

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: Children and Families Services	Service area: Residential Services
Lead person: Joel Hanna	Contact number: 0113 3783643

1. Title: New build residential home for children with complex autism needs

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify
 This is a new residential home for children with complex needs to complement the provision already in existence within Residential Services

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

Currently there are a number of our children and young people with complex needs who are looked after and live in external residential homes as Leeds does not have enough appropriate and specialist provision to meet their needs. This cohort of children typically have learning difficulties, are on the autistic spectrum or have a high level of physical or medical needs. They often display high levels of behaviours that challenge.

This new home will offer the relevant specialist provision required in Leeds to ensure these children can stay close to family and friends and live within local communities.

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?**

We recognise the potential for detrimental impact on our children and young people and their outcomes for those who live in external residential placements, often at a significant distance from their families. Nationally this impact has been evidenced by enquires such as the Winterbourne Review and Lenehan Report, "These are Our Children" that

highlighted the creation of an “alternative normal”. We recognise the dangers of institutionalisation, lack of personal autonomy and the potential impact on long term outcomes for our children and young people.

There are logistical and wellbeing issues created for our children and young people who live at a distance from their families, friends and communities. This is mirrored by the practical and operational issues for local professionals and the potential negative impact this has on preparing for adulthood and transition to local adult services. Clearly there is also a negative impact on adult social care budgets and the Leeds pound. We have evidence to suggest that transitions for young people living locally benefit from closer working relationships with their family, support networks and professionals. This improves the quality of the assessment and planning for future needs and required provision therefore improving the young person’s life experience and reducing the risk of placement breakdown.

We will also pay due cognisance to the varying needs of children and young people with specific BAME, Sex, Disability, Religious and Belief requirements, support and care.

- **Key findings**

The new home (built on the old Pinfolds children homes site in Halton) for children and young people with complex autism needs will:

Support the City’s priorities which focus on matters such as supporting families to give children the best start in life.

Maintain a local provision that supports a ‘Sustainable Infrastructure’ by minimising the need for local families to travel an extended distance.

Support the authority’s Health & Wellbeing strategies which strives to improve the outcomes of all citizens of Leeds.

Ensure children and young people live locally, closer to their families and friends enabling closer, increased contact as appropriate. This can support continuity of relationships and links with communities in Leeds which in turn should positively impact on the wellbeing needs of the children and young people. Living locally also means we are more likely to be able to build on this continuity of relationships to support reunification work with an increased potential for success.

Ensure living in Leeds continues facilitate coordinated preparation for adulthood amongst key partners to support effective transition to appropriate adult services, reduce unnecessary costs and improve outcomes/quality of life.

- **Actions**

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

The project team made up of colleagues from within Childrens Residential Services, Childrens Health and Disabilities Services, Occupation Health Services, Social Work Services, Asset Management Services and NPS have agreed the design and have

developed the project in consultation with Adult Social Care and a professor at Leeds University who specialises in Children on the Autism Spectrum. This thorough analysis has ensured we develop a new home that meets the most complex needs of children with autism

The local community have been kept abreast of developments on site via publications on local notice boards. This communication will develop further as we progress and work on site.

Cllrs and Ward members have been provided with briefings.

We will engage with children and families further when we have final confirmation to proceed with the project. This will primarily be undertaken to assist with transition arrangements and also build a familiarity and contact with the new home.

We hope all of the above has allowed for a communication process that allows everyone to ask questions of the project and reduce any unfounded negative impacts for the local community, LCC and children and young people and their families.

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
Juan McCreedy	Project Co-ordinator	18 th January 2021

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

Date screening completed	
Date sent to Equality Team	
Date published (To be completed by the Equality Team)	