

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – INITIAL SCREENING TEMPLATE (IST)

Initial screening needs to take place for all new/revised Council policies. The word ‘policy’, in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision. This stage must be completed at the earliest opportunity to determine whether it is necessary to undertake an EIA for this activity.

Name of Policy: Business Travel and Expenses Policy

Lead Officer (responsible for assessment): Nicole Pema, HR Manager

Department: HR

Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):

Date Initial Screening Completed: October 2023

(a) What is the policy trying to achieve? i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

This policy sets out the approval and booking arrangements for claiming travel, accommodation, subsistence and any other expenses incurred by an employee in the performance of their duties. It aims to ensure that there is a consistent and transparent approach for all business travel in connection with the delivery of the council’s services and ensures that employees are recompensed for the additional costs incurred for undertaking business travel on behalf of the council.

In accordance with the council's Investors in Environment Travel Plan, this policy promotes more environmentally sustainable methods to either reduce business journeys and, if a journey is required, to undertake this in an environmentally efficient and cost-effective way. The most sustainable mode of travel is not to travel at all. Employees are encouraged to make maximum use of IT facilities, such as video conferencing rather than in person meetings wherever possible.

(b) Who are its main beneficiaries? i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

It applies to all employees of the council. It does not apply to the council’s trading companies.

(c) Is this assessment informed by any information or background data? i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

The Policy is informed by:

a) Relevant legislation, including:

- Working Time Regulations
- Health and Safety at Work Act

b) HMRC travel and expenses rules - as an employer paying your employees’ travel costs, you have certain tax, National Insurance and reporting obligations.

- c) Driving for work code of practice
- d) Consultation with Unison

(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics (please tick all that apply):

Ethnicity: NO
Sex: NO
Disability: NO
Gender Reassignment: NO
Pregnancy & Maternity: NO
Age: NO
Religion or Belief: NO
Sexual Orientation: NO
Marriage & Civil Partnership: NO

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

The policy applies equally to any employee who is categorised as a either a casual or essential car user.

- a) **Does the policy affect service users or the wider community? NO**
- b) **Does the policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered? NO**
- c) **Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? NO**
- d) **Does it involve a significant commitment of resources? NO**
- e) **Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled**
- f) **people's access to public transport etc? NO**

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions above, then it is necessary to proceed with a full equality impact assessment (EIA). If the answer is **NO**, then this judgement and your response to the above questions will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead Officer and then forwarded to the HR Manager.

Signatures:

Completing Officer: Nicole Pema **Date:** October 2023

Service Lead Officer: Nicole Pema **Date:** October 2023