

## 8. 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/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate:</b>	Adult Social Care
<b>Service area:</b>	Commissioning
<b>Lead person:</b>	Helen Gee
<b>Contact number:</b>	2476060
<b>1. Title:</b>	Adult Autism strategy
<b>Is this a:</b>	
Strategy/Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service/Function	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If other, please specify	<input type="text"/>

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

This is a strategy and action plan for adults with autism. It is the local response to national legislation. It will run from 2011 to 2014.

The intention of the Leeds autism strategy and the action plans which will form part of it will be to improve quality of life for all people with autism and improve services and supports for those people who are entitled to these. People with autism are a disability group but any individual may also belong to any of other equality groups.

The strategy consists of a series of objectives which have been developed by a multi agency group and then modified following a widespread consultation. In addition the appendix includes an up to date review of demographic and service information which will form the basis of future planning and can be used to begin to assess the impact of any developments of any equality groups.

Due consideration has been given to equality issues during the development of the strategy. A range of potential issues and barriers (outlined below) have been identified during initial work and these will be addressed in future work as indicated. We will continue to monitor and review the strategy and its actions.

## 3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/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 and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

### Questions

Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?

Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?

Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?

Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?

Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

**Yes**

**No**

Possibly, see below	
	Initial consultation suggests approval
X	
X	
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*)

People with autism are a disability group and the strategy is written from an equalities perspective in that a large part of its aim is to ensure public and private bodies make the necessary adjustment to fully include people with autism, including those with autism who also are members of other equality strands e.g. BME physical disabilities etc. The intention of the autism strategy and the action plans which will form part of it will be to improve quality of life for all people with autism and improve services and supports for those people who are entitled to these. The strategy takes into account that any individual on the autistic spectrum may also belong to one or more of the other equality groups so may be differentially affected by current or future developments.

The strategy will aim to improve lives for all adults with autism and will tie in closely with children's autism strategy and services. The action plans and timelines deriving from it will prioritise those actions which are either a statutory obligation or most essential to make changes. The intention is to also improve access to support and information for carers of people with autism.

The demographic knowledge about numbers of people with autism and their level of need is limited. The strategy has pulled together all the information we have and it details plans to improve information collection over subsequent years. Any local or national information we do collect will be (where possible) broken down by the various equality categories.

Consultation so far has been with carers, people with autism and various professional bodies. See part 8 of the strategy documents.

- **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*)

The lack of demographic information about people with autism is a national problem as well as a local one. This makes it particularly difficult to measure the differential impacts on the various equality groups. As stated above we intend to improve our information collection by increasing the quantity and quality of recording, through inclusion in Service level agreements and contracts and regularly updating our needs assessment. The lack of information arises both from under diagnosis of ASC and under recording in both health and social care.

There are some indications of possible equality areas which will need particular monitoring:

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**Gender** – approximately 4 times as many men as women are diagnosed with ASC – current research suggests that women may be under diagnosed as they present differently:

**Action:**

- to monitor local figures of incidence and service use
- to ensure that local diagnostic services (once these are in place) are using best practice tools.
- to ensure that local services are accessible to women.

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**Age** – There very few older people with a diagnosis of ASC relative to younger people.

**Action:** to monitor age range of new diagnoses and if there are needs arising for autism friendly services in older age ranges

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**Ethnicity** – local figures indicate that there may be a lower rate of diagnosis for children from South Asian communities relative to other ethnic groups. There is a small amount of national evidence to suggest this is not just a local issue.

**Action:**

- to continue to monitor figures,
- to check education Leeds figures against CAMHS figures
- to liaise with local 3rd sector and representative groups

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**Sexual orientation & gender reassignment** – we have no figures on this either nationally or locally. There is some anecdotal information from writings by people on the spectrum that there may be a greater than majority population numbers of ASC people within these categories.

**Action:**

- to require that contracted services include sexual orientation in their monitoring figures
- to work with LGBT organisations to ensure that they are able to support ASC people.

Poverty/social class

There is some indication that people with autism are more likely to be using social housing and to have lower educational qualifications.

Action:

- to continue to monitor and depending on outcome of monitoring to target awareness raising to appropriate services e.g. housing associations, benefits advice agencies etc.
- to prioritise employment support.

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

As stated above we will take actions to clarify the current level of impact on the various equality groups within the ASC population through careful monitoring, including service user perception work. We will then use this information to impact assess the effect of any developments on various equality groups. If there is an indication that there is a differential need for any groups we will attempt to build this into future developments.

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**

7. **Publishing**

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published. Please send a copy to the Equality Team for publishing.

**Date screening completed**

**Date sent to Equality Team**

**Date published**

*(To be completed by the Equality Team)*