

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: March 2015	Directorate: Corporate Services	Section: HR
1. Activity to be assessed	Shared Parental Leave Policy	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change Function/procedure	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Tony Madden	
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Pat Butler, Alison James	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Comply with new legislation introducing Shared Parental Leave and Pay; allow both partners to share in the time off to care for a new baby that has previously been available through maternity leave only.	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	New parents (birth or adoptive) and/or partners caring for a new baby	
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.
		What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality	Y	N ✓
9. Racial equality	Y	N ✓

10. Gender equality	Y ✓	N	Positive	The stated aim of the new legislation is to make it possible for both parents to share in the childcare arrangements for a new baby.
11. Sexual Orientation equality	Y	N ✓		No different impact on parents relating to sexual orientation – same sex partners looking after a new child are equally able to benefit.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N ✓		No known different impact due to gender reassignment.
13. Age equality	Y	N ✓		No known different impact due to age, as employees may be new parents at a wide range of ages.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N ✓		No known different impact due to religion/belief.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y ✓	N	Positive	The intention of the legislation and policy is to allow both partners to share in the early care of the new baby.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N ✓		No known different impact.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	None known.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	No negative impacts.			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	<p>It is not possible at this stage to predict how many people will take up the new options for Shared Parental Leave, although it is generally believed that initial impact will be relatively modest; it may take some time for this style of leave to become more commonplace.</p> <p>The Council is following current practice in offering the SPL at statutory pay levels, ie not enhancing it as Maternity Leave is enhanced; we believe most mothers will use up any enhanced payments before ceasing Maternity Leave and taking up SPL. From this point onwards both parents would receive the same levels of payment. Were we to enhance pay for mothers only to match enhanced maternity pay levels, it would be considered discriminatory. The Government has yet to provide any specific guidance on this but it has in the past taken the view that not enhancing Shared Paternity Pay would not amount to unlawful discrimination. (Women have special protection as a result of their biological position as the mother which can justify different treatment and different pay in maternity leave).</p>			

	The pragmatic approach the Council is advised to adopt on this is that if the mother voluntarily chooses to end her maternity leave and pay in order to embark on a period of SPL, the male and female partners are then treated and paid equally at statutory levels. We will revisit this issue in the light of any further government or national advice.		
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N✓	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	None available at this time. When the policy has been in operation for some time it will be easier to understand the levels of take-up.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N✓	The explanations offered above are deemed sufficient not to warrant a full EIA.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
New rights will be communicated to all staff.		CO:HR	
Take up will be analysed further after the first full year.		CO:HR	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	n/a		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	The introduction of the Policy is itself intended to provide more options for new parents and to allow partners of new mothers to become more involved in the initial childcare if they should wish to be.		
26. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: TONY MADDEN		Date: March 2015

When complete please send to abby.thomas@bracknell-forest.gov.uk for publication on the Council's website.