

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Sickness Absence Policy		
Directorate	Resource and Transformation		
Service	HR Strategy and Planning Team		
Responsible Officer	Rebecca Lloyd		
Proposal planning start	June 2019	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	August 2019

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy	Yes	Revision
	Procedure	Yes	Revision
	Guidance	No	NA
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?	No	NA
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?	No	NA
	Other - give details		
2	What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?		
	<p>In response to feedback from the organisation and to bring the HR policies in line with the PROUD Programme and the Behaviour Framework, this procedure has been re-formatted and redesigned to reflect the following principles;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with Walsall Proud Programme and vision • Clear identification of accountabilities in line with behaviours • Clear, consistent and concise policy containing easy to use procedure • Streamlined detail with more in the supporting guidance documents <p>The policy and procedure remain fundamentally unchanged, with the exception of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insertion of compliance to the PROUD Programme and Behaviour Framework in the introduction • Strengthening the wording that suspected misconduct will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy • New insertion of the discretion to extend Occupational Sick Pay in exceptional circumstances, such as terminal illness. This inclusion has arisen from the local agreement on the 'Dying to Work' Voluntary Charter that the Council has signed up to. • Clarification on the circumstances where the council's reserves the right to withhold or suspend Occupational Sick Pay 		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that managers must record sickness absence in the HR Information System within 24 hours of notification, as this can affect an employee's sick pay. • Clarification of the Return To Work procedure • New insertion of the managers right to commence the long term management process at the same stage as previously at when an employee returns to work after long term sickness absence and is subsequently absence again within 6 months of their return. 		
3	Who is the proposal likely to affect?		
	People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
	All		This policy applies to all council employees, excluding those in schools where the Governing Body has delegated authority, Assistant Directors, Executive Directors and the Chief Executive. The policy does not apply to casual employees or agency workers.
	Specific group/s		
	Council employees	Yes	
	Other (identify)		
4	Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer's protected characteristics.		
	<p>As of 31 March 2019 the total number of Walsall Council employees (excluding Schools) were 3141. The Council's workforce is made up of 68.51% females. 21.59% of the workforce are classified as minority ethnic. In total there were 138 employees (4.39% of the workforce) who declared they had a disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>		
5	Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).		
	<p>Consultation was undertaken within the HR Management team and HR Operations, and wider consultation with Assistants Directors and Heads of Service across the Council between 20/06/19 to 05/07/19.</p> <p>Feedback from consultation resulted in some minor amendments to clarify wording and aid understanding.</p> <p>Trade Unions and Professional Associations were consulted at the same time as senior managers. The trade unions requested that some information be retained in the policy/procedure, however it was felt that these would better fit in the guidance due to the design principles of streamlining the policy. The trade unions also felt there was a general lack of recognition of what stages the trade unions are involved, however this is stated in the principles (3.6) as any formal sickness absence review meetings and more detail will be included in the policy guidance.</p> <p>The Sickness Absence Policy will be submitted to CMT on 11/07/19, followed by Personnel Committee for approval on 23/07/19.</p>		

Consultation Activity

Complete a copy of this table for each consultation activity you have undertaken.

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation within Human Resources	Date	01/07/19
Who attended/participated?	HR Managers, HR Business Partners and HR Advisers		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		
Feedback			
Feedback was related to minor wording changes for clarification and to aid understanding.			

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with wider council	Date	05/07/19
Who attended/participated?	Senior Managers (tier 3 and 4)		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		
Feedback			
The policy clearly aligns to the PROUD Programme.			

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with trade unions – meeting (19/06/19) and via email	Date	05/07/19
Who attended/participated?	Trade unions representatives		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		
Feedback			
Request for some information be retained in the policy/procedure, in relation to the Equality Act and Occupational Sickness Pay entitlements. However it was felt that these would better fit in the guidance due to the design principles of streamlining the policy.			
The trade unions also felt there was a general lack of recognition of what stages the trade unions are involved. However this is stated in the principles (3.6) as any formal sickness absence review meetings and more detail will be included in the policy guidance.			

6 Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation

	Formal consultation with senior managers across the council and trade unions raised no concerns in relation to protected characteristics and the proposed changes to the procedure.			
7	How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.			
	Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Yes / No
	Age	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen. Discretion to extend sick pay in cases of terminal illness can affect employees of any age.	No
	Disability	Positive	Potential impact on employees who require reasonable adjustments as a result of a disability-related condition. The policy gives a reasonable adjustment to allow those medical redeployees to apply for posts above their substantive grade.	No
		Negative	Potential impact on employees who require reasonable adjustments for communication who do not understand the policy e.g. employees with learning disabilities.	Yes
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen	No
	Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen	No
	Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	Potential impact on employees who are pregnant or on maternity when under	No

			notice of compulsory redundancy. The policy allows for them to be considered ahead of other redeployees.	
	Race	Negative	Potential impact on employees where English is not their first language as they may not understand the policy.	Yes
	Religion or belief	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen	No
	Sex	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen	No
	Sexual orientation	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees – no impact foreseen	No
8	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.			(Delete one) No
9	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?			
	A	No major change required		
	B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality		
	C	Continue despite possible adverse impact		
	D	Stop and rethink your proposal		

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
Day of launch	The policy to be explained/made available to employees	Employee's line manager should make themselves available to explain the policy to ensure understanding and offer support to allow individuals to achieve the requirements	As and when required	
Day Of launch	The policy to be explained/made available in other languages on request for employees whose first language is not English.	Appropriate liaison as required with the council's Interpretation, Translation, Transcription and Easy Read service (ITTE)	As and when requested	
Day of launch	Alternative formats (audio and Easy Read) for disabled employees to be made available on request.	Liaison as required with the appropriate council procured services; audio formats from Walsall Society for the Blind and Easy Read from the Community, Equality and Cohesion team.	As and when requested	

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail

Contact us

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Inside Walsall: [http://int.walsall.gov.uk/Service information/Equality and diversity](http://int.walsall.gov.uk/Service_information/Equality_and_diversity)