

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00458 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Housing & Communities	Lead Officer Name:	Jennifer Kerr
		Team:	Communities
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Proposal:	Bowhouse Community Hall - SPR	Reference No:	458

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.
22/01/2024	Ongoing support to explore a Community Asset Transfer throughout 2023. Group moving to submitting an EOI

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 - 4530 users 4 weekly sample.

Community ; YPTC, TABLE TENNIS, COME CHAT ABOUT THAT, SOCIAL DANCING, BOWHOUSE COMMITTEE, FALKIRK VETERANS

Private Business- BABY BALLET, DINKY DYES, M&K DANCING, YOGA, PHSYIO LED PILATES, SLIMMING WORLD, PARACISE, TAEKWONDO, TABLE TENNIS, DNC DANCE, ARCHERY, BIG BAD WOLF, YOUNG PORTONIAN THEATRE COMPANY, TRYST THEATRE, NADINE JUDGE MCKECHNIE SCHOOL OF DANCE, CHRISTMAS MINI PHOTOSHOOT - ZOE MCKAY.

Public Sector FALKIRK COUNCIL LABOUR.

BIRTHDAY PARTY.

This venue is busy and booked on a regular basis with weekly bookings by many of the businesses and activities.

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

Persons with protected Characteristics commented-

As an older resident I play competitive table tennis at this facility this helps by providing a place where I can get exercise (the benefits of table tennis for older age groups are well documented)and a social environment that helps me mix with other people.

I attend events in this hall on a regular basis.

It will affect me on grounds of my sex and age if this facility closes.

We are a registered charity to enhance the lives of children. If you close these halls you are destroying the future of Falkirk.

Centre provides support to the community in many forms. Activities, young mothers, veterans, give food/support to local people in need

I use this service to maintain a social lifestyle and socialisation.

This facility is used by young and old. There is a community group in every day and the hall is fab for private parties. It would be a huge loss if this closed.

I attend an exercise class every Thursday morning. This is a well attended class. It helps people to keep fit, helps with mental health, and make new friends. I can walk to this class. The hall is surrounded by houses that makes it easier to access instead of having to travel by car or bus.

This is venue used by organisations which I believe in its closure would be impacted by rising costs in finding other venues.

"I use this facility weekly for my child and have done since early on in her life. Attending a baby class at this facility has greatly helped myself as I new Mum who was pregnant and gave birth during the pandemic and also helps my child in her development. Having a community facility close to my home has been so valued in such difficult times.

The building is accessible for me to walk to and from with my child in her buggy. Loosing community facilities like this is going to dramatically impact mental health."

Difficulty travelling to alternative venue with young children.

I run a local young parent group in this building and it was started due to young parents being isolated due to having children in a worldwide pandemic. If this building is closed we will have no where to meet and it would be near impossible to find anywhere else seeing as the plans are to close the kersie bank as well.

Valise to home and easy access.

Grangemouth has went through years of consultation and creation of a community action plan to make Grangemouth better! With the burden of industry and the front line of making Scotland net zero Grangemouth (non industrial) is NOT benefiting from either including the investment zone which Grangemouth carries the burden while the district enjoys the benefits. Our town hall is our identity and centres our life blood. At the very least we should not bare the burden of these cuts!

Facilities are required for children to be involved in activities. COVID has caused a real lack of genuine social interaction that needs to have community groups to allow our children to thrive.

I would loose confidence and become more depressed which I get support from this building for.

Discount rates at other venues.

Comments from other respondents who did not identify as having a protected characteristic but commented on the impact this could have on other who do.

Part of the very strong TT community. The loss of this facility will be significant. Short-term thinking which will result in poorer long term outcomes for the people of Falkirk. All research evidence shows that physical activity enhances mental, emotional, physical and social health. People will come to harm without these opportunities.

I teach gentle exercise classes for the 50+/retired age group and this building if closed would affect my business and most importantly the health and well being of my class participants.

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 Bowhouse 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 in the Grangemouth Library 16th January 2023. Ongoing support to explore a CAT throughout 2023	
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 specific to this building.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Grangemouth Library 16th January 2023.
Other: please specify	The Hall Management Committee had informally expressed an interest in an Asset Transfer prior to the SPR process commencing. This has been formally noted and we will work on this with the Hall Committee.	
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			✓	Older and younger people, and local residents of all ages would lose access to groups and activities that support their development and wellbeing.
Disability			✓	Person with disability felt their mental health, social opportunities, and lifestyle would be reduced if they could not attend activities in this venue. Loss of an accessible building.
Sex			✓	Unknown. No impact information received from respondents. A young mums group runs from this group providing support and childcare for women
Ethnicity				
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Transgender				
Pregnancy / Maternity	✓			None identified- Comments pertained mainly to wanting a local venue to bring children to rather than pregnancy/maternity. -
Marriage / Civil Partnership				
Poverty			✓	Groups may not be able to afford additional costs to use the venue if taken over by public. People may not be able to afford additional fees for activities if costs increase. Bowhouse is a neighbourhood that experience higher than average levels of deprivation in the SMID Index.
Care Experienced				
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.				
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):	The closure of this hall would reduce opportunities for a wide range of groups to come together in an informal setting and reduce opportunities to foster good relations between groups.

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	Many small businesses operate from the venue providing health and fitness and wellbeing activities. These are well attended.
Councils	Yes	Councillor Surgery.
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	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.
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 may impact on persons of all ages	Children Older Persons Young People Adults who attend activities	Prioritised the most disadvantaged persons in this category such as Older Persons, Youth, Children in alternative locations if required. Alternative Delivery Model - CAT	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
Closure would have an impact on persons with a disability	Mental Health Accessibility for persons with less mobility	Prioritised the most disadvantaged persons in this category such as Older Persons, Youth, Children in alternative locations if required. Alternative Delivery Model - CAT	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

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 low income households who benefit from low cost or free activities that do not require transport to get to.	Low Income Households	Prioritise local relocation of activities supporting low income households if required. Consider discounts at alternative venues (respondent suggestion) Alternative Delivery Model - CAT	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	Information gathering of groups who use this facility has been recorded, with further opportunity of participation through a survey.	
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: It is proposed to develop as a mitigation an alternate model of delivery. The impacts on community should continue to be monitored and assessed as proposal for mitigation is developed.
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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	There was good information from this consultation, closure would have a negative impact on young mothers and their children , older and younger people and people with a disability. The hall is in an area of deprivation.
MEDIUM	No	
LOW	No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

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