

Equality Impact Assessment Form **Reference –**

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| **Department** | Estates & Property | **Version no** | 1 |
| **Assessed by** | Gemma Cain | **Date created** | 08/11/2022 |
| **Approved by** | Ben Middleton | **Date approved** |  |
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| **Final approval** |  | **Date signed off** |  |

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to

* eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
* advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
* foster good relations between different groups

# Section 1: What is being assessed?

**1.1 Name of proposal to be assessed.**

The temporary closure of two city centre office buildings to reduce costs.

**1.2 Describe the proposal under assessment and what change it would result in if implemented.**

During the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns occupancy of our workplaces fell dramatically. Government instructed people to only attend work where it was essential. We began to monitor attendance in our city centre offices during April 2020 and have continued to do so since. The data provided shows a significant reduction in attendance, even after the ending of restrictions.

Against this backdrop utility prices have increased dramatically, with non-residential gas prices expected to go up by at least 300% and electricity by 160%. It is therefore essential that we use of buildings as efficiently as possible.

In order to address the significant increase in energy costs facing the Council, whilst a longer term solution is identified in respect of permanently closing one of the Council’s city centre office buildings, consideration is being given to temporarily closing two city centre office building to reduce our utility usage and costs and to achieve this before the winter.

The changes proposed are temporary and will not impact on staff’s terms and conditions. The office location will be temporarily changed and those wanting or needing to work from the office will be able to do so.

# Section 2: What the impact of the proposal is likely to be

* 1. **Will this proposal advance equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and/or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not? If yes, please explain further.**

No

* 1. **Will this proposal have a positive impact and help to eliminate discrimination and harassment against, or the victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

No

* 1. **Will this proposal potentially have a negative or disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

No

**2.4 Please indicate the level of negative impact on each of the protected characteristics?**

(Please indicate high (H), medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each)

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| --- | --- |
| **Protected Characteristics:** | **Impact**  (H, M, L, N) |
| Age | N |
| Disability | L |
| Gender reassignment | N |
| Race | N |
| Religion/Belief | N |
| Pregnancy and maternity | N |
| Sexual Orientation | N |
| Sex | N |
| Marriage and civil partnership | N |
| **Additional Consideration:** |  |
| Low income/low wage | L |

**2.5 How could the disproportionate negative impacts be mitigated or eliminated?**

(Note: Legislation and best practice require mitigations to be considered, but need only be put in place if it is possible.)

It has been suggested that more staff may want to attend work in the winter because they will be unable to heat their homes. This may be the case for some staff, but it would have to be an extreme number to pressure the estate with 568 workstations free in Britannia House.

Britannia House, City Hall and Sir Henry Mitchell House are all accessible buildings, although wheelchair turning is limited near lifts and may be difficult for larger/extended wheelchairs due to restraints with the building space. Any specific needs in relation to access for those staff with a disability will be reviewed on an individual basis in by individual’s line managers.

Existing PEEP’S (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) of staff being relocated will be reviewed by FM’s. The managers of staff who currently have one in place will be contacted to advise they need to update this for the new location and liaise with the relevant FM of that building to ensure they meet the individuals needs.

Buildings are not currently Braille signed, however, this has not been identified as a need by any individuals with visual impairments. Highlighted nosing that highlights the edge of stairs is installed in Hall Ings stairwells.

Accessible toilets are available on all floors and lower level worktops/sinks are installed in kitchens In Britannia House on the Hall Ings side of the building.

Disabled parking is available close to Britannia House/City Hall at Norfolk Gardens and Bank Street.

Rise and Fall desks will be available for those who need them in Britannia House, SHMH and City Hall.

Multi Faith rooms are available for use by all staff in Britannia House/City Hall/Sir Henry Mitchell House.

Few members of the public access MMT and those that do come to pick up forms. The reception function will transfer to Sir Henry Mitchell House which is accessible. There is no public access to Argus Chambers.

Meetings which would have been held in Argus Chambers or MMT will transfer to other buildings. These buildings are all accessible.

# Section 3: Dependencies from other proposals

**3.1 Please consider which other services would need to know about your proposal and the impacts you have identified. Identify below which services you have consulted, and any consequent additional equality impacts that have been identified.**

The office location will be temporarily changed and those wanting or needing to work from the office will be able to do so.

AD’s were consulted on 11th October of the plans and asked to confirm if they could foresee a significant increase in their attendance due to working patterns. No issues were raised by AD’s of these services.

Communication was issued to SD’s on 4th November 2022 confirming the decision had been made to temporarily close MMT and Argus Chambers and request that staff are briefed as soon as possible.

The Teams/services affected by the temporary building closures are: -

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| **Team** | **From  MMT** | **To  Brit** |
| Housing/Economic Development/Client Services | 8th | 1st |
| One Adoption | 7th | 1st |
| Early Education Funding sufficence | 7th | 2nd |
| Information Management | 7th | 2nd |
| Policy and performance | 7th | 2nd |
| CCHDT | 5th | 2nd |
| E P and Portage | 5th | 2nd |
| Placement Co-ordination | 5th | 2nd |
| BSO's For specialist teaching | 5th | 2nd |
| Printing Procurement | 4th | 5th |
| IT services | 4th | 6th |
| Transformation and Compliance | 3rd | 5th |
| SEN EHCP | 3rd | 5th |
| SEN Case work | 3rd | 5th |
| SEN Management ( Finance and short Breaks ) | 3rd | 5th |
| Skill. (Special Teaching and support Service ) | 3rd | 5th |
| Education and safe guarding | 2nd | 4th |
| Governance | 2nd | 4th |
| Education and Learning | 2nd | 4th |
| Employment and Skill /Housing | 2nd | 5th |
| Admissions & Exclusions | 1st | 3rd |

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| **Team** | **From  SHMH** | **To  Brit** |
| Police engagement | 5th | 3rd |
| Prevent | 5th | 3rd |
| Stronger Communities | 5th | 3rd |
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 5th | 3rd |
| Domestic Violence | 5th | 3rd |
| Families First | 5th | 3rd |

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| **Team** | **From  Argus** | **To  Brit** |
| Strategic Asset Management | 1st | 3rd |
| Estates and Property - Disposals | 1st | 3rd |
| Estates and Property - Acquisitions | 1st | 3rd |
| Revs & Bens | 2nd | 2nd |
| Place | 3rd | 3rd |
| P, T & H | 4th | 4th |
| H&W | 5th | 5th |

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| **Team** | **From  MMT** | **To  City Hall** |
| Directors and PA's | 1st MMT | TBC |
| CS Trust improvement team | 1st MMT | TBC |
| Environment & Enforcement | 5th SHMH | TBC |

A further communication will be issued to Services on 14th November.

# Section 4: What evidence you have used?

**4.1 What evidence do you hold to back up this assessment?**

Occupancy monitoring, formal communication with AD’s.

**4.2 Do you need further evidence?**

No.

# Section 5: Consultation Feedback

**5.1 Results from any previous consultations prior to the proposal development.**

N/A

**5.2 The departmental feedback you provided on the previous consultation (as at 5.1).**

N/A

**5.3 Feedback from current consultation following the proposal development (e.g. following approval by Executive for budget consultation).**

No equality feedback received

**5.4 Your departmental response to the feedback on the current consultation (as at 5.3) – include any changes made to the proposal as a result of the feedback.**

N/A