Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects and unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

Name of Policy/Project/Decision	Agile Working Policy
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager	Sam McVaigh
Department/Team	HR, Corporate Core
Proposed Implementation Date	July 2024
Author of the EqIA	Catherine King
Date of the EqIA	June 2024

1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?
The Council's original Agile Working Policy was adopted in June 2021, to facilitate agile working arrangements in the context of the Covid pandemic. A new revised version has been developed based on feedback from employees, trade unions and service users, plus best practice from the Local Government sector and beyond.   The Policy complements the Council's existing flexible working options, supporting employees' wellbeing through enabling a more flexible integration of their work and home lives, and it also supports the Council's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. It sets out a fair and consistent approach for considering and, where appropriate, supporting agile working for all staff who wish to participate.   The Policy's guiding principle is that 'work is something you do, not somewhere you go'. All staff are encouraged to work with agility on the basis it is mutually beneficial for both the service and the individual. However, agile working is only applied by agreement, and so any staff who are unable or unwilling to work with agility are provided with appropriate space to work from.

Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 9 of the guidance document)

2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?
Employees: **Yes**/~~No~~ Community/Residents: **Yes**/~~No~~ 3rd parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: ~~Yes~~/**No** If there is no likely impact on any of these, a full equality impact analysis is not required

2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation
Documentary Evidence:
Data: Employment Equality Report 2023 https://www.bury.gov.uk/asset-library/employment-equality-report-2023.pdf Baseline data was collated when the original Agile Policy was developed. Comparisons to recent data have now been added: ▪ Full time/part time: 1 April 20 = 43.7% FT and 56.3% PT 31 Dec 21 = 46.0% FT and 54.0% PT 31 Mar 23 = 39.63% FT and 60.47% PT This illustrates a significant increase in part time workers. Possibly illustrating that people are valuing their work life balance more, or have responsibilities linked to equality characteristics. ▪ Successful work life balance applications: 19/20 = 583 20/21 = 452 22/23 = 422 This shows a continual reduction which could suggest that that agile working is generally supportive of people's work life balance ▪ Employees with grade increases within the same post:

19/20 = 469/3118 (15.4%)

20/21 = 190/2904 (6.5%)

22/23 = 1212 – but this high number includes grade increases to reflect the real living wage changes, so isn't a realistic comparator

Stakeholder information/consultation:

Pulse survey data shows:

I am able to strike the right balance between my work and home life

April 22 = 74% positive

March 24 = 79.2% positive (of which the strongly agree response increased by 10.8%)

Agile working supports my wellbeing

April 22 = 80.8% positive

October 23 = 86.2% positive (of which the strongly agree response increased by 5.5%)

Consultations with the trade unions, change agents, Inclusion Working Group, special SMF session and leadership focus groups.

2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could likely have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the likely impact this would have.

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? Yes
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment with us for people from an equality group? Yes
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service by people from an equality group? Yes
- Could people from an equality group be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? Disabled employees and those with caring responsibilities may be disproportionately disadvantaged
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that people from an equality group will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? No
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards people from an equality group (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? No
- Could the proposal prevent or limit people from an equality group contributing to the democratic running of the council? No, this will have no impact on public meeting approach

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
Age	Agile working may have a detrimental impact on new (and potentially younger) workers, due to a lack of experiential learning		The induction guidance requires managers to work with new employees in the office for the first 2 weeks and with regular face to face check-ins thereafter. The mandatory Management Development Programme and an Outcome Based Management e-learning package enable managers to better support staff working with agility. Supporting new colleagues and learning is a specific stated objective of the policy.	Neutral

Age	Some older workers who may have acquired health conditions/disabilities or caring responsibilities and have shaped a work/life balance around the current agile working policy may struggle with the need to come into the office 2 days per week. This could result in people leaving the Council.		Managers will be advised to speak to affected colleagues sensitively and compassionately to find solutions and adjustments	Neutral
Disability	Working at home may affect mental & physical wellbeing e.g. if working in poor conditions or with the incorrect equipment or an increase of feeling isolated		The Policy requires staff to spend at least 2 days (pro rata) in the office each week. Our management development programme is supporting managers to develop and hone their skills to support employees in this regard All employees must complete a Health and Safety Toolkit to ensure their working environment and equipment are	Positive

			appropriate. This is reviewed annually as part of Employee Reviews. Adjustments are offered for both home and office locations when reasonable. Guidance is available.	
	Agile working provides flexibility to better manage long term health conditions. Improving sickness absence and productivity. It also supports the recruitment and retention on disabled colleagues			Positive
	Colleagues have adjustments in place or a work/life balance that are disrupted with the change in the agile working policy		As part of the implementation of this policy, managers will be required to discuss the needs of colleagues in terms of workplace adjustments they will need to achieve a work/life balance whilst agile working	Neutral

| | Workspaces and workplace practices impact the working styles and needs of neurodivergent colleagues | | As part of the implementation of this policy, managers will be required to discuss the needs of colleagues in terms of workplace adjustments they will need in workplaces whilst agile working.

Support and advice available to managers and colleagues from EDI manager and Disability Employee Group | Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|---|

	Reduced estate and 'hot desking' impacting provision of set desks & equipment as workplace adjustments		As part of the implementation of this policy, managers will be required to discuss the needs of colleagues in terms of workplace adjustments they will need in workplaces whilst agile working. Facilities management will assist in providing adapted furniture and storage for specialist equipment.	Neutral
Gender Reassignment				
Marriage and Civil Partnership				
Pregnancy and Maternity	Requirement for adequate facilities to express and store milk for mothers required to be in the office		Colleagues are advised to discuss requirements with their manager	Neutral
Race				

Religion and Belief	Requirement to provide adequate multi faith rooms and food preparation areas accessible for all colleagues		Multi faith rooms available in 3KP and Town Hall. Provision to be reviewed at Bradley Fold and Killilea House. Colleagues requiring a private space to practice their faith can request a meeting room to be booked through their manager where there is no specific multi faith room provision. Food preparation and storage areas are available in all buildings. Colleagues are advised to discuss with their manager if they require additional provisions	Neutral

	Religious periods and days of worship conflict with decisions of when teams/colleagues should be in the office		Colleagues and managers are encouraged to discuss religious and spiritual days to accommodate these needs where possible. Colleagues are encouraged to note their religion on iTrent which can be used for workforce planning	Neutral
Sex				
Sexual Orientation				
Carers	Agile working gives carers more flexibility to support those that they provide care for. This increases productivity and supports recruitment and retention			Positive

	Some carers have built a work life balance around the current agile policy may struggle with the need to come into the office 2 days per week. This could result in people leaving the Council.		As part of the implementation of this policy, managers will be required to discuss the needs of colleagues in terms of workplace adjustments they will need to achieve a work/life balance whilst agile working	Neutral
Looked After Children and Care Leavers				
Socio-economically vulnerable	Working from home may bring costs for employees (higher electricity and heating bills etc.)		All employees can work from an office full time if they wish. Costs of working at home are offset by reduced travel and office wear costs	Positive
Veterans				

Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristic	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date
Age	Comms to remind managers of the onboarding and induction guidance	CK	
All	Comms to remind managers of the opportunity to review current workplace and work arrangements adjustments in place	CK	

All	Comms to encourage colleagues to discuss specific needs with managers to agree workplace adjustments and work/life balance needs	CK	
All	Encourage colleagues to update sensitive data on iTrent to support workforce and workplace planning	CK	
Religion & Belief	Management teams in Bradley Fold and Killilea House to review multi faith room provision	CK	

Section 3 - Impact Risk (Pages 9 and 10 of the guidance document)

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

3.1 Level of impact / Likelihood	Unlikely (U)	Possible (P)	Likely (L)	Very Likely (V)
High Impact (H)	4	8	12	16
Medium Impact (M)	3	6	9	12
Low Impact (L)	2	4	6	8
Positive or No Impact (N)	1	1	1	1
Risk Level	No Risk = 1	Low Risk = 2 - 4	Medium Risk = 6 – 9	High Risk = 12 - 16

3.2 Level of risk identified	4
3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation	The Agile Working Policy brings many positive impacts, and actions are in place to mainly mitigate any potential negative impacts. However, due to the nature of our complex roles and service provision, not all impacts can be fully mitigated in some cases.

Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	Reasons for This Decision

There is no impact therefore the activity will proceed	
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed	X
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review	

Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager	Catherine King	270624	
Responsible Asst. Director/Director	Sam McVaigh , Director of People & Inclusion	03.07.24	
EDI	Lee Cawley	03.07.24	

EqIA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details

Bury Council – Equality Impact