

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00135 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Social Work Adult Services Community Care	Lead Officer Name:	Steph MacGregor-Cross
		Team:	Falkirk Learning Disability Team
		Tel:	01324 590 512
		Email:	stephanie.macgregorcross@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	British Sign Language (BSL) Plan for Falkirk	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	No	Yes	No	No
Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other, please specify:				

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

<p>03/07/2019</p>	<p>The Scottish Government wants to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users (incl. Tactile BSL users) to live, work and visit. This means that people whose first or preferred language is BSL will be fully involved in daily and public life in Scotland, as active, healthy citizens, and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.</p> <p>The Falkirk Plan will focus on people from Falkirk who use BSL/Tactile BSL and will take specific account of resources or lack of resources in the area. A collaborative approach has been adopted to allow the co-production of the plan. BSL users (incl. Tactile BSL users) have been involved in co-producing the plan along side partners from local council services, third sector and independent sector. For years 18/19 and 19/20, £16K has been awarded to Falkirk by Scottish Government in order to implement the plan.</p> <p>The BSL Plan for Falkirk, as required by BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. It sets out actions that Falkirk will take over the period 2018-2024. It follows the BSL National Plan 2017-2023, published 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. The Falkirk plan is framed around the same long-term goals as BSL national plan. Falkirk Council have a commitment to supporting BSL, including in its tactile form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ The English version of the plan will be translated and period of consultation will take place for users of BSL/Tactile BSL. This will be through engagement events and social media. ☑ Falkirk Council are committed to continued engagement around a) implementing actions and b) providing feedback on progress. ☑ The plan will be reviewed annually and will contribute to national progress report in 2020. and will be a live working document. ☑ The BSL plan version of this plan can be obtained by contacting the lead officer. <p>*BSL Users = D/deaf and or D/deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language. (A copy of the Falkirk BSL Plan is attached)</p>

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	0	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:	0	
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:	£16,000	One off grant funding from Scottish Government for 18/19 and 19/20.
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	0	
	Expected Annual Income Total:	0	
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:		
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

There are approx. 50K - 70K people who use BSL in Scotland. The Falkirk HSCP do not hold information on the exact number of BSL users living in Falkirk.

If figures were held anywhere this would not be accurate information, as BSL users can also include people with hearing who use BSL to communicate with people who are Deaf.

BSL Users=/deaf and or D/deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.

B - Qualitative Evidence

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Through consultation with those who use BSL and interested others, it has been agreed that the implementation of the plan will aim to support people to be fully involved in daily and public life in Falkirk, as active, healthy citizens, and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives. The development of the plan has been guided by the BSL (Scotland) 2015 Act and the BSL National Plan 2017-2023. These are linked below along with the Falkirk BSL Plan 2018-2024.

The BSL (Scotland) 2015 Act is linked. [BSL \(Scotland\) 2015 Act](#)

BSL National Plan 2017-2023 is linked [BSL National Plan 2017- 2023](#)

The Falkirk BSL Plan 2018-2024 is linked [Falkirk BSL Plan 2018-2024](#)

Best Judgement:	
Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	No
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	The BSL Scotland Act 2015 BSL National Plan 2017-2023
What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	The Act lays out the statutory duty for Local Authorities to develop a BSL Plan

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.	Users of BSL/Tactile BSL in Falkirk, however, this was an open invitation to all. a Public consultation was also available through the Council intranet.	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.		
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	Yes	Through the council Intranet. Only one respondent who was very positive.
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	Yes	The draft plan consultation to place over 2 mornings. Those in attendance fully embraced the plan and also made suggested changes which will be made before the plan is made final.
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	Yes	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all ages who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by age.
Disability		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people whose life is impacted through hearing loss and who communicate through use of BSL.
Sex		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all genders who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by gender.
Ethnicity		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all ethnicities as the plan is not restricted by ethnicity.
Religion / Belief / non-Belief		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all religions as the plan is not restricted by religion.
Sexual Orientation		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people of all sexual orientations who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by gender sexual orientations.
Transgender		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all genders who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by gender.
Pregnancy / Maternity		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all ethnicities who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by ethnicity
Marriage / Civil Partnership		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people on all marital statuses who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by marital status.
Poverty		✓		BSL Plan will positively impact on people of all backgrounds who use BSL as the plan is not restricted by background.

<p>Other, health, community justice, carers etc.</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>The BSL plan for Falkirk will adopt the long term goals for BSL in Scotland as set out in the Scottish Government British Sign Language National Plan 2017 – 2023. The plan for Falkirk will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Improving access to a wide range of information and public services in BSL. ☑ Investigating the level of BSL in our organisation, focusing on frontline staff including teaching staff, escorts, receptionists. ☑ Enabling BSL/BSL tactile users in decision making that affects their lives and the lives of their children. ☑ Improve the experience of pupils who use BSL and Tactile BSL with their transition through school to college, university and/or into employment. ☑ Improve access to health and social care, including access to mental health services for those who use BSL.
<p>Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)</p>			

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	The BSL Plan will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination against people whose first or preferred language is BSL.
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	The BSL Plan will help to advance equality of opportunity for people whose first or preferred language is BSL so they will be fully involved in daily and public life in Scotland, as active, healthy citizens, and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	The BSL Plan will help to promote understanding and reduce prejudice with regard to people whose first or preferred language is BSL.

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	Yes	The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL.
Councils	Yes	<p>The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL however, the responsibility of developing and monitoring the plan is the local authority.</p> <p>Falkirk share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:</p> <p>“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users”.</p>

<p>Education Sector</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL however, the responsibility of developing and monitoring the plan is the local authority, including education.</p> <p>We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:</p> <p>“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child, and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL”.</p> <p>We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:</p> <p>“Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child’s education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school”.</p> <p>Post School Education</p> <p>We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:</p> <p>“BSL users* will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post – school education if they wish to do so and will receive the support they need to achieve the potential in their chosen subject(s).</p> <p>Training, Work and Social Security</p> <p>We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:</p> <p>“BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career”.</p>
<p>Fire</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL</p>

NHS	Yes	NHS Forth Valley have their own BSL Plan in place
Integration Joint Board	Yes	The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL
Police	Yes	The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL
Third Sector	Yes	The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.	The BSL Plan affects every organisation that supplies a service to those who use BSL	

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

This is a positive and welcome step forward to those in the BSL Community.

Are actions being reported to Members?

No

If yes when and how ?

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	Yes	This proposal will be of benefit to those who use BSL
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Steph MacGregor-Cross</i>	Date:	30/08/2021
------------	------------------------------	-------	------------

SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:	Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
------------------------------------	--	-----

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	The evidence is well documented in the publications noted in section 3 as well as arranging users of BSL/Tactile BSL in Falkirk to an open invitation to a Public consultation was also available through the Council intranet.. Albeit the uptake was not large but the offering was made available for the public to provide feedback.	
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA		
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA		

Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?	No	If YES, please describe: There was no negative impact on diverse communities identified in this assessment.
---	----	--

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes	There will be a high level of positive impact for any service user, employee, member of the public or anyone else working within the public, private and third sectors who uses BSL/Tactile BSL within the Falkirk area.
MEDIUM	No	
LOW	No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:	<i>Martin David Thom</i>	Date:	10/09/2021