

Equality Impact Assessment Corporate Service Improvement Tool

Details of the assessment

Name of Function/Policy/ Service being assessed:	Flexible Working & Time Off Policy
Is the activity...?	Existing: Yes, therefore moved directly to step 2
Date of assessment	March 2011
Directorate & Service	Central Services - Personnel
Policy Owner	Central Services Director
Lead Officer	Delia Gordon

Step 1	Initial Screening for:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new policies/strategies • revised policies/strategies • policy decisions • considering partnership working arrangements • procurement/commissioning activities <p>(For assessments identified within the Equality Impact Assessment Timetable 2010-13 please go straight to Step 2).</p>		
	Key Questions	Answers/Notes	
1	What are you looking to achieve in this activity?		
2	Who in the main will benefit?		
3	Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Please explain:
		No <input type="checkbox"/>	Please explain:

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Step 1	Initial Screening for:		
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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes	
		Note: if the answer is 'yes' then a full equality impact assessment is required – see step 2.	
4	Does the activity make a positive contribution to equalities?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Please explain:
		No <input type="checkbox"/>	Please explain:
		Note: if the answer is 'yes' then a full equality impact assessment is required – see step 2.	

Where the screening has identified the need for a full impact assessment, this must:

- be commenced during the drafting stages of a new policy/strategy and fully completed following any consultation period before submitting the committee approval
- carried out before any policy decision is taken
- completed in the planning stages of any procurement exercise

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
Step 2	Scoping the assessment	
1.	What is the overall aim, or purpose of the function/ policy/service?	To provide a policy framework that is legally compliant and that provides opportunities for employees to request flexible working arrangements and time off.
2.	What outcomes do you want to achieve with this function/ policy/service and for whom?	To ensure that any requests for flexible working or time off are considered by managers in an appropriate and legally compliant manner. To provide employees with a succinct reference document of the range of options for flexible working and time off. To ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of equality legislation.
3.	Who is intended to benefit from the function/service/ policy?	All employees, specifically in situations where their eligibility to request flexible working is enshrined in legislation. The elected members and managers who will have a clear policy framework to refer to when making decisions about requests for flexible working, time off for training or study etc. The Council in terms of retaining a flexible and diverse workforce.
4.	Who defines or defined the function/service/policy?	The General Purposes Committee.
5.	Who implements the function/service/policy?	All those within a supervisory or managerial role within the Council, acting on advice from Personnel Services.
6.	How do the outcomes of the function/service/policy meet or conflict other policies, values or objectives of the public authority (if applicable)?	Please indicate which Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) priority these outcomes relate to:
		Safer place <input type="checkbox"/>
		Cleaner, smarter borough <input type="checkbox"/>
		Improving health & reducing inequalities <input type="checkbox"/> With regards to the employees of the Council.
		Protecting & enhancing the environment <input type="checkbox"/>
	Good local transport <input type="checkbox"/>	

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
		Strong economy & decent housing <input type="checkbox"/>
		Any other comments:
7.	Are there any factors that could contribute or detract from the outcomes identified earlier?	N/A.
Step 3	Consideration of data and information	
8.	What do you already know about who uses this function/service/ policy?	<p>The Council undertakes regular equality monitoring of its employees regarding sex, race, disability and age. The demographic data for the 423 (headcount) permanent and temporary staff within the Council is set out below: Male – 172, Female – 251 Disability – 6, No disability – 417 Ethnicity : White – 291, Black – 2, Asian or Asian British – 1, Other Asian – 1, Mixed – 3 Age: Up to 19 = 0, 20 – 25 = 40, 26 – 35 = 81, 36 – 45 = 107, 46 – 55 = 103, 56 – 65 = 80, Over 65 = 5. Note – any discrepancies in the totals above are due to employees not disclosing personal information.</p> <p>To date it has not been necessary to undertake a formal investigation into the misapplication of the policy as no formal Grievance has ever been raised.</p>
9.	Has any consultation with service users already taken place on the function/service/ policy and if so what were the key findings?	Yes, consultation has taken place via the Council’s Joint Employee Consultative Committee. A copy of the updated policy was sent to union and staff representatives who were invited to seek feedback from their members/colleagues. The amended policy was discussed at the JECC meeting on 31 March 2011, where the amended policy was given widespread support. No adverse consequences for any of the protected characteristic groups were identified.
10.	What, if any, additional information is needed to assess the impact of the function/service/policy?	It is not felt necessary for the Council to undertake equality monitoring for the protected characteristics of sexual orientation, religion or religious belief, marriage and civil partnership status as the policy needs to be updated to include the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 for staff with these protected characteristics, irrespective of the demographic composition of the

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
		Council's workforce.
11.	How do you propose to gather the additional information?	N/A.
Step 4	Assessing the Impact	
12.	Based on what information you already know, in relation to each of the following groups consider whether a) there is anything in the function/service/policy that could discriminate or put anyone at a disadvantage b) for an existing function/service/policy, how it is actually working in practice for each group	
a.	Equality groups	Age The provisions of the policy apply equally to all age groups. The Council's policy on retirement issues is being considered separately in the light of the abolition of the default retirement age.
b.		Disability The policy needs to be explicit about the duty to make reasonable adjustments to working patterns if this removes a barrier to the employee being able to do the job.
c.		Gender The policy needs to incorporate the right to request additional paternity leave for all eligible employees.
d.		Race N/A
e.		Religion/Belief The policy needs to express the Council's commitment to consider requests for changes to hours of work or flexible working relating to a worker's religion or belief, i.e. requirements to pray at certain times of the day.
f.		Sexual Orientation The policy's wording regarding parental leave, paternity leave and adoption leave needs to reflect the inclusion of same sex couples.
g.		General/other The policy needs to make provision for paid time off for ante-natal care. The policy needs to make provision for the right to request flexible working for those who have already undergone, who are undergoing or who are proposing to undergo gender reassignment.
Step 5		Reviewing and Scrutinising the Impact
13.	Have you identified any differential impact and does this adversely or positively affect any groups in the	No differential impacts have been identified.

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
	community?	
14.	Can we make any changes or improvements?	
15.	If there is nothing you can do, can the reasons be fairly justified?	
16.	Do any of the changes in relation to the adverse impact have a further adverse affect on any other group?	

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Step 5 continued...		Actions to be inserted into Equality Action Plans			
Based on your answers in Step 5, please finalise your actions here. These actions will then be incorporated into our equality action plans.					
Equality Strand	Related SCS (or other) Priority	Action	Outcome/monitoring information and targets	Date for Completion	Responsible Officer
If an adverse impact was found or unmet needs identified, which actions will you put in place to address this:					
If the impact is still unclear, list the actions you will put in place to gather the information you need:					
If you did not find any evidence of unmet needs or adverse impact, list the actions you will put in place to maintain good practice:					
All	Improving health and reducing inequalities for staff.	Monitor the outcomes of requests for flexible working practice.		Ongoing	Delia Gordon & Charlie Steel.

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Step 6 Decision making and future monitoring		
17.	Which decision making process do these changes need to go through i.e. do they need to be approved by a committee/Council?	Approval for the updated policy will be sought from the General Purposes Committee scheduled to meet on 27 June 2011.
18.	How will you continue to monitor the impact of the function/service/ policy on diverse groups?	Annual monitoring of the outcomes from the Council's protected characteristics monitoring.
19.	When will you review this equality impact assessment?	
Final steps		
For an existing function/service/policy: Send your assessment to the West Kent Equalities Officer		
For a new function/service/ policy: Summarise your findings in the committee report. Ensure planned consultations address the findings of this impact assessment.		