic – The Volunteer Response

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

Summary

1. Main issues

- On the 23rd of March 2020, the UK government announced a lockdown of the country and the Coronavirus Act 2020 received Royal Assent on the 25th of March 2020. The provisions of the Act enabled the government on the basis of scientific advice to – for example - restrict or prohibit public gatherings, control or suspend public transport, order businesses to close, temporarily detain people suspected of COVID-19, and close educational and childcare premises etc.. It is in this lockdown context that the COVID-19 volunteering response was initiated, urgently, as the needs of the vulnerable citizens of Leeds grew exponentially in those early days.
- Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic emergency has been one of the most challenging events in the recent history of Leeds and it has brought into sharp relief the crucial role of local authorities, the Third Sector and volunteering in providing leadership to the city and in working in partnership to help support and meet the needs of the citizens of Leeds. Particularly, those individuals and families who are isolated and vulnerable. The pandemic emergency initiated a crisis that quickly brought to the fore a large number of needs across the communities in Leeds and it has exacerbated health, economic, social and other inequalities in the city.
- The volunteering work highlighted in this report represents an insight into just one element of the plethora work that has been done in the city under the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan and it seeks to respond to an evaluation of the

arrangements to make them even better, more agile, flexible and responsive to need.

- Whilst the majority of this report focuses on a specific aspect of volunteering known as 'Tier 2' volunteering that has been the council's organised response to COVID-19 in partnership with Voluntary Action Leeds. It is important to recognise and celebrate the remarkable work that has been done by the many local third sector organisations in their local neighbourhoods and communities and that are not directly involved in the formal citywide arrangement. Without these every day, hyper-local endeavours the challenge in the city would have been much more challenging than it has already been.

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

- The work referenced in this report has contributed to the Councils overall aim of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. In particular it has focused on Safe, Strong Communities including -
 - Keeping people safe from harm and protecting the most vulnerable.
 - Helping people out of financial hardship.
 - Being responsive to local needs, building thriving, resilient communities.
 - Promoting community respect and resilience.

3. Resource Implications

- In addition to the thousands of volunteers that have been recruited and deployed, funding has been provided by Adults and Health Directorate direct to hubs and from the Community Committee wellbeing funds where appropriate to COVID-19 local activities. Where appropriate and supportive of voluntary hubs, existing funding has been re-purposed for COVID-19 work. A review has taken place with voluntary hubs on their experience over the past three months to inform immediate and longer-term resource requirements for a more sustainable programme.
- Council staff have been extensively re-deployed from other non-essential council services to administer the extensive back office arrangements and as link officers with hubs. The Communities Team have been re-focused to COVID-19 support to communities and hubs for the past three months. Voluntary Action Leeds have contributed significant staff time and other resources in supporting the overall arrangements and the voluntary hubs directly including, organising the review meetings and producing publications that enhance the volunteering effort overall.

Recommendations

- a) Note and comment on the contents of this report.
- b) Contribute to the refining of the current volunteer hub arrangements for a more bottom up approach.
- c) Contribute to the shaping of a coordinated volunteering arrangement in the city for the longer term.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the work which Leeds City Council (LCC), Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) and other organisations undertook to respond to needs in our communities as the Covid-19 Pandemic set in. The report focusses on the primary response to meeting the immediate needs of these communities.

2. Background information

- 2.1 On the 23rd of March 2020 the UK government took the decision to lockdown the country as the key response to the COVID 19 pandemic. The aim was to prevent infection transmission in the general population by restricting the types of activities which could be undertaken beyond the home. The key advice was to stay at home, leaving only for essential supplies (food and medicine), and exercise and for essential work. This advice necessitated the closure of businesses and wider activities and the loss of income to communities.

The government further announced that to ensure compliance with the instruction to stay at home, an additional set of measures were to be implemented, including the following:

- Closure of all shops selling non-essential goods, including clothing and electronic stores and other premises including libraries, playgrounds and outdoor gyms, and places of worship;
- Stop all gatherings of more than two people in public, excluding, people you live with;
- Stop all social events, including weddings, baptisms and other ceremonies, but excluding funerals; and
- Parks remaining open for exercise but gatherings to be dispersed

- 2.2 The NHS wrote to people considered to be at highest clinical risk from COVID-19 to inform them that they should stay at home at all times and avoid all face-to-face contact except with carers and healthcare workers as part of their medical care. This is known as 'shielding'. Those contacted in this way were strongly advised to rigorously follow the guidance.
- 2.3 The pandemic emergency initiated a crisis that quickly brought to the fore a large number of needs across the communities in Leeds. For example, where individuals were required to stay at home but without access to funds, their ability to shop for basic necessities or to collect medicines for their treatments was heavily impaired. This was exacerbated if they had no trusted neighbours, friends or relatives to help them. The negative impact in the more disadvantaged areas of the city where the ability to withstand shocks was restricted was significant as it was in all areas for those with underlying health conditions or where age related risks necessitated self-isolation.
- 2.4 There have been a range of volunteer responses to the pandemic narrowly described for the purposes of managing the response as Tier 1, 2 and 3 volunteering. This report focuses on the 'Tier 2' Community Care Volunteer response. Nevertheless, work has taken place at both 'Tier 1' and 'Tier 3' and this is highlighted below.

- 2.5 LCC Adults and Health directorate have worked closely with VAL to identify volunteers in Tier 1 who were willing to undertake tasks which would require them to provide more intensive support to people needing it. This included driving people to medical appointments and providing support inside their homes. When enhanced DBS requirements were confirmed, these Tier 1 volunteers were deployed through a central co-ordination team in order to provide support to people across the city. Advice from Public Health about the most appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for these volunteers was sought, guidance was issued and continued support offered to these volunteers.
- 2.6 The Tier 1 volunteers are co-ordinated by the Older Peoples Commissioning Team in the LCC Adults & Health directorate. The Business Support Centre has confirmed the DBS status of 485 Tier 1 volunteers and the team in Adults & Health also provides support and advice to the community hubs around more complex referrals including, when there may be a need for a social care referral. Tier 1 volunteers have also been provided to other organisations and services in Leeds, such as the Age UK Hospital to Home scheme, Forward Leeds and the Leeds & York Partnership Foundation Trust. Appendix 1 provides a snapshot of Tier 1 numbers, activities and the organisations supported.
- 2.7 One of the most striking aspects of Leeds' response was the willingness of people in neighbourhoods and communities to support one another without any organisational involvement at all - known internally as the 'Tier 3' approach. To support and promote this vital work, VAL developed the 'Being a Good Neighbour Pack' and made it widely accessible in late March. The guide provided practical and common sense advice for people who wanted to offer support in their neighbourhood and those who may need support, to do so safely. This has been regularly promoted throughout the pandemic, with a dedicated page on Doing Good Leeds website. A series of blogs called Socially Connected Leeds, have also sought to continuously highlight ongoing activity within local communities and neighbourhoods all the way through the crisis.

3. Main issues

Recruiting Volunteers

- 3.1 In order to ensure a joined up and safe response across the city which ensured that everyone, including the most vulnerable people were able to access help and support, VAL in partnership with Leeds City Council launched a new volunteering programme - Community Care Volunteers. Potential volunteers were asked to register via the Doing Good Leeds website and were then required to complete an online induction programme, covering health and safety; equality and diversity; data protection and safeguarding. The response was excellent and at its peak, the programme attracted sign ups from nearly 8,000 people across Leeds. Of these 8000 people, 5,400 went on to fully complete all parts of their induction, meaning they were ready to be deployed.
- 3.2 Local deployment was not without its challenges, and there were many wards where the number of available volunteers far exceeded the number of referrals/people requiring support. It is estimated that around 1,600 volunteers were deployed locally through Hubs, 100 through the Tier 1 Service, 300 as part of the "RU OK?" befriending programme and 25 as part of the Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service volunteer support line, equating to just under 40% of the overall number.

- 3.3 Many volunteers were keen to be deployed and help as soon as possible. In order to address this and keep people informed, VAL sent out regular bulletins to all inducted volunteers to keep them informed and encourage them to undertake acts of local neighbourliness whilst they were waiting to be formally called upon. Over time this initial approach was expanded to include advertising specific new volunteering opportunities related to COVID-19 but outside of the Community Care volunteer programme, including links to the volunteering pages of the Doing Good Leeds website. This approach led to 200,000 visits to the website in May 2020 alone. VAL also undertook to support Hubs where they were in need of additional volunteers and source these from areas that had a surplus of volunteers, enabling people to volunteer in a different part of the city and easing pressure on Hubs with high levels of referrals.
- 3.4 Whilst not everyone who signed up was able to be deployed, the response in Leeds and opportunities given to volunteers compares favourably to that of other volunteering schemes.
- 3.5 Arrangements were put in place to secure DBS checks where required. All active volunteers were issued with identification badges from LCC and communications across the city encouraged people to ask to see the badges in case of any concerns. An important safeguard in the light of a number of reports of fraud related to COVID-19.

Securing Volunteer Hubs

- 3.6 To ensure that volunteers were able to be deployed to support people locally, VAL worked in partnership with LCC Communities Team to set up a new network of volunteer 'hubs' across the city. On 24th March an online discussion was facilitated by Leeds City Council and Voluntary Action Leeds engaged with a range of third sector organisations who were interested of being a ward level hub and leading the response to meeting needs at the local level. By the 25th of March, organisations had confirmed their intent to participate in the programmes and the volunteer response commenced. The participant organisations are listed at Appendix 2.
- 3.7 Working closely with these third sector organisations, the new network was rapidly set up, involving twenty-seven locally based and trusted organisations acting as the lead organisation within each of the thirty-three electoral wards in Leeds. Following the launch of a central LCC COVID-19 telephone helpline in late March accompanied by a citywide distribution of leaflets to 330,000 households shortly thereafter to promote it, the Hubs took on the responsibility of responding to referrals for support from people living locally to them. Hubs were provided with daily lists of available volunteers in their area for them to match with local people requiring that support.
- 3.8 Leeds City Council provided direct financial support in the form of an initial grant of £5k per ward. Each ward allocated £10k of their Community Committee wellbeing funds for ward members to fund local activities, including, where appropriate the work of the local volunteer hubs. In addition, the Council has provided substantial management and logistical support including the re-deployment of staff from services where activity had ceased temporarily.
- 3.9 VAL's strong experience of volunteer management meant they were able to provide ongoing support and advice to Hubs. Organisations were issued with a Volunteer

Management Guide and a Volunteer Activity Guide providing accessible and practical advice, regularly updated. All Hubs were matched with a VAL link worker who was on hand to provide support, answer questions and problem solve. A number of Hubs made use of support that was available from experienced volunteer managers from other organisations, brokered through the Leeds Volunteer Managers Network.

Design features of the response

3.10 Important features of the volunteer response were –

- A Leeds City Council (LCC) directed element as follows:
 - Telephone helpline to receive requests from the public.
 - Welfare support offer including the opening of a warehouse to co-ordinate the food response.
 - Direct delivery service of emergency food parcels.
 - Referral system for local hubs for on-going food parcel delivery.
 - Secure system through which volunteers could purchase food for residents who were unable to leave home to do their shopping and do have the monetary means to pay for food.
- Matching required tasks to volunteers by the voluntary hubs, the shopping was completed as per the request by the resident, and receipts were returned to LCC so that residents could be billed.
- Collection of prescriptions from pharmacies by volunteers so that residents can access essential medical supplies.
- The development of a central welfare calls service called “RU OK?” with oversight by Leeds Older People’s Forum. This service, which involves matching a person in need with a volunteer caller, aimed to complement existing arrangements in the city by providing a centralised service for people who may not need any other form of additional support.
- The development of a volunteer-led support service to lend a ‘listening ear’ to other volunteers who may have experienced distressing situations in the course of their role. This service has been developed and managed by Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service.

3.11 Hubs responded by matching volunteers to tasks where help was needed, as well as creating food and other provision locally. The local response began from 26th March 2020. Capacity to deliver was either built from a limited base as a direct response to the pandemic emergency or expanded from existing third sector activity. The organisations involved in the response ranged from Neighbourhood Networks, community groups, youth organisations through to environmental and cultural organisations.

Performance

3.12 Over the past 13 weeks the Council has received over 19,000 service calls. These were responded to in by emergency action - usually a food parcel delivery by the Council - using the resources at the food warehouse developed specifically for that purpose. The individuals and families that have been helped have continued to receive further and often regular support directly from the voluntary hubs after the initial call. The detail of the council’s referral data is shown in appendix 3.

- 3.13 It is also clear that strong, effective partnerships have been developed with other local organisations who can often extend the assistance. For example, to provide support physical, emotional and mental wellbeing needs and also ensuring that links are established with equality communities in the city.

Impact

- 3.14 In addition to the council's referral data, VAL has been collecting weekly information from Hubs about the range of activities they are undertaking and the impact of the work on people and communities. This data helps to articulate a wider story about the impact of the Hubs which is not captured solely by referral data as many people have been accessing support directly from Hubs as local trusted organisations.
- 3.15 In addition to the council's referral data, VAL has been collecting weekly information from Hubs about the range of activities they are undertaking and the impact of the work on people and communities. This data helps to articulate a wider story about the impact of the Hubs which is not captured solely by referral data as many people have been accessing support directly from Hubs as local trusted organisations.
- 3.16 As a snapshot, in the week of 16th to 24th May, it is estimated that across the whole of the Community Care Volunteers programme the following level of programme delivery took place -
- Total number of volunteers deployed: 1500+
 - Number of people receiving on-going support: 5000+
 - Food parcels delivered: 1000+
 - Delivery of hot meals: 700+
 - Buying & delivering paid for shopping: 400 +
 - Prescription collection: 450 +
 - Dog walking: 130+
 - Welfare calls / befriending: 1800+

Case studies

- 3.17 In work of this nature, a dry description of the different elements and outputs of a system do not alone demonstrate the positive impact on citizens in Leeds. Case studies at Appendix 4 prepared by Voluntary Action Leeds and the hub managers tell the story through examples about how the effort has impacted in particular places. In addition, it is anticipated that representatives of some of the organisations involved in the effort will be in attendance at the Scrutiny Board meeting in July to share their experiences with elected members.

Lessons Learned for the initial volunteering response

- 3.18 In late May and early June a series of discussions with groups of Hubs chaired by the Chief Officer Communities were held by Leeds City Council and VAL to review progress, consider the learning and think about both the immediate next steps and longer-term potential of building on the city's response to the crisis.

3.19 Hubs shared their views of both the successes and challenges of the programme as follows:

Successes

- Overall response of the programme and the speed of set up
- Confidence shown in the third sector and their flexibility and ability to deliver
- Volunteer numbers, skills, responsiveness and commitment to local community
- New volunteers stepping forward alongside those with volunteering experience
- Support from LCC and VAL staff
- Partnerships with other organisations forged, expanded or strengthened to meet needs – i.e. the response has involved a network of local partnerships working with the 27 lead organisations
- Flexibility of funders – freedom to adapt to meet needs
- Contact made with new people / hidden needs in communities recognised
- Locally designed and driven approaches
- Food distribution – avoiding waste and meeting need
- Taking positive action in a negative scenario

Challenges:

- Large numbers of volunteers / effective deployment
- Responding to mental health / emotional needs
- Financial pressure on organisations
- Staff stress and long hours / working weeks
- Supporting volunteers to deal with difficult situations / community needs
- Longer-term challenge of responding to hidden needs uncovered during COVID
- Balancing the core role with the new wider remit (especially cited by Neighbourhood Networks)
- Covering new geographical areas and client groups
- Shifting from community development to service delivery for some
- Over-centralisation of a grass-roots model (feeling of a shift from partnership to a firmer relationship)
- Systems and processes developed in a 'top down' way – with some initial communication issues
- Volume of information and guidance and the accessibility of the information
- Quality of referral data
- Issues with the portal – timing of introduction, training and accessibility
- Initially, an open system to one with later restrictions – i.e. food eligibility

3.20 Hubs described their immediate needs in terms of their ability to continue to provide a response in the short term:

- Funding for Hub role
- Support to secure funding from wider sources
- Respite for staff
- Clarity / reassurance re:
 - Timescales
 - Existing LCC contracts
- Sharing the learning amongst Hubs
- Celebrating the positive impact of the programme
- Exploring new immediate partnership opportunities (food supply / distribution)
- Clarity around support for people and communities (no 'cliff edge')

- Information / guidance around citywide specialist services for signposting / referrals (including adult social care)
- Understanding pressure to return to core business – advice around reopening ‘COVID-compliant’ services
- Reassurance around volunteer numbers / availability

3.21 Hubs also set out some of their suggested principles for building on the response shown to COVID-19 in order to develop a refined model which continues to provide support to people and communities locally and has local ownership. These principles are -

- Sustainably funded
- Co-produced
- Overall blueprint but not top down / one size fits all
- Partnerships not contracts
- Builds on new and existing partnerships
- Retains and develops local volunteers
- Asset-based and restorative in nature
- Ongoing support for previously ‘hidden’ needs
- Provides locally designed support at a community level
- Recognises the skills of organisations working with particular client groups
- Builds on trust shown in the third sector – and places further trust in them
- Engages a wide range of local partners – including faith groups / organisations
- Considers both the material *and* emotional needs of people and communities

3.22 As a result of these discussions and feedback there is now a programme of improvement work to respond to these issues, led by LCC for the immediate issues and VAL for the longer term development of a new model within localities

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 Engagement continues between services within the council, with partners, with elected members and with the public. It has not always been possible to engage in the normal way about service changes as there has been no choice about many of the changes to ensure compliance with national guidance. Engagement with stakeholders has continued and in many cases been strengthened with the context of what we have had to manage during this incident

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 Work has been taking place in Leeds to understand the disproportionate or differential impact on inequality that is happening due to COVID-19. This work is supported by Voluntary Action Leeds, Forum Central and a range of partners who provide specialist support to the city’s diverse communities. This includes starting to gather evidence of the impact on Communities of Interest, some of which is evidence based and some is based on direct community conversations in the form of a narrative. It also shows that there is considerable experiential overlap across many Communities of Interest. This work mirrors work that being undertaken by Public Health on wider health inequalities of COVID-19.

- 4.2.2 This emerging evidence highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated already inherent social and economic inequalities and we need to further understand what these impacts are on communities in Leeds. What it tells us so far mirrors national evidence and the local narrative that COVID-19 does have a disproportionate and differential impact based on where you live, your gender, your ethnicity and your job etc. For example, being unable to self-isolate due to insecure jobs and/or living in close proximity to each other in densely populated areas

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The work referenced in this report has contributed to the Councils overall aim of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. In particular it has focused on Safe, Strong Communities including -
- Keeping people safe from harm and protecting the most vulnerable.
 - Helping people out of financial hardship.
 - Being responsive to local needs, building thriving, resilient communities.
 - Promoting community respect and resilience.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The pandemic emergency has seen limited movement in the city over the past three months and a reduction in daily emissions. In that context, the volunteering programme has recruited volunteers local to the wards they are supporting and deployed effectively to minimise unnecessary vehicle journeys, wherever possible. Clearly, some vehicle journeys are inevitable when picking up shopping or medicines and delivering them to the resident and where possible, shopping trips have been to local shops. Although, this has not been the primary concern and delivering much needed food and medicines has been the priority.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Funds to provide this volunteer response have been sourced from grant funding identified by Adult Social Care and Health directorate and from local community committee wellbeing funds.
- 4.4.2 The volunteer response has relied on the commitment and goodwill of volunteers and partners, and to some repurposing of funded activity which was no longer appropriate in the pandemic.

4.5 Legal implications, Access to Information, and Call-in

- 4.5.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 This project has been delivered within the context of the COVID-19 Leeds Strategic Response and Recovery Plan and risk management has been considered in that vein with the work being reported to the Citizens and Communities Silver Multi Agency Group chaired by the Director of Communities and Environment.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The volunteering response to the pandemic in Leeds has been a resounding celebration of the community spirit in this city and a testimony to many years of effective partnership working, relationship building and community leadership. It is now incumbent on the city to harness the energy that has been liberated from communities across the city and in the way that people have come together to respond to the crisis for the benefit of the city in the medium to longer term.
- 5.2 The response has created an opportunity for the good of the whole of Leeds and it is planned to build upon this in the coming months to encourage people who may not have volunteered previously to continue to undertake a voluntary role following this crisis. Voluntary Action Leeds will enhance this opportunity by introducing a new volunteering platform for the city called “Be Collective”.
- 5.3 The crisis has further demonstrated the crucial role of third sector organisations working with people and communities in their locality to provide support and reassurance. The levels of partnership working and collaboration between Leeds City Council and third sector organisations have been unprecedented. As a partnership we want to continue to learn from this to explore opportunities to further develop services and support in neighbourhoods, building on the record of the city for delivering innovative services and approaches including, Asset Based Community Development, restorative practice and the Neighbourhood Networks.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Note and comment on the content of this report.
- 6.2 Contribute to the refining of the current volunteer hub arrangements for a more bottom up approach.
- 6.3 Contribute to the shaping of a coordinated volunteering arrangement in the city for the longer term.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 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.

Appendix1

Snapshot of Tier 1 numbers and activities (w/c 15th June 2020)

Volunteer Details

Total DBS checked volunteers	485
Total Volunteers Matched	117
Volunteers matched with another Organisation	89
Volunteers matched for LCC	28
Inactive volunteers	41
Pending volunteers	0
Previously Volunteered with LCC referral	3

Community Referrals - LCC

Total	61
Matched Referrals	11
Referrals sorted through other means	49
Referrals pending	1
People receiving:	
Phone befriending	10
Face to face befriending	2
Food shopping and delivery	5
Prescription collection	2
Pension/Bills	2

Residential Referrals - LCC

Total	28
Matched Referrals	2
Referrals sorted through other means	2
Homes Receiving:	
Food shopping and delivery	1
Prescription collection	1

Other Organisations

Total referrals from other organisations	8
Matched referrals	7
Pending Referrals	1
Total active Volunteers with external organisations	89
Organisations receiving:	
Phone Befriending	1
Face to face befriending	1
Food shopping and delivery	1
Prescription collection	2
Transport	2
Social media support	2
Admin support	1

Organisation	Referral	Volunteers Requested	Volunteers sent	Active Volunteers	Pending	No longer wanting/ able to volunteer
Age UK Leeds	Hospital to home service	12	15	14		1
Forward Leeds	Helping deliver controlled drugs	5	13	6		7
LYPFT	Supporting on mental health wards in a healthcare support role	20	19	12		7
Leeds Cancer Awareness Project	Helping spread information, advice and awareness via Facebook for the project	10 -20	10 + 11	7	1 + 11	2
Holbeck Together	Providing volunteers to help prepare and deliver food parcels as well as help out with befriending calls	5	5	5		
Sue Ryder	Helping people with transport to hospital appointments	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
LYPFT	Volunteer shoppers	6+	19		19	
LYPFT	PPE stock management	3+	15	2	13	
LCC Care Delivery Service	Various roles supporting in house services		13		13	

Appendix 2

Community Care Volunteers – Ward hubs

Ward	Third sector volunteer coordination lead	Contact Name	Email
Adel & Wharfedale	OPAL	Joanna Mawson	johanna@opal-project.org.uk
Alwoodley	Moor Allerton Elderly Care	Julia Edmunds	julia@maecare.org.uk
Ardley & Robin Hood	Groundwork	Adrian Curtis	ACurtis@groundwork.org.uk
Armley	New Wortley Community Centre	Andrea Edwards	Andrea.Edwards@newwortleycc.org
Beeston & Holbeck	Slung Low	Alan Lane	alan@slunglow.org
Bramley & Stanningley	Barca	Joe Kent	volunteerhub@barca-leeds.org
Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	Leeds Mencap	Bernie Gahan	bernie.gahan@leedsmencap.org.uk
Calverley & Farsley	Pudsey Parish Church	Vicar Richard Dimery	vicar@pudseyparish.org.uk
Chapel Allerton	Feel Good Factor	Corrina Lawrence	Corrina@fgfleeds.org
Cross Gates & Whinmoor	Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours Scheme	Jo Horsfall	jo@crossgatesgns.org.uk
Farnley & Wortley	Armley Helping Hands	Dawn Newsome	dawn.newsome@armleyhelpinghands.org
Garforth & Swillington	Garforth Net	Monica Walker	monica@netgarforth.org
Gipton & Harehills	CATCH	Del Sylvester	del@arkleeds.co.uk
Guiselley & Rawdon	AVSED	Michelle Phillips	avsed@btconnect.com
Harewood	Wetherby in Support of the Elderly	Mark Dobson	mark@w-ise.org.uk
Headingley & Hyde Park	Hyde Park Source	Behla Hutchinson	behla@hydeparksource.org
Horsforth	Horsforth Community aid project	Sally Metcalfe	Sally.Metcalfe@mha.org.uk
Hunslet & Riverside	Involve (Hunslet)	Claire Whitley	claire@involveleeds.org.uk
Killingbeck & Seacroft	LS14 Trust	Howard Bradley	howards14trust@gmail.com

Kippax & Methley	Garforth Net	Monica Walker	monica@netgarforth.org
Kirkstall	Kirkstall Valley Development Trust	Adele Rae	adele.rae@kvdt.org.uk
Little London and Woodhouse	Oblong	Jess Fishenden	admin@oblongleeds.org.uk
Middleton Park	Hamara	Shanaz Gul	shanaz@hamara.co.uk
Moortown	InterACT Church and Community Partnership	Vanessa	Vanessa Brown <vanessa@interact.uk.net>
Morley North	Groundwork	Adrian Curtis	ACurtis@groundwork.org.uk
Morley South	Groundwork	Adrian Curtis	ACurtis@groundwork.org.uk
Otley & Yeadon	Otley Action for Older People	Sue Trainor	info@otleyactionforolderpeople.org.uk
Pudsey	Pudsey Parish Church	Vicar Richard Dimery	vicar@pudseyparish.org.uk
Rothwell	Rothwell Live At Home	Mandy Farr	Mandy.Farr@mha.org.uk
Roundhay	St Edmunds church	Reverend Nigel Wright	revnigelwright@gmail.com
Temple Newsam	Hope and Partners	Jeff Coupar	jeff@betterbuildsolutions.co.uk
Weetwood	OPAL	Joanna Mawson	johanna@opal-project.org.uk
Wetherby	Wetherby in Support of the Elderly	Mark Dobson	mark@w-ise.org.uk

Appendix 3

COVID-19: Requests for Support

Ward	Enquiries	Rank	Unique Customers	Rank	Unique Customers per 100 Households	Rank
Adel & Wharfedale	227	30	165	29	1.7	30
Alwoodley	535	13	339	15	3.3	13
Ardsley & Robin Hood	253	28	163	30	1.7	28
Armley	990	5	603	5	5.4	6
Beeston & Holbeck	1054	4	664	4	5.9	3
Bramley & Stanningley	698	10	430	10	3.9	10
Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	1752	1	1185	1	9.9	1
Calverley & Farsley	261	27	179	28	1.7	29
Chapel Allerton	735	9	463	8	4.4	8
Cross Gates & Whinmoor	535	13	349	14	3.2	15
Farnley & Wortley	586	12	390	12	3.2	16
Garforth & Swillington	215	31	157	31	1.8	27
Gipton & Harehills	1531	2	932	2	7.4	2
Guiseley & Rawdon	185	32	137	32	1.3	33
Harewood	181	33	135	33	1.6	32
Headingley & Hyde Park	279	25	198	25	2.0	25
Horsforth	285	24	194	26	1.9	26
Hunslet & Riverside	1335	3	802	3	5.4	5
Killingbeck & Seacroft	926	6	593	6	5.6	4
Kippax & Methley	298	23	228	22	2.4	19
Kirkstall	666	11	407	11	4.4	7
Little London & Woodhouse	750	8	454	9	3.0	17
Middleton Park	852	7	577	7	4.3	9
Moortown	313	21	231	21	2.4	20
Morley North	323	20	237	20	2.2	24
Morley South	497	15	350	13	3.4	11
Otley & Yeadon	251	29	181	27	1.7	31
Pudsey	398	19	264	19	2.3	22
Rothwell	279	25	202	24	2.2	23
Roundhay	431	17	278	18	2.8	18
Temple Newsam	457	16	311	16	3.3	12
Weetwood	306	22	212	23	2.3	21
Wetherby	411	18	301	17	3.2	14
Leeds	19071		12504		3.5	

Enquiries by Shielding Status	Leeds	
	Count	% Total
Yes	7126	47%
No	8177	53%
Total	15303	
Unknown	3768	20%

Requests by Type of Assistance Required	Leeds	
	Count	% Total
Food Parcel	8192	43%
Food and Essential Shopping	4452	23%
Fuel	3388	18%
Prescription	1919	10%
Befriending and Reassurance	514	3%
Baby Products	442	2%
Sanitary and Hygiene Products	82	0%
Dog Walking	77	0%
Total Known Requests	19066	

Appendix 4

Ward Case Studies

Case study 1: Bramley and Stanningley Ward

Bramley and Stanningley Ward is in West Leeds. They have a number of organisations working together to support the local community through the Covid19 crisis.

The hub coordinating organisation is [BARCA](#). They have maintained its current services, adapting to the new operating environment, and has also taken on a new role within the COVID19 pandemic become a volunteer hub. The main thrust of the BARCA Covid19 response work has been delivering food parcels, collecting and delivering prescriptions and making welfare calls. They have used a small number of volunteers for some of this work: 'it helps to have a familiar face at the pharmacy every week', For other aspects, for example welfare calls: their staff team provides expertise to manage these 'we've had calls where people are talking about suicide, or require other safeguarding support and we wouldn't expect volunteers to have to manage this.'

Other organisations have partnered up with BARCA to extend the hub's work. Bramley Care Bears, a small organisation, run by local volunteers, evolved from a desire to make a difference to their local area. Normally the group runs a free garden makeover service, a homework club and organises regular litter picking, for Covid19 work they were asked to focus their attention on essential work which is their food distribution service.

Sixteen volunteers on a rota are currently supporting around 30 – 35 families per week, in 3 different community centres on 3 different days of the week including Sunday. The food is sourced from local Asda, Tesco, M&S (they are on the list for Waitrose), other foodbank outlets from schools, Rosebank Primary and Whitecote Primary, as well as the local hub, BARCA.

They also offer a delivery service to those people who are self isolating, this service has been made much easier by the loan of the Bramley Elderly Action minibus.

[Bramley Elderly Action \(BEA\)](#) has suspended their regular activities and instead offer services designed to support people aged 60+ during the crisis. They are offering a Weekly Shopping Delivery Service, a weekday phone line and email contact, a phone service run by staff and volunteers offering a phone check in and they have developed a phone buddy service called 'phone a new Friend' where BEA members are matched so they phone each other for mutual support.

The longer the need for everyone to stay at home, the more projects respond to these constraints and find creative ways to focus on what is around the home to turn into something new: [Zerowaste Leeds](#) are running online workshops to demonstrate how to create things from items destined for recycling; [Scrap Leeds](#) a project based in West Leeds have distributed 100's of mini make Leeds to families. Local young people have now made a platform on YouTube, called [YouTube Makers Club](#) to show case the activities inspired by the creative packs that have been distributed by [Playful Leeds](#) including growing sunflower seeds.

Bramley Breezers a local running club have picked up this flowering mantle and helped [Solidarity Sunflowers](#) – a Leeds organisation that encourages people to grow sunflowers –

by combining a regular run to drop off bags of sunflowers seedlings to Swinnow Community Centre.

Young people and old have been encouraged to stay active with Garden Groovers work: a partnership project between BARCA and DAZL, a Leeds based dance project, who have now taken this across the city now called doorstep dancing.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/apr/29/youth-worker-coronavirus-youth-services-young-people-pandemic>

Encouraging activity and well-being for local people, has been some of the work [Bramley Baths](#), is doing. Usually a community swimming baths and gym, they have developed Health and Wellbeing packs, that include basic exercise equipment, info sheets and tips, a small bag and water bottle, as well as sunflower seeds and compost. This has been funded by local councillors and the 50 packs are distributed by BARCA.

Case study 2: Burmantofts and Richmond Hill Ward

[Leeds Mencap](#) is the lead hub for the covid19 response for the Richmond Hill and Burmantofts Ward.

Leeds Mencap is based in Richmond Hill and their building is host to a community nursery, a special needs play room and family support services. They have a room hire service as an income generator that supports the Leeds Mencap work as the rooms are only used regularly by their groups on an evening and in the school holidays.

As they had capacity through the immediate re-deployment of room hire staff and space, had developed strong partnerships with local organisations and already used volunteers they were well placed to be a hub lead.

Leeds Mencap have taken a strong partnership approach to managing the hub work and this has supported the ongoing work that organisations, faith groups and community groups continue to do in the area. This hub is one of the busiest in Leeds and the approach tries to ensure that all communities are supported where needed.

The more formal partnership includes Bridge Community Church, Burmantofts Senior Action, Learning Partnerships, Project Hope with Newbourne Church, Richmond Hill Elderly Action, St Hilda's Church with Community Unity, St Vincent's Support Centre, Touchstone and Zarach. These partners take referrals for on-going support. Other locally based organisations and groups (such as Refugee Council and Freedom Church) were happy to continue supporting their clients and communities within the Ward without and know to contact the hub should they require any support.

Leeds Mencap received all the LCC referrals and volunteer applications. 24 Community Team Volunteers have worked directly with Leeds Mencap, including 2 Food and Shopping Co-ordinators, who have been involved in setting up and running a safe and secure paid for shopping service (this was one of the early immediate needs coming through the referrals from the council's helpline – as many shielding/isolating residents were unable to go out, had no one to help them and were unable to access delivery slots from supermarkets for 6 weeks or more). The ward was one of the first to establish a paid for shopping system and this has meant that people had more control over their shopping choices and it is anticipated that this system will still continue as people like their shopping from particular places which a centralised system won't be able to accommodate. In order to safely and logistically manage the delivery of food parcels and shopping, the hub is lucky to have the services of drivers and vans from the Community Payback service and Canopy Housing.

Leeds Mencap as the hub deals with most of the one off interventions (e.g. a prescription pick up, a one off food parcel) and the shopping service. Due to the demographic of the area where there are large numbers of vulnerable people who require ongoing support – these are referred to the most appropriate partner(s).

The partnership model that sprang into action in the ward was not the model that was envisaged when the 'Community Care Programme' was conceived by Leeds City Council and Voluntary Action Leeds but *'we tried to use the right people in the right place, doing the right thing at the right time'* to meet the anticipated high volume and complex needs for support and to ensure that the Community Team Volunteers were able to make a difference alongside existing services and agencies.

As well as contributing to the Hub referral system, partners have continued to support their communities and service users, quickly adapting to find new and safe ways to do this. [Touchstone](#) has supported food donations deliveries and distribution, [Richmond Hill Elderly Action](#) have been continuing to support their clients with support calls and even organised on street bingo.

[Burmantofts Senior Action](#) have provided a telephone support service to their users and continue to offer advice and support from benefits and welfare to technology tips to maintain social contact during this time, and sending out information of activities and help in Leeds.

[Learning partnerships](#) continued to support learners with tutors/key workers calling and emailing them as well as planning courses and developing online classes, for ESOL, Employability, IT and confidence building.

[Zarach](#), an organisation that supports children living in poverty, by delivering beds to families have put this project to one side and set up [Project Vantry](#) by converting their vans to basic pantries so they can supply basic food and hygiene products to families in need, both their existing families as well as accepting referrals from schools. They have also set up an elderly support strand taking referrals from the LCC helpline. All the 'Zarach Seniors' receive two calls and food shopping/medicine collections twice a week. This has been very successful with people very happy with the service: *'Thanks [Tracy July](#) and all our other volunteers for the incredible work you are doing with our seniors. They are so, so grateful'*.

A real positive that has come out of the COVID-19 crisis has been how organisations have rallied to put the community first and build on our shared knowledge and expertise. For example for families who have been struggling we may get in touch with the Inner East Cluster, their school, or the Children's Centre and they would work with us to quickly provide information, advice and/or support as appropriate. Leeds Mencap are liaising with some of the Refugee and Asylum Seeker support groups who are unable to be on the ground delivering their services and they are guiding us to best support their service users.

The partnership aspires to use some of the learning and experience from this to develop future ways of working to better meet the longer term needs of the more vulnerable residents in the ward, including how access to food should be part of a more holistic service.

Case study 3: Gipton and Harehills Ward

Gipton and Harehills Ward have come together to work in creative ways to support the local community through the Coronavirus crisis.

[CATCH – ‘Community Action to Create Hope’](#) is a volunteer-led charity based in the Harehills area of Leeds which was established in 2010. It prides itself on being run ‘for the community by the community’.

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, CATCH offered opportunities to both young people and adults from diverse backgrounds, promoting volunteering and leadership opportunities alongside schemes such as alternative educational provision, a gym, community cafe and a youth club with hundreds of members. They have continued to serve this community during the additional support they are offering as part of the citywide response.

CATCH operates the community care hub serving the Gipton and Harehills ward in inner-city east Leeds. The ward contains some of the most socio-economically deprived areas of the city, with overcrowded, poor quality housing, poor health outcomes, and a high number of workers in lower-paid service industry jobs. Harehills also has a high representation of BAME communities; groups at greater risk of serious illness from the virus, meaning that CATCH are working with some of the most vulnerable people in the city.

Unsurprisingly, the CATCH hub has received one of the highest referral rates across all wards in Leeds, utilising over 100 new VAL volunteers responding to referrals from the Covid-19 helpline, in addition to their 50 existing volunteers.

The main challenge for the hub was the distribution of food to the local community and CATCH has worked with many local schools and organisations to ensure that families and individuals were able to access food supplies. [Hovingham Primary](#), a large school with over 800 pupils has maintained good connections to the families of their pupils and they have been working with Fareshare, Fareone, Rethink and Morrison’s to deliver around 100 food parcels a week to their most vulnerable families.

[St Aidan’s Church](#) also run their own non-means-tested, food-bank, which has seen demand more than double over the crisis (with 150 families accessing weekly), working with local organisations such as Give a Gift, Leeds Street Team, Leeds Muslim Youth Forum and supermarkets who are providing them with donations.

St Aidan’s work closely with [PAFRAS](#) (Positive Action for Refugees), who normally run a drop in from St Aidan’s for asylum seekers and refugees and who have continued to provide food parcels for this group of people throughout the coronavirus pandemic. The St. Aidan’s church organisers have commented that connections established within the ‘food aid network’ before the crisis, such as Fareshare, have been vital to cope with the increase in demand. Since the crisis, the church have established connections with residents groups and organisations outside of the Harehills area, who have in turn donated food and volunteering time. Local businesses have also been involved with donating food to the foodbank:

“I am extremely grateful to local businessmen/women in Harehills for showing true community spirit in supporting the food bank at Madina Gifts being set up by Leeds street team volunteers which is helping to support the St Aidan’s food bank, who are in desperate need. I’m particularly grateful to CC Hair & Beauty/CC Continental and the small family stores along Harehills road for your support. Particularly grateful to community

activists like Kaneez Khan, Idrees from CC and Moulana Mahboob for all your support, hard work and love to those in need."

St Aidan's also offers a translation service to other 3rd sector organisations, translating Romanian, Farsi, Kurdish and other community languages, making communication with all communities easier.

[Neruka's Soup Kitchen](#) offered hot wholesome food and food parcels before Covid and still continues to work with some of the most vulnerable in the ward.

Recently community organisations in the area have grouped together to share surplus food to ensure none goes to waste. CATCH hopes that the food provision network that has been strengthened through the Covid-19 crisis will become a legacy and maintain a high presence of engagement with local communities in future times.

Other local businesses and organisations have adjusted their usual working practices to support covid19 work.

[Shine Business Centre](#) runs a social enterprise on Harehills Road. A significant part of their income is via room hire, but they have adapted to the crisis by keeping their doors open and managing the large space safely. Having partnered with Leeds Teaching Hospitals (they are in close proximity to St James University Hospital), Shine can offer safe space for staff training.

'[Action For Gipton Elderly](#)' is a well established older peoples charity, serving some of the most vulnerable elderly people in the local area. As they are a small charity they have adjusted their activities to ensure the elderly in the community were supported. Working with three different hubs that cover their area, they set up a free shopping service for those most vulnerable and at risk. They are actively working with the re-enablement teams to provide food for the housebound and delivering medications. They are providing a telephone support befriending service for all service users, plus daily support and prompting calls for people with dementia, depression and anxiety.

They have received many referrals for help from LLC help line and have met all of these including delivering a donated microwave and freezer so we could provide frozen meals for a 91 year old man discharged from hospital.

Continuing to supporting vulnerable communities in different ways when usually the work is face to face has been key. For young people [Get Away Girls](#) provide a free phone number where girls and young women can contact staff, along with positive messages on Instagram and support on Facebook. [Leeds Street Team](#) are continuing detached youth work and have a strong online presence to ensure the young people they work with stay safe during coronavirus. [The Beck Leeds](#) have been creating tailored welfare packs to give out to their young people. Like other projects, The Beck Leeds use social media to connect young people to wider services such as The Market Place, Leeds Survivor-led Crisis Support and Mindmate.

[Shantona Women's Centre](#) has been involved supporting their clients who are experiencing domestic violence during the crisis (an issue that has increased since lockdown).

[People In Action](#) work with people in the area with learning difficulties, providing activity packs, support and a daily timetable of on line events including exercise, games and chats

via Zoom and utilising the technology to provide sign language communication to members, including an online talent contest, showing that a combination of fun activities and more serious support are vital in these times.

On a neighbourhood level, residents' Facebook groups offering mutual support are evident with groups such as [Harehills Community Watch](#) sharing volunteer opportunities and local connections for vulnerable people. It is clear that there is crossover in support between ward boundaries, and this is particularly evident within the Richmond Hill and Gipton areas of the city.

Case study 4: Beeston and Holbeck Ward

The Beeston & Holbeck ward of Leeds sits to the south of the city centre. This community has truly come together to support one another during the Coronavirus outbreak. There has been an outpouring of kindness, generosity and togetherness which cannot be understated. Here are a few examples of how local people are being supported.

The Community Care Volunteer Hub for this area of Leeds is [Slung Low](#); a theatre company who run the oldest social club in Britain. Whilst the social club may be closed for business, the Slung Low team are definitely not taking any time off. With the help of volunteers, they are now busy picking up shopping and prescriptions, delivering food parcels and hot meals, dog walking and carrying out welfare calls. They have also put together the beautiful LS11 Art Gallery; local people submit artwork which Slung Low are using to line the streets. This is a far cry from their usual role producing large community theatre performances, showcasing the work of artists in the Holbeck and running their Cultural Community College.

But the Slung Low team feel that they don't want to go back to exactly what they were doing before; they've discovered new areas of the local community which they previously had little contact with, new partnerships have formed with organisations they'd never been in touch with and amazing individuals have stepped up to help. Going forward in the short-term, Slung Low does have some plans to do some of their "normal" day-to-day work; they will be presenting outdoor performances to families and are even putting together a drive-thru show. The way they have completely changed their service delivery and adapted to Covid-19 is huge and has made a massive impact to the local community.

[Holbeck Together](#) are also involved in the effort to support residents of this ward. Their usual activities involve offering social and leisure activities, health and wellbeing support, and community transport and meals services. Now, instead of their regular activities, they are focussing solely on supporting vulnerable and isolated people, with befriending calls and delivering hot meals, shopping and activity packs. New working partnerships have been formed with St. Vincent's, KidzKlub and Age UK Leeds. The team even managed to deliver VE Day afternoon tea packages to local people, so they could celebrate VE day from the comfort of their own home.

Your Space has done a great job of adapting their usual services to continue to meet the needs of local people. They are a community, wellbeing and outreach service supporting residents across south and east Leeds. Your Space usually offer wellbeing groups and creative activities for people to access support, meet new people, build resilience, learn coping skills and be signposted to other services. With face-to-face contact being so limited, these groups have now moved online. Your Space is now providing community wellbeing Facebook groups, Zoom groups; including Chocolate, Chat and Chill, Journaling and #CreatetoConnect, and is working on online quizzes and bingo events, as well as a WhatsApp Wellbeing course.

Case study 5: Headingley & Hyde Park Ward

(Note: this case study was written by Behla Hutchinson from [Hyde Park Source](#) and originally appeared on the [Leeds Independent Life](#) website).

When Covid-19 lockdown struck in late March, Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) and Leeds City Council (LCC) quickly responded to launch the Community Care Project. Alongside a central LCC helpline and food distribution, the 33 wards that make up the city were handed over to 33 organisations which became 'Community Hubs', responding to the needs of isolating households and linking local volunteers to offer support. Behla Hutchinson, the volunteer coordinator for Headingley and Hyde Park community hub Hyde Park Source, explains their role, the impact on Leeds communities, and the amazing work being done to help.

"When Voluntary Action Leeds made a city-wide plea for volunteers, over 7600 residents stepped forward, an astounding figure. We agreed to co-ordinate Headingley and Hyde Park, working closely with the amazing Pay As You Feel Community Café Rainbow Junktion; we were very lucky to have over 300 volunteers and an established food hub already functioning. The picture across Leeds was quite different for all 33 organisations; some wards were flooded with requests for help, were operating with far less volunteers and no food hub; so, hats off to each and every one of them!

There were many challenges in the first few weeks; we had to figure out how and where to get food, how best to respond to referrals and how to select and support volunteers. It was pretty stressful, but nothing in comparison to the situations many households found themselves in across Leeds. As more time has passed since lockdown started, we have got into more of a rhythm, although there are still unforeseen issues that come up and things are always changing. The next big hurdle will be how we return to our usual jobs, and step away from this project without leaving people in the lurch."

The impact of the crisis, both globally and here in Leeds, may be long lasting for everyone. For lots of individuals and businesses their lives and livelihoods have been changed unrecognisably. In response, many of them are showing a remarkable resilience, coming together as communities to support one another. We released the Local Survival Guide as a simple and effective tool to help independent businesses connect with customers and to encourage people to buy locally. All across the city, there has been positive local action from communities and organisations working together for the people most affected, as Behla has witnessed directly.

"Unfortunately, the people being hit the hardest have the least. The co-ordinated response has highlighted how many families are in need of support regardless of the current crisis; people who have fallen foul of the system and weren't linked to any support prior to this. I hope for these households, this will change things for the better, as it is much harder to remove support once it has been given.

On the positive side, this crisis has proven the power of people to do good, and the hidden strength of the Third Sector. As part of this, Hyde Park Source depends upon working in partnerships, operating on a tight budget, building relationships, knowing the communities we operate within and their strengths. All these were necessary to respond quickly and support the people who were in need effectively. There has definitely been more overlap between the Public, Private and the Third Sector, which have come together to work more collectively to tackle this crisis."

This holistic approach is essential. Community hubs respond to referrals passed by the council, along with direct requests from the community. They then speak to the individual to check what help they need: this could be accessing free food parcels from food hubs; organising a weekly shop using paid-for e-vouchers supplied by LCC; or collecting and delivering prescribed medication. Volunteers are selected from a database provided by VAL to link people together as a one-off or longer-term basis. Behla confirms the importance of all of this at Hyde Park Source.

“A huge benefit of this has been the relationships formed between volunteers and the people they have been supporting. They have shared conversations, thoughts, worries and hopes and these seemingly simple interactions have helped to connect communities and break down barriers. In our ward we have also worked really closely with a number of organisations

Leeds Grand Mosque, who have been running ‘Love in a box’ providing a food parcel and food delivery service; Interserve Justice, who have delivered LCC food parcels using their vans and drivers; Older Wiser Local Seniors (OWLS) for the over 60’s, delivering food and organising befriending calls; Oblong, who manage Woodhouse Community Centre and lead the Woodhouse and Little London Ward working with Gateway Church, Leeds African Communities and Woodhouse Mutual Aid Network.

And Rainbow Junktion, an amazing place dedicated to supporting people in need and offering open doors to anyone and everyone. They intercept food waste, provide a community hub for people to connect and be nourished no matter what their situation. Rainbow Junktion relies heavily on their amazing volunteers, and received donations from many sources The Real Junk Food Project surplus from: The Headingley Green Grocer, The Organic Pantry, Leeds Bread Coop, Mecca Bingo and other local businesses.”

Moving forward, there are positives to take from the lessons and behaviours learnt during this time. Having adapted from their usual activities, Hyde Park Source and others like them have confirmed their importance in connecting and supporting communities in Leeds. They hope to re-start their community groups and city projects in late summer operating in ‘the new normal’. Things will be very different, but Behla is hopeful that it is an opportunity for positive changes.

“There are already some really interesting conversations happening around the cities’ reaction to the crisis; what can we learn and change in order to be more resilient in the future? HPS care a lot about linking communities with unused spaces and land, this pandemic has really highlighted the importance of access to land, local food production and distribution. Although dried food parcels have been provided by LCC on mass, without local supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables it is very hard to provide people with a nutritional and balanced diet.

Leeds has so many unused spaces which could be converted into food producing gardens, there is a chronic problem of access to and ownership of these spaces but when communities take them on amazing things happen. The community share and learn skills, become more self-sufficient, healthier, more connected and resilient. I hope this crisis encourages more people to claim and transform local spaces and connect with their community.”

For now, Hyde Park Source and the 33 community hubs of Leeds continue their vital work. As well as engaging with those most in need, they are communicating how everybody can be involved and help out. Echoing the ethos of our Local Survival Guide, the message

from Behla is to come together as a community and support local people and local business.

“Across the city the main thing people can do right now is support their neighbours; VAL have made a great pack with advice around this. The other thing is to donate any spare items to local food hubs. In terms of businesses, we are usually on the look-out for donations of toiletries, toilet roll, cleaning products, and spare unperishable food – so get in touch with your local food hub if you have any spare.

Long term, I think supporting local food is one of the most important things you can do to affect change, cut out the supermarkets, the fast food chains, online everything stores and other multinational. Grow your own food or support Leeds Market, your local baker, butcher, greengrocer, veg box scheme, independent restaurants and cafes. Volunteer with a local gardening group, learn skills and take home free fresh fruit and veg, support local jobs, and a more sustainable system that is resilient in times of crisis will emerge.”

Case study 6: Middleton Park ward

Hamara is a community based organisation based in Beeston Hill they run a multitude of groups and activities in the centre, in the words of Shanaz Gul:

“The Hamara Centre is a hub based in the south of Leeds, we work citywide to promote health and well-being to individuals, and we work to support the wider determinants of health. What we want to do is raise aspirations, to build resilience and help the community, from young people all the way to older. We’ve got family work approach, we work restoratively with an asset based community development model. We are working to encourage each and every individual to work with us so we can support them to achieve the best that they can.”

Hamara are the hub organisation for the Middleton area. They receive approximately 12 – 15 referrals a day for food parcel or shopping requests. They operate a food-bank onsite where volunteers pick up the food parcels from and deliver to the referral’s address. In addition they are giving out hot meals average 70 a day. They intend to continue to do this during lockdown and are very sensitive to the needs of vulnerable household in their area. They have worked with a steady number of volunteers between 20 and 30 in number and have been really impressed by them. They hope to retain some of them to work with Hamara helping to run projects in the future.

Hamara have worked closely with a wide range of partners: **Touchstone, Rainbow junction, Families First team**, are all supporting with deliveries,. For the Families First team *‘it’s really helped them because they wanted to know how their families are doing and so can deliver food parcels and check in with them at the same time.’* Hamara have also been able to refer to the early help hub: *‘we’ve had a couple of incidences with families with very aggressive children, so we can refer to the early help rather than it be a social services referral.’* Hamara have been very appreciative of the flexibility of Fareshare: *‘[Fareshare](#) have been the star organisation they have been amazing supporting with food, really paying attention to what communities are needing and changing the food they provide based on this information.’*

The council link worker has helped the source the use of 2 chest freezers at [Manorfield Hall](#) in Middleton which has been very useful for storage. Manorfield hall have changed their service during this time to offer more support to local residents their main change has been a foodbank service from the centre for those wanting to come and pick up supplies. As organisations needed to move services online and still keep in touch with their communities **Health for All** organise sing along sessions for all to join in with. As well as their other Time To Shine activities , including Tai Chi, Poetry, IT advice plus an invitation for participants to get involved with their passion and share this with others. They have been offering telephone support with weekly calls and wellbeing support to their service users as well as providing food parcels, activity packs and emotional support. They have also been able to offer 1:1 support to young people in the local park.

‘There also a number of opportunities for volunteers who would like to run some groups on subjects they are passionate and informed about. Please get in touch if you’d like to use these circumstances to share your passions with others and contribute to keeping spirits up’ [South Leeds Life article](#)

To keep young people entertained activity packs are being sent out by **Skipkko** and **Middleton Family Centre**, who have also been offering food as part of their Healthy holidays programme. [Lychee Red Chinese Seniors Project](#) kept connected to each

other by organising talent contests on line., *'we are following government guidelines #stayathome #savelives #protectNHS , but we are still connecting to the world by our individual talent performance online to fight the loneliness'*.

DAZL- have a good offer across the ward and have adapted to the change in circumstances by changing activities to socially distanced events and online resources. Projects for fitness like **Garden Groovers**, and **Delivering social distancing dance and physical activity** for 5 local primary schools as well as arts activities, support for parents and creating a mental health podcast.

Leeds Baby Bank have continued to raise money and ask for donations and have worked alongside Hamara for essential items for new mothers and babies.

Businesses like **B &M Bargains** have supported projects with donations. In summary although the work has been hard, Hamara wish to focus on the positive: with future joint working with their neighbouring hub leads **Involve Leeds** and **Slung Low** and an awareness of how many different communities are working together to support each other. *'So many communities have been brought together. Everyone is willing to help.'*

Case study 7: Morley North and Morley South wards

The Morley wards have been supported by a number of organisations who have adapted their usual work streams to respond to the Covid19 situation.

Before the Coronavirus outbreak, [Groundwork](#) based in Morley, Leeds provided social and environmental regeneration services, working alongside local communities to transform places, spaces and people's opportunities.

Groundwork is currently running the hub for the Morley North, Morley South and Robin Hood and Ardsley wards. They manage over 50 volunteers, working with over 400 clients, with an average of 100 tasks a day, consisting of 46% welfare calls and the other 54% consisting of shopping, prescription collection and delivery, dog walking and deliveries of up to 80 food parcels per week.

Links have been made with the [Mobile Haberdashery](#) who has supported all Groundwork hub volunteers by donating handmade face masks. The 'Marvellous Mask Making Team' have never met one another, but make links on Facebook. Not only has this project delivered masks to dozens of organisations around Leeds including hospitals it has provided boredom relief for many people who have had to self-isolate. They have reported that they have 'had a sense of purpose'; others feel good for having 'stepped up'. Collection of these masks have had been with social distancing in mind so bin lids, garden chairs and bushes have been used as pick up points

[Morley Elderly Action](#) are ensuring that their members are getting what they need whilst being in isolation: through their phone line they have, directed people to food banks, provided shopping services and arranged medication deliveries, They have also sent out a newsletter to over 1000 people with guidance on how to stay safe and how to access support. They have a regular phone welfare calls that run every weekday during the crisis.

[The Trussell Trust](#) are continuing to support families in the local area with food parcels and are working with Groundwork to ensure that those in need receive the provisions they need.

In order to support people with fuel poverty, one of Groundwork's existing projects, [the Green Doctor](#), has been repurposed to provide telephone support and support people with top ups for their prepay meters as partners who normally deal with this have been busy dealing with unprecedented levels of demand.

There has been a general feeling that local communities have really appreciated the fast response to the Covid19 crisis: 'The community are much more aware that charities have been around during the crisis, that they have back-flipped into the unknown and developed a safe way of service delivery finding ways of keeping volunteers and clients safe'.

Case study 8: Otley and Yeadon ward

Otley had organised a system for supporting local people before the LCC Covid response had been set up. [Otley Action for Older People \(OAOP\)](#) working with [Otley Town Council](#), [Otley Courthouse](#), [Otley Churches Together](#) and [Otley Food bank](#) had set up a system for people over and under 60 who needed help and support with shopping, food, phone support, a three day a week fish and chip run and errands. A leaflet was created and delivered to all Otley residents. A week after this system was developed OAOP had a call to ask if they would become a hub.

OAOP is a long established and successful community-based organisation working on behalf of the older population of Otley, Pool and Arthington. OAOP is part of the Leeds Neighbourhood Network Schemes (NNS's). Although OAOP were willing to get involved it meant several challenges that they needed to deal with: the age range that they represented included all ages and the area they were asked to cover was the whole ward rather than the LS21 postcode they are funded to support. They found the change to supporting young families challenging as they often had financial difficulties to manage as well. The change meant that they were working 50 hour weeks at the beginning of the pandemic outbreak.

Once the referral system and the volunteer offers started to come through a system was set up whereby Otley Courthouse managed the volunteers and OAOP dealt with referrals. The method of referrals reflects their speedy covid19 response: because of the leaflet drop, OAOP and other local organisations were rung directly rather than going through the LCC helpline. So although the referrals from LCC were 7 a day at their peak and a total of 175 as of 12th June, the direct referrals totalled 100 a week with 50 regular requirements a week as well as an additional 51 weekly extra requests.

As well coordinating the volunteers for Otley, the Otley Courthouse continued to entertain locals with quizzes, virtual art exhibitions, recitals, and comedy events.

[Otley Makerspace](#) were involved with making PPE equipment for NHS staff using 3D printers at local schools they also created cloth facemasks for residents to have.

[The Otley Bid](#) and Town Council supported local businesses by advertising which businesses were active, running deliveries and together with the town council has developed packs for businesses – face masks, hand gel and tape for marking out 2 metre distancing now that shops are opening.

[Otley Fire Service](#) worked with Boots Pharmacy and OAOP to help with prescription pick up and delivery.

More locally WhatsApp provided support to local people where information is shared, support is both offered and requested, books and DVD'S swapped and the a community book exchange was developed. One local resident was making scrubs and scrub bags out of old sheets, duvet covers and pillowcases.

In Yeadon, Simon & Becky's Greengrocers started up an extra slot at a roadside location in Yeadon where they packed pre-ordered veg boxes in advance and then put them in the boot of your car when you pulled in to collect.

Case study 9: Pudsey and Calverley & Farsley wards

Pudsey Community Project (PCP), a project born out of Pudsey Parish Church and developed by Rev Richard Dimler and volunteers, was in a 9 month process of being set up as there was a recognised need of support particularly for youth work and young families in the area, as well as single people with no family networks. It was an embryonic organisation in July 2019 and three days before lockdown started, the project was formally established. It now has three trustees and are the process of completing the forms for charity status and organising a separate bank account. It has been noted that this is not an ideal time to formally set up a new project!

With the advent of Covid 19 the PCP knew that they needed to be involved with the response effort. Rev Richard Dimler was aware of how the other hubs were being set up and the sort of organisations that were running them and knew that there wasn't anything like this in Pudsey.

'We knew that we could do the work and it's better to know that you've done it rather than thinking you could have done it and did nothing. And there was no one else in the local area who could manage it.'

At the planning stages it was realised that Hub work needed to cover the Calverley and Farsley Ward and so PCP linked up with St Wilfred's and St John's Churches and Farsley Live at Home in this area with support from the local councillors. The work of the hub has been dealing with food parcels and shopping, prescriptions, and befriending.

The main bulk of the work is food: making up food parcels, delivery and sourcing food. PCP found that the food parcels from the LCC warehouse were not enough and they needed to double what they were collecting in order to meet demand. The generous donations from locals, now diminishing, were being used anything else that is needed is funded by the Church. The project is seeing £4,000 worth of food going out to local people each week.

The number of referrals up to 11 June has been 1,062. In the first week of setting up they were averaging 100 a week referrals, the now have 48 repeat referrals each week. They all start off as one offs and then some are repeats. *'We review the repeats weekly, get volunteers to call them, check if they need anything else sanitary towels, nappies etc. So they are getting what they need and not what we think they need.'*

There have been a regular and steady number of volunteers averaging 40 – 45 a week and they have 4 staff members to staff the drop in. The team comprises of organising prescriptions and shopping collection, also delivery people, admin support, staffing phones and making up food parcels. Volunteers are made up 50 / 50 of Church volunteers and Community Cares Volunteers.

There has been a well organised system of food donations in both wards with [Calverley Church](#), [St John's Church Farsley](#) and [St James the Great Woodhall](#) organising food collections from the local community that is delivered to the PCP. These churches are also supporting their local areas with online programmes for all church attendees with a wide range of programmes that support children and adults. With talks, coffee mornings and video call meetings.

PCP use Facebook and messenger to communicate with the community, either to ask for donations, thank organisations for donations *'We are hugely grateful to the huge donation*

brought in from the [Pudsey Panthers rounders team](#) who just brought so much food for food parcels it almost broke the tables!' and to ensure that any one off perishable donations get distributed out to those who need it before it goes off. This system works very well with a lively response from locals.

The [Swinnow Community Centre](#) in the neighbouring hub has received donations of food from PCP and have gathered a good partnership with local food providers to distribute to local people.

Businesses like [One Stop](#) have been able to donate food to the PCP and financial donations have been received from [Calverley Rotary Club](#) – who continue to organise food collections by asking people to donate 'lunch money' that they currently aren't spending to pay for fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Rotary club have also made a donation to the [Farsley Live at Home Scheme](#) for them to make wellbeing activity packs to members. They include a lockdown memories journal, card making kits, sunflower growing kits and puzzles and have been well received by their members.

Richard has great experience of interagency networking and has seen the value in this with the Covid19 work. There are no neighbour hood schemes. The PCP hub has worked closely with local primary schools and the local children centres 3 across the two wards, they've received direct referrals and work closely with them specifically supporting the individuals and families.

As there are a large number of families in the local area and schools have different levels of capacity the PCP have found that some of the schools are taking to people outside of their own pupils.

For young people [Southroyd School Pudsey children's centre](#) have had an active online presence encouraging children with their online work and pointing them to relevant events and special days like the #stephenlawrenceday and Florence Nightingale 200th Anniversary of her birthday.

What's next

As time goes on and the referrals from the Community Cares programme are dropping they are receiving increasing numbers of direct referrals from Facebook. This has started the process for PCP to plan what happens next and how PCP can start to include the work that has occurred as a result of Covid 19 as well as pick up the work that they set out to do pre-Covid.

They can see that there will be a continued need to support people with the impact of Covid19 for many months in the future, and now with an emphasis of addressing other ongoing issues impacting on people.

Working with families, befriending, parents with mental health problems and young children and youth work are seen as important work to continue. Helping people to connect is a central theme. PCP can see that there will be a need to keep the food bank but sees that it will become less about ways of feeding people and more about recognising a more holistic approach of working.

Reflecting on the whole Covid response Richard said that the building and 25 existing church volunteers have been the backbone of the service.

'It's been a combination of 2 things. It's really good collaboration with the church structure and volunteers stepping forward when things are needed. If it wasn't for the church then this response wouldn't have happened.'

The final reflection is on the importance of getting work done regardless of who gets the accolade:

'It's amazing what you can achieve if you don't mind who gets the credit'

Case study 10: Rothwell ward

[MHA Rothwell & District Live at Home \(Rothwell LAH\)](#) is one of the 37 Neighbourhood Network Schemes working with older people in Leeds. They are also one of the five live at home schemes part of the MHA charity groups. Their remit is to run groups like soup and sandwich lunch clubs and they cover the area that includes Rothwell, Methley Kippax, Lofthouse, Thorpe Carlton, Ardsley and Robin Hood.

They were asked to consider whether they would be a hub. They agreed as there were no other organisations that had come forward, although they were unsure of what the work would entail they thought that if it didn't work out they could withdraw.

The work that the hub undertook was food organising and phone calls.

Initially they had no idea how they were going to coordinate the food side of things and a lucky meet with Cllr Diane Chapman when they were both meeting with the Morrison's Community Champions, a system began to emerge in terms of sourcing food as well as a great resource in Diane who is part of the hub team.

The food was sourced either through **Morrisons**, donations from **Woodlesford Co -op**, **Arla Foods** and Leeds City Council food parcels. These donations would be redistributed to ensure that each food parcel to families or individuals had enough food to last for a week. Other food provisions are a pay as you can system in the hub building where people can come and have two bags of food for whatever they could afford as well as a Paid for Shopping service where they would buy gift cards that people would then pay for.

Rothwell LAH have a strong cohort of 50 volunteers in usual times and this number shrunk to 15 because of volunteers individual circumstances. Three of these work at the hub and others are making calls.

They have used the Community Cares Volunteers – around 30 of the 100 that had been given to them. Volunteers were used for ringing up the referrals, doing the shopping and then delivering it. The system worked better with volunteers opting for the roles that suited them best, rather than one volunteers doing the whole shop and delivery. Other volunteer activities were welfare calls, there was an average of 150 telephone calls; some weekly and other some 2/3 times a week.

[The Fair Exchange](#) is a small community organisation that run groups and activities in the LS26 area. During lockdown their usual activities have been suspended and instead groups have been supporting each other with check in phone calls, online groups, including a CBT course for the Mental Health group, as lockdown restrictions have eased some members have met in Rothwell Park.

Some neighbourhoods have organised street parties, to commemorate the Queen's Birthday and VE day and book exchanges have been established.

One aspect of the work that Rothwell LAH realised was the lack of community groups in the local area: *'It's proved in Rothwell there are no other organisations who have come through in this area it's leafy and green but still got pockets of deprivation, I don't know of any other organisation who were available to help. It makes you see what is and isn't in the community.'*

Case study 11: Wetherby and Harewood wards

Wetherby in Support of the Elderly (WiSE) is a registered charity organisation part funded by Leeds City Council. Their aim is to improve quality of life for the over 60's by providing community based activities, information, help and support. It is one of the 37 Neighbourhood networks across the city. As well as the Leeds City Council (LCC) Neighbourhood Networks grant they have other funding including a partnership with Children in Need.

The first day of lockdown WiSE agreed to become a hub lead for Wetherby and Harewood Wards, taking the pressure from other organisations that didn't have the capacity to take on the role.

W-ISE realised that their normal way of setting up a project was not possible to do and so just had to improvise with what they had.

'The challenge was that normally when a project starts there's time to plan, trail and then run it. In this situation we had referrals and volunteers with no system to hook them too. So we worked backwards – as the phone number came out very quickly we distributed this at that time we had no idea of food supplies, vouchers, prescriptions, we only had our first volunteer'

The system slowly followed this with the e-voucher shopping system and later the portal. Both systems WiSE have found very helpful.

For food supplies WiSE worked with **Fareshare** and topped up supplies by using the grant money from LCC to buy food.

Referrals started to come in at the same time as volunteers through the Community Cares volunteers and along with WiSE's existing volunteers, tasks were allocated to those best suited for the job required.

W-ISE worked alongside other groups who were operating in the wards.

Harewood is a clued up part of the world with other voluntary groups working in the local areas: [Wetherby Lions](#), Church groups, and the **Wetherby and District Food Bank**, were all supporting local people in their own ways. And communities in the two wards' villages like Clifford, Thorner, Scholes and Barwick have used methods like the Nextdoor app to keep in touch and support each other.

In Boston Spa **St Mary's Church** supported the community with online services. **The Boston Spa festival** was able to host the annual scarecrow festival, despite the main festival being cancelled. As lockdown continues to ease the **Boston Spa running club** is now organising weekly running meet ups and although the Boston Spa Festival had to be cancelled the Scarecrow Festival will be happening.

WiSE are confident that they have managed this challenging situation very well within the system they had been given. They feel that if needed they are well placed to running a hub to support a larger area of the city if this was required.

'We've handled this in a professional way and applied a professional model. Our organisation is well placed to do the work, if we use this system we can quite comfortably take on work from around the city'

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Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 9 July 2020

Subject: Work Schedule

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

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

2. Background information

- 2.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.
- 3.2 Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 24 June 2020 are also attached as Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and identify any matter where specific scrutiny activity may be warranted, and therefore subsequently incorporated into the work schedule.

Developing the work schedule

- 3.3 When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
- Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue.
 - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
 - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
 - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
 - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
- 3.4 In addition, in order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where necessary and appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.5 The On 16 March 2020, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, Leeds City Council took the necessary step to cancel a number of planned meetings of various Committees, Boards and Panels. This included all Scrutiny Board meetings and any joint scrutiny arrangements where the Council acts as the lead authority.
- 3.6 In cancelling Scrutiny Board meetings it was acknowledged that, after the urgency of the initial stages of the pandemic response, there would be opportunity to reflect and identify any lessons learned across different service areas and statutory local authority scrutiny functions would have an important role to play in this process.
- 3.7 With Council services focused on the urgent pandemic response and subsequent city recovery plan, the usual collaborative process of annual work programming for Scrutiny Boards was also suspended. However, in May 2020 all Scrutiny Boards were briefed on decision making relating to the areas of the pandemic response that fell within their respective remits and this may influence members’ priorities for the 2020/21 work programme.
- 3.8 In June 2020 remote public sessions of all Scrutiny Boards were introduced. There is continuing uncertainty about how future meetings will be hosted – they may be hosted remotely, be buildings-based or involve a hybrid approach. However, all meetings have been scheduled in such a way as to ensure they can continue to be resourced remotely if that is the required approach.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Vision for Scrutiny states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director(s) and Executive Member(s) about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include ‘to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Scheme’.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 When considering areas of work, the Board is reminded that influencing climate change and sustainability should be a key area of focus.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
- 4.4.2 The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.

Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
- Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

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

- 4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 This report has no specific risk management implications.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. The latest iteration of the Board’s work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider the matters outlined in this report and agree (or amend) the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2020/21.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 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.



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2020/2021 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 18 June 2020	Meeting Agenda for 9 July 2020	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
REMOTE SESSION Outcome of the consultation on the proposals for the land currently occupied by Temple Newsam Golf Course Safer Leeds (verbal update)	*REMOTE SESSION* Volunteer Hubs – learning lessons to ensure the future resilience of the 3rd sector Referral to Scrutiny: Nitrous Oxide (Cllr Robinson)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2020/2021 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 24 September 2020	Meeting Agenda for 15 October 2020	Meeting Agenda for 18 November 2020
Waste Management Services: update on the recommendations of the 2018 scrutiny inquiry [PM] LASBT Review: update following the introduction of changes to the service in early 2020. [PSR] <i>Performance Update [PM] – due in June, re-scheduled due to CV</i> <i>Potential item regarding the Council's budget – further information to follow</i>	Housing Activity Update [PM] Fireworks partnership discussion, following the 2020 referral to scrutiny [PS]	River Cleanliness: Follow on from Referral to Scrutiny in the name of Cllr Lamb [PSR] Locality Working and Priority Neighbourhoods [PM] <i>Voluntary Sector: reflections on lessons learned from the Covid 19 experience [following July 2020 discussion]</i>
Working Group Meetings		
Workshop to discuss parameters of Fireworks Inquiry	Workshop to discuss the parameters of the River Cleanliness inquiry	Universal Credit Update: Service user experience as per discussions in January 2020
Site Visits		

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2020/2021 Municipal Year

January	February	March
Meeting Agenda for 14 January 2021	Meeting Agenda for 25 February 2021	Meeting Agenda 25 March 2021
Reducing Poverty and improving Financial Inclusion – update report, including impact of Universal Credit. (PSR) Financial Health Monitoring and Initial Budget Proposals [PDS] Best Council Plan [PDS]	Standards in the Private Rented Sector – update report [PSR] Parking Strategy and Management update [PM]	Fuel Poverty Update / Energy Efficiency in Council Housing Stock / Carbon reduction in the Private Rented Sector [PM] Clean Air Zone – post implementation review (PSR)
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response

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REMOTE MEETING OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 24TH JUNE, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor J Blake in the Chair
(REMOTELY) Councillors A Carter, R Charlwood,
S Golton, J Lewis, L Mulherin, J Pryor,
M Rafique and F Venner

APOLOGIES: Councillor D Coupar

1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the remote meeting of the Executive Board, which was being held as a result of the ongoing social distancing measures established in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair extended her thanks and appreciation to Council employees, together with all partner organisations and sectors across the city and the wider region for the extraordinary co-ordinated efforts which continued to be taken to safeguard and serve communities during these unprecedented times.

The Chair also highlighted that as the national measures in place began to change over the coming weeks, key messages around the ongoing importance of caution and safety, in line with the Government's guidance, would continue to be communicated.

2 Late Items

Agenda Item 15 (Update on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic – Response and Recovery Plan)

With the agreement of the Chair, a late item of business was admitted to the agenda entitled, 'Update on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic – Response and Recovery Plan'.

Given the scale and significance of this issue, it was deemed appropriate that a further update report be submitted to this remote meeting of the Board. However, due to the fast paced nature of developments on this issue, and in order to ensure that Board Members received the most up to date information as possible the report was not included within the agenda as originally published on 16th June 2020. (Minute No. 14 refers).

3 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 19th May 2020 be approved as a correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 20th July, 2020

RESOURCES

5 Financial Performance - Outturn Financial Year Ended 31st March 2020

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report presenting the financial outturn position for the 2019/20 financial year in terms of both revenue and capital elements, with it also including details regarding the Housing Revenue Account and expenditure on schools. In addition, the report also highlighted the position in respect of other key financial health indicators including: Council Tax and Business Rates collection statistics; sundry income; reserves and the prompt payment of creditors.

The Executive Member for Resources extended his thanks to Council officers for the work undertaken to achieve the Council's outturn position for 2019/20, as detailed within the report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's financial outturn position for 2019/20, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the creation of earmarked reserves, as detailed within paragraph 6.3 of the submitted report, be agreed, with agreement also being given to delegate the release of such reserves to the Chief Officer (Financial Services);
- (c) That it be noted that the Chief Officer (Financial Services) will be responsible for the implementation of these resolutions following the conclusion of the 'Call In' period.

6 Treasury Management Outturn Report 2019/20

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report providing the financial outturn position for the 2019/20 financial year in terms of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and operations.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with an update on the Council's current approach towards borrowing, with it being noted that during this current financially uncertain period, the Council was monitoring the markets with the aim of ensuring that future borrowing achieved best value for the Council.

RESOLVED – That the Treasury Management outturn position for 2019/20, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that treasury activity has remained within the Treasury Management Strategy and policy framework.

7 Financial Health Monitoring 2020/21 – Month 1

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which presented the projected financial health position of the Authority for 2020/21, as at month 1 of the financial year.

With regard to a Member's comments regarding the appended action plan which looked to address the pressures upon the 'Children Looked After' budget for 2020/21 and the approach being taken to deal with any increased demand for related services which could potentially arise as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Board was advised that a detailed set of actions were in place to address such matters and that such information could be shared with Board Members, as required. Also, it was noted that there was a focus upon the transfer of children and young people currently in external placements to foster care wherever possible and appropriate, which was alongside the actions being taken aimed at increasing the recruitment levels of foster carers in Leeds.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Authority, as at Month 1 of the 2020/21 financial year be noted, and that the projected impact of COVID-19 on that position also be noted;
- (b) That the savings plan, as provided by the Director of Children and Families which identifies initial proposals to address pressures in 'Children Looked After' budgets and the reduction in grant funding as announced after the 2020/21 budget had been set, be noted;
- (c) That in line with principles laid out by Government, it be noted that the Council has continued to charge schools as normal for Council services disrupted by COVID-19, for which they have a regular financial commitment.

8 Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) upon Leeds City Council's 2020/21 Financial Position and Update on the Forecast Budget Position for 2021/22

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which provided an update regarding the Council's financial position in respect of 2020/21 and 2021/22, taking into consideration the current position regarding the financial impact upon the Authority arising from Coronavirus pandemic.

In introducing the report the Executive Member for Resources highlighted the scale of the budget shortfall which was currently forecast, with it being noted that the Council continued to be in dialogue with the Government on such matters, including the need for further support.

In considering the submitted report, the Board discussed a number of key issues, including:-

- Whilst recognising the support which had been provided by the Government to date, emphasis was placed upon the unprecedented scale of the financial situation being faced by Local Authorities and the need for further support to be provided, with it being noted that a co-ordinated approach was being taken by Local Authorities and the Local Government Association in communicating such concerns to Government;
- In acknowledging the possibility that a budgetary shortfall may still remain even with the provision of further support from Government, Members

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 20th July, 2020

discussed the need for further discussion to take place with Government around the possibility of being able to address the Council's financial position over a longer term and with greater flexibility;

- Members discussed matters relating to the current level of reserves held by the Council when compared to other Local Authorities; the longstanding budgetary approach which has been taken in Leeds; the Council's track record in consistently delivering balanced budgets; the nature and size of the economy in the city as a whole and the role which the Council continued to play within that;
- The key role which has been played by Local Authorities throughout the pandemic was highlighted, and the need for that key role to continue and be appropriately supported by Government, with emphasis also being placed upon the importance of the Council being agile enough to adapt and respond to the evolving needs of local communities and the economy as we progressed through the different stages of the pandemic.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the position, as outlined in the submitted report by the Chief Officer (Financial Services) concerning Leeds City Council's financial position as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Government has been written to asking for further financial assistance;
- (c) That it be noted that if further assistance from the Government is not forthcoming or is insufficient to address the scale of the financial overspend as detailed within the submitted report, then an Emergency Budget would be considered by Full Council in the Summer;
- (d) That if the actions that the Council can take on this issue are in the professional opinion of the Chief Officer (Financial Services) insufficient to reduce the Council's cost base to enable there to be sufficient resources to fund services, then it be noted that a Section 114 report would be issued;
- (e) That the revised estimated budget gap for 2021/22 and the actions being taken to address this position, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (f) That it be noted that an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy is to be brought to Executive Board in September 2020 which will provide an update on the Council's financial position covering the period 2021/22 – 2025/26.

9 Annual Corporate Risk Management Report

The Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report that provided an update on the Council's most significant corporate risks, how they were currently being managed and presenting details on the further activity planned to address such risks during 2020/21.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member for Resources emphasised the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic upon the range of risks which were currently being faced by the Council, as reflected within the submitted report.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on the stress test work undertaken regarding the resilience of the Council to maintain its financial position and deliver services under certain circumstances, with it being undertaken that the details of such work could be provided to Board Members as required.

In addition, further to the discussions in the preceding item, the need for continued dialogue with Government around the possibility of being able to address the Council's financial position over a longer term and with greater flexibility was reiterated.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the annual risk management report, as submitted, together with the assurances given on the most significant corporate risks, in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy and the Board's overarching responsibility for their management, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the submitted report will provide a key source of evidence on the Authority's risk management arrangements contributing towards the Annual Governance Statement to be considered later this year by the Council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

10 Learning Places Design & Cost Report School Places Delivery September 2020

The Director of Children and Families and the Director of City Development submitted a report providing information on the need for additional secondary school places across the city for delivery by September 2020, and which sought approval regarding authority to spend and to incur a total expenditure of £7,595,000 to deliver projects at both Cockburn Academy and Leeds City Academy for September 2020 to address specific demographic growth pressures in those respective areas.

A Member raised concerns relating to the proposals within the submitted report regarding Cockburn Academy, with specific reference to the £6,835,000 capital expenditure proposed for that one school, indicated the potential for the matter to be 'Called In' which would require consideration by Scrutiny, and made an enquiry regarding any previous funding which had been provided to the Cockburn Multi Academy Trust. Responding to the concerns raised, the Board discussed and received further information regarding:-

- The delayed delivery of the Laurence Calvert Free School and the impact of this upon school places in the area, with Members receiving an update on the current position regarding the continued dialogue

taking place with Government in relation to the delivery of this Free School;

- Further detail was provided on how the proposed expenditure would be used, which included addressing the historical capacity issues at the school and the required adaptation of the current on site infrastructure, whilst also ensuring the delivery of appropriate facilities – with an offer that further detail could be provided to the Member in question, if required;
- In terms of timescales, it was confirmed that the 60 additional places proposed to be created at Cockburn Academy to address that bulge cohort would remain at the school until those 60 pupils had completed Year 11;
- Members also discussed the broader issue of appropriate resource being provided to the Local Authority for the delivery of further school places across the city to enable levels of demand to be met, with it being highlighted that further consideration and discussion of such matters would be welcomed.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the additional secondary places which are required in order to reduce the amount of children being allocated a school place out of area, be noted;
- (b) That the necessary authority to spend be approved, together with approval also being given to incur expenditure of £6,835,000 from Capital Scheme number 33176/BGE/CBN to deliver the works associated with a 60 place ‘bulge’ at Cockburn Academy for September 2020;
- (c) That the proposal for the freehold transfer of the land identified within the submitted report, which forms part of the former South Leeds Golf Course to Cockburn Multi Academy Trust be approved, to allow the delivery of the sports field provision required as part of the proposals as detailed within paragraph 3.1.4 of the submitted report;
- (d) That the necessary authority to spend be approved, together with approval also being given to incur expenditure of £760,000 from Capital Scheme number 33176/BGE/LCA to deliver the works associated with a 60 place ‘bulge’ at Leeds City Academy which are being delivered by the Local Education Partnership (LEP) for September 2020;
- (e) That the programme dates, as detailed in the submitted report, in relation to the implementation of these resolutions, which represent the critical path for project success and must be adhered to where possible, be noted;
- (f) That it be noted that the officer responsible for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Service Learning Systems in the Children’s and Families directorate.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Carter required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

11 Outcome of statutory notice on a proposal to permanently increase learning places at Allerton Grange School from September 2021

Further to Minute No. 147, 12th February 2020, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented details of a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. Specifically, this report described the outcome of a Statutory Notice published under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 in regard to a proposal to expand secondary school provision at Allerton Grange School and which sought a final decision in respect of this proposal.

Responding to an enquiry, officers undertook to provide Executive Members with information on the timeframe by which Ofsted inspections would resume and also with information regarding the outcomes from inspections which took place immediately prior to the Coronavirus outbreak.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton Grange School from a capacity of 1200 pupils to 1500 pupils in years 7 to 11, with an increase in the admission number from 240 to 300 and with effect from September 2021, be approved;
- (b) That the recommendation to exempt the decision from the Call In process for the reasons as set out within paragraph 4.5.2 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (b) above, and for the reasons as detailed within sections 4.5.2 of the submitted report)

12 Outcome of consultation and request to approve funding to permanently increase learning places at Leeds West Academy from September 2022

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented details of a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. Specifically, this report described the outcome of a consultation exercise which had been undertaken regarding a proposal to expand secondary school provision at Leeds West Academy and

which sought a decision to fund the delivery of a scheme to create the additional learning places required.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the consultation process undertaken on the proposal to permanently expand Leeds West Academy from a capacity of 1200 to 1500 students by increasing the admission number in year 7 from 240 to 300, with effect from September 2022, be noted;
- (b) That provisional approval for the authority to spend (ATS) £5.269m to deliver the proposed permanent expansion at Leeds West Academy be granted, with it being noted that early feasibility indicates the final cost is likely to be lower than this amount;
- (c) That it be noted that the implementation of this proposal is subject to funding being agreed based upon the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications, as indicated at section 4.4 of the submitted report, with it also being noted that this proposal has been brought forward in time for places to be delivered for 2022;
- (d) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of the Capital budget is the Head of Learning Systems;
- (e) That it be noted that the White Rose Academies Trustees intend to self-deliver the build scheme.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

13 Update on 'Thriving': The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds

Further to Minute No. 105, 25 November 2019, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an update on the work being undertaken towards the outputs and outcomes of each Impact Workstream under the 'Thriving' Strategy, provided details of the work being undertaken in response to the effects of COVID-19 in this area, whilst the report also provided details of the associated monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the work streams within the Strategy.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member for Children and Families highlighted how the report had been adapted to incorporate the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic when considering child poverty, together with a summary of current national issues linked to this agenda.

In considering such matters, a Member emphasised the need for all children and young people across the city who were affected by the effects of poverty to be supported, especially given the likely exacerbation of the issue as a result of the pandemic. Linked to this, the importance of continuing to monitor the extent of the impact of the pandemic in respect of child poverty was emphasised, so that appropriate responses to the needs of children and young people could be delivered.

Responding to comments, it was highlighted that all initiatives included within the strategy aimed to ameliorate the impact of poverty for children and young people and following this, Members received updates on, and discussed the approaches taken towards both the Period Poverty initiative and also the Healthy Holidays programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the strategic framework in place to mitigate the impact of child poverty, together with the work being undertaken by the Council and its partners in the key areas of activity, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the data overview, the current work being undertaken and the reporting updates, as outlined within the submitted report, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the officer responsible for the implementation of such matters is the Chief Officer, Partnerships and Health, by December 2022;
- (d) That it be noted that Executive Board has an understanding of the potential impact of COVID-19 on child poverty, with the calls for a national approach towards mitigating the impact of child poverty also being noted.

(During the consideration of this item, under the provisions of Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 3.2.5, in the temporary absence of Councillor Blake, Councillor Lewis assumed the Chair of the meeting. In returning to the meeting, Councillor Blake resumed her position as Chair)

INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND CULTURE

14 Update on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic - Response and Recovery Plan

Further to Minute No. 170, 19th May 2020, the Chief Executive submitted a report which provided an update on the continued coronavirus (COVID-19) related work across the city being driven by the response and recovery plan, which aimed to mitigate the effects of the outbreak on those in the city, especially the most vulnerable, and prepare for the longer term planning of stages of recovery including local outbreak planning. The report highlighted how the city's multi-agency command and control arrangements continued to be used, which had been updated to reflect local outbreak management arrangements for Leeds, and also provided information on the organisational issues which were being faced by the Council arising from the pandemic.

With the agreement of the Chair, the submitted report had been circulated to Board Members as a late item of business prior to the meeting for the reasons as set out in section 10.1 of the submitted report, and as detailed in Minute No. 2.

In introducing the submitted report and providing an update on the current position, the Leader, on behalf of the Board, extended her thanks to all of those involved in the continued delivery of statutory services across the city and also the delivery of those actions which were in response to the pandemic. Linked to this, the key role being played by Local Authorities throughout the pandemic, as highlighted earlier in the meeting was reiterated.

In addition, Members paid tribute to the work being undertaken at a national level by the Chief Executive, Tom Riordan, as part of the Government's ongoing test and trace programme.

The Board received an update from the Chief Executive on the key aspects of the work which continued to be undertaken in respect of planning for the control and management of any Coronavirus outbreaks, how such work was being co-ordinated at a local and regional level and how this fed into the national strategy, with details also being provided on how the newly established Leeds Outbreak Control Board fitted within existing governance arrangements.

Responding to an enquiry, the Board received further information and assurance on the close liaison which continued to take place with neighbouring Authorities regarding the control and management of localised outbreaks, to facilitate a more regionalised approach, where appropriate.

A Member highlighted the need, moving forward, to build upon the partnership working which had been developed throughout the pandemic, and the importance of looking to harness the effectiveness of local communities working together which had been a key part of the local response. Linked to this, Members highlighted how an effective communications strategy from a national to a local level continued to be fundamental to the successful management of outbreaks as restrictions began to be relaxed, with the role of Ward Councillors in helping to deliver such communications within communities being highlighted.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updated context, the progress being made and the issues being faced as the Council moves through the phases of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, be noted;
- (b) That the submitted report and the comments made in respect of it during the discussion be noted in context with the more detailed report on the financial implications of Coronavirus for the Council, as presented within Minute No. 8;
- (c) That the establishment of the Leeds Outbreak Board and Outbreak Plan to ensure that effective local arrangements are in place and which are linked to national testing and tracing approach, be noted;
- (d) That the continued focus of the collective response on health and wellbeing which recognises the direct health impacts of COVID-19,

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 20th July, 2020

together with focus upon the emerging social and economic consequences, be noted.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 26TH JUNE 2020

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M. ON FRIDAY, 3RD JULY 2020

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