

Equality Impact Assessment Corporate Service Improvement Tool

Details of the assessment

Name of Function/Policy/ Service being assessed:	Flexible Retirement Policy
Is the activity...?	Existing: <input type="checkbox"/> (please go to step 2)
Date of assessment	April 2012
Directorate & Service	Central, Personnel
Policy Owner	Central Services Director, Julie Beilby
Lead Officer	Personnel Manager, 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:		
	<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	
		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 framework for employees to request flexible retirement and for Chief Officers to consider these requests.
2.	What outcomes do you want to achieve with this function/ policy/service and for whom?	A policy that is compliant with the regulations governing the Local Government Pension Scheme, and that provides a transparent, fair and equitable framework for considering requests for flexible retirement.
3.	Who is intended to benefit from the function/service/ policy?	Employees of the Council
4.	Who defines or defined the function/service/policy?	The policy is drawn up by the Personnel Manager, discussed with the Council's JECC and Management Team, and considered in detail by the General Purposes Committee.
5.	Who implements the function/service/policy?	The 2 Personnel Managers and the Management Team.
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"/>
		Protecting & enhancing the environment <input type="checkbox"/>
		Good local transport <input type="checkbox"/>
		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?	Changes in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, and changes in the Council's financial position.

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
Step 3	Consideration of data and information	
8.	What do you already know about who uses this function/service/ policy?	The small number of those who have requested flexible retirement have had their requests agreed.
9.	Has any consultation with service users already taken place on the function/service/ policy and if so what were the key findings?	<p>Yes, qualitative research was undertaken with a randomly selected sample of potential users of the policy that included a small number of managers. The issues listed below were identified and have been accommodated within the draft updated policy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current policy does not provide the context of the spectrum of retirement options within the Local Government Pension Scheme (the LGPS). As a result much of what is contained in the current policy is incomprehensible to those who are “not in the know”. 2. The current policy does not give any guidance to those who may wish to apply for flexible retirement as to what they need to do in order for their request to be considered. 3. The current policy does not set any tangible criteria for the granting of flexible retirement. What are the benchmarks according to which Chief Officers/Management Team might agree to a request? Concern was expressed that if there were not corporately agreed guidelines, there could be inconsistencies/inequities in the decisions that were made. 4. The current policy does not give any information about the implications of flexible retirement for an employee’s ongoing contractual entitlements such as sick leave, holiday pay etc, or whether or not flexible retirees are able to continue paying into the LGPS. Without this information potential users of the policy are not able to make an informed decision as to whether or not to apply for flexible retirement. 5. Is it possible to “trial” a flexible retirement arrangement in the same way as it is for flexible working arrangements such as returning from maternity leave? If not , why not? 6. If the policy is subject to annual equalities monitoring this should be stated in the policy and a commitment should be given to not identifying the names of individuals.
10.	What, if any, additional information is needed to assess the impact of the function/service/policy?	None.
11.	How do you propose to gather the	N/A

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	Key Questions	Answers/Notes
	additional information?	
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	Potentially, the granting of significant numbers of flexible retirements that entail a reduction in the number of hours worked with no compensating increase in capacity to “pick up the slack”, could have increase the work loads of employees who will be required to undertake the tasks that flexible retirees no longer have the time to perform.
b.	Disability	N/A
c.	Gender	N/A
d.	Race	N/A
e.	Religion/Belief	N/A
f.	Sexual Orientation	N/A
g.	General/other	N/A
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 community?	N/A
14.	Can we make any changes or improvements?	Yes, update the policy to reflect the feedback listed in point 9 above.
15.	If there is nothing you can do, can the reasons be fairly justified?	N/A
16.	Do any of the changes in relation to the adverse impact have a further adverse affect on any other group?	N/A

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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:					
Age	Improving health & reducing inequalities.	Update the policy.	Submit the updated policy to the July 2 meeting of the General Purposes Committee.	<i>July 2012</i>	Delia Gordon
Age	“	Monitor the impact, in terms of workload, of those who are required to undertake tasks formerly undertaken by flexible retirees in situations where the “sacrificed” hours have not been filled.	Report to E&DSG	<i>Ongoing</i>	Delia Gordon
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:					

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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?	The General Purposes Committee July 2012.
18.	How will you continue to monitor the impact of the function/service/ policy on diverse groups?	N/A
19.	When will you review this equality impact assessment?	When the new LGPS regulations are introduced in 2012.
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.		