

# 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 and Neighbourhoods	<b>Service area:</b> Housing Support
<b>Lead person:</b> Kath Bramall	<b>Contact number:</b> 0113 224 3296

## 1. Title: Lettings Policy review 2013

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

A review of the council's lettings policy is required as a result of the Localism Act 2011 and to enable the council to assist social housing tenants affected by forthcoming Welfare Reform changes.

The proposed change are;

- Removal of sheltered properties and bungalows from the date of registration quota (DORQ)
- Change the local connection area from housing office to Ward
- 'Cap' waiting time to 6 months for owner occupiers in no housing need
- Reduce the number of properties advertised in the DORQ from 25% to 10%
- Introduce a penalty for customers in Band C who refuse a property
- Introduce a 'Qualification Criteria' for customers on the Leeds Homes Register
- Review the policy on rehousing for 16 and 17 year olds

- Extension of the priority period from 120 days to 180 days
- Amend the policy to reflect the regulations on the Armed Forces
- Award additional priority to tenants in smaller properties who are overcrowded in order to help free up properties for tenants affected by Welfare Reform to move into
- Ring fence some properties to give preference to tenants affected by Welfare Reform with a local connection.

### 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)

- **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)

In summary, the changes are intended to assist the council meet its legal duties to customers in housing need and support tenants affected by the forthcoming housing benefit changes which will affect under occupying council and housing association tenants of working age.

The positive impacts are:

- Removing sheltered properties and bungalows from the date of registration quota will increase proportion of lettings available to older and disabled customers in housing need or tenants affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria
- The introduction of a qualification criteria will assist in streamlining the housing register, to place focus on customers in housing need, those without sufficient resources to make their own arrangements,
- The policy on rehousing customers aged 16 and 17 will ensure adequate support is in place for the council to meet its obligations to younger people
- Awarding priority to under occupying tenants will release larger properties for overcrowded households who are more likely to be customers from BME groups.
- Tenants affected by the housing benefit changes who downsize will be better off financially

The main negative impact are there will be fewer properties available for customers without an assessed housing need.

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

The proposals will be consulted on before a final version of the lettings policy is approved by Executive Board.

A full EIA will be completed for consideration by Executive Board with the final version of the policy.

**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:	November 2012
Date to complete your impact assessment	March 2013
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	Kath Bramall Leeds Homes Policy Manager

**6. Governance, ownership and approval**

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

Name	Job title	Date

**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>	31 October 2012
<b>Date sent to Equality Team</b>	
<b>Date published</b> (To be completed by the Equality Team)	