



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):

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- Any Remote Member who has declared an interest in an item and withdrawn must pause/exit the communication link whilst the item is being considered.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 holding hybrid council and committee meetings in the council chambers. This includes physical and technical accessibility requirements for attending and viewing hybrid meetings.

(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**.

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.

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.

The revised chamber layout and recommended furniture has been designed to ensure accessibility for wheelchair users.

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.

The audio-only option would not be accessible to British Sign Language users who rely on lip reading to follow the livestream or the recording.

The static camera option may not provide a good enough representation of speakers to allow users who rely on lip reading to follow the livestream or the recording.

The recommended option using intelligent zooming cameras offers maximum accessibility for all users

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 - No

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.

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?

All options to ensure maximum accessibility have been considered.

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

This EIA will be reviewed if there are any further developments that impact hybrid meeting arrangements.

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

This will be included with the committee report on the council web site.

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

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Approved by: Gavin Balfour – Acting Director of Infrastructure – 18 June 2022

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