






Argyll and Bute Council / HSCP Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQIA)

	07 June 2022		
	Shirley Johnstone		
	01	New Document – Dunoon	07.06.22
	02	Updated Document – Dunoon / Rothesay	08.11.22
	03	Updated Document – Rothesay / Islay / Oban	16.10.23

Argyll and Bute Council / HSCP Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Section 1: About the proposal

Title of Proposal
Our Modern Workspace

Intended outcome of proposal
Our Modern Workspace has been set up to allow Argyll and Bute Council an opportunity to review the way in which it works, the tools that the workforce have to deliver their Services and to take the lessons learned from the way in which the council adapted in response to the pandemic and use these to develop flexible working opportunities to support the wellbeing of the workforce. It is expected that this project will take approx. 3 years to deliver

Description of proposal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The purpose of this Project is<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ To engage with staff and customers about the future model of delivering services from offices○ To review the current work places of the Councils office based workforce.○ To modernise our office estate so it is fit for future operations of Council;○ To establish the contractual requirements for altering the current employment contracts to reflect the preferences in work locations by services and employees.○ To review the remaining office estate and rationalise to reflect the outcome of the Employee Work Place Review.○ To mothball, let or repurpose / dispose of the surplus buildings to create revenue, capital or budget savings for the Council.○ To explore opportunities for greater collaboration and joint working with partners to ensure efficient outcomes for staff / partner / customers.• The Project was established following the Budget Planning decisions made in Feb 2021. The aims / responsibilities of the Project are as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ To name the project and provide informative, relative and regular updates to the Council workforce, ensuring that all employees are kept up to date with progress that may affect their working environments.○ To liaise and consult with the trade unions to ensure they participate in the decision making process and have the most current information to share with their members.○ To ensure all changes are implemented in line with Council policies and procedures.○ To provide regular updates to DMT / SMT as required.○ To provide regular updates to strategic boards, including Asset Management Board and HR Board

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Shirley Johnstone
Job title	Change Manager
Department	Commercial Services
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Ross McLaughlin / Jane Fowler
Job title	Head of Commercial Services / Head of Customer Support Services
Department	Customer Services / Development and Infrastructure
Sign off of EQIA (Head of Service):	
Date of sign off:	

Who will deliver the proposal?
Our Modern Workspace Project Board Any building works will be tendered and overseen by Property Services

Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EQIA

Consultation / engagement

The Project Board currently meet monthly and the members of the board are representatives from HSCP, HROD, Commercial Services, H&S, IT, Trade Unions, Finance and Communications which means that a wide cross section of the Council / HSCP are involved in the discussions and decision making.

There was initial consultation with SMT / DMT and then at Service Level Management meetings to advise on the project proposals.

This allowed detail discussions with each 3rd tier manager and their staff, and at individual team level to ensure all staff had an opportunity to provide input and raise any issues they felt were service specific.

Going forward, as we look at each town, the engagement of a Design Consultant to produce a redesign of the identified buildings, will then allow further engagement via a workshop with a representative from each of the teams to be located within the building, to ensure any changes or missed information is picked up and where possible addressed.

Consultation with staff also took place via regular newsflash emails, CEO updates and three WFH surveys (two to staff and one from managers). Also cascaded discussions between managers and their staff with regard to their preferences going forward. The following email address was set up for employees to submit and questions or comments in relation to the project: ourmodernworkspace@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Data

Detailed online information gathering form was sent to all heads of service and 3rd tier managers to complete

Other information

The engagement of a design consultant will ensure that any proposed plans are compliant with H&S, Building Standards, HR and that Service specific requirements are met.

As OMW is a joint Project between Commercial Services and Customer Support Services and jointly chaired by both Heads of Service, there are different EQESIA for the building aspect and the staff aspect of the project. HR have completed a revised Hybrid Working Policy, and have completed a separate EQESIA in relation to this. This assessment deals specifically with the building aspect of the project and does not include for any Service redesign.

Should there be a Service redesign carried out separately by any Service following the relocations, a specific EQESIA should be completed as part of that process.

Gaps in evidence

As the Project is to be delivered on a rolling town by town basis, this assessment will be reviewed and updated with separate Impact of Proposals for each town

Section 3: Impact of proposal

Impact on **Service Users** (*members of the public / partners*):
 Town 1 (Dunoon) Public Sector Hub Building (**Argyll House**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population		X		
Island populations		X		
Low income		X		
Low wealth		X		
Material deprivation		X		
Area deprivation		X		
Socio-economic background		X		
Communities of place?		X		
Communities of interest?		X		

If you have identified any impacts on service users (*members of the public / partners*), explain what these will be.

N/a

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/A

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Service Users of the Public Sector hub will not be impacted as this hub will be designed primarily for Service Deliverers.

Impact on **Service Deliverers** (including employees, volunteers etc):
 Town 1 (Dunoon) Public Sector Hub Building (**Argyll House**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		x		
Disability			x	
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x		
Pregnancy and Maternity			x	
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			x	
Island populations			x	
Low income		x		
Low wealth		x		
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?			x	

If you have identified any impacts on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc), explain what these will be.

Mainland rural population/ Island Populations

With the opportunity for more posts to be carried out remotely, this could improve chances for those living on islands and in more rural areas to gain employment and help to fill posts which have previously been difficult to fill.

Low income/ Low wealth

One of the aims of the hybrid working policy is to support employees to find ways of working that balance their personal preferences with work requirements. The cost of working from home was raised as a challenge by some employees in the survey. While there would be no financial detriment to employees who could continue to work from the office, they may perceive that there is a negative impact on the level of flexibility they can have around where they work if they would like to work from home but can't afford to. This may refer more to a curtailing of the positive impact as opposed to having a negative impact or detriment to this group of employees.

Communities of Interest- Carers

Having more flexible arrangements around how we work could have positive impact on carers who may have to be available at short notice.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/A

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Ongoing staff engagement into individual requirements is underway through the HR policies and procedures which is currently under review. This will identify any groups that may fall within the “negative” category and each impact will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Whilst not identified as a “negative” impact the Hub building has previously been reasonably adjusted for staff with accessibility issues which can accommodate those moving from other buildings whose needs can be assessed and reasonable adjustments will be put in place, where necessary. The shift to more hybrid working may increase the reasonable adjustments available or allow them to be tailored more fully to people’s needs/ preferences.

Impact on **Service Users** (incl. members of the public / partners):
 Town 1 (Dunoon) – Customer Engagement Hub (Dolphin Hall – TBC)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population		X		
Island populations		X		
Low income		X		
Low wealth		X		
Material deprivation		X		
Area deprivation		X		
Socio-economic background		X		
Communities of place?		X		
Communities of interest?		X		

If you have identified any impacts on service users (incl. members of the public / partners), explain what these will be.

N/a

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/A

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Service Users of the Public Sector hub will not be impacted as this hub will be designed primarily for Service Deliverers.

Impact on **Service Deliverers** (including employees, volunteers etc):
 Town 1 (Dunoon) – Customer Engagement Hub (Dolphin Hall TBC)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population				X
Island populations				X
Low income				X
Low wealth				X
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place?				X
Communities of interest?				X

If you have identified any impacts on service deliverers (incl. employees, volunteers etc.), explain what these will be.

N/a

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

Ongoing staff engagement into individual requirements is underway through the HR policies and procedures currently under review. This will identify any groups that may fall within the "negative" category and each impact will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

N/a

Impact on **Service Users** (*members of the public / partners*):
 Town 2 (Rothesay) Multi-Service Hub Building (**Union Street**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		x		
Disability		x		
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x		
Pregnancy and Maternity		x		
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population		x		
Island populations		x		
Low income		x		
Low wealth		x		
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?		x		

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Users (*members of the public / partners*), explain what these will be.**

Disability

The Hub is a ground floor, single level building which will be DDA compliant.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/a

Impact on **Service Deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):**
Town 2 (Rothesay) Multi-Service Hub Building (Union Street)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		x		
Disability			x	
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x		
Pregnancy and Maternity			x	
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			x	
Island populations			x	
Low income		x		
Low wealth		x		
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?			x	

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Deliverers (inc employees, volunteers etc), explain what these will be.**

Disability

The Hub is a ground floor, single level building which will be DDA compliant, for staff with a disability moving to the hub building, who were previously located at another building. Their specific needs can be assessed and reasonable adjustments will be put in place where required or reasonable.

The council already makes reasonable adjustments to support disabled employees at work. The shift to more hybrid working may increase the reasonable adjustments available or allow them to be tailored more fully to people's needs/ preferences

Pregnancy & Maternity

Work spaces will be located in a ground floor, single storey building, meaning staff are not required to climb stairs to access offices, work spaces, meeting rooms or welfare facilities.

Mainland rural population/ Island Populations

With the opportunity for more posts to be carried out remotely, this could improve chances for those living on islands and in more rural areas to gain employment and help to fill posts which have previously been difficult to fill.

Communities of Interest- Carers

Having more flexible arrangements around how we work could have positive impact on carers who may have to be available at short notice.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/a

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Ongoing staff engagement into individual requirements is underway through the HR policies and procedures which is currently under review. This will identify any groups that may fall within the "negative" category and each impact will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Impact on **Service Users** (*members of the public / partners*):
 Town 2 (Rothesay) – Customer Engagement Hub (**Victoria Street**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age			x	
Disability			x	
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership			x	
Pregnancy and Maternity		x		
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			x	
Island populations		x		
Low income			x	
Low wealth			x	
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?		x		

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Users (*members of the public / partners*), explain what these will be.**

Disability & Age

Service Users of the Customer Engagement Hub will be positively impacted as this hub is currently located in Eaglesham House which is at the top of a steep hill which could prove a difficulty for some customers and staff. The relocation of the Hub to the Victoria Street office will offer a much more accessible space which is close to public transport.

The Hub building will be DDA compliant, with amendments having been made to access and WC facilities.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/a.

Impact on Service Deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):
Town 2 (Rothesay) – Customer Engagement Hub (Victoria Street)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age			X	
Disability			X	
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity			X	
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population				X
Island populations				X
Low income				X
Low wealth				X
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place?				X
Communities of interest?				X

If you have identified any impacts on Service Deliverers (employees, volunteers, etc.), explain what these will be.

Disability & Age

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Pregnancy & Maternity

Work spaces will be located in a ground floor, single storey building, meaning no requirement for staff to climb stairs to access offices, work spaces, meeting rooms or welfare facilities.

Mainland rural population/ Island Populations

With the opportunity for more posts to be carried out remotely, this could improve chances for those living on islands and in more rural areas to gain employment and help to fill posts which have previously been difficult to fill.

Low income/ Low wealth

One of the aims of the hybrid working policy is to support employees to find ways of working that balance their personal preferences with work requirements. The cost of

working from home was raised as a challenge by some employees in the survey While there would be no financial detriment to employees who could continue to work from the office, they may perceive that there is a negative impact on the level of flexibility they can have around where they work if they would like to work from home but can't afford to. This may refer more to a curtailing of the positive impact as opposed to having a negative impact or detriment to this group of employees.

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How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

N/a

Impact on **Service Users** (*members of the public / partners*):
 Town 3 (Islay) – Customer Engagement Hub (**Jamieson Street**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age			x	
Disability			x	
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x		
Pregnancy and Maternity		x		
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			x	
Island populations		x		
Low income			x	
Low wealth			x	
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?		x		

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Users (*members of the public / partners*), explain what these will be.**

Mainland rural population/ Island Populations

With the opportunity for more posts to be carried out remotely, this could improve chances for those living on islands and in more rural areas to gain employment and help to fill posts which have previously been difficult to fill.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/a

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Multiple service users will access the building through the same main entrance. Operational management arrangements will be put in place to mitigate against any conflict.

Impact on **Service Deliverers** (including employees, volunteers etc):
 Town 3 (Islay) Customer Engagement Hub (**Jamieson Street**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population				X
Island populations				X
Low income				X
Low wealth				X
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place?				X
Communities of interest?				X

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Deliverers (employees, volunteers, etc.), explain what these will be.**

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Communities of Interest- Carers

Having more flexible arrangements around how we work could have positive impact on carers who may have to be available at short notice.

If any 'don't knows' have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

Ongoing staff engagement into individual requirements is underway through the HR policies and procedures currently under review. This will identify any groups that may fall within the "negative" category and each impact will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

N/a

Impact on **Service Users** (*members of the public / partners*):
 Town 4 (Oban) – Customer Engagement Hub (**Municipal Building**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		x		
Disability		x		
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		x		
Gender reassignment		x		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x		
Pregnancy and Maternity		x		
Religion		x		
Sexual Orientation		x		
Fairer Scotland Duty:		x		
Mainland rural population		x		
Island populations		x		
Low income		x		
Low wealth		x		
Material deprivation		x		
Area deprivation		x		
Socio-economic background		x		
Communities of place?		x		
Communities of interest?		x		

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How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

Multiple service users will access the building through the same main entrance. Operational management arrangements are in place to mitigate against any conflict.

Impact on **Service Deliverers** (including employees, volunteers etc):
 Town 4 Oban – Customer Engagement Hub (**Municipal Building**)

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			X	
Island populations			X	
Low income		X		
Low wealth		X		
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place?				X
Communities of interest?				X

If you have identified any impacts on **Service Deliverers (employees, volunteers, etc.), explain what these will be.**

Mainland rural population/ Island Populations

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Low income/ Low wealth

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How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

N/a

Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the Council /HCSP?

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Yes

Details of knock-on effects identified

Once the review of each town is completed and any reconfiguration of office space and relocation of staff is complete, a further review of surplus building will be undertaken and identify which buildings can be re-purposed or disposed of.

Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?

Through levels of service demand, performance and staff feedback

Section 6: Publication

How will you publish this EQIA?

This EQIA will be presented to the Project Board.

The EQIA will be published on both the Council and NHS Highland website once all 8 towns have been assessed.