

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: Redundancy Policy

Lead Officer (responsible for assessment): Nicole Pema, HR Manager

Department: HR

Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):NO

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?

East Cambridgeshire District Council aspires to be a fair and equitable employer committed to the principle of maintaining the highest possible level of job security for its employees. However, it is recognised that there may be certain occasions when financial pressures, changes in working practices, advances in technology, or external factors, have an impact on the council’s workforce.

In the event of a potential redundancy situation being identified, the council will endeavour to address this by limiting external recruitment, reducing overtime, retraining and redeploying employees where possible, and other reasonably practicable measures in order to avoid a compulsory redundancy situation. However, should compulsory redundancy become necessary the council will strive to ensure a consistent and fair method of selection is applied.

The policy sets out how potential redundancy situations and, if necessary, compulsory redundancies will be managed within the council.

(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:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation

b) Guidance issued by the Cambridgeshire County Council Pension Fund in relation to redundancy and retirement

c) Data Protection Guidance

d) 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: NO

Sexual Orientation: NO

Gender Reassignment: NO

Marriage & Civil Partnership: NO

Pregnancy & Maternity: NO

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?

This policy gives a clear structure for dealing with redundancy situations and provides a fair and objective approach when selecting members of the workforce for redundancy.

The purpose of having objective criteria is to ensure that employees are not unfairly selected for redundancy. One of the Council's compulsory redundancy selection criteria is 'Attendance Record' which could be considered to be disadvantageous for people with a disability who may have more periods of time off work, however, the policy states that any absence relating to the following must be disregarded: disability, pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption, parental, time off for dependents, time off to act as a trade union rep, time off for reserve forces, jury service etc.

If there is any doubt about the reliability of factual information, the Council can agree to disregard a particular criteria for a particular selection process.

Where an employee on maternity leave has been selected for redundancy, she must be notified at the same time as other employees receiving notice. It must be clearly explained that the maternity provisions take precedence and that she will not be made redundant until she returns from ordinary maternity leave or additional maternity leave and only then, if no suitable alternative job can be found. She will be offered the first choice of any suitable alternative vacancy.

This could be considered disadvantageous for men, however, it is a legal right under equalities legislation.

Employees with less than 2 years Local Government service are not eligible for a redundancy payment, this may be considered disadvantageous for younger employees. This timeframe reflects the statutory requirement to receive a compensatory payment.

Employees aged 55+ are eligible for immediate pension benefits if made redundant. This could be considered disadvantageous for people below 55 as they would not have access to their pension benefit. This is a condition of Cambridgeshire's Local Government Pension Scheme and as such cannot be altered. Conversely employees may feel that their age is a key determinant when undertaking a restructuring exercise due to the associated pension related costs in releasing them. Costs should be only one of several factors when considering requests for voluntary redundancy/flexible retirement and managers need to ensure a robust selection process is in place.

(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

(i) 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