

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

| EIA Version | Date     | Author    | Changes |
|-------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 001         | 14/02/21 | T Stephen |         |

| Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions including those that affect services the council delivers). |  |
|---|--|
| Service   | Life Live Aberdeenshire  |
| Section   | Community Centres and Halls  |
| Title of the activity etc.  | Closure of underutilised Halls and Community centres   |
| Aims and desired outcomes of the activity   | This is part of an ongoing process to rationalise our built assets with a view to reducing building stock and investing in remaining facilities to ensure they meet community need -rather than trying to maintain a wide range of often underutilised facilities. |
| Author(s) & Title(s)  | Tim Stephen, Service Manager, LLA Operations   |

| Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment and explain what it means in relation to the activity you are assessing. |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Evidence  | What does it say?  | What does it mean?  |
| Existing usage information  | A number of our halls are underutilised, or in some cases not used at all.   | Some of our halls are not well used, but require investment to ensure they are safe.  |
| Existing property maintenance records   | A number of our halls require significant investment for them to meet user needs.<br><br>In some cases, properties are closed due to issues such as fire damage -and require significant investment to bring them back to use. | It is comparatively expensive in some cases (on a cost per usage basis) to input investment into some underutilised buildings, and this may be better focussed on a smaller range of facilities – which can then meet user needs. |

|                             |  |   |
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| Engagement with user groups | A lot of user groups use buildings due to historical precedent, and in many cases have modern needs which cannot always be met in those facilities | There is the opportunity to move some group to other facilities – making them more sustainable. |
|-----------------------------|--|---|

| Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.                                   |  |
|---|--|
| Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold? | Requirement to consult with local stakeholders to gauge whether there is any appetite for alternative uses of some properties (potentially through asset transfer) |

| Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.   |                                     |            |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------|
| What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form. | Measures:                           | Timescale: |
|  | Engagement with existing user group | April 2021 |
|  | Engagement with local councillors   | April 2021 |
|  | Engagement with local stakeholders  | May 2021   |
|  |                                     |            |

| Stage 5: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups/areas? |   |
|--|---|
| These should be included in the action plan.   | Discussion with existing user group as to how they can be accommodated in alternative premises. |

| Stage 6: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?  |  |
|--|--|
| Transfer of activities to other facilities may make them more sustainable and lead to additional investment to ensure that they can accommodate new activities that may meet the needs of existing non-users. Maintaining a streamlined building stock properly will also enable us to better cater for modern needs and also potentially allow us to develop other facilities where they are particularly needed. |  |

Stage 7a:

Are there potential impacts on protected groups?

The protected groups covered by the equality duty are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Who is affected by the activity or who is intended to benefit from the proposed activity and how? Complete the table below for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.

|   | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Unknown |
|---|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| Age – Younger   |          |          | X       |         |
| Age - Older   |          |          | X       |         |
| Disability  |          |          | X       |         |
| Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)                    |          |          | X       |         |
| Religion or Belief                                    |          |          | X       |         |
| Sex   |          |          | X       |         |
| Pregnancy and maternity                               |          |          | X       |         |
| Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual) |          |          | X       |         |
| Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)          |          |          | X       |         |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership                        |          |          | X       |         |

Stage 7b: Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy, activity etc. will or may impact on socio-economic inequalities?

This is about trying to be fair to everyone. Part of that is realising that not everyone may be starting at the same place. Some individuals and families may have low income, may have very little or no savings which means they are living from month to month therefore changes to council policies/services may have a greater adverse impact on them.

On this basis you should consider potential impacts on individuals/families by:

- Place: on specific vulnerable areas or communities (SIMD, regeneration, rural) e.g. housing, transport.
- Pockets: household resources, (Income, benefits, outgoings) ability to access a service
- Prospects: peoples life chances e.g., Access to, or ability to access employment, training, services (such as council or health) or support.

Groups of people who may be impacted include, but not limited to:

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>• People on benefits</li> <li>• Those involved in the criminal justice system</li> <li>• People in the most deprived communities</li> <li>• People who live in rural areas</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pensioners</li> <li>• Looked after children</li> <li>• Carers including young carers</li> <li>• Veterans</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Single adult households</li> <li>• People who have experienced the asylum system</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• People with lower educational qualifications</li> <li>• People in low paid work</li> <li>• People with one or more protected characteristic</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

Please complete by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.

| Socio-economic disadvantage   | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Unknown |
|---|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| Pockets: Low income/income poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing | X        | X        |         |         |

|   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Pockets: Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future                        | X | X |   |  |
| Pockets: Material deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies |   |   | X |  |
| Place: Area deprivation – where you live, where you work  | X | X |   |  |
| Prospects: Socioeconomic background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income, educational achievement.  |   |   | X |  |

| Stage 8: What are the positive and negative impacts?   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Impacts.   | Positive   | Negative   |
| Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected. | Potential for improved usage of other local buildings, improving their sustainability. | In some rural areas, closure of a building may necessitate the need to travel to another location which is not served (or served well) by public transport. May be problematic if groups do not have access to transport |
|  | Potential for improved accommodation for an existing user group.                       |  |
|  | Empty building may provide an opportunity for a local business to develop.             |  |

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| Stage 9: Have any of the affected groups/areas been involved, engaged with or consulted?   |  |
|--|--|
| If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps? | engagement with user groups is to follow – with a view to looking at how impacted user groups could be housed elsewhere. |

| Stage 10: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts? |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.               | Mitigating Steps  | Timescale  |
|   | Engage with existing user groups in rural areas to identify how their needs could be met in an alternative facility. This could (as an example) include being housed in a local school. | April 2021 |
|   |   |            |
|   |   |            |
|   |   |            |
|   |   |            |

| Stage 11: What monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal |  |
|---|--|
| These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).               | Ongoing contact with existing user group |

| Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment? |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Please complete the appropriate box/boxes        | 1 | No negative impacts have been identified –please explain. |
|  |   |   |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | 2   | Negative Impacts have been identified; these can be mitigated - please explain.<br>* Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.          |
|  | We believe that the existing user can largely be accommodated in alternative locations.<br><br>Where we have identified that this may be problematic (for example in rural areas) we will look to discuss alternative options which might include working with third parties (i.e., local church groups) / looking to the local school or potentially even private businesses (i.e., hotels). We are confident that alternatives can be found with minimal inconvenience to existing users. |   |
|  | 3   | The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain.<br>* Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen |
|  |   |   |

\* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

The positive impact that being able to focus existing resources on a smaller building stock will bring more advantages in terms of being able to provide for our communities than disadvantages – which we are confident can be managed.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

|                             |  |   |   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Sign off and authorisation. | 1) Service and Team  | Live Life Aberdeenshire, Halls service  |   |
|                             | 2) Title of Policy/Activity  | Closure of some Town Halls and Community Centres.   |   |
|                             | 3) <b>Authors:</b><br>I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity. | Name: Gillian Bowie<br>Position: Facilities and Funding Mgr<br>Date: 14/02/21<br>Signature: | Name:<br>Position:<br>Date:<br>Signature: |
|                             |  | Name:<br>Position:<br>Date:<br>Signature:   | Name:<br>Position:<br>Date:<br>Signature: |

|   |   |                             |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 4) Consultation with Service Manager  | Name: Tim Stephen<br>Date: 15/02/21   |                             |
| 5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service   | Name:<br><br>Position: Interim Head of Service, Live Life Aberdeenshire<br>Date: 17 Feb 2021 | Name:<br>Position:<br>Date: |
| 6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. |   | Date:                       |
| 7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: equalities@aberdeenshire.gov.uk  |   | Date:                       |

