

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00127 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Human Resources & Business Transformation	Lead Officer Name:	Tracey Gillespie
		Team:	HR
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Proposal:	Absence Service Review - £134k SWAS have identified additional savings from their budget	Reference No:	CHS41

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	No	No	Yes	No

Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	No	No	Yes	No

Other, please specify:

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

08/02/2019	To reduce absence levels across services in order to reduce backfill costs and improve employee wellbeing.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	£8m	Doesn't include backfill costs. this only relates to sick pay costs.
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:	134,000	Additional savings been identified by SWAS.
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:		
	Expected Annual Income Total:		
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	01/04/2019	
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

Absence for 2017/18 was 4.51% and YTD 4.20%. Falkirk Council target is £4%. Direct absence costs for sick pay are currently c£8m per annum. Backfill costs are in addition to this.

For disability – 4531 employees have disclosed their disability status with 126 responded yes (2.8%). From the overall workforce number (7275) it equates to 1.7%. Given the small number identifying themselves as disabled, it is difficult to do any analysis of disability/sickness.

Gender is 73% female and 27% male.

Age ranges are:

16-24 – 4.9%; 25-34 – 18%; 35-44 – 21% ; 45-54 – 30%;55-64 – 24%;65-74 – 2% ; 75+ - 0.1%

B - Qualitative Evidence

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

General Actions:

Phased returns are often implemented after long term absences to help facilitate a return to work.

CBT is provided in specific cases to aid recovery and facilitate a return to work.

Physio is provided to aid recovery and facilitate a return to work or avoid an absence.

Specific Cases:

Individual with chronic fatigue/ME requested specific hours and days to support a return to work. Whilst the service found this difficult to manage due to the nature of the work, consideration was given to recruiting a backfill for the other hours on a casual basis to help support a return.

Individual with sensory impairment supported to return to work by an arrangement that allowed him/her to work from home.

Employee who was unable to use stairs, carry files/books etc - redeployed into a clerical post, so he/she had access to a disabled toilet, lift and essentially doing a sedentary role.

Employee with chronic back condition no longer fit for moving and handling post – redeployed into sedentary role.

Case involving complications arising from diabetes so shift work was not compatible with condition. Redeployed to alternate post that didn't require shift work.

Employee with stoma bag agreed arrangements where he/she could return to home/time off to facilitate a return to work.

Employee with physical injury and long term psychological trauma, redeployed to an environment that allowed his/her physical and emotional scars to heal in a safe environment.

Best Judgement:**Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?**

No

Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?

What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	Aim of policy is to support individuals with protected characteristics.

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.	Hackathon with employees and with managers. Trade Unions were invited. Only a small number of employees attended the session.	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.		
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	Yes	2 x Hackathons
Survey	No	
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	Yes	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	No	
Is further engagement recommended?	Yes	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, public protection etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age				unknown
Disability				unknown
Sex				unknown
Ethnicity				unknown
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				unknown
Sexual Orientation				unknown
Transgender				unknown
Pregnancy / Maternity				unknown
Marriage / Civil Partnership				unknown
Poverty				unknown
Other, health, community justice, public protection etc.				unknown
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)	Potential for increased tribunal claims. potential for individuals to return to work when not fully fit. Employee morale may be impacted however employees should be supported in a return to work.			

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	Issues considered on a case by case basis to ensure employee can continue to work
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	No	
Councils	Yes	If FC manage to reduce absence levels, then other Councils will request feedback on how this has been achieved.
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	Yes	If FC manage to reduce absence levels, then other Councils will request feedback.
Police	No	
Third Sector	No	
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

No identified impact.

Supporting managers through case management.

Training will be provided to ensure consistent application of policy and employees are supported in a return to work.

Are actions being reported to Members?

No

If yes when and how ?

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	Yes	Consultation has taken place. The policy is not changing significantly. The aim is to ensure consistent application of the existing policy.
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Tracey Gillespie</i>	Date:	08/02/2019
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SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:	Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	Policy is not changing, managers are being asked to implement policy. Consideration given on a case by case basis to try to ensure that employee can return to work	
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA		
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA		

Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made?</u>	Yes / No	If YES, please describe:

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes / No	
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:		
Signature:	<i>Stuart Ritchie</i>	Date: 18/02/2019