

**STRONGER** together



Lewes District Council



Working in partnership with Eastbourne Homes

# Equality and Fairness Analysis Report

|                                                                       |                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Proposal/Project/Work Stream/Policy Title</b>                      | Joint Agile Policy                                                          |
| <b>Proposal/Project/Work Stream/Policy Lead Officer</b>               | Becky Cooke                                                                 |
| <b>Key people involved in the Proposal/Project/Work Stream/Policy</b> | Becky Cooke<br>Helen Knight<br>Lee Banner<br>Claire Kelly<br>Tracey Wallace |
| <b>Director/Assistant Director</b>                                    | Becky Cooke                                                                 |
| <b>Equality and Fairness Analysis Report Author</b>                   | Tracey Wallace/Claire Kelly                                                 |
| <b>Key people involved in the Equality and Fairness Analysis</b>      | As above<br>Equalities Group                                                |
| <b>Date Equality and Fairness Analysis Report Submitted</b>           | 7 March 2018                                                                |

# Context and Scope

## **What is the purpose of the proposal/project/work stream/policy and why is it needed?**

The purpose of the Joint Transformation programme (JTP) is the formation of two strong councils through full integration of management, services and ICT. The programme has four strategic objectives:

1. Protect Services
2. Greater strategic presence
3. High quality, modern services
4. Resilient services

The JTP supports the delivery of the Joint Transformation Model which will make a significant contribution to both councils Medium Term Financial Strategies, to support the councils' goals to deliver excellent, efficient and modern services rather than cutting service levels simply to reduce costs. The JTM will create a new, flexible and resilient organisation with a high regional profile.

The work to develop a joint Agile Policy has been undertaken as a result of changes to ways of working as a result of the Transformation programme Phase 1 and 2. This assessment has been informed by previous Equality and Fairness Reports developed for JTP Phase 2, Project I2 One Mobile and Project R1 HR Policy Alignment.

## **In what context will it operate and who is it intended to benefit?**

Agile working is the term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from any location, whether it is from a council building, in the community, from home or a combination of these. It is about enabling individuals to work in an environment that best suits the job role so that work is completed in the most appropriate place, at the best time, and in the best way, to deliver the service to our customers.

Agile working promotes work/life balance for employees and improves performance management by emphasising the quality of output rather than attendance in the office.

The Policy has been developed with reference to existing policies, training and support to ensure that all Health and Safety aspects of homeworking are considered (section 10) including provision of appropriate online training courses and risk assessments.

Both councils have limited space in their existing buildings, and we need to make it easier for staff to work flexibly across both. This policy supports staff working across the various council sites dependent on their individually defined workstyle.

The R1 HR Policy Alignment project and associated EaFA delivered a move to the

position of sole employer with consistent HR policies and procedures.

The I2 One Mobile project and associated EaFA covered the equality implications for mobile staff such as Neighbourhood First and the provision of mobile devices such as tablets to Councillors.

The move to a more agile workforce does not require staff to necessarily work from home if this is not appropriate to their role. Agile in the context of the JTP project refers the ability to hot desk within each building and work across the councils' sites as required. If there is a need for staff to work more flexibly including home working their managers will need to consider the effect any disability might have on their ability to work from home or be more mobile across the two councils and make adaptations as needed.

**What are the expected outcomes/longer term benefits of the proposal/project/work stream/policy?**

That there will be a consistent approach in managing work styles across Lewes and Eastbourne which will ensure that all employees will be treated equally and fairly.

By promoting hot desking, clear desk policy and a more flexible approach to the 'workplace' the formation of a joint policy will enable newly mobilised teams to form effectively, and underpins the agile working approach that is essential to the effective working of both Councils.

## Information and Research

**List all sources of information and relevant data that was obtained and considered in the assessment and include the groups you consulted with?**

- Equality monitoring data
- The initial analysis of the JTP business case
- The analysis for the transfer of staff to the sole employer
- Equality and Fairness Guidance for Project Leads and Equality Champions
- The Equality and Fairness Analysis for the Base and Implementation plan – May 2016
- Information on staff protected characteristics as provided by HR
- EaFA for I2 –One Mobile Project
- EaFA for R1 –HR Policy Alignment Project

**Were there any gaps identified in this information and if so, what are these and what actions are being taken to address them?**

Some gaps exist in the HR equality information held. This is because some employees have chosen not to share this information or opted not to declare against specific characteristics.

HR has confirmed that there are a number of members of staff registered with disabilities. Information about the nature of these disabilities, how this might affect their use of technology or whether their job role falls within the mobile documented; however the policy ensures that managers are aware of their responsibility to ensure that reasonable adjustments and special arrangements are fully taken into account with regards to ways of working and travel arrangements and that an occupational health referral may be appropriate if a change to work style is requested as a result.

Managers are responsible for the well-being of their staff while working, even during periods of home working. Issues such as support to do the job, isolation, monitoring outputs and expectations and what to do if a member of staff is taken ill at home should all be addressed by the appropriate manager and staff member prior to that member of staff commencing homeworking.

The most common request made from staff around working at home is the provision of additional equipment such as monitors. ICT are able to procure additional equipment should this be required to support staff work in an agile role.

HR are due to send out a Protected Characteristic Staff Information Form requesting staff complete and return that information to make sure that we have up to date and complete equality data for staff especially those in mobile and flexible roles. A copy of the form is attached. HR will also continue to collect and record equality information when new starters join the organisation

## **Analysis and Assessment**

**What are the main findings, trends and themes arising out of the research and information you have gathered and any consultation you have carried out?**

Changes to HR policies and procedures have the potential to impact all and to be relevant to all of the protected characteristics.

Some high-level equality considerations relating to HR policies have already been considered by the Equality and Fairness Analysis undertaken on the JTP Business

Case and Implementation Plan in May 2016. This included highlighting potential issues and opportunities for equality in relation to gender, disability and age.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                           |   |          |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---|----------|---|
| <p><b>Which protected groups will it affect/benefit the most?</b></p> <p><i>Considering who the policy is intending to benefit and what the expected outcomes are, assess each characteristic and indicate whether the policy has 'M' more, 'L' less, or 'E' equal relevance. Highlight the finding.</i></p> | Age                                                       | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Disability                                                | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Gender reassignment                                       | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Marriage and civil partnership                            | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Maternity and pregnancy                                   | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Race                                                      | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Religion or beliefs                                       | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Sex                                                       | M | <b>E</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Sexual orientation                                        | M | <b>E</b> | L |
| <p><b>Which parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty are most relevant to the proposal/project/work stream/policy?</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation |   | <b>M</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2. Advance equality of opportunity                        |   | <b>M</b> | L |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 3. Foster good relations                                  |   | <b>M</b> | L |

**Please explain your reasons for the above assessments and how you have given consideration to the different needs of people and taken steps to minimise potential disadvantages and maximise equality of opportunity**

There is a legal responsibility for employers to make reasonable adjustments for employees that fall under the Equalities Act 2010 who have or we believe may have a disability.

It is not considered that there is a disproportionate impact on any particular equality group.

Changes to technology such as conference calling, video conferencing and MiCollab

instant messenger support employees working in an agile environment. If a member of staff falls within a protected characteristic which affects their ability to work flexibly provision is built into the policy to ensure that Occupational Health and/or reasonable adjustments are considered by their manager and HR.

HR will undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment every 3 years to ensure that the Agile Policy does not have a negative impact on any particular equality group. If there are any significant variances as a result they will be investigated to ensure appropriate action is taken regarding the Councils' commitment to equalities.

**Based on your findings is there a need to balance conflicting views or counter resentment/address inaccurate perceptions, if so what will you do?**

Changes to the ways of working including working in an agile environment have been consulted upon with staff as part of JTP Consultation Phase 1 and Phase 2 and the Travel Policy consultation by HR.

This policy brings together the existing Agile Policies of both councils and as such there has been no need to balance conflicting views or counter resentments identified.

## Action Planning

**If you have identified specific areas that require action to promote equality, what steps are you going to take to ensure this work is carried out and completed?**

| Issue Identified                                                                                                         | Action Required                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lead Officer | Required Resources | Target Date | Measure of Success                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Gaps in equality information gathered from employees may result in some staff not benefiting from reasonable adjustments | <p>HR to send out a Protected Characteristic Staff Information Form requesting staff complete and return that information to make sure that we have up to date and complete equality data for staff especially those in mobile and flexible roles.</p> <p>HR will continue to collect and record equality information when new starters join the organisation.</p> | HR Managers  | HRBP/HRA time      | 31 May 2018 | Complete equality data held for all staff |
|                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |              |                    |             |                                           |

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## Outcome

Considering all the evidence and the potential or actual effect of the proposal/project/work stream/policy on equality, I conclude that:

(\*Delete as appropriate)

**\*1. No changes are required to the proposals** – the proposal is robust and evidence shows no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to advice equality and foster good relations between groups has been taken.

**\*2. Minor adjustments can be made to better promote equality in the proposals** - some minor steps have been identified to remove barriers or to better advance equality.

**\*3. Adjustments are required for the proposals to continue** - action has been identified to remove barriers or better advance equality where possible, but the proposal will be adopted despite any adverse effects or missed opportunities because it does not unlawfully discriminate.

**\*4. Stop and remove the proposal** – there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be reduced and may constitute unlawful discrimination.

## Approval

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Report Author</b> | Tracey Wallace |
| <b>Signed</b>        | Tracey Wallace |
| <b>Dated</b>         | 7 March 2018   |

|                                                 |              |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Proposal/Project/Work Stream/Policy Lead</b> | Becky Cooke  |
| <b>Signed</b>                                   | Beck Cooke   |
| <b>Dated</b>                                    | 7 March 2018 |

Please now send this report to [equalities@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@lewes.gov.uk)

To be completed by the Performance Officer (Equalities):

|                                                     |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Date sent to the Equality and Fairness Forum</b> |  |
| <b>Date discussed at Forum meeting</b>              |  |
| <b>Comments/Recommendations</b>                     |  |
| <b>Report Agreement? (yes/no)</b>                   |  |
| <b>Signed by Forum Chair</b>                        |  |
| <b>Dated</b>                                        |  |

|                                                                    |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Does this EaFA impact on staff?</b>                             |  |
| <b>If yes, date considered by the JTP Staff Consultative Forum</b> |  |
| <b>Comments/Recommendations</b>                                    |  |

|                                                                                |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Date considered by the Equality and Fairness External Stakeholder Group</b> |  |
| <b>Comments/Recommendations</b>                                                |  |

## Quality Assurance

To be completed by the Project Lead:

|                                                                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>How will you implement any recommendations made?</b>                                               |  |
| <b>How will the issues covered in the action plan be monitored and reviewed and who will do this?</b> |  |
| <b>Who will sign off the action plan once all actions are completed?</b>                              |  |
| <b>How will you share the results with stakeholders?</b>                                              |  |