

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Environment and Housing	Service area: Housing Policy
Lead person: Kathryn Bramall	Contact number: 224 3496
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 15/04/2014	

1. Title: Pets policy review
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy /Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Kathryn Bramall	LCC	Housing Tenure Manager
Catriona Purdy	LCC	Housing Tenure Officer

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:
<p>Leeds City Council recognises the benefits to tenants of keeping pets, and will generally allow this. However, this must be done in line with the council’s policy on keeping pets in council houses. Where the property is unsuitable or the animal’s welfare cannot be assured, permission will not be given.</p> <p>The policy gives further information about when permission will be given or withheld, the number of pets allowed, specific advice for certain animals, and action the council will take where a tenant allows a pet to cause a nuisance.</p>

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment
 (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

4b. Service, function, event

please tick the appropriate box below

The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

5. Fact finding – what do we already know

Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.

(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)

A consultation with tenants on changes to the policy on keeping pets in council houses took place in July and early August 2013, along with a consultation on satellite dishes. Responses were generally by email, with some by post. We received 73 responses although some of these related solely to satellite dishes. Of the responses that mentioned pets, some responses did not address every point, others did not address any of the points directly.

There was broad agreement for the proposals. 52% of respondents agreed that pets should not be kept in high rise properties, with a further 10% who believed that only small animals should be allowed as pets in high rise properties. 92% agreed that illegal pets should not be allowed and 94% agreed that the council should take action against tenants who neglect their pets or allow them to cause a nuisance to others.

Respondents did express concerns that pets currently kept outside of the policy would have to be destroyed and there was widespread recognition of the benefits of keeping pets, particularly to older or more vulnerable customers.

There is legislation relating to animal welfare or safety which has been taken into account in writing this policy, namely;

- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Animal Welfare Act 2006

A series of meeting to consult with operational staff and local and national animal welfare charities have been held. Participants include Cats Protection, Dog's Trust, Camp Nibble (Rabbit rehoming charity) and the RSPCA, both locally and nationally.

The council's STAR survey 2012-13 highlighted dissatisfaction from tenants in high rise blocks about pets and animals in their neighbourhood. This indicates the current policy is not adequately addressing the issue of keeping pets.

The Tenancy Agreement outlines the tenant's community responsibilities, which includes a clause prohibiting the tenant from acting in an anti-social way or in a way which is or is likely to cause a nuisance to another person. This includes nuisance caused by pets.

We have had legal advice regarding a tenant's right to keep a pet. The European Courts have held that keeping a domestic pet does not fall within the sphere of the owner's private life for the purposes for Article 8 of the convention, which is now Article 8 of the Human Rights Act.

The council has achieved the RSPCA's Bronze Community Animal Welfare Footprint (CAWF) which recognised that the council has consistently demonstrated a commitment to animal welfare through its housing policies and procedures.

The new policy seeks to implement a fair and consistent approach to keeping pets in council properties.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information

Please provide detail: We are not aware of the number or type of pets that are currently kept in council properties.

Action required: When Orchard Housing is implemented in mid-2014 there will be the option of a tab to record pets in a tenancy. This will allow the council to monitor the number and type of animal kept in council homes.

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

X

Yes	No
Please provide detail: See above for details of the consultation carried with tenants.	
Action required: The revised policy will be publicised through tenant newsletters etc and housing staff will be briefed.	

7. Who may be affected by this activity?
 please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify: Single people or childless couples who are more likely to be rehoused in flats where dogs and cats are not generally permitted.

Stakeholders

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members	<input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify		

Potential barriers.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer care
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Timing	Stereotypes and assumptions
<input type="checkbox"/> Cost	<input type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function	
Please specify	

8. Positive and negative impact
 Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

The revised policy allows disabled tenants who require support dogs (Guide Dogs, Epilepsy Dogs, Hearing Dogs) to keep them in a council property. This will have a positive impact on disabled people and carers. Effective enforcement of the policy will benefit all tenants and residents by reducing cases of nuisance and antisocial behaviour.

Action required:

The revised policy will be publicised through tenant newsletters etc and officers will be briefed on how to apply the policy.

8b. Negative impact:

Pets such as dogs and cats will not be permitted in unsuitable property types, mainly general needs flats with a shared entrance and sheltered properties with communal areas. These properties are generally let to single people or couples without dependent children. Sheltered properties are generally let to customers aged 60 and over.

Action required:

Information about whether pets are permitted will be included in the Leeds Homes property advert so prospective tenants are aware of any restrictions. There is scope within the policy to consider requests to keep pets in sheltered schemes where there is a communal garden, provided existing tenants are consulted. The council also has units of sheltered accommodation without communal gardens, where permission to keep a pet may be granted.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes **No**

Please provide detail: Enforcing the Tenancy Agreement and the policy on keeping pets in council homes will ensure a fair and consistent approach is taken across the city, and will reduce nuisance complaints relating to pets.

Action required: The revised policy will be publicised through tenant newsletters etc and housing staff will be briefed. The impact of the new policy will be monitored in conjunction with animal welfare charities through the Pan-Leeds Pets Forum

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other? (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required: n/a

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another? (e.g. where your activity/decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required: n/a

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
When Orchard Housing is implemented in mid-2014 there will be the option of a tab to record pets in a tenancy. This will allow the council to monitor the number and type of animal kept in council homes.	Mid 2014	Facility available on Orchard Housing to maintain register of pets in council homes	Kath Bramall
The revised policy will be publicised through tenant newsletters	Spring 2014	Information available for tenants giving feedback from consultation and details of revised policy	Kath Bramall
Housing staff to be briefed on new policy	Spring 2014	Briefing sessions arranged for housing and OSC staff dealing with new policy	Kath Bramall
The impact of the new policy will be monitored in conjunction with animal welfare charities through the Pan-Leeds Pets Forum	Meetings held every 6 months; May 2014	On-going meetings, successful award of RSPCA CAWF award	Kath Bramall

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Kath Bramall	Housing Tenure Manager	15/04/2014

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify) - The impact of the new policy will be monitored in conjunction with animal welfare charities through the Pan-Leeds Pets Forum

15. Publishing

This Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this impact assessment relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment's should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date impact assessment completed	15/04/2014
If relates to a Key Decision – date sent to Corporate Governance	
Any other decision – date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)	