

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: Communities, Housing and Environment	Service area: Housing and Homelessness
Lead person: Mandy Sawyer	Contact number: 07891276430
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: February 2022	

1. Title: Approval of the updated Leeds Housing Strategy
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team For example, service user, manager of service, specialist
Mandy Sawyer	LCC	Head of Housing & Homelessness
Simon Baker	LCC	Policy Officer

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

The update of the 2022-27 Leeds Housing Strategy has been assessed. It sets out the high-level strategy for the city for the next five years in terms of the city's housing provision, across a number of themes. The strategy isn't simply concerned with providing new housing, it considers how the existing stock can be made suitable for the future and how housing meets the needs of the city's diverse communities and how residents are supported to remain independent.

The new Strategy's development has been informed by the wider strategic evolution that has happened in the city since the last Housing Strategy was developed in 2016. The Best City Ambition, and the development of the Three Pillars, have given an increased focus on what the city's goals are and these have been reflected in the new Strategy.

The Council's wider strategy, as encapsulated in the new Best City Ambition, is centred firmly on tackling poverty and inequalities and this new Strategy seeks to complement those aims. The Ambition aims to build upon the strengths that have come to the fore throughout Leeds's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, capturing the spirit of genuine partnership between organisations to deliver for local people, and the vital contribution that everyone living or working here can make to our shared efforts to improve the lives of people who live in all parts of the city.

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 Housing Strategy states the city's ambition for the housing sector for the next five years, and its role in improving outcomes for the people of Leeds in the many areas where the housing sector impacts on people's lives and communities. It is built around the Three Pillars that define the Council's overarching strategic priorities. The city's housing sector has an important role in delivering the outcomes that each pillar requires.

The Strategy is comprised of six key themes, and these have equality impacts that reflect the focus of each theme. The themes are:

- Meeting Affordable Housing Need – concerned with increasing new affordable housing, and effectively meeting the demand for affordable housing via the social rented sector. There is a high demand for social housing, and very often the wait for affordable accommodation can be felt by those people who have protected characteristics. For example, the homeless community has many people who are affected by issues related to their sexuality, gender, or race.
- Improving Housing Quality – this theme is concerned with achieving zero carbon and improving the quality of all homes. Research has shown that members of the BAME community are more likely to suffer from sub-standard housing.
- Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – this theme aims to improve the city’s offer to marginalised groups, making sure people are given the right housing and support offer to help them achieve a sustainable tenancy. As noted above, people affected by homelessness are very often part of one, or more, protected characteristic groups.
- Thriving and Inclusive Communities – this theme is concerned with ensuring community safety, reducing poverty, and maximising inclusion. Our consultation showed that it is important to members of the LGBTQ+ community, for example, that they live in communities where they feel accepted and able to live openly and accepted.
- Improving Health Through Housing – concerned with reducing health inequalities, with housing integrated into care, better use of digital technology and safeguarding, the equalities impact of this theme are particularly relevant to helping disabled and older people, or anyone who needs support, to live in the best way that suits their individual needs. Health inequalities are another area which can be particularly felt by those people with protected characteristics.
- Child and Age Friendly Housing – this theme seeks to ensure that the housing and support needs of the youngest and oldest are met. The equalities impact here is concerned with meeting the needs of older people, but the equality impact for this theme also falls on other groups – the LGBTQ+ community don’t want to have to hide their status when they enter supported accommodation, for example.

This equality impact assessment will consider the equality impacts of the overall Housing Strategy. It won’t consider the equality impacts of each of the priorities within the themes as separate equality considerations will be given to these as part of local service decision making.

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)

The information we have used to carry out this assessment has been gained through consultation with a wide range of Council officers, external partner service providers and the Equalities Hubs to gain insight into how the Strategy's themes will impact on the city and its citizens. It has also been informed by local and national data and research that has been used in the development of the new Strategy.

A significant number of people in Leeds were already being impacted by low income and poverty before COVID-19 took effect in March 2020. Local authorities are often ranked on the proportion of neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% nationally. Based on the most recent Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019, Leeds has 114 neighbourhoods (24% of its 482) in the most deprived 10% nationally. Leeds is ranked at 33 out of 317 local authorities in England (1 is most deprived) on this measure.

Although the IMD is based on neighbourhoods and is designed to identify pockets of deprivation, the government also publish summary measures for larger areas like local authorities. There is no single 'best' local authority measure, and the ranking of Leeds varies depending on the measure used.

The city faces long-term challenges in relation to poverty:

- In 2019/20, 22% of the Leeds population (equating to 174,000 people) were classed as living in relative poverty after housing costs are deducted from income
- 24% of children, (36, 496) were estimated to be living in relative low-income families before housing costs in 2019/20
- It is estimated that 18.2% of all Leeds working residents earned less than the Real Living Wage in 2020, affecting 61,593 FTE residents. It is also estimated that 12,417 workers are on zero-hour contracts
- Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, 153,335 food parcels in Leeds were given out informally via Community Care Hubs, Emergency Food Provisions which equates to an 860% increase since 2019/20
- In 2019, 16.8% of Leeds' households (57,429 households) were estimated to be in fuel poverty

The Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the city. Prior to the pandemic, local research highlighted that in 2018 households in Leeds were less resilient and worse prepared for an external financial shock or crisis than in 2004, with significantly lower propensity to save and a higher likelihood of being in debt.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 proved to be such a crisis, increasing pressures on low-income households and the most vulnerable in our society, as well as pushing many

additional households to experience financial uncertainty and hardship for the first time. The last year has seen further impact on low-income households, with both local and national evidence describing how many are left trapped between a reduction in income due to job losses, furlough ending and the removal of the £20 uplift in the Universal Credit (UC) weekly standard allowance, compounded by rising costs from energy prices, household bills and supply issues.

This screening has also been able to draw on several sources which have been a source of equality information – The Annual Performance Report 20/21, the Equality Progress 2020-2021 report, the Draft Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021, and the Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information:

Please provide detail:

2021 census data was not released in time for use in developing the housing strategy priorities, so changes in demographic and tenure data are limited to local data analysis. Once the census data has been released it will be analysed to consider demographic changes / impacts on the housing strategy priorities and this equality impact assessment.

Action required:

Review the census data and consider the equality, diversity and inclusion impacts on themes of the Housing Strategy.

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

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

We have consulted, via online sessions, with the city's five Equality Hubs, to get feedback and input into the new strategy and to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion impacts have been considered.

We also ran an online survey so citizens could have their say on the proposals, which garnered 168 responses.

We have consulted with stakeholders who will be guided by the Strategy in their service priorities and delivery, utilising their knowledge and operational experience to gain informed comments and feedback on the new Strategy and how it will impact on the city.

We have attempted to gain representations from those groups who exhibit protected characteristics to inform the strategy.

We know from consultation with the city's Equalities Hubs, in addition to the operational knowledge gained by LCC officers and staff from partner organisations, that the housing sector has a big impact on equalities.

For example, concerns were raised about how the housing sector can be better access to services for members of the BAME community, and to be more aware of how to house people in communities where they feel safe. This concern about feeling safe in a community was echoed through data received from the LGBTQ+ community, who want to feel safe to be themselves and live openly without fear of prejudice.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community are disproportionately likely to be homeless due to conflict with their families over the sexuality or gender.

The victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) have barriers to accessing safe accommodation, for example through having No Recourse to Public Funds. There is limited capacity to provide specialist DVA support for children and young people in safe accommodation.

There is a lack of emergency accommodation, including women's only accommodation, for sex workers and other people with complex support needs.

The data collected clearly illustrates the wide-ranging impact that the Housing Strategy has in terms of EDCI issues. There will be many individual projects that fall under the wider umbrella of the Housing Strategy, and these will in turn be subject to their own EDCI screening processes.

Action required:

Speaking to the Equalities Hubs has raised a few issues where follow up engagement and development is required. This includes the following:

- Hubs were keen to understand more about referral pathways for people who are homeless / rough sleeping, to apply for Council housing / other specialist housing so that they can more effectively support their communities;
- Follow up conversations required with the LGBTQ+ Hub to consider how the Leeds Housing Options Service can proactively support LGBTQ+ community who are disproportionately affected by homelessness and how the housing sector can support the LGBTQ+ community to thrive through housing.
- Follow up conversations are required with the Cultural Diversity Hub to consider accessibility of BAME communities to housing services, including people with no recourse to public funds.
- Follow up conversations are required with the Disability Hub to promote best practice on meeting the needs of disabled people through new developments.

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



Age



Carers



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 type="checkbox"/> 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: Tackling poverty and improving health and wellbeing

Stakeholders

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify | | |

Potential barriers

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Built environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial exclusion | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment and training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function | |

Please specify

There are a number of potential barriers to delivering the Housing Strategy priorities:
 Meeting affordable housing need - land pressures, cost, and housing market pressures impact on the city's ability to meet affordable housing need

Improving housing quality – the cost of delivering investment to make all homes in the city carbon zero is a significant barrier along with limited technological solutions and product

availability.

Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping – the cost-of-living crisis will pose a significant risk to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in the city, as increasing number of people are projected to be impacted by financial hardship which results in them losing their home.

Thriving and Inclusive Communities / Health and Housing – the cost-of-living crisis will inevitably impact on poverty and health inequalities across the city, particularly in the most deprived neighbourhoods, making the challenge greater for the housing and related sectors to have a positive impact on reducing poverty and health inequalities.

Child and Age Friendly Housing – the ability of this housing strategy to influence housing quality along with improving accessibility, particularly in the owner-occupied sector are the biggest barriers to maximising age friendly housing in the city, linked both to cost and opportunity to influence.

As much as possible these barriers will be monitored and managed as part of the delivery of the strategy priorities, seeking to minimise the impact of the barriers on the strategy's success.

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 Strategy will have a positive impact on people in Leeds. It will help to increase the amount of affordable housing available. It will improve the quality of housing and service delivery by making better, more efficient links between providers across the city. Improved digital technologies will make outcomes better by improving the flow of information across services and organisations. It will encourage the development of safer, more inclusive communities that can make their own decisions about how they choose to develop and tackle their problems in a way that suits them best. People will be encouraged to make the choices in their housing that best suit their needs as they age.

The Strategy will feed and guide into a wide range of projects and services, helping to improve the lives of all citizens in Leeds, including those with protected characteristics.

The barriers mentioned above could make delivery of the Strategy difficult, but each theme of the Strategy has outcome targets that will be monitored and scrutinised as the life of the plan passes. The Strategy is also intended to be a living document, to be flexible enough to evolve as priorities and issues change through the life of the document.

Action required:

Scrutiny of the Strategy's targets and impact through its lifecycle, via the Leeds Strategic Housing Board, to ensure that it is providing relevant, impactful guidance for stakeholders across the city and delivering better outcomes for the city's citizens.

8b. Negative impact:

The Housing Strategy should not have any negative impacts on the city and should help the wider housing and related sectors respond collaboratively to some of the barriers and challenges that the city faces in delivering the strategy. Equality, diversity and inclusion are key underpinning principles to the strategy and so the strategy's priorities should not have a negative impact on those of protected characteristics. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken of individual policy approaches to identify and respond to any potential equality impacts.

Action required:

No action required.

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

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The Strategy will promote and encourage service providers across the city to work with people from all communities, helping to foster stronger, inclusive neighbourhoods that promote strong relationships. The Strategy has been built around the Council's wider strategic aims that seek to foster inclusivity and better outcomes.

Action required:

Continue to work with partners on the myriad projects and services that they deliver to encourage positive relationships between stakeholders and the people of Leeds who use their services.

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

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

It is likely that the Strategy, particularly via the theme of 'Thriving and Inclusive Communities' will facilitate the increased interaction of communities across the city, but the specific details of this will depend on individual projects which are beyond the scope of the

Strategy.

Action required:

As mentioned above, it is important to ensure that the myriad projects that will be influenced by Strategy are mindful of the goal of increased contact and interaction between communities.

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

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required:

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
Promote the Strategy and its intended outcomes to embed it with partners across the city	The life of the Strategy	Monitor how the Strategy is referenced by partner organisations and any new projects	Mandy Sawyer
Monitor progress with hitting the Strategy's Target Outcomes	The life of the Strategy	The Leeds Strategic Housing Board will be the main forum which will scrutinise performance in relation to the Housing Strategy's targets. However Affordable Housing delivery will be monitored by the Housing Growth and Choice Board.	Mandy Sayer
Continue engagement with the Equality Hubs to ensure their voice plays a continuous role of advice and feedback through the delivery of the Strategy.	The life of the Strategy	Attend Hub meetings as and when required.	Mandy Sawyer
Ongoing engagement with	The life of the Strategy	Successful engagement with	Mandy Sawyer

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
partners and stakeholders to look at issues that arise through the life of the Strategy via workshops.		stakeholders.	

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
Mandy Sawyer	Head of Housing & Homelessness	
Date impact assessment completed		March 2022

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 – Executive 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 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 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: