

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

<b>Proposal name</b>	<b>Menopause Policy</b>		
<b>Directorate</b>	Resources and Transformation		
<b>Service</b>	HR Strategy and Planning Team		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Hannah Hewston-Jones		
<b>Proposal planning start</b>	19/10/2021	<b>Proposal start date (due or actual date)</b>	24/01/2022

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy	Yes	New
	Procedure	No	N/A
	Guidance	No	N/A
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?	No	N/A
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?		
	Other - give details		
2	<b>What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?</b>		
	<p>The purpose of this policy is to raise awareness of menopause, ensure employees / workers and managers understand what the menopause is and to provide support to those experiencing menopausal symptoms. Providing support and guidance to those experiencing the menopause is an important aspect of our overall commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as well as looking after both the physical and psychological health and well-being of all our employees.</p> <p>The menopause is considered a life event, as people work longer and more women work, so the likelihood of the menopause impacting on the workplace increases. Whilst menopause is often thought of as a female condition, this policy is aimed at all those individuals who in some form or another may experience menopausal symptoms, including those individuals from non-binary and transgender communities.</p> <p>Research has revealed that as many as one in five women leave the workplace due to menopause and their employers are not told the underlying reasons why. For many women, particularly those that are in senior roles, either suffer in silence or leave their jobs. It is therefore important for the council to support people experiencing menopausal symptoms to help retain valuable skills, talent, reduce sickness absence and improve staff morale.</p> <p>By 2030, the Department for Work and Pensions estimates that 50 per cent of adults in the UK will be aged 50 or over. With more women in the workplace about to transition into perimenopause it is more important than ever that we know how best to support our colleagues.</p>		



	<p>This policy is intended to help foster a supportive environment, where employees / workers and managers are knowledgeable and encouraged to be comfortable enough to have open conversations about menopause without embarrassment and fear of shame or stigma. It includes suggestions for self-management, signposts to relevant sources of advice, information, support and provides guidance on reasonable adjustments that should be considered.</p> <p>The policy has been aligned with other HR policies around PROUD and the Behaviour Framework.</p>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Who is the proposal likely to affect?</b>		
	<b>People in Walsall</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Detail</b>
	<b>All</b>	No	<p>This policy applies to all council employees (including Directors, Executive Directors, the Chief Executive, fixed term and temporary employees as well as casual and agency workers (where applicable)).</p> <p>The policy does not apply to school –based employees / workers where the governing body has delegated authority and does not include contractors, consultants or any self-employed workers.</p>
	<b>Specific group/s</b>	No	
	<b>Council employees</b>	Yes	
	<b>Other (identify)</b>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer's protected characteristics.</b>		
	<p>As of 31 March 2021 the total number of Walsall Council employees (excluding Schools) were 3079. The Council's workforce is made up of 67.6% females. 23.8% of the workforce are classified as minority ethnic. In total there were 137 employees (4.45% of the workforce) who declared they had a disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. 3.12% of the workforce are under 25 years of age, 30.14% of the workforce are 55 years or older, 42.25% of the workforce are aged between 40-54 years old and 50-54 years old are the largest age group making up 17.69% of the workforce.</p> <p>As of 31 March 2021 the total number of Education employees were 3527. The education workforce is made up of 90.84% females. 11.68% of the education workforce are classified as minority ethnic. In total there were 20 employees (0.57% of the education workforce) who declared they had a disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. 6.15% of the education workforce are under 25 years of age, 18.4% of the workforce are 55 years or older, 39.89% of the education workforce are aged between 40-54 years old and 45-49 years old are the largest age group making up 13.8% of the education workforce.</p>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).</b>		
	<p>Consultation commenced on 19/10/2021 with Assistant Directors, Heads of Service, and stakeholders who have a specific interest/involvement with the policy. The consultation ended on 5 November 2021.</p> <p>Trade Unions were consulted at the same time.</p>		

Consultation Activity			
Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with wider council	Date	19/10/2021 to 05/11/2021
Who attended/participated?	Senior Managers across the council		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		
<b>Feedback</b> As part of the consultation process, the new policy was emailed to the wider council to review and make comments on. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General positive comments about the comprehensiveness of the policy</li><li>• Good to see the amounts and variety of internal and external support available (to support and educate manager’s particularly male managers).</li></ul>			

Type of engagement/consultation	Consultation with Trade Unions	Date	19/10/2021 to 05/11/2021
Who attended/participated?	Trade Unions representatives ( Unison, GMB, UNITE)		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		
<b>Feedback</b> As part of the consultation process, the new policy was emailed to each of the Trade Unions across the council welcoming feedback and comments and suggested improvements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That’s brilliant, the only thing I would say is that people have been forced into the menopause a lot earlier, although rare people need to be aware.</li><li>• Whilst excluding contractors, consultants and self-employed is the ‘norm’ for our policies, being truly inclusive of those who are contributing to the council’s success would be a sign of a progressive authority. Menopause is not selective.</li><li>• Are sickness absence policy/procedures sufficiently flexible to reflect the menopause policy?</li><li>• Will welfare interviews and RTW interviews cover this health condition?</li><li>• Does the flexible working policy clearly state that the symptoms of menopause may require flexible working adjustments and allow for temporary changes in work patterns?</li><li>• Will more time be granted for more medical appointments, hospital appointments will be covered but currently GP appointments are not?</li></ul>			

Type of engagement/consultation	Key stakeholders	Date	19/10/2021 to 05/11/2021
Who attended/participated?	HR Department, Equality and Diversity Team, Legal Services and Mental Health First Aiders		
Protected characteristics of participants	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		

**Feedback**

As part of the ongoing consultation process, the new policy was again emailed to key stakeholders - HR colleagues and shared via Teams with the Mental Health First Aiders, welcoming feedback, comments, suggestions and improvements to ensure the draft policy meets their needs.

The following points were raised:

- Seems appropriate, comprehensive and straightforward.
- I think the questions we will get from managers is how menopause symptoms which result in sickness absence contribute to the Bradford factor score. Should these sickness episodes be discounted from the BF score like pregnancy related? There may need to be some reference to how managers should treat an absence, i.e. still recorded in the Bradford factor score but managers may decide to exclude from total depending on their circumstances of each individual case.
- Policy states that the council's MHFA have all undertaken menopause training? Is this something that is being arranged or on One Source?

<b>Type of engagement/consultation</b>	Key stakeholders	<b>Date</b>	19/10/2021 to 05/11/2021
<b>Who attended/participated?</b>	Mental Health First Aiders		
<b>Protected characteristics of participants</b>	A range of protected characteristics including, gender, race, age, disability.		

**Feedback**

A focus group meeting was held virtually on 03/11/2021 where all Mental Health First Aiders were invited to attend to discuss the content of the new Menopause policy.

The following comments were made:

- Managers of agency workers and the agency to work collaboratively – glad to see as we have a number of agency workers going through the menopause.
- Menopause can affect everyone at some point in time, either by working with or living with someone affected by / going through the menopause.
- Mental health and wellbeing – 'Acceptance that you are at that stage in life i.e. premature menopause is not just hormone related it is the emotional impact too for example fertility.
- What training will the Mental Health First Aiders have? When will this be delivered?
- Managers to discuss this policy with their employees / workers during 1:2:1's, APC's/ team meetings etc.
- Need more examples of possible adjustments for mental health symptoms.

## 6 Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation

The main points of feedback following the consultation are as follows:

- Consultees are happy to see that the council now has a Menopause policy with the relevance of an aging workforce which is predominantly female.
- How to manage menopause symptoms that result in sickness absence and how it contributes to the Bradford factor score.
- Pleased to see that men have been referenced in the policy with regards to Andropause.
- Good to see that agency workers have been included in this policy and that

	<p>council managers will work collaboratively with agency managers and workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive policy that provides helpful tips, encourages open conversations and offers numerous internal and external support.</li> <li>Ordering of external links alphabetically so there is no claim of bias / preference.</li> </ul> <p>The policy will be submitted to CMT on 06/01/2022 followed by Personnel Committee for approval on 24/01/22.</p>		
<b>7</b>	<p><b>How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group?</b>  <b>The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.</b></p>		
	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Affect</b>	<b>Action needed Yes / No</b>
	<b>Age</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen <b>No</b>
	<b>Disability</b>	Negative	Potential impact on employees / workers who require reasonable adjustments for communication who do not understand the policy e.g. employees with learning disabilities. <b>Yes</b>
		Positive	The policy provides support and recommends reasonable adjustments for those whom menopausal symptoms might be considered a disability. <b>No</b>
	<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen <b>No</b>
	<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen <b>No</b>
	<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen <b>No</b>
	<b>Race</b>	Negative	Potential impact on employees / workers where English is not their first language as they may not understand the policy. <b>Yes</b>
	<b>Religion or belief</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen <b>No</b>
	<b>Sex</b>	Positive	The policy applies to all employees / workers. It includes the effects of both menopause and andropause. <b>No</b>

	<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Neutral	The policy applies to all employees / workers – no impact foreseen	<b>No</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.</b>			(Delete one) <b>No</b>
	N/A			
<b>9</b>	<b>Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?</b>			
	A	No major change required		
	B	<b>Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality</b>		
	C	Continue despite possible adverse impact		
	D	Stop and rethink your proposal		

<b>Action and monitoring plan</b>				
<b>Action Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Day of launch	The policy to be explained/made available to affected employees / workers.	Employee's / workers line manager should make themselves available to explain the policy to ensure understanding and offer support and guidance 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 / workers whose first language is not English.	Appropriate liaison as required with the council's Interpretation, Translation, Transcription and Easy Read (ITTE) service provider.	As and when required	
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 required	

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail
Use this section for updates following the commencement of your proposal.	

### Contact us

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