



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

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|---|---|
| Policy, practice, function or project assessed | Organisational Change, Redundancy and Redeployment Policy and Procedures |
| Lead Officer | Susan Gardner Craig |
| Team | Susan Gardner Craig, Richard May and Paul Williams |
| Start date of assessment | 28 September 2010 |
| Completion of assessment | 29 October 2010 |

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The policy aims to treat all staff whose jobs are affected by change in a fair and consistent manner, whilst ensuring the highest possible standards of customer service throughout any periods of change. Specifically, its objectives are:

- To maintain job security and continuity of employment
- To minimise the effect of redundancies through the provision of time and effort to find suitable alternative employment for displaced staff
- To handle compulsory redundancy in a fair, consistent and sympathetic manner
- To take all reasonable steps to secure alternative employment for staff at risk of redundancy.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

Yes. It links directly with the Council's recruitment, selection, appeal and grievance procedures, its internal communication strategies and collective bargaining arrangements with recognised unions. Indirectly, it will be associated with any corporate restructuring proposals, which may result in redeployment and / or redundancy.

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

The policy applies to all Council staff. Indirect effects of redundancies will be far-reaching, for example in terms of employees and their families who are made redundant as residents of the district (customers), and on customers arising from altered and potentially reduced services following reorganisation.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

Yes. As described in Section A2 above.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

The policy will be reviewed after 3 years, or in response to emerging legislation, whichever is the sooner.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

The policy has been revised and updated in 2010. The key changes are as follows:

- Removal of the 1.5 times multiplier following the calculation of redundancy entitlement
- Periods of broken local government service are no longer taken into account when calculating entitlement to redundancy payments.

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

A detailed breakdown of the Council's workforce is set out in its Workforce Plan and statutory equality schemes. The Human Resources section carries out specific monitoring in respect of staff redundancies to identify potential anomalies in terms of gender, age and other key equality strands.

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

Workforce data is compared directly with the equality profile of the district, and generally compares favourably. There is a disproportionate lack of younger staff (under 30), which is not representative of the wider community. However, it is felt that this is an issue within the wider Local Government community, and not caused by any negative impact.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

Not as part of the development of revisions to this policy, which is concerned with putting in place a uniform process to be followed when considering redundancy and reorganisation, rather than with altering the staffing profile of the organisation. These issues will be covering through actions in the corporate Workforce Plan and service plans.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

Consultation is ongoing with the Council's recognised Trade Unions in the development of revisions to this policy. The unions have objected to the proposed changes on the grounds of the diminished employee benefits proposed. Further representations will be summarised as and when they are made.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

The draft policy was deferred from the September 2010 Council meeting to enable a full consultation with staff and unions. Views and comments arising from this consultation will inform the final proposals put to Members in November 2010.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

The Human Resources manager consulted other authorities, national employer bodies and the UNISON best practice guidance in drafting changes to the policy.

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the equality strands/groups. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

| DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT | Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse) | Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High) |
|--|---|---|
| GENDER: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women | Adverse | High |
| <p>The removal of the allowance for broken periods of local government service impacts disproportionately on female staff who have undertaken career breaks to raise families. It should be noted that the proposed changes have the effect of bringing the Council in line with the majority of local authorities, the majority of whom does not include broken periods of local government service in the calculation of redundancy payment entitlement.</p> <p>The policy proposes that, where an employee's actual weekly pay is less than the statutory redundancy weekly pay (currently £380 as at 1st October 2009), then this amount will be used to calculate the redundancy figure. This constitutes potentially positive equality impacts, where it can be identified that a disproportionate amount of males or females earn below the £380 threshold. There is, however, no disproportion of this nature affecting SCDC employees, therefore the impact of this provision is considered to be neutral.</p> | | |
| RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different race/ethnic groups | Neutral | |
| No impact. | | |
| DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people | Adverse | Medium |
| The policy sets out detailed written procedures which may be difficult to access for employees with certain types of literacy-based disabilities | | |
| AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups | Adverse | High |

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|--|----------------|--|
| (1) The maximum of 20 years of employment, taken into account in calculating redundancy pay entitlement, impacts negatively on older staff who are more likely to have compiled over 20 years' service. | | |
| (2) The restriction for employees aged 21 or under to half a week's pay for each year of employment impacts negatively on staff below the age of 21. | | |
| (3) The entitlement for employees aged 41 or over to 1.5 week's pay for each year of employment impacts negatively on staff below the age of 41. | | |
| These criteria represent statutory provisions within the Employment Rights Act 1996. | | |
| SEXUAL ORIENTATION: potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people | Neutral | |
| No impact. | | |
| RELIGION/FAITH: Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups | Neutral | |
| No impact. | | |
| OTHER | Adverse | |
| The draft policy contains a proposal that, in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Leader and Portfolio holder with responsibility for Staffing, an employee who was previously employed by SCDC immediately prior to a short break in service (maximum of 3 months), and who then returns to SCDC after the short break, will have their SCDC service counted as continuous. There is a risk that, if applied arbitrarily, this provision could give rise to general discrimination in decision-making involving one or more protected characteristic. This potentially adverse impact can be overcome through the agreement of equitable criteria within which 'exceptional circumstances' will be defined in practice. | | |

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

Gender:

Consider a 'means-based' approach under which employees who have taken lengthy career breaks to bring up families will be entitled to have broken service taken into account, subject to meeting certain criteria.

Disability:

Make reasonable adjustments for employees who are unable to deal with written correspondence and requirements due to disability and state this explicitly within the policy.

Age:

Introduce a standard multiple of week's pay to be used when calculating redundancy payments for all employees, regardless of age.

Subject to statutory restrictions, abolish the 20-year maximum in respect of length of service to be taken into account in the calculation of redundancy pay entitlement.

General

The potentially adverse impact of provisions in respect of recognising broken service in exceptional circumstances can be overcome through the agreement of equitable criteria under which these 'exceptional circumstances' will be assessed in practice.

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

The policy attempts to apply a generic and therefore equitable approach to redundancy and reorganisation; however, in attempting this it fails to reflect the diverse needs of the Council's workforce, leading to the adverse equality impacts identified above.

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

None.

| D. CONCLUSIONS | | | |
|---|------|-------------------------------------|--|
| D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment? | Yes? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment? |
| | No? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group? | Yes? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment? A full assessment has been drafted in respect of the adverse impacts identified. |
| | No? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities? | Yes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities? Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? |

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|---|-----|---|--|
| | No? | ✓ | <p>Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments?</p> <p>To be arranged.</p> |
| <p>D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?</p> <p>No</p> | | | |

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

| Recommendation/ issue to be addressed | Planned Milestone | Planned completion of milestone (date) | Officer Responsible | Progress |
|--|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------------|
| As per Section C2 above – refer to Full Equality Impact Assessment. | | | | |
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RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

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| No |
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ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

Refer to Full Equality Impact Assessment

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

| | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| Signature of Lead Officer | | Date: |
| Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer: | | Date: |

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.