

Supporting Good Decisions

**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;
Reducing Poverty; and
Protecting the Environment**

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality and Human Rights; Reducing Poverty; and Protecting the Environment

Title of Policy/ Proposal	Homeworking Policy
Timescale for Implementation	September 2021
I/A Completion Date	May 2021
Completed by	Gail Scott, HR Adviser
Lead officer	Zoe McFadzean, HR Business Partner

Section 1: Screening

1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing.

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy/ proposal/ activity being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

The purpose of the policy is to outline arrangements for East Lothian Council employees who request to be contracted to work from home rather than another council office or site.

It is proposed that employees contracted to work from home will be provided with all equipment required, have full H&S risk assessments undertaken and have robust management support and communication networks to enable this.

The aim of this policy is to align with the aims and delivery of council strategies including Asset Strategy and Management Plan, Climate Change, Workforce and Equalities. Also, to support employees attain work life balance whilst delivering excellent services to users and customers.

1.2 What will change as a result of this policy?

The council will achieve aspirations related to corporates strategies (see 1.1.) and positive results expected include:

- A more flexible workforce able to deliver services in a more flexible way.
- Enhanced recruitment and retention of employees who are seeking flexible working arrangements.
- Realisation of elements of the Asset Strategy and Management Plan by freeing up or reducing the need for serviced office space.
- Realisation of elements of the Climate Change Strategy by reducing personal and business travel requirements, reduction of serviced office space and equipment.
- New ways of working, embracing technology to offer a variety of services, enhancing availability of access for service users.
- Review of the effectiveness of this policy towards the end of the first year following implementation will take place.

1.3 Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.

Please answer the following questions:

	Yes	No
1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service?	✓	
2. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality and human rights, socio-economic disadvantage, the council's role as a corporate parent, or the council's commitment to tackling climate change?	✓	
3. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact as defined by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?		✓
4. The policy/ proposal involves a data processing activity (storage / collection of personal data) that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals as determined by Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation?		✓

- If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.

- If you have answered yes to question 3, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
 - If you have answered yes to question 4, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Please seek further advice from the Team Manager Information Governance.
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Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment

2.1 Have those who are directly affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?

Yes via Corporate Management Team, Senior Management Team, formal Trade Union and Employee Consultations.

2.2 What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?

Benchmarking and research from other Scottish Local Authorities, Society of Personnel & Development Scotland (SPDS), Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD), XpertHR, COSLA, ACAS, ELC Homeworking Employee Survey. Consideration of the council's Equalities Monitoring Report 2019/2020 which can be found [here](#)

2.3 What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy's actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?

Evidence	Comment
Which groups are in particular need of this service?	Families, working parents, those employees with health concerns or disabilities.
What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups?	Tbc
Can you identify positive outcomes for service users	Yes (see 1.1 & 1.2 above)
What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups?	Tbc
What opportunity have those	Homeworking Employee Survey, CMT and SMT

from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans?	meetings & full Employee and Trade Union Consultation.
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2.4 How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community?

	Comments
<p>Equality Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people, people in the middle years • Children and young people children • Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) • Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) • Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers) • Refugees and asylum seekers • People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) • Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people • People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership 	<p>This policy is inclusive and accessible to employees who are employed in roles, the key tasks of which could mainly be undertaken from home. Benefits include:</p> <p>Flexibility of working times to accommodate personal responsibilities and commitments outwith work, reduced travel time and expense, flexibility to accommodate carer responsibilities (elder and childcare), flexibility to support those with underlying health conditions and disabilities.</p> <p>Offering working from home will open up vacancies to a wider pool of applicants from a wider geographical area. Homeworking may also help retain staff as it offers flexibility to support home and work balance.</p>

<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • People on benefits • Lone Parents • Care experienced children and young people • Carers (including young carers) • Homeless people • Those involved in the community justice system • People with low literacy/numeracy • Families with 3 or more children • Those with a child/ children under 1 	<p>Tax implications for homeworkers could potentially have a detrimental effect for people on some state benefits.</p> <p>Homeworking offers flexibility within the working day which could support lone parents and those caring for elders, children and young people to have flexibility to attend to their dependants needs and avoid associated care support costs.</p> <p>This policy may be less accessible to those who are homeless, or who have limited space at home due to e.g. multigenerational households, limited room space or those who do not have access to broadband. However, homeworking is a voluntary arrangement with all employees currently supported to work from an office/site base.</p> <p>Where identified through the risk assessment process, workstation desk and/or chair will be provided for all contracted homeworkers.</p> <p>The monthly arrangements for reimbursement of expenses to contribute towards increased heating and utilities costs in the home due to homeworking may disadvantage low income families/employees facing regular bills.</p>
<p>Geographical communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural/ semi rural communities 	<p>This policy could be particularly beneficial for those living in remote or</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Communities • Coastal communities • Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas) 	<p>outlying areas as work can be undertaken from home which opens up a broader employment opportunities market.</p>
<p>People with communication needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelic Language Speakers {refer if necessary to the Council’s Gaelic Language Plan} • British Sign Language (BSL) users {refer if necessary to the Council’s BSL Plan} • English as a Second Language • Other e.g. DeafBlind, Plain English, Large Print 	<p>There is scope for the provision of support to enable specific communication needs for homeworking employees.</p>

2.5 Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?

This policy will only be available to those employees who are employed in a role within which core tasks are suitable to be carried out in a home environment.

2.6 Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

No

2.7 Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?

Via Inform, MyHR, cascade via Service Heads/Head Teachers, provision of guidance and support on the Intranet, employee induction, with alternative formats available upon request.

2.8 Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?

Equality and Human rights

- Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services
- Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment
- Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them
- Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)
- Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity

Comments:

- ✓ The policy is open to all current and potential employees who have job roles that could be undertaken at home which supports flexibility of work for individuals from equality and diversity perspectives.
- ✓ The policy enables flexible working which can be aligned with evolving customer and service needs.
- ✓ The policy promotes and outlines ongoing support and inclusion of all homeworkers as part of their team and the wider workforce.
- ✓ The policy refers to the council's Code of Conduct for Employees and the East Lothian Way, as well as outlining acceptable behaviour and etiquette for homeworkers.
- ✓ Technological support enables networking, inclusion and support of all homeworkers.

Socio-Economic Disadvantage / reducing poverty

- Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality
- Helps young people into positive destinations
- Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market
- Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy
- Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities
- Reduces the cost of living

Comments :

- ✓ The policy has the potential to maximise income, reduce income inequality and reduce the

cost of living due to reduction in costs associated with travel and expenses those associated with office based working (e.g. purchase of food, drinks, clothing).

- ✓ The homeworking policy enables flexibility for employees to undertake personal commitments and responsibilities which may reduce the need, cost and time associated with business and personal travel as well as carer responsibilities.
- ✓ The flexibility of the homeworking policy would benefit those returning to work requiring flexibility due to for example, child or elder care responsibilities or undertaking studies.
- ✓ The policy supports employees to continue to develop skills as part of ongoing Personal Development and Review.
- ✓ The policy outlines that all employees will be provided with hardware and software, along with desk and chair and all kit required for homeworking.

Tackling Climate Change

- Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport
- Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy
- Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources
- Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources
- Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity
- Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy
- Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts

Comments:

- ✓ The policy dramatically reduces the need to commute to work and unnecessary business travel due to IT technology negating the need to attend meetings in person.
- ✓ Homeworking embraces technology and encourages paperless administrative practices, with more electronic filing.
- ✓ Homeworking reduces the costs associated with asset and property management servicing and maintenance for the council.

Corporate Parenting and Care Experienced Young People

- Impacts on care experienced young people
- Provides opportunities or reduces opportunities to participate in activities which are designed to promote the wellbeing of young people
- Adversely affects the wellbeing of young people

- Adversely impacts on outcomes for care experienced young people

Comments:

n/a

Section 3. Action Plan

What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?

Changes to be made	Expected outcome of the change	Resources Required	Timeline	Responsible person
Provision of workstation chair and desk	To address barriers in relation to financial and socio-economic circumstances and to better support health and wellbeing of employees by provision of furniture that meets H&S requirements.		May 2021	Line Manager

For consideration of the Head of Service

Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?

Beyond anything already highlighted earlier in this document, I am unaware of any cumulative impacts that need to be disclosed and considered.

Sign off by Head of Service



Name: James D Lamond
Executive Director for Council Resources

Date: 16th June 2021