

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: Adults & Health	Service area: Integrated Commissioning
Lead person: Jo Buck	Contact number: 378 9372

1. Title: Approval of grant fund spending towards support costs of Somewhere Safe to Stay

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

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

This screening assessment is in relation to the decision to approve use of Government Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Rough Sleeper Initiative grant funding for the operation and running costs of new supported accommodation for women who are homeless or rough sleeping – Somewhere Safe to Stay.

On the 27th March 2020, in responding to the government guidance of the Corona Virus Pandemic, Leeds City Council moved all people placed in shared units of emergency accommodation into hotel rooms that had self-contained amenities, this included a small number of women accommodated by the Somewhere Safe to Stay HUB pilot scheme.

The Government invited bids for funding to help Local Authorities plan for longer term in

how services will be delivered as an alternative to the short term hotel provision, as any return to the communal shared facilities is not possible due to the higher risk of spreading the virus and difficulty in social distancing.

An opportunity arose to re-develop accommodation to continue the work done by the original Somewhere Safe to Stay pilot, which provided accommodation for vulnerable women who were rough sleeping or homeless.

The new premises will be leased to the Council from the landowner and provide 7 self-contained rooms, onsite support to the women will be delivered by staff from St Anne's Community Services. A further 2 units of accommodation will be available for emergency safeguarding and severe weather protocols

In September 2020 the Council was successful in receiving Government grant funding to assist with creating re-provisioned alternative services going forward from 2021, receiving £350,000. This NSAP funding was towards costs of refurbishment and construction.

A separate Government funding stream, the Rough Sleeper Initiative, has been identified as providing sufficient funding to enable the operating costs of the new service to be met.

The main objective of developing the Somewhere Safe to Stay project is to accommodate vulnerable women who are rough sleeping and to comply with the National Rough Sleeping Strategy, reducing the number of rough sleepers in the city.

The Government published its national rough sleeper strategy in August 2018. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars':

- To prevent new people from starting to sleep rough
- To intervene rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street
- To promote a person's recovery once they are off the street to build positive lives and don't return to rough sleeping.

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?	Y	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		N
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		N
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		N
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 	Y	

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?**

There is evidence of need that accommodation specific for women is required in the City. The new Somewhere Safe to Stay proposal will provide 9 units of accommodation for vulnerable females that prior to COVID 19 would have access to communal accommodation via the Safe to Stay Hub.

The accommodation will support women with complex needs including those with alcohol and substance misuse, mental and physical ill health, at risk of violence, sex working or prison leavers. This will be managed through a multi-agency approach , combining a referral and assessment process, observation and perceptions at referral and throughout the stay, Out of Hours screening and emergency services support as last resort.

Consultation has been carried out with strategic and third sector partners through the COVID 19 silver group partners, all of whom are in agreement with the proposal.

- **Key findings**

The proposal will have a positive impact on vulnerable women and some of the most marginalised individuals experiencing inequalities. It will offer good quality emergency and short term supported accommodation that will meet the following objectives:

- To **prevent** vulnerable females from starting to sleep rough
- To **intervene** rapidly when vulnerable females start to sleep rough to help them off the street
- To promote a person's **recovery** once they are off the street to build positive lives that stop them returning to rough sleeping
- To **promote long term health and wellbeing**, reducing risk of harm and enabling access to services by removing barriers through individual support packages.

- **Actions**

To ensure the project is successful and meets the needs of vulnerable women, support provided will be part of a well-established support network that is already in operation to meet the needs of the cohort of females that will access the accommodation. A full assessment of needs will be undertaken at the referral stage and a restorative, holistic

support package will be agreed. This will be a multi-agency package to ensure clients;

- Have a personal housing plan in place to prevent them from rough sleeping in the future.
- Have a pathway to secure accommodation that is suitable to their needs, such as social housing, private rented accommodation, Beacon supported housing.
- Engage with services that provide support to live independently, become “tenancy ready” and to sustain a tenancy, such as DWP, Engage Leeds.
- Engage with move on support via Engage Leeds.
- Engage with services that provide health and wellbeing support and specialist services that prevent homelessness, such as Bevan Health Care Nurses, Street Outreach Workers, Forward Leeds Substance Misuse Workers, Simon on the Streets female outreach workers and assistance from female only support providers such as Women’s Lives Leeds, Basis and Joanna Project.

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
Julie Staton	Head of Commissioning	12.07.2021
Date screening completed		9.07.2021

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: