



South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance available on Insite or contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Jonathan Corbett
- 1.2 Team and Service:
HR Team, HR and Corporate Services
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Parental Leave for Members
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
22/03/2022
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
22/03/2022
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Democratic Services and HR

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Policy
If other, please specify
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
Not applicable



2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

The new Parental Leave policy for Members gives all councillors the right to take extended leave for maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave. This will make parental leave an approved reason in relation to Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 1972 without the need for further approval of the Council. This is a significant change as failure to attend a qualifying Council meeting means a Member automatically vacates their elected office if 6 months have elapsed. The policy also provides for Members to continue to receive their allowances during their leave.

This policy is designed to support the Council's Equality Scheme. The key objective that this policy reinforces is that South Cambridgeshire District Council is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings. This should encourage people from a wider variety of backgrounds to stand for election by removing a potential barrier to becoming a Member.

2.7 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- None.

2.8 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users
- Councillors
- External Stakeholders
- Other
- Employees

If other, please specify [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- 2.9 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

There is no statutory requirement to implement a parental leave policy, but it will help the Council advance equality of opportunity and demonstrate commitment to the public sector equality duty to create positive impacts for protected groups. The Members that take parental leave will be impacted positively as they will be able to retain their elected office and normal allowances during their leave. This will also help them to balance Member and parental responsibilities, eliminating any potential direct discrimination arising from being a new parent. The Service Users and External Stakeholders may be impacted negatively if they are unable to contact their normal representative about issues that affect them. The policy explains how this can be mitigated by outlining the responsibilities of the Member to keep these groups informed about their leave and ensure their work is covered.

- 2.11 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards?
(Max 250 words)

Not applicable.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1 Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups?](#) Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information.

(Max 250 words)

This policy has been created by referring to Local Government Association (LGA) guidance on Member parental leave and the policies of North



Hertfordshire District Council, Durham County Council and West Berkshire District Council. Feedback has also been sought from Democratic Services, Legal Services and Members who have had children after being elected to understand the impact on the protected group of pregnancy and maternity.

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

Not applicable.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: This is likely to have a medium positive impact on improving the diversity of gender, experience, age and background of Members at South Cambridgeshire District Council by removing a potential barrier to standing for election.

Age

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Disability

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.



Gender reassignment

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: This will have a medium positive impact. Although the number of people impacted will be small, it will ensure that the provisions for taking parental leave are clear and transparent for all internal and external stakeholders.

Race

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Religion and belief

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Sex

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Sexual orientation

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Other

Details [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

None of the above

4.2 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

| Action and timescale | Officer |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>The Members using the policy should ensure that they communicate that they will be taking parental leave to the residents of their ward and other external organisations that may be impacted by their absence. This action should be completed at least a month before their leave.</p> | <p>Member taking parental leave.</p> |

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| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
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4.3 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

The policy should be reviewed by HR and Democratic Services after a Member has utilised this to take parental leave. This should take into account any feedback received from the Member's ward and other external organisations during the leave period.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The policy will have an overall positive impact by clearly outlining parental leave entitlement for Members ensuring they retain their elected office, continue to receive allowances and eliminate any potential direct discrimination arising from being a new parent. This strongly supports the Council's Equality Scheme objectives and will likely contribute to improving the diversity of election candidates and long-term retention of Members.

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

J. Corbett

6.2 Date of completion:

09/03/2022

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?

HR Team, 22/03/2025

6.4 Approving officer signature, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

Jeff Membery, Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services

6.5 Date of approval:

09/03/2022

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.