



South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance available on Insite or contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Chloe Whitehead
- 1.2 Team and Service:
HR – Transformation, HR, and Corporate Services
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Hybrid Working Policy
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
21/12/2021
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
01/04/2022
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
All employees

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Policy
If other, please specify
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
N/A
- 2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

Outline the responsibilities of the employer and employee in relation to Hybrid Working.

2.7 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- None.

2.8 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users
- Councillors
- External Stakeholders
- Other
- Employees

If other, please specify [Click or tap here to enter text](#).

2.9 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

The new policy will outline how all employees work, including how they interact with residents, external stakeholders, and other organisations. The policy includes the option for employees to work in remote and hybrid ways, meaning interactions will include online, virtual, and telephone instead of predominantly face-to-face communications.

- 2.11 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards?
(Max 250 words)
N/A

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1 Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups](#)? Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information.

(Max 250 words)

There is a range of research to suggest that flexible working is of particular benefit to a range of underrepresented groups, including disabled people, carers, neurodiverse people and those with young families.

<https://www.hays.co.uk/en/blog/-/blogs/flexible-working-marketing-edi>

<https://www.hays.co.uk/diversity/diversity-inclusion-report>. A staff survey conducted in 2020 found that the vast majority of employees are keen for a continuation of remote working in some form, and that they felt home-working and flexible working allowed them to maintain a healthier work/life balance.

There are also some staff who find remote working is detrimental to their wellbeing, but this policy allows people to work in our office if they prefer so colleagues can work in the way that best suits their needs. As part of this, we have asked all teams to complete a Team Charter where they identify what works for them and their service, and how those needs will be met

- 3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: Positive impacts in relation to providing flexible working arrangements to suit individual needs, circumstances and work tasks. Potential negative impacts around the perception that you need to be seen in the office in order to progress (although not seen as a big issue at SCDC, this is a perception that anecdotally exists generally within workplaces). We will continue to monitor the impact of Hybrid working in our annual staff survey's, and if any negative impacts are identified we will take steps to address these

Age

Details: Young people may be more likely to be living in shared accommodation or less likely to have suitable working space at home. This may result in greater need to have the option to work from the council offices. While we recognise that many older people are highly capable when it comes to using new technologies, some older employees may not be as comfortable. Training and support will be provided to support staff who require it.

Disability

Details: There may be an impact on those with physical disability who require specialist adaptations and who require particular support (e.g., software, adjustable



furnishings) at home or in the office. We are also developing a reasonable adjustment passport to assist with this and ensure all staff are supported. There may be an impact on those with neuro-diverse conditions who may require certain adjustments to working environments or practices. There may also be positive impacts in terms of providing the flexibility to work in an environment that is the best match in terms of meeting both work requirements, and those that relate to the specific needs of each individual disability, e.g. reduce the impact of distractions typical in an open plan office. There may be both positive and negative impacts for employees with mental health conditions; some staff may find the increased flexibility supportive while others may find home-working isolating.

Gender reassignment

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: Hybrid working could be of benefit to new or expectant families, offering flexibility, enabling working from home arrangements if required or requested.

Equally are there potential negative impacts in terms of blurring of lines between work and home life, and the difficulty in undertaking some roles in the home (e.g. sensitive conversations in the presence of children when working at home). As part of the Team Charter, teams should identify if this is an issue for them, and employees and managers should discuss to ensure this isn't causing a problem, and take steps if it is. These steps could include defining which tasks can be completed at home and which should only take place in an office, or providing colleagues with personal supports such as counselling.

Race

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Religion and belief



Details: Hybrid working could benefit anyone with religious and/or other beliefs, providing more flexible arrangements for praying or other religious or belief practices, such as fasting.

Sex

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Sexual orientation

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Other

Details Working from home could potentially negatively affect some as the increased costs of heating/lighting, electricity demands, broadband, also desk/table or having sufficient working space, could cause increased demand on personal finances, particularly impacting on those on low incomes. However, colleagues are still fully able to work from the office full time if that is their preference, where space and facilities can be provided. Colleagues can also apply for a tax refund through HMRC if they are working from home, and the Council provides access to many discounted products and services through its Employee Assistance Programme, as well as a financial and debt management advice service.

None of the above

4.2 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
Ensure working from home is not mandatory for those who wish to work within an office environment	Manager and HR
Desk and office arrangements are discussed with neurodiverse and disabled staff and reasonable adjustments are made to support the employee	HR, manager, and facilities
Training provided on hybrid working and ICT tools	HR and 3C ICT

All staff to undertake DSE assessments for home working and office working to ensure safe working environments	Health and Safety
Isolation – ensuring no employees are left out or feel isolated. Team Charters should be agreed which include social aspects for colleagues	All employees and managers

4.3 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

HR and Leadership Team will conduct regular employee surveys which will include questions on hybrid working, their impact, and requests for any improvements that could be made. We will also review our training offering annually and adjust to meet needs. For example, if there are requests for training on remote working, managing remote teams, or remote ICT tools the HR team will ensure this training is provided and available for staff. We will also continue to monitor the personal impact on staff (e.g. do they feel isolated? Is remote working having a positive, neutral, or negative impact on their physical and mental health) and if any concerns arise we will target these through individual, team, or organisational-wide actions. These may include additional training, additional social events, or recommended reviews and changes to the team charters to increase or decrease colleagues' presence in the office.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The introduction of Hybrid Working is expected to have many positive impacts for staff and residents, including increased flexibility on working hours and locations,

more supportive to home/work balance, and more autonomy over work. There are potentials for negative impacts, such as isolation or physical difficulties for some working from home, however staff will always be able to work in the office if they prefer and the Council will endeavour to provide equipment and support to those who need it.

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Chloe Whitehead

6.2 Date of completion:

18/01/2022

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

6.4 Approving officer signature, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

Jeff Membery

6.5 Date of approval:

11/04/2022



Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.