

# Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00420 (Version 1)

## SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

|                                |   |                           |                              |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Service &amp; Division:</b> | Corporate & Housing Services<br>Housing & Communities | <b>Lead Officer Name:</b> | Crawford Bell                |
|                                |   | <b>Team:</b>              | Communities                  |
|                                |   | <b>Tel:</b>               | +447483919745                |
|                                |   | <b>Email:</b>             | crawford.bell@falkirk.gov.uk |
| <b>Proposal:</b>               | Bonnybridge Community Education Centre - SPR          | <b>Reference No:</b>      |                              |

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

| <b>Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):</b> |   |
|--|---|
| 01/04/2023   | Considering closure or alternative delivery model of this community building. |
| 22/01/2024   | Ongoing support to explore a Community Asset Transfer throughout 2023         |
|  |   |
|  |   |
|  |   |

## 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 - 1184 users in 4 week sample.

Community: Baby and Toddler Group, cab Advice appointment, Basketball Practice, Carpet Bowling, BCEA Business, Out of school care, Badminton, Model Flying planes, Football, Netball, Computer class/IT Skills/CV's etc, 1:1 addition counselling, Walking Football, 5 a-side Football, Gala Association, First 4 Kids, Thursday Club, Greenhill Historical Society, Tartan Army.

Private Sector: Taekwon-Do, Judo training/coaching, Dance Practice, L Md School of Dance, Brig Athletic.

Public Sector: NHS Blood Transfusion, Councillor surgery, Dundas Resource Centre

38 of 90 survey respondents, 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:**

I believe the community benefits by keeping the centre

If this building was to be closed it would have a detrimental impact on both young and elderly villagers.. who meet in the building on a daily basis.

The Greenhill Historical Society (GHS) has been working for nearly 15 years to protect, display and educate residents about the area's heritage. GHS started in the community flat in Greenhill which closed, we then moved to Bonnybridge Library which became unavailable due to policy changes on charges for use, so we moved into Bonnybridge Community Education Unit (BCEU) - we would rather not have to move again!

as a member of the local community who attends groups and a member of a group who uses the building by closing it you would be increasing the barriers to inclusion and accessibility in an area which is considered to be in a low SIMD (1&2I)) this goes against national guidance.

Bonnybridge YFC cater to children of all ages in the local community who just want to play football. The facilities in the town are already an absolute disgrace so to close this last beacon of hope for our children would be an affront.

"As a coach wishing Bonnybridge youth football club the use of the facilities at the Bonnybridge community centre are paramount to our community togetherness and community spirit. Not only do these facilities allow us to help, teach, train our young football players across age groups ranging from 6 years old up to adults.

Closure of the building would impact on children's opportunities and activities.

Been to lots of events and went there for support.

We deal with additional support needs.

We have recently started a Walking Football Group. Obviously we are all over 60, Some 70,s. Open to all. We get exercise, meet others, so mentally good. We are getting fitter so less of a burden on the N H S We ENJOY IT.

We are a family on low income. Our son uses this facility at least twice a week for football. Without it we couldn't afford to continue allowing our child to play football.

We use the facility for football training and social activities as a group and there is nowhere locally accessible for the local children that we could accommodate them.

We have nowhere to hold our group if the centre closes. Our centre is an absolute staple of the community and if it were to close we have parents in our group that don't drive and wouldn't be able to attend the nearest hall.

if not available will have to travel to another area by public transport.

My children used to use this facility for taewondo which I believe is still run here. The craft and reading groups need this common area to meet regulations.

The community centre is very much needed in our community if this closes it will affect our community greatly.

"Yes I use it for the mother and toddler group.

There are a lot of clubs for young people in the community centre, if this were to close children would miss out on the opportunity to participate in clubs and the gala day. Some parents are unable to travel further with their children and this would be devastating for young people in Bonnybridge.

My child attends a youth organisation. Which if the building closes the organiser would not be able to run so where else can provide the group with the facilities and space that they have.

You're taking away activities from children.

The community centre is the location for many of the extra curricular activities my children take part in, along with many other children in the local community. By closing the centre, opportunities are taken away from children and young people which cannot be easily replaced which is unfair and detrimental to their wellbeing.

"I feel I am disproportionately affected by the proposals for the followings reasons,

The community relies heavily on this centre for a large variety of activities services and business.

Myself, my family and the wider community will be disproportionately affected by the closure of Bonnybridge Community and Education Centre.

"I have lived in the Falkirk area for over fifty years, and although I am retired, [pay rent and Council tax locally] ..... So I feel these proposals are making Falkirk Council Area a less attractive location to stay as I am not getting value for money. I can tell by the list of proposed closures that streamlining is much needed, so from my perspective, key buildings should be retained and promoted better. Bonnybridge Community Education Centre is a fantastic facility which has had a lot of money spent on it in recent years. Have studies been conducted to assess its current use v's capacity? I doubt it. To eliminate the disproportionate feelings I have, this facility should be retained and its potential realised. For example it has a fantastic sound proofed music studio. This is not advertised or widely known, and any up and coming bands in the Falkirk Council area are clearly not aware of it as it sees little use. Advertisement and Promotion take work and dedication, locking the doors doesn't.

My Organisation (Bonnybridge & District Model Railway Club) contributes to the Bonnybridge area as we have in the past held annual exhibitions within the Bonnybridge Community Education Centre which bring people from all over Scotland and some from further afield to the area. We donate to local organisations such as the Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch, Food Banks, Strathcarron Hospice etc. annually. This will all stop if we lose our premises within Bonnybridge Community Education Centre

My club is mostly made up of of persons who are pensioners. It is a hobby they enjoy very much and brings them many benefits including socialising, activities that keep them mentally sharp and increased mental health. Some stay themselves due to bereavement, so the loss of our club will put these people on a steady slide into loneliness and poor mental health. This in turn puts a greater burden on the already stretched NHS."

My son attends an after school club at the community centre. He has additional support needs. If he has no after school provision then I might need to give up my work

Also use it to attend asn group on a Monday morning.

For someone like me, a single mum who doesn't have much in the way of disposable income and doesn't drive, the community centre in Bonnybridge has been somewhat of a lifesaver for me. My 2 year old son and i have been attending the baby & toddler group for a year now and quite honestly it has helped integrate us into the community and make friends with people in the area who we otherwise wouldn't have met. We only moved to Bonnybridge just over a year ago so this has been really impactful on our lives as we didn't know anyone. It would be a shame to see such an important building close.

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

The centre on a personal note houses lots of activities for the community for kids and adults, taking this away from the community genuinely would be catastrophic for wellbeing both physically and mentally for so so many.

On another note, Bonnybridge is a large town now with no other facilities like it for kids and adults to go for such clubs etc that the centre offers.

This facility especially the Astro turf which my grandsons team use 3 times a week. 26 boys ages 7 is just 1 team using it. It's used by all ages group. The facility is key in Bonnybridge for our kids as there is nothing else like it. It supports the children's health and well-being and had improved their fitness and self-esteem. There is also an older persons walking football team so thus facility is used from age 4 right up to OAP's. Closing this facility would be detrimental to the area and would seriously upset so many people using thus facility. A time where things are very tricky for many families this is one area of pleasure and escape for the people using it. Closing this thus would be devastating for our community and morally wrong.

Rely on After School Club run at Bonnybridge community centre - would be unable to work without it

Closing this centre will have a negative impact on my community if this were to close. This centre is used to bring a community together both young and old, from toddler groups were both children and parents/carers use this space for support social growth and mental wellbeing. To being used as a space for NHS patients who volunteer to donate blood.

Taking away the football pitch at the community centre is the worse decision. Why do you want obese children with mental health issues?

| <b>Best Judgement:</b>  |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?</b> | No       |
| <b>Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?</b>      |          |
| <b>What gaps in data / information were identified?</b>                 |          |
| <b>Is further research necessary?</b>                                   | Yes / No |
| <b>If NO, please state why.</b>   |          |

**SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**

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

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?</b> | Yes   |  |
| <b>If YES, please state who was engagement with.</b>  | 90 Respondents in relation to Bonnybridge Community Centre identifying as users and local affected residents.<br><br>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 in Bonnybridge Library January 11th 2023.<br><br>Officers attended an additional event organised by the Community on the 31st of January 2023.<br><br>Ongoing support to explore a CAT throughout 2023 |  |
| <b>If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.</b>   |   |  |
| <b>How was the engagement carried out?</b>  | <b>What were the results from the engagement? Please list...</b>  |  |
| Focus Group   | No  |  |
| Survey  | Yes   | 90 respondents in relation to this building. |
| Display / Exhibitions   | No  |  |
| User Panels   | No  |  |
| Public Event  | Yes   | Bonnybridge Library January 11th 2023.       |
| Other: please specify   |   |  |
| <b>Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?</b>  | Yes   |  |
| <b>Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?</b>  | Yes   |  |
| <b>Is further engagement recommended?</b>   | 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.  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>Age</b>                            |                |                 | ✓               | <p>Older persons and young people would be impacted by the loss of space for activities should this building close.</p> <p>The impact on older people cited as: loss of bereavement support, loneliness and lack of inclusion, reduction in physical and mental health.</p> <p>The impact on children and young people cited as: obesity, a reduction in opportunity and community participation, lack of inclusion, possible anti-social behaviour, reduction in physical and mental health, lack of accessible buildings and services in the area , reduction in support and care services for young people, their parents and carers.</p> |
| <b>Disability</b>                     |                |                 | ✓               | <p>Closing this building would reduce access to services for parents of disabled children. there is an additional support needs group on Monday and the afterschool club includes children with disability. the impact of not having these could be increased stress for carers and reduced mental health. The impact on disabled children was not described by respondents. There is also addiction support offered in this venue. No impact information was provided on this service.</p>  |
| <b>Sex</b>                            |                |                 | ✓               | <p>Removing after-school child-care disproportionately impacts on women</p>  |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                      |                |                 |                 |  |
| <b>Religion / Belief / non-Belief</b> |                |                 |                 |  |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b>             |                |                 |                 |  |
| <b>Transgender</b>                    |                |                 |                 |  |
| <b>Pregnancy / Maternity</b>          |                |                 |                 |  |



**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:**

|  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |   | isolation and loneliness, lack of affordable services or activities for low income households.  |
| <b>Poverty</b>   |  |  | ✓ | The closure of this building would impact on low income households in the area. The low cost or free activities ending, some families could not afford to send children elsewhere. the impact would be a reduction in locally accessible, low cost, activities for children. the afterschool care was frequently cited by respondents as enabling them to work and its closure would therefore reduce their household incomes. For those that cannot drive to other venues, the local access is valued. |
| <b>Care Experienced</b>  |  |  |   |   |
| <b>Other, health, community justice, carers etc.</b>           |  |  |   |   |
| <b>Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)</b> |  |  |   |   |

|  | <b>Evidence of Due Regard</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):</b> | Inclusive consultation and engagement to include protected characteristics groups and individuals  |
| <b>Advance Equality of Opportunity:</b>  | Childcare is provided in this facility closure could lead to women having reduced opportunities for work if there is not suitable alternative provision. |
| <b>Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):</b>                     | Closure of this facility would impact on the opportunities for a wide range of groups to come together in an informal community setting.                 |

## 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.   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Business</b>  | Yes   | Some businesses operate from this building.   |
| <b>Councils</b>  | Yes   | A few Council services and a Councillor's surgery operate from this building.   |
| <b>Education Sector</b>  | No  |   |
| <b>Fire</b>  | No  |   |
| <b>NHS</b>   | Yes   | 'Blood transfusion' in this building.   |
| <b>Integration Joint Board</b>   | No  |   |
| <b>Police</b>  | No  |   |
| <b>Third Sector</b>  | Yes   | Possible positive impact -Alternative delivery model would create a third sector social enterprise business model for this building with the potential to grow the third sector in many ways, employment, size, income, social benefits, community leadership role. |
| <b>Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.</b>                 | <p>We have a long term agreement with Scouting Scotland in relation to Scout's use of this building.</p> <p>There is an adjacent astroturf pitch that is also managed through this building: ' Unsure as to our exact position. As Bonnybridge Sports Association we currently have a lease agreement with Falkirk Council to manage and run the outdoor Astroturf facility. Currently we do this with the support of Bonnybridge Community Education Centre staff and should the centre close, we are unsure of our position going forward.'</p> |   |

## 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   |
|--|---|--|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Persons of all ages would be impacted by the closure of this building.                                 | Older People<br>Younger People<br>Adults              | Prioritise the most vulnerable in these groups if alternative location is required.<br><br>Alternative Delivery Model<br>–Community Asset Transfer | Place Services | 01/04/2024                 | Council Plan:<br>- Supporting stronger and healthier communities<br>- Supporting a thriving economy and green transition<br><br>Falkirk Plan:<br>- Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities |
| Disabled persons attending services in the building would be impacted by its closure. So would carers. | Disabled Children<br>Carers<br>Substance Use recovery | Prioritise the most vulnerable in these groups if alternative location is required.<br><br>Alternative Delivery Model<br>–Community Asset Transfer | Place Services | 01/04/2024                 | Council Plan:<br>- Supporting stronger and healthier communities<br>- Supporting a thriving economy and green transition<br><br>Falkirk Plan:<br>- Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities |

| Identified Impact  | To Who                | Action(s)   | Lead Officer   | Evaluation and Review Date | Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes  |
|--|-----------------------|---|----------------|----------------------------|--|
| Single parents would be impacted by closure of this building.        | Single Parents        | <p>Prioritise the most vulnerable in these groups if alternative location is required and consider impact of loss of afterschool childcare on ability to earn income.</p> <p>Alternative Delivery Model<br/>–Community Asset Transfer</p>                     | Place Services | 01/04/2024                 | <p>Council Plan:<br/>- Supporting stronger and healthier communities<br/>- Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p> <p>Falkirk Plan:<br/>- Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities<br/>- Theme 2: Poverty</p> |
| Low income households would be affected by closure of this building. | Low income households | <p>Prioritise the most vulnerable in this group if alternative location is required and consider cost of transport and impact of losing afterschool childcare on ability to earn income.</p> <p>Alternative Delivery Model –<br/>Community Asset Transfer</p> | Place Services | 01/04/2024                 | <p>Council Plan:<br/>- Supporting stronger and healthier communities<br/>- Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p> <p>Falkirk Plan:<br/>- Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities<br/>-Theme 2: Poverty</p>  |
| Women  | women                 | <p>Prioritise the most vulnerable in this group if alternative location is required and consider cost of transport and impact of losing afterschool childcare on ability to earn income.</p> <p>Alternative Delivery Model –<br/>Community Asset Transfer</p> | Place Services | 01/04/2024                 | <p>Council Plan:<br/>- Supporting stronger and healthier communities<br/>- Supporting a thriving economy and green transition</p> <p>Falkirk Plan:<br/>- Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities<br/>-Theme 2: Poverty</p>  |
|  |                       |   |                |                            |  |

**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 |
|------------|----------------------|-------|------------|

**SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY**

|                                    |  |     |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|
| <b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:</b> | <b>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?</b> | Yes |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>ASSESSMENT FINDINGS</b>   | It is clear a wide range of groups use this facility most notable (age, both young and old people), people with a disability, sex ( both women and men), and the centre runs an after school club- which provides childcare for working families. |  |
| <b>If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA</b> |   |  |
| <b>If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA</b>                 |   |  |

|   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| <b>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>?</b> | Yes | If YES, please describe:<br>The mitigation against closure is either an alternate delivery model or a Community Asset Transfer. The impact of these proposals on the community should continue to be monitored and assessed. |
|---|-----|--|

**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   | No  |  |
| MEDIUM | Yes | The diverse communities that use this facility will be greatly impacted should it close. |
| LOW    | No  |  |

**SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF**

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