

Huntingdonshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)



Service area	Human Resources
Date of assessment	September 2022
Name of policy/service to be assessed	Sickness Absence Policy
Is this a new or existing policy/service?	Existing Policy
Name of manager responsible for new or amended policy/service	Nicki Bane – Strategic HR Manager
Names of people conducting the assessment	Kiran Hans
Step 1 – Description of new or amended policy/service	
Describe the aims; objectives and purpose of the new or amended policy/service (include how it fits in to wider aims or strategic objectives).	The policy outlines the Councils approach to managing sickness Absence
<p>The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, the Council also needs to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty. The Council therefore needs to understand how its decisions and activities impact on different people. An Equality Impact Assessment is the current method by which the Council can assess and keep a record of the impact of new or amended strategies, policies, functions or services.</p> <p>The council retains these duties even when outsourcing services or providing shared services.</p> <p><i>Definition of Adverse Impact - occurs when a decision, practice, or Policy has a disproportionately negative effect on a protected group. Adverse Impact may be unintentional.</i></p>	
Are there any (existing) equality objectives of the new/amended policy/service	Previous data not available
Who is intended to benefit from the new/amended policy/service and in what way?	All services would benefit from reduced sickness, but the policy also gives a mechanism for managing staff where they are unable to fulfil the contract

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	for which they are employed. Staff would also benefit from the discussions as it gives a framework to outline support, adjustments, Occupational Health advice, explore redeployment or ill health retirement where appropriate.
What are the intended outcomes of this new/amended policy/service?	The intent of this policy is to ensure that all HDC employees and managers are aware of how sickness is managed the expected standards and processes to be followed.
Step 2 – Data	
What baseline quantitative data (statistics) do you have about the function relating to equalities groups (e.g. monitoring data on proportions of service users compared to proportions in the population), relevant to this new/amended policy/service? Huntingdonshire Statistics	Data on sickness levels at HDC is available, currently this is not split by equality groups.
What qualitative data (opinions etc) do you have on different groups (e.g. comments from previous consumer satisfaction surveys/consultation, feedback exercises, or evidence from other authorities undertaking similar work), relevant to this new/amended policy/service?	This is an existing policy that has been applied consistently as needed, the process defined within is consistent with other authorities
The Consultation and Engagement Strategy Accessibility Guidance may be helpful when thinking about the potential impact of a policy/service on people with different protected characteristics.	
Age – this refers to the protected characteristic of age. A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32-year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30-year olds). Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?	Neutral impact – this policy will be applied consistently across all employees within the council and where someone is highlighted to have age related absences this would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

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<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>For some services this should include consideration of impact in terms of safeguarding young people.</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Disability – this refers the protected characteristic of disability. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy has been applied in the past, reference has been added to using it alongside Disability at work policy. This policy is applied consistently across the council, however if an employee is classed as having a disability that may impact their attendance this would be taken into account as part of the process and reasonable adjustments made.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment – gender reassignment discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently because they are trans*.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied to all staff consistently HDC has a Transgender and Gender Reassignment statement. If someone was undergoing treatment regarding gender reassignment this would be considered as part of any absence reviews and reasonable adjustments would be amde</p>

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<p>What evidence do you have for your answer? *although the term gender reassignment and transsexual is in the Equality Act 2010, it is accepted that the preferred term is trans.</p>	
<p>Marriage and civil partnership in the workplace; this refers the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership which is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex. Discrimination is when a person is treated differently at work because a person is married or in a civil partnership.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied consistently across the council regardless of status</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact in terms of pregnancy and maternity in the workplace (e.g. pregnant or breast-feeding women). Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Positive impact</p> <p>Where an employee is pregnant any absences relating to this would be discounted from the absence process in conjunction with support from HR.</p>

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<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Race – this refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. Gypsy/Travellers are distinct group within this category</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied consistently across the council regardless of race</p>
<p>Religion and Belief in the workplace - refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied consistently across the council regardless of an individuals religion or beleaf</p>

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<p>Sex - this refers to the protected characteristic of sex which can mean either male or female, or a group of people like men or boys, or women or girls.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied consistently across the council regardless of sex</p>
<p>Sexual orientation – this relates to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>This policy is applied consistently across the council regardless of sexual orientation</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact on part time/full time employees? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p> <p>If an employee is part time their sickness triggers would be adjusted in line with so not disadvantage them as compared to a full time employee.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact in terms of specific characteristics of Huntingdonshire e.g. Rural isolation</p>	<p>Neutral impact</p>

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Findings

This policy should have a neutral impact across the HDC workforce as it is applied consistently across all areas for employees and HR advice sought on areas e.g. disability, gender reassignment and pregnancy.

Recommendations

To continue to monitor the application of the policy to ensure that no detrimental impacts are seen.