

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

<b>Policy/activity or service area to be assessed:</b>	Career Break Policy	<b>Person completing assessment:</b>	Sue Wilkinson
<b>Reason for this assessment:</b> <i>(new policy / review etc)</i>	Review of existing policy (existing policy is draft only)	<b>Date of assessment:</b>	8.9.15

An EIA involves analysing the effect, or potential effect, of the way we do our business upon groups that share protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This requires us to look at the equality data which we capture or have access to and to consider the outcome of our community engagement. We need to assess whether our policies and practices show ‘due regard’ for the three aims (see below) of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The analysis should highlight effects that *increase* equality, *decrease* equality or have *no impact* upon equality across the protected characteristics. Its purpose is not just to paint a picture, but to *identify practical steps* to improve our performance by:

- (a) Eliminating any unlawful discrimination,**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity and**
- (c) Fostering good relations between different groups.**

1. Briefly describe the purpose, aims and objectives of the policy/activity: <sup>1</sup>	To provide a framework of the process for requesting a career break and to set out the terms applicable to any career break request that is granted.
2. Who is the policy/activity aimed at: (communities, staff, partners etc)	All staff of SFRS who wish to request an extended unpaid absence from their employment
3. Who is responsible for the policy/activity: (Directorate/Department/individual)	Human Resources / Line management

1. For ‘policy’: any new and existing policy, strategy, services, functions, work programme, project, practice and activity. This includes decisions about budgets, procurement, commissioning or de-commissioning services, service design and implementation.
2. Socio economic is not a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. We will however demonstrate due regard to it because as a risk factor poverty has a significant contributor to inequality indicators. Also when present alongside a PCs or multiple PCs the risk increases exponentially

## Equality Statement

Clearly explain and provide supporting evidence to show how the policy/activity satisfies the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and **DOES NOT** cause or have the potential to cause a **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effect:

The notion of the career break policy aims to support employees who may wish to take a break from their employment by giving them the option to do so without terminating their relationship with the Service. This may be, for example, to undertake training which is not relevant or applicable to their role, to travel or to support family where this is not covered by a contractual right to paid time off.

The policy outlines the process to be followed to request a career break.

The policy will aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination by ensuring that appropriate information is provided to both employees and managers advocating best practice management of requests for and management during a period of absence and management of the return to work. An appeal process is in place to ensure that requests that are refused are scrutinised by an independent and more senior manager. Requests for leave of absence will be monitored by Human Resources and any manager who hears an appeal against the refusal of a request will receive HR support to ensure that objective consideration is given to the request. Requests for career breaks will be monitored to identify any patterns in either the reasons for the request or the diversity of those making requests for the break.

The policy aims to advance the equality of opportunity for employees who wish to take an extended leave of absence but ensuring the establishment of contact details and contact arrangements during their leave to enable them to be made aware of opportunities which may arise during their absence.

The benefits of this policy are extended to all employees.

Where the policy/activity **DOES** or has the **POTENTIAL TO** have a **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effect indicate which of the Protected Characteristics **MUST** be considered:

Describe the **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effect and provide supporting evidence for your rationale \*

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<b>Age</b>	Staff who are of a younger age may not have the requisite period of service to request a career break. However the policy allows for discretion by the Service to grant a request if it is felt that it supports either the employee's development or the Service aims and values.
<b>Disability</b>	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	Payment arrangements for staff who become pregnant whilst on a leave of absence may be affected if their earnings prior to their maternity leave is lower than the eligibility criteria. It is however unlikely that unless notification to the employee is late in the pregnancy, they will either a) have the knowledge of the pregnancy prior to the leave of absence or b) have the opportunity to return to work prior to the commencement of their maternity leave. This is mitigated by the policy being very clear on the impact of career breaks on maternity and therefore the employee will be aware of the implications. However the Service has agreed to continue to pay Occupational Maternity Pay which will minimise or eradicate the impact of their ineligibility to claim Statutory Maternity Pay.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	
<b>Race</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	
<b>Socio-economic disadvantage 2</b>	

\* **NOTE:** Where any **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effects are likely to occur:

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- (a) For the policy/activity to continue corrective actions/amendments **MUST** be taken to prevent/minimise unlawful discrimination
- (b) An action plan **MUST** be completed (next section)
- (c) Where a negative (detrimental) effect can not be avoided, continuation of the policy/activity (with or without amendment) **MUST** be justified

## Action plan

This action plan **MUST** accompany the policy/activity and be used continually to assess any negative (detrimental) effects resulting from the delivery of or amendments to the policy/activity based on customer feedback and evaluation.

Negative/detrimental effect	Action needed to prevent/minimise it	By who	By when	Complete (tick)

All Completed EIA's should be submitted to E&D team for approval.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (E&D)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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