



## Equality Relevance Assessment

1. Details of proposal	
Policy title	Re-provision of mobile libraries service
Lead officer	Steve Field – Head of Area Services
Date relevance considered	25/09/13
2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?	
YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy will, or may potentially:	
General Duties	Impact on equality (Yes or No)
Reduce or increase discrimination, victimisation or harassment against people covered by the equality protected characteristics?	Yes
Reduce or increase equality of opportunity between people who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	Yes
Provide opportunity to improve good relations between those who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	No
4. Equality impact assessment required? (Two Yes above = full assessment necessary)	
YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Decision rationale	

- No assessment required – process ends
- Assessment required – continue to next section

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>1. Details of proposal</b>	
Details of others involved	Steve Field – Head of Area Services Kenny Selbie – Equality Officer Hannah Gardner – Equalities Analyst
Date assessment conducted	18/12/14
<b>2. Aims of the proposed change to council policy or resources</b>	
This project is part of the Delivering Better Outcomes programme to make significant cost savings across the council. The budget measure to re-provision the mobile library service is one of several to modernise the library service and create efficiencies.	
<b>3. What equality data, research or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?</b>	
Evidence was collected from local & national research including survey and census data.	
<b>4. Details of consultation and involvement</b>	
The assessment has been subject to scrutiny by representatives of the equality community forums through a specific focus on Delivering Better Outcomes projects as agreed by the council's Corporate Working Group on Equality.	
<b>5. Issues identified and 'protected characteristics' impact</b> <b>(Covering: age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief and sexual orientation equality)</b>	

Reducing or withdrawing the mobile library service is likely to disproportionately impact older people and people with disabilities in the community.

Providing high quality care and support for older people is a fundamental principle of social justice and is an important hallmark of a caring and compassionate society. Demographic changes coupled with a decade of difficult public finances means this is one of the biggest challenges facing Scotland. When asked as part of the Scottish Government consultation on the subject, respondents said that given the option, people want to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Of all the questions asked, this one received a near unanimous response, and was tempered with “for as long as people feel safe”; or “for as long as a person doesn’t feel too cut off”.

Currently, the council provides a mobile library service to outlying towns and villages further out from local libraries. A withdrawal of this service is likely to be a barrier for those who cannot travel further to access a library service, whether it be for learning or enjoyment. In 2014, 82% of at home clients receiving some sort of Social Care (includes Home Care, Telecare / Community alarm, Housing Support, Direct Payments and Meals services) were aged 65 years or older (Social Care Survey / Care Home Census). This is indicative of the issues that older people face, including problems with mobility and independence. Older people are also less likely to drive every day or to hold a driving license. Only a quarter of those aged 70-79 and 12% of those aged 80 or older drive everyday (*Transport and Travel in Scotland, 2012*).

Similarly, disabled adults perceive access to local services such as post offices and banks to be less convenient than adults without a disability (*Social Focus on Disability, 2004*). People with a disability are less likely to drive too. Only 44% of people aged 17 and over who have a disability or long-term illness hold a full driving license compared to 72% of people who report no disability or long-term illness.

At the time of assessment, the service were considering a specific mitigation related to the impact on equality, in the form of offering a new door to door service for clients that require it due to old age or disability. This alternative would be offered via an existing service already working and engaging with this client base. At the time of writing, it was not confirmed whether this mitigating action would be implemented.

## 6. What measures are in place to monitor the actual impact following implementation?

The Delivering Better Outcomes projects are being monitored by the Modernisation Board during implementation and equality impact assessment is identified as a key enabler for projects.

## 7. Recommendation

- Implement proposal with no amendments
- Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions (as outlined below)
- Reject proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality

## 8. Mitigating actions and additional outputs

The proposed mitigation on introducing an alternative door to door service should be implemented by the service in tandem with the existing service withdrawal in order to mitigate the potential equality impact of this measure.

- **Equality impact assessment completed**