



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):

Reduction of funding for Angus Virtual School (AVS), the Council's improvement service for education.

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	Yes

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:

Education and Lifelong Learning

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

This proposal will impact on our ability to meet the statutory duty to secure improvement in education as defined by:
Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

In general terms it will also impact on the duty of Best Value as defined by:
Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

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

To reduce the funding available to AVS. If approved, this will primarily remove our ability to fund secondments into AVS and reduce the team by 2 full time equivalent seconded posts. Taking forward this saving will reduce our ability to develop a systems leadership approach, support school inspections and deliver core improvement work. Dedicated input to STEM, Literacy and Numeracy, Learning for Sustainability and regional collaboration will be reduced. Priorities in the Angus Education Plan will be reviewed and amended to reflect the reduced level of resource.

(iv)Is it a new proposal? No

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? Yes, this efficiency was first included in the 2023-24 Change Programme as a potential saving in future years.

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

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees	Yes
Job Applicants	Yes
Service users	Yes
Members of the public	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).

Angus Education Plan including Stretch Aims
Achievement of a Level data – Literacy and Numeracy
Senior Phase Attainment data
Annual census returns including pupil:teacher ratio
Attendance and exclusion data
Free school meal and school clothing grant eligibility data
Child Poverty Index
Inspection data.

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

Directorate Senior Leadership Team, including the Head Teacher of AVS
Head Teachers
Trade Union reps
Evaluation of the Angus Virtual School 22-23

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

National Improvement Framework
Additional Support for Learning Review and Action Plan
Equity Audit – January 2021
Scottish Attainment Challenge - Framework for Accelerating Progress and Recovery
The Promise
UNCRC
Outcome of inspection activity by Education Scotland.
Hayward Report.
Muir Report.
Withers Report.
Target 2030.

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

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

Impact – negative – children and young people

The purpose of the AVS service is to support improvement activity and the implementation of education strategy as defined by Scottish Government. While the statutory duty to secure improvement existed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been brought into sharp focus in the context of post-pandemic recovery and the need to accelerate progress in addressing the significant disruption experienced by learners. Social inequalities and trauma have been exacerbated by the pandemic and can impact the ability of some children and young people to learn and thrive at school. A decision not to continue to fund secondments to the AVS will limit the capacity of our schools to deliver improved educational outcomes for all children, including those who are care-experienced and those affected by the poverty related attainment gap.

If capacity is reduced, current workplans may have to be reprioritised according to resource. Projects may take longer to achieve their expected outcome.

With regards to recruitment and workforce development, taking a saving from AVS will impact on our commitment to offer robust development opportunities to middle and aspiring leaders. Long-term this could impact our approach to systems leadership and the quality of school leaders. This will also impact on recruitment and succession planning to the ELL central leadership team.

The combined impact of this may result in a negative effect for our children and young people; and a reduction in professional learning for our school staff. However, there will be no impact on children's rights as set out in the UNCRC. This includes Article 28, the right to education.

Disability

Impact – neutral

We will continue to meet the needs of learners with additional support needs, by allocating specialist and additional staff, where necessary and appropriate, from dedicated ASN budgets.

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.

N/A

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?

- Some AVS capacity will be retained and deployed according to need in our schools and ELL improvement activity.

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

The ELL improvement service will continue to be available but in a reduced capacity.

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?

N/A

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?

The Angus Virtual School is our improvement service. An important element of their remit is the preparation and chairing of a schedule of progress in learning meetings in our schools. These meetings examine the progress of groups of children and individual children. Children living with the greatest levels of socio-economic disadvantage are the focus of these meetings.

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 - neutral

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 - neutral

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

Impact - negative

This proposal could affect this grouping. We know which areas have higher levels of relative deprivation and our capacity to address the impact of the poverty-related attainment gap in these areas may be reduced. Data from the Child Poverty Index prepared for Angus demonstrates wider levels of deprivation than is suggested by SIMD analysis. This proposal may limit our ability to mitigate impact on children and young people living in these areas.

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

Impact - negative

This proposal could affect this grouping, depending on the backgrounds of our families. This group is linked to Area Deprivation above. We do not directly hold information about the socio-economic backgrounds of our families, however we do hold more general information about free school meal and school clothing grant entitlement, as well as low income households which is utilised as a proxy through the Child Poverty Index. We also hold information about the care experience of children and young people in our schools and ELCs. These factors are all linked to the poverty-related attainment gap, and it can therefore be suggested that there is a potentially negative impact due to our reduced capacity to address this.

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?

The Assessment will be reviewed in the context of updates to the Angus Education Plan and routine performance monitoring.

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

On the Council website with the committee report.

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

Prepared by: Beth Reader, Service Leader – ELL, 05 February 2024.

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities), 13 February 2024.

Approved by: Kelly McIntosh, Director of Education & Lifelong Learning, 08 February 2024