

Appendix 1

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Form



Please read the EIA toolkit for guidance before completing this form

Service: COR	Policy area: Absence, Leave and Family Friendly	Name of officer: Jackie Roberts			
1. Is this a major policy: i.e. high profile / will affect many people / will have a severe effect on some people?	Yes		No	X	
	High risk. Complete a full EIA			Go to section 2	
2. Is the policy likely to have an impact on a specific group of people? (People from the E&D strands)	Yes		No	X	
	High risk. Complete a full EIA			Go to section 3	
3. For policies that have a low risk of impact on the E&D strands and where possible improvements have been identified complete section 5 below and sections 3 and 4 of the full EIA.					
4. For policies that have a low risk of impact on the E&D strands and require no action to be taken complete section 5 below.					
5. If this policy is low risk please give or attach evidence to indicate how you have reached this conclusion:					

Equality and Diversity strands that the policy is to be assessed against:	Age		Race		Disability		Gender		Belief / Faith		Sexual Orientation		Other equality issue(s)		HR Issues Only	
	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-
Could the CONDUCT have a negative or positive impact? (Yes/No)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes				

Head of Service Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment Template

1. Context of the Service or Policy

Policy area being assessed: ___Absence, Leave & Family
Friendly_____

Assessor: Jackie Roberts_____ Date 20 March 2009_____

What are the aims of the service or policy? If this assessment is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review/improve

(NB this should set out the aims and objectives of the policy or service)

This policy area includes the following policies:

Attendance management
Maternity leave and pay
Time off for dependants
Compassionate leave
Carers guidance
Adoption leave and pay
Career break
Parental leave
Paternity leave
Annual leave

The aim of this policy area is to ensure that all staff are aware of their legal and contractual entitlement to time off, to provide information about support and guidance for staff who have caring responsibilities or are ill and to provide managers with guidance on supporting and managing staff who are absent from work through sickness.

Who are the beneficiaries /users of this service or policy?

(NB this should address needs of client groups and a review of barriers to policy or services)

- SCC staff
- Potential job seekers
- Council Departments
- Trade Unions

What is the existing situation in relation to minority, disadvantaged and excluded groups in which this service/policy operates? (Including age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other general equality strands or issues that might make people vulnerable. NB this will require declaring what information is currently captured with respect to equality & diversity Monitoring) of this service or policy. It is also important to show the relevance of capturing this data.)

The purpose of this policy area is to ensure that all staff are treated legally and equitably when they are absent for any reason.

The purpose of this policy area is to ensure that entitlements to leave and pay during absence are applied legally and consistently to all staff and that there are guidelines in place for providing support and assistance to employees who have caring responsibilities or are absent through sickness by:

Providing clear guidance on how to apply for various categories of leave and pay;

Outlining when and how leave will be granted in a variety of circumstances;

Ensure that access to appropriate support is available for staff with caring responsibilities or who are absent due to sickness;

Ensure that employees who are absent due to illness are treated reasonably, fairly and consistently.

2. Given what you already know, what is the potential for this service/policy to have a negative or differential impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and excluded groups or on race relations and community cohesion?

Please summarise the negative impact identified due to age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other or general equality issues

The assessment of the written policies indicated that there is potential for adverse impact in the following areas:

Group	Yes	No	Comments
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Group	Yes	No	Comments
Age		✓	
Disability	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Management – The policy requires individuals to tell their manager the nature of their illness. There is no alternative offered. This is may be indirect sex discrimination in that opposite genders might not wish to tell managers of intimate health problems. Annual Leave - Intimating that it is not appropriate to take annual leave during the probationary period may result in indirect disability discrimination if, for example staff who have a disability and require regular breaks.
Gender	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is nothing in the policy about the management of pregnancy sickness absence. Therefore managers/employees might think it should be managed the same way as other sickness absence and could lead to sex discrimination Annual Leave - Intimating that it is not appropriate to take annual leave during the probationary period may result in indirect sex, discrimination if, for example, the period covers school holidays.
Race	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Break – Some employees may wish to take career breaks to spend time with family overseas. To require them to attend 4 week work placements and training courses during the break would prevent anyone spending a period with their family overseas
Sexual Orientation	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees who have chosen to keep their sexuality confidential might not feel free to ask for certain leaves such as compassionate, Paternity, or Adoption leave if it would expose their sexuality
Religion/belief	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Management – The policy requires individuals to tell their manager the nature of their illness. There is no alternative offered. This is may be indirect sex discrimination in that opposite genders might not wish to tell managers of intimate health problems. Muslim and women of other religions would certainly not tell a male manager about gynaecological or similar problems; nor would a Muslim man tell a female manager about similarly personal medical problems Special Leave - There is an issue around compassionate leave for the bereaved from Hindu, Muslim and Jewish religions.

Group	Yes	No	Comments
			<p>Muslims and Jews are required to remain in the house for a set amount of time following a close bereavement. Hindus – particularly sons – are required to take parental ashes to the Ganges. As it stands, the policy may discriminate on the grounds of religion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Leave - Intimating that it is not appropriate to take annual leave during the probationary period may result in indirect religious, discrimination if, for example for certain religious festivals •

2. Given what you already know, what is the potential for this service/policy to have a positive impact, such as tackling discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and / or promoting good community relations, for minority, disadvantaged and excluded groups?

Please summarise the positive impact identified due to age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other or general equality issues. NB this would include positive initiatives delivery by the service or through the policy for any/all of these equality groups. What have been the outcomes or changes?

Group	Yes	No	Comments
Age	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers leave will have a positive impact on middle aged employees with caring responsibilities
Disability		✓	
Gender	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some leave such as Maternity & Paternity leave will encourage prospective and current employees to stay at Surrey County Council, as it will be viewed as an employer of choice.
Race		✓	
Sexual Orientation		✓	
Religion/belief		✓	

3. Give details of involvement, consultation and or research undertaken for each relevant equality and diversity grouping, upon which this policy/service has had an impact either internally or externally.

What is the research telling you in relation to age, belief/faith, disability, race gender/transgender, sexual orientation and other equality issues?

<p>Guidance has been sought, at various times, from relevant expert organisations including the CIPD and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and its predecessor</p>

departments. Websites were accessed and enquiries made by telephone and e-mail for any insights into aspects of law and policy that had proved to be discriminatory under case law.

The following consultation has been completed:

- 30 September - Half day HR intranet restructure workshop - HR policies
- 1 October - Meeting with the TU's on Fairness & Dignity policy
- 6 October - Benchmarking on Policies with Brighton & Hove Council
- 7 October - SCC and VT4S Working Together
- 10 October - Personnel & Appointment Committee (PAC) special meeting
- 21 October - Special audit of policies
- 28 October - Policy Streamlining internal team meeting
- 4 November - SCC and VT4S Working Together
- 13 November - SCCTU / HRLT consultation
- 17 November - Review of HR policies - internal meeting
- 18 November - Review of References Policy
- 20 November - Team meeting to discuss progress on HR policies
- 27 November - SCCTU / CCMT consultation
- 1 December - Meeting with Surrey Police Authority to discuss HR policies
- 1 December - Conference Call with "Jamkit" Policy Team
- 13 January - SCC and VT4S Working Together
- 15 January - SCCTU / HRLT consultation
- 27 January - Special consultation meeting with SCCTU on policies (1)
- 30 January - Special consultation meeting with SCCTU on policies (2)
- 10 February - SCC and VT4S Working Together
- 12 February - Special consultation meeting with SCCTU on policies (3)
- 12 February - SCCTU / CCMT consultation
- 19 March - SCCTU / CCMT consultation
- 23 March - Personnel & Appointment Committee meeting to agree the simplified and streamlined policies on the Council's s-net.

In addition there have been regular discussions and updates at weekly meetings of HRLT

5. Given your answers to the previous questions, how will your service or policy be revised to mitigate, reduce or eliminate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts for the relevant equality groups?

(NB this is in effect the Recommendations to improve this policy)

Recommendations	
1.	The policies in this area should be subject to ongoing review to ensure that they continue to be fair and equitable, legislation changes and trends in formal performance management issues.
2.	Consider monitoring and analysis of data by the six strands of diversity to assess if differential impact is occurring and what action needs to be taken to address issues emerging

6. Actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations:

Action Plan

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action
Attendance Management	Include in policy an alternative person for employees to discuss the nature of their absence with and/or provide guidance on the level of detail required	Revised guidance	Policy team	Sept 2009
Special Leave	Include guidance on how to treat compassionate leave where a longer absence might be expected because of religious practices	Revised guidance	Policy team	Sept 2009
Career break	Entire policy being revised	New policy	Policy team	July 2009
Annual Leave	Include guidance on the requirement to limit time off during probation	Revised guidance	Policy team	Sept 2009

NB these actions should have SMART Targets

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

NB these actions should be reported to the Departmental Equality and Diversity Implementation Group (DIG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

7. If no actions are to be taken with respect to the recommendations please give reasons below:

Action Plan review date	30 June 2009
Name of person responsible for review	Matthew Baker
Name of person who carried out the assessment	Jackie Roberts
Name of Head of Service	Carmel Millar
Signature of Head of Service	

Date Completed	26 March 2009
Date sent for publication	26 March 2009

1. Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for monitoring and audit purposes
2. Send an electronic copy to the SCC 'Web Operations Team' for publication on the SCC website
3. Send Action Plan to DIG for review at its next meeting.