

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA): Stage 1: Initial Screening Form for New/Revised Policies or Functions

### A: Summary Details

Directorate: **Chief Executive's**

Section: **Accommodation Project Board**

Person responsible for the assessment: **John Mitchell**

Contact details: **2513**

Name of Policy to be assessed: **Accommodation Strategy**

Is this a new or revised policy: **The Programme Brief was originally introduced in February 04.**

Date policy scheduled for Overview and Scrutiny/Cabinet/LAB: **TBA**

### B: Preparation

1. Do you have monitoring data available on the number of people from different target groups) who are using or are potentially impacted upon by your policy? Please specify what monitoring information you have available (your monitoring information should be compared to the current available census data to see whether a proportionate number of people are taking up your service.

*The Council has undertaken a number of initiatives and information gathering exercises for the purpose of monitoring staff and front facing customer services These are as follows:*

Name	Forum	Date
Corporate Equalities Audit	CMT	May 06
Workforce to reflect the Community	Cabinet	January 06
Mulberry Place Reception	CMT	July 06
Staff Survey 2005 key findings	CMT	May 2005

*Apart from school based employees, there are 6, 000 plus staff directly employed by the Council. Target groups are listed by percentage as follows:*

Ethnicity		Gender		Disability	
Asian	21.78%	Female	60.87%	Yes	3.87%
Black	20.76%	Male	39.13%	No	57.64%
Mixed	1.59%			Failed to Respond	20.63%
White	53.42%			No Data	17.86%
Other	0.60%				
Failed To Respond	0.53%				
No Data	1.32%				

Sexual Orientation	
Bisexual	0.62%
Gay	1.13%
Heterosexual	34.49%
Lesbian	0.48%

Failed to Respond	10.18%
No Data	54.69%

<b>Religion</b>	
Buddhist	0.39%
Christian	20.86%
Failed to Respond	7.50%
Hindu	0.86%
Jewish	0.37%
Muslim	7.64%
No Faith	7.55%
Other	2.38%
Sikh	0.39%
No Data	52.05%

<b>Age Group</b>	
15-19	1.18%
20-24	5.35%
25-29	9.20%
30-34	10.29%
35-39	13.24%
40-44	17.81%
45-49	16.33%
50-54	12.92%

55-59	9.23%
60-64	4.11%
65+	0.34%
No Data	0.02%

2. If monitoring has NOT been undertaken, will it be done in the future or do you have access to relevant monitoring data for this area? If not, specify the arrangement you intend to make; if not please give a reason for your decision.

*Continuous monitoring is undertaken through a wide range of groups as listed below, however, there are elements from the above target groups for which additional information is currently being sought where return data is low.*

3. Please list any consultations that you may have had and/or local/national consultations, research or practical guidance that will assist you in completing this EIA

*Consultation and governance on the Accommodation Strategy is ongoing through Corporate and Directorate led managements teams and local forums as follows:*

*CMT  
Members Briefings  
Corporate Programme Management Board  
Flexible Working Group  
Corporate Joint Trade Union Forum  
Joint Health and Safety Committee  
Directorate Health and Safety Committee's  
Chief Executive's DMTs  
Housing DMT and Accommodation Programme Board  
E&C DMT& Accommodation Programme Board  
Education DMT & Accommodation Programme Board*

*Social Services DMT & Accommodation Programme Board  
D&R DMT and Accommodation Programme Board  
Mulberry Place Reception Project Group  
Directorate TU Forums*

*Other related forums for consultation are:*

*The Corporate Equalities Steering Group (CESG)  
Corporate Human Resources Group (CHRG)  
The Disabled Staff Forum.  
BME Staff Forum*

*In addition, Directorates have independently undertaken research on aspects of Flexible working in the home and office environment. Sources for some of this research is as follows:*

*Project NOMAD  
Amalgamated Electrical and Engineering Union (AEEU)  
DTi Flexible Working Business case 50 success stories  
OGC Flexible working in central Government (University of Reading)*

## **C: Your Policy or Function**

1. What is the main purpose of the function?

*The Councils' Accommodation Strategy is designed to: **Create a modern, effective, customer-focused workforce supported by appropriate accommodation and technology.***

***The overall strategy has 5 main elements:***

- 1.0 *Moving office-based services to occupy 'core' sites in East India Dock (Mulberry Place and Anchorage House), Jack Dash House, Gladstone Place and, 62 Roman Road.*
- 2.0 *Managerial change – all managers owning and introducing their staff to new styles of working and flexible working environments as part of the moves in tune with service needs*
- 3.0 *Making greater and better use of information and communications technology to support efficiency and customer service*
- 4.0 *Improving customer access*
- 5.0 *Disposing of obsolete buildings to reduce overall running costs.*

2 Are there any other objectives of the policy or function, if so what are they?

***The council is committed to a range of key steps to turn the vision into reality:***

Providing modern, efficient office space and a better working environment for all staff

Improving and using ICT to enhance productivity, enable flexibility and support mobile working to better meet customer needs

Reducing office running costs so more can be spent on frontline services

Ensuring buildings meet accessibility standards

Encouraging new ways of working – joined-up services that meet our customers needs, where and when they want them

Improving the environmental performance of Council buildings

Making work more rewarding

3 Do any written procedures exist to enable delivery of this policy or function?

*There is a wide range of procedures and policy documentation in place and more currently being developed to enable the Office Accommodation Strategy. In place so far are:*

<i>Employee guide to part time working</i>	<i>08/2003</i>
<i>Home working policy</i>	<i>09/2005</i>
<i>Hot desking procedure</i>	<i>02/2006</i>
<i>Managers guide to hot desking</i>	<i>02/2006</i>
<i>Clear desk procedure</i>	<i>02/2006</i>
<i>Reduced hours scheme</i>	<i>02/2006</i>
<i>Staggered hours scheme</i>	<i>08/2006</i>
<i>Term time only procedure</i>	<i>08/2006</i>
<i>Flexi-time Scheme</i>	<i>08/2006</i>

**Managers tool-kit**

<i>Clear desk checklist</i>	<i>05/2006</i>
<i>Communications checklist</i>	<i>05/2006</i>
<i>Health &amp; safety checklist</i>	<i>05/2006</i>
<i>Hot desking checklist</i>	<i>05/2006</i>
<i>Moves checklist</i>	<i>05/2006</i>

4 Are there elements of common practice in the service area or function that are not clearly defined within the written procedures?

*There is no evidence that there are any common practices that are not identified in the combined policy and information set available to managers and staff.*

5 Who are the main stakeholders of the policy?

*All Council Staff have an equal stake holding in the Accommodation Strategy*

6 Is the policy associated with any other Council policy (s)?

*There are associations with the following policies:*

*Policy Statement on Equality and Diversity*

*Corporate Health and Safety Policy*

*Directorate Health and Safety Policies*

*Family Friendly Policies*

*Efficiency Strategy*

*Medium Term Financial Strategy*

*Environment Strategy (Draft)*

7 Are there any areas of the service that are governed by discretionary powers? If so, is there clear guidance as to how to exercise these?

*Within the legal parameters of Health and Safety Legislation and the Disability Discrimination Act, the Council can choose to accommodate staff as it sees fit. Staff are not contracted to work in a specific location, but to a specific job description.*

*The Council has a duty to ensure that the services it provides are equally accessible to all sections of the community, and it is fulfilling this duty through a range of initiatives such as the Customer Access strategy and ensuring that all buildings are DDA compliant.*

*Managers will exercise discretion in day to day service delivery which is specific to individual working practices. However, there are a number of considerations with respect to managers' discretion when applying change under the Corporate Accommodation Strategy:*

*Managers will be expected to embrace the concept of flexible working and be mindful that a fair and balanced view should be maintained when considering requests for types of flexible working from all Equalities target groups.*

*Managers will be held to account under performance management procedures for the successful delivery of their service areas whilst the Council operates under new flexible working arrangements.*

*It is the responsibility of Managers to ensure they attend the training available in the implementation of flexible working.*

*Managers will need to adapt their mindset when thinking about the specific needs of their staff.*

- 8 Is the responsibility for the proposed policy or function shared with another department or authority or organisation? If so, what responsibility, and which bodies?

*This statement does not apply on the basis that this is a Council wide strategy to be adopted by all Directorates.*

#### **D: The Impact**

Assess the potential impact that the policy could have on each of the target groups. The potential impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you have assessed negative potential impact for any of the target groups you will need to also assess whether that negative potential impact is high, medium or low – see glossary in the attached guidance notes for definitions.

- a) Identify the potential impact of the policy on men and women:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
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		specify if High, Medium or Low)		
<b>Women</b>	*			<p>There is no evidence to suggest there will be a negative impact in terms of gender on the basis that research suggests that if properly managed, flexible working has many positive attributes for all staff and the Councils customers.</p> <p>However, It is recognised that female staff with families could be the first to benefit from an improved work-life balance. This in turn would lead to more opportunities for both partners owing to the wider choices offered which would lead to improvements in work-life balance.</p>
<b>Men</b>	*			

b) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different race groups:

<b>Race</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Asian</b> (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian Background – please specify _____)			*	<p>There is no evidence to suggest there will be either a negative or positive impact in terms of race on the basis that current HR policies and the joint strategic planning across the Accommodation Strategy apply to all staff equally.</p>
<b>Black</b> (including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other black background – please specify _____)			*	

<b>White</b> (including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other white background – please specify _____)			*	<b>However, it is important to recognise that Managers exercising their discretionary powers will be open to scrutiny with respect to a balanced interpretation of HR Policies.</b>
<b>Mixed Dual heritage</b> (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background)			*	
<b>Other</b> (please specify)			*	

c) Identify the potential impact of the policy on disabled people:

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>

	<b>*</b>			<p><b>There is no evidence to suggest there will be any disproportionate impact in terms of disability on the basis that all Council accommodation directly affected by the Accommodation Strategy will be fully DDA compliant. In addition, any Disabled person who qualifies for Home / Flexible working will have a bespoke risk assessment undertaken in order to ensure a safe and equitable working environment.</b></p> <p><b>It is expected that flexible working will be effective in improving work-life balance for a proportion of this target group on the basis that it will provide wider opportunities in the choice of work-place and environment including home working. However, it should be recognised that there may be a risk for some staff with respect to isolation from the work-place. On this basis, managers should be vigilant when undertaking bespoke risk assessments in this area; not only to include DDA and DSE issues but also matters relating to the general wellbeing of staff.</b></p>
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d) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different age groups:

<b>Age Group (specify, for example younger, older etc)</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
			<b>*</b>	<p><b>There is no evidence to suggest there will be either a negative or positive impact in terms of Age on the basis that all policies and procedures associated with the Councils Accommodation Strategy promotes equality across the Council and there are no working</b></p>

				<p>practices that could induce harm that do not have an accompanying risk assessment.</p> <p>It is necessary to note however, that there is likely to be a rise in the number of older employees in the future on the basis of new retirement policy coming into effect from October 2006. This may for example lead to Managers needing to re-evaluate their service delivery on the basis of more staff seeking part-time and reduced hours working.</p>
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e) Identify the potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people:

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Lesbian</b>			*	<p>There is no evidence to suggest there will be either a negative or positive impact in terms of Sexual Orientation on the basis that all policies and procedures associated with the Councils Accommodation Strategy promotes equality across the Council.</p>
<b>Gay Men</b>			*	
<b>Bisexual</b>			*	
<b>Heterosexual</b>			*	<p>However, the return data in this area is weak and therefore open to re-interpretation during monitoring through the Equalities steering group and HR.</p>

f) Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups?

Religious/Faith groups (specify)	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Buddhist			*	<p>There is no evidence to suggest there will be either a negative or positive impact in terms of Religious Belief on the basis that all policies and procedures associated with the Councils Accommodation Strategy promotes equality across the Council.</p> <p>However, it should be recognised by Managers that devout followers of their religion will have varying needs with respect to specific times in the calendar year. On this basis, managers should work with staff in obtaining the right balance in order to maintain service delivery and recognising the necessary activities involving their faith.</p>
Christian			*	
Hindu			*	
Jewish			*	
Muslim			*	
Sikh			*	
Other (please specify)			*	

g) As a result of completing Question 1 a-f above what is the potential impact of your policy?

High

Medium

**Low**

Could you minimise or remove any negative potential impact that is of medium or low significance? Explain How.

*The Accommodation Strategy is an inevitable step forward in terms of Service Delivery and modern ways of working. The work underway right now has already become common practice for a great many Private Sector Companies and Councils alike. Part of the strategic work being undertaken by the Accommodation Programme Office is to assess the impact / success and failings at each stage of the project. These findings are being constantly updated and published to the Intranet by the Council's communications office.*

*Standardised Project Management and Programme Management principles have been adopted by the Council and are being applied by all members of the project teams.*

*Any learned weakness in the Strategy which has the potential to disproportionately affect any of the above target groups will result in positive action under change control process. This process will be embedded within the programme management arrangements of the Accommodation Strategy and governed accordingly as follows:*

*It is recognised by the Accommodation Programme Board and the Accommodation Programme Office that any equalities impact will form part of project 'stage boundary reporting'. In the case of the Accommodation Strategy, stage boundaries have been adopted as being at the end of each Directorate's move or re-organisation.*

*A process is in place to widely consult with each Directorate's managers and Staff at a period of 3 months following the move. This period has been agreed by the Accommodation Project Board on the basis of allowing planned process and systems to be sufficiently embedded for testing.*

*Stage boundary reporting will be led by a sub project team*

*The team will comprise members of the Accommodation Programme Board and the Programme Office and will particularly include representation from the corporate communications office.*

*Each stage will be reported by the Corporate Communications Office to the Programme Board and subsequently published on the staff intranet.*

*Any emerging patterns arising from this testing will be flagged to the Corporate Equalities Steering Group.*

*Stage boundary reporting will form the basis of the lessons learned report at project close.*

If there is no evidence that the policy promotes equal opportunity– could it be adapted so it does? How?

**N/A**

Please ensure that all actions identified are included in the attached action plan and in your service plan.

**Action Plan:**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Progress Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
<p>Ensure that written stage boundary reports are prepared following each Directorate move / relocation for the duration of the Programme. taking account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service delivery</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Flexible working</li> <li>• Home working</li> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Well being</li> </ul>	<p>Each Directorate will conduct a moves evaluation 3 months following each move / re-location as part of the overall evaluation of the move. (see appendix a)</p> <p>Programme Office to commission a stage closure review on each report before reporting to the programme board and results published to the Intranet.</p> <p>Stage closure dates to be</p>	<p>Issues arising from moves evaluations will be reported by Directorates to the Programme Office and entered into the issues log and assigned issues resolution. The programme Office will then commission reporting as necessary regarding any emerging patterns relating to target groups. to the CESG.</p>	<p>Martin Smith Accommodation Project Sponsor</p>

	agreed by the programme Board and embedded into the master project plan		
Provide training and development opportunities to support the learning and development of all staff relating to the Accommodation Strategy and the introduction of flexible working.	<p>Provide specific training for all staff on the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrating to new ICT</li> <li>• New FM arrangements</li> <li>• Training for managers in implementing the new styles of working, covering new flexible working procedures.</li> </ul>	<p>Run a training analysis at each stage boundary.</p> <p>Make changes to the training package according to specific feed-back received from staff from each Directorate using the new Learning and Development Evaluation Framework</p>	<p>Ruth Alabi Chief Executive's ICT Training</p> <p>Steve Shaw Chief Executive's HR</p>
Monitor the outcomes and recommendations from the Corporate Equalities Steering Group (CESG) and action accordingly to mitigate any disproportionate / negative effect in any of the target groups.	Ensure that Equalities data relating to the Accommodation Strategy is fed into Directorate Project boards for comment / action and feedback to the Accommodation Programme Office	Report to the Accommodation Programme Board at 3 month intervals with stage boundary reporting that includes any actions / mitigation involving target groups. For the duration of the programme	John Mitchell Accommodation Programme Board

<p>Use internal communications to ensure staff are aware of the Council's Accommodation plans and ensure key messages are understood.</p>	<p>Accommodation lead for Communications to provide regular and timely information to all staff through attendance on the Accommodation Strategy Programme Board</p>	<p>To ensure that any specific / relevant information relating to the target groups are reported in managers briefings and pulling together.</p>	<p>Head of Service Corporate Communications</p>
<p>To review numbers and types of contacts from the public and service users accessing through EiD</p> <p>Where necessary investigate any changes in patterns to ensure that any negative impact on any of the target groups arising from the accommodation strategy is neutralised.</p>	<p>To review customer facing services at 3 month intervals following start-up of services from the new Mulberry reception facilities for the duration of the Programme.</p>	<p>To report to the Accommodation Programme Board with findings following service checks</p>	<p>Clair Symonds Head of Customer Access</p>

## **Appendix (A)**

# **Equalities Accommodation Programme Impact Assessment at Project Stage Boundary**

## **Pro-Forma**

**Please return this form to:** Susan Murcutt (Accommodation programme Office)

The Accommodation Programme Management protocols call for a moves evaluation at a period not exceeding 3 months following each Directorate Move / re-location in accordance with the moves programme and dates agreed by Directorates. These evaluations are referred to as Stage Boundaries.

The purpose of these evaluations is to gauge the effectiveness of any changes in working practices, to apply issues resolution to areas requiring attention and to pass on lessons learned to other Directorates / Services Areas via the Accommodation Programme Board and Communications Office.




**Information provided by:**.....

**If you do not have anything to report please  
return this form stating NIL here:**

**Department and position:**.....

**Contact Tel:**.....

**Date:**.....

**If you require any information on any aspect of Equalities please contact: Nagina Kayani on 0**