



## Equality Relevance Assessment

1. Details of proposal	
Policy title	Further roll out of Civic Centre centralised administration model
Lead officer	Julie Whitelaw - Head of Corporate Services
Date relevance considered	10 September 2013
2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?	
YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy will, or may potentially:	
General Duties	Impact on equality (Yes or No)
Reduce or increase discrimination, victimisation or harassment against people covered by the equality protected characteristics?	Yes
Reduce or increase equality of opportunity between people who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	Yes
Provide opportunity to improve good relations between those who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	Yes
4. Equality impact assessment required? (Two Yes above = full assessment necessary)	
YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Decision rationale	
<p>While centralised administration has a number of efficiency benefits there are potential challenges for the project in relation to gender equality issues such as equal pay and tackling occupational segregation. These issues need to be considered in detail prior to implementation of the project.</p>	

- No assessment required – process ends
- Assessment required – continue to next section

## Equality Impact Assessment

1. Details of proposal	
Details of others involved	Julie Whitelaw – Head of Corporate Services Kenny Selbie – Equality Officer Sophie McKinney – HR Adviser Hannah Gardner – Equalities Analyst
Date assessment conducted	15/12/14
2. Aims of the proposed change to council policy or resources	
<p>The centralisation and streamlining of administrative support within the Civic Centre has delivered savings in excess £500,000 in 2011/12 and has created a more effective administrative function. The provision of administrative support across the council's other main administrative buildings are specific to each building. With the exception of County Buildings, the delivery of administrative support is fragmented across the services within each building. There is minimal integration of service delivery between these main administrative buildings and between service teams.</p> <p>A consideration of the application of the Civic Centre model to the council's other main administrative buildings will reveal opportunities for further improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative function.</p>	
3. What equality data, research or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?	
<p>Evidence was collected from local, national &amp; academic research, including, census data for West Lothian. Research was also drawn from gender pay gap specialists <i>Close the Gap</i>, and the <i>EHRC</i>.</p>	
4. Details of consultation and involvement	
<p>The assessment has been subject to scrutiny by representatives of the equality community forums through a specific focus on Delivering Better Outcomes projects as agreed by the council's Corporate Working Group on Equality.</p>	
5. Issues identified and 'protected characteristics' impact (Covering: age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief and sexual orientation equality)	

The outcome of research conducted for *AD1: Administration Support & Integration* primarily points towards there being a disproportionate effect on females working within administration services within West Lothian Council.

The proposed changes will identify a number of both adverse and positive impacts for this particular protected characteristic. Due to the makeup of the workforce profile of the administration services in West Lothian Council, there is a possible risk that female employees could be adversely impacted. The posts affected by the proposed project are predominately support posts - with a large number of female employees within the administration services holding support positions.

In 2004, women made up the majority of employees in Public Administration, Education and Health (72%), Distribution, Hotels and Catering and Repairs (56%), and Banking, Finance and Insurance (51%). By contrast men made up the majority of employees in Construction (89%), Energy and Water Supply (82%), Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (75%), Manufacturing (73%), and Transport and Communication (72%) (*A Gender Audit of Statistics: Comparing the Position of Women and Men in Scotland, 2007*). This trend continues into later years, solidifying the longevity of horizontal occupational segregation in the workplace (*Scottish Government, 2006; 2008; 2012*). As a result, when rationalising and restructuring services, such as administration, there may be a disproportionate adverse effect on female employees.

Sources outside the Scottish Government also concur with the above results. Research published by *Close the Gap* indicates that women generally work in a handful of job roles. Defined as the 'five C's', women are more likely to be found in one of these low-paying roles: cleaning; catering; clerical (administration); cashiering (retail); and caring work. Women are also far more likely to work in the public sector than men, with women representing 67% of employees in local government, and 78% of NHS staff (*Economics of Occupational Segregation, Close the Gap*).

Those who have caring responsibilities may also be adversely affected by the proposed plans. Primary carers of children are more likely to be female, and as a result there is a direct overlap between these protected groups. This group may be affected if there is a change to the geographical location of their workplace, or a change to their working hours. Females and those with caring responsibilities are more likely to work part-time hours, and therefore a change to work structures may impact on them in a negative way (*Close the Gap, 2013*). 41% of women in employment worked part-time in 2005, compared with 10% of men. This proportion of women is largely unchanged since 1984. The Office for National Statistics data for March 2011 – April 2012 show 48% of women employees in Scotland working part-time, compared to 16% of men (*Scottish Government, 2013*).

## **6. What measures are in place to monitor the actual impact following implementation?**

Many of the proposals under this project are already implemented and a number of the early initiatives were assessed as part of the council's previous Tough Choices programme. The Delivering Better Outcomes projects are being monitored by the Modernisation Board during implementation and equality impact assessment is identified as a key enabler for projects.

## 7. Recommendation

- Implement proposal with no amendments
- Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions (as outlined below)
- Reject proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality

## 8. Mitigating actions and additional outputs

The council has a position of no compulsory redundancy. While an individual's current post and working practices may be impacted upon by a number of budget proposals, the potential impact of compulsory redundancy is mitigated regardless of a protected characteristic. The workforce management policy enables staff that may be displaced to be offered alternative posts elsewhere in the service or organisation. Significant opportunities for flexible transition, including training and development, are supported. Skills matching and the consultation process ensure that the particular needs and issues of each individual employee are taken into account during the implementation of the policy. Work is being undertaken to profile the council's workforce. This will assist to pro-actively identify services or teams that have capacity to accept employees via the redeployment process. This work assists in advance to identify required skills, training and other development which may be necessary to transition from one role into another. The council's policies on flexible working, reduced hours working, voluntary severance and early retirement provide further options to manage and mitigate the impact of the measure.