


Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment

Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)						
Version	1.1		Date Completed	02/07/2024		
Description of what is being impact assessed						
<p><u>Devolution of the operation of Westlands Entertainment Venue to Yeovil Town Council</u></p> <p>This EIA assesses the impact of the operation of Westlands Entertainment Venue being devolved to Yeovil Town Council on the 1st August 2024. It only assesses the impact of the initial transfer of services and assets in their current state rather than focusing on what could happen in the future as it is expected that were Yeovil Town Council to decide to make changes to service provision in the future they would carry out their own equality impact assessment to evaluate the potential impacts.</p> <p>This assessment provides details about current use of the venue by protected groups. The venue is currently used by a wide range of community groups and schools as well as being used by individuals and families. Some programmes and activities are run as part of the National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) and the delivery of these are being maintained by Somerset Council, and this would safeguard the current inclusivity of these programmes.</p> <p>17 staff would be transferred under TUPE transfer to Yeovil Town Council. Casual staff who work at the site would not transfer under TUPE but Yeovil Town Council has offered these staff continued employment. Equality data for the staff who would be impacted as a result of the operation of the venue being devolved has been considered but is not included in this equality impact assessment due to the risk of identifying individuals.</p>						
Evidence						
<p>What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the Office of National Statistics, Somerset Intelligence Partnership, Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), Staff and/ or area profiles, should be detailed here</p>						

Data from the Office of National Statistics, Census 2021, Area Profiles and Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

These data sets have been used to consider the impacts of devolving the operation of Westlands Entertainment Venue to Yeovil Town Council. Some key statistics from these data sets include that Yeovil West ward, where the venue is located, has a slightly higher percentage of people with disabilities, 19.3%, than across the rest of Somerset, 18.7% (Area Profiles). The ratio of sex in the population of Yeovil West Ward also differs slightly to the county wide level. 51.6% of the population is female and 48.4% is male, compared to 51.1% and 48.9% respectively across Somerset (Area Profiles, Census 2021). In Yeovil West Ward 15.7% of households in Yeovil West ward do not own a car or van (Somerset Intelligence Area Profiles). It is also worth noting that Westlands Entertainment Venue is within walking distance of neighbourhoods ranked within the top 20% nationally for deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019).

Protected characteristics data held by the Council relating to staff

The equality data for staff who would be impacted has been fully considered but is not included in this assessment due to the risk of identifying individuals. As a public authority and employer Yeovil Town Council will be under the same obligations as Somerset Council to uphold equalities standards from an employment perspective.

Information about community groups, clubs and local schools who currently use the venue

Data showing whether individual users of the site have protected characteristics is not collected so this data does not exist to inform this impact assessment. However, we do have some information about the community groups and local schools who use the site which can be used to provide an indication of some instances where protected groups may be impacted by devolution of the operation of the venue.

Age: People of all ages visit the venue to take part in classes or watch the performances. The venue is widely used by children. Approximately 100 schools are known to attend the venues, including The Octagon Theatre, each year. There are also summer schools, events and classes aimed at children.

Disability: Dementia friendly groups and Parkinsons groups meet at the venue.

Pregnancy and Maternity: There is an Adventure Babies group who use the venue for classes.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

No site users or protected groups have been consulted as the only change because of the devolution process will be the change of provider running the service. If Yeovil Town Council were to make changes in the future which impacted on equalities it would be for Yeovil Town Council to assess the impact.

Staff and trade unions have been consulted on devolution as part of the TUPE process.

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p>Groups of all ages use the facilities at the venue, but particular age groups may be more severely impacted than others.</p> <p>Children: Concessionary tickets for selected performances are currently available which covers anyone in full time education. Under 18s and under 16s tickets are also available at select performances when applicable. Approximately 100 schools are supported to attend the venues each year. Children's access to performances is also aided by free tickets for teachers for select performances when accompanying groups of school children. Events aimed at children are also put on during the annual Literary Festival.</p> <p>Certain aspects which improve accessibility of the venue for children are linked to the NPO, which is being maintained by Somerset Council. This includes work with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) to provide educational performances to children.</p> <p>Older people: Concessionary tickets for selected performances are available which covers those in receipt of state pension. The venue works with BSO to put on 'Cake Concerts' which are popular with elderly audiences, particularly those with Dementia.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Devolution is not likely to affect any age group more than others in the short term. However, it is unclear whether Yeovil Town Council will change how they provide services at Westlands Entertainment Venue in the future and there is a risk that any future changes could impact different age groups. Yeovil Town Council as a public authority will have to evaluate the equalities impacts of any changes they make and they may also have future opportunities to enhance access and increase inclusion for different age groups in the future.</p>			
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Many local groups use the venue for meetings, including Dementia friendly groups and Parkinsons groups. An Access Guide bespoke to the venue is provided for those with access needs to provide them with information they might require.</p> <p>Captioned and audio description screenings are offered where available for those who are deaf and blind, respectively. A 'relaxed performance' is conducted as part of the annual pantomime each year, which is specifically designed to welcome people who will benefit from a more relaxed theatre environment, including those with an Autism Spectrum Condition, sensory communication disorders, or a learning difficulty. It is also designed to be accessible to those with hearing impairments who require British Sign Language interpretation. Relaxed orchestral performances are also offered with the BSO as part of the NPO works, such as 'BSO On Your Doorstep: From the Hebrides to Padstow Relaxed Concert'.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

	<p>There is free disabled parking available at the venue and there is a disabled toilet. Disabled access to the stage is also provided.</p> <p>Devolution is not likely to affect people with disabilities more than others in the short term. However, we do not know if Yeovil Town Council will change the operation of Westlands Entertainment Venue in the future and there is a risk that any future changes could impact those with disabilities. Yeovil Town Council, as a public authority, will have to look at the equalities effects of any changes they make, and they may also find future ways to improve accessibility and inclusivity of the venue.</p> <p>Most staff always work on site at the venue, but for those who sometimes work from home this will probably not be an option in the immediate period after the operation devolves on 1st August as Yeovil Town Council's IT system does not support working from home at the moment. This may affect some staff with disabilities disproportionately should they find working from home more accessible.</p>			
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>All of the programmes and activities run by the venue are inclusive of all. It is not anticipated that the impact of devolution would be greater for this protected group than for other groups.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>The programmes and activities at the venue are inclusive of all. It is not expected that this protected group would be impacted more than other groups as a result of devolution.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>There are baby changing facilities in all public toilets. The group 'Adventure Babies' also hosts sessions at the venue.</p> <p>Based on the information available it is not expected that this group would be more greatly impacted by the devolution than others.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Race and ethnicity</p>	<p>All of the programmes and activities run are inclusive to all. Data is not collected about the race and ethnicity of users of the venue. Overall, the impact on these protected groups is not expected to be significantly greater than the impact all groups would experience.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Many users of the site travel from outside Yeovil West Ward to the venue and the overall percentage of users of the site who are religious is unknown as this data is not collected. All programmes and activities run are inclusive to all. It is not expected that any impact would be greater for this protected group than other groups.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>In Yeovil West Ward 51.6% of the population is female and 48.4% is male, compared to 51.1% and 48.9% respectively across Somerset (Area Profiles, Census 2021) though many users of the site travel to the site from outside Yeovil West Ward. When looking overall at the general public who use the site and after consideration of the information available it is not expected that one sex would be greater affected than another by the devolution of the facilities.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sexual orientation	<p>Data on sexual orientation of users of the venue is not collected. Overall, it is not anticipated that people will be impacted to a greater or lesser extent by the devolution of the venue based on their sexual orientation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)	<p>Given the venue is at relatively close proximity to the RNAS Yeovilton base it is likely that serving personnel and their family members use the venue, though no data on this is collected. It is not however expected that armed forces personnel, families and veterans will be impacted to a greater extent than other groups by the devolution of Westlands Entertainment Venue.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<p>Low income: 'Pay What You Can' ticket initiatives are available for some performances where applicable, which increase the accessibility of the venue for those on low incomes. The Accessible Pricing Scheme gives low-income individuals the opportunity to attend shows at no or heavily discounted cost with the subsidised ticket scheme. The Arts Engagement & Outreach team also work with local housing associations to offer free or reduced prices tickets as part of the accessible pricing scheme that encourages those on low income to attend the venues to experience live entertainment. Free places at the summer schools are offered to children aged 10-16 years who are in receipt of Free School Meals, which will continue with Somerset Council as part of the NPO work.</p> <p>Carers: As part of the Essential Companion Scheme, carer free tickets or 50% carer tickets for those eligible are available.</p> <p>The venue's devolution is not expected to have a greater effect on low-income individuals or carers compared to others in the short term. However, it is unclear if Yeovil Town Council will change the services and facilities at the venue in the future and there is a risk that any future</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>changes could affect low-income individuals or carers. It will be Yeovil Town Council's duty as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and they may also discover future opportunities that enhance access and increase inclusion for these groups.</p> <p>Most staff work on site at the venue, however after the operation devolves to Yeovil Town Council on 1st August, in the immediate term, those who sometimes work from home may not be able to, as the town council's IT system does not currently support homeworking. This could affect some staff with caring responsibilities who greatly benefit from flexible work arrangements.</p>			
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Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Impacted staff and trade unions will be consulted regarding the change to working arrangements and homeworking as part of the TUPE process.	31.7.24	Elizabeth Dawson	This will be monitored through the TUPE Consultation Process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Somerset Council will work with Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) to deliver training and development opportunities around equality and diversity including legal and practical responsibilities for Parish and Town Councils.	1.8.24	Elizabeth Dawson	This will be monitored through the Yeovil Devolution Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

It is possible that there could be negative impacts for groups with a protected characteristics as a consequence of devolution if Yeovil Town Council were to decide to make changes to service provision in the future after devolution of the service and facilities has occurred which had a negative impact for groups with protected characteristics. It would be for Yeovil Town Council to conduct their own assessment of any equalities impacts of any decisions they made in the future and as a public authority they are bound by the same legal duties as Somerset Council in relation to equalities. Some programmes and activities are run as part of the NPO and the delivery of these are being maintained by Somerset Council, and this would safeguard the current inclusivity of these programmes.

Completed by:	Jessica Kemmish Emily Glover
Date	02/07/2024
Signed off by:	Elizabeth Dawson
Date	4/7/24
Equality Lead sign off name:	Tom Rutland
Equality Lead sign off date:	5/7/24
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	Jessica Kemmish
Review date:	10/8/24