

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) 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, Housing and Environment	Service area: Parking Services
Lead person: Mark Jefford	Contact number: 378 9751

1. Title: District Car Park Charges

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

The introduction of charges for car parking at the following car parks: Wilderness & Station Gardens in Wetherby; Fink Hill in Horsforth; Barleyhill Road in Garforth; Marsh Street in Rothwell & Netherfield Road in Guiseley.

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 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 consultation for Wilderness and Station Gardens in Wetherby commenced on 5.12.23 and ended on 21.1.24. Overall 1100 people completed the survey.

The consultation for Fink Hill in Horsforth; Barleyhill Road in Garforth; Marsh Street in Rothwell & Netherfield Road in Guiseley commenced on 4.12.23 and ended on 11.1.24. There were 4134 responses to this survey.

EDI analysis undertaken in relation to the car parking charges demonstrated that:

- Older people are less likely to disagree
- Disabled people are less likely to disagree
- Females are less likely to disagree
- Although there were some differences within different ethnic groups, none were statistically significant.

One potential issue is that cash will not be accepted as a payment method. Internet research shows there is no conclusion or steer from the Government over the use and acceptance of cash other than it is not a legal right to protect the use of cash, however from a Parking perspective it is still in legislation that a penalty charge notice (PCN (parking fine)) has to have a system in place to allow for the customer to pay for their PCN via cash. The national audit office produced a report on the 18th September 2020 titled 'The production and distribution of cash' that showed there is a significant decline in cash where the opening line into the conclusion of the report was "The declining use of cash is placing increasing pressure on the sustainability of the infrastructure for producing and distributing cash."

The increasing costs of handling cash needs to be considered alongside access to bank cards and smart phones. According to figures from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) published in August 2023, 2.1% of the country's adult population do not have access to a bank account. 4% of people do not have a smart phone. It is proposed that the parking machines will not accept cash payments, due to the risk of vandalism occurring to the machines. A recent study of how payments are made to other LCC machines across the city shows that only 15% of users chose to pay with cash, even though in some cases cash is cheaper than paying by card or app.

- 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)

- Charging for car parking could negatively impact on people with disabilities who are reliant on cars for travel
- Disproportionate impact on residents on lower incomes who may feel unable to visit the specific district centres if they have to pay for parking
- To avoid the problem of vandalism, the parking ticket machines will not have an option to purchase tickets using cash and will only accept payments using a bank card or a parking app. This could cause an issue for people who do not have access to a bank account or a compatible mobile phone. It has been flagged that there is a potential that this could disproportionately impact on the elderly.
- Female employees working in these areas that currently use the car parks who travel to work when it is dark may choose to stop using the car park due to the cost and therefore have to walk further and feel more vulnerable
- Evidence shows that poor air quality disproportionately impacts certain vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, people with underlying health conditions and pregnant women. Therefore, encouraging people to travel by alternative means to the car provides a positive impact to these groups.

- **Actions**

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

- A blanket charge for all users could negatively impact disabled people who rely on a car to access the sites so, as part of the proposed scheme, we intend to ensure sufficient disabled parking bays are available in each car park and exempt blue badge holders from the proposed charges.
- The proposal could also potentially have a disproportionate impact on residents on lower incomes who may feel unable to visit these areas if they have to pay for parking. However, evidence suggests that people on the lowest incomes in society are unlikely to own and run a car so the charges would not impact them. In addition, the charges proposed are very modest (and comparable to the cost of a return bus ticket in the city) to mitigate the potential problem of reducing access to the parks for people on lower incomes. It should also be noted that parking at other district car parks is not part of this scheme and will remain free.
- It has been noted that mobile phone signal may fluctuate across the city depending on the network and area. We are in contact with the providers of both the cashless system and the parking machines to ensure that there is good connectivity in the car parks before the scheme is introduced.

- Lower income workers, especially females, may avoid the car parks and park further away if charges are implemented to save on costs. This could lead to them having to walk in the dark at times (e.g. in winter) to get to their cars which has raised concerns about safety. The charges will only apply up to 6pm. The charges are proposed to be set at affordable levels (65p for 2 hours, £3.65 for all day and £12.15 for a week). We will investigate allowing the relevant businesses to purchase passes that can be transferred between employees when at work to help mitigate this risk.
- Post implementation the service will continue to listen to feedback on the scheme, especially from those with protected characteristics.

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:	
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Date to complete your impact assessment	
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Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	
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6. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Mark Jefford	Parking Manager	18 September 2024

Date screening completed	
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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: