

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00939 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Place Services Invest Falkirk	Lead Officer Name:	Charlotte Paterson
		Team:	PMO (SPR)
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Proposal:	Closure of Burgh Buildings - service relocation	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	Yes	No	No	No

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):

06/01/2025	Closure of Burgh Buildings in line with the Council decision on the Strategic Property Review and to deliver the financial savings agreed.
06/01/2025	To successfully relocate the services to alternative suitable locations. Registrations will be relocated to Falkirk Library. Weddings, Civil Partnerships and Civic Ceremonies will be relocated to Callendar House.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	Annual property revenue costs £59,700	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
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:	01/04/2025	
	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.

In 2023, there were 129 civil partnerships/marriages and 18 citizenship ceremonies. In 2022, 3977 registrations took place.

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

The decision to close the Burgh Buildings has already taken place by Council in January 2024. The services will continue but are relocating to other suitable venues in close proximity.

The registration team offer a statutory service which is much valued by customers and service users. There is limited evidence to support the identification of potential impacts.

Best Judgement:

Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	<p>The decision was taken to close Burgh Buildings as part of the Strategic Property Review given it's a non-core property, the financial costs to operate the building and viability.</p> <p>Options were looked at with the Registration Team and Chief Officers to identify a suitable location that enables the service to deliver the statutory service, while ensuring the new locations meets the needs of customers and service users. Registrations will now take place at Falkirk Library and users will also be able to benefit from other front facing activity within Falkirk Library. Weddings/Civic Partnerships and Citizenships will relocate to Callendar House. It's anticipated that this venue will improve the customer experience for special events. Those with weddings already booked will pay the same fee as Burgh Buildings.</p>

What gaps in data / information were identified?	It has not been possible to identify the protected characteristics of service users.
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	The Burgh Buildings has already been declared surplus and has been approved to close as part of the Strategic Property Review. A suitable relocation has been identified.

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.	Engagement on all properties within the Strategic Property Review took place December 2022 - January 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	As part of the SPR, a survey was available for completion December 2022-January 2023. No specific comments were made in relation to Falkirk Registrars and Appointments Hub/Burgh Buildings.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	As part of the SPR, a series of public engagement events took place in January 2023.
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

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	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Disability	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Sex	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Ethnicity	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Religion / Belief / non-Belief	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Sexual Orientation	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Transgender	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Pregnancy / Maternity	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Marriage / Civil Partnership	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Poverty	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Care Experienced	✓			No negative impacts identified.
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.	✓			No negative impacts identified.
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):	Consideration has been given to a suitable alternative location for the services. This has ensured that registrations of births, marriages and deaths is still within the Town Centre location and accessible to all. Services will remain accessible and the relocations are deemed to be a positive outcome.
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	The new facilities offer improved accessibility that will continue to meet the needs of different protected characteristic groups and minimise disadvantage in accessing services.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	The proposals are centralising services into existing community facing venues where a range of services are delivered. This may help to foster good relations between different protected characteristic groups by bring different groups into long established, front facing community hubs

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	No	
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	No	
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 of Burgh Buildings - impact on service users registering a birth/marriage/ death	Service user	Careful consideration has been given to a suitable relocation option that is accessible and in Town Centre - Falkirk Library	Fiona Mitchell	20/12/2024	Supporting stronger and healthier communities
Closure of Burgh Buildings - impact on weddings/civic partnerships and citizenship ceremonies	Service users/customers	Careful consideration has been given to a suitable relocation option that is accessible - Callendar House. It is acknowledged that it's not a Town Centre location however, it's still within the centre of Falkirk and anticipated that this relocation will result in an improved customer experience given the venue.	Fiona Mitchell	20/12/2024	Supporting stronger and healthier 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?	No
If yes when and how ?	

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	Yes	The Burgh Buildings has already been declared surplus and has been approved to close as part of the Strategic Property Review to deliver agreed savings. Suitable relocation options have been identified and are anticipated to result in an improved customer experience.
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	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Charlotte Paterson</i>	Date:	06/01/2025
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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?	No
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	Protected characteristic data of users have not been identified or recorded. This could be improved upon by providing a breakdown. However, the mitigating actions noted are designed to support those with protected characteristics.	
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: There has been no indication of adverse impact on diverse communities.
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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	No	
MEDIUM	No	
LOW	Yes	There has been no indication of risk on diverse communities.

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:	<i>Malcolm Bennie</i>	Date:	09/01/2025