

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

<b>Directorate: Communities, Housing and Environment</b>	<b>Service area: Safer and Stronger Communities</b>
<b>Lead person: Gerry Shevlin</b>	<b>Contact number: 3789708</b>
<b>Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b>	

**1. Title:** Domestic Violence and Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy

Is this a:

**Strategy / Policy**       **Service / Function**       **Other**

**If other, please specify**

**2. Members of the assessment team:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role on assessment team For example, service user, manager of service, specialist</b>
Jane Maxwell	LCC	Head of service
Jude Roberts	LCC	Manager

<b>3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:</b>
<p>The Domestic Violence and Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Commissioning Strategy sets out how the Local Authority will fulfil its statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The Strategy will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve support to victims-survivors in safe accommodation</li> <li>2. Increase the availability of accommodation options for victims-survivors</li> <li>3. Improve our responses to Domestic Violence and Abuse through a coordinated partnership</li> </ol> <p>It is based on a comprehensive needs assessment and was developed in consultation with victims-survivors of Domestic Violence and Abuse, partners and stakeholders.</p>

**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)

<b>4a. Strategy, policy or plan</b> (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"/>
<p><b>Please provide detail:</b>          The strategy sets out the vision, ambitions and values that will enable the delivery of support in safe accommodation to victims-survivors of DVA and their children. It outlines the current relevant provision, the needs that have been identified and the three strategic priorities for delivery.</p>	

<b>4b. Service, function, event</b> please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service	<input type="checkbox"/>

(including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please provide detail:</b>	

**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).

We know from national and local data that DVA is a gendered crime that disproportionately affects women. Monitoring of numbers of people reporting to the police and accessing specialist services indicates that there is under-reporting of DVA from the LGBT+ community as well as ethnic and religious minority communities. Findings from Domestic Homicide Reviews show a high prevalence of fatal DVA in the over 50 age group. Research collated by Safe Lives tells us that women in households with an income of less than £10,000 were 3.5 times more at risk of DVA than in households with an income over £20,000. Most high-risk victims are in their 20s or 30s and nearly 1 in 3 women who suffer DVA report that the first incidence of violence happened while they were pregnant. DVA was raised as an issue in several focus groups aimed at engaging marginalised women as part of the Leeds City Listening project in 2019-20.

A comprehensive needs assessment was carried out when developing the Strategy, gathering information from victims-survivors, practitioners, and data sources. Findings from this needs assessment (focusing on those with particular equality impacts) included:

- Having No Recourse to Public Funds is a barrier to accessing safe accommodation
- Victims-survivors with mental health issues and substance misuse require more specialist support
- There is limited capacity to provide specialist DVA support for children and young people in safe accommodation
- Women from minority communities are over-represented in refuge accommodation, but under-represented in reported incidents
- The highest concentrations of reported incidents are from communities with greater deprivation and hardship

**Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information**  
**Please provide detail:**

There is a gap in the understanding around why reports of DVA from minority communities and LGBT+ communities are low.

People who experience DVA but have No Recourse to Public Funds experience specific

challenges in accessing support in safe accommodation. Whilst there are legal constraints around how services can be delivered, a better understanding of those challenges and greater awareness within services about what support they can provide is necessary.

**Action required:**  
Continue to promote specialist services to these groups and continue to ensure awareness campaigns reach these audiences.

To collect equality monitoring data for victims-survivors who are accessing the Support in Safe Accommodation offer to understand if the offer is equally accessible to all.

**6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested**

Yes       No

**Please provide detail:**  
We liaised with partners providing specialist DVA services and through them had a series of conversations with women who have experienced DVA. These were done via one-to-one conversations with a trusted worker, in support group settings and one meeting of women who have been brought together to form a service user panel. There was a culturally diverse representation of views.

We were not able to safely consult with children or young people who have experienced DVA so liaised with CYP services to ensure their needs were considered.

**Action required:**  
Continue to develop mechanisms for service user involvement, including involving children and young people.

**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 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"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**Sex (male or female)****Sexual orientation****Other**

**(Other** can include – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being)

**Please specify:** We also know that people with complex needs (including substance misuse and mental health issues) are over-represented as experiencing DVA. Whilst poverty is not a cause of DVA, we know that financial pressure can be a trigger for abuse.

**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****Financial exclusion****Employment and training****specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function****Please specify**

There is a stigma attached to DVA that often inhibits victims-survivors from recognising the abuse and seeking help. This can be more greatly felt for people in some communities including communities where there are stereotypes around cultural norms.

**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
<b>8a. Positive impact:</b>
<p>This strategy will have an overall positive impact on people in Leeds who experience domestic violence and abuse. It will improve the access to support in safe accommodation by increasing the support available in refuges and expanding their capacity to accept out of hours referrals thus enabling people to access accommodation sooner and for those with more complex needs to be better supported.</p> <p>The Sanctuary Support project will enable many more people to remain safely in their homes; this will mean they can continue to seek support from within their own networks (including faith groups, cultural groups, and support that is age appropriate) and experience less disruption, thus increasing their overall wellbeing and life chances.</p> <p>It will allow non-specialist housing providers to provide accommodation-based support in supported housing settings, which will again benefit a wide range of people who may be unable to access DVA agencies. This includes younger people who may not recognise their experience as abuse and people for whom other issues may mask the equality challenges they face.</p>
<b>Action required:</b>
Ensure that promotion of the new support that is available reaches all communities in Leeds.

<b>8b. Negative impact:</b>
None identified.
<b>Action required:</b>
N/A

<b>9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the</b>
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<b>groups/communities identified?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
<b>Please provide detail:</b>	
The partnership approach to developing and delivering this strategy has contributed to positive relationships across the sector.	
The engagement with victims-survivors will continue to improve their confidence in services whilst also improving the service that is being delivered as a result of their input.	
The delivery of the strategy will improve the life chances and overall wellbeing of victims-survivors thus enabling them to play an active role in society.	
<b>Action required:</b>	
Continue to engage with victims-survivors from all communities in delivering the strategy.	
Ensure monitoring arrangements explore the impact on people with protected characteristics.	

<b>10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other?</b> (for example, in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
<b>Please provide detail:</b>	
The majority of the strategy will be delivered to people on a one-to-one basis, however there will be opportunities to be involved in group work for support and consultation/engagement purposes. This will bring people together from different backgrounds and increase their understanding of each other.	
<b>Action required:</b>	
As above.	

<b>11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?</b> (for example where your activity or decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
<b>Please provide detail:</b>	

<b>Action required:</b>
N/A

**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)

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Lead person</b>
Continue to promote specialist services to these groups and continue to ensure awareness campaigns reach these audiences.	During 21/22	Numbers of people accessing services and numbers of people receiving information about the service.	Jude Roberts
To collect equality monitoring data for victims-survivors who are accessing the Support in Safe Accommodation offer to understand if the offer is equally accessible to all.	Quarterly in line with requirements of DLUHC	Numbers of people accessing services with protected characteristics.	Alison Ferguson
Continue to develop mechanisms for service user involvement, including involving children and young people.	Ongoing – with regular updates provided to DALPB at quarterly meetings.	Improvement in engagement of service users.	Jude Roberts/Gerry Shevlin
Ensure that promotion of the new support that is available	During 21/22	Numbers of people accessing services and numbers of	Jude Roberts/Gerry Shevlin

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Lead person</b>
reaches all communities in Leeds.		people receiving information about the service.	
Continue to engage with victims-survivors from all communities in delivering the strategy.	Ongoing – with regular updates provided to DALPB at quarterly meetings.	Improvement in engagement of service users.	Jude Roberts/Gerry Shevlin
Ensure monitoring arrangements explore the impact on people with protected characteristics.	Quarterly in line with requirements of DLUHC	Numbers of people accessing services with protected characteristics.	Alison Ferguson

**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
Jane Maxwell	Head of Safeguarding and Strategic Partnerships	12/10/21
<b>Date impact assessment completed</b>		<b>12/10/21</b>

**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**

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 impact assessment 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 impact assessments that are not to be published should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk) for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached assessment was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to <b>Governance Services</b>	Date sent: 14/10/21
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate <b>Directorate</b>	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to <a href="mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk">equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk</a>	Date sent: