

Better Lives Strategy 2022 - 2027



Leeds City Council's strategy for people with care and support needs



Foreword

We believe that everyone has the right to a good and fulfilling life. In Leeds, we want every person with care and support needs to be able to live the life they want to live, doing what's important to them in good homes and in caring communities. We know that to live a good life, people need more than adult social care. This Council wide strategy sets out how our services from parks to libraries, housing to physical activity, will work together to achieve our vision.

The new Better Lives Strategy is set in the context of a pandemic that has had a profound impact on people who draw on care and support, their families and carers. The pandemic has shone a light on deep-rooted inequalities in society, the crisis in our mental health system and the huge challenges faced by our social care workforce. Despite this, the response of our communities, our staff, our partners and our voluntary and independent sector who have come together to support those with care and support needs across the city has been truly inspiring.

As we look ahead to the next 5 years, we have been speaking with people to understand what living better lives means to them. Our conversations have focussed on what is important to people, what is working well and what we need to improve. The strategy looks to address six key priorities that will make a meaningful difference to people's lives: improving information and access; good housing; tackling poverty and inequality; using technology; connected, thriving communities and support to keep well.

As a Council, our resolve to tackle inequality remains at the heart of our mission and we are committed to being a Marmot city, using the principles set out in the Marmot report, Build Back Fairer. The priorities of our Better Lives Strategy will support the Council to deliver on our Marmot ambition.

We will only achieve our vision by working together, building on our strong partnerships and living our values. In spite of the many challenges we face, we're enthusiastic and optimistic about what we can achieve.

Cath Roff, MBE

Director Adults and Health
Leeds City Council

Councillor Fiona Venner

Executive Member for Adult and Children's
Social Care and Health Partnerships
Leeds City Council

Building on what we have achieved

Over the last five years there has been considerable progress in delivering on the three key themes of the original Better Lives Strategy: Better Conversations, Better Connections and Better Living.

Despite the challenges experienced as a result of the pandemic, there are many excellent examples of how we have improved the way we do things, worked well together and innovated including:



**Better
Conversations**

We have established a strength-based model of social work in Leeds that recognises that the communities we live in and the relationships we have are what matter most to people. We start by looking at what someone can do, moving from ‘what’s wrong?’ to ‘what’s strong?’ and focus on quality conversations to better understand the person and get them to the right place to help them. “Talking Points” in communities across the city, give people an opportunity to speak directly to a social worker.

Our Street Support programme for homeless people is an example of how our strength-based approach is now embedded across adult social care. Social workers now reach out to marginalised and excluded members of society through a Street Support Talking Point. The ‘Team Around Me’ model has been developed to co-ordinate support for women at risk across different agencies.



**Better
Connections**

Closer working with our health partners has delivered real improvements to the lives of people who live and work in Leeds. Our response to the pandemic has demonstrated what can be achieved when health and care staff from different organisations and different roles work together, alongside communities, to achieve shared goals. The Health Protection Team for example, supported over 1,200 local businesses to implement control measures, responding to over 90 workplace outbreaks and over 40 outbreaks per day in care settings at the peak of the pandemic.

Having resilient and connected communities is crucial to our strength-based approach and Leeds now has the largest Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) programme in the UK. ABCD is a neighbourhood-based community building approach based on the principle that given the tools and the opportunity, small groups of citizens can change the things that they believe need changing in the community, better than anyone else. Leeds Beckett University published research in 2021 that showed the range of positive impacts of ABCD in Leeds.

Leeds’s award winning 100% Digital Team provides equipment, grants, technical support, training, signposting and advice to support digital inclusion. The Team has developed innovative ways to use digital to better connect people, including those living with dementia, their families, and carers.



Better Living

We have continued to build new council homes and invest in council homes. In 2020–21, £54.2m was spent on improvement schemes, 89% of repair appointments were attended within target time and 97% of repairs were completed 'right first time'.

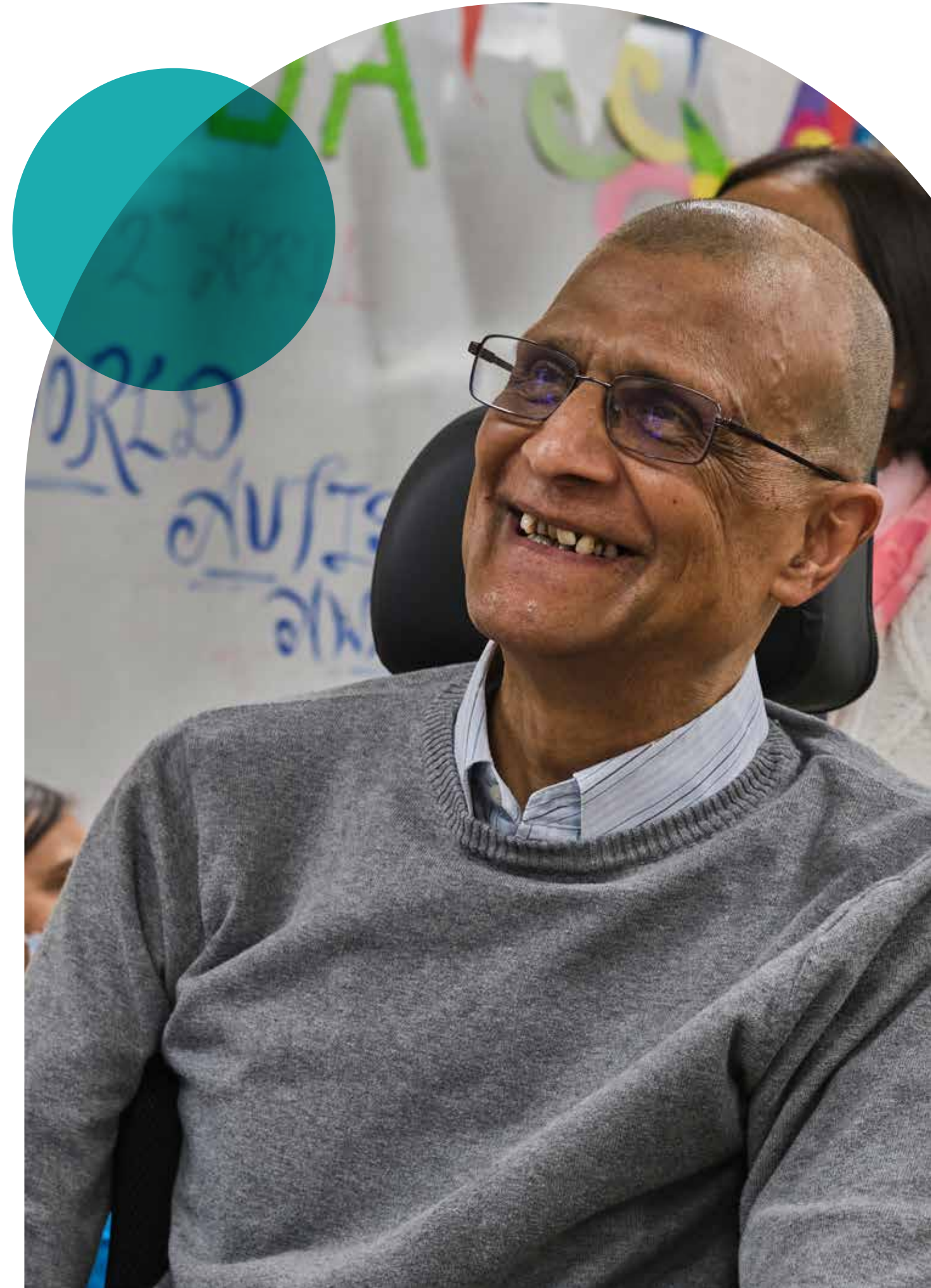
An ambitious programme of extra care housing is being developed. Extra care provides a flexible range of support and care services that meet individual needs, enabling people to maintain their independence. Over 400 units will be delivered in total, and the first site opened in December 2021.

Leeds has maintained the Local Welfare Support Schemes, prioritising the most vulnerable groups. The scheme was the basis for the COVID-19 Emergency Food Response.

The Social Justice team supports people who have significant barriers to finding work into employment. The team has been a key element of the Department for Work and Pensions delivery throughout the pandemic and have received national recognition as well as a recent regional award.

Leeds is projected to have completed 1,940 disabled facilities grants and spent a total of £27.6 million on adaptations and initiatives to promote independent living since 2019/20.

Although we have a strong foundation to build the next phase of our transformation work, we know that we have much more to do as a Council to fulfil our ambitions for people to live better lives. The challenges we're facing need us all to work together to make best use of what we have.



Understanding our City:



People across the city require a range of different care and support to meet their needs:



There are an estimated **8,700 people living with dementia**.



An estimated **2000 people** in Leeds have a mild to severe learning disability and approximately **5500 people** have learning difficulties.



Carers play a vital role in supporting people right across the City. It is estimated that **Leeds has 75,000 carers** which is around **1 in 10 people**.

Our Vision

We want every person in Leeds that needs care and support to live in the place they call home with the people and things they love, in communities that look out for one another, doing the things that matter most to them

We know that getting the right help and support at the right time can help people to manage their daily lives as independently as possible, can support people through a crisis and can really help people to flourish.

Our vision builds on our work to support people to live good and fulfilling lives but is set in the context of today. It reflects what we have learned from the challenges that we have faced and what we know is important to people.

The Best City Ambition is our overall vision for the future of Leeds. At its heart is our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home. The ambition sets out the three key strategic plans known as the pillars of Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero Carbon, delivered through the continued commitment to strength-based approaches, harnessing a contribution from everyone, and working across sectors with the citizen at the centre of activity.

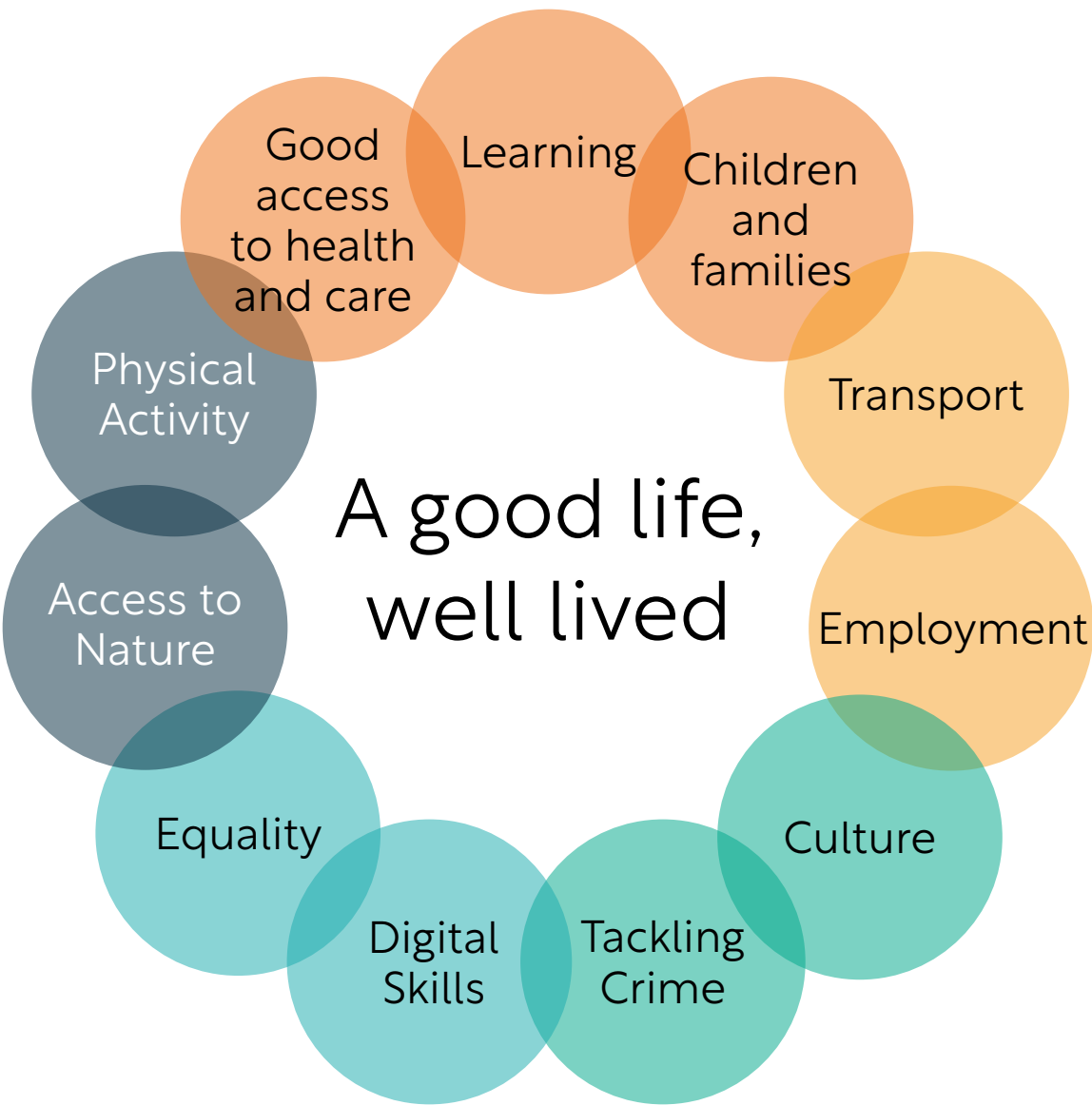
Our Approach

The Better Lives Strategy is a whole Council strategy. While this strategy does include our approach to services provided via Adult Social Care, we also want to consider the ways in which other parts of the Council and our community can support people drawing on care and support services to live a good life. Our cross-council approach recognises the role that our services play in helping people in Leeds to live good and fulfilling lives. Teams right across the Council will be involved including housing, culture, transport, parks, and physical activity to support people and communities to thrive.

Our Best City Ambition sets out our team approach. This will involve everyone coming together to play their part to achieve our ambitions. We want to build Team Leeds

– made up of the people who live or work here, and those who champion the city nationally and internationally. Team Leeds is about supporting one another to make Leeds the best it can be. It is about sharing ideas and learning, working in genuine partnership, being ambitious about our collective social and environmental impact, and organisations sharing their resources and assets as we work towards common goals.

A new Adult Social Care Plan will be developed to support the delivery of the Better Lives Strategy. This will set out our approach to delivering care and support within the context of the People at the Heart of Care adult social care reform white paper, published in December 2021.



Our Values

Our values will drive our approach to delivering our ambition for people to live well in Leeds. They reflect what people have told us is important about how we should work.



Our principles

We will continue to work in ways that support our Team Leeds approach. The following key principles will underpin how we work:

- Make co-production and co-design central to how we work and listen to the voices of people. Work to shift power to people and families.
- Be led by the evidence, using data to provide valuable and practical insights in guiding interventions.
- Be innovative, creative, and foster a learning culture, working with others to try new approaches and ideas.

Finding out what matters

The Better Lives Strategy has continued to be shaped by listening to what people have told us is important to them and what matters the most. It reflects the context of the present time: the Black Lives Matter movement and Covid-19 pandemic highlighting race and health inequalities; the impact of Brexit; the collaboration required to deliver joined up services to strengthen our social care and NHS services; the support needed with the recovery from

the long-term mental, physical and financial impacts of Covid-19 pandemic; and the need to plan for the national health and social care reforms.

Although our consultation was affected by the pandemic restrictions, we developed online questionnaires, delivered virtual workshops, and interviewed people that receive or provide care and support from across the city. The consultation sought to understand what we as a Council do well to support people with care and support needs to lead a good life and where we could improve. We focussed on the following six areas that together, describe what good, citizen-focused, personalised care and support looks like:

- Keeping safe, independent, and well
- Having the information and advice I need
- Keeping family, friends, and connections to my community
- Having flexible and co-ordinated support
- Staying in control when things need to change
- Feeling valued and supported by our workforce

These six areas are based on the 'Making it Real' framework developed by Think Local Act Personal, a national partnership of more than 50 organisations committed to transforming health and care through personalisation and community-based support.

This activity builds on the insights we have gained from a broad range of consultation and engagement

work that the Council and our partners have undertaken over the past year. The full list of this work is included at the end of this strategy.

We are committed to continuing to listen actively to citizens and working collaboratively to develop our Better Lives Strategy over the next 5 years.



Our principles

What matters to you

You have told us that the following areas are the most important to focus on:

Keeping safe, independent, and well

- Accessing services is difficult and that this was especially hard during the Covid Pandemic.
- The need to shield and isolate impacted mental health and left people feeling lonely and isolated.
- Unpaid Carers have been particularly affected by the pandemic with increased time spent caring and fewer opportunities to take breaks.
- Parks and green spaces need to be well maintained, safe and accessible.
- Better and more accessible transport links and information about what was happening in local communities would improve wellbeing and independence.
- Changes to roads in the City Centre have made it difficult for people to cross safely.
- Sports facilities such as Gyms are important and valued in helping people to feel well.
- The cost-of-living crisis will be very difficult for many people across the City. It will be less affordable to keep active and well.
- Anti-social behaviour needs to be prevented and tackled more quickly and effectively.

Having the information and advice I need

- People often find the process of navigating the system difficult, frustrating and confusing.
- People often don't understand what support the Council can provide.
- Lots of information is available but trying to find the right information at the right time can be difficult.
- The Leeds Directory is a valued tool, but some people don't know about it.
- Many people don't understand what adult social care is. This is especially the case with our diverse communities.
- More support needed to help people access benefits as well as employment opportunities.
- Many people are unable to access the information and advice available digitally.

Keeping family, friends, and connections to my community

- Partnership working with the Third Sector is a key strength in Leeds.
- Neighbourhood networks and a strength-based focus have helped us deliver stronger communities in Leeds.
- More opportunities to meet and mix with people of different ages would be welcomed. There are opportunities to make more groups cross generational.
- Some people felt they were still unable to find and access events and support happening in their own communities.
- For some Covid has increased feelings of social isolation and increased anxiety about mixing outside the home.
- Care homes don't always feel connected to communities they are based in.



Having flexible and co-ordinated support

- There is a lack of choice on location of accommodation, especially those with a specific need.
- People felt that choice and control was only really available to those who could afford to pay it.
- Better communication on a range of support, for example the bin 'pull out' service, that could make a real difference.
- The Council could make better use of digital tools and technology to support people.

Staying in control when things need to change

- Clear and timely communication is important. Communication was one of the biggest reasons for complaints made to the Council.
- Agencies need to work better together.
- Faster response with urgent housing repairs needed.
- Language barriers can make it difficult for people's voices to be heard.
- Still issues in terms of information sharing with partner organisations.

Feeling valued and supported by our workforce

- Lots of positive feedback about our workforce but a recognition that care and support needs to be more person centred with each person helped to meet their personal goals and aspirations.
- The Council needs to better understand and respond to the needs of diverse communities and provide culturally competent support.



Our Priority Areas

From our work to understand what matters most to people, we have identified 6 priority areas. Our ambition can only be achieved by taking a whole council approach and working with our diverse range of partners as well as people who draw on care and support and Carers.



BETTER INFORMATION AND ACCESS

We will make it easier for people to access the services they need when they need them. We will be more proactive in ensuring culturally diverse communities and those who speak English as a second language are aware of and can access support.

We will...

Make sure our information is accessible and inclusive and improve our website and our communications to raise awareness of what support is available across the Council.

Ensure Libraries and other key Council services can support residents to become more knowledgeable and confident about managing their health and wellbeing.

Improve access to information at a local level by developing more Talking Points (sessions where people can speak directly to a social worker) in communities and Community Connectors, people who can help others in their communities access the support they need.

Deliver the Listening Forum in partnership with the Third Sector to improve access to care and support services for our diverse communities.

Work with people who are deaf, hard of hearing, visually impaired or have a dual sensory loss to ensure that our services are accessible.

Develop key tools such as the Leeds Directory and Leeds Housing Options to help people find the right information at the right time.

Refresh the advice and guidance that people receive when they first come to adult social care, focused on maintaining independence where possible.



GOOD HOUSING

We will work with housing providers, landlords, tenants, and communities to ensure good quality housing.

We will...

Deliver sustainable housing and tenancies for everyone.

Develop specialist housing to meet a range of care and support needs.

Increase the amount of accessible new build housing.

Support people to access adaptations and services.

Minimise delays in hospital discharge due to housing issues.



TACKLING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

We will continue to support people and families who are experiencing poverty and the effects of the rise in the cost of living. We will provide skilled advice and support to enable people that use our service to make the best possible use of their money.

We will...

Target investment and intervention to tackle poverty in priority neighbourhoods.

Develop initiatives to support people into work and to improve their skills and progress into better jobs.

Provide clear information on support (e.g., Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Free School Meals, and Discretionary Housing Payments) including how to claim and rights regarding reviews/appeals.

Provide free, confidential, impartial advice and support with benefits through the Council's Welfare Rights Unit.

Support the Leeds Advice Contract to help people resolve a range of enquiries including benefits, housing, employment, and debt.

Provide emergency support for food, fuel, and essential household items through the Local Welfare Support Scheme, prioritising the most vulnerable groups.

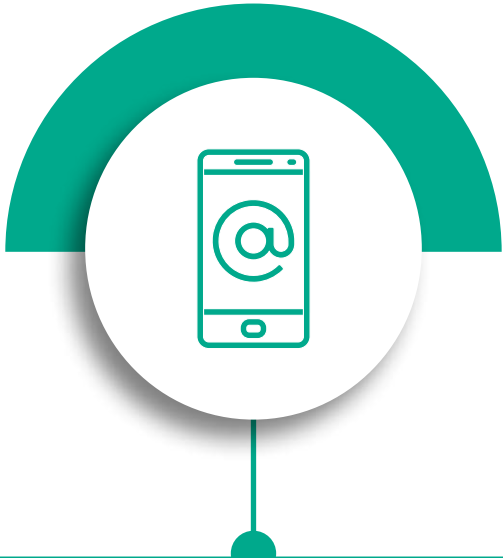
Ensure that Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support is paid correctly and in a timely manner.

Tackle deep-rooted and systemic inequalities including the fight for racial justice through a range of activity including the Race4equality Network.

Deliver the Workforce Race Quality Standard across social care, ensuring that we support staff as an anti-racist employer.

Our Priority Areas

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USING DIGITAL TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

We will continue to support people to use digital tools, technology, and services where they are able to, in the right way for them to live as independently as possible. We will improve the confidence of our workforce to use technology.

We will...

Identify how new and emerging technologies can redefine how we deliver our services.

Develop the digital hubs across the city, in libraries and Third Sector Organisations to improve Digital health participation to reduce health inequalities.

Expand our Telecare service to help keep people safe in their homes. We will improve the choice of support available and enable more people to access the service.

Work with care homes to improve staff and residents, skills, and capability to use digital equipment and the internet.

Support our workforce to improve their digital skills and knowledge. Tailored training and development activity will be delivered to the social care workforce.

Continue to develop the Shared Care Record.

Improve the collection, use, and sharing of data and information to deliver services to the right people at the right time.

Use new technologies to improve user experience of travel within the city, connect more communities together and make mobility easier and cheaper.



CONNECTED, THRIVING COMMUNITIES

We will support people to build on their strengths and grow their capabilities, enabling them to make connections in their communities and develop friendships. We will improve our transport to make it more accessible. We will make sure our green spaces are accessible for all.

We will...

Work with the Third Sector to support communities to thrive, investing in prevention and building community capacity.

Support Local Care Partnerships to work with communities in providing joined up care and tackling health inequalities.

Develop Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), supporting people to make the changes they want to see in their communities and develop good friends.

Develop the Community Hub programme across the city.

Increase opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing through culture.

Prioritise streets for people, connecting communities and enabling everyone to lead more active and healthier lives.

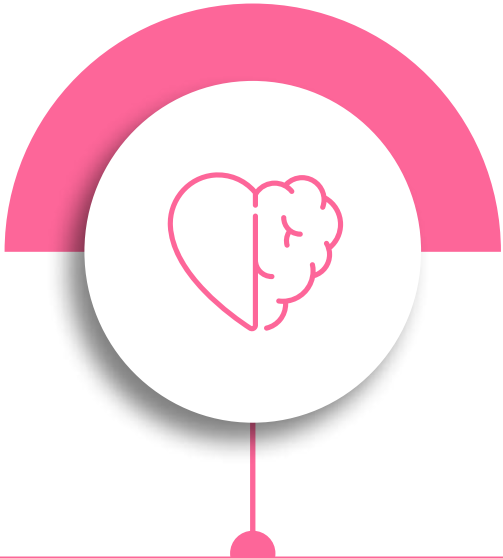
Working with land use planning to ensure all new developments enable connected communities to be developed.

Continue to work with accessibility and inclusivity groups to improve safety and reduce barriers to travel.

Improve the bus network connectivity for communities facing deprivation, inequality, and exclusion.

Provide and promote a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces, including parks and healthy walking routes.

Reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour on communities by targeting hotspot areas and co-ordinating multi-agency approaches at a local level.



KEEPING WELL

We will develop a new way to provide care and support to people at home; support people and their Carers to stay healthy; prioritise mental health support and help people to build new connections with people and their communities. We will support people to do the things they value in helping them to feel well.

We will...

Develop a Community Health and Wellbeing Service to support people at home that is rooted in communities, promotes independence, and supports our workforce to work better together.

Put Carers at the heart of everything to ensure that carers in Leeds stay mentally and physically healthy for longer.

Deliver training to support people to age well across the life course, focussing on healthy living, mental health and wellbeing and long term conditions.

Deliver on the priorities set out in the Mental Health Strategy.

Develop our physical activity programmes to support people to lead an active, healthy life with a focus on reducing inequalities and addressing barriers experienced by specific communities and population groups. This will include activity to get people moving more every day, as well as support for those at risk of falling to improve their strength, balance, and coordination.

Co-design a new approach to direct payments to provide greater choice, control, and independence.

Transform the city centre and improve accessibility to public transport and to work, leisure and health services.

How will we know we are making a difference?

The Better Lives Strategy is a whole Council strategy and a range of Council services will contribute to delivering our vision. A detailed action plan will be developed to capture how services will measure impact against our six priorities.

The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) provides an outcomes-based national framework for measuring performance of all local authorities. This provides us with a useful picture of how well we are supporting people with care and support needs. These can be found here:

There are a number of local measures that can also help us to understand the impact of the Better Lives Strategy:

- Percentage of referrals for social care resolved at initial point of contact or through accessing universal services.
- Ratio of people who receive community-based support versus people who are supported in care homes.
- People who are independent at the end of a period of support from re-ablement.
- Proportion of Care Quality Commission registered care services in Leeds rated overall as good or outstanding.
- The percentage of people with a concluded safeguarding enquiry for whom their outcomes were fully or partially met (overall number).

The Better Lives Board will oversee the development of the Better Lives Strategy and provide assurance in relation to our delivery plans. The Board will support and review our plans, tracking progress against our priorities. The Board will also oversee an annual report that will detail our performance and the impact of our work on people with care and support needs.

Getting involved

The Better Lives Strategy is a live document which will be shaped and updated to reflect new priorities as they emerge and the progress we make towards achieving our vision. We will continue to listen to, and work with, people with lived experience of care and support to develop the plans to meet our priorities. If you want to get involved then please get in touch.

The Better Lives Board

The Leeds Better Lives Board brings together people and their families who use social care and support services with decision makers and service providers to work together to create and oversee progress of the Better Lives Strategy. The board is values driven and built on the principle that those who use care and support services are best placed to help design them.

This board provides a focus for community engagement in the development and delivery of support to people with care and support needs.

If you would like to attend or join the Better Lives Board please contact:

Leeds Involving People
 Unity Business Centre, 26 Roundhay Road, Leeds, LS7 1AB
 E: info@leedsinvolvingpeople.org.uk
 T: 0113 237 4508



