

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Document Number:	Reference	GRSC/P31V1.0
Title of Policy:	Furlough Policy	
No of Pages (including appendices):	8	
Version:	1	
Issue Date:		
Policy Nominated Officer:	Sharon McNicholl Director: Performance	
Equality screened /Rural Needs Impact Assessed by	Sharon McNicholl Director: Performance	
Equality screening/Rural Needs Impact Assessment date:	22.06.20	
Amendment Version Issue Date:		
Sent out by:		
Approved by:		
Review Date:		

AMENDMENT RECORD SHEET

Remove and destroy old pages. Insert new pages as indicated.

Revision Number	Page Number	Date Revised	Description of Revision
	-		

Policy Screening Form

Policy Scoping

Policy Title: Furlough in accordance with the JRF

Brief Description of Policy (please attach copy if available). Please state if it is a new, existing or amended policy.

The decision to furlough staff was taken in line with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (NB, this has not been a council policy but adoption of government wide scheme). A delegated decision was taken, after consultation with party leaders, to Furlough staff at 100% of pay and claim back 80% from the JRS. Members asked that this decision be reviewed in June 2020.

The Job Retention Scheme was introduced in March 2020. We received written notification from Department of Communities on 4 May that the Scheme applied to Local Government and was a means by which council could offset financial pressures resulting from loss of income.

Intended aims/outcomes. What is the policy trying to achieve?

If you can't maintain your current workforce because your operations have been severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19), you can furlough employees and apply for a grant to cover the majority of their wages. For Local Government it applies to staff and casual workers in income earning areas of the business.

Policy Framework

Has the policy been developed in response to statutory requirements, legal advice or on the basis of any other professional advice? Does this affect the discretion available to Council to amend the policy?

The council is implementing furlough in line with government guidance, it is a government scheme.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy? If so, please outline.

All groups can potentially benefit from the policy as it is intended to assist in safeguarding employment.

Who initiated or wrote the policy (if Council decision, please state). Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

Who initiated or wrote policy?	Who is responsible for implementation?
The UK government.	The Council

Are there any factors which might contribute to or detract from the implementation of the policy (e.g. financial, legislative, other)?

Operational requirements and changes in the continually evolving Covid-19 situation and recovery process.

Main stakeholders in relation to the policy

Please list main stakeholders affected by the policy (e.g. staff, service users, other statutory bodies, community or voluntary sector, private sector)

Staff Members and casual workers, councillors, members of the public

Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy? If so, please identify them and how they impact on this policy.

None

Available Evidence

Council should ensure that its screening decisions are informed by relevant data. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Evidence
Religious belief	The council's approach has been proscribed by the UK Coronavirus JRS. Staff affected are in income earning areas of the council, this includes a range of staff across the section 75 categories.
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Men and women generally	
Disability	
Dependants	

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information gathered above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories in relation to this particular policy/decision?

Section 75 category	Needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	N/A
Age	Current government guidance advises those who are over 70 to self-isolate.
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	Current government guidance advises those who have certain health conditions or disabilities to self-isolate.
Dependants	Those who have caring responsibilities either for older people or young children are likely to find it more difficult to undertake full hours of employment.

Screening Questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy for each of the Section 75 categories?		
Category	Policy Impact	Level of impact (Major/minor/none)
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	None	None
Age	Current government guidance advises those who are over 70 to self-isolate.	Positive minor
Marital status	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None
Men and women generally	None	None
Disability	Current government guidance advises those who have certain health conditions or disabilities to self-isolate.	Positive minor
Dependants	Those who have caring responsibilities either for older people or young children are likely to find it more difficult to undertake full hours of employment.	Positive minor

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		The policy applies only where operations have been affected by coronavirus (COVID-19). It is temporary in nature, ending in October 2020.
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level of impact (major/minor/none)
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	None	None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		No
Political opinion		No
Racial group		No

Multiple Identity

Generally speaking, people fall into more than one Section 75 category (for example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; young lesbian, gay and bisexual people). Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant s75 categories concerned.

None identified.

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

Is there an opportunity for the policy to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

None identified.

Is there an opportunity for the policy to encourage participation by disabled people in public life?

Potentially by protecting employment.

Screening Decision

A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY

Please identify reasons for this below

B: MINOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY AS IMPACT CAN BE ELIMINATED OR MITIGATED

Where the impact is likely to be minor, you should consider if the policy can be mitigated or an alternative policy introduced. If so, an EQIA may not be considered necessary. You must indicate the reasons for this decision below, together with details of measures to mitigate the adverse impact or the alternative policy proposed.

The council has decided to top up the furlough payment of 80% to 100%. There may be an impact if a decision is taken to reduce the level of payment from 100% to 80%; however this can be mitigated by staff using annual leave (all staff must aim to take half their annual leave by November.). Staff also have to agree to participate in the scheme, and can therefore refuse to be furloughed. The JRS is a UK government scheme and council is working within these guidelines. The return of operational services as part of recovery means that fewer staff will be furloughed moving forward and the scheme itself is temporary, ending in October 2020.

C: MAJOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA REQUIRED

If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Timetabling and Prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3 with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	

The total rating score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the council in timetabling its EQIAs.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? If yes, please give details.

Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help the authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy. It is recommended that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced to mitigate adverse impact, monitoring be undertaken on a broader basis to identify any impact (positive or adverse).

Further information on monitoring is available in the Equality Commission's guidance on monitoring (www.equalityni.org).

Identify how the impact of the policy is to be monitored

These are temporary measures and will only be in place until October 2020 at the latest. These arrangements will be carefully monitored.

Approval and Authorisation

A copy of the screening form for each policy screened should be signed off by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The screening recommendation should be reported to the relevant Committee/Council when the policy is submitted for approval.

Screened by	Position/Job title	Date
Sharon McNicholl	Director: Performance	22.06.20
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date

Please forward a copy of the completed policy and form to:

mary.hanna@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

who will ensure these are made available on the Council's website.

The above officer is also responsible for issuing reports on a quarterly basis on those policies "screened out for EQIA". This allows stakeholders who disagree with this recommendation to submit their views. In the event of any stakeholder disagreeing with the decision to screen out any policy, the screening exercise will be reviewed.