

Brent Council - Equality Impact Assessment

Change, initiative or review:	Voluntary Redundancy policy
Directorate:	Legal and HR Services
Officer:	Debra Norman
Date:	18.7.18

Section A: Description

Please describe your proposed policy, decision, action or project, explaining why the change is needed. Please cite any relevant background information and/or previous decisions:

It is proposed that a voluntary redundancy scheme be implemented across the council, with applications during August and September 2018, to enable managers to have information about potential volunteers in advance of planning and implementing restructures to achieve council savings requirements over the next period.

The council has made a commitment in its Change Management policy to seek to avoid compulsory redundancies by using voluntary redundancy where appropriate. A voluntary redundancy scheme is advantageous for both management and employees. It enables employees to come forward and initiate a discussion about their future without fear of committing themselves until all the paperwork has been agreed after exit figures have been finalised. For managers, it means that they can plan reorganisations more effectively, knowing in advance which staff are willing to leave. Implementing compulsory redundancies is a significant drain on management time and is very disruptive for the wider workforce.

All final decisions will be made in one place (CMT) which will ensure consistency and will also enable the council to ensure that implementation of the scheme is affordable in the context of the council's savings requirements.

Each individual case will be assessed on the basis of the efficiency of the service and longer term financial considerations. A payback period of not more than 2 years is proposed. Applications can only be accepted where it is appropriate to delete the employee's post (or the post of another member

of staff who is suitable for the employee's post) as there must be a redundancy situation. Where an employee's post is not suitable for deletion, they may be placed on a central register of employees willing to take voluntary redundancy should another employee facing compulsorily redundancy in the future be a suitable candidate for their post.

Section B - Impact

Please complete the following table by including an X in the relevant column to outline the impact on specific equality characteristics (make sure you include residents, staff and external stakeholders if the group is more likely to use this service or be particularly affected by the proposal). Positive and negative impacts identified will need to inform your action plan. Impacts on all three needs in the PSED should be highlighted.

Equality groups	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	Neutral impacts	Unknown impacts
Age (including older and younger people, and working age population)	X	X		X
Disability (a physical or mental health condition which has a long-term impact on a person's ability to carry out day to day tasks)	X			X
Religion or belief (means both religious and non-religious beliefs)	X			X

Sex	X			X
Gender reassignment (including trans people who identify as trans but have not gone through the medical gender reassignment process)	X			X
Marriage and civil partnership	X			X
Pregnancy and maternity	X			X
Race	X			X
Sexual orientation	X			X
Human rights (not covered by the PSED, but should still be a consideration)				
Socio economic equality (including lone parents and people on low incomes. Not covered by the PSED, but should still be a consideration)				

Section C - Evidence and data

Please outline the evidence you have on the expected impacts identified in Section B. Include any relevant data, graphs or research under the headings below (only complete those boxes relevant to the type of impact you have identified). You can also include any specific consultation you have undertaken with the named protected groups but remember that consultation is a separate process. You may find the Brent Data resource helpful, as it holds a range of information and intelligence about the borough: <https://intelligence.brent.gov.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

1. Evidence of positive impact

For staff in all groups the scheme should have a positive impact. Those who are willing to leave will have an opportunity to put themselves forward. Those who do not wish to leave are less likely to be made compulsorily redundant. Longer serving and older employees are particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.

2. Evidence of negative impact (You will need to assess carefully if there's discrimination that you cannot remove or reduce, and how this will be justified)

Staff with longer service will have higher redundancy payment entitlements. This may mean the expectation under the scheme that the payback period is no more than two years may be harder to meet. This group may tend to be older compared to other employees. Those aged over 55 years or over who are accepted under the scheme may be entitled to early access to pension entitlements without reduction. This may mean the expectation under the scheme that the payback period is no more than two years may be harder to meet in the case of older employees.

Staff 55 years of age or over represent 21% of the workforce eligible for the scheme.
Any possible discrimination arising from the expectation of a payback period not exceeding 2 years can be materially justified by the policy objectives

to contribute to the council's savings requirements and to the avoidance/minimising of compulsory redundancies in the whole workforce. If costs are not recovered over the required period, this does not contribute to the council's savings requirements over this period and may mean additional redundancies are required to meet the additional costs of the severance.

3. Evidence of neutral impact

57% of the workforce aged less than 55 yrs are female and 50.65% of the workforce aged 55 yrs and over are female so it does not appear likely that there will be any disparate impact in terms of the gender make up of the work force.

Unknown impacts – until applications are received and considered it cannot be predicted with any degree of accuracy whether a disproportionate number of applications will be received and/or approved from any particular group. In view of the higher benefits, it is likely that older employees may be more likely to apply.

Unfortunately 713 of our 2139 staff have not specified their ethnicity so a meaningful analysis of the ethnicity of the 55 yrs and over age group compared to those under 55 yrs. is not possible.

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impact and increase the positive impact of your proposed policy, decision, action, project or review. You can also outline how you will address any gaps in knowledge.

NB: Please list the actions you will take to **advance opportunities for improvement where positive impacts have been identified** and **reduce the negative impacts** and explain the monitoring arrangements. You may also list how you will **address the gaps** in knowledge /evidence.

Action	How will you measure success?	Officer responsible	Estimated completion date
Undertake an Equality Assessment prior to decisions being taken by CMT and consider whether any adverse impact identified can be ameliorated and/or is justified and proportionate in view of the savings required to be achieved by the council.	The objectives of the scheme are achieved without an adverse impact on the diversity of the workforce.	Martin Williams	November 2018
Rigorous consideration of applications and decision making in a single place.	The objectives of the scheme are achieved without an adverse impact on the diversity of the workforce.	Martin Williams	November 2018

Officer:	Debra Norman, Director of Legal and HR Services
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