

**DOCUMENT ANALYSIS REPORT**

# **MUNICIPAL RESOURCES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN LEEDS AND LONDON**



**CAPABLE PROJECT**

*Enhancing Capabilities? Rethinking Work-life Policies and their Impact  
from a New Perspective*

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## Executive Summary

Research on work-life balance has shown that inequalities in work and life outside work persist in Europe despite recent policy advancements (Yerkes, 2018). Local policies can be a valuable resource for tackling these inequalities as they provide important resources that people can use to live valued lives (Yerkes, Hoogenboom and Javornik, 2020). However, many factors shape what individuals are effectively able to achieve with the help of local policies. Policy design – including aspects such as availability, accessibility, affordability, flexibility, and quality – can affect individuals’ ability to translate policies into real opportunities for a better work-life balance. Structural factors such as gender, ethnicity, etc. also contribute to the work-life outcomes that individuals can achieve. Taking these factors into account can help to make local policies and services true resources for people, potentially improving work-life balance and individual wellbeing.

The current study was conducted as a part of the “Enhancing Capabilities: Rethinking Work-life Policies and their Impact from a New Perspective” (CAPABLE) research project (Yerkes, 2018). It provides a snapshot of local policies in Leeds and London and their potential to be resources for residents of these cities in leading valued lives. It explores what policies are available to residents that can potentially improve their work-life balance. Work-life balance policies are considered here in the broadest sense; for a detailed description see the introduction below. We note 5 key findings:

- London heavily promotes the idea of a sustainable and healthy city, promoting walking and cycling and restricting motor traffic. Leeds declares similar ambitions, but London has a more integrated and widescale programme integrating sustainability with liveability to make cycling and walking more accessible to residents. Tackling the accessibility of alternatives modes of transportation might allow more people the freedom to choose these options, potentially improving work-life balance and/or wellbeing.
- Leeds promotes active lifestyles by making a variety of resources available to residents, ensuring accessibility and affordability by providing a variety of free and/or affordable sporting facilities and activities, including activities targeted at older and reduced mobility residents. These activities can, directly and indirectly, affect individuals’ wellbeing.
- London displays attention to social integration in their local policies, emphasizing civic engagement, and targeting diverse groups. Leeds policies appear to focus on being an age-friendly city. Each of these approaches can, in varying ways, provide important resources for residents. To enhance accessibility of these resources, engaging residents in public consultations and targeting specific groups in policy design may be useful.
- Following national policy guidelines, both cities focus on providing more affordable housing. Affordable housing includes social housing but also pricier accommodations. Targeted affordable housing (and not solely social housing) potentially improves access to affordable housing for a wider group of residents.
- Significant geographical inequalities can exist within these localities. Policies at the lowest levels of government (e.g., boroughs in London) demonstrate variation in the resources available to residents. However, differences in barriers in access among local authorities’ services also mean that people can potentially try to make use of a better policy while similar

problems of access leave little room for manoeuvre, further complicating access to services that could help residents achieve the valued work-life balance outcomes.

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## 1 Introduction

This report details the results of a document analysis on work-life policies and services in the cities of Leeds and London, as a contribution to the research project: “Enhancing Capabilities: Rethinking Work-life Policies and their Impact from a New Perspective” (CAPABLE). It aims to provide an in-depth look at the local context in which individuals combine paid work with activities outside work, by providing a snapshot of the local policies and services available to the residents of Leeds and London. Leeds and London are included as two cities within the case study of the UK. Other case studies the CAPABLE project include the Netherlands (Amsterdam and Nijmegen), Slovenia (Ljubljana and Maribor), and Spain (Barcelona and Pamplona).

The CAPABLE project develops and applies a community framework (Yerkes, Hoogenboom, and Javornik, 2020) derived from Amartya Sen's capabilities approach (Sen, 1992). From this framework, local policies and services are potential resources individuals can use to balance paid work responsibilities with other activities outside of work in valued ways. This approach recognizes that while resources may be available to residents in theory, in practice, residents may be unable to use these resources. For example, public transportation can be a valued resource for combining work and other activities. But residents may not live close enough to public transport options or may be unable to afford them, creating the potential for inequalities in work-life balance and wellbeing. The document analysis reported on here aims to identify local policies and services available (or planned to be delivered) to residents of Leeds and London, guided by the following questions:

- 1) What policies and resources are available to residents of Leeds and London that could help them with their work-life balance?
- 2) How do city councils, through the implementation of policies formulated at the national level, affect the availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and/or flexibility of these resources?

The analysis does not aim to provide an exhaustive overview of policies and services provided by Leeds and London local authorities but rather focuses on policy goals and challenges on themes relevant to work-life balance identified by and focused on by local government authorities. Traditionally, work-life balance brings to mind topics like childcare and elder care or working conditions and income. But broader local policies and services can be important resources for how people balance work and life outside work. Thus, the analysis explored a broad range of policies that can, directly and indirectly, influence the way residents of Leeds and London combine work with other activities: policies regarding childcare, formal disability/elderly care and informal care, public health and mental health, housing, work and income, transport, liveability, sports and leisure, political participation, digitalisation and digital inclusion, etc. For a more detailed description of these topics, see ANNEX II.

The data include policy documents and web pages taken from the websites of Leeds and London municipal collected between May and November 2020 (webpages from October to November 2020). As data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, the information might be affected by any alterations made to policies and services as part of the government response to the pandemic.

A total of 116 documents were analysed (Leeds=28 documents, London=88 documents).<sup>1</sup> Given the complex two-tiered government structure in London, this analysis includes documents from both the Greater London Authority (city-level), and two local authorities the City of London and Hackney. City of London and Hackney have a joint mental health provision but otherwise, work separately. ANNEX II provides further information on the methodology of the analysis.

This report is structured as follows: First, we discuss a limited set of national policies essential for understanding the municipal resources provided by Leeds and London authorities. Next, an overview of relevant local policies and resources available to residents of Leeds and London is presented, including a comparison of the City of London and Hackney. We then view these policies and services from a community-based capabilities approach, evaluating policy design aspects (availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, flexibility) and structural factors<sup>2</sup> that may prevent these policies and services being actual resources for residents. Finally, a brief conclusion is provided.

## 2 National policies

While this report is focused on the resources made available to the local residents of Leeds and London, local policymaking is embedded in the national context. Particularly in the UK, responsibility for policy implementation has been significantly decentralized, giving municipalities (and potentially boroughs) a bigger role in providing resources at the local level. Understanding the national context is essential for the analysis of the municipal resources, as differences and similarities may arise in compliance with national guidelines. National guidelines potentially shaping the local context for work-life balance resources include policies and guidelines on childcare, social care, income protection, and housing.

### *Childcare*

In the UK, children aged three and four and some two-year-olds are entitled to early childhood education. For children of working parents, the entitlement is for 30 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year (1,140 hours per year), but parents can extend these hours for more weeks. Two-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks (570 hours total) a year if they have a disability and/or special needs, or if their parents have a low income, which is means-tested (*Help Paying for Childcare: Free Education and Childcare for 2-Year-Olds - GOV.UK*, n.d.). The government also funds childcare with the Tax-Free Childcare scheme (for working parents): for every 8 pounds parents put towards childcare costs (into an online account) the government provides additional 2 pounds to pay to the childcare provider for the services.

### *Social care*

In 2014, the government passed the Care Act (*Care Act 2014*), which outlines the responsibilities of the municipalities towards people with care needs (and their carers). Local authorities are required to assess the needs of people who claim they need support regardless of the likelihood of eligibility (everyone is entitled to an assessment). Moreover, municipalities have to supply an independent

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<sup>1</sup> See ANNEX I for the complete list of documents per city.

<sup>2</sup> Factors related to inequality, such as gender, ethnicity, etc. The full list of structural factors is available in ANNEX II.

advocate to help people communicate their needs and advocate for eligibility in case the person undergoing the assessment requests it. In terms of care affordability, this national framework implies that most people have to contribute to social care and other support costs. Local authorities can fund a proportion of this care, depending upon a financial needs assessment (including income, property, and savings). In some situations, individuals can request a deferred payment arrangement. There is also the option of receiving care support in the form of direct payments that the person can use to purchase the services they choose (available in England, Scotland, and Wales) (*Apply for Direct Payments - GOV.UK*, n.d.).

### *Income and Housing Support*

Citizens with low income may be entitled to a Universal Credit (*Universal Credit*, n.d.) that replaced several other out-of-work and income benefits. In addition, there is a national housing benefit that is a component of the Universal Credit. Affordable housing is defined by national guidelines: it must contain social rent housing, discounted market sales housing, and housing that provides supported routes to homeownership, including shared ownership, equity loans, etc. (*A to Z - Housing Statistics and English Housing Survey Glossary - Guidance - GOV.UK*, n.d.).

The UK also has a national food voucher scheme called Healthy Start, for children under 4 years old and pregnant women.

## **3 Leeds**

Situated in the north of England, Leeds is one of the largest cities in the United Kingdom with 455,123 residents in the city and almost two million people including outer urban areas (*Leeds, United Kingdom Population (2020) - Population Stat*). Leeds is the second financial centre in the UK after London, and has both a diverse economy and a diverse demographic, with ethnic minorities making up 18% of the population (*Leeds, United Kingdom Population (2020) - Population Stat*). Despite its economic successes, Leeds faces challenges, being home to 13 out of the 137 most deprived neighbourhoods in the country (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019). Leeds public transport system is also dominated by motor vehicles, negatively affecting the city's ecology and liveability (Hyde, 2018).

The local authority for Leeds is Leeds City Council, and it has one of the largest populations for a metropolitan council in the United Kingdom. Leeds City Council deals with most matters, except for fire, policing, and public transport, which is governed by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (*About Us*, n.d.). At the moment of research, Leeds City Council was led by the Labour majority administration (57 out of 99 councils) with Eileen Taylor as the Lord Mayor. Labour has held the majority in the Leeds council since 2011 (*Political Composition*, n.d.).

### **3.1 Policies and services in Leeds**

In the document analysis 15 broad work-life balance topics were studied (see ANNEX II). Seven of these topics were present in Leeds policy documents, including: childcare, formal and informal care



services, mental health services, housing policies, initiatives for work and income, transport and liveability policies, and policies aimed at sports and leisure.

#### Childcare services

The latest Childcare Sufficiency Assessment of Leeds (Leeds City Council, 2020) states Leeds has sufficient childcare facilities, including funded places, although availability of spaces varies throughout the city, meaning some parents may not get the provider of their choice. This variation can negatively impact work-life balance if accessing available places requires travelling further from home, for example. The municipality aims to increase take-up of the two-year-olds' entitlement, suggesting some parents do not make use of available childcare resources.

In addition to childcare, most schools in Leeds are claimed to provide some out-of-school care (e.g., breakfast and after-school clubs), and Five Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) in Leeds offer places for special needs children. Documents analysed suggest the city is committed to ensuring childcare provision for special needs children is accessible, but how this will occur in practice is not yet clear.

#### Formal and informal care services

Leeds offers a diverse array of formal and informal care services. Leeds focuses on providing nursing homes as well as 'extra-care' homes for people who need help with daily tasks (e.g., bathing, dressing, moving) but who do not require nursing care. In general, Leeds appears to promote independent living by providing special and extra-care housing allowing people to live on their own with some support as an alternative to nursing homes, giving advice on adapting homes to the needs of older people, providing assistive technology, and delivering home care services. In addition, Leeds offers day and home care services to residents, including those aimed at social contact and community participation. Leeds also provides respite home care. Carers can be eligible for eight hours of respite care a week or up to 48 hours in case of an emergency. Nursing homes can be used to provide respite care as well. Leeds also offers rehabilitation care and a reablement service, and an intensive short-term support programme to help those with care needs regain independence with daily tasks and skills.

#### Mental health services

Leeds authorities developed the Leeds Mental Health Framework (MHF) in an attempt to improve the accessibility of mental health provisions in the area. To increase accessibility, the MHF aims to cut down on the number of assessments needed (although it is not clear from the documents how this is supposed to be achieved) and having more services available within the city so that fewer people need to seek help outside of Leeds. Moreover, the municipality plans to make crisis services available 24/7.

#### Housing policies

Based on the document analysis, Leeds is prioritizing the provision of appropriate (to the needs of specific groups) and affordable housing. The latest Housing Strategy (Leeds City Council, 2016a, p. 4) mentioned 22% of households living in social housing and affordable rented sector and stated the need for providing more affordable housing, outlining the plans to obtain about a thousand 'affordable' homes (which would house about 0.003% of the population of 321 000 households that the strategy reports) for each year through 2020. To procure more financially accessible

accommodation, the municipality also has targets for shares of 'affordable' (with social or lower than average market rent) housing for new private developments. Council housing includes sheltered and extra care properties, and the municipality plans to provide more housing that can support independent living for elderly and special needs residents by setting targets for new developments to include sheltered housing and level access dwellings. To connect people with special needs to appropriate housing, Leeds advertises its Accessible Housing Register, an electronic system that incorporates both data on the housing stock and the medical needs of applicants on the housing register, intended to improve the allocation process. For 'gypsy and traveller' communities, the council provides specialized housing and pledges to develop more sites for them. The document analysis was also interested in whether Leeds has initiatives regarding shared forms of housing (for instance, intergenerational combined student and elderly accommodation), but we found no information on such housing initiatives in Leeds.

#### Policies for work and income

Work and income policies in the UK are primarily at the national and employer level. In Leeds, the municipality claims to encourage employers to pay the Real Living Wage and provides tax discounts for several groups of households: single-person households, households with people with disabilities (although there are specific criteria for this), single parents of small children, people with a severe mental illness, and others. In addition, temporary measures are available to assist low-income residents. For example, if residents' benefits are insufficient to cover housing costs, they can apply for Discretionary Housing Payments to cover rent shortfalls, rent arrears that might cause eviction, or a deposit or advance payment to secure tenancy for a person who has to move. The availability of these payments can potentially improve the quality of life for some Leeds residents, as they enhance flexibility and quality of other housing-related benefits in terms of real opportunities.

#### Transport policies

Based on the document analysis, Leeds City Council aims to better the quality and diversity of the transport experience in the city. First, they intend to expand the cycling infrastructure in the city to improve connectivity by bicycle. They also plan to implement speed limits (20 mph) and have a programme aimed to reduce casualties in road accidents. The city council website mentions issuing a transport safety guide for older residents, and there are targeted transportation services available to help older residents access vital services such as community centres for those residents lacking transport. The city also aims to improve its public transport system, for instance, by achieving a higher frequency of bus services during the day. In the documents analysed, no information was found on policies or services aimed at the affordability of public transport, such as subsidies for daily commuters, or initiatives for improving the accessibility of public transport, for instance for people with disabilities.

#### Public spaces

As part of Leeds city's aspiration to be age-friendly, the city is attempting to make city parks available to all ages, making them meet the Leeds Quality Park standard by the end of the year 2020. The municipality has also implemented the Come and Rest scheme: participating establishments allow older people to rest on their premises without an obligation to buy anything. In addition, Leeds

attempts to offer multiple public playgrounds and play areas, to make the city a friendly space for younger residents and families as well.

In terms of general liveability, the municipality plans to protect the green infrastructure of the city and enhance its biodiversity.

#### Policies for sport and leisure

Leeds authorities appear to place emphasis on sports in their recreational activities provision and aim to make a range of opportunities available and accessible to different groups of people. The Council website promotes the Active Leeds programme, which [does what?]. Leeds City Council holds a network of 16 Active Leeds Leisure Centres that provide various sporting facilities, and the Leeds 'Let's Get Active' community programme (*Leeds Lets Get Active*, n.d.) gives access to sporting facilities at these leisure centres for affordable fees. In addition, the programme provides many free sporting activities, which can be accessed by people for whom the prices of the leisure centres would still be a barrier. The municipality also specifically targets older people with Active Life Sessions, a sporting programme designed for residents over 50, and physical activity programmes aimed at people at risk of falls. Leeds offers various green public spaces and a significant amount of woodland, although the city council admits that the inner-city area that is densely populated and lacks sufficient green space. We did not find any measures aimed at tackling this issue. In addition, Regarding leisure outside of sports, various library activities (history clubs, crafts, reading clubs, etc.) are provided for older (e.g., 55+) residents of Leeds. These include digital skills training, as the council has a '100% digital literacy' vision and plan to develop a strategy to achieve it (Leeds City Council, 2018).

### 3.2 Policy design and structural factors

To understand the extent to which residents of Leeds actually have the opportunity to access and use the local policies described here, that the CAPABLE project studies policy design aspects (including but not limited to availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and flexibility). Opportunities to use policies as a resource for work-life balance and wellbeing can also be improved or restricted by structural factors such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, and other social characteristics. Awareness of these structural factors can signal that policy design is attempting to overcome these barriers.

This section reports on instances where aspects of policy design and structural factors are addressed in the Leeds documents we analysed. This relates both to cases where policies mention potential issues and/or aim to tackle them, and to the characteristics of the policies that can be inferred from the documents. For instance, municipalities can identify potential barriers in access that the policy plans to target and/or outline requirements to access a certain service). This analysis is selective and illustrative. We do not have information on all the policy design aspects of the policies and services described in the previous section. Rather, we use the examples here to illustrate the importance of policy design and structural factors we have identified in the document analysis.

Availability and affordability of services is addressed in relation to affordable housing and public transportation. We note, however, that our analysis did not reveal any concrete measures towards the latter. Issues of accessibility are also mentioned concerning care services. Leeds provides respite

care services, but the Carers strategy (Leeds City Council, 2015a) mentioned it being oversubscribed, which means there are long wait lists for carers to access the service. No further information on potential improvements to respite care services was found. Respite care is also described to have affordability issues: The Carers strategy mentions that respite services were no longer offered free of charge as this was too expensive. The strategy promised to ensure the lowest possible rates for carers on the lowest incomes. Ensuring affordability is similarly mentioned regarding childcare services, as shown by the approach to breakfast clubs at Leeds schools:

*“Many breakfast clubs are funded externally or are free to low income families, or parents are charged a minimum amount and are generally run by schools”.* (Leeds City Council, 2020, p. 18).

We also found some instances of attention for flexibility, for example in care services. Flexibility is attempted to be achieved by providing direct payments to care-receivers, rather than arranging care for them. In addition, Leeds intends to annually review the support people receive to address changing needs across time.

The document analysis also revealed instances of attention for quality, in particular in relation to childcare provision and social housing. In Leeds, childcare has been overall highly evaluated by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, with 95% of providers judged as good or outstanding in the Child Sufficiency assessment (Leeds City Council, 2020). The council also claims to work on improving the quality of social housing in Leeds via the Leeds Standard that new developments have to meet:

*“New council homes, including specialist Extra Care housing schemes, are built to the Leeds Standard: better urban design, meeting space standards and using sustainable construction”.* (Leeds City Council, 2019, p. 21)

These measures are intended to contribute to the quality of the housing offered. The council also aims to improve the quality of public transport in the city, which was marked as a major issue in the public consultation for the Leeds transport strategy.

Lastly, accessibility, often a key point of attention for the provision of local policies and services, is addressed in several policies. Examples of attention to accessibility described above include making mental health care services more accessible (e.g., the Leeds Mental Health Framework, making crisis services continually available. Accessibility of services is also mentioned in relation to improving housing services for people with disabilities, for example through the Accessible Housing Register. The council also makes sport activities more accessible with Leeds Let's Get Active community classes:

*“The activities are free and open to all (unless stated eg: women only sessions) and are run by our community activators and instructors who will provide support and advise. Pull on some comfy clothes, pick up a water bottle and join in the fun!”* (Leeds Lets Get Active, n.d.)

Care assessments present an interesting case for the analysis of policy design in terms of accessibility. As determined by national policy, to access care, individuals apply for assessments of their care needs and are entitled to such an assessment. Leeds guide to social care provides a detailed and comprehensible description of how assessments work, intended to simplify the process. However, needs' assessments at the local level means those conducting assessments have evaluative space in

determining whether individuals meet requirements for eligibility. In practice, this can lead to more individualized support but can also lead to decreased access (and thus increased inequality) when professionals differ in their interpretation of individuals' needs.

Alongside policy design aspects highlighted by the analysis, we find evidence for a significant focus on age differences within Leeds. The Council declares the aspiration to make Leeds an age-friendly city and targets older residents with the provision of sport sessions designed for older people, and cultural-recreational activities such as book and history clubs. Notably, we did not find any information on cultural-recreational activities for other residents, though they might exist. Further services aimed at older residents included introduction of the Come and Rest scheme and delivering a transport safety guide specifically aimed at elderly residents. Another observably recognised structural factor is disability, which is targeted within policies on childcare (provision for children with special education needs and disabilities), specialised housing provision, and council tax discounts. Moreover, reducing inequality and poverty is often mentioned in Leeds documents, which suggests attention for differences in socio-economic status. We do not find mention of other structural factors, such as gender and ethnicity. One exception is that in line with national guidelines, Leeds provides special housing for Gypsy/Travellers communities.

The document analysis reveals attention for public consultations in an attempt to ensure the views of end-users are incorporated into local policies and services. For example, documents mention plans to '*seek the views of parents on their experiences*' (Leeds City Council, 2020, p. 27) and '*publish carer's information in consultation with carers*' (Leeds City Council, 2015b, p. 25); Leeds Transport Strategy (Leeds City Council, 2016b) shares that a conversation has been held with different groups or residents on their needs and visions. Public consultation can give residents voice, and alert policymakers to structural factors and/or potential policy design aspects requiring attention.

## 4 London

The capital of the United Kingdom is home to almost 8 million people (Greater London area) (*London, United Kingdom Population (2020) - Population Stat*, n.d.) with about 9 million people populating the metropolitan area. The largest city in the European Union is one of the most influential and expensive places in the world. London is considerably more diverse than the rest of the United Kingdom, both in terms of its racial and ethnic mix and places of birth of its residents. It is also very unequal, with several London boroughs being among the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, which includes the borough of Hackney discussed here (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019).

London governance operates in two tiers: the citywide, more strategic level (Greater London Authority consisting of the Mayor's office and the London Assembly) and the local authorities (32 boroughs and the City of London (*The Essential Guide to London Local Government | London Councils*, n.d.)). At the time of the document analysis, both branches of the Greater London Authority were under the control of the Labour party, with Sadiq Khan leading as the mayor. Labour also controlled the majority of London boroughs (21), with Conservatives having control over seven boroughs and Liberal Democrats of three (the City of London being politically independent and Havering being the only borough where

no group had overall control) (*Political Groups / London Councils*, n.d.). The borough of Hackney that we analyse as a case for London is one of the boroughs under Labour leadership.

#### **4.1 Policies and services from the Greater London Authority**

The Greater London Authority (GLA) and London boroughs divide and share responsibilities in terms of providing services to the residents of the city. This division means that not all topics of interest (see ANNEX II) were present in the London documents. This section reports on the policies and services identified for the Greater London Authority, which relates specifically to the Mayor of London and Transport for London. Topics included are childcare and family, housing, work and income, transport, liveability, sport and leisure, and political participation.

##### [Childcare services and family policies](#)

In terms of childcare, the GLA seemed to focus on accessibility and inclusion at the time of the study. The city council set up three Early Years Hubs uniting different childcare providers that are supposed to increase take-up of the funded early education entitlements and can provide childcare services outside of normal working hours and/or care focused on children with special needs and disabilities. The Early Years Hubs are also envisioned to increase contact among children from diverse backgrounds, promoting social integration. Another family-oriented policy by the Mayor was setting up the London Family Fund to finance projects that aim to provide support for families to build social networks. Such projects are intended to tackle isolation and increase interactions between people from different social classes. In the UK, local policies do not provide information on the entitlement to leave work to care for children as this is regulated at the national and employer level.

##### [Housing policies](#)

Judging by the Housing Strategy 2018 (Greater London Authority, 2018c), The Mayor of London's goal is to make more affordable housing available to residents through the Affordable Homes Programme. This programme uses the funds to subsidize rent and to 'deliver' homes with social housing level rent caps (although the strategy does not specify how exactly this is going to be done). The Affordable Homes Programme also provides subsidies to make housing available at so-called London Living Rent levels – rent below market average, and at about a third of an average household income. This programme is intended to help tenants save for a deposit for their own home. The GLA also plans to use Transport for London surplus land to build more affordable housing and promised to deliver ten thousand new units by 2021. We have not found any policies regarding intergenerational housing and home-sharing (e.g., student housing) in the GLA documents we have analysed.

In addition, the GLA administration operates the Seaside & Country Homes scheme, which provides residences for people who are willing to retire and move out of the city with homes in different parts of England to make space for people with urgent housing needs. Another programme, Housing Moves, which supports downsizing to use space more efficiently, was suggested to be altered to make it prioritise tenants who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. These measures are oriented towards increasing the availability of housing in London.

##### [Policies for work and income](#)

Greater London Authority policies on work and income seemingly focus on improving labour conditions in the city. To this end, the Mayor's Good Work Standard accreditation scheme was introduced. It set targets for employment standards in terms of diversity, inclusion, flexibility, wellbeing, and fair pay and encourages London employers to implement them. Another accreditation scheme for London employers, The London Healthy Workplace Charter, promotes workplaces that would support employees' health and mental wellbeing. This includes standards for flexible and family-friendly working: the basic level (awarded for satisfying rights for Shared Parental Leave and unpaid care leave); the medium level (means the employer must have family-friendly policies and allow flexible working from day one per the employee's request); and excellence (the highest level). The latter involves a company providing discretionary paid time off work for family and caring matters. In addition, the GLA is making investments into the cultural sector to better labour conditions there. For instance, London was planning Creative Enterprise Zones, which are neighbourhoods for artists and creative businesses with affordable workspaces. From these initiatives, it seems that the municipality's focus in terms of work and income issues is making more quality workplaces available for its residents. Other possible measures regarding work and income, such as various allowances, financial assistance for the disadvantaged, or bankruptcy debt alleviations were not represented in this snapshot of city-level initiatives.

#### Transport policies

This snapshot of London's transport initiatives indicates their commitment to making alternative transport modes such as walking and cycling available and accessible to London residents. The focus on transport mode diversity co-exists with a focus on safety (including health), sustainability (being climate neutral, improving air quality, etc.), and liveability. Transport for London (TfL) aims to deliver 450 km of new cycle routes across Greater London. For instance, three boroughs received funding from the city to create a network of cycle routes on their territory. Moreover, TfL plans improvements for bicycle hire services to make cycling more accessible, propose changing the operation of traffic lights to prioritise pedestrians, and fund community projects that promote cycling. They have also developed the Cycling Infrastructure Database (CID) that includes information helpful to London cyclists, including a journey planner and a cycle parking map. Moreover, initiatives such as 'Legible London', providing walking wayfinding maps and signage (intended to be maintained and improved) should help people find their way in the city. To boost transportation safety, several improvements are proposed, such as establishing 15mph speed limits in multiple locations in the city as well as encouraging the use of intelligent speed adaptation (ISA) technology and modernising the bus fleet of the city. Such policies aimed at improving availability and accessibility of commuting and transportation options has the potential to positively contribute to work-life balance of London residents.

The Transport of London is also attempting to improve the accessibility of transportation in London for people with disabilities and special needs. For people with disabilities, borough-based 'bus days' are planned to be held to help them learn to use this mode of transport. Moreover, setting up tactile rotating cones and/or audible signals and tactile paving for pedestrian crossings is planned for people with impaired sight to use the roads safely. It is important to note that in their attempts to reduce motor traffic, the policies by London authorities recognize motor vehicles transporting people with

special needs as *necessary* traffic. London also has special transportation options available for people with mobility impairment and children with special education needs and disabilities (although the accessibility of these services is hard to evaluate). These services include ‘Taxicard’, whereby people with mobility issues can access taxi services for subsidised prices, and ‘Dial-a-Ride’, which provides door-to-door free transportation service for people with permanent or long-term disabilities and residents over 85 years old.

#### Liveability policies

From the documents analysed, it appears the GLA is focused on upgrading the city’s landscape to be more suitable for walking and cycling, thereby reducing overall traffic dominance. The designated measures target availability, accessibility, and quality of public spaces. Any improvement scheme for London streets is intended to improve conditions for cycling and walking. The Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, funded by Transport for London and delivered by boroughs, is intended to bring these improvements to different parts of the city. The GLA administration aspires to provide ‘healthy routes’ to schools and local attractions and ‘healthy streets’ to its residents. Other measures aimed at the public space include plans to improve public Wi-Fi provision. Also, developments had been made to make London’s public spaces more accessible to people who use wheelchairs, e.g., making pavements wider, providing step-free access, and removing obstacles on the streets.

Further plans for public spaces include the London Environment Strategy (Greater London Authority, 2018b), which presents plans for nature protection, enhancing green space and biodiversity in London. In addition, the London Plan includes policies on the protection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) where land has exceptional ecological value and must be safeguarded. The GLA administration declared a commitment to funding small and medium scale greening projects in green spaces across the city and setting a Greener City Fund for strategic investment in green infrastructure. The Mayor plans to increase the number of city trees by ten percent by 2050 and pledges to protect the existing urban forest. Moreover, there are plans from Transport for London to increase the number of trees on London streets by 1 percent every year between 2016 and 2025. Community participation in managing green spaces is also encouraged by the London boroughs.

#### Policies for sport and leisure

The GLA administration has launched Sport Unites, an investment programme funding projects that aim to support social cohesion and Londoners’ wellbeing through local sports activities. Another funding programme, Culture Seeds, provides small grants to community-led cultural projects in the boroughs. These projects contribute to the availability of sports and leisure services and them being tailored to particular groups of people and their needs. The Mayor’s office also pledges to protect important cultural spots, for instance by funding at-risk venues and creating the LGBT+ Venues Charter to resist the closing of LGBT+ venues. Such measures are intended to ensure that LGBT+ people continue to have the resources these spaces provide available to them.

#### Policies for political participation

London authorities showed a focus on increasing civic engagement at the time of the study. London has a Citizen Led Engagement Programme, which aims to establish a dialogue with less represented



groups of Londoners. The administration further tries to increase the participation of more diverse audiences in the Talk London platform, where Londoners can take part in surveys and discussion forums on city issues. The Mayor's office has also invested in digital engagement tools for several projects they have implemented. Such policies seem to be aimed at enhancing the accessibility of voicing one's needs. However, the reliance on digital tools might result in inequalities: while for some, digital engagement is more accessible than other forms of involvement, for others – those who lack sufficient digital skills or access to technology – it might create barriers. To support digital inclusion, basic digital skills training is planned to be free for adult residents, funded by the local government from 2020-2021.

There is one topic close to political participation that is also salient in the Mayor's policies: the administration attempted to provide relevant services by relying on Londoners' preferences voiced through Crowdfund London, an online platform where Londoners can vote for projects to get funded, and the Mayor's office would finance them. For instance, Crowdfund London funded a night market for underemployed people allowing them to gain skills and entrepreneurial experience as well as an elevated urban park built on disused coal sidings alongside the railway line. According to the project's website, since the establishment of the programme in 2014, more than 100 projects have been funded, and the programme was prolonged for 2020-2022 with a one million pound budget (*MD2605 Delivering Crowdfund London 2020-2022 | London City Hall, n.d.*). This approach to local services involves residents in decision-making on which to be delivered. But while funding projects popular with residents might mean that the municipality delivers the services people need most, it is also crucial to note that not everyone can access the platform and utilize it to vote for projects that would be helpful to them, which might produce unequal outcomes from the projects for the residents.

## 4.2 Policy design and structural factors

As was the case with Leeds, this section reports on the coverage of policy design aspects (availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and flexibility) and structural factors that can improve or reduce the opportunities provided by municipal policies and services in London.

Availability and accessibility are problematized within London's housing policies. London has been experiencing a decrease in social housing stock for a long time (partly due to policies helping residents buy their social homes). This results in extraordinarily long waiting lists for social housing and overcrowding, which is recognized by the city authorities and mentioned as a problem. Another local service with recognised suboptimal availability is childcare, as the Economic Development Strategy states that "*less than half of London boroughs have enough childcare for parents working full-time*" (Greater London Authority, 2018f, p. 78). Childcare is also mentioned as having affordability issues, as the strategy reports that childcare costs in London are significantly higher in London than in the rest of the United Kingdom. Problems with affordability are reflected in lower female employment rates in London, as the childcare costs can act as an economic disincentive to participate in employment. A further example of a focus on service accessibility is the focus of Transport for London on making the public transport system more accessible. Efforts include gradually introducing step-free access to stations and stops (and offering possibilities for alternative routes or free taxis where it has yet to be provided) and delivering opportunities for spontaneous travel for people with special needs, including staff on the metro and rail stations to assist travellers, with no booking in advance needed.

The document analysis also highlights potential availability issues. We note, for example, that London does not appear to have a municipal food bank. However, the Mayor's policies include a goal to increase the take-up of the national food voucher system Healthy Start.

The document analysis further suggests that GLA policies acknowledge several structural factors. This recognition is evident, for example, in the development of the GLA's Health Inequalities Strategy (Greater London Authority, 2018d) and Social Integration strategy (Greater London Authority, 2018a). Both of these strategies are intended to address the structural issue of inequality and divide across social class and ethnicity. Structural factors related to age and disability are being addressed through initiatives such as the investment of £100 million in supported housing, transportation initiatives. For example, these groups of people might be entitled to targeted transportation services or free public transportation with Freedom passes and Oyster cards for travelling (60+). These passes are available to residents of the whole London and are funded by the boroughs.

The document analysis reveals attention being given to the needs of various groups by London authorities. Projects funded through the Sports Unites programme target different groups: for instance, a project for Muslim and non-Muslim girls to learn fencing and a project that delivers sporting activities for the elderly were funded via this programme. And both the Early Years Hubs and projects funded through London Family Fund are envisioned to help people from different social classes integrate and establish positive relationships:

*"The Mayor has established the London Family Fund to provide vital support for families, as part of his Strategy for Social Integration. The fund encourages families from diverse backgrounds to come together for mutual support and a common purpose. It will help them to build more diverse networks with families from different backgrounds, including families who may otherwise face loneliness or disadvantage. It will also be used to share and promote best practice in the family services and early years sectors".* (Greater London Authority, 2018d, p. 26)

Attention for gender, ethnicity and sexuality are evident in just some initiatives: The London policies analysed mention tackling crimes against girls and women, and the authority has established the Women's Night Safety Charter to achieve that goal. The Mayor's Citizen Led Engagement Programme considers ethnicity as it includes five community groups for people from different ethnic groups, e.g., Bulgarian, Somali, and older and younger BAME Londoners. To support queer Londoners, the Mayor's LGBT+ Venues Charter protects significant LGBT+ venues in the city.

### **4.3 Within-London variation: policies and services in City of London and Hackney**

In this section, we comparatively investigate two regions of London – the City of London and Hackney – to see how real chances for improving work-life balance can differ within one city. While the main focus of this document analysis is to compare Leeds and London, intra-city variation is important to consider in the UK case. London is one of the biggest cities in Europe, a megapolis with diverse experiences of living in the city and two-tier governance with local authorities (boroughs) being responsible for the provision of many services that are of interest to work-life balance researchers. For instance, boroughs own most social housing in the city and handle social services. So, differences

in resources made available by local authorities might result in inequalities between people living in the same city. Therefore, while City and Hackney do not represent all local authorities, investigating them comparatively provides insights into possible variation in the policies and services available to London residents based on their borough, and illustrates the division of labour between the Greater London Authority and the boroughs.

This section reports on the identified policies and services in City and Hackney with the same approach as previously implemented. This means not all topics of interest are represented in the documents, but all available information is presented. The topics of the policies refer to a broad range of issues, such as childcare, formal and informal care services, mental health services, social services and social participation initiatives, housing policies, work and income policies, transport policies, liveability policies, policies for sport and leisure and political participation. The City of London and Hackney are neighbouring districts, and their authorities collaborate on providing some services. However, they differ both in their policymaking, populations, and environments. First of all, Hackney, as one of the London boroughs, is affected by the political struggles between the parties while the City of London is run on a non-party political basis by the City of London Corporation. The variation in policymaking activity was evident in the number of policy documents accessed. The City Corporation website had many more strategies and other policy documents available than the Hackney Council website. Regarding the populations and environments, the City of London composes a smaller area, has a small residential population but hosts a lot of workspaces as the financial and business center of London. It receives many visitors and has to deal with substantial traffic of people and vehicles. Hackney, on the other hand, is less busy and more residential, and shows high levels of poverty and inequality. Hackney is among the most deprived districts in the country, which can result in different chances for City and Hackney residents to use the resources local governments provide to live valued lives.

#### Childcare services

The City of London has one primary school (as its residential population is small), which is said to have an after-school club and holiday schemes (although we do not have information on these services' accessibility and affordability). The City Corporation provides subsidized childcare places within and outside the City. According to the latest Hackney Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (London Borough of Hackney, 2018), many schools in Hackney have breakfast clubs (usually costing between 50 p and £2 per session), and each school has an after-school activity day once a week (free or charged). Additionally, Hackney schools offer paid after-school play centres and activities until 6 pm costing about 5 pounds per session (costs vary from £3 to £9). While seemingly affordable, these services can still be expensive for low-income and single-parent households.

#### Formal and informal care services

The City of London and Hackney have various services for elderly and disability care. The City's Adult Social Care service provides help to adults who need support: recovery from an illness or an injury can be supported by the reablement service that includes up to six weeks of help with daily tasks and the re-gaining ability for independent living. Hackney has a Council-run short-term residential care facility. It provides intensive rehabilitation care (up to six weeks) to City and Hackney residents over 55 years old and offers transitional placements. This facility also runs a day centre for older people.

Additionally, Hackney has set up a fund (The Independent Living Fund) to financially help people with disabilities live independently, which was said to support 57 people at the moment of the study.

According to the documents analysed, informal carers in City and Hackney can access different types of help by undergoing a carer's assessment that would identify their care needs and entitlements (eligibility criteria are determined nationally). For instance, resident carers of both local authorities could benefit from respite care services. Moreover, psychological support is available for carers at the City and Hackney Carers Centre (CHCC) that offers advice, counselling, and support groups. Wellbeing activities aimed at relieving carers from stress are provided by Mind in the City, Hackney, and Waltham Forest. Psychological support is also available to the City of London parent carers through the Early Help program.

However, City Corporation's Carers Strategy (Department of Community & Children's Services, 2019) recognises that City's services for carers were perceived to be difficult to navigate, with carers having to repeat their stories over and over. Unfortunately, we have no information on the quality of services provided by Hackney Council to carers, but it also seems that Hackney creates additional initiatives for carers that go beyond the City and Hackney joint provision. These appear to be aimed at the affordability of services for carers: they are granted free swimming in municipal pools and can apply for a Hackney carer's card that is intended to grant discounts for goods and services in the borough.

#### [Mental health services](#)

Mental health is provided by City and Hackney together: they have issued a joint mental health strategy (*City and Hackney Mental Health Strategy 2019-23*, 2019) and have joint services, for instance, The City and Hackney Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) Service and The City and Hackney Wellbeing Network. The document analysis indicates that the two authorities aim to increase the accessibility of mental health services: the strategy outlines plans to implement a 'no wrong door' approach to mental health services and deliver some open-access mental health services (no clarification of these approaches are provided). There is also mention of introducing neighbourhood-based mental health teams and helping people with more serious mental health problems to recover and step down from specialist care to community mental health care. Thus, City and Hackney aim to provide more services on the community level, which could contribute to mental health care accessibility. They also have available The City and Hackney Wellbeing Network which works with mental health issues such as anxiety and depression and is intended to help residents develop emotional resilience through participating in courses and activity-based groups. The strategy additionally outlines equity problems in mental health care and declares a goal to improve provision for certain groups: young black men and boys, the LGBTQ+ community, autistic people, and older adults. However, it does not mention concrete measures to be taken to reach that goal.

Further attention for mental health services includes two published guides on navigating dementia in the family. These guides provide information on how to manage personal relationships with people with dementia and where one can get help if needed. The existence of such guides potentially lowers barriers for accessing help as it outlines the opportunities for help and provides contact information. These guides also indicate the availability of services for people with dementia in City and Hackney:

care workers can check on them once or twice a day and help with some daily tasks to allow them to live independently in a safe way.

The joint City and Hackney Mental Health Strategy also mentions that the City Corporation plans to provide properties rent-free to a mental health provider who would give low-cost services to the community. It is unclear from the strategy if Hackney residents would be able to make use of this policy that attempts to deliver affordable mental health services.

#### Social services and social participation initiatives

Both City of London and Hackney documents describe the community centres and groups for the residents that provide opportunities for social interaction and activities. Coffee mornings and lunch clubs available in City and Hackney are oriented towards older residents to support social networks and address loneliness. For instance, Hackney has over-50 forums, consisting of groups providing activities and services for seniors to overcome social exclusion.

However, the document analysis suggests that social services from the City of London are more adapted to the diversity of their residents than Hackney. The groups mentioned in the City documents include, for example, a community group for black and minority women, carers groups, and a group for older LGBTQ+ Londoners, as well as groups and lunch clubs for people from the Bangladeshi community. City of London policies also seem to focus various initiatives on reducing loneliness: City provides a befriending service and a home social contact service (not care). In addition, volunteering is seen by the City Corporation as an activity that helps people build social networks. An example is the Spice Time Credits system that allows residents who volunteer to earn credits that can be exchanged for services as a means for tackling social isolation. Various free or low fee library activities (e.g., yoga and dance sessions) and adult learning courses with concession prices (although they are available for a limited range of courses) also bring opportunities for boosting social participation. The diversity of social services and activities available in the City of London might be beneficial for translating these resources into real opportunities for better lives for different people. However, the quality of the services is not reported to be universally high: The City Corporation commissioned research on their community spaces, which showed that two of the City community centres were not improving social networks as intended (City of London, 2017). The City Corporation has decided to tackle the issue by re-developing one of them and considering a change in the managing scheme for the other.

Hackney, on the other hand, seems to have a lower range of social services but potentially greater accessibility. Hackney provides transportation services for people with learning disabilities or special needs so they can get to day centres and for older people to travel to day centres and lunch clubs. The documents analysed did not provide any information on the quality of such services.

Digital literacy is a crucial resource both for social networking and for making use of local policies, so having initiatives dedicated to the digital literacy of the residents potentially contributes to the accessibility of other services. Both City and Hackney offer sessions aimed at enhancing digital skills. One of the courses at the City Adult learning centre introduces students to basic computer functions (costs £10), and the set of activities provided by the municipality includes a monthly gadget clinic where people can get help with their electronic devices as well as have some social interaction. In

Hackney, libraries and the community hubs are said to be helping older residents with their digital skills, and the Hackney Council's website has a bunch of how-to videos to help people at home. The Hackney Council also claimed to be piloting a digital buddy program at the moment of the study.

### Housing policies

Both City of London and Hackney own social housing, including sheltered housing. The City Corporation owns homes both in the Square Mile (two estates) and in other boroughs (2,761 properties in total), including two sheltered housing schemes for older residents (66+). In Hackney, over forty percent of the housing stock is social housing. Moreover, both local authorities proclaim dedication to providing more affordable housing to their residents, but the policies associated with these goals differ. The City Corporation's dedication to providing more affordable housing is reflected in the requirements for new developments: sizable residential developments (with potential for more than 10 units) must include a share of affordable housing. Moreover, the City's Local Plan (City of London Corporation, 2015) includes the possibility of buying more properties on the market to satisfy the housing needs of the residents, even though the conditions for doing this are not specified.

Hackney Council also has requirements for new developments aimed at protecting housing affordability. The authority exempts projects that promise 50% of more affordable homes from providing viability information while requiring a viability assessment from and subjecting to reviews those that cannot meet the 50% target. However, in contrast to the City Corporation, Hackney Council expects new social and shared ownership housing to be built soon (by 2022, in Woodberry Down), and the borough plans to make use of The Mayor of London's Affordable Homes Programme to make a share of housing schemes achieve affordable rent rates. Moreover, Hackney Council exhibits a programme for tenants to help them buy properties they inhabit. Properties that are a part of this scheme are managed by housing associations, and for five years tenants get rents set at 80% or market rent rate with service charges included (allowing them to save), and then they are invited to buy the place with a gifted deposit of 10% of the property value. If tenants cannot buy the property, they can renew their tenancy and try again in five years, having twenty years in total to buy their homes.

The social housing allocation procedure of the City (City of London Corporation, 2017) gives priority to people in unsatisfactory housing conditions (overcrowding, unsanitary housing) and people with medical and welfare needs that could be met by moving. Additional priority is given to people at risk of domestic abuse or other crimes. People on low income and children of current social housing tenants have some priority in the system as well. Also, in the City of London, housing support is a part of the Early Help programme, a service that aims to tackle potential problems before they become unmanageable. In Hackney, the council can waive standard residential requirements for people fleeing domestic violence when allocating social housing. In general, the process prioritises people who could be discharged from hospital if they had proper housing for their medical needs, people living in overcrowded accommodations, and residents with medical needs (Hackney Council, 2016). There are also specialized Traveller sites owned by the borough of Hackney and letting of those is covered by a standalone policy.

In terms of accessibility of social housing, it is notable that both City and Hackney have a local connection criterion that individuals must meet to join the housing registers of their local authority

(however, both municipalities indicate there are exceptions). In the City of London, the requirement is for two years residency in the City (increased from one year) or working for the City Corporation or caring for a City resident. In Hackney, one must be a resident of the borough for three years, but for those applying for sheltered housing, the procedure is easier than for general housing seekers. The latter do not need to join the housing register and are to be referred by their care manager or social worker. While these criteria are not enough to evaluate the overall accessibility of social housing in City and Hackney and compare them, such requirements can affect mobility. It potentially prevents residents applying for social housing in multiple boroughs (e.g., both in City and Hackney, which are neighbouring districts). It similarly discourages residents from moving to where they can access housing more easily, which can result in longer paths to affordable housing for low-income households.

#### Policies for work and income

In the document analysis, both authorities exhibited policies aimed at supporting their residents in terms of work and income. Social housing residents who pay rent to the City Corporation or housing associations can obtain housing benefits if they are not eligible for Universal Credit. In addition, they can obtain council tax reductions (this is also possible for tenants of the private landlords and owner-occupiers), with the amount of the benefits estimated based on personal circumstances (including income and rent, size of the household, etc.). In addition, the City Corporation might provide additional financial assistance in the form of discretionary housing payments for people whose benefits do not cover their rent. These additional payments make social benefits more flexible. For exceptional circumstances, the City has an emergency support scheme giving in-kind (non-monetary) support that includes food vouchers, fuel payments, furniture, and other needed goods. Hackney Council allows discounts for the council tax for single-person households, households where people with disabilities live, and young adults that have been in Hackney's care as children. Local housing allowance helps tenants with private landlords pay their rent. And in case of sudden financial shocks, Hackney residents can get help through the Discretionary Crisis Support Scheme that can assist with costs for food and crucial goods, utilities, and other essential services. The Hackney Foodbank works as an emergency food provider, and the borough plans to distribute a list of free events with food as one of the measures to tackle food poverty. Hackney is also considering building an online interactive map showing a list of food providing organisations.

According to the documents, Hackney Council also claims to promote employers paying the London Living Wage (set by the Greater London Authority) via their communication department. They also hold an annual celebration for the employers who meet their requirements. It is unclear how effective such initiatives might be in supporting the quality of workplaces in the borough. We note that we have not found policies or services aimed at improving labour conditions in the City of London documents.

#### Transport policies

In accordance with the policies from the Greater London Authority that promote walking and cycling, both City of London and Hackney have also issued policies aimed at increasing transport mode diversity. Both districts have available Cycle Superhighways, and both the City of London Corporation and Hackney Council have presented measures that are intended to make cycling more convenient

(and thus more accessible). However, judging by the documents analysed, the City of London appears to have more ambitious goals regarding restrictions of motor traffic and promoting walking. This is unsurprising given the dense traffic area in the City. = The City of London Corporation aims to increase the space of pedestrianized or pedestrian priority streets (where vehicles are allowed but are expected to give priority to walkers) by 10 kilometres by 2030. They further envision the Square Mile having half of its streets' with pedestrian priority by 2044. Widescale improvements to walking routes are planned by the City Corporation to make walking more comfortable and efficient (by enhancing pedestrian connectivity between locations within the City). In addition, restrictions for motor vehicles, such as speed limits and traffic volume limits, are proposed for local access streets. Measures aimed at reducing casualties on the road such as restricting motor vehicle speeds, supporting the adoption of the intelligent speed adaptation technology, and creating cycling lanes and highways and pedestrian routes are expected to make the walking and cycling experience safer, which, in its turn, should make alternative modes of transportation more accessible.

### Liveability policies

Both the City Corporation and Hackney Council policies present initiatives aimed at improving the public space available to the residents (and visitors) of the two respective authorities. The City's Local Plan (City of London Corporation, 2015) declares protection of open spaces, including play spaces: housing developments that deliver bigger flats would have to provide playgrounds as well. Multiple public realm improvements have been completed in the last years and several more are proposed, aiming to increase the amount of public space, including the amount of seating on the streets. For instance, in 2019 the City launched a Lunchtime Streets programme that creates more space on the streets in the summer so that people can have their lunch there. Proposed improvements to the public space also include upgrading street lighting and the availability of public toilets. Hackney also sets standards for new developments to protect and enhance the public realm of the borough. There are plans to create a new town centre around Hackney Wick to improve the environment in the area. The Council has issued a Liveable Neighbourhoods Plan (Hackney Council, 2014), delivering the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme of the Greater London Authority, that includes measures to increase tree canopy coverage (following Mayor's orders), find opportunities to support growing fruit and vegetables on the streets, and hold regular Play Streets, events during which roads are closed so children can use them for play.

Liveability initiatives exhibited by the City of London and Hackney authorities at the moment of study include plans regarding environmental protection and biodiversity, which concurs with Greater London Authority policies. The City proposes to incorporate more greenery and planting into the streets and encourage the installation of green roofs to maximise biodiversity and better the streetscapes. The river Thames is identified as one of the sites of importance for nature conservation where maintenance of different species' habitats should be given special attention. Hackney Council mentions working on connecting green spaces to each other and to the urban environment (by taking off railings or walls that separate them, for instance) to make them more accessible. They also promote the installation of green roofs - they are required on major development schemes that include roof plates of over 100 sqm. New developments must also protect and enhance biodiversity..

### Policies for sport and leisure



Both City of London and Hackney have municipal sports centres run by charities (Fusion in the City of London, Better in Hackney) that make sporting activities available. The Golden Lane Sport & Fitness in the City of London has activities for both children and adults, including a programme oriented towards City workers named 'the City of Sport'. Some sporting activities and classes are also available at the City's libraries. There are multiple sport and leisure centres in Hackney which have swimming, gym, racquet sports, and other activities and have concession memberships. Plus, Hackney has several football pitches, the West Reservoir Centre with pools, and walking and running groups for different levels, styles, and needs (for instance, an only-female one). In all the municipal leisure centres, carers, people with disabilities, residents over 60 years old, and children can swim for free. One of the sports centres, Britannia Leisure Centre, has a special programme for those who survived a stroke or transient ischaemic attack, which helps them work on their health and fitness. Plus, there is a sport and physical activity programme for Hackney residents aged 50 and over called New Age Games that makes different sports classes available, including chair-based activities. Hackney's vast green spaces (8 parks, gardens, and open spaces totalling around 282 hectares) also provide opportunities for active leisure time.

However, we do not have any information on recreational-cultural activities available to residents of Hackney, compared to the numerous activities on offer in the libraries and community centres of the City of London. Sport and leisure activities can be beneficial not only as activities per se but also as opportunities for social interaction, which can enhance wellbeing.

#### Policies for political participation

Both City of London and Hackney authorities seem to engage with their residents in the form of public consultations. For instance, carers were consulted through multiple organisations within the production of the City of London Carer's Strategy 2019-2023 (Department of Community & Children's Services, 2019), and this policy involves plans to engage carers even more. City and Hackney Mental Health Strategy (2019) proclaims to be created 'co-productively' with users of the mental health services, and the description and the insights from this collaboration are included in the document. City of London's Transport Strategy (City of London Corporation, 2019) also contains descriptions of extensive public engagement (survey, exhibition, workshops). Ensuring residents have a voice, involving the 'experts by experience', engagement and consultation are commonly featured in local policies. The public consultations provide information on both the negative and sceptical comments as well as the supportive ones.

Hackney claims to offer a 'broad range of community engagement techniques to give voice and listen to communities' in their Inclusive Economy Strategy (Hackney Council, 2019, p. 33). Several of the engagement programmes listed there have the word 'conversation' in them, which potentially indicates they are more about consultation and feedback than decision-making. However, it is notable that Hackney also targets specific groups of people at these stages, such as young black men and older residents. In addition, Hackney has a resident scrutiny panel which is aimed to serve as 'critical' friends of the council to provide reviews and recommendations to their work. While public consultations do not guarantee that policymakers would act on what they heard, the relative salience of people's voices in policy documents could indicate better chances at helping people reach important outcomes in their lives, including work-life balance.

## 5 Summary and final thoughts

This report communicates the results of a document analysis of the municipal resources available to residents of Leeds and London. These resources refer to different issues and spheres of life, from childcare to transport and political participation, all spheres that could directly or indirectly influence the possibilities for achieving valued work-life balance outcomes for the residents of the two cities. While the report cannot provide an exhaustive characterization of all the policies and services created by Leeds and London authorities, the insights on the salience of different issues, policy design aspects, and structural factors provide information on the municipalities' priorities at the time and the resources that could potentially be utilised by the residents. The report has found both similarities and differences between Leeds and London that might be important for understanding the un(equal) opportunities for valued lives within the United Kingdom.

The document analysis shows that at the moment of the study, London and Leeds shared some major orientations in their policymaking. One example is providing more affordable housing. While both cities do not always explain how exactly they aim to *make more affordable homes available*, it is crucial to note that the policies do not only focus on *social* housing (and maybe even less on social housing). They aim to provide *affordable* housing according to the UK definition, which includes dwellings pricier than social rent levels but less expensive than market prices. It also includes support on the journey to homeownership. While such policy design (probably influenced by national policy) potentially allows for greater assistance to residents, affordable housing is not quite as affordable as social housing and might not translate into real opportunities for the least affluent residents.

The document analysis of London and Leeds policymaking shows that both cities' administrations exhibit orientations towards increasing transport mode diversity by promoting cycling and improving their public spaces. However, in London the emphasis on liveability and making the city more walking- and cycling-friendly at the expense of motor vehicles is much more salient. Even the speed limits London proposes are stricter than the ones Leeds plans to establish (15 mph in London vs. 20 mph in Leeds). Indeed, Leeds has some measures to promote cycling and improve the public spaces, but London has a much grander programme, which links boosting walking and cycling with public space enhancements *to make walking and cycling more accessible*. London policies also exhibit more dedication to the environment and biodiversity. There is an Environment strategy, and this and other policies propose a variety of measures like reducing traffic (and thus emissions), protecting the river Thames, planting more trees, et cetera. Leeds seems to have a lot of green spaces (parks, woods) and promises to protect its green infrastructure, but they mention that the city centre area lacks sufficient greenery without suggesting a plan to change it.

However, judging by the documents analysed, a number of differences exist between Leeds and London in terms of policies and services relevant to work-life balance capabilities. First, Leeds seems to focus on supporting sports and active lifestyles more than London. The Active Leeds program makes sporting facilities available (including targeted ones) and makes them affordable (free or low fee), promoting more healthy lives. While London (and City and Hackney) have policies and services aimed

at sporting facilities provision, they do not seem as visible as the Active Leeds program, including its visibility on the authorities' websites which also contributes to accessibility.

Whereas both cities indicate digital literacy goals in the policy documents analysed, London authorities speak more concretely about what work is being done. Leeds declares to have a 100% digital literacy goal and offers digital skills training among the library activities. In London, basic digital skills training is planned to be free from 2020-2021, and pilot projects have been launched to test policy interventions. Local authorities we have investigated (City and Hackney) also have their own activities and programmes for digital literacy.

Based on our analysis, it seems that London, unlike Leeds, emphasized social integration at the moment of study. The Mayor of London issued a separate Social Integration strategy that includes projects supporting inclusion and establishing social networks between different groups of people, attempting to address a more diverse range of structural factors. While Leeds pays attention mostly to age (aspiring to be age-friendly and kids-friendly), London policies also target black and minority ethnic communities and the LGBT+ community. Age is not very visible in London on the city level, but the boroughs we inspected focus on it more in their work, providing a range of policies and services for their older residents. They also acknowledge other structural factors such as race/ethnicity and gender/sexuality. London also seemed to pay more attention to the accessibility of transport and public spaces for people with disabilities.

Crucial for the UK case is the complex two-tiered governance structure of London, which leads to further variation within London at the borough level. Local authorities are responsible for the provision of many services. This is evident, for instance, in the fact that GLA policies say almost nothing about social care, childcare, and community facilities: these resources are delivered by the boroughs, and their policies shape the resources available to their residents. Looking into City and Hackney showed us that policies and services available to London residents are not homogenous and differ per borough. The City of London, for instance, more expansively supports the Mayor's strategies on transport and public spaces, which probably makes sense as the Square Mile is an extremely busy area with its spaces populated with people going to and from work. However, small differences between services and policies are evident for all aspects of policymaking studied for City and Hackney: social services, informal carers support, work and income, etc. Different policies available and seemingly small differences in the design of policies of different boroughs can result in very different real opportunities for residents living in close proximity to each other

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## ANNEX II : METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

### Research questions:

- 1) What policies and resources are available to residents of Leeds and London that could help them improve their work-life balance?
- 2) How do City Councils, through the implementation of policies formulated at the national level, affect the availability, access, affordability, quality, and/or flexibility of these resources?

A total of 116 documents were selected for analysis. For Leeds, 28 documents were analyzed. These documents included 16 web pages saved from the Leeds City Council website (Welcome to LEEDS.GOV.UK - Leeds City Council, 2020). 14 documents covering policies were included for London (produced by the Mayorality and Transport for London). Additionally, to inspect variation in local policies determined by the work of boroughs (the second tier), documents for City of London and Hackney administrations were analyzed. The City of London is represented by 29 documents adopted from 2014 to 2020, including 13 web pages saved from the City of London council website (*Services - City of London*, 2020); Hackney by 44 documents created from 2014 to 2020, including 35 web pages saved from the borough council's website (*Contact Us | Hackney Council*, n.d.), and three documents relate to both City of London and Hackney.

Documents were coded deductively in NVivo, using a coding scheme created for the project and used for all country cases (see lower). A 'digital inclusion' node (providing access to technology/networks & digital literacy and skills) was added for this analysis as it was considered important for the UK case.

### Coding scheme

Nodes/Sub-nodes new	Description	Old node/sub-node
<b>Housing</b>	Policies around housing provision and housing benefits	'Residency'
<i>Social housing</i>	Non-profit rental housing, e.g. housing for lower-income individuals/families (subsidy) or public housing	'Accessibility...', 'affordability...' & 'availability in relation to class' (only selecting the social housing codes)
<i>Reserved housing</i>	Priority housing given to particular groups (e.g. particular occupations, people in domestic violence situations)	'Urgency' & 'order of allocation'
<i>Home-sharing</i>	Housing policies aimed at creating shared forms of housing (e.g. student accommodation)	
<i>Intergenerational housing</i>	Housing policies aimed at creating intergenerational housing forms	

<b>Sports, leisure, and cultural activities</b>	Organization and provision of sport facilities, recreational spaces and green areas, or cultural activities for city residents	
<i>Sporting facilities</i>	Provision of sport facilities and organization of sport activities within them	All codes from 'sports' and it's subnodes 'accessibility', 'activation', 'affordability', 'community aspects of sports' .
<i>Green spaces</i>	Provision of green spaces in neighbourhoods or at city level	'Green spaces'
<i>Recreational/Cultural activities</i>	Organization of recreational and cultural activities for urban residents	'leisure time' & 'green spaces'
<b>Childcare</b>	Provision of services for caring for children/after-school activities	'child care'
<i>Childcare facilities</i>	Provision of facilities for childcare during working hours	Some codes from 'families' and all codes from 'parent-child centres'
<i>After-school facilities</i>	Provision of facilities for childcare after school/working hours	'kinderopvang, voorschool ECEC'
<i>Day camps</i>	Provision of facilities/activities for childcare during holiday season/weekends	
<i>Leave to care for children</i>	Entitlement to leave to care for children (maybe who are ill), approached locally. It can vary in terms of length, age of children included and payment.	
<b>Formal elderly care</b>	Provision of formal services for elderly care	'Elderly care'
<i>Nursing homes</i>	Facilities for institutionalized care of elderly people	
<i>Day-care facilities</i>	Facilities for day care for elderly people during working hours	
<i>ome care services</i>	Home care services for elderly people	'home care'
<b>Informal care</b>	Provision of services and support for informal caregivers	'mantelzorg'
<i>Subsidies for home care</i>	Cash-for-care transfers to informal caregivers that have to combine paid work and caregiving at home	
<i>Psychological support</i>	Counselling services for informal caregivers that have to combine paid work and caregiving at home	
<i>Informal care training</i>	Training services for informal caregivers that have to combine paid work and caregiving at home	
<i>Leave to care for dependents</i>	Entitlement to leave to care for dependents (elderly, disabled, ill, or dependent in some other way), approached	

	locally. It can vary in terms of length, level of dependency, and payment.	
<b>Disability</b>	Provision of services/facilities for residents with disabilities and caregivers.	'disabled care'
<i>Rehabilitation facilities</i>	Facilities for people with physical/mental disabilities for rehabilitation and independent living (occupational therapy)	
<i>Day-care facilities for people w/disabilities</i>	Day care facilities for people with disabilities during working hours	
<i>Home-care for people w/disabilities</i>	Home care services for people with disabilities	
<b>Work and income</b>	Policies aimed at supporting low-income families, working poor and/or (tax) debt alleviation	'bijstand', 'low-end jobs'
<i>Rent allowance</i>	Subsidies for paying rent in low-income households	
<i>Childcare allowance</i>	Subsidies for paying childcare services in low-income households	Several codes from 'childcare'
<i>Health allowance</i>	Subsidies for paying health insurance of low-income individuals	Several codes from 'care' (from local policies 'care' (from welfare state and social policies), 'health insurance', 'healthcare', 'preventive care' 'social safety net' and 'WMO"
<i>Financial assistance for the disadvantaged</i>	Financial assistance for low-income individuals	
<i>Tax reduction</i>	Reduction of municipal taxes for low-income households	
<i>Bankruptcy</i>	Debt alleviation for individuals who cannot repay their creditors	'Finance', 'debt' & 'poverty'
<i>Labour conditions</i>	Working conditions (e.g. wages, hours, rest periods, working schedule, pay gap and accessibility of work)	'working conditions', 'pay gap' and 'accessibility of work'
<i>Specific groups of working people</i>	Policies for specific areas of work, including self-employed, low-end jobs, knowledge workers	'specific sectors' 'zzp en mkb' (Dutch abbreviations for self-employed)
<b>Liveability</b>	Policies around spatial planning for the improvement of quality of life	'safety'
<i>Public space</i>	Policies aimed at the public space, shared space	
<i>Neighbourhood planning</i>	Polices aimed at improving the spatial aspects of quality of life in neighbourhoods	'area-based working' 'public space'
<i>Age-friendly spaces</i>	Policies aimed at creating spaces where people of all ages are able to live healthy and active lives	

<i>Environmentally friendly spaces</i>	Policies aimed at creating spaces for nature protection/enjoyment in neighbourhoods	'sustainability' & it's subnodes
<b>Public transport</b>	Organization and provision of means of public transport	'public transport', 'bicycles and pedestrians', 'cars and parking' and 'accessibility'
<i>Commuter benefits</i>	Subsidies for daily commuters	
<i>Transport mode diversity</i>	Policies aimed at ensuring the use of alternative means of transportation (e.g. bikes)	
<i>Transport safety</i>	Policies aimed at increasing the safety of commuters	'road safety'
<i>Transport information</i>	Policies aimed at providing useful information for commuters	
<i>Targeted transportation services</i>	Policies aimed at providing special commuting services for specific groups (e.g. school buses, proximity transport for the elderly)	
<b>Public health</b>	Organization and provision of physical and mental health services that could benefit WLB	'accessibility' (from care).
<i>Community Health Centres</i>	Organization and provision of community health centres at the local level	
<i>Mental Health Centres</i>	Organization and provision of community mental health centres at the local level and counselling for residents in distress (e.g. bereavement, burnout, addictions, intra-familial violence)	
<i>Health Centre Concessions</i>	Concessions and other funding granted by municipalities to providers of social services"	
<i>Public pharmacies</i>	Public pharmacies or pharmacies with concession from the municipality	
<i>24h services</i>	Provision of automated pharmacies and other healthcare services available 24/7	
<b>Social services</b>	Services supporting individuals and groups and stimulating their social participation. (divorce, violence, loneliness, bereavement)	
<i>Local project funding</i>	Available funding for projects implemented by residents	
<i>Community centres</i>	Buildings arranged or otherwise funded by municipalities for community activities; activities arranged/facilitated by the municipality	

<i>Concessions</i>	Concessions granted by municipalities to providers of social services	
<i>Social networks</i>	Policies aimed at strengthening social networks within the community/social participation	'local relationships'
<i>Social services stigma</i>	Policies aimed at tackling the stigma of social services in order to render them more accessible	
<b>Political participation</b>	Policies for stimulating political participation in local decision making processes	'democracy' and 'citizenship'
<i>Decision making</i>	Policies aimed at including residents in decision-making processes at the local level	
<i>Social movements</i>	Policies aimed at including social movements in decision-making processes at the local level	'movements'
<b>Vulnerable groups</b>	Policies aimed at supporting specific vulnerable groups in the city	'vulnerable groups'
<i>Anti-discrimination policies</i>	Policies aimed at reducing stigma/discrimination of certain groups of residents	
<i>Foodbanks</i>	Facilities aimed at increasing food access to working poor residents	
<b>Outreach</b>	Policies aimed at increasing availability/accessibility of information about (WLB) resources	
<i>Information centres/campaigns</i>	Facilities and services aimed at distributing information about social services offered at the local level	'accessibility of local policies'
<i>Digitalization</i>	Process of digitalization of information and access to local social services for residents	'digital abilities'
<b>Policy design</b>	Aspects of policy design that affect residents' capabilities for WLB	'Local policies'
<i>Accessibility</i>	Requirements to access certain service/facility	'Accessibility of local policies'
<i>Availability</i>	Existence or lack of certain service/facility at the local level	
<i>Affordability</i>	Costs and financing of certain service/facility	
<i>Quality</i>	Aspects related with the quality of structural (e.g. physical characteristics) and process (e.g. expected outcomes) of certain services/facilities	

<i>Flexibility</i>	Aspects that refer to the possibility to adapt certain services/facilities to specific needs of residents	
<b>Structural factors</b>	Aspects of policy design addressing WLB capability inequalities produced by structural factors in society (see CAPABLE research proposal for an explanation of these structural factors)	
<i>Gender</i>		'Gender'
<i>Social class</i>		'SES'
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>		'ethnicity'
<i>Educational level</i>		'low literacy'
<i>Religion</i>		'religion'
<i>Sexual orientation and gender identity</i>		'sexual orientation'
<i>Age</i>		
<i>Occupation</i>		'Occupation', 'income'
<i>Disability/Functional diversity</i>	Includes health	
<b>General interests</b>	Node for including emergent sub/nodes which relationship with the objective of the study is only partial and/or cannot be classified in the other nodes. Please include a brief explanation of why you decide to include the new nodes in this document	'capability' 'wellbeing' & 'work-life balance'
<i>Regional regulations</i>	Regulations enforced on the regional level that affect the policies/provision of services at the local level	
<i>Dependence</i>	The dependence or independence of people of others. Having a certain level of autonomy.	'(in)dependence'
<i>Diversity</i>	Differences in social categories, for example: race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, occupation, et cetera.	'diversity'
<i>Emancipation</i>	Being set free from legal, social, or political restrictions; liberation.	'emancipation'
<i>Equality</i>	<b>Equality</b> is a state of affairs in which all people within a specific society or group have the same status in possibly all respects, possibly including civil rights, freedom of speech,	'(in)equality'

	property rights and <b>equal</b> access to certain social goods and social services.	
<i>Freedom</i>	Freedom of speech, freedom to live, liberty	'freedom'
<i>Governance</i>	Accountability/responsibility of certain groups or people for specific policies.	'responsibility'
- <i>Municipality</i>	Responsibility/ accountability of the city council/ municipality.	'city council'
- <i>Employer</i>	Responsibility/ accountability of the employer	'employer'
- <i>Government</i>	Responsibility/ accountability of the government	'government'
- <i>Individual</i>	Responsibility/ accountability of the individual	'individual'
- <i>Landlord</i>	Responsibility/ accountability of the landlord	'landlord'
<i>Inclusion</i>	Involvement and participation in society. Includes integration issues.	'inclusion'
<i>Justice</i>	justice values, need for justice (distributive)	'justice'
<i>Social-work centres</i>	Centers which provide information on social assistance services, personal help and guidance in order to develop, complement and improve your social possibilities. At Social Work Centres you can claim your rights from public funds if you are entitled to them. (Slovenian case)	
<i>Solidarity</i>	Social unity values, unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group.	'solidarity'

