

Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening Tool - Fulham Town Hall

Section 01	Details of Initial Equalities Impact Screening Assessment
Financial Year and Quarter	2010/11, Q4
Name of policy, strategy, function, project, activity, or programme	Proposal to dispose of Fulham Town Hall. Services currently located at the town hall include; Registrars, South Fulham Area Housing Office, Cemeteries, CCTV and Parking attendants.
Q1 What are you looking to achieve?	<p>Fulham Town Hall is one of two town halls in one of the smallest boroughs in the country. It is very under-used, with 30 – 40% vacant space, and requires major renovation, which the council cannot afford in the current economic climate. Most council services have been moved to other buildings over recent years and the council argues that in this day and age, taxpayers simply cannot afford the luxury of having two town halls in one borough. There is limited level access within the building, with the majority of the building being inaccessible to residents or staff with particular mobility difficulties. The relocation of council services such as registrars, CCTV and parking attendants from Fulham Town Hall to alternative council buildings in the borough will not significantly impact local residents.</p> <p>In addition the relocation of registration services appears to have the potential to impact positively on older and disabled people, as well as men and women registering a birth, since the services will be in an accessible location and be easier for those with mobility impairments and those carrying small children to use.</p> <p>With H&F being such a geographically small borough, with excellent transport links from Fulham to other parts of the borough, officers do not consider it necessary to retain this building for the provision of council services. It is intended to relocate the cemeteries staff to Mortlake Cemetery, where they will be on-site and better located to help customers with walk-in queries. For the tenants and leaseholders who presently get support and advice from South Fulham Housing Office, H&F Homes are already looking at ways to offer more local services to the residents in the South of the borough including</p>

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	<p>mobile working and/or sharing facilities with the 3rd sector. H&F Homes are surveying users of the housing reception services currently operating at the Town Hall to understand how customers use the service and will use this information in determining how those services would be provided appropriately in the future.</p> <p>In summary, we are looking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain services (e.g. registrars, cemeteries) ▪ Provide those services in an accessible way 			
<p>Q2 Who in the main will benefit?</p>	Race	/	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Registrars offer a service for people seeking British citizenship and conduct citizenship ceremonies for those successful in achieving British citizenship, therefore people of different races are likely to be more affected, however, the service will still be provided elsewhere in the borough.
	Disability	+	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently there is limited disabled access to the Fulham Town Hall, relocating to another building should lead to better access. ▪ Customers wishing to register births find access is difficult for those with pushchairs as do customers needing to register deaths who are often elderly with restricted mobility.
	Gender	+	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customers wishing to register births find access is difficult in FTH for those with pushchairs (men and women) ▪ Registrars' services will continue to be offered from another location in the borough, therefore there is unlikely to be any adverse effect on gender.
	Age	+	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers needing to register deaths are often elderly. Therefore this age group are more likely to be affected, but the service will continue to be offered elsewhere in the borough. • Customers seeking to register births are often in the 30 – 45 age group, therefore they will be more affected but the service will continue to be offered elsewhere in the borough. • It is expected that the new location of the service will have better access and facilities for these customers than the current location having a positive impact on the customer experience.
	Sexual	+	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrars conduct marriage and civil partnerships from Fulham

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	Orientation			Town Hall so this will affect those using this service, however, this service will be offered from elsewhere in the borough from an accessible location.
	Religion/belief (including non-belief)	/	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration services are non religious, therefore there is unlikely to be any impact.
<p>Will it affect Human Rights, as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998? No.</p>				
<p>Q3 Does the policy, strategy, function, project, activity, or programme make a positive contribution to equalities?</p>	<p>Yes, by retaining frontline services and providing them in a more accessible building to meet the needs of customers accessing the Registration Service.</p>			
<p>Q4 Does the policy, strategy, function, project, activity, or programme actually or potentially contribute to or hinder equality of opportunity, and/or adversely impact human rights?</p>	<p>Consultation has shown that this is not wholly supported (see below)</p> <p>Consultation feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of responses: 320 Responses supporting disposal: 12% Responses opposed to disposal: 49% No preference: 39% <p>The greatest proportion of respondents were against the idea of selling Fulham Town Hall. This was mainly due to the feeling that council services are being moved to Hammersmith, leaving Fulham devoid of services, as well as the hall's heritage and status within the Fulham community. There were also worries that the council would not secure an appropriate sale price. Those in favour of the sale suggested that only one town hall was necessary and the services it currently provides could be offered in alternative buildings. A proportion of respondents were not particularly familiar with the building or had no view regarding its sale. Some respondents suggested keeping this building to house other organisations that would be displaced due to sales of other buildings.</p>			

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However, the council's "Smart working" programme is enabling LBHF services to make better use of alternative council space, whilst continuing to offer an excellent level of service to borough residents. Given this and that service will not be reduced, but be provided in a more accessible way, there is no negative impact on equality.