

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00449 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Corporate & Housing Services Housing & Communities	Lead Officer Name:	Crawford Bell
		Team:	Communities
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Proposal:	Slamannan Community Education Centre - SPR	Reference No:	449

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:	Library Services
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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 - 733 users.

Community Led: Craft group, youth club (65 attendees), over 60's club, WRI, CVS Support work, Martha's Pantry.

Private Business: GA School of Dance, Jolly tots, tae-kwon-do.

Public Sector: CLLR Surgery.

Private Party.

12 of 39 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:

Due to my disability I enjoy attending some of the local groups and activities that take place in Slamannan community education centre. If the centre closes this would severely impact my mental health and I would become socially isolated.

This is a small community already quite far from any other village or facility also with a restricted bus service which leaves us isolated.

"As an area that is already in the bottom 20% in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, Slamannan as a rural community is further disadvantaged in relation to resources and local amenities. The impact of which are outlined in the Rural Deprivation evidence summary commissioned by Sot Gov in 2016.

Falkirk Council's Local Outcome Improvement Plan has clear themes and outcomes:

- working in partnership with communities
- poverty
- mental health and wellbeing

- substance use
- gender based violence
- economic recovery

Closing the community centre is in direct conflict with all of these outcomes and will further exacerbate the isolated and disproportionately disadvantaged residents of Slamannan."

"This the only community centre of this type within 8 miles. Slamannan is an area of deprivation and closure of this asset will result in an already marginalised society being unfairly targeted.

Hallglen Centre has recently been closed and there is nowhere else for children to attend."

The community centre is a huge part of Slamannan and the only place our residents have to be able to have classes and groups without this. centre Slamannan has absolutely nothing and will lose its only social networking place.

My future.

Unless the groups can transfer to other buildings, I don't believe there is any support.

There is nothing which could mitigate this situation as it is about scale of space and its availability which cannot be replicated elsewhere.

Reject closure of community centre. Look at improving services, perhaps relocating the library to the community centre to share overheads. Proper engagement with community to formulate a development plan.

"This is why I pay council tax, it is for the council to work out how to provide facilities, not the public.

I note with interest the income for the centre last year £740. I can only assume this is an accounting error as there are several groups that attend weekly. The school attend regularly, are they being charged for usage..."

Keeping our centre open and in good repair.

Where Has The Money Gone ?

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

Personally I feel that there are a multitude of factors that should be taken into account before making the decision. I feel it would be helpful for the community if the library was perhaps moved into the community center, if perhaps there was a member from the council within Slamannan community center to support the tenants of this area as it is classed as a village in poverty.

I don't think the building should be closed there is nothing else in the village. Martha's pantry is excellent for many families also bring library in to centre.

The pantry is a well needed Resource here, with the cost of living crisis our community rely on this service. Some people don't even have the bus fares to reach other places. By removing the centre you really are making us the forgotten village".

"My children and wife use this centre 3/4 times a week. It is a needed resource in this area for an all ready poverty stricken area. We already have a reduced bus service which stops us being able to do many activities outside of Slamannan. The children of Slamannan need this as they have nothing to do which leads to vandalism and increase crime rates, I'm sure the police force could do without that. The school also has very little clubs for the kids or activities. In fact after school the only one availability for an hour is basketball.

The closure of this facility would mean that there would be no place for the youth clubs that are attended. The food pantry would have to be else where and this would make it very difficult for me personally. Slamannan is already classes as a village in need and by taking away one of the very few resources available for the community, it will undoubtedly have a large impact.

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.	<p>39 Respondents in relation to Slamannan CEC identifying as users and local affected residents.</p> <p>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 Slamannan Library January 10th 2023.</p> <p>At least 2 further community led meetings were facilitated in addition by CVS Falkirk to consider options and feasibility for community ownership. All of these meetings noted a desire for the inclusion of the library in the building and a partnership agreement with Falkirk Council to be considered. Falkirk Council Officers attended 2 meetings and presenting ideas and drawings for adding an elevator to the building in order to make the upper floor accessible. Ongoing conversations to develop an idea and options continue.</p> <p>Ongoing support to explore a CAT throughout 2023</p>	
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	39 Respondents in relation to Slamannan CEC identifying as users and local affected residents.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	Slamannan Library January 10th 2023.
Other: please specify	2 Community Led /CVS Facilitated meetings attended by Falkirk Council Officers- Jan and Feb 2023.	
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 and Youth have limited other places to do activities. Impact may be crime and antisocial behaviour.
Disability			✓	Reduction in mental health and increase in isolation.
Sex				
Ethnicity				
Religion / Belief / non-Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Transgender				
Pregnancy / Maternity				
Marriage / Civil Partnership				
Poverty			✓	This building is in an area of deprivation as defined by the SMID index. It is also a rural described by respondents as isolated and with limited public transport. Access to food support would stop if this building were to close.
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:	The location of this building and the usage means that closure would have a negative impact on the ability of local people to reach their full potential.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	Closure would mean that there were limited opportunities for people in the community to come together in informal community 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	A few small businesses operate from the building.
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	Yes	Possible Positive impact - The community are exploring an alternative delivery model would create a third sector social enterprise business model or a partnership model with the Council 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
Children and young people would be affected by closure	Children Young people	Prioritise these groups if alternative location is required. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer or Partnership models	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 would be impacted by closure	Disabled person	Prioritise this group's ability to participate if alternative location is required. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer or Partnership models	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
Low income households would be impacted by closure	Low income households	Prioritise pantry relocation if alternative location is required. Alternative Delivery Model – Community Asset Transfer or Partnership models	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 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 for this facility is to either relocate the groups using the building or to begin the process for a community asset transfer. As these proposals develop the impacts need to continue to be assessed and monitored.
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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 evidence shows that closure would impact negatively on young people and those with a disability. The rurality of the village is an added dimension to the specific impacts for this facility.
LOW	Yes / No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

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