

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: Welfare & Benefits
Lead person: David Fryer	Contact number: 0113 3788395

1. Title: Council Tax Support Fund for Leeds

Is this a:

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

If other, please specify

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

Leeds City Council are set to receive £1,662,116 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Council Tax Support Fund (CTSF) to support economically vulnerable households in their area with council tax payments from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. Authorities are asked to use their grant allocation to fund further reductions in the council tax liability of individuals receiving Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) with an outstanding council tax liability, by up to £25. Local authorities are also able to use a proportion of their allocations to determine their own local approaches to supporting economically vulnerable households with council tax bills, including topping up the £25 award. The discount should apply to current LCTS claimants that have an outstanding council tax liability for the 2023-24 financial year. The proposal for distributing the CTSF to LCTS recipients in Leeds aims to ensure residents receive support directly and quickly in line with the guidance from Government. The full guidance can be found here: [Council Tax Support Fund guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/council-tax-support-fund-guidance)

For Leeds it is proposed the funding is allocated as follows:

- All LCTS recipients with an annual balance of £25 or more to pay in 2023/24 will receive a credit of up to £40.00 on their Council Tax bill.
- Based on current caseload data, this will mean 36,688 households in receipt of CTS will benefit.

These awards will only be available to existing LCTS recipients on 01/04/2023. Anyone claiming LCTS after 01/04/2023 will not receive an award. The guidance allows Authorities to make this decision and this has been confirmed by DLUHC.

A projected residual balance of approximately £208,401 will be available to make awards to LCTS recipients who are identified as suffering hardship throughout the year. Potential eligibility and award value will be considered based upon Council Tax arrears and personal circumstances. Applicants suffering financial hardship who apply for Discretionary Housing Payments will be considered for an award. All such awards will be recorded for audit purposes and officers will ensure the full allocation is spent.

LCTS recipients deemed eligible for an award will receive notification of their reduced Council Tax Bill during March 2023 in accordance with the guidance.

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 		x

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 		
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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)

- **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)

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

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:	
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Date to complete your impact assessment	
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Lead person for your impact assessment	
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(Include name and job title)	
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6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
David Fryer	Head of Service	24/01/23
Date screening completed		24/01/23

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: 25/01/23
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: