

Screening/Scoping Pro Forma

Section	Human Resources	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	
Name of Policy to be assessed	Work/Life Balance – flexible working, maternity, paternity and adoption, compassionate leave	Date of Assessment	28/10/2008
		Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	To support a healthy balance between work and home life and to enable employees manage work around their family and/or home life priorities.		
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To aid recruitment and retention by presenting a 'good employer' face. ➤ To reduce stress levels and the incidence of stress related sickness absence by allowing staff some measure of opportunity to manage the times that they spend at work. ➤ To meet statutory obligations in so far as they relate to these policies. 		
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	<p>Direct:</p> <p>Employees and management through the scope to fit people more effectively into work needs and through the commitment to work that the policies engender.</p> <p>Indirect</p> <p>The Council through the employees on which it depends to deliver its services being content.</p> <p>The 'customers' (end users) of the Council's services for the same reason as above.</p>		

4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A model of best practice in work/life balance ➤ Maintained/improved staff retention rates ➤ Harmony between those who need to take advantage of the work/life balance options and those who do not. 		
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of awareness of the policies and their purpose (NOTE: There is significant guidance available on the Loop) ➤ Inequitable application of the policies 		
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Employees, management, the Council, users of the Council's services	7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?	Directors and Line Managers supported by HR. HR is responsible for the policy through the Management Team
8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?	¥	N	<p>These policies widen the scope for greater flexibility in relation to work and home life and can be applied consistently irrespective of ethnicity.</p> <p>The existence of such policies will make it more acceptable for long periods of leave to visit families overseas for those whose main family is overseas. This is more likely to be the case but not exclusively so, for employees who are from a minority ethnic background.</p>
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	There is only a presumption that there is consistent application regardless of ethnicity as there is no equality monitoring of those who take up the various work/life balance opportunities. However, there is no evidence of a negative impact on minority ethnic staff.		

<p>9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>There is a general acceptance that women take the larger share of the caring functions in a family – both child care and elder care. The policies are aimed at supporting family life but it is undoubtedly so that women are far more likely to take up the various work/life balance opportunities.</p> <p>That this is not necessarily a source of concern lies in the opening statement about ‘general acceptance’ of the role of women in caring although it would be in appropriate for the Council to presume, in any way, that to be the case.</p> <p>Whether this results in a less sympathetic response to requests for more flexible working, compassionate leave etc. that come from male staff is not always clear as, although there is a formal route to application, it may not be known that males had been persuade against making their application through their line managers initial/informal response.</p> <p>The maternity and paternity leave procedures are gender specific. The improving provisions for men in supporting the birth of their child and the availability of parental leave go some way to balancing out the position.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>An analysis of part-time workers in Guildford shows that the significant majority are female.</p>		
<p>10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>As a generalisation, disabled people are more likely to be beneficiaries of the policies, other than maternity/paternity, that enable greater flexibility of working. Staff who have a disability that is recognised under the DDA Acts have statutory protections in respect of ‘reasonable adjustments’.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>As with gender above, there is a general acceptance of the need for disabled people to be given more favourable treatment in this respect and there is no evidence that this presents a source of concern.</p>		

<p>11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The flexible working arrangements do not create differential impacts due to sexuality.</p> <p>The maternity and paternity arrangements are not clear in relation to same sex partners. The criteria for entitlement to paternity leave would appear to exclude a same sex partner unless the non-biological parent formally adopts the child.</p> <p>Statutory parental leave is not automatically available to same sex partners although it may be as a consequence of legal proceedings.</p> <p>The broader 'Work Life Balance' policy statement does not highlight the situation of same sex partners.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>There is no hard evidence of any issues. GBC does not monitor the sexuality of its staff and there is, therefore, no encouragement for staff who are in a same sex partnership with children to raise their concerns about this.</p>		
<p>12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their age?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The maternity leave provisions will cease to be of significance to female employees as they get older but there is no barrier to access to maternity (or paternity) provisions on age grounds.</p> <p>The flexible working arrangements have no age barriers and the same applies to the application of the special/compassionate leave arrangements.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The Council does not monitor the take up of the work life balance provisions by the age of the staff making requests and there is no other evidence of a differential impact on grounds of age.</p>		

<p>13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>None of the relevant policies highlight differences arising out of religion or belief and it is possible that certain provisions could have a negative impact on people who are devout followers of particular religions. It would be unrealistic to be aware of all of the potential issues but recognition that there may be issues would help alleviate concerns.</p> <p>Time off work for non-Christian religious festivals, funerals conducted under certain religious doctrines may not be an issue but would be if a line manager felt the grant of leave was not appropriate on the grounds of a negative impact on service delivery. There is some advice available to staff on the FAQ Section of the HR pages on the Loop but it is hidden away and is not definitive.</p> <p>Although it is not anticipated that it would be an issue, no specific arrangements exist for those staff who need to pray at particular times of the day, i.e. what guidance is there for such staff in relation to a need to pray during 'core time' and/or whether they would need to make up time lost under the flexible working hours scheme.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The Council does not monitor its staff for their religion or belief and there is no clear evidence that the concerns are real.</p> <p>There is no evidence of formal grievances on grounds of religion.</p>		
<p>14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The primary emphasis of work life balance policies is to support staff with caring responsibilities and there is, therefore, a positive impact for such staff.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			

15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?	Y	N	Except in particular circumstances, the Council, on the grounds that they are 'spent' will not know if staff are ex-offenders. There is nothing in the various policies that could indirectly discriminate against ex-offenders.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	There is no monitoring of staff who are ex-offenders and, therefore, no basis on which to monitor the take-up of the benefits under the Work Life Balance policies.		
16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being Transgender or transsexual?	Y	N	It is unlikely that the Council will know if the staff that it recruits are transgender. There is nothing in the various policies that could indirectly discriminate against transgender staff.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	There is no monitoring of staff who are transgender and, therefore, no basis on which to monitor the take-up of the benefits under the Work Life Balance policies.		
17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?	Y	N	<p>A number of the differential impacts identified above highlight positive impacts as the work life balance policies, in some instances, are targeted at specific categories of staff. There is no consequential negative impact of staff who are not in the target groups as they either cannot apply the non-target groups or they are to negate a disadvantage.</p> <p>There are some areas in which an adverse impact could arise. The reasons for this are: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The absence of monitoring of take up of benefits by equality strand; ➤ Corporate advice to staff that is not sufficiently specific; and ➤ Lack of awareness of certain issues that may create either a direct or indirect negative impact.

<p>18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?</p>	<p>☹</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>There is no justification for the adverse impacts identified above in particular in relation to religion or belief and sexuality.</p>
<p>Business improvement</p> <p>19. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The absence of monitoring arrangements means that there is a low level of awareness of potential unmet needs particularly in relation to sexuality.</p> <p>The concerns identified in relation religion or belief may signal unmet needs.</p>
<p>20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups)?</p>	<p>☹</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Not in any obvious way</p>
<p>21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?</p>	<p>☹</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>It is unlikely that a full EIA is necessary for this activity.</p>
<p>22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The development of equality monitoring would act as an encouragement for staff from target groups to raise their concerns.</p>

23. Should the policy proceed to a full equality impact assessment?	Y	N		Yes	No
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?			<p>Consider ways in which equality monitoring of the use of the work life balance policies could reasonably happen.</p> <p>Review the policies to see how they could be used to promote awareness of religion or belief issues and sexuality issues.</p>		

Signed
 (completing officer) Date October 2008

Signed
 (Head of Section) Date

Countersigned
 (Corporate Diversity/Diversity/Policy Team) Date October 2008