



## Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

### Step 1

**Name of Proposal** (includes e. g. budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions): Hybrid model options for all future committee meetings

### Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment

No

**(A)** If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people

Yes/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics

Yes/No

(iii) It is for information only

Yes/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year

Yes/No

(v) It is technical

Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

**(B)** If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment

Yes

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment

No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

### Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service: HR, Digital Enablement and IT, BS and OD, Infrastructure.

(ii)Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

No - S43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 deals with remote participation in and calling of local authority meetings and states the following:

(1) The meetings of a local authority and its committees, including joint committees, and sub-committees thereof may (as well as being conducted in the way in which they have been conducted before the commencement of this section, that is to say, by all members being present together in a pre-determined place) be conducted in any other way in which each member is enabled to participate although not present with others in such a place.

And

S.9b of the standing orders deal with remote meetings and state the following:

Remote Members will be counted for the purposes of determining whether there is a quorum.

- A Remote Member will cast their vote as if participating in a roll call vote.
- Any Remote Member who has declared an interest in an item and withdrawn must pause/exit the communication link whilst the item is being considered. The Clerk will inform/re-invite the Remote Member (whether by email or otherwise) when to re-start the link and resume their participation.
- Any Remote Member must confirm that they are in a secure private location, and that no-one else is able to hear the proceedings from the device being used by that Remote Member, before they can participate in the consideration of any confidential and/or exempt item of business.

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

The proposal identifies and recommends options for either holding hybrid council and committee meetings in the council chambers or Angus House or retaining a purely remote model.

(iv)Is it a new proposal?      No      Please indicate      OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function?      Yes      Please indicate Previous reports on hybrid options and positions on holding remote council and committee meetings

**Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?**

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees	Yes
Job Applicants	No
Service users	No
Members of the public	Yes

**Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:**

**Internal data** (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Data from the YouTube channel shows that interest in viewing committee meetings has generally increased since 2020, with recent full council meetings reaching up to 700+ views.

**Internal consultation** (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Internal consultation has taken place between IT, Infrastructure Services and Democratic Services.

**External data** (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

**External consultation** (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Consultation has taken place with external hardware and software suppliers to determine potential accessibility issues.

**Other** (general information as appropriate).

Many other Councils in Scotland are moving to offer hybrid meetings which will involve an element of live meetings by their nature.

**Step 6: Evidence Gaps.**

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold?      No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

**Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups?**

Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected.

Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**. **Yes**

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.**

Age Yes

**Impact**

Face to face meetings can be less accessible for those of childbearing years and for staff/elected members who have caring responsibilities.

Younger people are more likely to use technology to join remotely, rather than attend in person. However, older people are possibly more likely not to be digitally enabled.

Using Angus House rather than the Council Chamber may require additional bus journeys for anyone travelling by public transport.

Disability Yes

**Impact**

Face to face meetings may impact on attendees with a disability which may be further increased for those with a disability using public transport to attend the meeting. There is an option, (where attendance is not required) for those to watch the meeting on the live stream.

Any technology introduced to deliver hybrid meetings would have to have accessibility built-in to operate or to view/hear livestreams or recordings of meetings.

Gender reassignment - No

**Impact**

Marriage and Civil Partnership - No

**Impact**

Pregnancy/Maternity - No

**Impact**

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers) - No

**Impact**

Religion or Belief - No

**Impact**

Sex – Yes

Statistically, women are still predominantly carers (of young and older people) therefore attendance in person may have a negative impact. This is in terms of travel time and being present for caring activities needed

**Impact**

Sexual orientation - No

**Impact**

**Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected**

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

**Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?**

**Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.**

See step 11.

**Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?**

Advances the equality of opportunity as people have the choice to attend physically or remotely, with the exception of option 1 which would mean that those who are not digitally enabled would be excluded.

It is taking cognisance of the fact that people of different protected characteristics have different needs. For some, in person is more favourable, and for others, attending virtually is preferable.

For anyone with specific requirements then reasonable adjustment would need to be made to allow participation.

**Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?**

See Step 11.

**Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

**Step 13(A) What evidence do you have about any socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome in relation to this strategic issue?**

**Step 13(B) Please state if there are any gaps in socio-economic evidence for this strategy and how you will take measures to gather the evidence you need.**

**Step 13(C) Are there any potential impacts this strategy may have specifically on the undernoted groupings?** Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each grouping.**

**Low and/or No Wealth** (e.g. those with 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.

**Impact**

**Material Deprivation** (i.e. those unable to access basic goods and services e.g. repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies).

**Impact**

**Area Deprivation** (i.e. where people live (e.g. rural areas), or where they work (e.g. accessibility of transport).

**Impact**

**Socio-economic Background** i.e. social class including parents' education, people's employment and income.

**Impact**

**Other** – please indicate

**Step 13(D) Please state below if there are measures which could be taken to reduce socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome.**

**Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?**

**Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?**

**Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation.** Please state name, post, and date for each:

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NB. There are several worked examples of separate EIA and FSD Assessments in the Guidance which may be of use to you.

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