

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCREENING DOCUMENT

Name of Proposal

Use of the Canmore Room for Civil Marriage, Partnership Registrations and Private Citizenship Ceremonies

Lead Department/Service

Legal and Democratic Services – Registration Service

What is the aim of the proposal?

The aim of the proposal is to agree to use the Canmore Room for Civil Marriage, Partnership Registrations and Private Citizenship Ceremonies.

Is this a new or a review of an existing policy, procedure, function or report?

This is a new report regarding a new proposal

Screening Process

1. Has the proposal already been assessed for its impact on age; disability; gender; gender re-assignment; pregnancy/maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion and belief; and sexual orientation? **If yes, go to 1 a. If no, go to 1 b.**

1 a. Unless there have been significant changes, no further action is required. **Please add your name, position and date below at 3.**

1 b. Does the proposal involve or have consequences for the people the council serves or employs? **If yes, go to 2. If no, go to 1 c.**

1 c. Please state why not

The proposal is not relevant and no further action is required. Sign and date below at 3.

2. Is the proposal relevant to one or more of the protected characteristics? **If yes, go to 2 a. If no, go to 2 b.**

2 a. Proceed to Step 1 of the Full Equality Impact Assessment on page 2.

2 b. Please state why not

The proposal not relevant and no further action is required. Add your name, position and date below at 3.

3. Name:

Position:

Date:

FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Step 1

Are there any statutory legal requirements affecting this proposal? If so please describe.

The Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977 permits a registrar to solemnise a civil marriage in his registration office or at an appropriate place in the registration district of the authorised registrar. The Registration Service has three offices (in Montrose, Arbroath and Forfar) and each office has a room set aside and furnished for conducting civil marriages, partnership registrations and private citizenship ceremonies. . In accordance with the Council's accommodation strategy, work is ongoing to co-locate this Service within other Council premises. Issues may arise in respect of the availability of accommodation to conduct the ceremonies referred to above but it is not thought that these issues are insurmountable.

It is against this background that consideration has been given to using the Canmore Room for conducting civil marriages, partnership registrations and private citizenship ceremonies. The use of the Canmore Room will reduce the accommodation requirements of a co-located Forfar Registration Office. In addition, it is considered that the location and suitability of the Canmore Room for conducting these types of ceremonies may increase the number of persons wishing to use the Registration Service which could result in additional revenue. The Registration Service has been seeking to increase revenue by promoting the use of its services at local marriage fairs and by introducing additional services (such as Renewal of Marriage Vows and Baby Naming Ceremonies). The Registration Service is also in the process of preparing a brochure advertising the services and facilities available in Angus.

If the Committee is minded to permit the use of the Canmore Room for conducting civil marriages, partnership registrations and private citizenship ceremonies, then it must prohibit the use of the Room for conducting religious or belief ceremonies. The National Registers of Scotland is responsible for the arrangements for registering births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships in Scotland. They have been clear that if premises are to be designated as a "registration office" for the purposes of the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977 then the premises cannot be used for conducting religious or belief. It is understood that this is required to preserve the distinction between religious marriage ceremonies and the civil marriage ceremonies performed by the Registration Service. It is not known that the Canmore Room has ever been used for such ceremonies (religious or otherwise).

Step 2

What data/research is available to assess the likely impact of the proposal?

None

Step 3

Is there any reason to believe the proposal could affect people differently due to their protected characteristic ie age; disability; gender; gender re-assignment; pregnancy/maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion and belief; and sexual orientation? Please **place a cross** in each box that applies, and give details alongside.

Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Gender Re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Pregnancy/maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Marriage and civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriages and civil partnership can take place in the Canmore Room
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Religion and belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religious and belief based ceremonies cannot take place in the Canmore Room

Sexual orientation

Step 4

Is there evidence to suggest that any part of the proposal could unlawfully discriminate against people? If so, how?

Persons with who wish religious or belief based marriage ceremonies will not be able to use the Canmore Room

Step 5

Can the proposal be seen to favour one section of the community

Yes X No

or deny opportunities to another?

Yes X No

If yes, please give details.

Persons who wish to enter Civil Marriage and Partnership Registrations will be able to use the Canmore Room for Ceremonies whereas persons who wish religious or belief based marriage ceremonies will not be able to use the Canmore Room.

Step 6

Does the proposal advance or restrict equality?

Yes X No

If yes, give details

It could be seen that person with certain religious beliefs are being treated differently to others.

Step 7

Are there any other actions which could have been taken to enhance equality of opportunity?

If so please state

The only option to do this would be to not use the Canmore Room for Civil Marriage and Partnership Registrations (with a potential loss of income).

Step 8

Based on the work you have done, rate the level of relevance being allocated to this proposal.

High Medium Low X Unknown

Step 9

If during **Steps 3 - 6** there has been an adverse impact identified, consider whether this can be justified.

Yes X No

If yes please give details.

The Council currently have three marriage rooms in Angus which are solely used for Civil Marriage and Partnership Registrations. These Rooms cannot be used for religious or belief based marriage ceremonies. The proposal will make available an additional service which should generate income. The Canmore Room will be treated exactly the same as the current three marriage rooms in Angus. It should also be noted that the Registration Service cannot perform religious or belief based marriage ceremonies. The use of the Canmore Room and the required restriction is a requirement of legislation.

Advice has been obtained from the National Records of Scotland. This issue turns on whether the Room is used

by the public for a variety of purposes. The Canmore Room is not available for booking by the public and is used solely in connection with Council or Council related functions.

If no, consider alternative ways of delivering the proposal to minimise negative impact or eliminate unlawful discrimination. Give details of the changes to be made to the proposal.

Step 10

Do you need to carry out a further impact assessment?

Yes No

If yes, what actions do you need to take?

Step 11

Make arrangements to monitor and review the impact assessment.

The number of Civil Marriages and Partnership Registrations in the Canmore Room ceremonies will be monitored as will the number of requests to use the Canmore Room for religious or belief based marriage ceremonies.

In the event that the Canmore Room becomes available for booking by the public then the situation will be re-visited.

Step 12

Publish impact assessment.

Where will the Equality Impact Assessment be published?

On the Council's website

Please state your name, position and date, and forward this pro forma either to your designated Equality Impact Assessment Co-ordinator, or if it refers to a committee report, it should be forwarded with the report to committee services.

Name: David Thompson

Position: Principal Solicitor

Date: 22 August 2016

For additional information and advice please contact:
the Equalities Officer - Tel: 01307 476058 or E-mail: Equalities@angus.gov.uk