



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

The **purpose** of an EIA is to give **as much information as possible** about potential equality impacts, to demonstrate we meet our **legal duties** under the Equality Act 2010.

Please read the EIA Guidance [on Hotwire](#) before completing this form.

Once you open the template please save it on your OneDrive or SharePoint site. Do not open the template, fill it in and then click Save as this will override the template on Hotwire.

### 1. What is the name of the policy, project, decision or activity?

PN448 Working with Choice; Flexible Working Options policy

Overall Equality Impact of this policy, project, decision or activity (*see instructions at end of EIA to complete*):

High		Medium		Low	x
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### 2. Contact details

Name of EIA author	Milo Bodrozic
Department and Team	People Services/Wellbeing Team
Date of EIA	26 August 2021

### 3. Aim and Purpose

What is the aim and purpose of the policy, project, decision or activity?	To update LFB's existing policy on flexible working (PN448) to reflect a new way of working that will allow most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff to have a choice of their work location dependent on their work and personal needs
Who is affected by this work (all staff, specific department, wider communities?)	All staff



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**4. Equality considerations:** the EIA must be based on evidence and information.

What consultation has taken place to support you to predict the equality impacts of this work?

Trade unions, ESGs, other internal departmental stakeholders (specifically IT, Health and Safety, Central Operations, Inclusion, Finance and Property) and Heads of Service/Directors. External information sources, in particular the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

## 5. Assessing Equality Impacts

**Use this section to record the impact this policy, project, decision or activity might have on people who have characteristics which are protected by the Equality Act.**

Protected Characteristic	Impact: positive, neutral or adverse	Reason for the impact	What information have you used to come to this conclusion?
<b>Age</b> (younger, older or particular age group)	<b>Neutral</b>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers.</p> <p>Irrespective of age there is a potential for staff to be affected by this new way of working because of a variety of personal/individual circumstances including, but not limited to, staff living on their own, still living with parents and/or having associated caring responsibilities, sharing accommodation with friends/other people, having domestic difficulties with a partner/children/other extended family members, or specific age related medical issues, all of which may not necessarily be conducive to creating/maintaining an effective working environment/pattern and ensuring personal wellbeing needs are met. Indirectly staff may also be affected even if they choose to work from a Brigade location on a more regular basis as other colleagues may prefer to work from home and/or another location thereby still creating a "difference" to the work/team dynamic. Conversely, with</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>Surveys conducted by the CIPD and the CMI through the course of late 2020 and early to mid-2021 found similar results.</p>

		<p>staff having a choice of work location, particularly the working from home option, will mean that there is a high probability that individuals will be better able to manage their work and home life balance. This has already been evidenced via a staff survey undertaken by LFB in 2020. The updated policy is also clear that agreement as to the most appropriate working pattern for individuals is to be decided by discussion with line managers. Line managers will need to be aware of the wider team/department needs/functioning and, importantly, the individual wellbeing needs of their staff that will undoubtedly result in regular occasions when staff will meet to ensure the team/department dynamic is maintained. In any event, giving staff the choice as to their preferred work location is likely to result in staff feeling more satisfied/positive about LFB working conditions that should be reflected in longer term staff wellbeing/pulse surveys. Overall an impact rating of neutral has been given to acknowledge potential age affects, offset by the fact that staff ultimately have a choice of work location and so should be in the best placed position to make a decision that best benefits themselves and the team as a whole.</p>	<p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b> (physical, sensory, mental health, learning disability, long term illness, hidden)</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they work from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. There is a potential for staff who present with a mental health disability, in particular, to be affected by this new way of working, although this will be very much dependent upon individual circumstances and what medical/other interventions are in being to support a specific condition</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was</p>

		<p>that might be affected by a change in work circumstances/practices. Staff presenting with other disabilities will now have better optioning as to how they manage their conditions i.e. determining that less travel and more working from home will better suit their condition. The updated policy also outlines that in cases where reasonable adjustments are required, specifically related to a disability and/or medical condition, it will be possible for staff to have the option of extended times for working at home without a necessity to visit a Brigade location. In any event a disability and the affects it has on a person is very individual, so the individual themselves is best placed to determine, via "choice" in the updated policy, what will best suit their circumstances. The updated policy is also underpinned by a Workspace Equipment Allowance that can be accessed by completing a DSE assessment which results in staff being able to purchase items of office equipment for their home to ensure their environment is safe and appropriate for home working. Staff presenting with a disability will not be limited to the £150 maximum. The updated policy also ensures that all staff who have an option to work away from a Brigade location will be provided with the necessary IT to be able to undertake their roles effectively.</p> <p>Having a working for choice policy will also potentially allow more individuals who have a disability to apply to work for the LFB.</p>	<p>ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>Surveys conducted by the CIPD and the CMI through the course of late 2020 and early to mid-2021 found similar results. Similar surveys conducted by CIPD and the Institute of Management through the course of late 2020 and early to mid 2021 found similar results.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place with the ESG Disability Working Group who are supportive of the updated policy and have offered their comments on the policy that have been accordingly incorporated.</p> <p>Trade Unions have been petitioning the government to ensure that staff with disabilities are able to continue to work from home post the Covid 19 pandemic. UNISON says it has evidence (August 2020) that suggests disabled staff have taken less time off for sickness as a result of being able to work from home. No data is presently available in LFB to support this directly, but overall, there was a decrease in LFB sickness absence during the first pandemic lockdown.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of</p>
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			2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b> (someone proposing to/undergoing/ undergone a transition from one gender to another)</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. Having such a choice has the potential to have a positive impact on staff that maybe transitioning from one gender to another. It will allow any planned medical interventions to be better supported by individuals not necessarily having to be placed sick, with the option of working from home available, subject to them being able and fit to discharge their role responsibilities. There is also the option of any individual transitioning to be able to manage how and when they "come out" to their colleagues so that they are both physically and mentally in the best place possible. Having choice as to work location will also mean that staff transitioning will be better able to manage any medical/hospital/Doctor appointments around their working day.</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<p><b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b> (married as well as same-sex couples)</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. For staff who are married/in a civil partnership having the option to choose where to work from, either at a Brigade</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to</p>

		<p>location or home, can have both a positive, and potentially negative impact, dependent upon an individual's own domestic/relationship circumstances. If the relationship is positive the option of working from home, so seeing more of their partner/children and/or not being tired out from commuting, could contribute to making their domestic arrangements/relationship stronger. Conversely, having a domestic situation that is "strained" and/or having a relationship that is not positive could result in any such difficulties being exposed to a greater degree and thereby affecting personal wellbeing and work productivity. Notwithstanding, having a choice of work location means that staff are better able to manage such circumstances based on individual preference/need. In light of both positive and negative circumstances possibly arising a neutral rating has been given to this characteristic.</p>	<p>determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b></p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. Having such a choice has the potential to have a positive impact on staff that are pregnant. It will allow an individual to better manage their pregnancy in terms of pre-natal appointments and/or any adverse effects of being pregnant including, but not limited to, morning sickness, feeling tired/generally uncomfortable and musculoskeletal issues, without the need to potentially have to take days as sickness owing to such effects. With the wider staff population also having the option not to be in an office environment on a regular basis is also likely to result in women who are on maternity leave feeling</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p>

		less like they are "missing out" on the activities in the wider workplace.	In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.
<b>Race</b> (including nationality, colour, national and/or ethnic origins)	<b>Neutral</b>	In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. All eligible staff are able to have access to this choice-based way of working irrespective of race. Any factors limiting a person's choice will be based on individual circumstances as it has been proven throughout the course of the Coronavirus pandemic that staff are able to work effectively and efficiently away from Brigade locations subject to the provision of the necessary equipment being in place. As eligible staff now have the option of a choice based approach to work this is considered to be having a positive impact irrespective of a person's race.	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief</b> (people of any religion, or no religion, or people who follow a particular belief (not political))	<b>Neutral</b>	In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work	LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance



		<p>needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. All eligible staff are able to have access to this choice-based way of working irrespective of their religion of beliefs. Any factors limiting a person's choice will be based on individual circumstances as it has been proven throughout the course of the Coronavirus pandemic that staff are able to work effectively and efficiently away from Brigade locations subject to the provision of the necessary equipment being in place. As eligible staff now have the option of a choice based approach to work this is considered to be having a positive impact irrespective of a person's race and may also be beneficial to staff who, because of their religion, have to fast and/or observe prayer which may potentially be easier to manage given the choice based way of working.</p>	<p>and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<p><b>Sex</b> (men and women)</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they from on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. All eligible staff are able to have access to this choice-based way of working irrespective of their sex. Any factors limiting a person's choice will be based on individual circumstances as it has been proven throughout the course of the Coronavirus pandemic that staff are able to work effectively and efficiently away from Brigade locations subject to the provision of the necessary equipment being in place. As eligible staff now have the</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to</p>

		<p>option of a choice based approach to work this is considered to be having a positive impact irrespective of a person's sex and may also be beneficial to staff who have caring/childcare responsibilities and/or other specific domestic arrangements which may potentially be easier to manage given the choice based way of working.</p> <p>An additional positive to arise will be related to medical conditions that affect the different sexes as they get older, in particular men who have a history of prostate problems and women who have to manage the symptoms of the menopause. Having choice based working could potentially allow such matters to be managed to a better degree within a person's own environment.</p>	<p>achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.</p>
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b> (straight, bi, gay and lesbian people)</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p>In line with the criteria detailed in the updated policy most FRS staff and non-fire station based operational staff will have a "choice" as to what location they work on a daily basis. Any such decision will be based on work needs/commitment and personal wellbeing considerations in discussion with line managers. All eligible staff are able to have access to this choice-based way of working irrespective of their sexual orientation. Any factors limiting a person's choice will be based on individual circumstances as it has been proven throughout the course of the Coronavirus pandemic that staff are able to work effectively and efficiently away from Brigade locations subject to the provision of the necessary equipment being in place. As eligible staff now have the option of a choice based approach to work this is considered to be having a positive impact irrespective of a person's sexual orientation and may also be beneficial to staff who have caring/childcare responsibilities and/or other specific domestic</p>	<p>LFB's staff survey of April 2020 on home working found that 83% of staff found home working was allowing them to achieve a better work life balance and 80% of staff said they were more productive as a result.</p> <p>Of the Heads of Service who participated (x10) in an updated survey conducted in April 2021 to determine the preparedness of the organisation for a new way of working, including home working, 77% thought believed that the organisation was ready for such a change, 90% believed that staff were more productive/effective working from home and 100% believed that staff were able to achieve a better work life balance if given the choice of work location.</p> <p>In addition to the proposed People Survey scheduled for release toward the end of 2021 a</p>

		arrangements which may potentially be easier to manage given the choice based way of working.	further specific survey related to the impacts of the policy will be commissioned toward the end of 2022. The accrued data will allow officers to revisit the Impact categorisation.
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<b>6. Impacts outside the Equality Act 2010</b>	
<b>What other groups might be affected by this policy, project, decision or activity?</b>	
Consider the impact on: carers, parents, non-binary people, people with learning difficulties, neurodiverse people, people with dyslexia, autism, care leavers, ex-offenders, people living in areas of disadvantage, homeless people, people on low income / in poverty.	
<p>LFB's updated flexible working policy (PN448) has the potential, because of its choice based way of working, of advantageously providing an additional "support" to staff working for LFB, not least as mentioned in the above characteristics section, but also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to those people on low income who will not have the additional cost of commuting, although there will be additional costs associated with home "bills" e.g. gas/electricity etc</li> <li>• for family members/children who will have better "access" to their family networks</li> <li>• allowing staff to become more involved in supporting their local communities</li> <li>• allowing staff time to focus on their own wellbeing needs, both physical and mental, by ensuring their working days are planned to be advantageous for both home and work environments</li> </ul> <p>Negative impact could arise for those staff that are not eligible to have a choice-based way of working because of their role responsibilities requiring that they be at a Brigade location. In such instance's managers should work with the staff affected to determine how best to manage the situation i.e. developing a rota where staff are able, on occasions, to undertake other duties not requiring them to be at Brigade locations.</p>	

<b>7. Legal duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)</b>	
How does this work help LFB to:	
<b>Eliminate discrimination?</b>	Allows all eligible staff to have access to a choice-based way of working
<b>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups?</b>	Allows all eligible staff to choose their preferred work location that will be of particular support to staff who present with either mental, physical or workplace challenges

<b>Foster good relations between different groups?</b>	By using Brigade work locations more as a focal point so that staff can network, collaborate and engage on a face to face basis, as opposed to "sitting in front of a computer" not talking to colleagues, should create and reinforce work and personal (social) relationships.
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<b>8. Mitigating and justifying impacts</b>		
Where an <b>adverse</b> impact has been identified, what steps are being taken to <b>mitigate</b> it? If you're unable to mitigate it, is it <b>justified</b> ?		
<b>Characteristic with potential adverse impact (e.g. age, disability)</b>	<b>Action being taken to mitigate or justify</b>	<b>Lead person responsible for action</b>
Not applicable		

### Now complete the RAG rating at the top of page 1:

**High:** as a result of this EIA there is evidence of significant adverse impact. This activity should be stopped until further work is done to mitigate the impact.

**Medium:** as a result of this EIA there is potential adverse impact against one or more groups. The risk of impact may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions identified in box 8 above.

**Low:** as a result of this EIA there are no adverse impacts predicted. No further actions are recommended at this stage.

### Document Control

Signed (lead for EIA / action plan)	Milo Bodrozic	Date	30 September 2021
Sign off by Inclusion Team	Shilla Patel	Date	30 September 2021
Stored by			



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Links			
External publication	Are you happy for this EIA to be published externally?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> If No state why: