

# Equality Impact Assessment Template – Policy, function or strategy

This document should be completed when a new policy, function or strategy is introduced or when a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy is recommended.

<b>1. Policy, function or strategy</b>		
a.	Name/description of the policy, function or strategy <sup>1</sup>	Temporary Enhancement in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to the Voluntary Early Release (VER) Scheme
b.	Responsible organisation(s)/Lead Service	Organisational Development (OD), Policy and Communications Service
c.	Lead Officer	Morna Rae, Head of OD, Policy and Communications
d.	Date of Impact Assessment	25 January 2024
e.	Partners/other Services involved in the development of the policy, function or strategy	-
f.	Is the policy, function or strategy?	<input type="checkbox"/> New
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed/Revised
g.	What is the purpose of the policy, function or strategy (include details of any new legislation which prompted the introduction of the policy, function or strategy or the substantive change to the policy, function or strategy)?	<p>The main purpose is to implement a temporary revision to the existing Voluntary Severance Policy. This will apply only to employees displaced as a result of the 2024/26 Council Budget process, including workstreams.</p> <p>The Policy outlines the options available to the employee (excluding teachers) and employer in relation to displacement and severance agreements and the steps to be undertaken.</p>
h.	What are the intended outcomes of the policy, function or strategy?	The intended outcome of the temporary revision is to provide an enhanced offer to employees in order to make VER a more

<sup>1</sup> Please attach details of the policy, function or strategy to this Template

		feasible or attractive option for the individual, and, in turn, facilitate budget savings.
i.	Geographical area (Inverclyde-wide or a specific location)	Council-wide. The Temporary Enhancement of the VER Scheme applies only in relation to Council employees displaced as a result of the 2024/26 Council Budget process, including workstreams.
j.	Which parts of the Equality Duty will the policy, function or strategy impact on?	<input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010
		<input type="checkbox"/> Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
		<input type="checkbox"/> Foster good relations between people from different groups
k.	Will those who may be directly or indirectly affected by the policy, function or strategy be involved in its development?	Consultation has taken place with the trade unions via the Joint Budget Group.

<b>2. Does the policy, function or strategy impact on:</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a. Protected Characteristics under The Equality Act 2010: Age; Care experienced; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation ( <b>see Section 3</b> )	X	

b. Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage – Fairer Scotland Duty <sup>2</sup> (see Section 6)	X	
c. Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 <sup>3</sup> (see Section 7)	X	
d. Council Plan 2023/28 <sup>4</sup> (see Section 8)	X	
<b>3. If 'Yes' is selected for any part of Section 2, please populate the other relevant Sections of this Template.</b>		
<b>4. If 'No' is selected for <u>every part</u> of Section 2, please state the reasons for this.</b>		
<p><b>Please sign below and email a copy of this Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer:</b></p> <p><b><u><a href="mailto:karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk">karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk</a></u></b></p>		
Signature:	Date:	

<sup>2</sup> [Fairer Scotland Duty: guidance for public bodies](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Council Plan 2023/28](#)

3. Impact – Protected Characteristics					
Which of the Protected Characteristics will the policy, function or strategy have an impact upon?					
Protected Characteristic	Impact				Reasons/Comments
	Positive High	Positive Low	Neutral	Negative High	
Age		X			

The list of proposed budget savings presented to the Inverclyde Council on 1 February 2024 includes a VER trawl under the enhanced scheme related to a saving of 53.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) posts. This covers a headcount/pool of staff who may be eligible for VER of 237 and 83.6 FTE.

The largest groups in terms of headcount are Grounds Maintenance (20), Community Wardens (20), School Music Instructors (20) and Cleaners (135).

The age profile of these employee groups is mixed.

The enhancement to ‘Group 1’ for redundancy payments relates to all those who are under 50 years of age, whether they are in the pension scheme or not. It also applies to over 50s who are non-members of the Strathclyde Pension Fund or have less than two years membership.

The enhancement to ‘Group 2’ for redundancy payments relates to those who are over 55 years and have more than two years pension scheme membership and those who are over 50 years and have more than two years membership at 6 April 2006.

On the basis that one of the enhancements is only open to those aged over 50 years it is assessed that there is an impact in relation to the Protected Characteristic of Age.

						This enhanced policy would also be available to employees identified through future stages in the 2024/26 Budget process, including those impacted through the workstreams and any Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) savings proposals. At this stage insufficient detail is known on these employees to assess potential impacts.
Care experienced			X			
Disability			X			
Gender Reassignment			X			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			X			
Pregnancy and Maternity			X			Employees who are pregnant or on maternity leave have additional protection under the existing Voluntary Severance Policy. This is unchanged by this temporary enhancement.
Race			X			
Religion and Belief			X			
Sex		X				The list of proposed budget savings presented to the Inverclyde Council on 1 February 2024 includes a VER trawl under the enhanced scheme related to a saving of 53.1 FTE posts. This covers a headcount of 237 and 83.6 FTE.

						<p>The largest groups in terms of headcount are Grounds Maintenance (20), Community Wardens (20), School Music Instructors (20) and Cleaners (135).</p> <p>Some of these employee groups are predominantly female (e.g. cleaning staff), others are predominantly male (e.g. Community Wardens and Grounds Maintenance). Other staff groups, such as School Music Instructors have a mix.</p> <p>The overall analysis of the potentially impacted staff suggests that it is predominantly female employees who may benefit.</p> <p>This enhanced policy would also be available to employees identified through future stages in the 2024/26 Budget process, including those impacted through the workstreams and any HSCP savings proposals. At this stage insufficient detail is known on these employees to assess potential impacts.</p>
Sexual Orientation			X			
Other groups to consider						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers</li> <li>• The Armed Forces Covenant Duty</li> </ul>			X			
			X			

<b>4. Which parts of the Equality Duty will the policy, function or strategy have an impact upon?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster good relations between people from different groups

<b>5. Impact – Groups</b>	
From the information you have highlighted above, describe the positive and negative impacts and the groups affected under The Equality Act 2010.	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Positive impact</b> + <i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p><u>Age</u>: On the basis that the enhancements are only open to those aged over 50 years it is assessed that there is an impact in relation to the Protected Characteristic of Age.</p> <p><u>Sex</u>: The overall analysis of the potentially impacted staff suggests that it is predominantly female employees who may benefit.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Negative impact</b> - <i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p>

**6. Impact – Fairer Scotland Duty**

What impact will the policy, function or strategy have on reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage?

Positive impact +	Neutral impact =	Negative impact -
X	=	
<p><b>Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on reducing inequalities of outcome.</b></p> <p>By providing an enhanced voluntary severance provision, employees who agree to leave their post under this scheme have more generous financial terms than those who leave under the standard policy. In an economic situation where former employees may find it difficult to secure alternative employment, the position is somewhat mitigated by providing additional support.</p>		

**7. Impact – Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33**

Which Themes from the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 will the policy, function or strategy impact on?

□	<p><b>Theme 1: Empowered people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities can have their voices heard, and influence the places and services that affect them</li> <li>• Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced</li> </ul>
X	<p><b>Theme 2: Working people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people will be in sustained employment, with fair pay and conditions</li> <li>• Poverty related gaps are addressed, so young people can have the skills for learning, life and work</li> <li>• Businesses are supported and encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint and develop green jobs</li> </ul>
□	<p><b>Theme 3: Healthy people and places</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People live longer and healthier lives</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive systems are in place to prevent alcohol and drug misuse</li> <li>• Our natural capital is looked after, and we are effectively adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Theme 4: A supportive place</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable adults and children are protected and supported, ensuring they can live safely and independently</li> <li>• We recognise where people are affected by trauma, and respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery</li> <li>• Public protection and community safety are improved through targeting our resources to reduce the risk of offending and harm</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Theme 5: A thriving place</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in our working age population by encouraging people to stay here, and attracting new people to settle here</li> <li>• Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need</li> <li>• Homes are energy efficient and fuel poverty is reduced</li> <li>• Increased use of active travel and sustainable transport options</li> <li>• Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces, and high-quality arts and cultural opportunities</li> </ul>

**Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/22 Themes.**

Theme 2: The Temporary Enhancement to the VER Scheme aims to provide the relevant Council employees with an enhanced option to support their decision-making process regarding their employment with the local authority.

**8. Impact – Council Plan 2023/28**

**Which Themes from the Council Plan 2023/28 will the policy, function or strategy impact on?**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Theme 1: People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education</li> <li>• Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced</li> <li>• People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing</li> <li>• More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions</li> <li>• Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported</li> </ul>
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□	<p><b>Theme 2: Place</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable</li> <li>• Our strategic housing function is robust</li> <li>• Our economy and skills base are developed</li> <li>• We have a sufficient supply of business premises</li> <li>• Our natural environment is protected</li> </ul>
X	<p><b>Theme 3: Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money</li> <li>• Our employees are supported and developed</li> </ul>

**Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on the Council Plan 2023/28 Themes.**

Themes 1 and 3: The Temporary Enhancement to the VER Scheme aims to provide the relevant Council employees with an enhanced option to support their decision-making process regarding their employment with the local authority.

**9. Evidence**

What evidence do you have to help identify any potential impacts of the policy, function or strategy?

Note: Evidence could include information from consultations, surveys, the Citizens’ Panel, focus groups, interviews, projects, user feedback, complaints, Officers’ knowledge and experience, equalities monitoring data, publications, research, reports, and local and national groups.

Evidence	Details
Consultation/engagement (including any carried out while developing the policy, function or strategy)	Consultation has taken place with the trade unions via the Joint Budget Group, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Members' Budget Working Group. They were supportive of the enhancement.

Research	Research on the approach taken by other local authority areas was undertaken. There is significant variation, especially in relation to the voluntary severance arrangements, from no added years of pensionable service to 10 years. The majority have a lower number of added years to the Inverclyde Council proposed increase to six years.
Officers' knowledge and experience (including feedback from frontline staff)	Officer knowledge of the employee groups involved alongside previous experience of undertaking employee trawls has informed this work.
Equalities monitoring data	The Inverclyde Council Workforce Information and Activity Report 2022/23 shows that most employees are aged between 46 and 65. This group is 52% of the workforce. 75% of the workforce are female and 25 are male.  97% of employees are in the pension scheme.
User feedback (including complaints)	
Stakeholders	
Other	
Are there information gaps and, if so, what are these?	It is not currently known which areas Elected Members will agree as budget savings and therefore which employee groups may benefit from the scheme.

**10. Consequences of Analysis**

What steps will you take in response to the findings of your analysis? Please select at least one of the following and provide a brief explanation.

a.	Continue development with no changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On the basis that this is more generous provision than that under the current scheme, and will provide additional support to employees and there are no anticipated negative impacts.
b.	Continue development with minor alterations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c.	Continue development with major changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d.	Discontinue development and consider alternatives (where relevant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

How will the effect of the policy, function or strategy be monitored following implementation?

The numbers and demographics of those employees impacted will be monitored, and updates provided to the CMT.

When is the policy, function or strategy due to be implemented?

During 2024/26. The release dates of employees may be in 2024 or 2025.

When will the policy, function or strategy be reviewed?

The policy will cease after the Budget setting for 2024/25 and 2025/26 is concluded and will revert to the current arrangement.

What resources are available for the implementation of the policy, function or strategy? Have these resources changed?

Costs will be contained in the existing VER earmarked reserve.

**11. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment process, including what action could be taken to mitigate the impact of the policy, function or strategy.**

The impacts on both Inverclyde Leisure and the HSCP should also be considered. A consistent approach would need to be taken with Council employees within the HSCP. The approach of Inverclyde Leisure tends to be to mirror the Council’s arrangements so any potential implications for them in terms of proposed budget savings should be raised.

**Details of the Person(s) who completed the Assessment:**

Name:	Morna Rae; Karen Barclay
Position:	Head of OD, Policy and Communications; Corporate Policy and Performance Officer
Date:	25 January 2024

**Authorised by:**

Classification: Official

Name:	Ruth Binks
Position:	Corporate Director – Education, Communities and OD
Date:	19 March 2024

**Please send a copy of the completed Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer at [karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk).**