



## Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

### Step 1

#### Name of Proposal

To adopt a British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024 – 2030.

### 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

### Step 3

(i) Lead Directorate/Service: HR, Digital Enablement & IT & Business Support

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

The BSL Scotland Act 2015

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

To meet our statutory requirement of producing a new BSL Plan, 2024 – 2030, and to report on actions from 2018 – 2024. It also states what we aim to do over the next six years to 2030.

(iv)Is it a new proposal?      Yes      Please indicate      OR

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

#### **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	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).

Not applicable.

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

The relevant council services, AHSCP, and Angus Alive were all consulted and a short-term working group was arranged. This was necessary in order to gather input regarding what actions for BSL had been taking place over the last six years, and to identify any actions planned over the next six years.

Members of the council's corporate equalities group were also consulted.

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

The 2011 Census lists 262 people in Angus who use BSL at home. For many of these BSL users English is not their first language, so to have a Plan which will promote and support BSL in Angus will have a major impact on a significant number of them.

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

Two joint engagement sessions with BSL users, Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Perth & Kinross Council and Tayside Health Board were held in January and February 2024. 25 -

30 BSL users took part over the two sessions, held in the Deaf Hub in Dundee. The first session was chaired by the British Deaf Association (BDA) but the BDA was not in attendance at the second one.

The purpose of consulting with BSL users was to gather their views regarding what progress in BSL they felt had been made over the last six years, and what they would like to be included in the BSL Plan for 2024 – 2030. These views have been incorporated into our BSL Plan.

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

The Angus Disability Forum, which includes membership of an organisation representing BSL users in Angus, was consulted with.

### **Step 6: Evidence Gaps.**

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold?      Yes

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

The data available on the number of BSL users is out-of-date, as the 2022 Census information has not yet been released. We have no control over the release of this data.

### **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** Positive. Although BSL users are included in all age groups, there are specific actions in both the National BSL Plan, 2023 - 2029, and in our BSL Plan, 2024 - 2030, regarding Early Years, and school education.

Disability

**Impact** Positive. There is a positive impact for BSL users in Angus to improve access to a wide range of information and public services in BSL and encourage their participation in public life. In addition, there are specific actions in both the National BSL Plan, 2023 - 2029, and in our BSL Plan, 2024 - 2030, under Health (including social care), and Wellbeing.

Gender reassignment

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Pregnancy/Maternity

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Religion or Belief

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Sex

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

Sexual orientation

**Impact** Neutral. No specific impact on BSL users.

### **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.

Details of consultation carried out are listed in Step 5.

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)?

There are no negative impacts identified. All actions in the Plan are to improve the lives of people who are BSL users in Angus.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable. Our aim is to remove barriers, such as with communication, to improve inclusivity of BSL users in Angus.

### **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?**

BSL users form a minority group which is more likely to feel isolated due to the nature of their disability. This Plan aims to advance equal opportunities by increasing their inclusivity and improving their life chances, in particular for young BSL users. In addition, it aims to continue to provide equal access to education, cultural activities, employment, health etc. for all BSL users living and/or working in Angus.

The proposal also aims to foster good relations between those who's first language is BSL, and others who do not understand BSL, by providing BSL as a 1+2 language in some primary schools and by providing opportunities for staff to learn BSL.

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

Not applicable.

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

It will be monitored as the BSL Plan develops.

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

Alongside the relevant committee report on the council's website.

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

Prepared by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities), 22.03.24.

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities), 22.03.24.

Approved by: Sharon Faulkner, Director of HR, OD, DE, IT & Business Support 02/04/24