

Appendix 1: Equality Assessment (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Voluntary Redundancy Scheme 2020
DEPARTMENT:	Council Wide
TEAM:	Human Resources
LEAD OFFICER:	Martin Williams
DATE:	17 November 2020

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

In order to address a requirement to make budgetary savings the Council opened up a Voluntary Redundancy (VR) scheme to its whole workforce in September 2020 as a measure to mitigate potential Compulsory Redundancies. The Scheme was open for one month and staff could request to be considered for Voluntary Redundancy.

Requests for VR were considered by departments to determine whether:

- The post could be dispensed with and a saving made.
- The post could be dispensed with in its current format and a partial saving could be made.
- The post was required to deliver services to the public and could not be dispensed with.

Each individual application was to be assessed on the basis of the efficiency of the service and the longer term financial considerations.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The VR scheme was open in principle to all employees to apply.

As the scheme is voluntary in nature, it is self-selective and is therefore not considered beneficial nor detrimental to any particular protected characteristic group at point of application.

The approval process meant that applications would only be accepted if business case requirements were met as described above and so applicants are affected by these requirements.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes.

The scheme involves making decisions as to which individuals who wish to be made redundant and benefit from the council's redundancy policy will be allowed to leave the council.. These decisions will be made with due regard to the council's public sector equality duty and other equalities legislation.

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age	X		x
Sex	X		
Race	X		
Disability	X		
Sexual orientation	X		
Gender reassignment	X		
Religion or belief	X		
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage	X		

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an "X".

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council's public sector equality duty?	x	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?		x
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		x
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	x	
<p>If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B. If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.</p>		

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

An analysis of the make up of those accepted under the scheme and those rejected has been undertaken. The data from this exercise is attached. In some cases the numbers are so small it makes useful statistical analysis impossible. In respect of some applicants no or only partial equalities data has been disclosed.

61% of applications were accepted.

66% of applications were from BAME background.

In respect of accepted applications 57% were from a BAME background and 28% were white.

In respect of declined applications 48% were from a BAME background and 34% were white.

88% of those who applied were in the 51-70 age group

84% of those accepted were in the 51-70 age group.

67% of those who applied were female

71% of those who were accepted were female

The data in respect of applications declined does not indicate any disproportionate impact on any particular protected group(s).

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

AGE	
Details of impacts identified	<p>Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.</p> <p>The expectation of a payback period not exceeding 2 years could potentially impact older staff (55yrs and over) because of the costs of pension strain. However, although some individual payments do not</p>

	meet the 2 year payback requirement, the scheme as a whole does and so no applications are currently proposed to be refused on the basis of this criterion.
DISABILITY	
Details of impacts identified	<p>Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.</p> <p>On the basis that redundancy (and if appropriate pension) payments are based on total length of service there is no detriment if the individual has a disability and has periods of absence related to this.</p>
RACE	
Details of impacts identified	<p>Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.</p>
SEX	
Details of impacts identified	<p>Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.</p>
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	

Details of impacts identified	Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.
PREGANCY AND MATERNITY	
Details of impacts identified	Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	
Details of impacts identified	Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	
Details of impacts identified	Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	
Details of impacts identified	Staff in all protected groups with significant numbers have put themselves forward under the scheme and applications from all these groups are recommended for approval. Staff in all groups who do not want to leave their roles benefit from colleagues leaving on a voluntary basis as the number of compulsory redundancies likely to be required reduces accordingly. Longer serving and older employees have particularly benefitted as legislative and policy rules favour them financially.

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3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

The whole workforce was engaged.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

None

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

n/a

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

After the scheme has been fully implemented, the data in respect of actual departures under the scheme will be reviewed.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired

outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

The VR scheme has potential to benefit individuals from all backgrounds by allowing those who wish to leave to do so and avoiding compulsory redundancy.

The decision making in respect of individual applications is based on service provision requirements which takes account of the need to maintain service to all parts of the Brent community and service users at an appropriate level. The data does not indicate that any group appears to have been disadvantaged by the decision making criteria.

The criteria for acceptance under the scheme are related to cost recovery have the potential to disadvantage longer serving employees and those over 55 years, but this is already mitigated by considering the recovery period across the scheme as a whole.

There are no apparent equalities issues in respect of the policy or its implementation.

SECTION D – RESULT

<i>Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".</i>		
A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Review data on actual departures under the scheme	Consistent with the current position	Martin Williams	April 2021

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	
REVIEWING OFFICER:	
HEAD OF SERVICE:	