



Equality Relevance Assessment

1. Details of proposal	
Policy title	Living Wage
Lead officer	Julie Whitelaw – Head of Corporate Services
Date relevance considered	12 th December 2014
2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?	
YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
NO <input type="checkbox"/>	<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?	No
4. Equality impact assessment required? (Yes to any of above = full assessment recommended)	
YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
NO <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Decision rationale	
A significant majority of employees who will benefit from further investment in the Living Wage are women and, by definition in terms of this measure, are low paid.	

- **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 Advisor Hannah Gardner – Equalities Analyst
Date assessment conducted	12 th December 2014
2. Aims of the proposed change to council policy or resources	
<p>West Lothian Council is committed to subsidising employees' basic wages to reflect the Living Wage, an hourly rate set independently each year. It is calculated according to the cost of living and gives the minimum pay rate required for a worker to provide their family with the essentials of life. Additionally, the Living Wage is:</p> <p>updated on an annual basis; calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK; paid by employers on a voluntary basis; fully supported by all political parties, with full backing by the Scottish and UK Governments; good for business, good for individuals and good for society.</p> <p>The Scottish Living Wage is currently £7.65. This figure is set to increase to £7.85 in April 2015.</p>	
3. What equality data, research or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?	
Evidence was collected from local, national & 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> .	
4. Details of consultation and involvement	
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.	
5. Issues identified and 'protected characteristics' impact (Covering: age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief and sexual orientation equality)	

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*).

West Lothian Council has made a commitment to work within the current legislative framework to pay its employees the Living Wage whilst encouraging its contractors to do the same.

Research conducted by Queen Mary University of London found that employees paid the London Living Wage benefitted from increased income, increased job quality, stronger motivation to work, better career opportunities, improvements in health and well-being and improved family life (*The costs and benefits of the London living wage, 2012*).

Whilst there are clear benefits to employees, the introduction of the Living Wage can provide benefits for employers including improved levels of morale, motivation and commitment from staff; better staff retention and workforce stability; reduced absenteeism and increased productivity through higher effort and an openness to changing job (*Work That Pays: The final report of the Living Wage Commission, 2014*)

The implementation of this measure will therefore have a positive impact on gender equality within the council's workforce, having a positive impact on the gender pay gap results and analysis for the Authority.

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

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

N/A

- **Equality impact assessment completed**