



Leeds  
CITY COUNCIL

# Equality Improvement Priorities (Summary) 2016-20

Update November 2017

Tackling poverty and reducing inequalities



# Introduction

We know that some of our communities have poorer outcomes than others and this affects them individually as well as the city as a whole. It is important for everyone to benefit from being part of a strong economy and our focus on a compassionate city approach will help us do this.

We are committed to making equality a reality for all the citizens of Leeds. Leeds will be a city where people are able to recognise, value and embrace diversity and difference. We will support people from different backgrounds and ages to feel comfortable living together. We will work with organisations across Leeds to promote a clear and consistent message that prejudicial views or behaviour that could result in hate incidents or crimes are not tolerated or condoned. We will work with communities to ensure people are treated with dignity and respect and the causes of unfairness are understood and addressed. We value the contributions that all citizens in Leeds make to our city and we want everyone to recognise and appreciate these.

We will ensure that we show kindness, and empathise with the difficult situations people find themselves in. We will do what we can to work with them to help them alleviate these.

In our aim to be a compassionate city, we want to live in an equal society which recognises different people's different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be. We will consider all the protected characteristics covered in the Equality Act 2010, and we will also widen our considerations to others who are disadvantaged in other ways eg by poverty. Our priorities do not include all our work across all the protected characteristics, but highlights those areas where there are significant differences in outcomes for people due to those characteristics. We believe that by addressing these areas we will make Leeds a better city for everyone.

We welcome all communities in Leeds and value the contributions that our citizens make to our city.

The following pages outline our equality priorities which have been developed because we recognise that there are currently different outcomes and experiences for different groups and communities. This is not acceptable and we will address these differences where ever we can.

Detailed information about the equality priorities is included within the equality annual report 2016-17

The equality improvement priorities will be reviewed during 2017-18 to ensure they are still relevant and continue to reflect the ambition of the council to tackle poverty and reduce inequality.



# Compassionate City

Living safely and well, living at home, and valuing communities

## Why this is important:

- There are approximately 300 children assessed as potentially at risk of, or a victim of child sexual exploitation in Leeds
- Police reports indicated that approximately 18,750 incidents of domestic violence were reported to the police between April 2016 and March 2017. 79% of these victims were female
- West Yorkshire Police recorded 1836 hate incidents during the year to February 2017, a 23.8% increase on the same period during 2015/16
- 2,339 young people (16-24 year olds) presented themselves as homeless in Leeds in 2014. 30% of these were 16-17 year olds
- 2,861 (5%) of lead tenants in council properties are between 16-24
- Over the next 15-20 years it is projected that 68% of council tenants will be over 55 with 18% of these being over 85
- People using Adult Social Care services tell us they do not have the information they need, or that it is in a format or language they find difficult
- Reducing fuel poverty increases life expectancy, improves mental health and wellbeing and reduces health inequalities

## Key actions

- Continue to support the partnership arrangements that are in place to enable partners to work together to identify and safeguard children and young people vulnerable to and at risk of child sexual exploitation, and divert /prosecute those intent on sexually exploiting children.
- Through the BME women's project build confidence, breakdown barriers and promote use of health services
- Develop understanding of new and emerging communities in each locality
- Consider and adopt appropriate models to strengthen communities working together
- Continue to develop innovative adaptation schemes to support tenants with additional support needs.
- Continue to provide appropriate support models to older tenants
- Improve communications

## Key indicators

- Reduce repeat incidence rate of domestic violence and abuse
- Reduce number of repeat victims of hate incidents and hate crime
- Increase availability of housing choice and provision including Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes across Leeds for older people
- Reduce number of households in fuel poverty
- Increase the number of people saying they have adequate information to decide on their care
- Produce annual reports on the BME women's project

## Our equality priorities

Although specific protected characteristics are identified for each priority, work in these areas will improve the position for everyone.

### Women:

Reduce the prevalence and impact of domestic violence and abuse

### Young people:

Improve housing options

### BME:

improve the health of migrant communities

### Those in poverty:

Reduce fuel poverty

### BME:

Understand the context and impact of migration on Leeds

### Young people:

(Girls from South Asian communities, and boys) Protect children from child sexual exploitation

### Older and disabled people:

Supported to live safely and as long as they wish in their own homes

### BME, LGBT, and disabled people:

Reduce the impact and occurrence of hate crime

### Older people and disabled people:

Identify and remove as many barriers as possible, especially those relating to communication and information

### Older and vulnerable people:

reduce the number of long term empty homes in the city impact of migration on Leeds



# Compassionate City

Enjoying culture and sport, inclusive access and language access

## Why this is important:

- Annual sports customer survey identified access as an issue for some groups, particularly women and disabled people
- Older and disabled people tell us that they have problems with obstructions on pavements, and this makes it difficult to get out safely
- People with mobility impairments tell us it is easier to get around the city centre if you know the average time it takes to walk to a destination
- In 2016 - 2017 the council successfully prosecuted 156 cases of misuse of blue badges and disabled parking facilities in Leeds. This illegal parking prevents disabled people from using these spaces.
- The introduction of the British Sign Language Video Interpreter Service at the One Stop Centres and British Sign Language Live via the Contact Centre has reduced avoidable contact and improved services for deaf and hard of hearing customers.
- The Learning English in Leeds website [www.lel.help](http://www.lel.help) provides an accessible and comprehensive on-line directory of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to both understand and meet needs.

## Key actions

- Identify barriers to female participation in sports
- Take action against residents who are causing access problems on public pathways eg wheelie bins, A boards, overgrown hedges
- Continue to carry out external consultation and involvement with the Equalities Assembly and/or the Access and User-Ability Group in the design of major projects and developments in the city
- Provide relevant and appropriate information in a way that is accessible to all

## Key indicators

- Number of access audits undertaken on museums and galleries in Leeds
- Increase the percentage of parks and countryside community parks which meet Leeds Quality Parks Standard
- Percentage of staff trained in equality, disability awareness and adapting activities (sport)
- Reduction in service requests in relation to access to pavements

## Our equality priorities

Although specific protected characteristics are identified for each priority, work in these areas will improve the position for everyone.

### **BME, people of faith, young and old, disabled people:**

Improve the quality of parks

### **Older people, children, disabled people, BME:**

Improve access to cultural opportunities and sport

### **All users of buses, trains and park and ride:**

Improved access to transport and quality of service for all to enable more people to use public transport

### **Older people, children, disabled people, BME:**

Improve access to Leeds city centre, pavements and disabled parking

### **Deaf people and those with limited English:**

Continue to improve awareness of availability of ESOL classes and improve BSL interpretation

### **Older people, children, disabled people:**

Ensure that simplified street space is safe

### **Those in poverty and new to Leeds:**

Improve recycling rates



# Strong Economy

Achieving potential, and improving representation

## Why this is important:

- Children living in poverty do not do as well at school and this affects their life opportunities. The gap between the proportion of those eligible for free school meals and those not eligible achieving 5+ A\*-C GCSEs has remained relatively constant.
- 10% of learners on apprenticeships are from BME groups compared with 19% of adult learners as a whole.
- 15,450 Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit claimants of working age in Leeds have mental ill health or a behavioural disorder
- 23% of premises in W Yorkshire with the poorest connectivity (no superfast broadband provision) are in the 20% most deprived areas of the country.
- Since 2013, over 20,000 awards have been made to vulnerable residents of Leeds. Although cuts in Government funding have meant refinements to the scheme, the council continues to provide a scheme which continues to target those most in need of emergency food aid and support for basic household goods.
- Research in 2010 indicated that lone parents (38%) were more likely than the average survey sample to use high cost sources of credit, have less savings and be experiencing financial difficulties
- At March 2015 the council employed 15,605 staff, of these 2% disclosed they were LGBT, 6% disabled, and 13% BME

## Key actions

- Targeted support and challenge for schools with significant proportions of relatively low achievers from vulnerable groups, including academies
- Promote affordable credit and banking service as an alternative to high cost lenders
- Increase disclosure rates of council staff by leading a campaign around the topic of 'why we need your information'

## Key indicators

- Reduce educational achievement gaps
- Increase the number of people experiencing mild to moderate mental ill health moving into work
- 98% of premises across W Yorkshire and York able to access superfast broadband by end 2018
- Growth in credit union membership
- Increase the proportion of underrepresented people with protected characteristics recruited into the council
- Reduce the gaps in representation between % of board membership and resident population, of specific identified boards

## Our equality priorities

Although specific protected characteristics are identified for each priority, work in these areas will improve the position for everyone.

### BME and young people:

Improved access to apprenticeships

### Those In poverty:

Support people out of financial hardship

### Those in poverty:

Increase digital inclusion

### BME, LGBT, women, and disabled people:

Develop a skilled and diverse council workforce

### BME, LGBT, women, and disabled people:

Increase board representation

### People experiencing mental health:

Provide effective support to access the labour market

### Vulnerable learners including: Children Looked After, and those children and young people with special educational needs and impairments

Reduce the gaps in learning outcomes



“Our vision is for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist. We want Leeds to be a city that is fair and sustainable, ambitious, fun and creative for all with a council that its residents can be proud of: the best council in the country.”

**Cllr Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council**

**Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council**

(Best Council Plan 2015-2020, update 2017-18)



Cllr Judith Blake



Tom Riordan

Any enquiries, or to have this paper made available in alternative formats, please email [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk), phone 0113 378 5998, text 07891 270162 or visit the website at [www.leeds.gov.uk/equality](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/equality)