

Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability



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Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability

Title of Policy/ Proposal	Voluntary Severance/Early Retirement (VS/ER) Policy (2018)
Completion Date	18/04/18
Completed by	Louise Bell, HR Business Partner
Lead officer	Marina Naylor, OD/HR Manager

Type of Initiative:

Policy/Strategy ☒

Programme/Plan ☐

Project ☐

Service ☐

Function ☐

Other ☐ Statement of Intent.....

New or Proposed ☐

Changing/Updated ☒

Review or existing ☒

1. Briefly describe the policy/proposal you are assessing.

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

The new suite of policies to manage change within the Council includes a revised VS/ER Policy

This Policy has been created to meet the future objectives of the Council in relation to achieving reductions in the budgeted staffing establishment, and helping to avoid compulsory redundancies.

2. What will change as a result of this policy?

- The policy ties in with the move to “avoiding” redundancy;
- The maximum severance remains at 66 weeks;
- There is an uplift for low paid workers from basic salary to the statutory value of £508 per week;
- The revised policy excludes those who have reached state retirement age as set out in the Pensions Act 2014;
- The restrictions on re-employment remain in place re: a minimum of 6 months;
- As part of the financial assessment for VS/ER, the payback should be no more than 2 years (previously 5 years).

3. Do I need to undertake a Combined Impact Assessment?

High Relevance	Yes/No
The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people	Yes
The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality	Yes
The policy/ proposal has the potential to make a significant impact on the economy and the delivery of economic outcomes	No
The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact	No
Low Relevance	
The policy/proposal has little relevance to equality	No
The policy/proposal has negligible impact on the economy	Yes
The policy/proposal has no/ minimal impact on the environment	Yes
If you have identified low relevance please give a brief description of your reasoning here and send it to your Head of Service to record.	

If you have answered yes to high relevance above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment.

4. What information/data/ consultation have you used to inform the policy to date?

Evidence	Comments: what does the evidence tell you?
Data on populations in need	Information available on certain protected characteristics
Data on service uptake/access	Data available from 2017 VSER scheme which does not indicate any particular issues around gender, age or any protected characteristics.
Data on quality/outcomes	VSER is effective in reducing the staffing establishment by voluntary means and that and the use of vacancy control reduces the need for displacement as a consequence of service review and ultimately helps avoid compulsory redundancies.
Research/literature evidence	Other local authorities and internet research which highlights that other Council's use similar provisions and which provides reassurance that the proposed policy meets the key requirements set out by Audit Scotland when they reviewed VSER across Scotland
Service user experience information	n/a
Consultation and involvement findings	Trade Unions have been involved and they sought to avoid any reduction in the voluntary severance calculator which is appendix 1 of the policy. Accordingly no changes were made to appendix 1 which still provides for a maximum of 66 weeks severance.
Good practice guidelines	ACAS redundancy guidance
Other (please specify)	n/a

Is any further information required? How will you gather this?	No
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5. How does the policy meet the different needs of and impact on groups in the community?

	Comments – positive/ negative impact
Equality Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older people, people in the middle years Young people and children Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity) 	<p>The proposed scheme retains the existing voluntary redundancy calculator which like the statutory redundancy calculator on which it is based recognises the combination of length of service and age when determining the level of redundancy payment. By its nature it therefore impact differently across the age profile of staff and so older staff with long service benefit from greater severance payments</p> <p>As in the previous comment the redundancy provisions are less favourable to those younger staff with less service and so could be seen as a negative impact versus the future earning potential. It does not affect children directly.</p> <p>Women and transgender people could be negatively affected if on low pay/trying to find other positions. However the enhancements against statutory redundancy ensure that a minimum weekly pay is used for those staff who earn less than that and who will not</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers, non-English speakers) Refugees and asylum seekers 	<p>access their pension</p> <p>Negative. Disabled people find it harder to secure employment and so if they need to work again would find it harder to secure employment.</p> <p>data not available but likely to be a negative effect as research shows minority ethnic people quite often find it harder to secure employment if further employment was required.</p> <p>No data available at present.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people 	<p>No data available at present.</p> <p>No adverse impact anticipated on any specific group. Provisions of the VSER policy apply to all equally.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership 	<p>No adverse impact anticipated on any specific group. Provisions of the VSER policy apply to all equally.</p>
<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployed People on benefits Single Parents and vulnerable families 	<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>May-have negative impact</p> <p>As above</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners • Looked after children • Those leaving care settings (including children and young people and those with illness) • Homeless people • Carers (including young carers) • Those involved in the criminal justice system • Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas) • People misusing services • People with low literacy/numeracy • Others e.g. veterans, students 	<p>N/A</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>May have negative impact</p> <p>As above</p> <p>May have negative impact</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>May have negative impact</p> <p>May have negative impact</p>
<p>Geographical communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural/ semi rural communities • Urban Communities • Coastal communities 	<p>Geographical communities</p> <p>The possible effects of the policy as described above would be the same in any of the geographical communities described over.</p>

6. Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policies impact on the community or staff groups?

This Policy supports the move away from what was previously in place i.e. no compulsory redundancy to an avoiding redundancy policy. It provides an enhanced severance offering when compared to statutory redundancy provisions.

7. Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

No – all monitored internally.

8. Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?

Electronically and in paper.

Information published by Midlothian Council can be provided on request in many of the community languages and also in large print, Braille, audio tape or BSL. For more information, please contact the Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer on 0131 271 3658 or equalities@midlothian.gov.uk

9. Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?

Objectives	Comments
Equality and Human rights	
Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services, status	Makes expectations and voluntary terms very clear to all employees. Those on lower pay grades will benefit from the £508 minimum weekly wage limit .
Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment	Support positive relationships within the workplace and within the Midlothian community by providing a voluntary means to reduce the budgeted staffing establishment for those who do not need to find further employment
Promotes participation, inclusion, dignity and self	Managing change policies will set out when VS/ER policy would be applied. As a voluntary offer employees have

control over decisions	self-control over decision as to whether to accept.
Builds family support networks, resilience and community capacity	n/a
Reduces crime and fear of crime	n/a
Promotes healthier lifestyles including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diet and nutrition, • sexual health, • substance misuse • Exercise and physical activity. • Lifeskills 	n/a
Environmental	
Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in East Lothian (including carbon management)	n/a
Plan for future climate change	n/a
Pollution: air/ water/ soil/ noise	n/a
Protect coastal and inland waters	n/a
Enhance biodiversity	n/a
Encourage resource efficiency (energy, water, materials and minerals)	n/a
Public Safety: Minimise waste generation/ infection control/ accidental injury /fire risk	n/a
Reduce need to travel / promote sustainable forms of transport	n/a
Improves the physical environment e.g. housing	n/a

quality, public and green space	
Economic	
Maximises income and /or reduces income inequality	Staff whose jobs are no longer required can access enhanced severance terms providing a lump sum payment and for those who have or can access their pension an ongoing annual income. Those who have reached normal retirement age can also access state pension
Helps young people into positive destinations	n/a
Supports local business	n/a
Helps people to access jobs (both paid and unpaid)	n/a
Improving literacy and numeracy	n/a
Improves working conditions, including equal pay	n/a
Improves local employment opportunities	n/a

10. Is the policy a qualifying Policy, Programme or Strategy as defined by The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?

No

11. Action Plan

Identified negative impact	Mitigating circumstances	Mitigating actions	Timeline	Responsible person
Risk of disproportionate impact of the application of the policy on specific groups , wither Equality groups, those at risk of poverty or specific communities	VSER will always represents an enhanced severance package when compared to statutory redundancy and so mitigates the greater risk of negative impact that would bring	<p>Enhancements as contained in the policy</p> <p>Annual review of VSER applications progressed to determine if any trends which impact negatively on any specific group or community and assessment of appropriate mitigating actions which can be developed</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Head of Finance and ISS</p> <p>Employment and Reward Manager</p>

12. Sign off by Head of Service/ NHS Project Lead



Name: G Fairley

Date: 26/04/2018