

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: Remote Working 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?

Remote working is a work arrangement that permits an employee to conduct all or some of their work at an approved alternative worksite such as the home or in office space near to the employee’s home.

Remote working requests can be either Occasional or Permanent.

To enable the council to maximise its employee’s effectiveness and productivity but at the same time giving more flexibility in their working lives, the council is committed to supporting remote working.

This policy has been developed to protect sensitive or valuable data and maintain the overall security of Council data and equipment whilst employees are working remotely. In addition, this policy recognises and defines the duty of care of the Council to the remote working employees in regard to their health and safety and fair treatment.

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

The Policy applies to all staff employed by the Council.

(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:

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Health and Safety at Work Act
- Flexible Working Regulations

b) Council's Code of Conduct

c) Data Protection Guidance

d) Health and Safety Policy and Codes of Practice

e) The Council's Insurance policy

f) Investors in the Environment Travel Plan

g) 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

Age: NO

Sex: NO

Religion or Belief: NO

Disability: YES

Sexual Orientation: NO

Gender Reassignment: NO

Marriage & Civil Partnership: NO

Pregnancy & Maternity: YES

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 flexible working legislation categorises home or remote working as a type of flexible working, and therefore the application process for Permanent Remote working reflects the same procedure as the Flexible working guidance in the Family Friendly Guidance.

All employees can request to:

- change the hours they work
- change the times when they are required to work
- change their pattern of work, e.g. compressed hours (9-day fortnights) and annualised hours
- change the place at which they are required to work

A flexible working request is a 'statutory request' which means that the Council has a duty to deal with it in a 'reasonable manner', giving it careful consideration.

The Remote Working Policy may attract and retain of employees who are unable to come into an office on a regular basis, e.g. those with childcare responsibilities or people with disabilities that affect their mobility

If we know that an employee is making the request for remote working due to a disability, then we are able to refer them to the Council's Reasonable Adjustment Request form which forms part of the Managing Attendance and Stress at Work Policy.

(e) Does the policy affect service users or the wider community? NO

(f) Does the policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered? NO

(g) Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? NO

(h) Does it involve a significant commitment of resources? NO

Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled 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