



## Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Form

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Name of proposal</b>	Agile Working
<b>Responsible department</b>	Human Resources

### B. AIMS OF THE PROPOSAL

<b>What do you hope to achieve?</b>	We want to realise the benefits of working in an agile manner for the SSSC, its staff and those we deliver services for.
<b>Why is the proposal needed?</b>	This replaces the interim guidance put in place for staff working from home and establishes a long-term approach. This makes sure that there is clarity for all.
<b>How will the proposal contribute to the SSSC's strategic objectives and/or priorities?</b>	<p>This policy supports our Organisational Characteristics in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and specifically "People want to work at the SSSC".</p> <p>The Strategic Plan states "we are committed to investing in our own workforce the same way we are invested in the external workforce".</p> <p>This policy supports strategic themes 2, 3 and 6 of our People Strategy 2021-2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and develop excellent people.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A healthy and inclusive organisation.</li> <li>▪ An agile and innovative workforce.</li> </ul> <p>This policy supports these priorities by expressing our position and how we support and enable our staff to work in an agile manner.</p> <p>By adopting this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We significantly increase the potential pool of staff who could work for us as staff no longer require to live within a commutable distance to Dundee.</li> <li>• We improve our ability to retain existing staff by offering a flexible approach that enables them to work in an agile way.</li> <li>• We can compete with other organisations who have adopted an agile approach and we are better able to compete with those organisations that have not.</li> <li>• We improve the work / life balance of our staff who we expect will see improved health outcomes as they have more control.</li> </ul>
<b>How will the proposal address the SSSC's Equality duties?</b>	<p>Certain groups with protected characteristics will benefit more than others by our providing a flexible approach to working.</p> <p>Our policy will reduce the opportunity for discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic by having agile working as our normal working practice. Previously, where our staff wanted to work at home they would need to make a formal request to do so. By having an agile approach, we have removed the opportunity for a decision to be made that inappropriately takes in to account a protected characteristic.</p> <p>The Agile Working policy addresses all 3 of the equality duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, <a href="#">Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)</a> ie eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p>

**C. DATA AND EVIDENCE GATHERING**

<b>What evidence has been used to come to the decisions contained in this EQIA?</b>	<p>We have conducted staff surveys during the pandemic to identify the level of interest and appetite from our staff. These surveys have shown a very high level of support from staff for agile working. Over 90% of staff want to work out with of the office most or every day.</p> <p>The most identified concerns were an adverse impact on team working, increased blurred boundary between home and work and the loss of training/learning from colleagues. The most identified benefits were improved work / life balance, having choice about where to work and reduced costs for the organisation.</p>
<b>Has the proposal been the subject of relevant engagement and/or consultation?</b>	We have consulted with the Operational Management Team, Executive Management Team and our recognised union, Unison regarding this policy proposal.
<b>Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?</b>	Yes
<b>Have any gaps been found in the data?</b>	N/A

## D. ASSESSING IMPACT AND IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE EQUALITY

**Gender** – does the proposal take account of different roles and responsibilities? Does it assume, perhaps wrongly that men have no caring responsibilities? Is the proposal flexible enough to provide a service that everyone can access?

The policy will promote equality by making agile working a default working practice. The pandemic has led to new perceptions and insights into how we can work from places other than the office. Many women have and continue to have significant carer responsibilities, and increasingly many men too, Agile working will help such staff to maintain a work / life balance while still meeting service need.

**Ethnicity** – have you covered all minority ethnic groups? Consider the impact your proposal has on someone from a minority ethnic group and remember this impact may differ depending on the gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation or ethnicity of the person as different cultures have different views on what is acceptable. Consider language and format.

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in decision making.

**Disability** – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities. How does this proposal affect disabled people? Are there any impairment groups who are unfavourably affected by the policy?

The policy will promote equality by making agile working a default working practice. This policy will promote greater employment opportunities for people with disabilities who often face additional challenges accessing workplaces and working in them.

**Sexual orientation** – what are the issues for this group in terms of your proposal? Does it meet the needs of this group?

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in decision making.

**Gender reassignment** – does your proposal include people of different gender identities? Will your proposal impact transgender individuals in any way?

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in the decision making process.

**Age** – remember different age groups have different concerns. When considering age remember that some individuals are more vulnerable or have issues that may need additional consideration.

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in the decision making process.

This policy may have an adverse impact on those who have less work experience, who will normally be younger staff, who may find it more difficult to learn and develop from colleagues and to build a network. We will seek to reduce the impact of this through being alert to the risk and taking it into account in development discussions with support and guidance being available from human resources.

**Marital and civil partnership** – it is unlawful discrimination for people who are married/civil partnership/same-sex couple to be treated less favourably in employment than those who are not married/civil partnership/mixed-sex couple.

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in the decision making process.

**Pregnancy and maternity** – protection against maternity discrimination covers 26 weeks after giving birth – this includes treating a woman unfavourable because she is breastfeeding.

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in the decision making process.

This policy will support pregnant women to work for longer into their pregnancy where they wish to by enabling them to work from home. This policy will support employees who are breastfeeding as they will be able to do so in their own environment rather than an office environment. This policy, coupled with our flexitime, will support parents of infants to better support them by their being more available and responsive to them.

**Religion/Belief/Non-belief** – does your proposal take into account different festivals, holidays, religious days and traditions? Will the different faith beliefs impact on women from that group and exclude or prevent them from using the service?

The policy applies equally to all employees, permanent and temporary, and is accessible regardless of this specific characteristic. The policy will reduce the opportunity for this characteristic to be a factor in the decision making process. This policy will make it easier for employees to practice their faith by being closer to their place of worship or having dedicated space within their own homes to do so.

## **E. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROUPS LIVING IN AN ISLAND COMMUNITY**

This section considers the impact or effect of the proposal on island communities and whether this could be significantly different from its effect on other communities.

It is recognised that our islands face particular challenges around distance, geography, connectivity and demography, so it is important that we consider these properly and make sure islands receive fair and equitable treatment and that there is no detriment to their unique circumstances.

Agile working practices will improve the opportunity for those living in island communities to work for us on an equal footing with those living on the mainland. This will have the effect of promoting good relations between those on the mainland and those living in island communities. It will improve our ability to recruit and retain staff who live in island community or who subsequently decide to do so.

We do not require an ICIA (Islands Community Impact Assessment).

## F. CHILD RIGHTS AND WELLBEING

This section considers the impact of the proposal on children and young people, or specific groups of children and young people, in Scotland.

The UNCRC applies to everyone under the age of 18 - the policy applies to everyone irrespective of age. We use this policy to identify the practices for staff working in an agile manner. This will have no direct impact on children's rights and well-being. This policy may have an indirect impact on children by our staff having more time available to spend with them or staff being more flexible to adapt to their needs. We do not currently employ any staff under the age of 18 years of age. We have identified a potential impact on employees with less experience, who are typically younger under Age above.

Commented [NM1]: Should we comment on extent to which we employ staff under 18 (or similar metric if we can't, e.g. under 21)

Commented [LF2R1]: I don't understand the last sentence about employing staff of 18 years and older.

Commented [LF3R1]: I think we should just add something as per council cover report about developmental needs to younger staff and being cognisant of these and taking account in devt discussions (or something similar)

## G. HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES

This section considers the impact of the proposal on physical and mental health and wellbeing; this includes for example, participation, creativity and developing potential.

Our policy will help to improve mental health and wellbeing through treating staff fairly and consistently. Our policy will also give staff the change to have more flexibility to pursue other social activities. In conjunction with our flexi-time scheme this gives staff a high degree of flexibility to work at times and locations that best suit their own needs and preferences.

## H. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

This section is concerned with the impact of the proposal on pay and employment opportunities as well as valuing and supporting voluntary work.

The benefits of the policy for both the SSSC and its employees are:

- supports our strategic responsibilities
- contributes to making us an employer of choice

**I. CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS**

This section concerns our duties to put Scotland's care experienced children, young people and adults at the heart of what we do.

We do not predict any direct impact on care experienced children, young people or adults beyond the impact identified under other characteristics.

**J. DECISION MAKING**

Which of the following statements best describes the action that should be taken following the EqIA in relation to your proposal?

<b>No major change</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Adjust the policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Continue with Policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Stop and remove the policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outline the reasons why you've selected this option

We have not identified any major changes following completion of the Equality Impact Assessment.



**K. MONITORING AND REVIEWING**

How will the implementation of the policy/proposal be monitored? How and when will the impact of the proposal be reviewed? Outline the actions that will be taken, the timescale for these and who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.

Action	Timescale	Person Responsible
The policy will be monitored on a three-yearly cycle to test for effectiveness and continued suitability.	Ongoing.	Lucy Finn, Head of HR.

**L. SIGN OFF**

**Name:** Lucy Finn

**Title:** Head of Human Resources

**Date Approved:** April 2022