

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. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Environment and Housing	Service area: Housing Management
Lead person: Jo-Ann Bradley	Contact number: 3785899
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 28/02/2018	

1. Title: Meynell's Local Letting Policy, for the new build properties off Meynell Approach, Holbeck, LS11.

Is this a:

Strategy /Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Katie Dixon-White	Leeds City Council	Housing Manager

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

This report outlines the framework for the Local Lettings Policy developed for the 28 new council houses on Meynell's, Holbeck, LS11.

The properties will be available to rent in March 2020.

The Local Lettings Policy has been developed in line with the council's framework for letting new build homes which aim to create mixed communities, reward good behaviour and waiting time and meet housing need in the local area.

This approach is supported by the Localism Act 2011 and the Code of Guidance on Allocations 2012 which states the policy objectives behind the changes in the Act included making *'it easier for existing social tenants to move by removing the constraints of Part 6*

from those social tenants who apply to the housing authority for a transfer, unless they have reasonable preference. Housing authorities will be able to strike a balance between meeting the needs of existing tenants and new applicants for social housing, while making best use of their stock' (paragraph 2.1).

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment
 (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan
 (please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:
 The Local Lettings Policy for 28 properties off Meynell Approach, Holbeck, LS11.

4b. Service, function, event
 please tick the appropriate box below

The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

5. Fact finding – what do we already know
 Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.
 (priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)

- Information held on the Leeds Homes Register on demand for housing in the Beeston &

Holbeck ward area • Consultation responses by equality groups
Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information Please provide detail:
Action required: Some equality information is missing from the Orchard Housing system, mainly on older applications registered before we introduced questions on equality issues.

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please provide detail: The council has consulted with local ward members and the local community in developing the proposals for the local lettings policy. This included a mailshot being sent to local residents and customers on the housing register, a survey questionnaire left available for pick up at the local housing office and a ‘drop in’ consultation event outside the local church on Holbeck Moor Road. People who responded to the consultation were asked to provide information about their background.
Action required: A summary of the consultation responses is included as an Appendix to the delegated decision to approve the local lettings policy.

7. Who may be affected by this activity? Please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function
Equality characteristics
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)
Please specify:

People who are unable to meet the criteria for all the preference categories:

- People with no connection to the Beeston & Holbeck ward area
- People without an excellent tenancy record, including vulnerable customers with unmet support needs
- People who do not fall into any of the other preference groups.

Stakeholders

Services users

Employees

Trade Unions

Partners

Members

Suppliers

Other please specify

Potential barriers.

Built environment

Location of premises and services

Information and communication

Customer care

Timing

Stereotypes and assumptions

Cost

Consultation and involvement

specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function

Please specify

- The demand for the new properties is likely to outstrip the supply, meaning the council's local lettings policy will determine which households are offered accommodation.
- The new build properties are likely to be perceived as more desirable than existing council stock in the area, and applicants who are not offered a new home may be dissatisfied with the local lettings policy, although the number of new build homes is small compared to the overall number of council homes we normally let in the area. In addition the new build homes will be let at a higher rent than other council houses in the area.
- The properties will be advertised through the Leeds Homes choice based letting system, some customers may face barriers accessing information about the properties.

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

The LLP gives preference to customers with a connection to the Beeston & Holbeck ward area. This will benefit people living in or having close family living in the area or who can establish a connection with the area in another way, and will contribute towards community cohesion and integration.

The LLP gives preference to Leeds City Council tenants with an excellent tenancy record, taking into account any rent arrears, the condition of the property and any antisocial behaviour. This will make the development sustainable and contribute towards community cohesion and integration. This will also create additional voids by freeing up other council homes when existing tenants transfer. By including the excellent tenancy record which takes account of the condition of the property the council aims to keep void costs and void times to a minimum, meaning the homes that are freed up will be reallocated to other applicants on the housing register as quickly as possible, including other households in housing need.

The local lettings policy will split the allocation of properties equally between date of application (50%) and priority band (50%). For properties allocated under date of application, it is further intended that for the 1 bed apartments (7 properties) employment is considered within the order of preference. The remaining 1 bed apartments (7 properties) will be shortlisted by priority band; therefore the employment criteria is only applicable to a proportion of the properties available within the Meynell scheme (25%).

The LLP gives preference to applicants who are in employment for a proportion of the properties available as outlined above. There is a lack of affordable housing around the city centre, particularly for single applicants not in priority need; utilising a small proportion of the properties within Meynell's site (25%) is a positive way to address this housing demand for this group.

The LLP gives preference of offers to applicants who are in the most housing need, helping to rehouse the most vulnerable applicants from the housing register. They will be placed in secure tenancies in a well-insulated, warm and secure home which will meet their needs for the remainder of their lifetime.

The LLP gives preference to applicants living in a home too big for their needs. These customers may free up social housing if they are moving from another council or housing association property, which will be available to let to other customers on the housing waiting list.

The properties will be allocated in accordance with the council's main lettings policy, namely to applicants on the housing register who have primary care of dependent children, or with an assessed medical need for a house as opposed to any other property type. The council will aim to let the houses at full occupation based on the bedroom standard set out in the main lettings policy. Prior to any offer being made the council will undertake affordability checks to ensure prospective tenants are able to afford the rent to avoid and issues arising at a later stage.

Action required:

- Leeds City Council to monitor lettings outcomes
- Properties to be advertised with details of the Affordable Rent and applicants to be advised if they are not able to afford the rent following affordability checks

8b. Negative impact:

The LLP gives preference to customers with a connection to the area which disadvantages customers with and urgent housing need who have no connection to the area.

The LLP gives preference to customers with an excellent tenancy record which may disadvantage customers who have accrued arrears or committed anti-social behaviour due to unmet support needs.

The LLP gives preference to applicants who are in employment which may disadvantage applicants who are unemployed, retired, in training or with caring responsibilities or applicants with a disability.

It has been considered that giving preference to applicants in employment for a proportion of the 1 bed apartments (50% of the 1 bed apartments and only 25% of the properties within the Meynell scheme overall) would not disproportionately disadvantage applicants that are not in employment (retired, in training, disabled, carers etc.) as there is sufficient 1 bed stock in the Beeston & Holbeck ward area to meet this demand; and the remaining 50% of the 1 bed apartments will be allocated based on housing need

The 1 bed apartments in the Meynell's scheme represent 4% of the overall 1 bed stock in the ward area; utilising 25% of the Meynell site (7 x 1 bed apartments) to preference employment would represent just 1% of the overall 1 bed stock in the Beeston & Holbeck ward area.

The local lettings policy gives preference to Leeds City Council tenants for both houses/apartments living in the ward area. The key benefit of this approach is that this will release additional stock in the ward area that would become available under the Council's Lettings Policy and would therefore not have any employment criteria/restrictions.

In developing the criteria for the local lettings policy, the council has considered the equality groups who may be unable to meet the criteria and allowed for the criteria to be relaxed, for example, an offer could be made a customer with a recognised carer who is unable to meet the employment criteria.

Giving preference to applicants living in a home too big for their needs may disadvantage other customer groups.

Giving preference to customers who are in the most housing need may disadvantage those who have been waiting a long time to be rehoused with no priority need.

Action required:

The connection to the Beeston & Holbeck ward area is wide enough to encompass residence, family, employment and other reasons.

The definition of residence includes previous periods of residence within the last 5 years, so someone who had to move away from the area recently for example due to being threatened with violence would still be able to establish a connection provided they had lived in the ward for 3 of the last 5 years or 6 of the last 12 months. To mitigate any adverse equality impacts, the council has the discretion to waive the connection requirement in exceptional circumstances where undue hardship would otherwise result.

The council will normally look at tenancy record over the last 5 years. In exceptional circumstances, customers with minor tenancy breaches who have demonstrated a change in behaviour to be exempted from the requirement for an excellent tenancy record. In addition, the council will also consider whether the breach has arisen because the customer required a support package or if there are any other exceptional circumstances that may justify overlooking a tenancy breach.

If a household is in housing need due to having a child in need, and they are not able to meet the strict criteria of the LLP (for example, in terms of tenancy record), the council will consider their application on a case by case basis when working through the shortlist.

In developing the criteria for the local lettings policy, the council has considered the equality groups who may be unable to meet the criteria and allowed for the criteria to be relaxed, for example, an offer could be made a customer with a recognised carer who is unable to meet the employment criteria.

In exceptional circumstances, customers who top the shortlist who are in urgent housing need for reasons other than those listed in the local lettings policy may be considered on a case by case basis.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Under the LLP, customers will have to demonstrate an excellent tenancy record and a connection to the area. This will contribute towards community cohesion and sustainable tenancies, increase tenant satisfaction, reduce turnover and help create a balanced community.

Action required:

The council will monitor the outcome of lettings.

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other? (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)

Yes

No

Please provide detail: See point 9 above.

Action required: Post-handover Housing Leeds will contact the new tenants and residents to promote the local tenant and residents group.

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another? (e.g. where your activity/decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)



Yes



No

Please provide detail:

The demand for the new properties is likely to outstrip the supply and the new build homes are likely to be perceived as being more desirable than the council's existing stock, meaning the council's local lettings policy will determine which households are offered accommodation. Customers who do not receive preference may perceive the LLP to be unfair.

Action required:

The connection definition is wide enough to encompass residence, employment, family and other reasons. To mitigate any adverse equality impacts, the council has the discretion to waive the connection requirement in exceptional circumstances where undue hardship would otherwise result.

In exceptional circumstances, customers with minor tenancy breaches who have demonstrated a change in behaviour may be exempted from the requirement for an excellent tenancy record. In addition, the council will also consider whether the breach has arisen because the customer required a support package.

LCC to ensure that new properties are publicised and that the property adverts in the Leeds Homes website and flyer include clear details about the LLP criteria.

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan (insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)			
Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Leeds City Council to monitor lettings outcomes	By September 2020	Project Team to review outcome of first lettings	Lettings and Tenancy Management Team
To mitigate any adverse equality impacts, the council has the discretion to waive the connection requirement in exceptional circumstances where undue hardship would otherwise result.	At shortlisting stage	LCC to consider whether exemptions apply to customers in the order they appear on the shortlist	Beeston & Holbeck Lettings Team
In exceptional circumstances, customers with minor tenancy breaches who have demonstrated a change in behaviour to be exempted from the requirement for an excellent tenancy record . In addition, the council will also consider whether the breach has arisen because the customer required a support package or if there are any other exceptional circumstances that may justify overlooking a tenancy breach.	At shortlisting stage	LCC to consider whether exemptions apply to customers in the order they appear on the shortlist	Beeston & Holbeck Lettings Team
If a household is in housing need due to having a child in need , and they are not able to meet the strict criteria of the LLP (for example, in terms of tenancy record), the council will consider their application on a case by case basis when working through the shortlist.	At shortlisting stage	LCC to consider whether exemptions apply to customers in the order they appear on the shortlist	Beeston & Holbeck Lettings Team
In exceptional circumstances, customers who top the shortlist who are in urgent housing need for reasons other than	At shortlisting stage	LCC to consider whether exemptions apply to customers in the order they appear on the shortlist	LCC Comms Team, Beeston & Holbeck Lettings Team and Leeds Homes Team

those listed in the local lettings policy will be considered on a case by case basis when working through the shortlist.			
Properties to be advertised with details of the Affordable Rent and applicants to be advised if they are not able to afford the rent following affordability checks .	At shortlisting stage	Information included in property adverts and affordability checks completed with prospective tenants prior to offer	Beeston & Holbeck Lettings Team
Advertise the houses as being for households with primary care of dependent children . Households made up of all-adults should be advised to apply for other property types such as flats.	At advertising stage	Information included in property adverts	Leeds Homes Team
Post-handover Housing Leeds will contact the new tenants and residents to promote the local tenant and residents group.	At viewing / sign up once properties allocated to new tenants	Engagement with new tenants	Tenant and Community Involvement Team / Gipton Housing Office
LCC to ensure that new properties are publicised and that the property adverts in the Leeds Homes website and flyer include clear details about the LLP criteria	At advertising stage	Information included in property adverts	Leeds Homes Team

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Katie Dixon-White	Housing Manager	14/03/2018

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

This Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this impact assessment relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** Equality and Diversity, Cohesion and Integration impact assessment's should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date impact assessment completed	14/03/2018
If relates to a Key Decision – date sent to Corporate Governance	
Any other decision – date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)	