

# Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00447 (Version 1)

## SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

<b>Service &amp; Division:</b>	Corporate & Housing Services 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>	Greenpark Community Education Centre - SPR	<b>Reference No:</b>	00447

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 - 2133 users over 4 weeks.

Community: childminding Group, Coffee Club, Wee Poetry Group, Carpet Bowlers, Polmont Playgroup, Line Dancing, / Slice of Art Club, Polmnt Quilters, Hobby Craft Group, Brownies Club, Guides meetings, card making classes, Club Finances, Mainly Music Group, Bridge Group, Polmont Ramblers, coffee lounge, Home school games Club, Jogging Club.

Private sector: Judo, Fitness, Fencing Club, Dance Dreams, Aerobics, Yoga, Sequence Dancers, Karate Club, Tai-Chi, political group.

Public sector: Councillor Surgery.

Religious Groups: 2.

**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 am a member of Falkirk Writers' Circle and we have used the Greenpark Centre for a number of years now for our regular weekly meetings. It is convenient, has adequate parking and the facilities within the Greenpark Centre suit our requirements admirably. Members come from Falkirk, Grangemouth, Bo'ness, Polmont, Bonnybridge & Denny so Greenpark offers a convenient central facility. The Centre itself is used by a number of other community groups so the loss would be of enormous disadvantage to all these groups.

"The Greenpark Centre is a modern purpose-built building in good condition. It is used by a widely-differing range of organisations seven days a week, with different organisations sometimes using the building's accommodation simultaneously. There is no viable alternative in or near Polmont.

The Greenpark Centre requires at the very least paid janitorial staff to enable it to function; and a volunteer management group is not the correct agency to employ staff.

The classes I attend are beneficial to my general well being and mental health

We use regularly use the facility. My child has dance classes here. A local playgroup is situated here

You are talking about closing down the centre which has housed Polmont playgroup for a long time. Staff, kids and parents rely on the playgroup being open in the grounds of the centre.

This facility has no equal within the area in providing multi user accommodation, viz apartments of different sizes, layouts, and facility.

This facility is in the heart of the community, is well used and has large enough rooms to accommodate our class size with facilities that are clean comfortable and allow us to have tea, coffee etc. the room is prepared for us beforehand. The staff are very helpful.

Our group use the facilities weekly throughout the year. It is a central meeting place for us where we can carry out our hobby in warm friendly surroundings and get the important mental stimulation through socialising and carrying out our hobby - very important with our ages.

There are a variety of users to this facility. Arts/ crafts, Pilates, Yoga, exercise programmes of which I do several. This is a very central facility with good car parking, kitchens, office space and is easily accessible.

Polmont Quakers have used the Community Centre every Sunday for over 35 years in order to worship together.

I attend the Probus club. There are very few facilities for older members of the community especially during the winter, without further cuts.

My son attends Polmont playgroup which has been serving our local community for 50 years and use this facility for playgroup. We live this place as a family and would be massively negatively impacted if this were to be shut down.

Polmont Playgroup reside permanently in the Greenpark Centre and have serviced the community for 50 years. It wouldn't be practically possible to run the playgroup if the setting was used for other purposes.

The Greenpark centre seems to be constantly booked with various groups and the grounds/parking around the centre are unique, not many comm centres have this ground available to usage. It would be a shame to see this close.

The Community Centre in Polmont also houses a playgroup which is used by children from the surrounding area. It is used by people not just from the immediate area but covers young and old from Linlithgow, Bo'ness and Grangemouth etc. There is a large cluster of homes being built within 500 yards of the centre which is intended for vulnerable people and also includes social housing. The community centre will provide a much needed social hub for them and particularly the young and old who have been so badly affected by the upheavals of the last few years. The mental health of particularly the old who have little in the way of outside activities is one area that is becoming more important important

The Polmont Playgroup is hosted at Greenpark Community Education Centre and is a much loved and important childcare facility locally. My son attends and loves it. The venue is great and presumably one of the reasons it is affordable is that the space is at a good price.

I also attended yoga classes at the centre for years, which was a great boost to health and mental health.

The community Council also meets there and countless groups for the community. It would be a significant loss to close this building.

I use several of the activities organised by the centre. Ramblers group, Horticultural society, Exercise classes.

The closure of the building would have an impact on as it is our primary place to meet on a Sunday as well as many ongoing community events - including a mum and tots group( mainly music) run each week from the centre.

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

Closure of the playgroup would be removing 2 hours a day worth of childcare Monday-Friday.

"Green Park Centre is used by Polmont playgroup. They provide vital childcare for parents in the area who wouldn't be able to work without the service. The playgroup is always full and runs a waiting list.

The community relies on this is a vital resource to tackle isolation and loneliness, promote physical activity and positive mental health.

I can't drive and have mobility issues so this facility has been a lifeline for me and my family in order to provide the children with opportunities and me with social contact with others - helping my mental health.

Due to the age of most of the participants, mainly retirees and the ease of locale of Greenpark Centre there would simply be no other alternative if the centre closes. The group encourages and promotes exercise which could have a severe impact on the health of the participants if no longer available.

<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>	70 Respondents in relation to Greenpark 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.  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	70 respondents for this building.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Braes Highschool January 10th 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.
Age			✓	Children attend a playgroup in the building, older persons attend activities in this building.
Disability			✓	A disabled respondent noted closure would result in a reduction in their wellbeing and mental health.
Sex				This centre provides 2 hrs of childcare per day for families-removal of children generally impacts more on women than on men
Ethnicity				
Religion / Belief / non-Belief			✓	A faith based group regularly meets in the centre
Sexual Orientation				
Transgender				
Pregnancy / Maternity				
Marriage / Civil Partnership				
Poverty				
Care Experienced				
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.				
<b>Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)</b>	Further engagement to better understand the impact on persons with Protected Characteristics is required to fully complete this assessment. User respondents provided very few comments about the impact on them should the building closed.			

**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:**

	<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>	This centre is used by a wide range of groups and supports a wide range of activities including childcare and a faith based group, closure would restrict the ability of those groups to worship and to reach full potential.
<b>Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):</b>	Closure of this facility will restrict the ability of a wide range of groups to meet 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	Private Businesses operate from this venue.
<b>Councils</b>	Yes	Councillor's Surgery.
<b>Education Sector</b>	No	
<b>Fire</b>	No	
<b>NHS</b>	No	
<b>Integration Joint Board</b>	No	
<b>Police</b>	No	
<b>Third Sector</b>	Yes	Possible Positive impact - This is a high occupancy building. Alternative delivery model could 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>	The Arts - an arts group meets here - 'Important meeting place for our art group'.	

## 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
Disabled persons attending services in the building would be impacted by its closure	Disability	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

### 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 based on current but limited information available. Further research is required to complete this assessment fully.
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**

<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
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<b>ASSESSMENT FINDINGS</b>  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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<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: The proposal for mitigation is that groups are prioritised for another location, there is an alternate model of delivery or a Community Asset transfer. As the proposal for mitigation is developed the impacts on the community need to 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	This building is used by a wide range of groups that would be affected by closure, older people, people with disability, childcare, children and young people and a faith based group.
LOW	Yes / 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