

**South Ayrshire Council      Equality Impact Assessment Scoping**

**1. Proposal details**

Proposal Title - ECS-S03 - Reduce Opening Hours of Customer Service Centres	Lead Officer Kate O'Hagan
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**2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this proposal? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts**

Community, Groups of People or Themes	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
The whole community of South Ayrshire		
People from different racial groups, ethnic or national origin.		
Women and/or men (boys and girls)		
People with disabilities	Possible negative impact	
People from particular age groups for example Older people, children and young people		
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people		
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process to change sex		
Pregnant women and new mothers		
People who are married or in a civil partnership		
People who share a particular religion or belief		
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights, Rurality and Deprivation.	Possible negative impact	

**3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the proposal will support the Council to:**

General Duty and other Equality Themes	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (high, medium or low)
Eliminate discrimination and harassment faced by particular communities or groups	
Promote equality of opportunity between particular communities or groups	
Foster good relations between particular communities or groups	
Promote positive attitudes towards different communities or groups	
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	

**4. Summary Assessment**

<b>Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?</b> (A full EIA must be carried out on all high and medium impact proposals)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rationale for decision: While the volume of customer transactions in certain centres is low, there may be an impact on a small number of customers in terms of deprivation and rurality.</b>			
Signed : .....Head of Service			
Date:	Copy to <a href="mailto:equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk">equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk</a>		

## SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Section One: Proposal Details\*

Name of Proposal	Reduce Opening Hours of Prestwick and Maybole Customer Service Centres
Lead Officer (Name/Position)	Kate O'Hagan, Head of Employee and Customer Services
Proposal Development Team (Names/Positions)	Gillian Farrell, Service Lead, Organisational Development and Customer Services Tracy Ferguson, Co-ordinator, Organisational Development and Customer Services Laura Donnelly, Customer Services Officer Iain Martin, Customer Services Officer
Critical friend (s)	Lorna Morris, OD Advisor

\*This could include strategy, project or application: see guidance attached.

What are the main <b>aims</b> of the proposal?	To target resources more effectively and efficiently; To modernise the ways in which customers can access services.
What are the intended <b>outcomes</b> of the proposal	Customers can access services in a range of ways which represent best value;

### Section Two: What are the Likely Impacts of the Proposal?

Will the proposal impact upon the whole population of South Ayrshire <i>or</i> particular groups within the population (please specify)	<p>The proposal will impact on customers living in Maybole and/ or Prestwick who choose to access council services via the Customer Service Centres (CSCs) located in these towns. The 2011 census shows Prestwick's population at 14,901 and Maybole's at 4,760. The number of visits to each Centre in 2017/18 were as follows:</p> <p><b>Prestwick</b> – 24,798 of which 55% were payments</p> <p><b>Maybole</b> – 26,086 of which 57% were payments.</p> <p>It should be noted that many of these will be repeat, rather than unique, customers. We do not hold data on the demographics or protected characteristics of customers. We do hold data on enquiry type and, where these can be linked to protected characteristics e.g. Blue Badge to disability, this has been taken into consideration and reflected in this impact assessment. It should also be noted that a separate proposal to remove the facility for payment only transactions in Customer Service Centres (which is the subject of a separate equality impact</p>
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	<p>assessment) would have a significant impact on the viability of both centres in terms of customer volume.</p> <p>Customers can access the majority of enquiries currently available on a face to face basis in Maybole and Prestwick in a range of other ways such as online, by email and by phone. There are a small number of enquiries which currently require a customer to go to a Customer Service Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Replacement Fobs – Housing</b> Currently customers in Maybole and Prestwick pay for and collect replacement fobs for secure areas in housing. These can also be collected from Girvan Customer Service Centre, Riverside House and Troon Customer Service Centre.</li> <li>• <b>Collecting food vouchers for Trussell Trust.</b> Currently customers collect these from CSCs.</li> <li>• <b>Submitting evidence for Scottish Welfare Fund-</b> Currently customers provide evidence to support a crisis grant claim in CSCs. However, decision makers can use discretion where customers cannot afford to travel to do so. For example, customers from Tarbolton and Mossblown who are unable to travel are not required to submit crisis grant evidence where agreed by the decision maker. Evidence can also be emailed in and customers can access crisis grant payments by phone.</li> <li>• <b>Travel Warrants-</b> Customers access travel warrants through Customer Service Centres.</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Appointee Payments-</b> Currently payments under this scheme are issued from CSCS. Payments could be made from the remaining CSCS or alternative locations sought. It should be noted that any decision to remove payment only transactions will impact on CSCS continuing to provide this service.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, any decision to reduce opening hours in Prestwick and Maybole may impact on staff. A reduction of 2FTE is anticipated however, we would try to manage this through non-filling of vacancies as they arise. Otherwise Managing Change will apply.</p>

**Considering the following Protected Characteristics and themes, what likely impacts or issues does the proposal have for the group or community.**

List any likely positive and/or negative impacts

Protected Characteristics	Positive and/or Negative Impacts
<b>Race:</b> Issues relating to people of any racial group, ethnic or national origin, including gypsy travellers and migrant workers	No anticipated impact
<b>Sex:</b> Issues specific to women or men	<p>Customers - no anticipated impact</p> <p>Staff – 80 % of staff are women and 20% are men. This reflects the wider demographic of council employees. Part closure of centres could result in a reduction in the number of advisors required. However, the Council has a No Compulsory Redundancy Pledge which commits to providing employees who are displaced from their substantive post (and at risk of redundancy) with an offer of alternative employment. Any displacement of employees will be managed in line with the Managing Change Framework which incorporates this pledge.</p>
<b>Disability:</b> Issues relating to disabled people	<p>There will be an impact on disabled customers with regard to <b>submitting evidence</b> for Blue Badge applications. Overall Blue Badge enquiries per centre in 2017/18 were as follows:</p> <p>Maybole - 0.01% of total interactions Prestwick - 0.02% of total interactions</p> <p>Of these enquiries, a number may have been to present evidence and a number to enquire about the scheme or submit an application. Alternative locations to submit evidence are in Ayr, Girvan and Troon.</p> <p>Employees – No impact anticipated. Two employees have stated that they have a disability. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required. Any displacement of employees will be managed in line with the Managing Change Framework which incorporates a no redundancy pledge.</p>
<b>Age:</b> Issues relating to a particular age group e.g. older people or children and young people	<p>Customers – We do not hold data by protected characteristic on our customers and do not anticipate a negative impact on this group. Most customers who use a face to face service do so as a preference, not as a necessity, and alternative methods are available.</p> <p>Employees - No impact is anticipated. Any displacement of employees will be managed in line with the Managing Change Framework which incorporates a no redundancy pledge.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief:</b> issues relating to a person's religion or belief (including non-belief)	No anticipated impact
<b>Sexual Orientation:</b> Issues relating to a person's sexual orientation i.e. lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, heterosexual	No anticipated impact

<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership:</b> Issues relating to people who are married or are in a civil partnership.	No anticipated impact
<b>Gender Reassignment:</b> Issues relating to people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex.	No anticipated impact
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity:</b> Issues relating to the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby and the period after the birth.	No anticipated impact
<b>Multiple / Cross Cutting Equality Issues</b> Issues relating to multiple protected characteristics.	No anticipated impact- no data held by PC on customers.
<b>Equality and Diversity Themes Particularly Relevant to South Ayrshire Council</b>	
<b>Health</b> Issues and impacts affecting people's health	None – see section on disability
<b>Human Rights:</b> Issues and impacts affecting people's human rights such as being treated with dignity and respect, the right to education, the right to respect for private and family life, and the right to free elections.	None
<b>Rurality</b> Impacts relating to living and working in a rural community	In terms of rurality the reduced opening hours of Maybole may impact on customers who choose to use a face to face service however, comprehensive communications will go out to customers to ensure they are aware of the revised opening hours.  In addition to Customer Services, other services use the private interview rooms located in the CSC to provide services such as the Information and Advice Hub; Seascope; Ayr Housing Aid; Housing and Social Work. This would continue in line with the revised opening hours.
<b>Deprivation</b> Issues relating to poverty and social exclusion, and the disadvantage that results from it.	In South Ayrshire the six datazones that suffer the severest (5% most deprived) level of overall deprivation are within the Ayr North area. However, there is 1 datazone in Maybole which is within the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland. It should be noted that this proposal does not remove services for customers, but does reduce opening hours. The majority of services are available by calling the 0300 number and comprehensive communications will go out to customers to advise them of the revised hours.

### Section Three: Evidence Used in Developing the Proposal

<p><b>Involvement and Consultation</b> In assessing the impact(s) set out above what evidence has been collected from involvement, engagement or consultation? <b>Who</b> did you involve, <b>when</b> and <b>how</b>?</p>	<p>Consultation with the public took place online and via drop in sessions as part of the council's <a href="#">Balancing The Budget</a> exercise in 2017.</p>
<p><b>Data and Research</b> In assessing the impact set out above what evidence has been collected from research or other data. Please specify <i>what</i> research was carried out or data collected, <i>when</i> and <i>how</i> this was done.</p>	<p>Data on customer enquiries by number and type has been gathered from internal systems - Qtastic (customer enquiries by number and type) and Paye.Net – payment enquiries by number and type</p> <p>Data on deprivation in South Ayrshire was gathered from the <a href="#">Socio economic profile for South Ayrshire</a> Data regarding employees was drawn from our Oracle system.</p>
<p><b>Partners data and research</b> In assessing the impact set out above what evidence has been provided by partners. Please specify partners</p>	<p>Data from the <a href="#">Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 (SIMD)</a></p>
<p><b>Gaps and Uncertainties</b> Have you identified any gaps or uncertainties in your understanding of the issues or impacts that need to be explored further?</p>	<p>The council does not have a Customer Records Management (CRM) system which holds data by protected characteristic on our customers. Nor do we have a CRM system which tracks interaction on individual customer interactions. Advisors use a range of standalone systems which do not enable us to gather standardised demographic information of our customer base.</p>

**Section Four: Detailed Action Plan to address identified gaps in:**

**a) evidence and**

**b) to mitigate negative impacts**

No	Action	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1	Consideration will be given to which days the centres will open based on an analysis of customer trends and data.	Tracy Ferguson and Laura Donnelly	
2	Comprehensive and targeted communications plan to public and partner agencies.	Tracy Ferguson and Laura Donnelly	
3			
4			
5			

**Note: Please add more rows as required.**

**Section Five - Performance monitoring and reporting**

Considering the proposal as a whole, including its equality and diversity implications:

When is the proposal intended to come into effect?	TBC
When will the proposal be reviewed?	Six months after the implementation date.
Which Scrutiny Panel will have oversight of the proposal?	Leadership Panel.

## Summary Equality Impact Assessment Implications & Mitigating Actions

**Name of Proposal:** Reduce Opening Hours of Prestwick and Maybole Customer Service Centres

This proposal will assist or inhibit the Council's ability to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations as follows:

<p><b>Eliminate discrimination</b></p> <p>The proposal is a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate aim of ensuring customers can access services in a range of ways which represent best value.</p>
<p><b>Advance equality of opportunity</b></p>
<p><b>Foster good relations</b></p>

<b>Summary of Action Plan to Mitigate Negative Impacts</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Consideration will be given to which days the centres will open based on an analysis of customer trends and data.	Tracy Ferguson and Laura Donnelly
Comprehensive and targeted communications plan to public and partner agencies.	Tracy Ferguson and Laura Donnelly

**Signed:** .....**Head of Service**

**Date:** .....