

The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 – 2015

“An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises different people’s different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be”

As a council, we are committed to promoting equality and diversity in terms of the people we serve, our workforce, the partners we work with and the services we deliver. Our ambition is to be the best City in the UK. We will only achieve our ambition if as a city we work to reduce disadvantage, discrimination, and inequalities of opportunity. Failure to tackle discrimination and to provide equality of opportunity can have a negative impact on people, undermines society and costs our economy.

We want to inspire pride in our city and all our communities. No one in Leeds should be held back from reaching their potential because of who they are, or where they come from. It is all our responsibility to tackle the causes of inequality and build a stronger, fairer and more cohesive society.

The Equality Improvement Priorities have been developed from the priorities outlined in the City Priority Plan and the Council Business Plan. They provide a summary of our strategic equality analysis and our strategic equality objectives which are supported by specific work across the council. Progress against the Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 – 2015 will be reported on an annual basis.

City Priority Plan - Best cityfor children and young people

Priority - Do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life
(taken from the Children and Young People's Plan)

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Support children from all equality communities to be ready for learning	There are lower levels of attainment for some BME communities, people with special educational needs and those from poorer areas

City Priority Plan - Best city for.....communities

Priority - Reduce crime levels and their impact across Leeds

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Address the impact of burglary on Vulnerable Communities	There is an identified need to better assess the impact of burglary on emerging communities.
Tackle domestic violence and protect and support the most vulnerable young people.	The overwhelming majority of domestic violence is perpetrated by men against women and children.
Improve citywide approaches to dealing with hate crime	Disability, race, homophobic and transphobic hate crime is experienced by many people

Priority - Increase a sense of belonging that builds cohesive and harmonious communities

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
There is a sense of belonging that builds cohesive and harmonious communities	In 2010/11 a small but concerning trend in youth related anti-social behaviour and damage which suggest deliberate targeting of vulnerable victims (adults with learning disabilities, BME residents in predominantly White British neighbourhoods, gay or lesbian couples) was recognised.

City Priority Plan - Best city to live

Priority - Maximise regeneration investment to increase housing choice and affordability within sustainable neighbourhoods

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Ensure that housing and regeneration investment meets the changing needs of individuals and communities.	Households headed by women with children, BME groups and those living in the social rented sector are more likely to live in overcrowded or substandard housing. There are also significantly higher numbers of BME people and people with disabilities who are unemployed

Priority - Improve housing conditions and energy efficiency

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Improve energy efficiency	Many households containing people recovering from long term illness, disabled people, and pensioners can not afford to heat their homes

City Priority Plan - Best city.....for health and wellbeing

Priority - Give people choice and control over their health and social care services

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
We will support individuals from all communities to access social care through personalised budgets and direct payments	The equality analysis of access to personalised budgets and direct payments is ongoing.

Priority - Support more people to live safely in their own homes

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
To support adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable to live safe and independent lives	The group with the largest proportion of safeguarding investigations in 2010/2011 were service users with learning disabilities

Priority - Make sure that people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
All universal social care services are equally accessible to members of all communities	The equality analysis of access to universal social care services is ongoing.
To commission targeted adult social care services for specific equality communities and to ensure these services are effective	Equality analysis from specific reviews is used to inform future commissioning (or de-commissioning) of services at both a service and sector wide level
New migrant communities effectively access appropriate health and social care services	Some groups eg Eritrean women, and people whose cultures prevent mental health issues being explicitly recognized, do not effectively access health and social care.

City Priority Plan - Best cityfor business

Priorities - Create more jobs and Improve skills

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Increase access to employment opportunities and up-skill the workforce	There are lower levels of skills and employment amongst some communities in particular some BME groups, and disabled people.

Priority - Support the sustainable growth of the Leeds' economy

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Improve financial inclusion	Lack of access to financial services disproportionately affects lone parents (typically female) disabled people, people with mental health illness, and those living in poorer areas.

Priority - Improve journey times and the reliability of public transport

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Enable access for all to local services, education and employment centres by public transport	Disabled and elderly people have specific concerns in accessing transport

Priority - Get more people involved in the city's cultural opportunities

Equality focus (objective)	Equality analysis
Ensure the continuing development of the council's cultural offer, including the successful transition to the new arrangements for sport and libraries	People from poorer areas, BME people and disabled people do not access sport services as much as others. Low numbers of disabled people access libraries
Enhance the quality of Leeds' Parks	Disabled people, those from a BME background, and men tend to visit parks less than other groups

Council Business Plan

The Council Business Plan draws together aspects of the City Priority Plan with those areas and priorities specific to the council itself. There are a number of cross cutting equality objectives included in the Council Business Plan which provide the building blocks for ensuring that equality is embedded in all our service delivery and as an employer. They are outlined here:

Equality Performance Area - Understanding our communities. Leeds communities are changing and it is vital that we have a clear understanding of who our citizens are in order to provide appropriate services in the most appropriate way.

Equality focus (objective)	Council Value
There is good evidence of the equalities profile of Leeds, based on national and local data, which is regularly reviewed	Working with communities

Equality Performance Area - Showing leadership and working in partnership. We will give due consideration to equality and diversity when we develop policies and make decisions. We will ensure that we fully understand the impacts of changed funding on different communities, and take this into account when making decisions

Equality focus (objective)	Council Value
Councillors and Officers have a reputation for championing equality issues and ensure that the equality issues relevant to Leeds are taken into account when making major decisions	Being open, honest and trusted

Equality Performance Area - Involving our communities - We will ensure communities are effectively able to influence what we do

Equality focus (objective)	Council Value
Equality groups are integrally involved in consultation and engagement activities	Working with communities

Equality Performance Area - A modern and diverse workforce – We will understand the make up of our workforce and work to ensure it is representative of the population of Leeds

Equality focus (objective)	Council Value
To make LCC an ‘employer of choice’ for people from groups in our communities whose diverse backgrounds are not yet fully represented in our workforce	Treating people fairly
To demonstrate increased engagement, year on year, for staff from groups whose diversity is not yet fully represented in our workforce.	
To improve opportunities for progression to senior levels in the organisation particularly for black, and minority ethnic and disabled staff	

Further detail is in supporting documentation which is available on the council website, and includes:

- Consultation and Involvement in Developing Equality Objectives
- Equality and Diversity Position Statement 2011
- Equality Analysis, Objectives and Activities 2011 - 2015
- Equality and Diversity Policy 2011 - 2015
- Approach to Embedding Equality 2011 - 2015

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