Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Attendance management and ill health policies

Equality impact, needs and requirements assessment form

Please use this form to record your findings, proposed actions, equality objectives and targets. Use the guidance notes to help you do the assessment or contact the Equality Standard Project Manager if you need some advice

About the policy, practice, service or function you are assessing

Name of policy, practice, service or function: attendance management and ill health policies

Assessment team leader name: Barbara Rusk

Department responsible: CAS   Service Area: HR

Other members of assessment team:

Name	Position	Area of expertise	Comments
Lisa Beris	Social Worker	Member of one of our Minority Employee Networks	
Laura Jones	HR Consultant		A critical friend

Gurpal Kooner	Technical Officer	Member of one of our Minority Employee Networks	
Beverley Lambert	Leadership and Development Manager	Member of one of our Minority Employee Networks	
Liz Perry	Lead Family Worker	Member of one of our Minority Employee Networks	

Question	Response/ findings
What are the main aims and objectives or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function that you are assessing?	This assessment looks at our Attendance Management Policy and Ill Health Procedure. These are included within our Personnel Handbook. The main objectives of the policies are to ensure: • sickness absence is managed in a timely, consistent and professional way. • roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders are clearly identified

Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person, team, department, or body – and include any outside organisations who deliver under procurement arrangements	All employees
	
	Managers at all levels and across all departments have an essential role in carrying out the processes and procedures
	
	HR Corporate
	           Departmental
	           Occupational Health
	           Health and Safety
	
	Transactional Service Centre / Payroll Centres
	
	Trade Unions provide support for their members
	
	There are some teams where our employees manage or are managed by non DCC staff.
	Outside organisations:
	Integrated Payroll / HR System – Selima Ltd.
	Employee Assistance Programme – P&MM Ltd
	Childcare Vouchers - Busy Bees Ltd

Question	**Response/ findings**
Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Such as, who are the external and internal customers, groups, or communities?	All employees are affected

What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for whom? For example, what do you want to be providing, how well, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be for customers, groups or communities?	The Council wants to help all employees attend work regularly and for any who are absent due to sickness to understand the processes and their roles and responsibilities. Improvements in attendance benefit our customers by providing more people to deliver services.
Question	**Response/ findings**

What existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function are there? For example, Best Value Inspections, policy reviews, research into the effects of a policy or practice. What did they tell you?	Best Value Performance Indicators are measured quarterly. The achievement s for 2006/7 are: BVPI 12 - 8.78 working days sickness a full time equivalent employee The policies also impact upon: BVPI 15 – 0.2% employees retiring due to ill health BVPI16A - 3.08% employees who consider they meet the DDA Divisional results are calculated for the following aspects of attendance: BVPI 12 Employees who have been sick for longer than 1 month Employees who have hit an attendance trigger as a result of a sickness absence the previous month Employees who have had no sickness Causes of sickness absence Attendance audits are carried out in dept and / or divisions covering the following areas: Timely and accurate recording of sickness absences Management of long term sickness cases Management of employees who have hit an attendance trigger A workshop was held in September 2006 for HR stakeholders to discuss attendance management policy development

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	External data is examined for benchmarking: CIPD annual absence survey Local government sickness stats Government stats Media eg newspapers reporting CBI data IDS publications Websites: EOC, DRC, ACAS, TUC, CIPD Attend various external seminars and conferences Meeting held with a member of a local transsexual group
Identifying potential equality issues and factors	
Question	**Response/ findings**

| What do you already know about the equality impact or need? For example, from research, feedback, consultation or any performance monitoring | We are in the upper quartile for overall sickness amongst other unitary authorities. The percentage of employees on long term sickness and those who have no sickness absence compare favourably to all organisations. We have a higher percentage of employees who return to work following cancer and in line with other leading organisations place particular importance upon back to work interviews and senior management commitment.

It is not possible for the present HR/Payroll system to calculate and issue accurate attendance trigger reports for employees who work less than 5 days.

Excluding pregnancy and disability related sickness absences from attendance triggers does not facilitate interviews for concerns to be raised and addressed. This results in management of frequent short term sickness absences related to disability being progressed through Ill Health Procedure with no previous discussions

Splitting attendance management between two policies confuses employees and can make the process unclear

Reference to DDA is misleading as we use the social not medical model of disability

Allowing managers flexibility of what actions to take when one of their employees hits an attendance trigger could lead to inequality of treatment

It is not possible to record and analyse results of interviews/ |
| --- | --- |

	meetings/hearings conducted by managers in order to carry out any equality impact assessments
	Some managers regularly discuss attendance at supervision meetings, providing an opportunity for personal and work issues to be raised and addressed at the earliest opportunity.
Question	**Response/ findings**
Is there any evidence of higher or lower take up under the policy or practice, or of the service or function for any particular groups? For example, who uses the service, who doesn't and why not?	Exclusion of pregnancy related sickness absences from the trigger calculations mean that the opportunity to confirm risk assessments have been carried out is missed.

Exclusion of disability related sickness absences mean that discussions relating to reasonable adjustments are not always carried out and changes made at the earliest opportunity.

The move to an Employee Assistance Programme is in the early stages so its not possible to evaluate the usage made and by which groups of employees. |
| Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? For example is the population changing, and if so, how and what might that mean for the service or function? | The local population has become more diverse but it is not clear whether this has affected the make up of our employees. Recent people joining have included some whose first language is Polish and so we may need to look at ensuring these and other policies are understood. .

We have supplied copies of these policies in Braille and larger print size to employees. |
| **Question** | **Response/ findings** |

Is there an indication that any of the policies or practices involved with the service or function creates particular problems or difficulties for any groups of customers or communities?	There is no reference within the policies to how we would support employees who are transsexual There is anecdotal evidence that employees sometimes take sickness absence when they are unable to have time off to attend religious festivals such as Eid.
What information or data exists? For example, statistics, customer feedback, complaints, research, monitoring – who keeps it and can you get hold of it?	Our HR/Payroll system does not currently record the religion or sexual orientation of our employees It would be possible to report on gender, age, disability and ethnicity of all our employees but this is not currently undertaken
Question	**Response/ findings**
Does any equality or diversity objectives already exist? If so, what are they and what is current performance like against them?	No, not at present
Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities?	There is no evidence that it impacts upon the wider community

Collecting the information and data about how the policy, practice, service or function, impacts on communities

Please record your information and data in this table and think about:

what information or data you will need
using both quantitative and qualitative data
making sure that where possible there is information that allows all perspectives to be considered
identifying any gaps in the information/ data and what it can tell you

These policies do not impact on communities directly but on all of our employees

Data or information	When and how was it collected?	Where is it from?	What does it tell you? You need to consider all six equality strands where you can	Gaps in information
Customer feedback and complaints				
Consultation and community involvement				
Performance information including Best Value				
Comparative information or data where no local information				
Census, national or regional statistics				
Access audits or assessments such as DDA assessments				
Workforce profile				

Where service delivered under procurement arrangements – workforce profile for deliverers				
Monitoring and scrutiny outcomes				

Analysing the information and data and setting equality objectives and targets

Please give your detailed findings in this table

Service or function	Policy or practice	Findings	Which groups are affected and how	Whose needs are not being met and how?
	Attendance Management Policy and Ill Health Procedure	Attendance triggers as defined in the policy cannot be produced for employees who work less than 5 days a week	Employees who work less than 5 days a week are treated more generously than others	Part time employees are being treated more generously. Full time employees working over a 5 day week are being disadvantaged
		Exclusion of pregnancy related sickness absence from the trigger calculations	Employees who are pregnant	Employees who are pregnant and have sickness as there is no discussion triggered to discuss their needs and ensure risk assessments have been carried out

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		Exclusion of disability related sickness absence from the trigger calculations	Employees who declare they are disabled	Employees who consider themselves to be disabled as there is no discussion triggered to discuss their needs and ensure reasonable adjustments have been assessed and arrangements made
		Two policies can confuse employees	Employees who do not have regular contact with HR policies	They find policies difficult to understand and management of absence between the two policies can lead to them being confused and unduly concerned
		Reference to DDA is confusing	Employees who consider themselves disabled and their managers	Reference to DDA implies we use the medical model of disability rather than the social model which could result in some employees not declaring their impairment

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		Managers choice to interview some employees and not others	It is not clear whether there are specific groups or if there is any rationale applied. On an individual basis however, it is a cause for concern	Potentially, all employees who trigger. It makes those who are interviewed feel they are being disciplined. Those who are not interviewed are denied the opportunity to discuss their attendance with their manager so that issues can be addressed quickly
		Results of interviews/ hearings/meetings are not recorded electronically so that no analysis can be carried out	It is not clear whether there are specific groups affected	Potentially, all employees who have a recorded discussion with their manager.
		Requirements for reports relating to the Employee Assistance Programme have not been agreed with the provider.	It is not clear whether there are specific groups affected	Potentially, all employees

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		The policies make no reference to transsexuals	Employees who are transsexual	Employees who are transsexual may feel unwilling to discuss their particular issues and needs as part of attendance management

Objectives - process, impact or outcome based

Please give your proposed objectives/ targets in this table

Objective/Target:	To work towards the production of trigger reports that are consistent with the agreed policy that pro-rata's the trigger based upon the number of days the employee attends work and that effective measurement of the impact of these 2 policies is possible
Specific	Yes
Measurable	Yes
Achievable	This is part of a wider corporate project
Relevant	Yes
Timed	Yes, but the project plan reflects the wider remit

Objective/Target:	To monitor use of the Employee Assistance Programme
Specific	Yes
Measurable	Yes, but being developed and is not likely to include all equality strands
Achievable	Depends upon external supplier though
Relevant	Yes
Timed	Yes

Objective/Target:	To revise the two policies to reflect the results of feedback and information obtained
Specific	Yes
Measurable	Yes
Achievable	Yes
Relevant	Yes
Timed	June 2008

Monitoring and reviewing - incorporating into performance management

Please summarise your objectives and targets in this table with your proposed monitoring and reporting arrangements

Objective	Planned action	Target performance			Responsible lead officer	Reporting cycle, for example, quarterly
		2005/6	2006/7	2007/8		
To work towards the production of trigger reports that are consistent with the agreed policy that pro-rata's the trigger based upon the number of days the employee attends work and that effective measurement of the impact of these 2 policies using the 6 strands of equality can be made	*Part of council wide project – plan being developed*				*Pam Vernon, AD, Financial Services, Resources is the project owner*	*quarterly*
To monitor use of the Employee Assistance Programme	*Agree format and frequency of reports with supplier and then monitor results*				*Karen Jewell / Barbara Rusk*	*quarterly*

To revise the two policies to reflect the results of feedback and information obtained	Initially, to redraft policies for consultation within HR				Barbara Rusk	quarterly

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