

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00468 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Housing & Communities	Lead Officer Name:	Crawford Bell
		Team:	Communities
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Proposal:	Newlands Community Hall - SPR	Reference No:	468

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	Yes	No	No	Yes
Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	Yes	No	No
Other, please specify:				

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):	
01/04/2023	Considering closure or alternative delivery model of this community building.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:		Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:	Financial savings detailed in the report; Strategic Property Review Update, Falkirk Council, 31st January 2024
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:	
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	
	Expected Annual Income Total:	
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	
	End Date (if any):	

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

Monthly usage sample - Hall Management Committee did not provide this information. The Volume and nature of comments note a busy activity schedule and that this building has a large hall (100+) and a stage.

Slimming World, Games, weekend private parties, baby activities (business).

Of 28 survey respondents, 14 expressed they have a Protected Characteristic that disadvantaged them.

B - Qualitative Evidence This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Comments from those who identify as having a Protected Characteristic:

This venue is where I run my Slimming World groups, supporting members of the local community to live healthier and more active lifestyles and positively impacting the health of Grangemouth and surrounding areas. To close this venue would not only have a significant impact on my business and income, but also leave over 100 members a week (and growing) without the support of our group. There aren't any alternative venues to use and it is a necessary lifeline for so many people.

This hall provides me with my Slimming World class which is invaluable both to me and the approx other 100 users for health and well-being

His hall is used for over 100 people in the community on Saturday mornings. It's used to help people lose weight and benefit health wise. I couldn't go further away due to mobility issues. I have lost three stones by using this. I couldn't do it on my own, I would probably put weight back on. As well as losing weight I have met lots of new friends, please don't close this facility. I've been using these facilities for more than fifty years.

My health has greatly improved by attending group in this facility, physically and mentally. My disability impairs me less since joining and the group is essential for helping me maintain the healthy lifestyle I need to maintain this benefit. There are so few suitable venues already that this will be a major loss if the venue closes. Another solution needs to be found or you risk reducing quality of life and increasing health and disability issues in the community.

Can't afford to travel to further away venues and it's too much strain on my health

I benefit greatly from attending a Slimming World group on a Saturday morning. Losing weight has improves my mental and physical health. It has enabled me to

meet new friends too. I also attend a Mind Body and Soul yoga group on a Wednesday evening. This again, has improved my mental and physical health and helped reduce age related joint problems. I have also met new friends through this.

I use this facility every week.

Attend a slimming world group, this has helped me lose weight, improve my health (physical and mental).

This is where my weekly group meets. The closure would adversely affect my mental and physical health.

This hall runs a Slimming World class on a Saturday morning for which there are more than 100 people attending. You close this down and where would we go?! There's nowhere left to hold group meeting. This would have a detrimental effect on so many people's diet, health and we'll being. Not to mention mental health state. This is my and many other people's only connection to the outside world. Please reconsider.

I attend this centre every Saturday morning and it would have a detrimental impact on my health if it closed.

Between my husband and I we attend 3 groups in this hall, and they have been life changing for us.

Don't close it. This venue is perfect for both activities. The parking is good. It feels safe, even at night-time and there are toilet and kitchen facilities. If you close it, you would have to offer the same facilities elsewhere.

Ensure suitable alternative venue is available.

Don't close it!

None. This hall is very well used and it makes no sense to close it.

Comments from those who do not identify as having a Protected Characteristic but have made comments on impact of closure on those who do:

It's beneficial for my son but also for me as it lets me meet other mum's for advice and support.

If this venue was to close it would have a substantial effect on our family income. We have a number of customers who greatly benefit from the class to help manage their physical and mental health.

Find the yoga classes help with the stress of working full time and being my mum's carer.

What venue can the council offer which has the capacity for over 100 people, that is easily accessible and in a central location?

Best Judgement:

Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?

No

Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?

What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	Yes / No
If NO, please state why.	

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.	28 respondents in relation to Newlands Hall identifying as users and local affected residents. A series of public events were held in libraries and schools across Falkirk during January 2023 and one online event. While all events were open to anyone from any area, there was an event held locally to the Newlands Hall in Grangemouth Library January 16th 2023. No contact or response has been received from centre Management Committee to discuss lease or CAT	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.		
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	Yes	28 respondents for this building. At least half of the comments relating to slimming world.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Grangemouth Library January 16th 2023.
Other: please specify	We recently engaged with the Treasurer of this Hall Committee in February. She advised the group would be interested in an asset transfer but there is significant capacity building to be done with this committee. They did not provide the usage information as requested and followed up on.	
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	Yes	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes	
Is further engagement recommended?	Yes	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age			✓	A wide age range of users, from elderly to early years have responded as beneficiaries.
Disability			✓	The impact of closure and not attending classes would increase stress, reduce mental and physical wellbeing. Weight loss has benefited one respondent managing a disability.
Sex			✓	Noted that this hall is seen as a safe space/venue.
Ethnicity				
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Transgender				
Pregnancy / Maternity			✓	Current babies group which would impact on expectant mothers.
Marriage / Civil Partnership				
Poverty			✓	Comments noted it is unaffordable to travel elsewhere.
Care Experienced				
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.			✓	Feedback suggests a range of vulnerable people who use this hall for activities, including carers and those with other health issues.
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)				

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	Inclusive consultation and engagement to include protected characteristics groups and individuals
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Inclusive consultation and engagement to include protected characteristics groups and individuals
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	Inclusive consultation and engagement to consider impact of the closure of this facility

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	Yes	Some businesses operate from this venue with at least two commenting on the negative impact on their business.
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	No	
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes
Closure would have an impact on disability	Disabled Persons	Prioritise these groups if alternative location is required. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer	Place Services	01/04/2024	Council Plan: - Supporting stronger and healthier communities - Supporting a thriving economy and green transition Falkirk Plan: - Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities
Low income households may be affected if required to travel elsewhere.	Low income Households	Consider forms of low cost transport if alternative location is required. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer	Place Services	01/04/2024	Council Plan: - Supporting stronger and healthier communities - Supporting a thriving economy and green transition Falkirk Plan: - Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities Theme 2: Poverty

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

Are actions being reported to Members?

Yes

If yes when and how ?

Strategic Property Review reported to Members in March 2023, and an updated report to Members in 2024.

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	No	
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	Yes	Mitigations identified.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Crawford Bell</i>	Date:	22/01/2024
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SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:	Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	There is some evidence that closure would impact on a wide range of groups and people, specifically disability. However this should have been supplemented with data from the management committee on usage of the hall - this makes a proper assessment difficult	
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA		
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA		

Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?	Yes	If YES, please describe: There is some evidence that shows there is an impact on disability. However the lack of data from management committee makes a full assessment difficult. The proposed mitigation of a Community Asset Transfer or alternate delivery model would need this data to continue to assess and monitor the impact of this on the community
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LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes	The busy schedule indicates this is a well used facility which is used regularly by diverse communities. The proposed mitigation of a Community Asset Transfer or alternate delivery model would need further data to continue to assess and monitor the impact of this on the community.
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes / No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:		
Signature:	<i>Karen Algie</i>	Date: 24/01/2024