

# Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



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.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate:</b> Environment & Housing	<b>Service area:</b> Sustainable Energy & Climate Change Team
<b>Lead person:</b> George Munson	<b>Contact number:</b> 0113 39 (52451)

## 1. Title:

Is this a:

**Strategy / Policy**

**Service / Function**

**Other**

**If other, please specify**

## 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

Establishment of a new energy company offering lower cost energy tariffs open to all Leeds residents, with fair, consistent, and transparent price policies.

Once established, we aim to switch council homes to this new tariff during the void periods and promote the tariff to sitting council tenants. We will also promote the tariff to private residents and potentially to SMEs.

Part of the service will be to remove dumb pre-payment meters, replacing them with smart meters. This will allow residents to either switch to direct debit to access the best tariffs or to keep as pre-payment customers if that suits their lifestyle better, but with lower tariffs than they can currently access.

### 3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		✓
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	✓	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		✓
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> </ul>		✓

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

### 4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

There are two principal equality considerations for this work.

The first is that the majority of households never, or very rarely, switch providers. Anecdotally, the lowest switching rates are amongst the more vulnerable demographics: the elderly, those with language, literacy, or numeracy barriers and those with limited computer skills or access to the internet. By automatically switching council homes during the voids process, these barriers can be overcome. Additionally, we will ensure that we have a simple telephone based switching mechanism and use the council's trusted brand to encourage partners to help their clients to switch.

The second is that in the main deprived people currently pay the most for energy via dumb pre-payment meters. Many council homes and privately rented homes have pre-payment meters due to previous tenants having energy debts. These are difficult to remove and have a very limited number of tariffs, all of which are more expensive than direct debit based arrangements. So many disadvantaged and vulnerable people are trapped on expensive tariffs, thus exacerbating fuel poverty.

- **Key findings**

**(think about** any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

As described above the primary equality benefit will be to help vulnerable and low income tenants and residents to access lower energy tariffs and remove the scourge of overpriced dumb pre-payment meters.

As this will be open to all, there are no negative impacts.

- **Actions**

**(think about** how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

As described above, the voids process, telephone switching, the council's trusted brand and working with partners such as Care and Repair and CAB will all help vulnerable customers who do not normally switch providers to access this new tariff.

**5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.**

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

**6. Governance, ownership and approval**

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Peter Leighton-Jones	Senior project officer	02//09/2015

### 7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening 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** screening's should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk). For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

<b>Date screening completed</b>	02/09/2015
If relates to a Key Decision - <b>date sent to Corporate Governance</b>	02/09/2015
Any other decision – <b>date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)</b>	