

Equality Impact and Needs Assessment Form



NB: Use the electronic MS Word template. Add additional rows and increase box size as required. Make sure your final document is suitable for publishing.

A) Description

Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed

Work-Life Balance Cluster

Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)

Corporate Resources – HR Strategic Services (Policy & Strategy Team)

Date of assessment (DD/MM/YY)

January 2010

Date next assessment due (3 years)

January 2013

Names and/or job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Jeanette Withers - HR Adviser, Policy and Strategy, HR Strategic Services
Jackie Baxter - HR Adviser, Policy and Strategy, HR Strategic Services

Accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)

Paul Jones - Director of Employment Strategy

Date EINA Form approved by accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)

4 January 2010

1. What are the aims or main purpose of the service, function or policy? What does it provide and how does it provide it?

The "Work-life Balance Cluster" is a group of policies which is supportive in terms of helping employees to achieve a better work-life balance through enabling greater flexibility as to when, how and where they work. At the same time, it helps DCC to position itself as an "employer of choice" in terms of attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse and high quality workforce, whilst ensuring fairness and complying with respective legislation. (Definition of an "employer of choice": "An employer for whom people want to work. There is a desire to join the organisation, and once there, to stay. Employees are committed to the organisation and engaged in the work that they do.")

There are a number of policies within the cluster as DCC recognises that there is no "one size fits all" pattern of work-life balance practices and initiatives, and that it is consequently important to offer those that potentially appeal to all employees. For example, not only policies that appeal to those with young or school age children but also those that may benefit employees who have other types of caring responsibilities (e.g. for elderly or disabled family members). Employees without dependents may also have commitments

within the community, or they may want time to travel, study or engage in leisure activities. In addition, those who live in remote rural areas may wish to work flexibly in light of the amount of time it takes them to commute to and from work. It is, of course, also important to bear in mind that employees' individual circumstances change over time.

The policies have been developed and are maintained by the HR Policy and Strategy Team and they provide guidance for staff, managers as well as HR colleagues. Whilst the policies comply with respective legislation and are designed to ensure consistency of approach and fairness across DCC, it is, however, important to acknowledge that some of the policies contain processes where there is potential for differential in treatment (e.g. whether it is agreed that an employee can work at home under the Corporate Homeworking Policy).

The policies cover DCC staff, including those working in joint working arrangements (e.g. with the NHS). Each policy document should state which group of employees it applies to, for example, some of the policies do not apply to those based in schools. Where this is not stated, this will be included when the policy is next reviewed. (Where appropriate, additional school-specific policies are produced by the HR Schools Team).

Advice and support in respect of the implementation and interpretation of the policies is provided by the HR Helpdesk and HR Operational Teams.

2. Location or any other relevant information

The policy documents are available on The Source (staff Intranet) in Word and PDF versions. They are also provided electronically for DCC's partners for the management of staff in joint working arrangements. When new or revised policies are produced, they are communicated across the Council by cascade and by the inclusion of items in Insider (weekly staff briefing) and other relevant internal communication channels, as appropriate.

3. List any key policies or procedures to be reviewed as part of this assessment.

- Corporate Career Break Scheme
- Corporate Flexible Retirement Policy
- Corporate Flexible Working Requests Policy
- Corporate Flexitime Policy
- Corporate Homeworking Policy
- Corporate Job Share Guidance
- Part Time Working
- Corporate Work-Life Balance

4. Who is intended to benefit from the service, function or policy?

DCC employees
DCC (as an organisation)
DCC HR
DCC elected Members
Public - Council Tax payers
Public - service users

5. Who are the stakeholders? What is their interest?

DCC employees – opportunities to achieve a better work-life balance which is likely to contribute to an improvement in general well being; higher levels of motivation, commitment and engagement at work resulting in greater job satisfaction; higher levels of attendance; and, positive reputation.

DCC (as an organisation) – helps to position DCC as an “employer of choice” (e.g. in terms of the organisation’s ability to attract, recruit, support and retain a diverse and high quality workforce); higher levels of employee attendance; helps to ensure fairness whilst complying with respective legislation; ability to deliver high quality services and functions; and, positive reputation.

DCC HR – ability to deliver high quality HR services and functions to the Directorates; the development and maintenance of policy and strategy in respect of work-life balance practices and initiatives; and, positive reputation.

DCC elected Members – quality workforce that delivers high quality services and functions; effective and efficient use of public money; and, positive reputation.

Public: Council Tax payers – high quality services delivered in an efficient and effective manner.

Public: service users – high quality services.

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts? For example: complaints, comments, research, outcomes of a scrutiny review. Please describe:

Policy implementation and communication - difficulties associated with implementing and communicating the policies across such a large and diverse organisation.

The HR Policy & Strategy Team has received anecdotal comments that some managers within the organisation may not necessarily be in favour of some of the policies (e.g. those that support more flexible ways of working). This could be for a variety of reasons (e.g. concerns about operational pressures and meeting service requirements, and/or, uncertainty about how to effectively manage flexible working) and could result in differential in treatment.

Complaints logged on internal TAGGISH system checked but none received relating to this cluster of HR policies.

B) Relevance – Note: if not relevant, do not complete this form

Select **all** that apply:

- 7. Service or function that people use.
- 8. Discretion is exercised, or potential for people to experience different outcomes or level of satisfaction.
- 9. Employment policy – where discretion is not exercised.
- 10. Employment policy – where discretion is exercised (e.g. recruitment or disciplinary process).
- 11. Concerns at a local, regional or national level of discrimination/inequalities.
- 12. Major change such as the closure, removal or transfer of a service/provision.
- 13. Community and regeneration strategies, local area agreements and organisational or directorate/partnership strategies/plans.*

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Scale of relevance

Low	
Medium	Section C applies
Medium	
High	Sections C & E apply
High	
High	
High	

* link to green agenda and homeworking

Other:

State why it is relevant:

How relevant (high, medium or low?):

Mark 'X' to confirm which strands are relevant to the review:

Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender (men and women)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Race/ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trans-gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (state below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Any other (such as Human Rights, people on low incomes and specific sub-strands requiring particular focus such as Travellers and Gypsies, Deaf people):

Carers
People on low incomes
People who live in remote rural areas/ need to travel long distances to commute to work

C) Information

1. What information (monitoring or consultation data) have you got and what is it telling you? *Required where relevance is Medium or High.*

2007 DCC Staff Survey

The 2007 DCC staff survey results (<http://staff.devon.gov.uk/staffsurvey.htm>) include the following statistics:

- 'I would welcome more flexible working arrangements such as homeworking, jobshare etc.' Strongly agree 23%; Agree 38%; Unsure 27%; Disagree 12%; Strongly disagree 1%

Although the cluster is supportive in terms of flexible working arrangements, the above results suggest that staff who completed the survey would welcome even more flexible ways of working. However, the results could also illustrate a number of other things (e.g. that the policies need to be more effectively promoted and communicated, and/or that some managers are not necessarily always supportive in terms of implementation).

- 'I would recommend DCC as a good employer' Strongly agree 12%; Agree 57%; Unsure 20%; Disagree 8%; Strongly disagree 3%

The above indicate that the majority of staff who completed the survey (69%) would recommend DCC as a good employer, which suggests that the organisation is effective, at least to some extent, with regards to being an "employer of choice".

- 'My manager actively challenges prejudice and discrimination and promotes equality in DCC' Yes 67%; No 5%; Don't know 29%

The above indicate that the majority of managers (of staff who completed the survey) have the prerequisite attributes (e.g. in terms of attitude) to effectively implement the cluster of policies in a fair and equitable way.

- 'Hope to retire before reaching state retirement age' (Yes 52%)

The above indicates that just over half of the staff who completed the survey may potentially be interested in a flexible retirement if they are eligible (under the Corporate Flexible Retirement Policy).

- 'Do you have a disability' (Yes 5%)

The above indicates that only 5% of staff who completed the survey disclosed that they have a disability, whereas national statistics suggest that this should be more in the region of 9.3%. This is because nearly 1 in 5 people of working age (7 million, or 18.6%) in UK have a disability, although only half of disabled people of working age are in work (50%), compared with 80% of non disabled people (Office for National Statistics – Labour Force Survey, Jan- Mar 2009)

The DCC Employment Diversity Data – April 2008 to March 2009 reported that 1.3% of the workforce is Disabled (32.3% Not Known - includes those who declined to specify) <http://www.devon.gov.uk/equalitymonitoring.pdf> p.14.

The above statistics may indicate a number of things. For example, e.g. that employees with a disability do not feel that DCC as their employer needs to know about their disability, or, that there is a culture within the organisation whereby employees are reluctant to disclose that they have a disability.

- 'Carer for a dependent' (Children 53%; Elderly relative 12%; Relative with a disability 5%; Other 4%)

The above indicates that many DCC staff who completed the survey have some sort of caring responsibility.

The 2001 Census also found that a considerable amount of unpaid care for family members or friends was being provided – 5.2 million carers in England and Wales, including over a million providing more than 50 hours per week <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=347>. The percentage of carers for elderly relatives is also predicted to grow in light of the UK's ageing population (Carers in the UK [online] <http://www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns>).

DCC Employment Diversity Data – April 2008 to March 2009

- Workforce profile: 80% staff female; 20% male
- 23% of women work full time (77% part time)
- 64% of men work full time (36% part time)

(<http://www.devon.gov.uk/equalitymonitoring.pdf> p.4)

HR Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008 Benchmark Scores: Importance and Performance

- 'Wellbeing and work-life balance for staff'

Importance: 2.4 (1 Low; 2 Medium; 3 High)

Performance: 4.4 (1 Poor; 2 Weak; 3 Less than adequate; 4 Adequate; 5 Good; 6 Excellent)

Statistics from a survey sent to managers/clients who use DCC's HR services by the Institute of Public Finance HR Benchmarking Group.

Corporate Flexible Retirement Policy

Flexible retirement allows an employee to release Local Government Pension Scheme benefits, without leaving employment, by reducing working hours and/or grade. It could provide an opportunity for employees to make changes to their working lives, whilst enabling DCC to retain valuable skills and experience.

Scheme started April 2007. Data as at 11 November 2009.

Total no. of completed flexible retirements under this policy	51
Female	32
Male	19

(Mostly employees aged 60 plus)

Total no. of applications refused under this policy due to employer costs (85 year rule)	7
Female	3
Male	4

(Aged 50 – 60)

Note: In addition to the retirements under this policy, some employees will have pursued other ways of retiring in a flexible manner e.g. reducing hours of work without pension release.

Additional sources of information

- Flexible Working
DCC's Corporate Flexible Working Request Policy is restricted to those employees who have a legal right to request flexible working (e.g. parents with children under the age of 6 (or under 18 in the case of a disabled child) or those that care for adults).

However, according to a Flexible Working Survey (2009):

- 80% of UK employers consider requests to work flexibly from any employee, regardless of whether or not they fall into the category of those who have a right to request
- Among employers, recognition of the benefits of flexible working is more widespread than recognition of the difficulties
- Improved retention and employee commitment are the main benefits experienced (IRS Flexible Working Survey: Availability, Take-up and Impact 2009 [online] <http://www.xperthr.co.uk/article/93627/irs-flexible-working-survey-2009--availability,-take-up-and-impact.aspx?searchwords=irs+flexible+working+survey>).

The Working Better – Fathers, Family and Work (2009) report, which focused on fathers and their experiences of, and attitudes towards work and care found that:

- Many British fathers are working long hours and struggling to balance work and family with 4 in 10 fathers say they spend too little time with their children
- 2 in 5 five men fear that asking for flexible working arrangements would result in their commitment to their job being questioned and would negatively affect their chances of a promotion (Equality and Human Rights Commission, Working Better –Fathers, Family and

Work 2009 [online]

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/fathers_family_and_work.pdf

- Working hours
 - The contractual full time working hours for DCC employees is 37 per week, which is the same as the UK national average. (Office for National Statistics. 2009 Labour force survey [online]. London: ONS. http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/LMS_FR_HS/WebTable08.xls).
- Taking work home
 - Data is not available to show how many DCC staff take work home on a regular basis, however, 1 in 5 people workers in the UK, including many managerial and professional workers, take work home almost every day. In addition, 1 in 3 partners of people who typically work more than 48 hours a week feel this had had a negative effect on personal relationships (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Work—Life Balance Factsheet. April 2009).
- Green agenda
 - Many employees, particularly younger ones, are increasingly looking to work for organisations with strong green credentials, which can be enhanced by using homeworking to discourage unnecessary travel (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Homeworking and Teleworking Factsheet. July 2008).

The above links to DCC's County Hall Travel Plan that contributes to 'Making Devon Greener' by reducing the carbon footprint of all travel related activities at County Hall, and the respective Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA) can found at http://www.devon.gov.uk/eina_county_hall_travel_plan_aug_2008.pdf .

D) Assessment

1. Describe any NEGATIVE impacts (actual or potential):

Strand/community	Impact (<i>how</i> they may be affected).
Age	<p>Employees under the age of 50 (55 from 1 April 2010) as the Flexible Retirement Policy does not apply to them.</p> <p>Employees aged between 50 and 60 as flexible retirement applications are refused when there would be costs to DCC, because of the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations which prevent costs being passed to employees when certain criteria are met related to the "85 year rule".</p>

Gender (men and women)	<p>Men - because of gender stereotyping, employees may fear that asking for flexible working arrangements to suit their individual circumstances (e.g. in their roles as fathers/ partners/ carers) may result in their commitment to their job being questioned and a negative affect on their chances of promotion.</p> <p>Women - may also fear that asking for flexible working arrangements to suit their individual circumstances (e.g. in their roles as mothers/ partners/ carers) may result in their commitment to their job being questioned and a negative affect on their chances of promotion.</p> <p>Men – The statistics show that men are underrepresented within the workforce and that part time working arrangements are widespread. It could therefore be argued that men are disadvantaged as they are more likely to want to work full time (e.g. as they more likely to be the main wage earner in a household and are less likely to have any type of caring responsibility). Full time posts have a more equal gender balance than part time.</p>
Disability	Employees who have a learning disability may find it difficult to access the policies (i.e. read and understand them).
All of the equality strands (identified in B)	Employees who do not have the legal right to make a request for flexible working under the Corporate Flexible Working Request Policy.

1. Describe any POSITIVE impacts:

Strand/community	Impact (<i>how</i> they may be affected)
Age	<p>Employees age 50 or over (55 from April 2010) who are eligible, as the Flexible Retirement Policy applies to them.</p> <p>Possibly younger employees as research has shown that this age group in particular are increasingly looking to work for organisations with strong green credentials, which can be enhanced by using homeworking to discourage unnecessary travel.</p> <p>Employees of all ages – as the cluster is supportive in terms of enabling greater flexibility as to when, how and where staff work.</p>

Gender (men and women)	<p>Women – by flexible working arrangements to suit their individual circumstances (e.g. in their roles as mothers/ partners/carers), especially as they are more likely than men to have some sort of caring responsibility.</p> <p>Men - by flexible working arrangements to suit their individual circumstances (e.g. in their roles as fathers/ partners).</p>
Disability	<p>Employees with some types of disability (e.g. mobility) may benefit as the cluster is supportive in terms of enabling greater flexibility as to when, how and where staff work. For instance, with regard to start and finish times which may make commuting to and from work easier; working shorter hours that may be less tiring; homeworking if individual roles facilitate this.</p>
Religion and belief	<p>Employees who are only able to work on certain days of the week due to their religion/ beliefs are likely to benefit as the cluster is supportive in terms of enabling greater flexibility as to when staff work.</p>
Carers	<p>Carers benefit as the cluster is supportive in terms of enabling greater flexibility as to when, how and where staff work in order that they can fulfil their caring responsibilities.</p>
People who live in remote rural areas/ need to travel long distances to commute to work	<p>Employees who live in rural areas benefit if their individual roles enable homeworking as this reduces the need to commute long distances to and from work. (Whether or not posts are suitable for homeworking is determined by a number of factors including how much discretion there is in performing responsibilities and whether the function is performed primarily on site or off site).</p>

1 Provide any information about NEUTRAL impacts that have been identified (there is neither a positive or negative impact):

Strand/community	Why there is 'no differential impact'
People on low incomes	<p>May not have suitable facilities/ resources to work from home (e.g. sufficient room/ space, PC and/or broadband access).</p> <p>May not be able to afford to reduce their hours of work (e.g. work part time or job share) or take a career break.</p> <p>Note re above comments: These policies do not have a positive or negative impact on these employees.</p>

<p>People who live in remote rural areas/ need to travel long distances to commute to work</p>	<p>May not have suitable facilities/ resources to work from home (e.g. broadband access).</p> <p>Note re above comment: These policies do not have a positive or negative impact on these employees.</p>
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E) Consultation

18. Did you carry out any consultations? *Required where relevance is High.*

Yes

19. Who was consulted? Include your findings in 15, 16 and 17 above.

Employees – staff survey

DCC's HR policies are usually consulted on before they are implemented or significantly revised, and the HR Policy & Strategy Team uses a checklist for communication and consultation which includes Directorates, HR and trade unions.

20. Describe other research, studies or information used to assist with the assessment and include your findings above:

Relevant DCC information including the DCC 2007 Staff Survey and DCC Employment Diversity Data – April 2008 to March 2009.

Relevant employment legislation and professional HR best practice resources, for example, professional magazines, journals and resources produced by organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Xpert HR.

Additional sources including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites.

F) Conclusions

	Action/objective/target OR Justification	Resources required	Timescale	I/R/S/O
a)	<p>Objective: Explore the feasibility of amending DCC's Corporate Flexible Working Request Policy (which applies to all DCC staff including centrally employed teachers but excludes all staff in schools) so that all employees, regardless of their circumstances and background, can submit a reasonable request for flexible working, which will be considered against the needs of maintaining excellent service delivery.</p>	<p>HR Policy & Strategy Team</p>	<p>Within 6 months</p>	

	<p>(Aligned to Corporate Employment Strategy 2009-12 CR/09/57 Cabinet 3 Nov 09 – Promote increased flexible working practices).</p> <p>Action: Seek agreement from the Human Resources Management Team re the above.</p>			
b)	<p>Objective: Communicate and promote the cluster of policies across DCC to help ensure that they are open to all, including those with learning disabilities, whilst addressing any concerns that managers have in order to engage with them and gain commitment. (Aligned to Corporate Employment Strategy 2009-12 CR/09/57 Cabinet 3 Nov 09 – Promote increased flexible working practices).</p>	<p>HR Policy & Strategy Team</p> <p>Internal Communications Team</p>	<p>Within 6 – 12 months</p>	
c)	<p>Justification: Corporate Flexible Retirement Policy – disadvantages some employees aged between 50 and 60 as it is DCC policy to refuse flexible retirement applications are refused when there would be costs to DCC. This is because of the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations which prevent costs being passed to employees when certain criteria are met related to the “85 year rule”.</p>			
d)	<p>Justification: Although there are many more part time posts, it is not possible to ascertain whether this is because of post requirements or whether they have been created in response flexible working requests. (It is also generally much easier to change a full time post to part time than vice versa).</p>			
e)	<p>Action: Continue to monitor legislation, HR best practice and the take up and effectiveness of the cluster of policies, where practicable. Update and enhance the HR policies, as appropriate.</p>	<p>HR Policy & Strategy Team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

f)	<p>Justification: It is not possible to monitor the take up and effectiveness of the cluster of policies across DCC in detail as it is a large and diverse organisation, or completely eliminate the potential for discrimination, however, any negative effects are mitigated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the availability of equality and diversity training for all DCC staff • giving managers the tools (e.g. clear policy guidance and support) in order that all requests are considered • the continuation of initiatives such as staff surveys that incorporate questions relating to this cluster of policies 			
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(I) Taking immediate effect.

(R) Recommended to Council/Directors through a Committee or other Report*.

(S) Added to the Service Plan.

(O) Added to the Fair for All Programme (as an organisational improvement)**

Note(s):

- (The Corporate Flexitime Policy was amended in April 2008 to extend core time and flexible hours (from 7am – 7pm), the number of flexi-days per month (to 2 days), and the scheme to Chief Officer and Chief Executive grades (including all D grade employees)).
- Other than the specific conclusions identified above (Section F), no further ones have been identified at the present time. All of the HR policies are supportive in terms of helping employees to achieve a better work-life balance and comply with respective employment legislation as well as nationally and locally agreed terms and conditions of employment.