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Hi everyone

I hope all is as well as it can be under the present circumstances. I know that this third lockdown has been particularly difficult for some people and a number of you are coping with outbreaks in services on top of what is already a very difficult set of pressures. Thank you to each of you for what you are doing to keep everyone safe. I would like to say a particular thanks to those day services staff who are supporting our colleagues in supported living, by working in those services, whether on shifts or through the day. Particularly during this time when day service attendance numbers have had to be even further restricted, this is extremely helpful as we support people who are unable to access day services and colleagues working in supported living.

I am pleased to be able to let you know that 388 staff have now had their first vaccine jab which equates to 46% of staff. The vaccine is one of the key factors that will lead to an end of this pandemic and, as someone who has had Covid and is still suffering with the long term effects, I urge everyone who has not yet done so to take up the offer of the vaccine. Vaccinations will protect each of us, our families and everyone for whom we provide support.

Vaccines are now also being made available for the people we support and in this video clip a person with a learning disability interviews a doctor about why having the vaccine is important: [video to find out more about vaccines](#). To date 43 of the people who live in our supported living services have been vaccinated and I know many of you are helping pull together capacity assessments and other information that can help best interest decisions to be made by health staff giving the vaccines.

The following was agreed by the Board at Monday's meeting:

2020/21 budget

We will return to Leeds City Council any surplus that we achieve over our original budget in order to help out with the wider pressures on LCC that have been caused by the pandemic.

2021/22 budget

The budget was approved with the following assumptions on pay:

All new Aspire Support Workers will have a pay rise of 2.15% in line with the Living Wage Foundation Living Wage;



All TUPE staff (or staff employed since spin out at a rate above Support Worker) will have their pay increased in line the national pay negotiations, as we have done in all previous years so that TUPE'd staff are 'no better, no worse' than had the transfer not happened. As yet, these negotiations have yet to be finalised, though the present offer from national employers is a minimum of £250 for anyone earning less than £24,000 and 0% for anyone earning £24,000 or above;

Within the budget, the following was agreed about changes to posts on structure:

- The vacant Governance Manager post will be converted to a Health & Safety Manager post
- A new (third) Senior Area Manager post will be created
- The Area Manager post for day services will not be recruited to when Jane retires in March
- As part of a phased reduction in my paid working life, I will drop to 4 days per week from April, with a view to dropping a further day in April 2022 and then retiring in 2023 - which will hopefully provide a long lead in time for us all to transition into a time when I retire from work.

The Chair of our Board, (Sheila Dunham) has also indicated her intention to step down from her role at or by the time of our AGM later this year and, between now and September, we will look to have new arrangements in place to replace Sheila as Chair.

I hope that this is a useful summary. I know that it might feel like there will be quite a lot of change, but hopefully the lead in times for both Sheila stepping down, and me eventually retiring, will provide sufficient time to have a smooth transition to the future.

Thank you once again for everything that you are doing to keep people safe and take the very best of care.

Keep well and stay safe.



Andy Rawnsley
Chief Executive

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