

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.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Directorate: City Development | Service area: Housing Investment |
| Lead person: Sue Morse | Contact number: 0113 2474111 |

1. Title: The development of new council Housing

Is this a:

☒ **Strategy / Policy** ☐ **Service / Function** ☐ **Other**

If other, please specify

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

A report to Leeds City Council Executive Board on 9th January 2013 seeking approval to progress the development of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) new build programme towards final site selection from a shortlist of sites, and through to the design and construction phases. Also to delegate the development of HRA new build programme, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development and the Economy, to the Directors of City Development and Environment & Neighbourhoods.

The report proposes that the 3 year development programme will focus on the delivery of 1 and 2 bedroomed homes in view of the level of demand from older people and single people under 60 and the additional demand which is expected to be generated by the impact of Welfare reforms due for implementation in April, 2013.

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? | 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">• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment• Advancing equality of opportunity• Fostering good relations | 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 Programme to develop new council housing is designed to respond to priorities set out in the City's Priority Plan – the increasing need for housing, the specific need for affordable housing and to meet the needs of older people.

An analysis of current and predicted demand has been undertaken to inform the type of properties to be built. Leeds, in line with national trends, has a growing older population and a growing number of smaller households. Meeting the housing needs of older people, and responding to the impacts of Welfare Reform through provision of 1 bed properties have been identified as key housing delivery drivers.

Welfare reforms which are due to come into effect from April 2013 as a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 will see Housing Benefit entitlement reduced for working age tenants living in Council or Housing Association homes where tenants are deemed to have more bedrooms than they need.

The development of new council housing designed for smaller households (single people and couples) is anticipated to have a positive impact in meeting the needs of older people and those affected by welfare reform. However, there are potentially other equality groups who will be disadvantaged by the size and restrictions on allocation of these properties.

Local lettings plans will be drafted to develop an appropriate lettings strategy with the aim of achieving greater sustainability of communities and tenancies. The development of homes specifically for single people and couples will have a direct impact on those groups of people. However, it is envisaged that prioritisation of applications from Council tenants currently underoccupying via a Local lettings plan will facilitate a vacancy chain of larger properties, thus creating an indirect impact on provision of homes for other groups.

Equality related information is gathered from all applicants on the Leeds Homes Register and will be utilised to identify applicants who may have specific needs relating to disabilities.

Subject to Executive Board approval work will commence to develop detailed proposals for the sites identified for delivery of phase 1 of the programme. As the Programme enters its implementation phases, there will be opportunities to involve communities in development-specific decision-making, through neighbourhood based or statutory

planning processes. Project delivery will require those processes to be undertaken with equality principles in place, taking note of local demographics and informed by neighbourhood intelligence via tasking groups and other networks.

- **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)

- 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

Whilst it is anticipated that the programme will produce a positive impact for older people and for those affected by welfare reform this may generate a perception of a resultant negative impact for other groups, specifically in relation to the shortage of affordable homes generally. However, it is anticipated that a chain of events will be set in motion by the delivery of homes for single people in that larger homes will be made available for occupation by the actions of existing tenants vacating homes which they currently under occupy.

The City's Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO) who will be involved in the programme are regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency and are required to meet the highest standards of equality practice in housing development, allocations and tenancy management.

The impact of new housing in communities has the potential to alienate people living with deprivation and disadvantage who can perceive that they are further excluded.

- **Actions**

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

Opportunities for housing people with priority medical or disability related housing need will be investigated via the ALMO's rehousing procedures including pre allocation of the dwelling so that before completion of the development stage adjustments may be made to ensure that the individuals specific needs are met.

As the Housing Investment Programme enters its implementation phases, there will be opportunities to involve communities in development-specific decision-making, through neighbourhood based or statutory planning processes. Project delivery will require those processes to be undertaken with equality principles in place, taking note of local demographics and informed by neighbourhood intelligence via tasking groups and other networks.

Opportunities to create mixed economies in localities will be sought and the impact of integrating into disadvantaged host communities evaluated.

Equality populations will be made aware of opportunities to access affordable housing by

working with support agencies, private sector agents and community and faith organisations to ensure that promotional materials are appropriate, with community languages available on request.

Many of the Council owned brownfield sites included within a shortlist for consideration for delivery of this programme are located in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the city and the programme provides a solution with positive impact to the wider neighbourhood. It is envisaged that ensuring integration with existing communities at planning, implementation and post implementation stages will mitigate any potential negative impact on neighbourhood cohesion.

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: | To be confirmed once programme has been further developed subject to approval by LCC Executive Board |
| Date to complete your impact assessment | To be confirmed once programme has been further developed, subject to approval by LCC Executive Board |
| Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title) | Sue Morse, Programme Delivery Manager |

6. Governance, ownership and approval

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

| Name | Job title | Date |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Maggie Gjessing | Housing Investment Manager | 26 November 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

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|---|------------------|
| Date screening completed | 23 November 2012 |
| Date sent to Equality Team | |
| Date published (To be completed by the Equality Team) | |