

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00013 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Policy, Technology & Improvement	Lead Officer Name:	Caroline Binnie
		Team:	Communications and Participation
		Tel:	07803898007
		Email:	caroline.binnie@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	Stop publishing Falkirk Council News - £20k	Reference No:	CHS11

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):	
28/11/2018	This proposal is to stop printing and distributing Falkirk Council News. Currently two editions are produced per annum at a cost of £10k per issue so this would save £20k in 2019/20.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	£20 k per annum	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:	£20 k per annum	N/A
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:	none	N/A
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	N/A	N/A
	Expected Annual Income Total:	N/A	N/A
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	31/03/2019	
	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.

Falkirk Council News is distributed twice a year to c70,000 households in the Council area. Some of these households will contain people with protected characteristics.

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

People will stop receiving regular printed information distributed directly to them at home. The Council will reduce printed newspaper and will use digital tools, including social media, to distribute information.

Best Judgement:

Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
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<p>Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?</p>	<p>Judgement based on practice in other Councils, very few of whom produce newspapers, changes in how people want to get information, evidenced by the worldwide decline of printed newspapers, the growth of digital channels and increasing use of social media.</p> <p>While we have not specifically consulted 70,000 households about stopping Falkirk Council News, we have local evidence from various surveys that people are moving away from print and their expectations are now for real-time information and information that's accessible 24/7.</p> <p>With regard to wider evidence, communications best practice for all organisations has changed significantly over recent years, with widespread use of social and digital channels and huge changes in how people consume information, declining newspaper sales etc. This is recognised and embraced by professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Public Relations. A printed newspaper sent out twice a year is no longer fit-for-purpose as a communications vehicle and the recommendation would be to stop producing it even if it wasn't a budget saving.</p>
<p>What gaps in data / information were identified?</p>	
<p>Is further research necessary?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If NO, please state why.</p>	<p>Historically the newspaper was the Council's primary channel for communicating with the public. This is no longer the case. The newspaper format is now outmoded as the public now expect to receive real time information through a variety of channels and to participate in two-way communication with the Council.</p>

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?	No	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.		
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.	Engagement was carried out with the Citizens Panel via a survey. This was not specifically aimed at those with protected characteristics.	
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	Yes	https://say.falkirk.gov.uk/corporate-housing-services/communications-and-participation-survey-2018/
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

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, public protection etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age				Unknown - some older people may be more likely to be reliant on printed information and less likely to access online information.
Disability				Unknown
Sex				Unknown
Ethnicity				Unknown - however the newspaper is not currently translated to other languages
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				Unknown
Sexual Orientation				Unknown
Transgender				Unknown
Pregnancy / Maternity				Unknown
Marriage / Civil Partnership				Unknown
Poverty				Unknown
Other, health, community justice, public protection etc.				Unknown.
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)	The main consequence of stopping Falkirk Council News will be that people may receive less information about the Council through printed material but this will be replaced by information distributed through a range of different channels. The newspaper is sent to all households in the area so withdrawal will not disproportionately affect any one group.			

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):	Information will be provided to the community using other channels
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Information will be provided to the community using other channels
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	Information will be promoted to the community using other channels

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	No	
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
Less Council information available to the public via print. More comprehensive and up-to-date information will be available via other channels.	This may affect a number of older people who still get information via print.	Ensure that information specifically targeted at older people is produced in a variety of formats.	Caroline Binnie	31/03/2020	

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?	No
If yes when and how ?	

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	Yes	This proposal has no specific impact on groups with protected characteristics. In terms of its broader impact, information will be issued using different, more modern channels including digital and via social media.
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	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Caroline Binnie</i>	Date:	14/12/2018
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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	This does not have an adverse impact on any of protected characteristic groups.	
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 / No	If YES, please describe:

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 / No	
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:		
Signature:	<i>Stuart Ritchie</i>	Date: 24/01/2019