

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00423 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Housing & Communities	Lead Officer Name:	Crawford Bell
		Team:	Communities
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		Email:	crawford.bell@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	Grange Community Education Centre - SPR	Reference No:	0423

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	Yes	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

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 - 1421 users over a 4 week period.

Community Activities - a daily weekday GRANGE AFTER SCHOOL PROJECT, ADULT TABLE TENNIS, OVER FIFTIES TABLE TENNIS, ADULT BADMONTON, JUNIOR TABLE TENNIS, ARCHERY, BASKETBALL, TRANSITION GROUP (Downs Syndrome group).

Private Sector- KARATE, METAFIT.

23 of 45 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:

The over 50's Table tennis club meet at the Grange on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. It is the best over 50's club in Central Scotland and a centre for table tennis in the area. The size and quality of the facility for table tennis will be very difficult to replace. The fact that there are three different sessions per week mean that at least one session is suitable for most and some, like myself can attend three mornings per week. It's great exercise for me personally and also very important socially as I live on my own and there are very few opportunities for me to socialise with such a friendly group of people. I would really miss it and I'm sure that my mental health would deteriorate without this. I'm sure many of the people who go would say the same. Table tennis is great exercise and good for the mind too.

Daughter attends table tennis club. She suffers from autism and the club has been a god send to her in her development.

The Grange Centre provides a huge variety of activities, including child care, that benefit the community. The over 50s clubs, for example, provide support for physical and mental health issues and are thriving. To lose these facilities would be a local disaster and have severely detrimental affects in users if all ages.

No other facilities for older people to engage in this sport in the area.

Venue for the largest Junior table tennis group in the Falkirk area with over 30 members aged 7-17. If the venue was no longer available we would struggle to find another suitable venue able to host our equipment and sessions.

Grange Community Education Centre has been the base of the Grange Table Tennis Club for several years whose players are mostly veterans and play not only in the local Stirlingshire Table Tennis League but also in Scottish and International Competitions representing Scotland.

I play table tennis at the Grange and it has been a saviour in terms of my physical and mental health, with no other options nearby.

"This is the only local group for children and adults with Downs Syndrome, run by a branch of downs syndrome Scotland.

This is a much needed facility to allow families to get together and receive advice and support as their child grows up.

The children and adults with downs syndrome are able to socialise with each other and not feel as alone in society."

"Our Activities club for people with Down's syndrome of all ages have been meeting here for almost 30 years and find the facilities ideal for our varied needs.

My children attend the Grange After School Project which uses the Grange Centre to provide after school care for children of working parents.

We run a men's group that helps to tackle social isolation and loneliness in the deprived area of Grangemouth. If we no longer had access to the building our group would need to disband and the attendees mental health would take a heavy tole causing further stress on other services.

Yes. My children attend after school club at that venue. There is a huge shortage of childcare in my neighbourhood: if this after school school club wasn't an option I would have to reduce my working hours as I have no other childcare option. As far as I know, there is no other possible venue in my neighbourhood to accommodate this after school club.

"Closure of the building would impact on after school childcare. There is no other building in the area that the Grange After School Club could move to, to continue to provide this service. This would mean that I as the mum would not be able to work anymore. Employers in my profession do not allow 3pm pick ups and afternoon childcare at home. Part time jobs are very difficult to obtain in my profession.

We make extensive use of the Grange After School Project for our childcare needs. Both myself and my husband work and having an affordable childcare programme within walking distance of both school and our home is required. Previously we were unable to find childminders that were able to look after our child in the area due to limited spaces - I cannot drive so pickup is difficult if it is too far away from Wallacestone School. Without the support of the Grange After School Project it is likely myself or my husband would have to stop work.

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 would be a disaster to close down The Grange as we use it 5 times a week for two different table tennis clubs as we are all over 50 years of age up to one man who is 95.

I use this facility 2/3 times each week, it is a highly valued facility which provides the Community with a sporting place for the older members of the Community to meet, to play sport and to maintain friendships and positive wellbeing. I would find this devastating if this facility closed both from a physical and mental wellbeing perspective.

Furthermore, my son is disabled, has autism and epilepsy. The afterschool service is crucial for his social development and has sufficient expertise to handle him and his medication. The Grange After School Project operating out of this building is the only service available to my son. I strongly feel that closure of the building will discriminate working mums because of childcare issues and children with disabilities and special needs due to lack of other services."

If the centre closed, I would be out of a job. This would cause huge strain on me financially. I have a 4year old child as a single parent I am the only source of income

My Child uses this for after school care without this facility I cannot work and care for my child

Losing the Centre and GASP would have a significant impact on me and partner but most of all it would impact my child. GASP has a large amount of children of mixed ages and my child enjoys interacting and socializing with the other children. The group has a lot of equipment stored at the Grange which is used by my child. In addition the Grange has great facilities such as a ball court for sports activities and a kitchen which allows the group to prepare snacks for the children. The grange is also within walking distance from the school which keeps my child active.

My son attends the Grange After School Project at the centre 2 days a week. This is the only after school club available for children attending Wallacestone Primary school and allows working parents to have a safe and fun environment for their children to attend after school to allow them to remain in employment and work 'normal' hours. Without this facility, there would be nowhere for them to go. There are no other facilities locally that I believe would have the space and facilities that the Grange centre does to allow it to run. There would not be sufficient childminders in the area to accommodate all of the children who attend GASP and this would mean that parents may need to change hours at work which would mean a cut in salary. A cut in salary would mean that they may not be able to afford household costs and that they would have less money to spend in the local economy.

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.	45 respondents in relation to Grange Community Centre 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 Grange in Braes Highschool January 10th 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	45 respondents in relation to this building.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Braes Highschool January 10th 2023.
Other: please specify		
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			✓	Children that attend the afterschool club would lose social inclusion opportunities and may face reduced social development. Older people who attend the table tennis group note reduced physical and mental health.
Disability			✓	Disabled children attend the afterschool club and would face the same impacts noted for other children. Persons with Down syndrome attend a group but not impact information was provided by respondents. Reduced social inclusion and increased isolation may be impacts of this group stopping.
Sex			✓	Men's group member would see increased physical and mental health problems.
Ethnicity				
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Transgender				
Pregnancy / Maternity				
Marriage / Civil Partnership			✓	Single mums would face having to quit working or reduce hours should the afterschool club not have a venue.
Poverty			✓	Many parents voiced having to quit or reduce hours in the absence of an afterschool club would create low income, poverty in their households. A Community Ownership model may increase costs for all user groups that may need to be passed onto users.
Care Experienced				
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.				

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:	The closure of this facility would impact on the ability of some groups: children and young people with downs syndrome and other disabilities to lead a full and active life.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	A wide range of groups use this facility. Closure would restrict opportunities for the community to come together in a range of informal settings.

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 private businesses operate out of the Centre.
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	Yes	Possible Positive impact - This venue is busy. 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
Persons of all ages would be impacted by the closure of this building.	Children Older Persons Adults	Prioritise the most vulnerable in these groups if alternative location is required- In particular the afterschool club. 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
Disabled persons attending services in the building would be impacted by its closure.	Disabled Adults Disabled Children	Prioritise these groups if alternative location is required, in particular the afterschool club and Downs Syndrome groups. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer	Place Services	01/04/2024	- Supporting stronger and healthier communities - Supporting a thriving economy and green transition Falkirk Plan: - Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities
Men would be affected by the closure of the men's group	Men	Prioritise this group 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

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 affected by the closure of the afterschool club	Single parents	<p>Prioritise the most vulnerable in these groups if alternative location is required- In particular the afterschool club.</p> <p>Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer</p>	Place Services	01/04/2024	<p>Council Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting stronger and healthier communities - Supporting a thriving economy and green transition <p>Falkirk Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theme 1: Working in Partnership with Communities
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- In particular the afterschool club.</p> <p>Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer</p>	Place Services	01/04/2024	<p>Council Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting stronger and healthier communities - Supporting a thriving economy and green transition <p>Falkirk Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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
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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 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	Information gathering of groups who use this facility has been recorded, with further opportunity of participation through a survey.	
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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: The proposed mitigation is to find alternate venues for groups, have an alternate delivery model or have a community asset transfer. As the mitigation is developed the impacts should continue to be monitored and assessed.
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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 / No	
MEDIUM	Yes	The closure would impact on a wide range of groups most notably those that related to age, sex, disability and low income. This centre provides childcare for parents.
LOW	Yes / No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

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