

Joint Statement from all Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board Chairs

On 16 March 2020, Leeds City Council took the necessary step to cancel a number of planned meetings of various Committees, Boards and Panels. This included all Scrutiny Board meetings and any joint scrutiny arrangements where the Council acts as the lead authority.

As Scrutiny Board Chairs, we were fully involved in the decision-making process to cancel all Scrutiny Board meetings for the foreseeable future. Moreover, we fully support the action taken by the Council in what are unprecedented circumstances.

The decisive actions taken by the Council have since been reinforced by the further restrictions placed on people's movement and public contact, announced by Prime Minister on 23 March 2020.

Undoubtedly, after the current circumstances have passed and a high degree of normality returns to daily living, there will be opportunity to reflect and identify any lessons learned across different service areas and statutory local authority scrutiny functions will have an important role to play in this process.

Nonetheless, it is important to recognise that all public services across the UK are grappling with the worst public health crisis in a century. As such, services and local leaders need the time and space to deal with the 'here and now' and respond to the fast-paced changes that are occurring on a daily basis.

As Scrutiny Board Chairs we are actively engaged in the review and clearance of key decisions that are necessarily taken under our Urgency provisions. It is also worth confirming that Call-in arrangements continue and, if such a meeting were to be necessary, this would be facilitated as a remote meeting of the appropriate Board.

We jointly applaud the speed and dedication with which the staff of the Council and its partners are working to address this enormous challenge.



*Councillor Barry Anderson
Chair, Scrutiny Board
(Environment, Housing
and Communities)*



*Councillor Helen Hayden
Chair, Scrutiny Board
(Adults, Health and Active
Lifestyles)*



*Councillor Mary Harland
Chair, Scrutiny Board
(Strategy and Resources)*



*Councillor Alan Lamb
Chair, Scrutiny Board (Children
and Families)*



*Councillor Paul Truswell
Chair, Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure,
Investment and Inclusive Growth)*

30 March 2020