

North Ayrshire Council

Equality & Children's Rights Impact Assessment (Full Form)

Introduction

This form will assist in carrying out an **Equality Impact Assessment** and where appropriate, **Socio-Economic, Children's Rights, Island Communities and Consumer Duty Impacts** of new, revised and existing policies and practices. Guidance on how to complete assessments is given in the Council's **Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment Toolkit**.

The form is mandatory and must be published on the Council website once the policy or practice has been approved.

1. General Details

1.1 **Directorate/Service:** Place/Sustainability, Transport & Corporate Property
Section: Property Management & Investment

1.2 **Name of Policy, Practice of Proposal being assessed:**

Relocation of Customer Service Centre from Bridgegate House and Galt House
This is a **new** proposal.

1.3 **List of participants in the assessment**

David Oliver, Team Manager PMI

Donna McIlwraith, Team Manager Homeless Prevention & Advice

Annie Johnson, HSCP - Principal Manager (Business Support Services)

Elaine Nixon, Senior Manager Customer Services

Angela McNamara, Project Manager

1.4 **Manager responsible for the impact assessment**

Name: David Oliver Designation: Team Manager PMI

1.5 **Timetable (should be started during the development phase of the proposal)**

Date Assessment Started: 14 January 2026

Interim Review Date: August 2026

Final sign off by Head of Service at the end of the form.

2. Aims and Relevance

2.1 What is the purpose of the policy practice or proposal?

The proposal aims to relocate the Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) from Bridgegate House and the Housing Advice Team (HAT) located at Galt House to Cunninghame House as part of the wider Irvine Accommodation Programme. The relocation supports optimisation of office accommodation, creates an updated CSC facility on the ground floor of Cunninghame House, and consolidates customer facing services within a single site.

As part of the approach to address the financial challenges currently facing local authorities, the Council has adopted an ambitious sustainable change programme aligned to its Medium-Term Financial Plan, Council Plan and other relevant strategies. One of the key workstreams within the programme is focused on land and property. The purpose of the land and property workstream is to rationalise the Council's property estate, in a managed way, in order to:

- Reduce the Council's carbon emissions arising from the property estate and future exposure to investment requirements for public sector buildings to achieve ZDE ('zero direct emissions').
- Reduce property running costs, i.e. from rates, utilities etc. • Reduce property maintenance and future investment costs, to enable limited resources to be focused on property assets that will be retained in the longer term
- Address under-utilisation of key office accommodation and provide a proportionate property estate that ensures members of the public can access the services they need
- Provide potential opportunities for community ownership of surplus property assets
- Consider wider opportunities linked to existing and forthcoming regeneration proposals, for example the recent £20 million allocation for Irvine town centre as part of the Levelling Up Fund

The majority of staff based at Cunninghame House and Bridgegate House are operating on an agile working pattern. This provides an opportunity to optimise utilisation of available office accommodation in line with the objectives above. The office accommodation across Cunninghame House, Bridgegate House and Galt House has been mapped against future working requirements to understand the scale of potential, while ensuring that sufficient office accommodation, civic space, meeting space, storage facilities etc. are provided both for now and the future.

Following the creation of a new Customer Service Centre, mirroring similar provision as currently provided (and planned) at Bridgegate House, including required interview rooms, all remaining staff in Bridgegate House (ie those not relocated as part of earlier phases) and Galt House will be relocated.

3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 **What evidence were you able to access about the relevant needs of protected groups as outlined in section 3.3 below** (Please include your sources – links to equality providers and evidence can be found in both the toolkit and the [Promoting Equality](#) Page on Connects).

Equality Act 2010 – Reasonable Adjustments: -

- Disability (physical, sensory, learning and neurodiversity): Anticipatory reasonable adjustments are embedded in the CSC design and operation, including step-free public access, wheelchair-accessible interview rooms, accessible customer WC facilities, and an induction hearing loop installed at reception which will be tested and maintained. Private interview rooms can be used to support communication needs, privacy and reduced sensory stimulation.
- Pregnancy & maternity: A separate risk assessment has been completed for new and expectant mothers, recognising reduced mobility and balance, fatigue, use of prams/buggies, increased toileting needs and the need to minimise waiting times. Controls include accessible WC with baby changing facilities, staff assistance where required and access to private interview rooms for sensitive discussions.
- Age (children and young people): A separate risk assessment has been completed for young people, recognising safeguarding needs and potential vulnerability in a public waiting environment. Controls include staff supervision, CCTV monitoring and the ability to relocate young people to private interview rooms if required.

Feasibility study undertaken by Atkins Realis – NAC Office Consolidation

While the buildings are in close proximity to one another the concern would be for any disabled, elderly or neurodivergent customers who arrive via public transport which stops at Bridgegate House. However, a google search confirms close proximity (0.5miles) and per google maps, a 10- minute walk via the Rivergate Mall. A review of the Rivergate Mall website confirms that the mall is wheelchair accessible with lifts and ramps for use. This is further validated by Euan's Guide review, a trusted disabled access charity working to make it easier, safer and more rewarding for disabled people and their families, friends and carers to discover accessible places which scores it 4 out of 5 stars. Cunninghame House is already an accessible building with ramps to the public entrance and disabled parking in very close proximity. The changes at Cunninghame House have been completed in line with Building Standards and have been improved overall with 3 of the 6 interview rooms being wheelchair accessible and public access to a disabled toilet with baby changing facilities. Customers will be provided with sufficient notice of the relocation to allow them to adjust to the new location and raise any concerns.

3.2 Are there any gaps in your evidence or areas of uncertainty?

- No direct engagement with disabled people’s organisations or young people has been undertaken at the time of assessment; reliance has been placed on internal service expertise and operational risk assessment. Post-implementation feedback will be used to identify any unforeseen barriers and inform further reasonable adjustments.
- Customer Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are not in place due to the nature of a public access building. Evacuation chairs and refuge points are provided within restricted access stairwells for staff use only. Customers will be supported through staff-assisted evacuation procedures.

3.3 From the list of protected characteristic groups identified in section 3.3, please identify any potential positive and negative impacts on any of these protected characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Impact on the Protected Characteristic? (yes, no, not applicable)	Please Explain (Positive or Negative or Neutral)
<p>Age - Older people, children and young people – please identify which categories will be affected</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Relocation changes the physical access point for customers; older people and young people may be more sensitive to building layout, travel distance, and navigation. New CSC is within close proximity of current CSC and Galt House and located in Irvine town centre. There are 7 bus stops within a 5 minute walking distance of Cunninghame House and Irvine train station is a 4 min walk. There is a range of suitable parking locations within close proximity to the building. No direct evidence of negative impact.</p>
<p>Disability - Physical and Learning</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>As above, relocation changes the physical access point. As noted in section 3.1, short walk to Cunninghame House which is already an accessible building. Interview rooms being created to allow wheelchair access and access to disabled toilet facilities. Hearing loop being installed. Potential negative impact for neurodivergent customers as due to space, no</p>

Protected Characteristic	Impact on the Protected Characteristic? (yes, no, not applicable)	Please Explain (Positive or Negative or Neutral)
		ability to provide separate quiet waiting areas, although there are interview rooms that can be utilised.
Gender reassignment - When a person is living in a gender other than their birth gender.	No	No evidence suggests differential impact. Services remain unchanged
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	Relocation is not expected to create a barrier. Accessible building with ramps that can be used for pram access. Other reasonable adjustments include accessible WC with baby changing facilities, staff assistance where required, appointment/triage to minimise waiting times. Potential to access Mothering Room in building if excessive wait time results in such requirement. Access to private interview rooms to reduce stress.
Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins (including gypsy/ travellers, refugees and asylum seekers)	No	No evidence indicates differential impact.
Religion or belief (includes religious and philosophical beliefs, including no belief)	No	No service or environmental change affects religious practices.
Sex - Women and Men	No	No changes to service delivery model

Protected Characteristic	Impact on the Protected Characteristic? (yes, no, not applicable)	Please Explain (Positive or Negative or Neutral)
Sexual Orientation – such as lesbian, gay and bisexual people.	No	No changes to service delivery model
Marriage and Civil Partnership - this includes same sex couples	No	No evidence of differential impact
Human Rights	No	Access to public services is maintained.
Care Experienced - This term refers to anyone who is currently in care or has been for any length of time regardless of their age and includes Kinship Care (other family members); Looked After at Home (with support from social work); Residential Care ; Foster Care ; Secure Care ; Adoption .	No	No direct impact.
Other - Homelessness, ex-offenders, carers, part-time workers	Yes	Homeless team relocating to Cunninghame House. Design of rooms and operating space has been created in close consultation with team. No confirmed negative impacts. Potential positive due to more parking available

3.4 Describe any consultation or engagement undertaken, including details of the groups involved and the methods used.

Operational risk assessments for vulnerable customer groups (new and expectant mothers, young people and those with underlying health conditions) have been completed and used to inform anticipatory reasonable adjustments and safety controls within the CSC.

Internal engagement with PMI, Housing, Homelessness, HSCP, ICT, CCTV/Protective Services and Customer Services regarding space planning, interview rooms, and safety features.

Questions 3.5 to 3.7 refer to the [‘Three Key needs \(or aims\) of the Equality Duty’](#)

3.5 Which aspects of the policy eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

The proposal does not alter eligibility or access to services. No discriminatory elements identified.

3.6 Which aspects of the policy advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?

The relocation offers an opportunity to review and improve accessibility, signage, and interview room suitability.

3.7 Which aspects of the policy foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not? (Does it tackle prejudice and promote a better understanding of equality issues).

Co-location of services may improve service navigation and consistency for customers.

3.8 If you have identified any negative impacts of your proposal how will you mitigate these?

No negative impacts identified, however we will: -

- Monitor customer feedback after implementation.
- Provide clear communications regarding the new location.

3.9 Is the policy or practice intended to promote equality by permitting positive action or lead to positive outcomes for people based on a protected characteristic?

The proposal is not explicitly designed as positive action; however, improvements in physical environment may indirectly enhance accessibility.

4. Section 4 – The Fairer Scotland Duty

The Fairer Scotland Duty ('the Duty'), Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 places a legal responsibility on the Council to actively consider ('pay due regard to') how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making decisions.

4.1 Does the proposal have the potential to have a significant impact on inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage? (Consider low income; low wealth; material deprivation; area deprivation; communities of place or interest, socio-economic background).

No, the proposal does not have the potential to have a significant impact on inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. Access to services remains available at an alternative Council site as well as all other alternative access routes – Phone, online, email etc

If No, please go to Section 5.

4.2 Low Income/Income Poverty: Cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food and clothing

Not applicable

4.3 Low/and or no wealth: Having enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to pay for any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.

Not applicable

4.4 Material Deprivation: Being unable to access basic goods and services, i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure/hobbies

Not applicable

4.5 Area Deprivation: Where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport).

Not applicable

4.6 If impacts have been identified how will these be mitigated or explored in more detail? (please outline below)

Not applicable

5. Section 5 – Children’s Rights

When considering the Children’s Right’s Impact process, some of the key considerations include any evidence, research and consultation (specifically including any consultation or engagement with young people).

5.1 Are any Children’s Rights impacted by this proposal? (please refer to Appendix 1 of this document, where the Children’s Rights Articles have been matched against the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. This is solely to make it easier to identify which rights might be impacted on; the Rights are the key element of this section).

No, there are no Children’s Rights impacted by this proposal.

5.2 Please indicate, if possible, how many children and young people (nearest estimate) are likely to be affected by the policy or measure?

Not applicable

5.3 Are some children and young people more likely to be affected than others?

No, some children and young people are not more likely to be affected than others.

5.4 What Children’s Rights are likely to be affected by the policy/proposal?

Please refer to Table 2 (Appendix 1) ‘Links between Wellbeing Indicators and Articles of the UNCRC’ and insert the relevant rights and indicators in the table below.

Wellbeing indicator (for example, safe, healthy etc.)	Children’s Right (for example, 22 – refugee children)
Not applicable	Not applicable

5.5 What likely impact will the policy/proposal have on Children’s Rights and Wellbeing? Either Positive, Negative or Neutral.

Children Rights

Neutral

Other Protected Characteristics

Neutral

5.6 **Describe any consultation or engagement that has taken place with young people?**

None

5.7 **If negative impacts are identified how will these be mitigated either fully or in part?**

No negative impacts identified

6. Section 6 – Island Communities Impact (or Island Proofing)

Island Proofing is about considering the particular needs and circumstances of island communities when public sector organisations exercise their functions and make decisions. This has been added to the process of assessing the Council Plan and includes a range of issues such as access to services, digital connectivity, employment and access to education, transport and access to goods and services.

6.1 Do the intended outcomes of the proposal potentially differ or have a different impact for our Island Communities?

No, the intended outcomes of the proposal do not potentially differ or have a different impact for our Island Communities.

6.2 Please describe the potential impacts for our Island Communities.

None

6.3 Please explain if the impacts are different for communities on different islands?

None

6.4 What consultation or engagement has taken place with our Island Communities?

None

6.5 How will you address any potential barriers or wider impacts for our Island Communities as identified through this assessment?

Not applicable

7. Section 7 – The Consumer Duty

The Consumer Duty is about the impact of Council proposals on consumers in Scotland. A Consumer is an individual or a small business that purchases, uses or receives goods or services in Scotland, that are supplied either by a business or a public body – please see [What is the Consumer Duty](#).

7.1 Will your proposal impact on consumers?

Yes, the proposal will impact on consumers.

7.2 What are the impacts, if any, on consumers in general? Is it likely that consumers will experience harm because of this proposal?

Change in physical location of Customer Services Centre requires communication and clear signage. No evidence of harm.

7.3 Describe the impacts if any, on consumers in vulnerable circumstances. Is it likely that consumers in vulnerable circumstances* will experience harm because of this proposal? (please include any relevant evidence or engagement with consumers)

*Vulnerable circumstances may be temporary in nature and may or may not arise as a result of a consumer's protected characteristics. For more information, please see [page 31 of Consumer Scotland's draft guidance on the consumer duty](#).

Housing and Homeless customers often present in crisis; ensuring appropriate interview room settings is important.

7.4 Describe any consultation and engagement that has taken place with consumers around your proposal.

This was an operational efficiency decision with internal service led feedback only. While no direct consumer engagement, the proposal was put through the governance process with final sign off by Cabinet 19th March 2024.

7.5 What alternative proposals could improve outcomes for consumers and/or reduce harm to consumers? How do these compare to the original proposal?

Not applicable

8. Section 8 – Crosscutting Impacts

- 8.1 **Have any cross-cutting impacts been identified from other Council Services or Partner Agencies (multiple discrimination or accumulated effects on a protected characteristic group through multiple proposals or existing decisions)?**

No

- 8.2 **If Crosscutting issues have been identified with other Services, what discussion/interaction has taken place to mitigate any potential negative impacts of accumulated proposals?**

Not applicable

9. Section 9 – Outcome of the Assessment

- 9.1 **Please detail the outcome of the assessment:**

No major alterations to the policy assessed: the Impact Assessment demonstrates the policy is robust and there is no possible discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to minimise negative impacts and enhance positive outcomes have been taken.

- 9.2 **For Outcome 2. in section 9.1 above - please detail recommendations, including any action required to address negative impacts identified or to better promote equality.**

Not applicable

- 9.3 **If Outcome 3 is chosen from section 9.1 above, please outline the justifications for continuing the policy/procedure.**

Not applicable

- 9.4 **Please state the key issues, recommendations and future actions arising from the Integrated Impact Assessment.**

Confirm accessibility compliance; provide clear public communications; monitor early usage feedback post-relocation

10. Section 10 – Monitoring

10.1 Describe how you will monitor the impact of this policy for example, performance indicators, actions, other monitoring arrangements, who will monitor progress, criteria used to measure if outcomes are achieved, timescales including any future reviews of the impact of the proposal and where this will be recorded.

- Feedback from frontline teams
- Monitor customer feedback, complaints and compliments relating to accessibility and equality.
- Record and review the nature and frequency of reasonable adjustment requests.
- Post occupancy review following relocation

11. Section 11 – Sign Off

11.1 Head of Service approval of the impact assessment.

Name: Laurence Cree

Title: Head of Service Sustainability, Transport & Corporate Property



Laurence Cree

Date: 2 April 2026

12. Section 12 – Publication

12.1 Following approval by Head of Service, completed Impact Assessments are published on our Council's External Website.

Please email: equalities@north-ayrshire.gov.uk