



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL



BEST COUNCIL PLAN 2019/20:

Annual Performance Report

Published September 2020



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Foreword

Welcome to the 2020 Annual Performance Report looking back at how, during 2019/20, we continued to pursue our vision for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate and caring, in which everyone can benefit from a strong economy, and which tackles poverty and inequality. The report presents a balanced picture, both looking at the achievements and progress made, whilst acknowledging the future challenges we face. We cannot ignore the implications on our performance of the global coronavirus pandemic which led to a nationwide lockdown being imposed in March 2020 and so it would be difficult to properly report our performance without making an assessment of the immediate impact of these exceptionally challenging circumstances. The report offers our preliminary assessment of how our performance against our strategic plan for the city and the organisation - the Best Council Plan - has been, and will continue to be, affected by COVID-19. It is clear that results for 2020/21 and beyond will show a very different picture as the council, the city, and our communities and partners strive to recover from the impact of these unprecedented times. Although it is too early to determine the full impact of the pandemic on our ambitions and priorities, or how long it will take us to recover, next year's report will provide a more thorough assessment and will show the progress we make over the year that lies ahead.

Beyond the impacts of COVID-19, we face a number of stubborn, longstanding issues: people living in our disadvantaged areas continue to have poor health outcomes, educational attainment remains a challenge, adapting to and mitigating against climate change requires an enormous amount of work, and the UK's exit from the European Union still presents uncertainty. The current and future financial climate for local government also represents a significant risk to the council's priorities and ambitions.

Our ambition will not be easy to achieve. It has always been challenging, but now more so than ever before. In reflection of this, we updated our **Best Council Plan 2020-2025**, placing emphasis on the role of the priorities in establishing a 'new normal' for life in Leeds after COVID-19. Our longstanding commitment to the priorities is now more important than ever as we continue to focus our support on those in most need, while enabling everyone to reach their full potential. In light of the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, we want Leeds to be a safe city.

The progress made against the vision, ambitions and priorities would not be achievable without our dedicated staff, Elected Members, our supportive partners and the Leeds public who continue to work with us during these difficult times to make Leeds a safe city in which to live, work and visit.



CLlr Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council and
Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council



Introduction

At the start of the year 2019/20, our Best Council Plan set out our continued vision to be the best city and the best council in the country, to be achieved through eight interconnected Best City priorities and our Best Council aim to be a more efficient, enterprising and healthy organisation. Building on our previous work, we added a new 'Age-Friendly Leeds' priority based on our well-developed ambition for Leeds to be the best city to grow old in. We also replaced the title of our '21st-Century Infrastructure' with 'Sustainable Infrastructure', to better reflect the environmental ambitions of the council and the city. Together, our priorities are aimed at delivering improved outcomes for everyone in Leeds. 2019/20 saw the strengthening of our health and wellbeing offer to staff in response to the impact of ever increasing demands on public services, alongside reduced resources, on our workforce, and to reflect this 'health' was added to our existing Best Council ambition to become a more 'Efficient, Enterprising and Healthy Organisation'.

This report contains an overview of how we performed against each of our priorities and a preliminary assessment of how the COVID-19 pandemic has already impacted our performance and will continue to do so in the future. The full year-end results for our key performance indicators are given in Appendix 1.

Performance Overview

Best City Priority: Inclusive Growth

The aim of our Inclusive Growth priority is for a strong economy within a compassionate city, where everyone, and all communities, can contribute to and benefit from our economic success.

Good progress was made against this priority in 2019/20. Over the year, the number of new business start-ups in Leeds increased slightly to 4,338 when compared with the year before, and the five year survival rate for businesses in Leeds was 42.9%, which compared favourably against other UK core cities¹. The council helped more than 5,400 people into work, with results showing that 61% of those moving into work lived in neighbourhoods classed as among the 20% most deprived in the city. The council also supported 6,921 people to improve their skills through accredited or non-accredited courses. Although the level of business rates payable across the city has increased over the past three years, in 2019/20 the rate of in-year growth slowed to 0.71%.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- The council successfully **supported 5,414 local people into work** through the council's Employment and Skills Service² and the Jobshops in Community Hubs. Results showed that 61% of those moving into work lived in neighbourhoods classed within the 20% most deprived in the city (as per the Indices of deprivation), 36% identified as BAME and 9% declared a physical or mental health disability. The Employment and Skills Service continued to operate during the pandemic and between April and June 2020 it supported 1,140 people into work, including 62 people into apprenticeships. This support covered job roles across sectors, with the largest numbers seen in health and care, food retail, logistics, distribution and transport.

¹ Core Cities UK is a partnership of eleven city councils (Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield) with a wide range of shared interests encompassing transport and connectivity, innovation and business support, skills and employment, sustainable communities, culture and creative industries, climate change, finance and industry, and governance. Leeds City Council's Leader, Councillor Blake, currently chairs the Core Cities Cabinet, comprising the Leaders of each member local authority.

² The Employment and Skills Service works with a range of partners to support local people into work, training or education opportunities. It works with businesses to help them recruit retain and develop a skilled and inclusive workforce and contribute to the city's economic growth.

- 6,921 **people were supported to improve their skills** through accredited or non-accredited courses. There were 1,290 courses delivered within communities, mainly through the Adult Learning Programme³. Although the 2019/20 result was 579 (8%) below the target of 7,500 people, this was due to social distancing measures from March requiring the cessation of classroom-based learning across 150 plus community settings. We worked with providers to move from 'face to face' to online provision and over 200 adult learning tutors undertook additional training to help enable this. As we continue into the 'new normal' of the pandemic recovery phase, the support provided to help people to improve their skills and to get jobs will become increasingly important.
- The proportion of Leeds' working age population (WAP) with at least a **Level 4 educational qualification**⁴ once again increased, going up by 1.9%, from 38.2% (197,600 people) to 40.1% (205,800 people). *[Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2019 figures released April 2020]*
- An indicative assessment of the productivity of businesses and individuals is the gross Value Added (GVA) per filled job. In 2018 (the latest figures available), Leeds' **GVA** per filled job grew by 1.4% compared to 2017, from £52,568 to £53,311 per filled job.
- The number of **new business start-ups** in Leeds increased slightly when compared with the previous year. In 2019, there were 4,338 business start-ups, an increase of 1.4% since 2018. This compared well with the national picture where the growth in start-ups across England fell by 0.8%, and also fell in Yorkshire and Humberside by 0.8%. *[Source: BankSearch, which compiles information from Companies House and High Street business bank account opening data].*
- **467 businesses scaled up** in Leeds during 2017/18 (the latest results available) - i.e. had 20% growth in either turnover or employment over the previous three years. This is a similar level to that reported in 2016/17 (461 businesses), and is indicative of business confidence in the city at that time. *[Source: Calculated in-house using external data from HMRC, Companies House and the Inter-Departmental Business Register 2017/18 result calculated October 2019].*
- The latest result (2018) for the **five year survival rate for businesses** was 42.9% of businesses which started up during 2013 in Leeds were still trading after 5 years i.e. 1,670 of the 3,895 new businesses started in 2013. *[Source: ONS: Business demography, UK. Published 19 November 2019]*
- Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2020, the cumulative growth in **business rates payable** across the city (gross of appeals, discounts and reliefs) went up from £446.1m to £460.5m, an increase of 3.21% (£14.4m), reflecting gains and losses to the rating list. In response to COVID-19, the Government has since put in place a number of initiatives to support businesses including business rates relief for a range of occupied retail, leisure and hospitality properties. This support and the ongoing economic situation for businesses will have an impact on future levels of business rates payable.
- The demand for **business support** across all sectors surged as a consequence of COVID-19. The council processed 12,528 grants to a value of £153,450,000 (as at 9th September 2020). According to the Department for Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), by June 2020 Leeds was in the top three best performing local authorities by amount paid with over 87% of the initial government allocation paid to businesses in Leeds.
- The scheme closed for new applications on 28th August with a deadline to issue payments 30th September. Since the start of the scheme, as at 1st September, the council had paid 12,478 grants with a total value of £152,950k.

³ Leeds Adult Learning Programme: <https://leedsadultlearning.co.uk/>

⁴ Level 4 qualifications include higher education certificates, higher apprenticeships and higher national certificates as well as level 4 awards, certificates, diplomas and NVQs.

- The number of **people working in the private sector** in Leeds increased by 4.5% from 380,100 (2017) to 397,100 (2018 – provisional). *[Source: ONS UK Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES); provisional results 2018]*
- The 2019 Annual Economic Impact Report indicated that the economic impact of the **visitor economy in Leeds** (day visitors and staying visitors) grew by almost 4.3% between 2018 and 2019, by an additional £58m to £1.89bn. In 2019, the city welcomed 30.42 million day and staying visitors who spent a total of 33.73 million days in the city, supporting 21,520 people in direct and indirect employment associated with the visitor economy. Prior to the pandemic, the day visitor market continued to make up the majority of visitors to Leeds accounting for 92% of visitors, with the remaining 8% representing the staying visitor market.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

In August 2020, as a direct result of the pandemic, the UK went into recession for the first time since 2008/09. The number of workers on UK payrolls is falling and more high street businesses are entering into administration. Even as lockdown eases, many businesses are still facing severe pressure, with concerns regarding business closures and redundancies. These impacts are being felt locally in Leeds too. In terms of the labour market, almost 90,000 employees were furloughed in the city after the pandemic took effect, with young people and low earners the most likely to have been affected as they are prevalent in the hardest hit sectors. The hospitality and retail sectors, both of which had a thriving presence in Leeds have been especially hard hit by the lockdown. We have yet to see the longer-term effect on unemployment levels in the city, mainly because firms have put employees on the Government-backed furlough scheme which is due to end in October.

The key challenge for the council and the city will be supporting Leeds's economic recovery from COVID-19, getting people back into work and building longer-term economic resilience. The council is working with a wide range of stakeholders to understand the impact on our economy and provide support where possible. Whilst there are clear economic challenges ahead for the city, the successes noted in this report for 2019/20 should provide Leeds with a strong foundation as we safely look to recover our economy.

Best City Priority: Health and Wellbeing

In Leeds we believe that our greatest strength and most important asset is our people. Health and wellbeing derive from our connections with family, friends and colleagues; the behaviour, care and compassion we show one another; and the environment we create to live in together.

During 2019/20, many results continued the positive trend seen in previous years. In relation to population health, the infant mortality rate reduced as did the percentages of inactive adults, adults who smoke and the rate of teenage pregnancy. Life expectancy at birth increased for men whilst remaining unchanged for women - although both these results still place Leeds behind both the region and England. In relation to adult social care, for Leeds, the headline quality of life measure for people receiving adult social care services increased slightly over the year. Against a maximum possible score of 24, Leeds' provisional score was 19.7, slightly up from the previous year. Another highlight was the continued improvement in the overall satisfaction of people with their care and support, which increased from 63.3% to a provisional 66.7% in 2019/20.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- **Life Expectancy at birth** for men living in Leeds increased slightly between 2015-17 and 2016-18 from 78.2 years to 78.3 years; for women it remained unchanged at 82.1 years. This places Leeds behind both the region (for 2016-18, male life expectancy was 78.7 years; female 82.4

years) and England as a whole (men 79.6 years; women 83.2 years). *[Source: ONS Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 by local areas, UK – release date 11th December 2019]*

- The most recent results for **Avoidable Years of Life Lost**⁵ (2016-18) show an increase for both Leeds deprived⁶ (9,452 per 100,000 people, up from 9,253 in 2015-17) and for Leeds overall (5,613 per 100,000 people, up from 5,547 in 2015-17). The gap between Leeds overall and deprived areas remains large. *[Source: ONS Mortality data]*
- The **Infant Mortality Rate** per 1,000 live births is the over-arching indicator for the multi-agency Leeds Best Start programme⁷. Leeds' rate has once again improved to 4.0 for the latest reporting period (an aggregate for the three-year period 2016-18), down from 4.2 in 2015-15; and similar to both England (3.9) and the region (4.0). *[Source PHE Fingertips/ Public Health England]*.
- **Suicide rates** per 100,000 population (persons aged 10+⁸) within Leeds overall decreased this year after a rising trend in recent years: from 10.5 (2013-15), 10.9 (2014-16) and 11.8 (2015-17) to 10.9 (2016-18). The Leeds result is remains higher than that for England (9.6) and the region (10.7). *[Source: ONS Source data]*.
- The percentage of **children maintaining a healthy weight at age 11** reduced slightly to 63.2% for the 2018/19 school year (the most recent figures available), down from 64.6% in 2017/18. However, when looking at the prevalence of **obesity among children** of Year 6 age, Leeds was 20.9%, below the regional average (21.0%) but above that for England (20.2%). At reception age, Leeds compares well against other local authorities in Yorkshire and Humber (9.7% in Leeds; 10.2% across the region). *[Source: National Child Measurement Programme – England, 2018-19, published October 2019 NHS Digital]*
- According to the latest Active Lives Adults Survey from Sport England, nationally, as well as in Leeds, activity levels were on the rise and inactivity was falling before the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 12 months to November 2019, the number and percentage of people in Leeds classed as **'inactive'** (carrying out less than 30 minutes of moderate activity per week) improved by 1.6% compared to the previous year, down to 132,900 people (20.9%), reflecting well against the England national average of 24.6%. The number and percentage of **'active'** people (carrying out at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week) increased by 0.1% to 66.3% (422,400 people), again higher than the England average of 63.3%. *[Source: Active Lives Survey Nov 2018 - Nov 2019), April 2020 release]*.
- To support everyone to stay active and healthy at home during the pandemic lockdown, **Active Leeds**, the council's health and fitness provision, developed online resources such as activity tutorials, guidance and information and fun challenges for people to try from home. The Active Leeds app was downloaded over 20,000 times during June 2020 alone and over 1,000 people participated in the first two days of live streaming of fitness classes through the app. National and regional initiatives to promote activity during the pandemic were also supported including: Stay #HealthyAtHome, #PEwithJoe and Yorkshire Sport Foundation's 'Active at home'.
- **Smoking prevalence** in adults across the city continues to reduce, from 19% (2018/19) to 18.6% (2019/20). For the same period, Leeds deprived rates also reduced from 30.2% to 29.6%. While the overall trajectory shows a decrease in smoking prevalence, there is still a large gap between Leeds and Leeds deprived *[Source: Local PHI data – GP data extraction]*.

⁵ Deaths from causes that are considered avoidable in the presence of timely and effective healthcare or public health interventions.

⁶ Deprived Leeds: **Lower Super Output Areas** (LSOAs) that fall into the 10% most deprived in England.

⁷ The Leeds Best Start Plan describes a broad preventative programme from conception to age 2 years which aims to ensure a good start for every baby, with early identification and targeted support for vulnerable families early in the life of the child. This is a progressive universal approach.

⁸ Suicide definition: the statistical release is based on the National Statistics definition of suicide. This includes all deaths from intentional self-harm for persons aged 10 and over, and deaths caused by injury or poisoning where the intent was undetermined for those aged 15 and over.

- 2019/20 saw a total of 19,880 **Health Checks** completed, a decrease of 1,799 (8.3%) on the 2018/19 result of 21,679. [Source: Leeds GP extraction data].
- The rate of **teenage pregnancy** in the city (conception rate per 1,000 women below the age of 18) reduced between the calendar years 2017 and 2018 (the most recent year for which results are available) from 27.3 to 23.8 but remains higher than for England (16.78) and the region (19.6). [Source: ONS Conceptions in England and Wales, 2018. Release date March 2020.]

The national **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework** (ASCOF) measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people based on a number of statutory national government returns, and results from an annual survey of service users. Data is published annually, and, at the time of writing, official 2019/20 performance figures for England and all local authorities have not yet been published. As such, all ASCOF 2019/20 data for Leeds below is provisional and comparisons with regional and national performance figures are only available for 2018/19. [The source for all ASCOF 2018/19 data referred to below is NHS Digital's 'Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England - 2018-19', published 22 October 2019].

- The headline measure ASCOF 1A: **quality of life** measure for **people receiving adult social care services** is an average quality of life score based on responses to eight questions in the Adult Social Care Survey. Against a maximum possible score of 24, Leeds' provisional score was 19.7 in 2019/20, slightly up from 19.6 in the previous year.
- Provisional results for the proportion of people who use services who have **control over their daily life** (ASCOF 1B) showed an increase to 82.2 in 2019/20 from 75.1% in 2018/19. Our result of 75.1 for 2018/19 was lower when compared against results for England (77.7%) and the region (78.2%).
- The proportion of people who use services and reported that they **had as much social contact as they like** (ASCOF 1I) reduced slightly, from 51.6% in 2018/19 to provisionally 49.4% in 2019/20. Leeds' 2018/19 results compared favourably with the results for England (46.0%) and the region (47.5%) for the same year.
- Leeds continued to performed well for the **proportion of people who use services who receive self-directed support** (ASCOF 1C), with 91.2% in 2018/19 increasing to provisionally 92.7 in 2019/20. The 2018/19 result compared favourably to both the England average 89.7% and regional 89.3%. When looking at the proportion of **carers receiving self-directed support and carers receiving direct payments**: for self-directed support, Leeds' figure was 94.0% in 2018/19, falling slightly to provisionally 93.4% in 2019/20; for direct payments, Leeds' figure was 87.4% in 2018/19 but falling provisionally to 83.8% in 2019/20. Both sets of 2018/19 results compared favourably against England and the region. However, Leeds still performs less well when looking at **direct payments to people** (ASCOF 1C2a⁹): 17.8% in 2018/19 compared to the England average of 28.5% and this has provisionally fallen further in 2019/20 to 16.2%.
- Improvements continue in results related to **people with learning disabilities in paid employment and living in their own home or with their family** (ASCOF measures 1E and 1G respectively). The former saw a continuation of the upward trend from 7.7% in 2018/19 to provisionally 8.1% in 2019/20. The latter has also seen a continuation in the upward trend from 73.0% in 2018/19 to provisionally 74.8% in 2019/20 – though Leeds remains below the national average (77.4% in 2018/19).
- **Permanent admissions to residential and nursing care homes** (ASCOF 2A) continues to show a mixed picture. The Leeds rate of adults over 65 who best have their needs met through admission to nursing and care homes showed a provisional result of 549.7 per 100,000 in 2019/20, up from 524.4 per 100,000 in 2018/19 (however, this is still below national and

⁹ Proportion of people receiving direct payments is based upon the percentage of long term service users who get all or part of their support package in the form of a payment with which to fund their own support. As this measure is calculated more frequently than ASCOF 1B, we use this as our KPI for 'control over daily life'.

regional comparator rates). There is also a continuing increase in the admission rate for the 18-64 age range with provisionally 16.3 per 100,000 people, up from 13.4 the previous year; but in comparative terms, Leeds' performance in 2018/19 remains good when compared against those for England and the region.

- Leeds' performance remains good in relation to the **proportion of older people who are provided with short-term support from hospital** (ASCOF 2B1) that enables them to remain at home 91 days later. At the end of March 2020 the provisional annual figure for Leeds was 83.1%, up on the 2018/19 result of 82.2% (the England 2018/19 average was 82.4%).
- The publication of the provisional 2019/20 results for **Delayed transfers of care from hospital** (DToC – ASCOF 2C (1, 2 & 3)) have been delayed by the Government due to COVID-19. However, in relation to Leeds' confirmed results for 2018/19: For those cases attributable to just adult social care, there has been a significant improvement: falling from 4.2 daily beds per 100,000 population in 2017/18 to 1.1 in 2018/19 (compared to the regional rate of 2.4 and England rate of 3.1). However there remains a challenge across the wider system with the overall DToC per 100,000 population going down from 16.9 daily beds in 2017/18 to 16.4 in 2018/19, and DToC attributable to both the NHS and adult social care rising from 1.0 in 2017/18 to 3.0 in 2018/19.
- There has been continued improvement in the **overall satisfaction of people with their care and support** (ASCOF 3A) from 63.3% in 2018/19 to provisionally 66.7% in 2019/20.
- **The proportion of people using services who find it easy to find information and support** (ASCOF 3D(1)) has seen an increase from 69.8 in 2018/19 to provisionally 71.2 in 2019/20.
- ASCOF Measure 2d – 'The outcome of short-term services' – measures the percentage of new service users who go on to receive no further long-term services. In Leeds this rose from 60.6% for 2018/19 to provisionally 65.7% for 2019/20, though the 2018/19 results were below the England average of 79.6% and regional average of 72.7%.
- Leeds has a national and international profile for its work to develop ABCD, an **asset based approach to community development**. The ABCD programme reframes the relationships between the local authority and citizens with the potential to make a significant contribution to improving the council's sustainability in the long term. Fourteen communities across the city are working in an asset based way, each covering a population of approximately 5,000-10,000. A Leeds Beckett University pilot study has estimated that £27.20 of social value is returned for every £1 invested in ABCD. In 2019/20, 25 Third Sector organisations and 326 individuals participated in ABCD training sessions, the Community Builders made a total of 336 connections with other organisations and engaged 146 new Community Connectors. The value of ABCD and asset based approaches have been highlighted in the city's response to COVID-19. Areas with ABCD sites have been able to get support to where it is needed quickly. The strong community connections that have developed enabled people to effectively support each other with less demand for statutory services or formal volunteers.
- Leeds' **Care Quality Commission** (CQC) local provision inspection results: based on a snapshot at the end of March 2020, 87.8% of Leeds providers were rated as good or better, up by nearly 6 percentage points on the 82.1% snapshot 12 months before. This result accepts that care home performance is stronger than that for domiciliary care and that continued improvement in nursing provision is needed.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

The council has a key role to play in enabling the health and social care sector to respond to and recover from COVID-19, reducing health inequalities and supporting active lifestyles. Patients and citizens need to be supported even better than before as we move into a period of living with COVID-19 and we need to remain vigilant to any lasting effects of the pandemic on the Leeds population. As more data and analysis on the outbreak gets published, we are becoming more aware of the direct health impacts of COVID-19 on the city. On the 2nd June 2020, Public Health England published the findings on how different factors such as age, sex and ethnicity affect COVID-

19 risks and outcomes. The report identified that those with underlying health conditions were particularly at risk from COVID-19. The council and our partners assisted those people in Leeds who were shielding from the pandemic by providing them with a wide range of support and information across multiple media channels. Health and Social Care Services are taking steps to resume day services with advice being issued on how to do this safely. Some day services have never ceased and others have changed how they were delivered.

Best City Priority: Sustainable Infrastructure

As a city, Leeds faces many challenges in providing modern and reliable infrastructure to link people to services and employment, whilst at the same time tackling the climate emergency by improving air quality, adapting to climate change, being more resource efficient, and promoting more sustainable solutions for the future.

We continued to make good progress on our Sustainable Infrastructure priority in 2019/20. Work progressed in delivering a range of transport improvements such as new and improved rail stations, new and enhanced park and ride services, bus priority measures along key corridors, cycle schemes and modernised transport hubs across the city. The Leeds PIPES district heating network is being rolled out across the city centre sooner than anticipated, in part due to the reduction in city centre traffic during the pandemic lockdown. Work also progressed on the next phase of our Flood Alleviation Scheme, implementing flood prevention measures for areas upstream of the city centre.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- Our sustainable infrastructure priority reflects the council's declaration of a **climate emergency** and our ambition to work towards being a net zero carbon city by 2030. **Carbon emissions** across the city continue to reduce, with the most recent results available showing a 38% reduction when compared to Leeds' 2005 levels, the equivalent of 3.133m tonnes. *[Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy - Emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas. 2018 results published June 2020]* Although the results published are subject to a time lag, the drop in car usage during the first months of the pandemic lockdown is expected to result in further carbon emission reductions.
- The council supported the UK **Clean Air Day** campaign in June 2019 through activities and communication campaigns including the closing of roads outside 12 primary schools for an afternoon and anti-idling banners distributed to schools and nurseries. Car Free Day events were also hosted in Otley, Headingley and Beeston Hill during September 2019.
- **Air quality measures** to complement the CAZ have been delivered or are being progressed. These include enhancement of the electric vehicle charge points (EVCP) of which Leeds currently has 10 live sites with plans to increase to 25. However, the impact of COVID-19 caused a delay in the delivery of this work and the timescales for completion have had to be revised to the end of 2020.
- The **Leeds PIPES district heating network** continues to be rolled out across the city centre. Powered by waste from the city's recycling and energy recovery facility (RERF), the PIPES network will provide major civic buildings and commercial properties plus 1,983 homes with low carbon heating and hot water by the end of 2020. By March 2020, 800 properties had been connected to the network. Work is progressing faster than planned due to the lockdown-related reduction in city centre traffic.
- Council and health service buildings across Leeds are to be upgraded to full fibre connectivity thanks to a partnership with British Telecom. The **Leeds Full Fibre Programme** will use these sites to accelerate the wider roll out of faster, more reliable broadband to nearby residential and commercial properties. Without increasing what the council currently spends on network services.

- Work continues on major projects across the city, notably the **Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme** which is delivering a range of transport improvements in Leeds such as new and improved rail stations, new and enhanced park and ride services, bus priority measures along key corridors, cycle schemes and modernised transport hubs across the city. Additionally, major works began on the Headrow in September 2019 and on Infirmary Street and Park Row in February 2020. This work aims to provide a better city centre infrastructure for those cycling and walking and also increase the reliability of buses, all of which will help reduce the dominance of car usage.
- With both Elland Road and Temple Green **Park & Ride sites** meeting capacity during 2019, work was underway to create an additional 2,000 park and ride spaces across the city by March 2021. However, due to COVID-19, the park and ride sites in Leeds temporarily ceased operating at the end of March 2020, with the Temple Green site being converted for use as an NHS testing facility. Elland Road Park and Ride will reopen from Monday 24th August whilst Temple Green remains closed until further notice.
- Although we report the level of sustainable transport methods into the city centre, the pandemic has delayed publication of the 2019/20 result.
- A major challenge facing Leeds is the reliance of the whole city centre on a **single railway station**. With plans for the High Speed 2 and 3 rail networks to come to the city, there is a need for station redevelopment so that it can become a gateway to drive economic growth and regeneration for both Leeds city centre and the Leeds City Region. During 2019/20, work progressed to improve Leeds rail station through improvements to its main concourse and the upgrade of New Station Street.
- Work continues to swap out all non-LED bulbs within Leeds' **street lights** (approximately 86,000 in total). Work on the LED streetlights conversions started in October 2019 and so far around 13,250 lanterns have been swapped, resulting in an estimated saving to date of over 1M kWhs. The LED works were able to continue throughout lockdown, with the exception of a very short stoppage in March to allow for safe working procedures to be ensured.
- The council is working alongside the Environment Agency on a **major flood alleviation scheme**, implementing flood prevention measures for areas upstream of the city centre. The proposals for the next phase of the scheme are twofold and feature measures such as new defence walls with work already underway at Wellington Bridge Street, embankments and a large flood storage area. The first part of the next phase will give protection against a one-in-100 chance of flooding in any given year and is expected to be complete by winter 2022. The second part of the work involves creating flood storage at Calverley, making use of an existing flood plain, and works at Apperley Bridge, which will bring the level of protection up to a one-in-200 chance of flooding in any given year. In July 2020 the Government announced additional funding for the next phase of the Leeds Flood Alleviation scheme, subject to final business case approval.
- Through the four year Flood Alleviation programme, the number of residential and commercial properties moved to a **lower level of flood risk** now stands at 3,171 (residential) and (501) commercial. *[Source: Environment Agency, results published September 2019].*
- Leeds' Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs) initially closed due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, before being able to reopen in May.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

The city's infrastructure is now facing significant short- and medium-term challenges as social distancing requirements have become a national priority. In this context, sustainability has taken on new emphasis as safety – for people and places - must be central to how our systems operate. However, COVID-19 has presented opportunities as well as threats. Weekday 24-hour traffic levels on the Leeds network fell as the lockdown measures took effect but are now showing a weekly increase as more shops, pubs and businesses begin to re-open. Nationally, as well as in Leeds, the

reduced levels of traffic should have a positive impact on air quality levels. The pandemic had an inevitable impact public transport use in the city and although timetables are being restored, public transport capacity will continue to be significantly constrained because of social distancing measures; we must recognise that our earlier focus on rapidly expanding use of public transport has become less viable, at least in the short term. Linked to this, we promoted more sustainable, safe and active methods of travel around the city such as walking and cycling and introduced or widened cycle lanes, making streets traffic-free and expanding footpaths. Despite disruption caused by the pandemic, major transport schemes have continued to be delivered throughout lockdown including the Regent Street flyover replacement, the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR) and city centre infrastructure work on the Headrow, Infirmary Street and Park Row.

Best City Priority: Child-Friendly City

Our child-friendly city aspiration is central to everything the council does, as we seek to improve the homes and places in which children live and play and enhance their overall health and wellbeing. We aim to improve outcomes for all our children while recognising the need for outcomes to improve faster for children from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds.

Over the last nine years, the city has safely and appropriately reduced the number of children looked after, bucking the national trend, although we have seen a slow rise in recent years. In 2019/20, the number of children subject to a child protection plan rose after a sharp reduction the year before, due to the number of new plans exceeding those that ceased. Despite this, the long-term trend (since 2011) is a continued safe and appropriate reduction. As with the picture nationally, the number of children and young people in Leeds living with an education, health or care plan has risen rapidly in recent years. Leeds children overall make good progress in learning with Progress 8 scores remaining strong, though results from the 2018/19 academic year placed pupils behind national at Key Stages 2 and 4. School attendance figures compare well and authorised absence in Leeds schools is amongst the lowest in the country, but persistent absence and unauthorised absence remain a challenge.

- The **Three As Strategy** was launched in the summer of 2019, focusing on attendance, achievement and attainment. The strategy is intended to ensure that all children including those affected by child poverty and disadvantages have the opportunity to reach their potential. The strategy recognises more children should be reaching national expectations and all children should be making good progress and that where this is not the case disadvantage is often evident.
- Since 2011, when the number of **children looked after** became one of the council's children and young people's 'obsessions', this has led to more than a 7.3% reduction in looked after numbers in Leeds whilst national rates have continued to rise. In March 2011, 1,450 children and young people in Leeds were looked after; in March 2020 this had fallen to 1,344, although we have seen a slow rise in recent years as more children are remaining in care for longer, so the number of children leaving care each year is reducing at a slower rate than the number of children starting to be looked after.
- The city's under-18 population has risen at a faster rate than the national under-18 population in recent years, with much of this increase being seen in some of the most deprived areas of the city (areas in the 3% most deprived areas nationally). In 2018/19, the number of children starting to be looked after in six of the most deprived areas in the city reduced from the previous year by two-thirds (from 55 to 19). Whilst there was an increase in both 2018/19 and 2019/20, the current number of children starting to be looked after from our most deprived areas is still significantly below both the figures seen in 2017/18 (26, compared to 55), and the three-year rolling average (33).
- The number of children subject to a **child protection plan** rose after a sharp reduction in the previous year. The March 2020 figure of 590 is 176 higher than the March 2019 figure and

broadly in line with the March 2018 figure. There is an increasing range of early help options available that divert some children away from a child protection plan, but every child's circumstances are carefully considered by qualified professionals who make the most appropriate decision for each child.

- The Annual Standards report summarises the **educational performance of Leeds pupils** at all key stages in the 2018/19 academic year (the most recent results available). The report highlights the successes and challenges, identifying where the gaps are between groups of Leeds pupils and their national peers. Headline performance includes:
 - 62% of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 (3 points behind national, one point closer than last year).
 - 41.6% of pupils achieved a strong pass (grade five and above) at Key Stage 4 (1.6 points behind national).
 - The Leeds Progress 8 score (which demonstrates institutional effectiveness by showing progress made by pupils between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4) is +0.03; this is above the national figure of -0.03.
- **Primary School attendance** remained good in the 2018/19 academic year, with Leeds' result of 95.9% above comparator averages (national 95.8% and Yorkshire and the Humber both at 95.7%). For the same period, 8.8% of primary age pupils were persistently absent. **Secondary school attendance** was 94.2% for the 2018/19 academic year, slightly above the Yorkshire and The Humber (94.1 %). The national trend (which Leeds and its comparators are following) shows a slow but steady decline since a peak in 2014. The persistent absence figure for Leeds has decreased over the last two years and in 2018/19 is 14.6%. The Yorkshire and Humber average is 15.3%. *[Source: Department for Education Local Authority Interactive Tool, updated 14 May 2020]*
- The latest national data show that **authorised absence** in Leeds schools is amongst the lowest in the country. Primary authorised absence was 2.6%, slightly better than last year; secondary authorised absence was 3.1%, down by 0.2 points. These results reflect the seriousness with which the council and the city view school attendance. Unauthorised absence, however, remains a challenge, particularly in a small number of secondary schools, and for more vulnerable groups of young people being closely connected to higher rates of persistent absence. *[Source: Department for Education Local Authority Interactive Tool, updated 14 May 2020]*
- All local authorities are required to track the **activity of all resident young people of academic age 16 and 17**. This ensures that relevant young people are identified and receive targeted information, advice, and guidance and support into activity that is suitable for them. How well a local authority tracks young people is measured by an annual average of December, January and February young people who are either not in education, employment or training (NEET) or those whose activity is not known. The 2019/20 figure for Leeds is 7.2%, a reduction of 2.7 points from 9.9% in 2018/19. This is comprised of 2.4% (NEET) and 4.8% young people whose activity is not known. The national figure is 5.5%; this is virtually unchanged from last year, so the gap between Leeds and national has greatly reduced. Whilst it is too early to provide definitive evidence, the impact of COVID is likely to be significant on young people's transition from school to the marketplace, and ongoing engagement with those who are NEET or whose status is not known. Unemployment is expected to rise throughout the rest of 2020, especially as the furlough scheme tapers off, and it is likely that young people trying to find their first job will be disproportionately affected by the emerging changes in employment levels.
- There were 4,339 children and young people living in Leeds with an **education, health and care (EHC) plan** in January 2020. This was an increase of 13% compared with the previous year and continued the upward trend in the number of EHC plans maintained by the council since 2016. *[Source: DfE statistical first release Education, Health and Care Plans : England, 2020, 7 May 2020]*

- As at January 2020, 10,998 (14.6%) primary and 5,377 (10.8%) secondary statutory school age pupils attending a school in Leeds (state-funded) had **special educational needs (SEN) provision** of SEN Support. This represents an increase in the proportion of all pupils who receive SEN Support in Leeds schools of 0.3% for primary pupils, and an increase of 0.5% for secondary pupils compared with January 2019. Leeds' attainment at key stage 2 and 4 for the SEND group is below national rates. *[Source: DfE statistical first release Special educational needs in England, 2020, 2 July 2020]*
- The provision of **personal travel budgets** for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has been a continued success. This enables families to transport eligible children to school independently, rather being reliant on the council to provide transport, offering families flexibility and independence as well as delivering savings. The scheme has developed momentum and has further room for growth. A pilot scheme to provide bicycles to eligible children at mainstream settings as an alternative to free bus passes is being developed, underpinned by a recent funding award. This would reduce demand for public transport and promote sustainable travel and healthy lifestyles, in addition to delivering savings.
- There has been a sharp rise in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in recent years due to rising migration. Nationally the numbers are stark: between 2015 and 2019 the numbers nearly doubled, rising by 83% from 2,760 to 5,070. In Leeds, the rise was sharper, more than doubling from 16 in 2015 to 60 in 2019. Numbers have fluctuated throughout 2019/20, with 60 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children - the same as at the end of March 2019 - being looked after by Leeds at the end of March 2020.
- **Voice and Influence of Children and Young People** included the following highlights during the year:
 - 11,734 young people in Leeds voted in the Leeds Youth Parliament Make Your Mark ballot in 2019, with the top issue voted for being 'protect the environment'.
 - Leeds has three Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) aged 11-18, elected to represent the city's young people at local, regional and national levels.
 - 116 students and staff representing 21 high schools and colleges around Leeds participated in a Youth Voice Summit for Tackling Climate Change.
 - 45 schools entered the Leeds Children's Mayor 2019/20 elections with 8,918 children voting. The manifesto of the elected Leeds Children's Mayor focuses on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of primary pupils, giving them a safe space to relax and talk about what is on their mind.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

It is not yet clear what exactly the long-term effects of the pandemic on children will be. It is clear, however, that there will be an increase in the level of need and demand for support and services that support children and young people in vulnerable situations. The most vulnerable children in our education system are likely to be the ones who feel the effects the most, and the concern is that the current attainment gap between all pupils and vulnerable pupils could grow. We anticipate an increase in requests for Education Health and Care Plans, elective home education, and some children not attending school. Children and young people are likely to experience social, emotional, and mental health issues, which may impact on school attendance, and young people not realising their potential at school by not achieving their expected outcomes pre-COVID. The impact of lockdown and isolation (children not being in school) is also contributing to parental conflict and domestic violence concerns. A recently-published report from the Children's Commissioner for England¹⁰ identifies a number of risks for teenagers who were already vulnerable before COVID, including teenagers with an open social work case; pupils with an education, health, and care plan; pupils who are persistently absent from school; and those who are NEET.

¹⁰ **Teenagers falling through the gaps**, (published 7th July 2020)

Due to COVID-19 it is unlikely that attendance data will be published for the 2019/20 academic year nor next collected until 2021. School exams have also been cancelled for the 2019/20 academic year. Whilst pupils will receive grades at Key Stage 4 no local authority level data will be published. The next set of local authority data will be based on exams sat in the summer of 2021.

In March 2020, Ofsted announced that Leeds was to receive a Joint Targeted Area Inspection with a specific focus on child exploitation. The inspection, however, was cancelled due to COVID-19 as it became clear that the country was moving into lockdown. Routine Ofsted inspections are currently suspended due to COVID-19. Ofsted have announced plans for a phased return to inspections, starting in September. School inspections will recommence in January 2021, with visits taking place during the autumn term.

Best City Priority: Age-Friendly Leeds

The opportunities and challenges presented by an ageing population are well-known. Older people contribute in countless ways to our rich and vibrant communities and with this priority we will work to ensure that Leeds is a place where older people are valued, feel respected and appreciated, and are seen as the assets they are.

2019/20 was the first year of our Age-Friendly Leeds priority and our performance gauged how Leeds is working towards being the best city to grow old in. Our population is increasing and ageing: it is predicted Leeds' population will increase to approximately 798,000 by 2021 with 31% aged 50 and over¹¹. We recognise the cumulative impact of lifetime of inequality and poverty on older people. In comparison to English Core Cities, Leeds has the lowest percentage of older people living in income deprived households, at 15.6%¹². A report by Independent Age¹³ estimated that there was over £30 million of unclaimed pension credit in Leeds by those eligible for this benefit. This means that we can do much more to ensure we maximise the incomes of older people, especially for those living in the most deprived communities. The employment rate for people in Leeds approaching, and in their later life (people over 50) is 47.7% compared to the national average of 42.9%. Although this is positive, there is more to do to improve the financial security of our older residents as they approach retirement. Disability free life expectancy (at birth) in Leeds is currently 61.9 years for men and 62.8 years for women¹⁴, which compares favourably to other English core cities; but there is a significant gap between those living in the more deprived communities and the city overall. Healthy life expectancy in Leeds is also similar to other English core cities.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- The **employment rate** for people in Leeds approaching and in their later life (i.e. people aged 50+) is 47.8% compared to the national average of 42.8%¹⁵. Although this is positive, we recognise there is more to do to improve the financial security of our older residents as they approach retirement. This will be increasingly relevant as a result of COVID-19, as 30% of workers age 60–64 are receiving less pay than before the outbreak (along with 22% of 50–54s and 26% of 55–59s).¹⁶
- Leeds has set out a requirement for 30% of new properties to be built to **accessible standards** and 2% to wheelchair accessible standards¹⁷. This may become even more important with the impact of COVID-19 increasing the rate of people moving to residential homes and an increase in people remaining in their own home with extra support. We have committed to build 12

¹¹ ONS Population Projection 2018 dataset, (published 24 March 2020)

¹² Source: Ministry of Housing and Local Government / Indices of deprivation, 2019

¹³ Credit Where It's Due: Ending the £3.5 billion Pension Credit scandal (published by Independent Age, 26 June 2019)

¹⁴ PHE Productive Healthy Ageing Profile, (2016 – 18)

¹⁵ NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics - 12 months to March 2020

¹⁶ Young Workers in the coronavirus, Resolution Foundation, 18 May 2020

¹⁷ HM Building Regulations: Accessible and adaptable dwellings standard (M4(2)) and Wheelchair User Dwellings (M4(3))

Working Age Adult Bungalows to an M4 (3) standard, fully wheelchair assessable, alongside the Extra Care development in Middleton Park Ward.

- **Healthy life expectancy at birth**¹⁸ in Leeds (2016-18) is 62.2 years for men (lower than the England national average of 63.4 years) and 64.1 years for women (higher than the England national average of 63.9 years).
- **Disability free life expectancy**¹⁹ at birth in Leeds (2016-18) is currently 61.9 years for men (lower than the England national average of 62.9 years) and 62.8 years for women (higher than the England national average of 61.9 years).
- Leeds is recognised nationally and internationally for its age friendly work. Leeds has a presence on the steering group and is a founding member of the **UK Network of Age Friendly Communities**; is a member of the **Eurocities - Urban Ageing Forum**, and recognised as age friendly by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Cities.
- In November 2019 Leeds was proud to be the first local authority to sign the **Healthy Ageing Consensus Statement**. This statement by Public Health England and the Centre for Ageing Better sets out our shared vision for making England the best place in the world to grow old.
- To support the delivery of the **cold weather plan for England**²⁰ and to contribute towards reducing the number of excess winter deaths, **'Winter Friends'** was developed as a tool to engage the workforce (within the council and the city) in the nine high-impact, evidence-based interventions to support the most vulnerable residents during winter.
- **Lunch clubs** in Leeds were funded to provide regular hot meals and social activities for older people, with an estimated 180,000 visits in 2019/20²¹. As a result of COVID-19 and lockdown many lunch clubs repurposed their provision with a number of them providing a delivery service and doorstep drops of meals.
- **Home Plus (Leeds)** service is a partnership commissioned by the council to help people live safely and independently in their own homes. Over 90% of clients are aged 50+ and over 40% aged 80+. The service was launched in October 2018 and in its first year, assisted more than 2,400 people to reduce the risk of falls over 900 households to reduce fuel poverty.
- Age remains the biggest indicator of whether an individual is online, with a national digital skills study estimating that 52% of those offline are between 60 and 70 years old²². **100% Digital Leeds** is a city-wide programme promoting digital inclusion. In 2019/20 the programme included a specific focus on supporting older people and people with long term conditions. During the pandemic, 100% Digital Leeds has supported over 20 organisations working with older people to adapt their services to provide virtual sessions and digital support sessions. We also worked with council care homes during the pandemic by loaning them Amazon Alexa's and 4G-enabled iPads to increase customers' digital skills, confidence, mental wellbeing as well as enabling them to stay connected to friends and family.²³
- **Dementia Friendly Leeds:** A series of Dementia Information Roadshows took place across the city where people could learn more about Dementia, how to seek diagnosis and find support to

¹⁸ Healthy life expectancy shows the years a person can expect to live in good health (rather than with a disability or in poor health). Source: [Public Health England: Productive Healthy Ageing Profile](#)

¹⁹ Disability Free Life Expectancy provides more information on healthy ageing to complement the existing Public Health indicator on healthy life expectancy. The government 'grand challenge' for our ageing society, has a mission to ensure that people can enjoy at least 5 extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035, while narrowing the gap between the experience of the richest and poorest. DFLE at birth has been proposed as the metric to measure progress towards achieving this ambition. Source: [Public Health England: Productive Healthy Ageing Profile](#)

²⁰ The cold weather plan gives advice to help prevent the major avoidable effects on health during periods of cold weather in England.

²¹ This figure is based on the grant applications made to Leeds Community Foundation who administer the fund, i.e. number of clubs, average predicted attendees and number of weeks they plan to run.

²² [Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index Report 2020](#)

²³ Figures collected by the 100% Digital Leeds Team.

live with Dementia. Leeds has over 50 Memory Cafes that help people with Dementia and there are a wide range of Dementia Friendly activities and support groups. As coronavirus impacted on the city, Dementia Friendly Leeds used their Twitter account to circulate important guidance and advice including dedicated phone lines provided by supermarkets for vulnerable customers, how to spot COVID-19 scams and the Leeds Coronavirus Hotline.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

Nationally, people aged 70+ are one of the groups much more likely than others to become seriously unwell from COVID-19. In terms of age, sadly older people have seen the greatest impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in Leeds with those aged over 60 accounting for 95% of deaths in the city as at the end of June 2020²⁴. The number of care homes in Leeds with COVID-19 outbreaks or active cases peaked at 47 during the spring of 2020 before reducing, due to close partnership working and a co-ordinated multiagency response. The longer term impacts are still being seen, with mental health support (including bereavement support) for staff being prioritised across the care home sector. Our Age Friendly Leeds partners have worked hard to lessen the impacts of lockdown on older people in Leeds. Examples of work undertaken include supporting the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks to host digital coffee mornings; training volunteers on the RU Ok? Service to make welfare calls to people; Public Health with partners producing the 'Keeping Well At Home Guide' to help people remain physically active at home and colleagues in the council's Housing Service phoning the 4,500 tenants in sheltered housing. The health and care system in Leeds is analysing the impact of COVID-19 on people living with frailty, in terms of the infection itself; the impact on missed appointments for both planned care and urgent care and the wider physical, mental, social and economic impacts.

Best City Priority: Culture

We believe culture has a vital role to play in realising our Best City ambition. Through this priority, we aim to promote a positive attitude towards culture, focusing on the contribution it can make to the city's confidence, profile and economy, as well as helping to achieve wider community cohesion.

In 2019/20 Leeds enjoyed another year of cultural success, reflected in our selection to host the EUROCITIES Culture Forum in October 2019. The Forum centred on the theme of 'celebrating diversity through innovative cultural partnerships' and coincided with Leeds' popular Light Night, one of a wide range of well-established cultural events enjoyed by thousands of people, families and communities. The council maintains the city's parks, several of which were once again recognised as amongst the best green spaces in the UK and awarded Green Flag status. Leeds Museums and Galleries remains the largest local authority-run museum service in England and 2019/20 saw the service maintain its accreditation with the Arts Council UK Accreditation scheme.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- Leeds showcased its wide and diverse cultural offering to cultural experts from across Europe, as the city hosted the **EUROCITIES Culture Forum** in October 2019. In collaboration with the University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University and Leeds' cultural sector, we welcomed senior culture officials from some of Europe's major cities as part of the Forum, which centred on the theme of 'celebrating diversity through innovative cultural partnerships'. The forum also coincided with Leeds' popular Light Night.
- Several of Leeds' parks were once again recognised as some of the best **green spaces** in the UK during 2019/20: Golden Acre Park; Kirkstall Abbey; Middleton Park; Otley Chevin Country Park; Pusey Park; Roundhay Park; and Temple Newsam were all awarded Green Flag status, a UK-

²⁴ Data provided by the Chief Analyst, Leeds Health and Care Hub – Analytics. Up to 30th June 2020, there were total 663 COVID deaths registered in Leeds, of these 93.7% (621 deaths) in people aged over 60 years

recognised quality accreditation given to parks and green spaces that provide the highest environmental standards, excellent visitor facilities and a beautifully maintained environment. Leeds' council run parks, cafes, and venues including Lotherton Hall, Temple Newsam and the Arium closed in March in response to the pandemic but have now started to reopen, subject to the implementation of suitable measures, including risk assessments, revised operating procedures and social distancing.

- Leeds retained its **Purple Flag status** for a fourth successive year. The Purple Flag accreditation is the benchmark for good night time destinations and recognises the city's excellence in managing its evening and night time economy. A key element in Leeds retaining its Purple Flag status has once again been the positive and joined-up approach displayed by a wide range of partners.
- **Leeds Museums and Galleries** highlights during 2019/20 included:
 - The Leeds Curriculum won **Educational Initiative of the Year** at the Museums + Heritage Awards in May 2019. The Leeds Curriculum was developed in collaboration with over 40 arts and culture organisations and 30 primary schools, to bring together the expertise of learning and arts professionals in the city.
 - In October 2019, the Beavers to Weavers exhibition: The Wonderful World of Animal Makers won the **Museums Change Lives award** in the category of environmental sustainability.
 - In March 2020 all nine Leeds Museums and Galleries sites successfully maintained their accreditation with the **Arts Council UK Accreditation scheme**.
 - Over 49,000 visits were made by school children, supported by over 6,200 teachers.
 - At **Leeds Art Gallery**, we partnered with the Henry Moore Institute, the Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park in the inaugural **Yorkshire Sculpture International** – 100 days of sculpture in Leeds and Wakefield. Over 1 million people saw a sculpture in Leeds and Wakefield during this period.
- Other notable events and projects worked on and delivered in 2019/20 as part of Leeds' culture offer include:
 - Leeds' **Light Night** is one of the UK's largest annual arts and light festivals. Over two nights in early October some of Leeds' most recognisable indoor and outdoor spaces were transformed by artworks and performances by local, national and international artists. The 2019 event attracted more than 150,000 visitors.
 - Running since 2006, **Leeds Pride** is now the largest Pride in the UK to still be a completely free event. In recent years attendance has increased from an estimated 40,000 in 2017 to 55,000 in 2018 and over 60,000 for the 2019 event.
 - The UK round of the **World Triathlon Series** was again hosted in Leeds in 2019. Over 800 entries were received for the Go Tri events and approximately 2,400 entries for the age-group competitions held across the weekend.
 - **Headingley Stadium** hosted Cricket World Cup matches and an Ashes Test Match.
 - **Roundhay Park** hosted two major concerts by Ed Sheeran in August 2019.
 - The **Road Racing Championships** (cycling) visited Leeds in September 2019.
 - **Leeds International Film Festival** took place in November 2019 and held over 300 screenings and events across 16 days.
 - **Leeds Digital Festival** was held in April-May 2019 and saw 25,000 attendees across 240 events with 750 speakers.
 - **The Leeds Young Film Festival**, now in its 20th year, showcased the latest film, television, animation and virtual reality technology to children and young people.
 - In 2019 the annual **Armed Forces Day** was held in the city centre. The event included a parade led by West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Services Band, and stalls, stands and marquees with an array of activities and displays.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

The cultural and creative sector has been particularly affected by COVID-19. Many of the successful events delivered in the city during 2019/20 won't be able to be held again this year due to the ongoing social distancing restrictions implemented to help ensure public safety. Almost all public and private cultural venues and events have been affected, and although some hospitality venues, parks, leisure facilities and cultural attractions have started to re-open, this is currently not the case for the theatres, live music venues, nightclubs and many sporting events where spectators are present. Prior to COVID-19, over 12,000 people were employed in creative industries in Leeds but it is too early to calculate what impact the pandemic will have on this figure. Between May and June 2020, a survey was undertaken by the council and partners to gain an understanding of the impacts of the pandemic on the region's cultural and creative sector. The survey focused on staffing levels and pay, funding and grants, future plans and support received during the crisis. Over half of the 300 organisations from across the region that completed the survey were based or working in the Leeds area. Progress made by the sector against the survey results will be tracked over the next 18 months. In response to the pandemic, a range of initiatives and events are being developed which will be valuable assets in helping to encourage people to visit the city. Work will continue in providing business support to all of our tourism stakeholders, including signposting to financial support, business advice and assistance and supporting partners as they develop and adapt their businesses and products for a 'new look' tourism sector that is anticipated when restrictions ease further. We hope to benefit from the Government's national package of support for the sector including emergency grants and loans, to help protect the future of the UK's world-renowned galleries, museums, heritage sites, music venues, independent cinemas and other cultural venues as well as local venues. Emergency grants from the Arts Council were also made to organisations in the city including the Leeds Playhouse and Northern Ballet.

Best City Priority: Housing

One of the biggest challenges Leeds faces is to provide enough quality and accessible homes to meet the city's growing population whilst protecting the environment and respecting community identity. Delivering affordable housing and affordable warmth are both key to meeting this challenge.

During the year, 3,386 newly built and converted homes were delivered, exceeding the proposed target. There were also fewer long-term empty properties in the city compared to the previous year. Work was undertaken on council high rise housing including urgent fire safety checks and the fitting of sprinkler systems to even more of our blocks. Our 'Rethinking Repairs Project' was started with the aim of helping improve the quality and efficiency of the repairs service, and a number of other investment and improvement actions have been progressed over the year following the last tenants' (STAR) survey in 2018/19. Leeds Housing Options (homeless advice service) has maintained high levels of homeless prevention activity, helping to avert the threat of homelessness in over 4,000 cases during 2019/20.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- 3,386 newly built and converted homes²⁵ were delivered in 2019/20, exceeding the proposed target of 3,247 new homes set out in the Core Strategy Selective Review²⁶.
- At the end of 2019/20 there were 102 fewer long-term empty homes (3,545) relative to the end of 2018/19. There has been a levelling off in reduction of long-term empty properties over the

²⁵ A total of newly built homes, net conversions of existing homes, extra care elderly housing and deducting in-year demolitions.

²⁶ The Leeds Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 and set out the long-term strategic town planning policy framework for the district up to 2028. Following consultation and external inspection, an updated 'Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review' covering the period 2017-33 was adopted in September 2019. The updated Core Strategy Document can be found [here](#).

past few years and the result remains below the target of no more than 3,776 long-term empty homes.

- 421 **affordable Homes** were delivered during 2019/20, slightly below the result of 433 in 2018/19 and 13 short of the Core Strategy in-year target of 434²⁷.
- Changes to funding regulations in late 2018 enabled the local authority to embark on its largest council house building programme in decades, with an ambitious target of directly delivering at 1,500 **new build council homes** over the next five years. During 2019/20, 11 new build council homes were handed over, with a further 48 to follow later in 2020. The programme also exchanged on 21 new build properties from a developer in March 2020, and acquired a further 45 properties for inclusion in council housing stock via the property buyback project. In terms of progress towards its initial target of 1,500 new build homes, the programme has allocated sites at various stages of design, planning and development for around 670 units to date, including 3 council owned extra care schemes which will provide c190 units of accommodation for older people. A further 100 more units are in earlier stages of feasibility / scoping. Work is ongoing to identify and secure additional sites to support the balance of our target.
- **High rise housing** is a substantial part of council housing in Leeds, with over 7,500 households living in 116 blocks across the city. During 2019/20 work undertaken on high rise properties in the city included fire safety checks, a programme to fit sprinkler systems to more of our blocks and installing external wall insulation to some as part of a range of work to help keep homes warmer and respond to the city's climate emergency commitment.
- The number of untenanted council housing **void properties** remains just below the 1% target, at 0.99% at the end of March 2020. While this is an increase on the position of 0.63% at the end of 2018/19, this is mainly linked to people being unable to move towards the end of March during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- The **average re-let time** of council housing properties has shown an improvement since March 2019 (34.4 days), reducing to 29.6 days by the end of March 2020.
- The level of Leeds' council homes meeting the **decency standard** in March 2020 stood at 96.92%, an increase from 93.19% in March 2019. Decency is measured using the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and in practice the service aims to keep the level of decent homes above 90%.
- For council housing properties, the percentage of **responsive repairs completed right first time** has remained consistently high and above the 90.5% target throughout 2019/20, with the figure for March 2020 standing at 94.44%. The number of **responsive repairs completed within target** timescales remained below the 99% target during the year with performance at the end of March 2020 standing at 90.82%. However, the figure for March is affected by the start of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequent effect on the repairs service. Housing Leeds has formed a Rethinking Repairs Project to help improve the quality and efficiency of the repairs service, including increased customer satisfaction, removing duplication, increasing 'Right First Time' and less visits, improving diagnosis and reducing disrepair.
- High citywide **customer satisfaction levels for repairs** have been reported for the majority of 2019/20, with a high of 97.31% in November 2019. There was a subsequent dip in early 2020, although remaining above the 90% target, with the March figure standing at 90.91%. The main reason for this dip was in relation to customers being unhappy with unfinished repairs; as previously mentioned, the figure will have been effected by the start of lockdown due to the pandemic. The Rethinking Repairs Project will be taking actions forward to improve the quality and efficiency of the repairs service.

²⁷ Source: Affordable Housing Provider quarterly returns submitted to Leeds City Council in regards Planning Section 106 delivery; direct delivery and Homes England and Right to Buy Replacement Programme grant funded schemes; and delivery through the Council Housing Growth Programme.

- The percentage of **housing complaints** responded to within timescales remains an area for improvement. The percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within timescales in March 2020 stood at 74.72% and for stage 2 it was 80.00%. This is down from 89.67% and 86.36% respectively at March 2019. Housing Leeds has received an increased number of complaints this year with over 370 more stage 1 complaints throughout 2019/20 when compared with 2018/19. The main areas of complaints are timescales / incomplete work and quality of service provided by the repairs service. A number of processes have been put in place to improve response times and the quality of responses to customers; weekly information is sent to teams showing the numbers of complaints that are open and whether or not they are within timescale.
- Numbers of council housing tenants moving onto **Universal Credit** have increased due to the impact of COVID-19, with almost 1,300 new claims made during April. The service supported tenants to access Universal Credit and set up regular payment plans and helped with wider support needs throughout the pandemic.
- The **council's housing tenants (STAR) survey** is undertaken every two years, with the most recent one taking place in 2018/19. Results from the survey were generally consistent, and a summary of the results was shared with tenants, highlighting the investment and improvement actions put in place in response during 2019/20. These included increased resources for the Contact Centre to answer calls within 1 minute and the launch of the new Leeds Homes website which allows applicants to update their application online and view live bidding positions. The Housing Leeds website was also updated to make it easier to access services online.
- The council's **Private Rented service** has a focus to address individual needs and support as well as improving the fabric of properties. The service has carried out a series of home visits in targeted areas, enabling support to be provided to vulnerable occupiers through advice and signposting to partner services. This advice often relates to benefit entitlement and energy bills.
- The service prepared business cases that has led to the council designating two areas of the city as **Selective Licensing areas** – from 6th January 2020 landlords in Harehills and Beeston must have a licence to operate in these most deprived areas. This is expected to cover approximately 7,000 privately rented properties, all of which will be inspected over the lifetime of the schemes to ensure compliance with licence conditions and meet the minimum legal property standards.
- Leeds has maintained high levels of **homeless prevention** activity. The service standard for good performance is 80% of cases having homelessness prevented and our monthly performance has consistently remained above 80%, with the March 2020 figure reaching 93%.
- **Leeds Housing Options** (our homeless advice service) deals with around 15,000 households each year and last year helped over 4,000 cases avert the threat of homelessness.
- Councils are obliged by government to carry out full city **Rough Sleeper** headcounts in September, November, January and March each year. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these have been temporarily suspended since March 2020. However, the figures for the last full count in Leeds in January 2020 was 39 rough sleepers.
- Latest provisional figures give the average city-wide SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) **energy efficiency rating** for 2018 as 63.6 (based on a rating of 1-100), a slight improvement on 63.4 in 2017. Energy efficiency is also presented in an 'A' to 'G' banding system for energy performance certificates where band 'A' is the most efficient and 'G' the least. In 2018, 2.5% of Leeds properties were rated below SAP band 'E' (minimum SAP 39), compared with 2.2% in 2017. The apparent increase is most likely due to limitations in the available data and the higher error margin in calculated low SAP values.
- The most recent results²⁸ show that 35,852 (10.3%) of Leeds households were estimated to be in **fuel poverty**, an improvement from 36,926 households (11.1%) in 2017. Our results are

²⁸ Statistics relating to fuel poverty are published two years in arrears, so the most recent data available relate to 2018. A household is considered to be 'fuel poor' if their required fuel costs are above average (national median) and, if they were to spend that amount, they would be left with an income below the official poverty line (the 'Low Income High Cost' definition).

comparable with England (10.3%) and the region (10.1%) [Source: 'Sub-regional fuel poverty, England 2020 (2018 data)' published 30 April 2020; 'Sub-regional fuel poverty, England 2019 (2017 data)' published 13 June 2019. Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy]

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

The council's Housing Service continued to provide essential services to council tenants throughout lockdown: completing essential and priority repairs, supporting tenants who got into financial difficulty by suspending normal recovery action for four months, and giving guidance and support to claim appropriate benefits to assist tenants with paying their rent. Most of the housing-related services moved to telephone only during lockdown: ringing vulnerable tenants to check their wellbeing, and carrying out around 10,000 telephone contacts per week to tenants living in the Retirement Life homes. However, backlogs in activity were created which are taking time to address, such as with empty homes and responsive repairs. During the pandemic lockdown around 300 homeless people and rough sleepers in Leeds were re-housed into emergency temporary accommodation, providing shelter, food, healthcare and services to enable people to self-isolate safely. A priority was to ensure that people living in emergency accommodation were supported into long term, safe accommodation in support of our ambition to minimise homelessness. The pandemic has also impacted on our ability to drive up standards in the private rented sector. During lockdown, inspections were only carried out where there was a serious risk to health and safety and the introduction of Selective Licensing in Harehills and Beeston Hill and Holbeck was interrupted. Though recent housing delivery has been strong across the district, with Core Strategy housing targets being met during 2018/19 and 2019/20, the impact of COVID-19 represents an additional challenge on delivery. Starts and completions both fell in in Quarter 1 of 2020/21 as a number of major developers closed sites and sales outlets at the start of the lockdown. However, social distancing measures have subsequently been implemented and development activity has largely recommenced; the pipeline of sites and permissions coming forward remains healthy and strong. With lockdown restrictions easing, and recent changes to permitted development rights it is expected that delivery rates will improve throughout the year.

Best City Priority: Safe, Strong Communities

Leeds is a growing and richly diverse city, with people of different ages and from many backgrounds, cultures and beliefs living and working alongside each other. Through this priority we want Leeds to be a safe and welcoming city for all, where people get on with each other and feel they are part of their local neighbourhood, and where the most vulnerable are protected.

During 2019/20 the council's Local Welfare Support Scheme continued to help support the most vulnerable people in Leeds, including providing advice to customers on welfare, housing benefit and Council Tax support. Food poverty remains a challenge for the city with the number of people visiting food banks over the year increasing by nearly 20% compared to 2018/19. In addition, 'holiday hunger' continues to be a concern for parents and over the year, holiday schemes have been funded to target this; 79 projects were supported during the 2019 summer holidays alone. An increase in the percentage of self-reported domestic violence and abuse cases indicated increased victim confidence in coming forwards and there was a 10% reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by the Police compared to the previous year.

How did Leeds perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- The council's **Local Welfare Support Scheme** continued to help support the most vulnerable people in Leeds by way of goods or services rather than direct cash payments. As the pandemic lockdown took effect, resources from the scheme were used to work on the emergency provision of both food and fuel for those affected by COVID-19. From the start of lockdown, regular suppliers of goods, such as electrics and furniture, that were awarded through the scheme closed down for the lockdown, leading to the need to find alternative suppliers.

- The council's Welfare Rights team provided **welfare advice** to 34,594 customers in 2019/20, comparable to the numbers seen in the previous year. The impact of COVID-19 has directly resulted in a significant increase to the number of new Universal Credit claims. Department for Work and Pensions data for Leeds showed that in February 2020 (pre-pandemic), 33,715 people citywide were claiming Universal Credit, but by May, this had increased to 62,884, an 86% increase.
- Prior to the pandemic, the combined **Housing Benefit/Local Council Tax Support (HB/LCTS)** caseload fell over the year. As at 12th April 2019 the caseload was 69,292 (52,197 HB/LCTS cases; 17,095 Local Council Tax Support Only cases) which, by the 8th March 2020, reduced in total to 66,953 (44,168 HB/LCTS cases; 22,785 Local Council Tax Support Only cases). The ongoing decrease in HB Caseload is due to Leeds being in Universal Credit Full Service, which also accounts for the increase in Council Tax Support Only cases, since claims that previously received both HB and LCTS became LCTS only claims. However, as a result of COVID-19, the overall caseload increased due to the effect on people losing their jobs, being on furlough or experiencing changes in their income. By mid-June the caseload had increased to 69,375 (42,417 HB/LCTS cases; 26,958 Local Council Tax Support Only cases). Whilst the number of HB claims continued to decline, there has been a significant increase in the number of LCTS Only claims. This can be attributed to previous joint claims moving to LCTS Only, due to changes that caused them to move to Universal Credit, plus new claims for LCTS Only from people making their first claim for Universal Credit having lost their jobs, being put on furlough or having a change in their income due to COVID-19. *[Source: SHBE, a statutory return to the DWP based on results from Leeds benefits system, Academy]*
- **Food Poverty** remains a challenge for the city, with data from the Leeds Food Aid Network showing that the number of people visiting foodbanks increased from 33,645 in 2018/19 to 41,396 in 2019/20, up nearly 20%. Demand went up further in light of COVID-19. And so the council and partners put additional support in place to ensure everyone was able to access the food they needed, with over 49,200 food parcels distributed by the Emergency Food Service by early July.
- We know from our communities that feeding children in school holidays (termed '**holiday hunger**') is a growing challenge for parents. The Healthy and Happy Holiday scheme once again benefited from funding, enabling 79 projects to be supported during the 2019 summer holidays. Nationally, COVID-19 shed further light on the issue of holiday hunger and, after a high profile campaign by Fareshare UK and footballer Marcus Rashford, the Government expanded the provision of its Free School Meal Voucher Scheme to continue during the 2020 summer holidays.
- **Leeds Credit Union (LCU)** is one of the key partners in the city working alongside the council to help combat the problems brought about by financial exclusion. 2019 saw LCU's most successful campaign to date, saving members over £1.7 million in high interest charges during the run up to Christmas. LCU also won 'Lender of the Year' at the Yorkshire Finance Awards in February 2020.
- The council joined forces with the gambling industry to raise awareness across the city of **gambling-related harm**, mitigating the risk of problem gambling and providing advice on how to get help and support. During 2019, anti-gambling campaigns were held linked to the Cricket World Cup. We also promoted Responsible Gambling Week in November 2019.
- The number of people **killed or seriously injured (KSI)** from road traffic accidents in Leeds remained a concern prior to the pandemic. During the 2019 calendar year, a total of 357 people were KSI in Leeds (25 of whom were children or young people). This was an increase from 337 people (40 children or young people) in 2018 and is still above our target of no more than 234 KSI per year. In 2019 there were 23 fatalities, 3 less than in 2017 *[Source: Department for Transport statistical release 'Reported Road Casualties in West Yorkshire' – May 2019 based on figures provided by West Yorkshire Police]*
- Comparing **road traffic casualties** in the first 23 weeks of 2020 with last year shows that casualties are down by 40% compared to the same period in 2019 (from 785 to 473). From week

12, the total number of all casualties fell by 54% from 379 in 2019 to 176 in 2020, while those classed as KSI went down by 48% (64 in 2019 vs 33 in 2020). The number of weekly road casualties however is now starting to increase as lockdown eases. In week 23, more casualties were recorded in 2020 (23) compared to 2019 (18). In response, links are being made with the Road Safety Great Britain “Take Extra Care” campaign and we are discussing with the Police the resumption of the close pass initiative related to cycling and increased speed enforcement.

- There has been a decrease in **police-recorded crime** in Leeds, although crime volume can be affected by changes in recording practices, policing activity and willingness of victims to report. 103,092 crimes were recorded in Leeds in 2019/20, a reduction of 3% on 2018/19 (3,244 fewer crimes). There have been reductions in Criminal damage and Arson (10,468 crimes, a decrease of 4%); reductions in Burglary (8,261 crimes, a decrease of 18%); reductions in Vehicle offences (7,799 crimes, a decrease of 9%) and reductions in Robbery (1,446 crimes, a decrease of 14%).
- Over 5,600 Leeds respondents completed a **‘Your Views’ survey** conducted by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2019/20, with responses from Leeds’ residents comparing favourably to the broader West Yorkshire position²⁹. The survey results showed that 84% of respondents in Leeds said that they felt ‘safe or very safe’ in their local area.
- Behaviour that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person may be defined as **anti-social behaviour (ASB)**. In 2019/20, 15,949 anti-social behaviour incidents were recorded by Police in Leeds, a 10.0% reduction from the year before. *[Source: Dataset provided by West Yorkshire Police with manual calculation applied by Safer Leeds]* Following the imposition of the lockdown response to COVID-19, some existing neighbour tensions were heightened, and new ones arose, resulting in incidents of ASB. This is being closely monitored by Safer Leeds and our response will be adjusted accordingly.
- In 2019/20, 2,813 **hate incidents** were reported to police in Leeds, down by 6.9% from the 3,021 incidents reported in 2018/19. However, the wider 5 year trend shows a long term increase in the volume of hate incidents reported to the police in Leeds which can be attributed to increased awareness and a commitment from the police to respond to incidents of hate in communities.
- **Domestic violence and abuse:** In 2019/20, 21,631 domestic incidents were reported to West Yorkshire police in Leeds, a decrease in volume of 2.5% compared to 2018/19 when 22,176 incidents were reported. The repeat victim rate was 48%, down from 48.6% in 2018/19. 33% of cases were victim ‘self-reported’ (up from 32% the year before), indicating increased victim confidence in reporting domestic violence and abuse³⁰. Since COVID-19 took effect, media attention has frequently turned to the increased risk of domestic violence and abuse posed by the lockdown and, unfortunately, Leeds has not escaped this worrying trend. Contact to national domestic violence helplines continues to be at high levels and this has been mirrored by the Leeds Domestic Violence Service helpline with an average increase of 25% as at July, but at one stage surging by nearly 80%. The council launched campaigns to promote the support available for people experiencing domestic violence and abuse, closely linked to the national ‘You Are Not Alone’ campaign.
- **Operation Nightsafe**, an ongoing safety campaign, involves Safer Leeds working with a range of agencies and venues to increase public safety in Leeds city centre, particularly in relation to the night time economy. The last weekend in November 2019 saw Operation Nightsafe2 – aimed at keeping people safe and feeling safe in Leeds city centre as Christmas approached.

²⁹ [‘Your Views Survey’](#), Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner West Yorkshire, 2019/20 Year End.

³⁰ Dataset provided by West Yorkshire Police with manual calculation applied by Safer Leeds.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

We have seen the strength and resilience of our communities in recent months. COVID-19 has brought real emotional and financial hardship to too many families, but it has also seen Leeds' community spirit come into its own. We are aware that the impact of the virus mirrors existing health inequalities and, in some cases, has increased them further, with people from deprived areas, those from BAME groups, and employees in low paid or low skilled occupations at most risk, and those with underlying health conditions. By mid-June 2020 the effect on people losing their jobs, being on furlough or experiencing changes in their income saw an increase in the overall caseload of Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support (HB/LCTS). COVID-19 also impacted on community safety in Leeds. There has been an increase in domestic violence and abuse incidents since lockdown measures took effect in March, with the number of repeat cases also increasing. Immediately after the imposition of the lockdown measures in March, the decrease in city centre footfall resulted in a fall in the volume of Race Hate incidents reported to the police. However, the lockdown may have exacerbated existing neighbour tensions, some of which were hate motivated, with an increase in the number of hate-related incidents causing alarm or distress, including malicious reports relating to breaches of the lockdown measures. Safer Leeds are monitoring these trends closely and working with partners to implement appropriate responses.

Best Council Priority: An Efficient, Enterprising and Healthy Organisation

Our 'Best Council' ambition has for many years been aimed at becoming a more efficient and enterprising organisation, centred on an ongoing programme of cultural change. In 2019/20 we updated this to include a particular focus on the health and wellbeing of our staff, without whom the outcomes and priorities set out in the Best Council Plan could not be delivered.

The financial climate for local authorities continues to be challenging but, once again, in 2019/20 the council was able to deliver a balanced budget whilst making efforts to protect the delivery of front line services. Despite the unexpected difficulties faced on our finances from the impact of COVID, we were able to collect close to our year-end targets for council tax, business rates and council housing rent. Based on the latest results, the gender pay gap within the council's workforce continues to reduce and by 31st March 2019 (the most recent results available) had dropped to 5.9% based on mean hourly pay. During the year we introduced a range of new measures to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff. This work has been given renewed impetus from COVID-19 which has made it even more important than ever that staff feel supported as they work from home or in isolation through this difficult time. Nevertheless, levels of staff sickness across the organisation remains an area of concern.

How did Leeds City Council perform in 2019/20 (based on latest available data)

- Despite the financial pressures facing the council, we were able to deliver a balanced budget in 2019/20.
- The council's **income collection rates** remained high in 2019/20: for council tax and business rates these were 95.93% and 97.29% respectively, both similar to the previous year's results. At the end of March 2020, rent collection across council housing stood at 96.43%, slightly down on the 97.27% collected during 2018/19. When direct payments of rent paid through Universal Credit but received after 31st March are taken into account, the collection rate for 2019/20 increases to 96.91%. This is lower than the target of 97.50%, but is a positive position given that nearly 11,000 tenants have now moved on to Universal Credit.
- As at the end of March 2020, **the council employed 12,914 full-time equivalent (FTE) members of staff**. The majority of our staff are women (61%) and aged 40 years and over (64%). Where staff have provided additional detail, we know that: 15% are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, up from 14% last year (but less than the 19% of Leeds citizens who were identified as from a BAME background in the 2011 census); 6% are disabled, unchanged from

last year (compared to 16.7% of Leeds citizens); 10% are carers, up from 8% last year (now equalling the 10% of Leeds citizens in the 2011 census); and 3% are LGBT+, unchanged from last year (this question was not asked in the 2011 census so cannot be compared with the Leeds population). Within this, the number of staff undertaking **apprenticeships** at the end of March 2020 was 766 (5% of the workforce) which exceeded our target.

- Based on a snapshot taken on 31st March 2019 (the most recent information available), when comparing **mean hourly wages** earned by Leeds City Council employees, the mean hourly wage for women was 5.9% lower than that of men, a reduction from 6.3% a year earlier.³¹
- Our average **staff sickness level** in 2019/20 was 10.12 days per FTE (11.46 days when schools are excluded). The highest cause of absence among our staff continued to be mental health (comprising a number of categories including stress, anxiety and depression). We have been working hard to tackle absence related to mental health including training over 200 Mental Health First Aiders and delivering awareness training to help employees and managers identify the causes of stress. As part of our response to COVID-19, we have been working closely with Trade Unions and staff to enhance the range of support offered to staff, including that for colleagues who needed to self-isolate or shield, as well as measures to help staff who were required to work from home for the first time, or more than usual.
- Leeds City Council moved up 10 places to number 62 on **Stonewall's latest list of the Top 100 employers for 2020**. This annual list features those employers who have done great work over the past year to help achieve acceptance without exception for all their LGBT employees.
- As with any other major city, Leeds routinely experiences **disruption caused by major incidents, emergencies and planned events**. During 2019/20, a range of disruptive incidents were experienced in Leeds which put well-developed plans and multi-agency arrangements to the test. These included: the campaign by Extinction Rebellion which, as well as other impacts, closed Victoria Bridge for five days; protests relating to the UK's Exit from the European Union; the impact of several severe weather events, including storms Ciara and Dennis causing surface water and river flooding and major disruption on the roads; and a major building fire closing Clay Pit Lane and causing traffic disruption in the area for several days.
- In 2019/20 our **bin collection** performance remained high at 99.93% of bins collected across Leeds (12 months to end March 2020). During the pandemic, refuse collections of black and green bins were maintained and recorded record total tonnage across all waste streams with black bins around 20% above the normal amount and green bins around 10% higher. Garden waste collections (brown bins) were suspended at end of March, resuming in late May. In the first two weeks of garden waste collections resuming, the total waste collected was 7,500 tonnes a week, compared to 4,500 tonnes for the same week last year. This is the largest quantity of household waste ever collected in Leeds in one week and was achieved whilst operational staff absence due to self-isolation or shielding requirements was around 10%.
- In the council's **Contact Centre**, telephone performance improved during 2019/20, but still fell short of target, with 88% of calls being answered with an average waiting time of just over 5 minutes, against a target of 90% calls answered within 3 minutes.
- The council's **Digital and Information Service** provide day-to-day support to council and partner staff using Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) to carry out their job. During 2019/20, systems availability continued to exceed the target set of 99%. As COVID-19 took effect, we enabled over 9,000 council staff to stay safe and work from home supported by our IT infrastructure.
- The number of **statutory requests for information** from the council has continued to rise, which, together with resource capacity issues, has impacted on our ability to respond to those requests within the required timescales. Responding to Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulation requests (FOIs and EIRs) was prioritised throughout the year and

³¹ Source: Gov.uk - [Gender Pay Gap Service](#)

although the number of requests received increased from 2,402 in 2018/19 to 2,535 in 2019/20, those responded to in time fell only slightly to 91.4%. This fall can be attributed to the drop in performance encountered at the end of 2019/20 due to the impact of COVID-19,³² which is likely to continue during 2020/21. The number of Subject Access Requests (SARs) rose to 949 in 2019/20 and resources were diverted from these in order to maintain compliance in relation to FOIs and EIRs. This led to a drop in the percentage of requests responded to in time to 83.4%.

- During 2019/20, the proportion of **invoices paid promptly** by the council (i.e. undisputed invoices paid within 30 days of being received or paid within longer contractual terms offered by the supplier) was 93.87%, exceeding the prompt payment target of 92%.
- Electoral Services successfully coordinated local government and all-out Parish **elections** at the start of May 2019, followed quickly by the unexpected European Elections at the end of May for which Leeds acted as the Regional Returning Officer authority. The annual canvass to compile the register of electors took place from July and concluded earlier than planned at the end of October when a snap General Election was called for 12 December. For the General Election alone, the Electoral Services team dealt with in excess of 60,000 applications to register to vote and 10,000 applications to vote by post over a 4 week period.
- Focus continues to be made on the implications, risks and opportunities to the council and the city from the **UK's withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit)** and our Chief Executive, Tom Riordan, remained in his role as part of a network of nine local authority chief executives across England tasked by the government with engaging with other councils in their regions on preparations. We continue to monitor the existing economic and social impact of the transition period and the new arrangements as they become clear.

The impact of COVID-19 on this priority

COVID-19 presented the council with an unprecedented set of challenges that impacted our Best Council Plan priority. As a result of the pandemic, the council has seen demand for services increase, incurred additional costs by providing various emergency support services, and lost income from business rates and chargeable services such as car parks and leisure centres. This has placed significant pressure on the council's budget, and will continue to do so into 2020/21 and beyond. The effects of the pandemic on our income collection rates will be seen much more significantly in the future, with an expected rise in tenants claiming Universal Credit after losing their jobs or being furloughed. Many council buildings had to be closed in mid-March, with a high proportion of staff required to work from home. This has led to pressure on our digital systems, and network capacity was increased to meet this demand. The way we use council buildings in the future will also evolve as we keep up to date with social distancing requirements. Additional focus has, and will continue to be placed on supporting the health and wellbeing of staff as they adapt and to keep everyone informed about the rapidly changing situation.

³² This measure includes all requests received by 31st March 2020. Work on these would normally continue throughout April and into May but the lockdown has meant staff elsewhere in the council have not been available to provide the necessary information, therefore the response time has not been met.

Appendix 1: Best Council Plan Scorecard - Key Performance Indicators 2019/20

Best Council Plan Ambition & Priority	Year-end 2018/19	Year-end 2019/20 (latest results)	What is our aim?	Did we improve in 2019/20?	Rating (RAG)
Best City KPIs - Strong Economy & Compassionate City					
Inclusive Growth					
Private Sector employment in Leeds	380,100 2017	397,100 (provisional) 2018	Increase	Yes	●
Productivity forecast - GVA per filled job	£52,568 2017	£53,311 2018	Increase	Yes	●
Number of new business start-ups	4,277 2018	4,338 2019	Increase	Yes	●
Number of new business scale-ups	461 2016/17	467 2018/19	Increase	Yes	●
Business survival rate	41.9% survived 5 years 2012 - 2017	42.96% survived 5 years 2013 - 2018	Increase	Yes	●
Change in NNRD payable since 2017 revaluation	2.7% by 31st Mar 2019 £11.8m increase	3.21% by 31st Mar 2020 £14.4m increase	Cumulative growth from 1st April 2017	No - rate of growth was slower than previous year	●
Visitor economic impact for Leeds	£1,832 billion 2018	£1,890 billion 2019	Increase	Yes	●
Percentage of working-age Leeds residents with at least Level 4 qualification	38.2% 2018	40.1% 2019	Increase	Yes	●
Number of people supported to improve their skills	7,010 2018/19	6,921 2019/20	7,500 target 2019/20	No	●
Percentages of Leeds residents and Leeds workers earning below the Real Living Wage	20.5% residents 20.5% workers Nov 2018	19.7% residents 18.6% workers Nov 2019	Decrease	Yes	●
Number of people supported into work	N/A New indicator	5,414 2019/20	4,000 target 2019/20	N/A	●
Number of adults of working age affected by in-work poverty	71,262 2016/17	70,248 2017/18	Decrease	Yes	●
Health & Wellbeing					
Infant mortality rate	4.2 / 1,000 3-year average 2015-17	4.0 / 1,000 3-year average 2016-18	Decrease	Yes	●
Percentage/proportion of children maintaining a healthy weight at age 11	64.6% 2017/18	63.2% 2018/19	Increase	No	●
Percentage of physically active adults	21.5% inactive 12 months to end Nov 2018	20.9% inactive 12 months to end Nov 2019	Decrease	Yes	●
Percentage of adults who smoke	19.0% Year-end 2018/19	18.6% Year-end 2019/20	Decrease	Yes	●
Avoidable years of life lost	5,547 / 100,000 3-year average 2015-17	5,613 / 100,000 3-year average 2016-18	Decrease	No	●
Suicide rate	11.8 / 100,000 3-year average 2015-17	10.9 / 100,000 3-year average 2016-18	Decrease	Yes	●
Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	65.7% 2017/18 academic year	66.4% 2018/19 academic year	Increase	Yes	●
Percentage of CQC-registered care services in Leeds rated as 'good' or 'outstanding'	82.1% End Mar 2019	87.8% End Mar 2020	Increase	Yes	●
No. of permanent admissions to residential & nursing care homes for (a) people aged 18-64 inc 12 week disregards; (b) people aged 65+ inc 12 week disregards	13.4 / 100,000 (18-64) 524.4 / 100,000 (65+) 12 months to end Mar 2019	16.3 / 100,000 (18-64) provisional 549.7 / 100,000 (65+) provisional 12 months to end Mar 2020	8.70 / 100,000 (18-64) 650 / 100,000 (65+) Annual target	No	●
Proportion of people who use social care services who have control over their daily life	17.8% End Mar 2019	16.2% (provisional) End Mar 2020	Increase	No	●
Sustainable Infrastructure					
Satisfaction with a range of transport services	6.3 / 10 2017/18	6.7 / 10 2018/19	Increase	Yes	●
Number of passengers boarding buses in the Leeds district	67.1 million 2017	66.5 million 2018	Increase	No	●
Increase in city centre travel by sustainable transport (bus, train, cycling, walking)	45.6% 2018/19 ¹	2019/20 results delayed	TBC - Results delayed	N/A	●
Percentage of waste recycled	38.71% Year-end 2018/19	38.48% (provisional) Year-end 2019/20	Increase	No	●
Carbon emissions across the city	37.0% reduction 3.133m tonnes 2017	38.0% reduction 3.088m tonnes 2018	40% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2020 against 2005 levels	Yes	●

Appendix 1: Best Council Plan Scorecard - Key Performance Indicators 2019/20

Best Council Plan Ambition & Priority	Year-end 2018/19	Year-end 2019/20 (latest results)	What is our aim?	Did we improve in 2019/20?	Rating (RAG)
Level of CO2 emissions from council buildings and operations	43.8% reduction 72,258 tonnes 2018/19	47.9% reduction 66,880 tonnes 2019/20	40% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2020 against 2005 levels	Yes	●
Number of residential and commercial properties moved to a lower level of flood risk	3,134 residential 501 commercial Apr 2017 - Sep 2018	3,171 residential 501 commercial Apr 2017 - Sep 2019	Cumulative increase across 4-year programme 2017 - 2021	No - no major schemes completed in-year	●
📍 Child-friendly city					
Number of children who need to be looked after	1,284 77.2 / 10,000 Mar 2019	1,344 (provisional) 79.9 / 10,000 Mar 2020	Decrease	No	●
Number of children and young people subject to a child protection plan	414 24.9 / 10,000 Mar 2019	590 (provisional) 35.1 / 10,000 Mar 2020	Decrease	No	●
Attendance at primary and secondary schools	Primary 95.9% Secondary 94.2% HT 1-6 2017/18	Primary 95.9% Secondary 94.2% HT 1-6 2018/19	Increase	No change	●
Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	61% 2017/18 academic year	62% 2018/19 academic year	Increase	Yes	●
Progress 8 score for Leeds at the end of Key Stage 4	-0.02 2017/18 academic year	+0.03 2018/19 academic year	Increase	Yes	●
Percentage and number of young people not in education, employment or training or whose status is 'not known'	1,573 (9.9%) Mar 2019	1,147 (7.2%) Mar 2020	Decrease	Yes	●
📍 Age-friendly Leeds					
Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (percentage) (IDAOP)	18.0% 2015	15.6% 2019	Decrease	Data available every four years	●
Percentage of new developments built to wheelchair accessible and adaptable standards	N/A New indicator	Annual results not yet available	Increase	N/A	●
Healthy life expectancy at birth by gender	Men: 62.0 years Women: 64.0 years 3-year average 2015-17	Men: 62.2 years Women: 64.1 years 3-year average 2016-18	Increase	Yes	●
Disability-free life expectancy	Men: 61.4 years Women: 62.4 years 3-year average 2015-17	Men: 61.9 years Women: 62.8 years 3-year average 2016-18	Increase	Yes	●
📍 Culture					
Number of visitors to a range of venues and events	2,400,794 tickets/visitors 2018	2019 results not available	TBC	N/A	
Number of employees in the creative industries in Leeds	8,000 2017	12,000 2018	Increase	Yes	●
📍 Housing					
Growth in new homes in Leeds	3,521 2018/19	3,386 2019/20	3,247 annual target	Target met but fewer homes delivered than previous year	●
Number of affordable homes delivered	433 2018/19	421 2019/20	434 target 2019/20	No	●
Improved energy and thermal efficiency performance of houses	63.4 average citywide SAP 2.2% below SAP Band 'E' 2017	63.6 average citywide SAP 2.5% below SAP Band 'E' 2018 (provisional)	Average SAP: increase Below Band E: decrease	No	●
Number of households in fuel poverty	36,926 (11.1%) 2017	35,852 (10.3%) 2018	Decrease	Yes	●
Number of homeless preventions	87% prevention rate Mar 2019	93% prevention rate Mar 2020	80% target	Yes	●
Number of rough sleepers in Leeds	32 Mar 2019 headcount	39 Jan 2020 headcount ²	Decrease	No	●
Percentage of housing adaptations completed within target timescale	83% Council 91% Private Mar 2019	88% Council 92% Private Mar 2020	95% target	Target not met, but improved on previous year	●
Percentage of council housing repairs completed within target	96.35% Mar 2019	90.82% Mar 2020	99% target	No	●
📍 Safe, Strong Communities					
Percentage of people with a concluded safeguarding enquiry for whom their desired outcomes were fully or partially met	96.5% 2018/19	97.2% 2019/20	Increase	Yes	●
Self-reporting of domestic violence and abuse incidents	32% of 22,176 incidents 12 months to end Mar 2019	33% of 21,631 incidents 12 months to end Mar 2020	Increase	Yes	●
Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions	337 2018	357 2019	No more than 234 2019	No	●
Council tenant satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live	74% 2018/19 survey	No new result Next survey due 2020/21	Increase	N/A	N/A

Appendix 1: Best Council Plan Scorecard - Key Performance Indicators 2019/20

Best Council Plan Ambition & Priority	Year-end 2018/19	Year-end 2019/20 (latest results)	What is our aim?	Did we improve in 2019/20?	Rating (RAG)
Percentage of Leeds residents who say they feel safe or very safe in their local area	81% of respondents 12 months to end Mar 2019	84% of respondents 12 months to end Mar 2020	Increase	Yes	●
Number of reported anti-social behaviour/nuisance incidents	17,677 12 months to end Mar 2019	15,949 12 months to end Mar 2020	Decrease	Yes	●
Number of reported hate incidents	3,021 12 months to end Mar 2019	2,813 12 months to end Mar 2020	Decrease	Yes	●
Best Council KPIs					
Efficient, Enterprising & Healthy Organisation					
Workforce more representative of our communities	Female 61%. 40+ 64%. BAME 14% Disabled 6%. Carers 8%. LGBT+ 3% End Mar 2019	Female 61%. 40+ 64%. BAME 15% Disabled 6%. Carers 10%. LGBT+ 3% End Mar 2020	For our workforce to be representative of our communities	No material change	●
Number / percentage of apprentices employed by the council	626 (4.22%) 26 Apr 2019	766 (5%) 31 Mar 2020	2.30% target	Yes	●
Score out of ten given by staff working for Leeds City Council	7.54 / 10 49.4% response rate 2017 survey	7.5 / 10 48% response rate 2019 survey	Increase	No material change	●
Average staff sickness levels	9.61 days (10.78 days excl schools) 12 months to end Mar 2019	10.12 days (11.46 days excl schools) 12 months to end Mar 2020	8.5 days target	No	●
Reduction in workplace accident and incident reports (with a specific reduction in absence related to violence & aggression and manual handling)	9 Specified (Major) Injuries 41 Over 7-days injuries 2018/19	5 Specified (Major) Injuries 32 Over 7-days injuries 2019/20	Decrease	Yes	●
Number of employees who believe that their immediate manager/supervisor looks out for their general health and wellbeing	83% 2017 survey	77% ³ 2019 survey	Increase	N/A	●
Percentage of staff appraisals and mid-year reviews completed	Mid-year 93.42% Year-end 98.12% 2018/19	Mid-year 97.51% Year-end - appraisals TBC ⁴ 2019/20	100% target	Yes	●
Gender pay gap across council staff	6.3% gap (mean hourly rate) 31 Mar 2018	5.9% gap (mean hourly rate) 31 Mar 2019	Below 8% gap (mean hourly rate) by 2020	Yes	●
Level of over/underspend for this financial year	Balanced budget 2018/19	Balanced budget 2019/20	Balanced budget	No change	●
Collection rates: council tax	96.10% Year-end 2018/19	95.93% Year-end 2019/20	96.1% target by year-end	No - but within tolerance	●
Collection rates: business rates	97.76% Year-end 2018/19	97.29% Year-end 2019/20	98% target by year-end	No - but within tolerance	●
Collection rates: council housing rental	97.27% Year-end 2018/19	96.91% Year-end 2019/20	97.5% target by year-end	No - but within tolerance	●
Percentage of ICT service desk calls fixed at the first point of contact	82.23% Year-end 2018/19	83.15% Year-end 2019/20	70% target	Yes	●
Level of customer complaints	5812 2018/19	6430 2019/20	Decrease	No	●
Proportion of customers using self-serve when getting in touch with the council	73.00% 2018/19	75.00% 2019/20	Increase	Yes	●
Percentage of subject access requests received responded to within statutory timescales	91.8% 845 requests 2018/19	83.4% 949 requests 2019/20	88% target	No	●
Percentage of FOI and EIR requests received responded to within statutory timescales	93.5% 2402 requests 2018/19	91.4% 2535 requests 2019/20	96% target	No	●
Percentage of orders placed with local suppliers or small and medium-sized enterprises	51.97% of expenditure 2018/19	64.64% of expenditure 2019/20	Increase	Yes	●
Prompt payment of invoices against target	92.98% 2018/19	93.87% 2019/20	92% target	Yes	●

1 Publication of sustainable travel figures for 2019/20 delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic

2 No headcount was conducted in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the council arranged emergency accommodation for over 200 people who were rough sleeping or thought to be at risk of rough sleeping

3 In 2019/20 the closest question asked, and therefore reported here, was: "I am well supported around my health, safety and wellbeing at work"

4 2019/20 year-end appraisals postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will take place later in the year