

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 and Families	Service area: Assets and Access
Lead person: Sally Lowe	Contact number: 0113 378 7233

1. Title: Children’s Transport Policy: Permission to consult on proposed changes to transport assistance for post-16 students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

The statutory responsibility for transport for 16–19-year-olds (who have started a course before their 19 birthday) rests with the local authority.

Childrens Transport is demand led and guided by policy. By its nature when the demography and population changes so do the pressures on the Council’s budget.

The Children and Families Directorate 2024/25 transport budget for 2024/25 is £22.3m, a net increase of £4.3m compared to £18m in 2023/24. This includes transport for pupils with SEND, Children who are ‘looked after’ (CLA) and mainstream school bus services. In terms of the budget increase, £6.1m was added to the transport budget for growth based on forecast trends at the time. This was then reduced by £1.8m of savings targets, resulting in a net budget increase of £4.3m.

In addition to the £1.8m savings targets in the budget, the latest figures for numbers on transport indicate there may be further budget pressures in 2024/25, which mitigating savings will need to be identified for.

Although the local authority is statutorily obliged to make free of charge home to school travel arrangements for eligible children of compulsory school age, there is no similar obligation on the local authority to provide transport for post-16 learners.

Where there are statutory demands, the options for financial efficiency lie in how we deliver which mode of transport. Where there are discretionary elements, these are affected by change in policy. As part of this discretionary element, the Local Authority currently provides transport support to approximately 815 post-16 learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities, at a cost of approx. £4m - £4.5m per annum. This has included transporting learners either in council fleet vehicles or by contracting private hire firms.

Research, modelling, and analysis has taken place and a range of proposals have been developed for consultation. If a decision to consult was granted by Executive Board, consultation would start 24th June 2024, and close 21st July 2024. Consultation findings, analysis and recommendations would be reported to Executive Board October 2024.

Any proposal agreed for implementation will be phased so that any new criteria would only apply to new applications requesting transport assistance from September 2025 or where learner circumstances change (such as a house move or change of setting).

This screening focusses on the impact of progressing with a consultation. It also seeks to identify any future action required to ensure that equality, diversity, cohesion and integration continues to be fully considered throughout the proposed consultation, should the decision be to proceed.

A high-level analysis has taken place of the current Post 16 SEND cohort accessing Fleet or Private Hire transport assistance to inform the proposed consultation. If the decision was to progress with a consultation, there would be a full screening completed on all proposed option using feedback provided during the consultation.

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)

Analysis shows there are approximately 815 post-16 young people with SEND in receipt of transport assistance from the Local Authority. Of those, 578 have an in-house fleet or private hire transport award in place. Quantitative equality monitoring information about those individuals has been extracted from the local authority's latest SEN2 survey submission and the January Census and used as a representative sample of young people currently receiving transport assistance and may be affected by any future changes to transport policy. This sample and their characteristics were then compared to the demographic profile of all post-16 learners with SEND in Leeds.

The following characteristics were compared:

Disability

Gender

Ethnicity

SEN Primary Need

Index of Multiple Deprivation decile of home postcode

The protected characteristic of 'Disability' applies to 100% of the sample receiving travel assistance.

The gender split is very similar between the sample and the city-wide profile, with most current recipients being male.

A slightly lower proportion of children and young people in the sample are ethnically diverse, although not significantly so.

Double the proportion of children and young people in the sample have an SEN primary need of Severe Learning Difficulty and nearly double the number of children and young people in the sample have a Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty compared to the city-wide profile.

A slightly higher proportion of children and young people in the sample have an SEN primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Moderate Learning Difficulty and Speech Language & Communication Needs. However, much lower proportion have a primary need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

The proportion of post-16 learners in the sample who live in a postcode area in the bottom 10% of the deprivation index (IMD Decile 1) is 10% higher than the city-wide profile.

A full EDCI will be completed on the range of proposals consulted on and will be continuously updated to understand impact and inform any recommendations in change of policy.

- **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)

Previous consultations on proposed changes to the Children's Transport Policy will provide valuable lessons and inform any future consultation. The consultation will be a significant informant of the full EDCI.

We will ensure we are as clear as possible on what decisions those consulted can affect. This will include where we are still to complete further analysis on proposal, or details of delivery, or ways to mitigate impact.

We will be clear on what information we need to help us make those decisions and who the stakeholders are – who we need to consult with – and their roles. It is intended that partner organisations such as SILCs and organised representative parent/family groups will be engaged before public consultation opens, for the following reasons:

- To benefit from their expert views on our proposals, allowing revision prior to consulting service users
- To demonstrate our values in action, of working with partners and listening.
- To design the best ways to engage service users, with the active support of

partners' networks and influence.

We will ensure the consultation and supporting information is accessible to all consultees, by offering a range of self-service or supported ways to take part.

We will allow open space in the consultation for service users to offer their own refinements to proposals and be clear that whilst entirely new proposals may be incorporated into proposals, they may be problematic to consider exclusively in isolation.

We will be clear from the outset how all consultees will receive feedback on the overall findings and proposed actions arising from the consultation.

We will consider if there are opportunities for ongoing involvement of service users in the design of mitigation of any agreed proposals.

We will ensure:

- The appropriate involvement of young people
- Learning the lessons of previous consultation in terms increasing the reach of consultation
- Secure the support of a range of agencies in maximising consultation reach and effective communications
- A focus on the possible impact on those with the highest level of need or highest level of deprivation.
- Identifying avenues through which to minimise possible impact on other services

Engagement with Children's Scrutiny Board will take place if required before any decisions on implementation are made

- **Actions**

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

- To finalise a full communication and consultation plan incorporating all stakeholders with the view to consult between 24th June – 21st July 2024.
- Complete a full EDCI analysis in relation to a range of proposals to consult on, with feedback and analysis informing the impact analysis throughout the consultation period and beyond. The full EDCI screening document will accompany the report detailing the outcome of consultation to Executive Board in October 2024

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:	27/05/2024 – 21/07/2024
Date to complete your impact assessment	28/08/2024
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	Sally Lowe Assets & Access Lead

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 Children & Families	
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 or Key Delegated Decisions**.

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.
- 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: