Stage 1: Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

EIAs are designed to be proportionate and relevant and thus the time spent completing the EIA and the depth to which the questions are answered need to reflect the size and importance of what is being assessed

Your Equality Champion can help with completing the EIA if necessary, or guidance can be found in the Documents section of the Equality and Young People page on WySpace (via the Corporate tab)

1. What is being assessed? (Title or description of the policy, strategy, service, function (this includes reports to Cabinet as appropriate)).
   And who implements this policy, strategy, service or function?

A new Sickness Absence and Ill health Toolkit.

HR implements this toolkit for use by Employees & Managers.

Managers will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this toolkit is implemented and any feedback provided to HR as part of any ongoing reviews of it or the policy.

2. What is the purpose? (A short statement about its aim or objectives)

The aim of the toolkit is to provide guidance and a framework for managers to manage sickness absence within Wycombe District Council.

3. Who is affected? (The people it covers)

All employees and managers of the Council.

4. Are there any other organisations involved in delivery? (Other agencies, Voluntary sector) If so, please list them.

The toolkits introduction will be supported by Workshops provided by the HR Ops team.

The implementation of it will be further supported by the training course on Sickness Absence and Capability provided by Bucks County Council.

The OH provider – PAM Solutions will also provide guidance and support to Wycombe District Councils Managers and HR when helping the organisation to manage any sickness absence cases.

5. What are the external drivers for change? (i.e. Legal, National Policy, Partnership, etc)

The main driver has been to review HR policies and procedure to better support managers following the implementation of Shared Support Services. The ACAS guidance on managing sickness absence and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 have been taken into account when reviewing this policy.

6. Does the service, or the way you implement it, affect the public, Members or staff directly?

The main affect is on staff and employees.

7. Does it affect how other services are provided?

All employees need to take account of the standards of behaviour that are expected of them in the delivery of their services.

8. Is there information e.g. survey data or complaints that suggest that it is affecting particular groups of people? If so, how?

All absences are recorded on Empower by line managers. This information is then accessible to line managers and employees to identify if absence triggers outlined in the policy is being hit. Furthermore BAMs (Business Alerts Manager) are automatically sent to line managers each month highlighting employees who have hit sickness absence triggers. During 11/12 – sickness absence rate was 3.11%. There is no evidence to show that it will affect a particular group of people.

9. Does it have employment implications? (eg Recruitment policy)

Yes. Depending on the reason for the employees absence will depend which policy is used ie Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy or the Disciplinary Policy.

> *If you have answered 'yes' to one or more of questions 6,7,8 or 9 you will probably need to carry out a full Equality Impact Assessment immediately.*

10. Using the assessment in Questions 6-9 above, should a full assessment be carried out at this time?

YES X   NO

11. If you have said NO what is the justification for your decision? (Please provide details. eg a top level assessment may need to be carried out now to meet Cabinet requirements but enough information for a full assessment isn't available at this time). If so a due date for the completion of the full EIA **MUST** be provided

> *If the answer to Q10 is 'yes' continue with stages 2-4. Head of Service sign off will be required after Stage 4 only and a **Word electronic copy** should be returned to the Equality Officer for publication.*
>
> *If the answer to Q10 is 'no' the EIA will need to go through the **challenge process** to ensure that no further stages are required either at this time or ever, and needs to be sent to Claire Hook, Equality Officer for discussion and possible further explanation at claire_hook@wycombe.gov.uk.   Then, if following the challenge process*
>
> *a) it is agreed with the Equality Officer that no further Stages need to be completed the Head of Service needs to sign off the assessment (below) and return a Word electronic copy it to the Equality Officer for publication.*
>
> <p align="center">OR</p>
>
> *b) it is agreed with the Equality Officer that Stages 2-4 need to be completed there is no need for Head of Service sign off until Stages 2-4 have been completed at which point a **Word electronic copy** should be returned to the Equality Officer for publication.*

12. Who undertook this assessment?

Name: Catherine Moroney

Job Title: HR Advisor

Phone: x 3136

Email: Catherine.moroney@wycombe.gov.uk

This impact assessment was approved by the following Head of Service:

Name:

Service:

Date:

NB Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the EIA accurately reflects the service area and has been completed in line with the current programme.

Stage 2: Information Gathering

1. Under the Equality Act we need to comply with certain General duties, These ask; **What will the review or <u>change to the Service / policy etc. currently being assessed do to:</u>**	
eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation for any / all of the protected characteristics? (These are age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil p'ship, and pregnancy or maternity). Also bear in mind the impact on the needs of refugees and migrants where relevant.	One of the main principles of the Sickness Absence and Ill Health Toolkit is that it will support managers in managing sickness absence cases in a consistent, fair and transparent way whilst at the same time ensure individuals are treated with dignity and respect. It will also ensure that employees will not be discriminated against in the application of this policy and procedure on any grounds including grounds of the protected characteristics. Compliance with this will be through 1-1 between managers and employees, at team meetings.
advance equality of opportunity for any / all of the protected characteristics (as listed above)	It will raise awareness of the requirement for all managers and employees to comply with the Equal Opportunities policy and support managers in managing sickness absence cases.
foster good relations for any / all of the protected characteristics (as listed above)	It is to help all employees feel they are valued and supported irrespective of their individual characteristics.

2. Have you carried out work to identify the profile of your users or do you have information that describes the profile? (Please state the main sources of information you have used to map and understand the individuals and their needs, and what this has told you about them).

The Council currently employs 366 staff, 59% of whom are female and 41% are male. Currently 14.2% of the workforce is from BME groups. 4% of the staff describe themselves as having a disability (Equality & Disability Survey 2012).

3. Please describe the groups and / or mechanisms you use to engage / consult with service users, as well as a summary of the consultation findings if applicable. (Also include any relevant consultations undertaken by other organisations involved in delivery (Stage 1 Q4)).

Consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions via Joint Staff Committee on the introduction of this policy

3a. Is this ongoing? (if not please give reasons why)
No further steps are required for approval.

4. Have you done any work to understand the impacts of your service/ policy/ review on these user groups? This may include any consultation/ research / studies you have used. (If 'yes' what has this told you)?

Need to ensure that the policy is accessible to all employees particularly where English may not be a first language.

5. Is there any further consultation or research planned? Yes as in 3 above   No X *If 'yes', remember to include this as an action in Stage 4*
6. If there are gaps in your knowledge are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on these issues? Yes   No X 6a. If Yes, please list them and explain how you will obtain their views: *Remember to include contacting them, and (if relevant), the use of their views to determine actions in Stage 4*
7. Do you need to carry out further research? Yes   No X 7a.If yes give details: *If 'yes', remember to include this as an action in Stage 4*

Stage 3: Making a Judgement (Analysis)

1. Please state what you have done *to date* to take into account the needs / promote service for each of the protected characteristics with respect to this policy / procedure / function / review. (Include here past actions that have benefitted specific groups. Eg in the past you may have undertaken work to benefit a particular group who may, therefore, be excluded from this new piece of work, and this needs explaining. This section is therefore not always applicable).

Age	
Disability	
Gender	
Gender reassignment	
Race	
Religion / belief	
Sexual orientation	
Marriage / civil partnership	
Pregnancy / maternity	

2. From the information above and the description of your service state the likely positive and negative impacts for each protected characteristic. (This relates to the *proposal currently being assessed)*

Also consider the wider impact - whilst low income isn't a protected characteristic in itself it might be highly relevant to the area being assessed. For example: older or younger people may well have a lower income than the middle aged population, and people with disabilities are more likely to be out of work or paid less than the general population, as are those from an ethnic minority background. And, currently, there are more single mothers than single fathers and this may mean a lower income.

Age	Neutral
Disability	Neutral – The policy makes specific mention of the requirement to make adjustments as necessary to ensure the individual is able to engage with the process
Gender	Neutral
Gender reassignment	Neutral
Race	Neutral

Religion / belief	Neutral
Sexual orientation	Neutral
Marriage / civil partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy / Maternity	Neutral

Again remember to include any actions in Stage 4 as necessary.

3. Which negative impacts are:
a) Unavoidable? Please explain your answers and ensure an *action is included in Stage 4* to mitigate these wherever possible

Stage 4: Monitoring (Publication and Review)

1. Please state the actions you will take to promote equality or to address any adverse impact highlighted in the Stages above
Equality Improvement Plan (EIP)

Equality Target (eg Improved evaluation by school children attending formal sessions)	Equality Action (many actions may work towards one target) (eg i) devise pre-evaluation process, ii) devise post-evaluation process, iii) implement evaluation, iv) collate findings & make recommendations)	Intended outcome * this should link to any information you still need to obtain (Stage 2), any impacts you are attempting to mitigate, or achieve (Stage 3), or how it contributes to the Equality Act General Duties (Stage 3)	Deadline for completion this MUST be included (**ongoing is not acceptable**)	WDC officer responsible	Job Title	Email address	Phone number
Increase knowledge and awareness of the policy.	Promote the sickness Absence and Ill Health Toolkit to all Managers and employees.	Develop an approach to communication toolkit to managers and employees.	Nov 2013	Catherine Moroney	HR Advisor	Catherine.moroney@wycombe.gov.uk	01494 421136
		Promote the toolkit on Wyspace (Council intranet)	Jan 2014	Catherine	HR Advisor	Catherine.moroney@wycombe.gov.uk	01494 421136
		Ensure every employee has a return to work meeting after every absence.	April 2014	SMB/HOS			
		Managers to ensure that employees who are hitting triggers have a formal attendance	April 2014	SMB/HoS			

		review meeting.					
		Promote the Toolkit on WySpace (intranet)	Jan 2014	Catherine Moroney	HR Advisor	Catherine.moroney@wycombe.gov.uk	01494 421136
		Provide brief bites to managers and team leaders on the toolkit and highlight key information and checklists to use.	April 2014	Catherine Moroney	HR Advisor	Catherine.moroney@wycombe.gov.uk	01494 421136
Increase accessibility of policy	Ensure that employees who do not routinely use a PC for work are given access to the policy	Line managers to ensure a hard copy is made available to those staff	April 2014	SMB/HoS/ Line Managers			
	Line managers to ensure that staff where English in not their first language fully understand the policy and that information could be made available about obtaining policies in other languages and formats		April 2014	SMB/HoS/ Line Managers			
Raise awareness of sickness absence cases at team meetings in a confidential manner.	Managers to make the topic of 'sickness absence' part of their team meeting agenda.	Line managers to discuss cases as part of their team meetings to ensure that good practice is shared.	April 2014	SMB/HoS/ Line Managers			

- Intended outcome relates to how the results of the action will be used. (for eg. If you have an action to consult please provide an intended outcome that shows what you will use the information gained for, and how this will make a real-life equality improvement for people).
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NB you will be required to provide quarterly updates on these actions to your Equality Champion until they are completed.

Confirmation that actions are agreed and EIA approved for publication:

Head of Service signature…John McMillan……………………………………………………….

Service Area   HR, ICT and Customer services

Date

An **electronic Word version** should now be sent to the Equalities Officer for publication.

Date received by Equalities Officer……………………………………………………….

NB Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the EIA accurately reflects the service area.