



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):

Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment Yes/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/No

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Yes/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:

Chief Executive as Parliamentary Returning Officer

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

Section 18(c) of the Representation of the People Act 1983

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

The aim of this proposal/review is to ensure that every elector in Angus has such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable, and that there are no unnecessary barriers to voting for those who may have any form of disability.

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

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? ~~Yes/No~~ Please indicate

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

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees Yes/No

Job Applicants Yes/No

Service users Yes/No

Members of the public Yes/~~No~~

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).

The elections team considered Angus Council's policy on access for people with disabilities prior to making any recommendations.

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

The election staff are asked to provide feedback on the suitability of the halls at each election. Staff are asked to provide feedback on any issues, complaints, comments from electors, candidates and agents. These are held in the polling station logbooks and are recorded on a spreadsheet after the election. Any such feedback is highlighted for closer scrutiny. This feedback was used when considering the recommendations and the consultation response received.

The Equalities Officer at Angus Council was consulted with, who then took steps to contact organisations and individuals who sit on the Angus Disability Forum. No responses were received.

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

The elections team undertook an accessibility evaluation in relation to the Memus and the Glens Community Hall on 26 September 2023. No issues were identified; however, it was noted that there are no bus links to the polling place. This can be mitigated by postal voting being available.

Data from the previous polling station reviews of Monifieth Parish Church, which was undertaken in 2021, and Meadowbank Inn, which was undertaken in 2022, was considered when making recommendations.

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

A public consultation was undertaken on 2 October 2023, to 30 October 2023. The consultation invited comments from any person or body with expertise in access to premises or facilities for persons with any type of disability to make a representation or comment on the authority's proposals, the Returning Officer's representations or any other matters relating to the review. The consultation document was also published on the Angus Council website, circulated via social media and copies were available at Angus House, Bruce House and in public libraries.

One response was received during the consultation period. The response was an email which raised concerns regarding the proposed changes in relation to Monifieth Church. Concern was raised in relation to the available parking for individuals seeking to attend the church to vote. There are two car parks immediately opposite the planned polling place and concern was raised that these are usually busy with shoppers, meaning limited turnover of parking spaces. A question was raised in relation to what consideration had been made around ensuring voters who access the polling places by car are able to park nearby.

The election team advised that although Monifieth Church does not have its own car park, there is on street parking available. Tesco car park is also over the road and there are two public car parks on Reform Street, which is around the corner from the church. The location also sits on a main bus route for Monifieth for anyone who has concerns in relation to the parking and would rather take public transport.

Further to this, the elections team took steps to review the data from the last two elections, where Monifieth Church Hall was used for the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary election and the

2022 Government election. The elections team confirmed that no complaints were received directly from electors or via the polling station staff regarding any issues with parking.

The Returning Officer also issued the consultation to a number of organisations who have experience in assessing the access requirements for persons with different types of disabilities. No responses were received.

Other (general information as appropriate).

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

Memus and the Glens Community Hall

Impact: Negative:

There are no public transport links, i.e no bus links for the Memus and the Glens Community Hall. Those who are younger may not be in a financial position to afford their own car and therefore rely on public transport. Similarly, those who are elderly may no longer drive and they may rely on public transport. Both would not be able to access the polling station.

However, this can be mitigated with the option of a postal vote. It should also be noted that no complaints have been received previously for Memus Hall.

Monifieth Church:

Impact: Positive

The initial change occurred during the last election as an interim measure, from Grange Primary, to Gerald Hall, to Monifieth Church.

This will positively impact those who attend Grange Primary as they will not miss out on their classes, as Grange Primary will no longer have to close to accommodate the elections.

The Church is located on the high street in Carnoustie and on the main bus route. There is a bus stop opposite the Tesco Superstore and one further down located opposite the

Prestige Garage. Those who are elderly and can no longer drive will still be able to access the polling station via bus. Similarly, those who are younger and are not in the financial position to buy a car will have access too.

Meadowbank Inn:

Impact: Positive

The polling station is being moved from Arbroath Academy to Meadow bank Inn. Again, this would reflect in a further reduction in the use of schools, which will positively impact those who attend Arbroath Academy, as they will not have to miss out on their classes.

There is a main bus route to Montrose 30 bus stop, which is approximately 200 yards from the polling station. As noted above, those who are elderly and can no longer drive will still be able to access the polling station via bus. Similarly, those who are younger and are not in the financial position to buy a car will have access too.

Disability

Memus and the Glens Community Hall:

Impact: Negative.

There are no bus links to Memus and the Glens Community Hall which could be considered a negative impact for those who cannot drive due to their disability.

This can be mitigated by the option of postal voting being available. It should also be noted that no complaints have been received previously for Memus Hall.

Monifieth Church:

Impact: Positive

The Church is located on the high street in Carnoustie and on the main bus route. There is a bus stop opposite the Tesco Superstore and one further down located opposite the Prestige Garage. This means that those who are unable to drive due to their disability will still have access to the polling station.

This polling station has accessible facilities. For example, there are parking facilities available for those with a disability, there is level access, the entrance is wide enough for wheelchair use, the building is fully accessible and there are large wide corridors and a wheelchair lift to the upper hall.

Meadowbank Inn:

Impact: Positive

For those who cannot drive due to a disability, there is a main bus route to Montrose 30 bus stop, which is approximately 200 yards from the polling station.

This polling station is accessible for those with a disability, for example, a disabled ramp has been fitted to the main entrance of the Café. Although there are no disabled parking spaces,

cones can be placed to mark out disabled parking spaces. There is also access to disabled toilets.

Gender reassignment

Impact: Neutral

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact: Neutral

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact: Neutral

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

Impact: Neutral

Religion or Belief

Impact: Neutral

Sex

Impact: Neutral

Sexual orientation

Impact: Neutral

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.

The Returning Officer issued the consultation to a number of organisations who have experience in assessing the access requirements for persons with different types of disabilities. No responses were received.

The Equalities Officer issued the consultation to organisations and individuals who sit on the Angus Disability Forum. No responses were received.

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)?

N/A

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

Postal voting will be available for those who are unable to access the polling stations.

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

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?

A fundamental aspect of the review process is to ensure the provision of suitable polling arrangements for all electors, including those with a disability. Premises are assessed for the suitability for wheelchair users in terms of interior space, door width, level flooring, toilets for voters with a disability, smooth car park surfaces, clear internal light, etc.

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

N/A

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?

N/A

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.

N/A

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 N/A

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 N/A

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

Impact N/A

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

Impact N/A

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.

N/A

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

Under Section 18(c) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, a review of polling districts and places is required every five years.

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

With the report to Council seeking approval for the amendments to the current polling arrangements.

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

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Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities)

Approved by: Alison Watson, Service Leader – Legal & Procurement 08/12/23

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