

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 or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: Communities and Environment	Service area: Parks and Countryside
Lead person: Mike Kinnaird	Contact number: 3786002

1. Title: Proposal for Woodland Creation

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

Proposals on how the council can lead an ambitious initiative to combat climate change with a programme of education and community engagement focussed around tree planting and woodland creation.

The Committee on Climate Change have advised that tree planting rates of at least 30,000 hectares per year will be required in order for the UK to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050. The contribution in Leeds could be equivalent to almost doubling the current tree canopy cover from 17.1% to approximately 33% which represents a further 9,000 hectares of woodland creation.

The scale of this challenge is now becoming clear and presents a unique opportunity for the council to play a leading role via the Arium in education, community engagement and the provision of trees to establish an unprecedented tree growing programme. This will make Leeds a leading local authority nationally in responding to the need to grow

and plant trees.

The council's recreational land, grass verges and grass spaces around social housing equates to around 4,000 hectares of land which represents just over 7% of the total Leeds metropolitan area. Given that 9,000 hectares of additional tree cover is required then this would equate to 630 hectares of additional woodland. The need for action is clear and it is proposed as a minimum that 25 hectares of parks and green spaces needs to be planted each season with this figure reviewed in the light of emerging national policy on this issue. There is potential to expand woodland planting to include other council land as the scheme develops.

Community engagement and involvement is vital if such an ambitious programme of woodland creation is to be successful. The primary National Curriculum now has an emphasis on outdoor learning and there is scope to develop education packs for teachers using the Arium as a hub based around a wealth of opportunities in parks and green spaces across the city. There is also potential to encourage children and communities to help develop ideas on how more seeds can be collected and used for growing in the Arium.

The process of identifying suitable Parks and Countryside sites for woodland creation will need to be intensified in order that potential woodland areas can be established. In many cases areas of land can be dedicated for woodland creation although there will be many examples of where appropriate woodlands can be created within the context of existing community parks and enhance the overall recreation value. There is also potential for woodland creation within the street scene environment, particularly on large grass verges, large spaces around social housing and banked areas that are difficult to access with mowing machinery.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or 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. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

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		x

practices?		
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 Fridays for Future movement has seen marches internationally and in Leeds involving children and young people conducting ‘strikes’ from school to raise awareness of climate change issues. Extinction Rebellion held a protest in Leeds city centre lasting 5 days in July last year. Woodland creation therefore presents an opportunity to engage and educate children and the wider community in tree planting.

When a woodland is planted it is clearly with the long term intention that land is not used for any other purpose. It is therefore important that liaison is conducted across the council to determine if there could be other potential plans or alternative future usage of potential sites. Community engagement and involvement is vital if such an ambitious programme of woodland creation is to be successful. As suitable sites are identified, local ward members will be consulted initially before wider involvement with relevant community groups and making plans available publicly.

The primary National Curriculum now has an emphasis on outdoor learning and the Parks and Countryside service already facilities educational visits for over 40,000 children each year. There is scope to develop education packs for teachers using the Arium as a hub based around a wealth of opportunities in parks and green spaces across the city. Countryside rangers in Parks and Countryside already work with local schools to gather seeds which could be sent to the Arium for growing on and subsequently replanted. There is potential to encourage children and communities in developing ideas on how more seeds can be collected and used in this way.

With regard to tree planting it is proposed that as suitable sites are identified for woodland planting that compartments are identified suitable to allow the potential for volunteer planting.

- **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)

The proposals address the areas for concern identified above.

- **Actions**

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

To implement the community engagement programme and identify a range of suitable sites for tree and woodland planting across the city.

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
Sean Flesher	Chief Parks and Countryside Officer	29/11/19
Date screening completed		29/11/19

7. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions or a Significant Operational Decision.**

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.

- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: