

# 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> Environments & Neighbourhoods	<b>Service area:</b> Strategy and Commissioning
<b>Lead person:</b> George Munson	<b>Contact number:</b> 3951767

<b>1. Title:</b> Bulk Fuel Purchase
Is this a:
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>

<b>2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening</b>
<p>A bulk fuel purchasing proposal, using grant funding from DECC (if successful), designed to reduce the costs of fuel to residents and to reduce overall energy demand over the longer term.</p> <p>The grant funding is time limited so we have entered into a partnership with CO2Sense to help design and deliver the scheme, including setting up contracts, running the procurement and designing marketing.</p> <p>The scheme works by asking residents to register their interest in bulk purchasing to access cheaper fuel bills, then once a target number of people have expressed an interest, to run a procurement/auction to get the best offer from energy suppliers. This offer is then made to registered residents who then decide whether to switch or not, and if so, they enter into a contract with their new energy supplier.</p>

<b>3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration</b>
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?	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
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>		X

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)

The recent Fuel Poverty Scrutiny contained a recommendation (no. 20):

“that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods leads on undertaking a cost-benefit and risk analysis for the Council to bulk purchase domestic heating fuel for householders.”

This proposal directly responds to this identified need to try to reduce the costs of energy to all Leeds residents.

Our main aims have been to identify an approach which would provide:

- Returns to the householder in terms of reduced bills, to maximise their available income;
- Access to the vulnerable fuel poor, including households with no or limited internet access;
- Added value in terms of behavioural change, links with energy efficiency projects and continued support of households to ensure that they received a longer term benefit than just the time limited decrease in costs afforded by the bulk purchase of the fuel itself.

The project has therefore considered how we can best access the vulnerable fuel poor, building on our existing expertise from years of delivering home energy efficiency improvements. We therefore plan to use an extensive community based approach, using our extensive networks of community organisations and frontline carers with an interest in issues of both poverty and 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)

We believe that this project will have a predominantly positive effect on equality issues. One known issue is that many people in fuel poverty underheat their homes and therefore have relatively low fuel bills. This means that less affluent customers do not stand to gain so much by switching as more affluent customers. However, as our model is based on pooling a referral fee from each switch to provide additional savings, less affluent households will be able to access additional support to cut their energy bills in the long term.

Another known issue is where households have fuel debt or pre-payment meters, which typically act as barriers to switching as energy companies do not actively seek these customers. We will therefore specify in the procurement that winning energy companies will have to accept a mix of both affluent and less affluent clients (including those with fuel debts).

- **Actions**

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

This is covered in the two paragraphs above.

**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
Tom Knowland	Head of Sustainable Development	06.11.2012

### 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.

Please send a copy to the Equality Team for publishing

<b>Date screening completed</b>	06.11.2012
<b>Date sent to Equality Team</b>	tbc
<b>Date published</b> (To be completed by the Equality Team)	