

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, Housing and Environment	Service area: Parks and Countryside
Lead person:	Contact number:

1. Title: Seasonal Bedding and Floral Decorations Reduction

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

Proposed changes to seasonal bedding displays and city centre floral decorations in response to climate change issues. To help achieve climate change objectives as well as contribute to the medium-term financial plan, proposals were approved at Executive Board in December 2020 to save £134k on the cost of seasonal bedding. Following a consultation exercise earlier this year there is now a proposal to create over 1 hectare of new pollinator friendly wildflower areas in place of traditional bedding displays. The intention is to replace some bedding primarily with wildflower displays but also to include where appropriate the removal of beds, reduction in size of existing beds or perennial planting. Similarly, a proposal for a 50% reduction in floral decorations in the city centre (with a cost saving of £16k) was also approved at Executive Board subject to consultation. This proposal does not affect displays outside the city centre or support for 'in bloom' activities. The intention is to retain floral decorations at key gateways, civic buildings and cultural areas whilst areas proposed for removal are in retail and legal/business areas, however these could be retained if local businesses wished to fund them.

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)

In December 2019 the findings of the Big Climate Conversation were published which saw council officers and volunteers engage with residents about the climate emergency. A mixed-method approach was taken that included online questionnaires, in-person conversations, focus groups and social media.

A consultation exercise specific to the proposal to reduce seasonal bedding and floral decorations was undertaken commencing on 11th January 2021 for a 3-week period to the 1st February. The survey outlined the council budget position and the proposed reduction in seasonal bedding and floral decorations along with the information highlighted in the table on the setting for each display. The survey was available online with the option of filling in a paper copy if required.

- **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)

In total, 7,835 individuals participated and Almost all residents (97.1%) agreed with the scientific consensus that the climate is changing and that the earth's warming is due to human activity (93.4%). More than nine out of ten residents agreed they are worried about wildlife loss (97.3%), biodiversity loss (96.3%), and the frequency of extreme weather events in the future (93.3%). Four out of five respondents strongly agreed that they are worried about the effects of climate change on future generations (82.7%).

Residents were also asked to indicate their support for eleven different proposals ('big ideas') that the council could explore to help reduce the carbon footprint in Leeds. There was widespread support for each of these proposals. Notably, every proposal was supported by at least 84% of respondents. '**WILD**' was the most popular choice, referring to planting more wildlife-friendly species in parks, verges and flower beds. This includes choosing to plant more species that better support wildlife and pollinating insects as well as to help beautify the council's parks, verges and flower beds.

There were 383 responses to the questionnaire with 72% who supported retaining some seasonal bedding displays, and 58% supported retaining some floral

decorations in the city centre. Those who stated 'no' to seasonal bedding altogether were mainly due to the need to make savings, regarding them as 'nice to have' with the need for more sustainable planting to benefit pollinators and wildlife as an alternative. Those who stated 'no' to floral decorations were mainly due to the need to make savings and that floral features are better experienced in a natural setting.

• Actions

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

Reconfiguration of beds will take place over autumn/winter ready for wildflower displays in spring/summer 2022. Those beds that are to be retained with seasonal bedding will be planted out in autumn as usual. Revised arrangements for floral decorations within the city centre will be put in place late May/June 2022.

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	12 th October 2021
Date screening completed		

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: