

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00973 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Children's Services Education	Lead Officer Name:	Scott Lavery
		Team:	Quality Improvement
		Tel:	07483936686
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Proposal:	Cease central funding for Police Officers in Schools	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	Yes	No	No	Yes

Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	No	Yes	No

Other, please specify:

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

31/01/2025	To cease central funding for School Based Police Officers saving circa £120k.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	Current spend (24/25) - £200k Projected spend (25/26) - £215k	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:	Projected increase - £15k	
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:		
	Expected Annual Income Total:		
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	27/06/2025	
	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.

Children's Services supports 21,300 children and young people across all of our establishments. In the secondary sector these are as follows:

9695 young people in our High Schools - of which 4315 have an identified additional support need

Number of young people in each Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation SIMD quintile within secondary sector:

Quintile 1: 1496 pupils

Quintile 2: 2058 pupils

Quintile 3: 2379 pupils

Quintile 4: 1564 pupils

Quintile 5: 2063 pupils

Not known: 135 pupils

School Based Police Officers were introduced in session 2007 -2008, initially in Larbert High School and then later in session 2008/2009 within Denny High School .

On 21st August 2012, Education Committee agreed to extend this provision to a further 3 secondary schools; Braes, Falkirk and Grangemouth, thus providing a Police Officer in 5 secondary schools.

On 29 March 2016 the Children and Young People's Executive Committee agreed to increase the allocation of full time school based police officers by a further 3 posts to provide a full time officer in each of the 8 mainstream secondary schools.

In 2016 the 8 posts were funded as follows:

Police Scotland: 6 officers

Children's Services: 2 officers from Revenue Budget and a contribution from each secondary school devolved budget.

Over the last few years, Police Scotland have reduced fully Funded posts from 6 to 4. Children's Services and Secondary Devolved Budget contributions have covered 4 posts to maintain a full-time officer in each secondary school.

Fiscal challenge and pay settlements have increased costs for both Police Scotland and Children's Services. Overall, the cost of supporting an allocation of full-time officers in 8 schools has risen from £84K in 2016 -215K in 2024/25.

Secondary HTs have continued to contribute to these costs from their devolved budgets. this contribution has increased from £6,125K in 2016 to £12k in 2024/25.

Across our Secondary Schools, there are:

- 1673 pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (around 17.5% of the pupil roll)
- 2179 pupils in receipt of School Clothing Grants (around 22.9% of the pupil roll)
- 701 Ethnic Minority pupils (around 7.4% of the pupil roll) - see breakdown below
- 4780 pupils are male (50.1% of pupil roll) and 4753 are female (49.9% of pupil roll)

Breakdown of pupils across High Schools based on Ethnicity:

- African - African/British/Scottish: 66
- African - Other: 129
- Asian - Bangladeshi/British/Scottish: 2
- Asian - Chinese/British/Scottish: 25
- Asian - Indian/British/Scottish: 85
- Asian - Other: 34
- Asian - Pakistani/British/Scottish: 189
- Caribbean or Black - Caribbean/British/Scottish: 6

- Caribbean or Black: 4
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: 106
- Not Disclosed: 19
- Not Known: 54
- Other - Arab: 18
- Other - Other: 37
- White - Gypsy/Traveller: 12
- White - Irish: 19
- White - Other: 356
- White - Other British: 394
- White - Polish: 185
- White - Scottish: 7793

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

This is a budget reduction proposal there are no cases studies.

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?	
What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	Yes
If NO, please state why.	

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.	Consultation with secondary headteachers and colleagues has been ongoing since the increase to 8 full time officers in 2016. The devolved school management budget contribution from each secondary school is discussed and agreed annually. Further work is required with staff at Police Scotland and Secondary Head Teachers to establish the rationale for officers and allocation based on the funding model.	
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	Yes	Previous discussions have noted the high value placed on having a full-time officer by all secondary Headteachers, who do however, appreciate the financial pressure of increasing costs and have considered the possibility of sharing posts.
Survey	No	
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes	
Is further engagement recommended?	Yes	

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			✓	Possible reduction in availability of a full-time campus officer in each secondary schools will affect the original objective to build positive and trusting relationships with particular emphasis on improving partnerships between the Police and pupils in secondary schools and associated schools in the community.
Disability	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Sex	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Ethnicity	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Religion / Belief / non-Belief	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Sexual Orientation	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Transgender	✓			We have not identified a specific impact on this group.
Pregnancy / Maternity	✓			The reduction in the number of full time campus/ school based police officers has minimal direct impact on this protected characteristic.
Marriage / Civil Partnership	✓			The reduction in the number of full time campus/ school based police officers has minimal direct impact on this protected characteristic.
Poverty	✓			The reduction in the number of full time campus/ school based police officers has minimal direct impact on this protected characteristic.
Care Experienced			✓	Reduced numbers of full time officers may impact on their capacity to participate in joined-up, inter-agency early interventions to support young people and families.
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.			✓	Potentially reducing the number of campus-based officers will impact the capacity to provide support/ single point of contact for social services, youth justice services and health professionals and partners who work with a secondary school and when needed with the associated primary schools in each locality.
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)	Possible reduction in full time officers may impact on staff having to support pupils who are distressed or demonstrating inappropriate behaviours.			

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):	We have established protocols, processes and reporting systems in line with Children and Young People Scotland Act (2014). Adherence to local and national policy and a Service Equalities Framework in line with UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). However, it is noted that the any reduction of police officers could give rise to indirect and/or direct discrimination towards those with protected characteristics. This would include the impact on activities that are performed by school-based police officers.
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	The presence of police officers in schools helps to meet the needs of different groups, as there are many variable factors that can lead to distressed or inappropriate behaviours. The perception of safety also allows for increased participation of diverse young people. These may be at risk and planning will need to take place to mitigate these issues.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	Academic Research (2010 Scottish Government commissioned Ipsos/Mori 'Evaluation of Campus Police officers in Scottish Schools, and Scottish Institute of Policing Research SIPR review in 2013) into School Based Officers has recognised the many benefits of the role in tackling prejudice and promote understanding. In the Falkirk Council Children's Services Equalities Framework: Our vision and aims emphasise the importance of developing positive relationships, equality, acceptance and inclusion at all levels.

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	No	
Councils	No	
Education Sector	Yes	<p>Any possible reduction in the number of full time officers may impact on current progress and improvements in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a positive image of Police Scotland with young people in the school and its community through positive partnerships. • Educating members of the school community about the consequences of actions, the responsibilities and potential for positive citizenship. • Participation in multi-agency initiatives to improve the learning environment within the high schools.
Fire	Yes	Any reduction in the number full time officers may impact on effective partnerships between campus officers and the Fire Service in reducing anti-social behaviour and youth crime, including offending within communities.
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	Yes	<p>Any reduction in the number full-time officers could have a financial impact on Police Scotland who lose the contribution from Children's Services of the equivalent of potentially 2 full time officer salaries.</p> <p>The reduction may also impact on the capacity of Police Scotland to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build upon the existing positive relationship between Police Scotland and the secondary pupils and their families. • Reduce fear of crime amongst pupils, teachers and other members of the school community through effective partnership and communication. • Assist in practice of restorative approaches to support and address issues of victimisation, bullying and anti-social behaviours within the community.
Third Sector	No	

Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.

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
Impact of capacity to improve partnerships/relationship between Police and pupils in Secondary Schools	Mainstream Secondary Schools and Police Scotland	In consultation with Police Scotland and secondary headteachers; Plan the redistribution of the equivalence of 6 full time officers across 8 mainstream secondary schools or identify additional funding from either Police Scotland or Secondary schools.	Jill Pringle	30/05/2025	Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities The Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities
Reduced capacity to support multi-agency initiatives and interventions. (Care Experienced)	Mainstream Secondary Schools and Children's Services	Revise the roles and responsibilities of Campus based officers to prioritise support for multi agency interventions. Sustain the positive status of campus officers as a helpful "single point of contact" for: young people, parents and carers, children's services teams, community groups and local businesses.	Kenny McNeill	30/05/2025	Falkirk Plan: Working in Partnership with Communities The Council Plan: Supporting stronger and healthier communities Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities

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.

Are actions being reported to Members?	Yes
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If yes when and how ?	As part of the Council's budget proposals in March.
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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	No	
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	Yes	Whilst there is no change to the roles and responsibilities of campus/ school based police officers, the reduction in the number of posts overall may affect capacity as detailed in sections 5 and 6.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Paul Wilcox</i>	Date:	05/02/2025
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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?	No
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	<p>Limited data regarding the protected characteristics of those who are impacted by the proposed change. Evidence included does not fully support the conclusions reached in terms of the impact. Further evidence, for example on incidences of violence/hate crime, would make for a more robust assessment. No consultation with pupils/parents has taken place.</p> <p>Data of age, low income, sex and ethnicity is recorded, however this does not encompass the other protected characteristics that would be impacted with the removal of this provision. There is no evidence to suggest if the presence of police officers over the past 6-8 years has had any impact on schools.</p>	
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</u> been made?	No	If YES, please describe:
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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 / No	
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	Yes	The evidence on impact is not sufficient to determine impact so we have assessed as low, however, there is a potential that without the presence of a deterrent to crime and bullying, there could be a rise (recorded or unrecorded) of incidents against pupils with protected characteristics.

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:		
Signature:	<i>Jon Reid</i>	Date: 18/02/2025