

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) 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: Children & Families | Service area: Corporate Parenting |
| Lead person: Ben Finlay | Contact number: 07715 044858 |

1. Title: Fostering & Placement Stability

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

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

Increasing capacity and diversification of the council's in-house foster care provision for Children Looked After (CLA). Leeds currently has approximately 500 children and young people living in foster care arrangements, of which c.208 are Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements.

This proposal seeks to reduce the council's reliance on high-cost external provision by increasing in-house foster care capacity through recruitment within current skills tiers, as well as the introduction of a new higher-level of specialist foster carer who would be matched with young people with significant and complex needs. To effectively and efficiently support these additional foster carers an enhanced staff structure is required, creating the right conditions for successful foster carer recruitment, training and retention, as well as improving placement stability. The proposal therefore seeks to create 42 new posts, recruitment to which will be aligned to on-boarding of new foster carers to ensure efficient use of resources.

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)

A key consideration in progressing with the proposal is the opportunity it gives to increase outcomes for those children and young people who will benefit from greater placement

stability and having care arrangements which better meet their individual needs. Through improved stability the young people, who benefit from the increased foster care provision, will experience greater equality of opportunity throughout their childhood, as well as into adult life. By creating the right conditions for children and young people to be their best, attain in education, make good life choices and develop solid foundations upon which to transition into adulthood the proposal will support those young people to thrive and achieve throughout life.

The proposal will impact on the commissioning of external fostering and residential placements, reducing reliance on these routes to providing care and support for children looked after. It will further enable resources to be redirected into in-house council services, offering increased employment opportunities, as well as opportunities to consider foster carer diversity, reflecting the diversity of children looked after.

• **Actions**

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

Equality, diversity and inclusion will be central to the recruitment of both staff and foster carers. Positive action will be taken to ensure that both groups are reflective of the city's children looked after in terms of diversity, with active monitoring throughout the recruitment processes, and undertaking of targeted activity if necessary.

Consultation and engagement activity will take place throughout implementation with the city's Foster Carer Liaison Group, the wider fostering community, as well as children and young people.

Actions will be taken to ensure that consultation and engagement activities are inclusive and accessible to all identified stakeholders. Where appropriate up take and responses will be monitored against equality characteristics to better understand if any group is disproportionately affected.

Consultation and engagement has taken place, and will continue to do so throughout implementation, with Trade Unions around recruitment to new posts, including monitoring of success and phasing in-line with increasing foster carer numbers.

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 Longworth | Director of Children and | 12/05/2023 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|------------|
| | Families | |
| Date screening completed | | 21/04/2023 |

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: |