



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Response to the proposal for the future of Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres

Response to Consultation

July 2017

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Introduction

1. This document is the report following the public consultation around the ***Proposal for the future of Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres.***

It covers:

- the background to the consultation
- a summary of the consultation responses
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) response to key points raised by respondents
- conclusion and next steps

Background

2. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced new proposals on Wednesday, 7 December 2016 to relocate some of its Jobcentre Plus offices in Glasgow and South Lanarkshire.
3. Jobcentre Plus operations have changed in recent years as people make more use of online and telephone services, generally only attending offices for appointments or for specific help with jobsearch.
4. To reflect this, the public consultation paper, ***Proposal for the future of Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres***, was published on 19 December 2016. It invited comments from those with an interest in the future of Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres, including the closure of the buildings and the services provided being transferred to other jobcentres in the City of Glasgow. The consultation proposed that:
 - Bridgeton Jobcentre will move to Shettleston Jobcentre
 - Castlemilk Jobcentre will move to Newlands Jobcentre
 - Maryhill Jobcentre will move to Springburn Jobcentre
5. Guidelines around the movement of jobcentres, referred to as 'Ministerial Criteria', have been used since 2010 across the whole of the UK network. They originated from a desire to standardise the circumstances under which we would consider the movement of one jobcentre to another.
6. DWP believe that it is reasonable to expect claimants to travel 3 miles or 20 minutes by public transport from their existing jobcentre. Where it is proposed to move or close an office, and the move to a new jobcentre is outside these criteria, DWP has the option to consult publicly about these changes. Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres all fall outside these criteria.
7. The proposed closures would contribute to the consolidation of the Glasgow jobcentre network and, through rationalisation, provide an opportunity for DWP to deliver improved customer services at reduced costs to the taxpayer through better use of the office space occupied.

DWP's estates strategy

8. The Estates Strategy is delivering improved use of space and resources for less cost, by reviewing utilisation of space to achieve a more effective and targeted approach. On 31 March 2018, DWP's PFI PRIME (Private Finance Initiative for the Management of the Estate) contract with Telereal Trillium expires. This 20-year contract covers the majority of DWP's current property portfolio of over 900 sites. This offers a unique opportunity to obtain extra value from DWP contracts whilst ensuring high levels of service. It also gives us an opportunity to review which offices DWP will need in the future, taking account of the increased use of online services, the reforms DWP will be implementing over the coming years, and the anticipated demand on services.
9. The roll out of Universal Credit and the reforms of Jobcentre Plus, have increased the number of interactions claimants now have with DWP online. For example, eight out of ten new claims for Jobseeker's Allowance are now made using digital channels and 99.6% of applicants for Universal Credit full service submitted their claim online. At the same time, DWP has seen record levels of employment across the United Kingdom, with the claimant count dropping from almost 1.5 million in 2010 to around 800,000 now.
10. As a result, 20% of the space DWP currently occupies is no longer being used, even allowing contingency for medium term increase in demand. DWP has a responsibility to ensure the estate is utilised to deliver services efficiently and effectively while providing value for money to the public purse. Paying only for the space needed, will provide significant savings to taxpayers. These savings, which are in the region of £180 million per annum over the next 10 years, are an integral element of the departments overall financial plan, helping to reduce pressure in other areas, and any potential impact on staff and service delivery.
11. The department's aim is to maintain and improve services; this includes merging some jobcentres, and co-locating others with local government services where appropriate.

What does this mean for the City of Glasgow?

12. DWP remains firmly committed to retaining a substantial jobcentre network in the City of Glasgow, and continuing to offer the same level of service to customers in all areas of the city.
13. In 2015, Glasgow had more jobcentres per 100,000 of the population than any other major city in the UK, and, in terms of claimant numbers, Glasgow also had the second highest number of jobcentres per 1,000 claimants. Additionally, it had the lowest utilisation of space per square metre than any other major city in the UK at only 38%. If the proposed changes are implemented, from 2018 Glasgow will still have the second largest jobcentre space in square metres, but at same time the second lowest utilisation of space in the UK at only 72%.
14. DWP's commitment to Glasgow will deliver a jobcentre network that is right for the city, benefit claimants, partners and colleagues.

Consultation

15. Following the citywide announcement in Glasgow, a series of meetings and engagement events were held as part of the consultation. These provided interested parties with an opportunity to discuss first hand with DWP officials their observations and concerns about the proposals. [Annex A](#) provides more information about these events.
16. The consultation period closed on 31 January 2017 and this report summarises the responses, including how the consultation process informed the final decision on the future of Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres.

Management Summary

17. DWP is grateful to all those who responded to the consultation, including those who raised potential impacts, concerns or objections. The department has considered in depth the comments raised by all the people and organisations and provided a detailed response to each of these in the content of this paper.
18. The points raised by respondents do highlight difficulties raised in making these changes, but DWP has to balance the need to provide services to customers along with the budget it has to deliver those services. The department is recruiting more people, but using less space. After careful consideration of the responses, it is DWP's view that these do not provide a basis to amend or change the proposal to close Bridgeton Jobcentre and move the services to Shettleston Jobcentre, and to also close Maryhill Jobcentre and move the services to Springburn Jobcentre.
19. However, DWP is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in the community and proposes to leave an outreach facility to deliver local support, placing a part-time work coach within a community location. Discussions are taking place with partner organisations in the Bridgeton and Maryhill areas to establish the delivery location and the exact nature of the services offered.
20. DWP has examined the proposal to close Castlemilk Jobcentre and decided to retain the office, on a short-term lease, with a view to securing a more suitable new site in the local area, supporting modern ways of working, and capable of delivering current and future business demand.
21. The department is confident that, in proceeding with these plans, sufficient jobcentre capacity will remain across the City of Glasgow, delivering targeted service and support, able to respond to future changes in demand.

Summary of responses

22. Two-hundred and ninety responses to the consultation proposals were received. In addition, an online petition was submitted.

DWP is grateful for all the contributions made in response to the consultation.

The respondents have been categorised as follows:

- 233 responses were from members of the public
- 33 responses were from organisations
- 14 responses were from MPs/MSPs, (6 from MPs and 8 from MSPs)
- 10 responses were received in respect of the proposed closure of Anniesland, Parkhead, Cambuslang and Easterhouse jobcentres. These jobcentres are within Ministerial Criteria and have been excluded from this response

23. Analyses of the responses can be found at Annex C for [Bridgeton Jobcentre](#), Annex D for [Castlemilk Jobcentre](#) and Annex E for [Maryhill Jobcentre](#).

Response themes

24. The following summarises the responses by grouping issues into a series of themes.

Travel time

25. Two hundred and fifty seven respondents (92%) expressed concerns about the increase in travel time to attend the new jobcentres. Concerns cited included inconvenience, journey times on public transport and increased difficulties for vulnerable groups - those with disabilities, mental health problems and those caring for young children.

Typical comments:

“Will all appointments with increased travel time be set to reflect childcare commitments?”

“If Jobcentre closures were made, provisions within a clearly defined system would need to be made for those not able to travel for long due to ill health, disability...”

*“They [**proposals**] do not take into consideration the potential complexity in individuals’ journeys from their homes... and the limitations of viable alternatives.”*

“...it is much more likely that someone will be required to take a number of buses, trains or subway in order to get from their starting point to the destination... due to the fact that Jobcentres are more likely to be based on main transport routes rather than in residential areas.”

Travel time response

26. DWP believes that it is reasonable to expect claimants to travel to an office within 3 miles, or 20 minutes by public transport from their existing jobcentre.

Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres all fall outside these criteria so the department has chosen to consult publicly.

27. Through consultation, the catchment area of each jobcentre has been investigated and travel times and bus and train routes have been compiled. Details can be found for each jobcentre in the site-specific annex.
28. DWP's work coaches personalise the support provided for each claimant based on individual need and circumstance. Where claimants have limitations due to a health condition or disability or because of caring responsibilities, then this is taken into account when arranging any attendance. DWP has various ways of interacting with vulnerable claimants, including:
 - face-to-face
 - by email
 - by telephone
 - by post
 - by SMS
29. However, DWP recognises that some claimants will be taking an unfamiliar journey. Work coaches will support claimants over the transition period until they become familiar with new travel arrangements. Claimants can also make a request to attend a jobcentre closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

Travel cost

30. Two hundred and twenty respondents (79%) expressed concern about the potential increase in travel costs and the effect this would have on disposable income for food and other necessities.
31. It has been suggested that some claimants will face a more expensive journey to get to their jobcentre and many will no longer have the option to walk thus incurring additional expense.

Typical comments:

"The fact that people would be required to catch several buses is relevant as it has the potential to increase the cost."

"We would be interested to understand if service users will be compensated or assisted in any way, or whether they will simply be left worse off."

"We are particularly concerned that many of our customers from the poorest areas of the City will face higher travel costs... our Housing Officers are subsidising some customers travel costs in an attempt to avert sanctions."

Travel cost response

32. DWP acknowledge that the proposals included in the consultation may increase travel costs for some claimants when they are required to attend a jobcentre.

This will be particularly so for those who currently live within easy reach of their current jobcentre.

33. The reimbursement of travel costs, other than mandatory attendance, is considered on an individual basis in line with DWP regulations nationally. This is not new and is the case for any claimant required to attend a jobcentre throughout the UK.
34. Support to meet travel costs is also available to eligible claimants via the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card. Claimants can also request to attend a jobcentre closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

Access to services

35. Two hundred and twenty eight respondents (81%) expressed concern about the adverse effect, on the local community, of removing access to services and support for vulnerable benefit claimants and those seeking work.
36. Concerns were also raised about the ability of the new office to absorb the increased caseload, specifically whether work coaches would be able to continue to devote the time to support claimants. Comments were also made about claimants losing the support from their current work coach and reductions in local access to computers for example.
37. A number of respondents commented that moving to a jobcentre outside the local area may affect the existing relationships between the current local jobcentre and local support groups and businesses. Local support groups commented that claimants may approach them for help instead of making the longer, more expensive journey to the new jobcentre.

Typical comments:

“Jobcentres can play an important role in helping to tackle poverty at the community level. They can do so by promoting social security provisions, supporting economic development, and making appropriate referrals to skills training courses and other forms of personal support.”

“Jobcentres belong in communities .They need to be accessible and close to advice services such as Citizens Advice Bureau.”

“Jobcentre Plus provide free computer access and access to the internet ...removing this facility could have a detrimental impact on claimant’s ability to find work and the requirements of their claimant commitment.”

“Work coaches build relationships with people accessing Jobcentres with the ultimate aim of finding people employment, regardless of their personal situation. Will work coaches moving location keep the same caseload?”

Access to services response

38. DWP is not reducing its services and is committed to retaining a substantial jobcentre network in the City of Glasgow. Indeed, Glasgow will still have one of the highest concentrations of jobcentres in the UK. The offices proposed for closure will deliver economies of scale, which will enable DWP to deliver enhanced services to support business improvements including digital services, group information support and access to a wider range of partners and employers.
39. The overall aim is to provide an enhanced service in jobcentres. IT equipment will be moved and rehoused in the new offices. Claimants will continue to be encouraged to bring their own electronic devices into jobcentres to make good use of DWP's free Wi-Fi to help them manage their online claim and support their jobsearch activities. Dedicated staff will be available to support claimants by delivering services and additional support in our digital suites.
40. These proposals will ensure that DWP can respond better to customer demand, support the move towards Universal Credit and increase flexibility to deliver a full service across all jobcentres.
41. Flexible tailored support will continue to be offered to meet customer needs including the delivery of specific group sessions, co-delivered with employers and partners if appropriate, and tailored to offer maximum support. The proposals will ensure claimants have full access to employers via job fairs, recruitment events and networking events that currently cannot take place in the offices affected due to space and resource constraints.
42. DWP is confident that the additional workload can be accommodated into the new jobcentres with the capacity to expand as necessary. Working practices and service delivery methods will continue to be reviewed and adapted to maximise the use of the estate.
43. The need for space for support organisations has been considered as part of space planning. The proposals mean that partners will be able to reduce the number of sites they attend and will have access to a larger customer base. The excellent working relationships that are already in place with voluntary and partner organisations will be maintained, with plans to build on these over coming years.
44. Partnerships are an integral part of DWP's service delivery model and plans are being produced to ensure close working with local groups and voluntary organisations to maximise claimant support available from all offices. These will be monitored to assess the effect of these proposals and steps will be put in place to provide additional support as required.

45. DWP fully recognises the value of the developed relationship between claimants and work coaches and this will continue after services have moved. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, claimants will retain their current work coach who will continue to deliver tailored and personalised support from the new jobcentre.

Sanctions

46. Seventy-one respondents (25%) expressed concern that the number of sanctions issued would increase if the proposed jobcentre closures went ahead.
47. Some responses highlighted that longer more complex journeys by public transport could lead to increased lateness or failure to attend appointments. Longer journey times might also affect the time available to claimants to meet their claimant commitment. Concerns have been expressed about the impact on public transport services of external factors such as:
- frequency of service
 - reliability
 - disruption
 - adverse weather
48. These could all affect what some respondents view as an already challenging journey. The affordability of the journeys has also been mentioned: see response to **Travel costs**.
49. Respondents felt that the proposed jobcentre closures would result in a reduction of locally available access to IT equipment. This could result in failures to meet claimant commitment and incur sanctions: see response to **Access to services**.

Typical comments:

"I have dealt with many constituents who have been sanctioned for missing appointments due to buses not turning up on time."

"Having little or no money to live is hard enough without added pressure from government insisting on travelling even further to attend meetings and being sanctioned if they are late. Public transport is not always reliable and having further to travel makes the unemployed even more vulnerable to things out with their control." (Individual)

Sanctions response

50. Concern about public transport will continue to be considered on an individual basis. However, DWP recognises that some claimants will be taking an unfamiliar journey: work coaches will support claimants over the transition period until they become familiar with new travel arrangements. Claimants can also make a request to attend a jobcentre that is closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

51. DWP do not expect these proposals to result in additional sanctions, as a direct result of the impact of travel journeys beyond the claimant's control. In addition, the department does not sanction for issues beyond the claimants control when they have made reasonable efforts to inform us.
52. The National Audit Office has estimated that a million jobseekers missed appointments, across the United Kingdom, between July 2015 and December 2015 compared with only 34,000 sanction referrals. On-going work to ensure claimants understand and agree expectations with their work coaches has supported this reduction.
53. All claimants receive personalised tailored support, taking account of individual circumstance recognising capability (including health conditions), disability and caring (including children and childcare) responsibilities. It should also be noted that claimants, including those with vulnerabilities, are asked to agree reasonable requirements appropriate to individual circumstances.

Outreach

54. Thirty-nine respondents (14%) expressed the view that a 'footprint' or 'outreach' facility should exist in these local communities. People acknowledged that this type of service would not replace jobcentres but could provide advice, support or guidance for claimants about their jobsearch in the event of any closures.

Typical comments:

"Jobcentre are positioned within communities with significant levels of deprivation. We do not see the value in closing existing offices only to replace these (at cost) with community based resources."

"[We] believe that efforts should be made to increase access to DWP services. This could take the form of co-location with other local authority or third sector services outreach sessions for example at local GP practices, or home visits for those who have limited mobility."

"Our desire is for society to work together to remove as many barriers as possible to work for people... these proposals from the DWP will... make it harder for people who would like to move forward."

"We would like DWP to consider placing Work Coach staff in XX's facilities in Castlemilk, George Square, the Gorbals and Possil, as part of the mitigation of the closures should they go ahead."

"The XX Group have numerous community based facilities. With funding from the DWP we could look to expand these."

Outreach response

55. DWP is committed to retaining a jobcentre network and continuing to serve people in all areas of the UK to make sure they can continue to access the tailored services they need. When a full-time jobcentre closes following a public consultation, DWP will put an 'outreach' service in place within the local community.
56. Outreach is a vital front-facing service to claimants. Host organizations offer access to their facilities as part of the on-going partnership activities with DWP. This allows work coaches and partner organizations to work together to support the joint needs of claimants. DWP is currently working with our partner organizations within the local area to develop an outreach service.
57. DWP recognises the need to ensure facilities are made available to offer additional local support to claimants. The department is working in partnership with organisations to offer support to claimants. For example, through the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership Agreement, DWP funds Glasgow City Council to provide initial and ongoing online support to claimants in three library hub locations (Gorbals, Anniesland and Shettleston).
58. A number of organizations have offered to discuss the potential of outreach facilities on their premises following the public consultation and further local discussions are taking place.
59. Access to benefit advice and enquiries will not change; they will continue to be delivered through telephony and digital services

Equality analysis

60. DWP has been mindful of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and has carried out local jobcentre level consultation to inform understanding of the effect of the proposal. Careful consideration has been given to the wider effect on the local communities. DWP will maintain services to claimants, whether in their existing jobcentre where a decision is made to retain that office or, where their existing jobcentre will close, at an alternative site.
61. DWP recognises that these proposals represent a major change that may have a greater impact on some groups with protected characteristics than others, as evidenced by the consultation responses, and consideration has been given to how any such impacts can be mitigated.
62. DWP has had due regard to the impact of the proposals throughout programme development, as evidenced by the high level equality analysis that was undertaken before the proposal was finalised and by the consultation and full Equality Analysis that has just been undertaken.
63. The site level consultation has enabled the department to carry out detailed analysis to enable us to understand how any proposal might impact at a local

level. In Scotland, for example, the department engaged widely by targeting around 100 organizations which provide support and services to customers: a list of these organizations can be found at Annex B. We also consulted staff and service users directly and the evidence of real life impact will be invaluable in ensuring that the final decisions are robust and take account of all relevant considerations.

Conclusion

64. DWP has considered the points raised by all the people and organizations that have responded to this consultation. The points raised by respondents do highlight difficulties raised in making these changes, but DWP has to balance the need to provide services along with the budget it has to deliver those services.
65. DWP has examined the proposal to close Bridgeton and Maryhill Jobcentres and concluded that it remains the best option in order to achieve improved use of space and resources, delivering value for money, providing better facilities and maintaining a high standard of service to claimants.
66. However, the department is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in the community and proposes to leave an outreach facility to deliver local support, placing a part-time work coach service within a community location. Discussions are taking place with partner organizations to establish the delivery location and the exact nature of the services offered.
67. The initial assessment of Castlemilk Jobcentre indicated that the building is not suitable to deliver DWP's business in the long term. There is insufficient space, the building is of a poor quality and is unable to accommodate the increase in staff required to support the introduction of Universal credit and to provide claimants with digital support.
68. There are no options to further modernise the building and provide a suitable environment to deliver the services that DWP claimants require. These factors formed the basis for the proposal to close Castlemilk Jobcentre and to move into Newlands Jobcentre where there was sufficient space to accommodate the required services.
69. The proposal was based on the preliminary work to assess the likely impact of the change in location from Castlemilk Jobcentre to Newlands Jobcentre. The detailed analysis of the public consultation response suggested that there were more claimants living in a wider catchment area outside of the Castlemilk locality. Impacting two factors:
 - the closure of Castlemilk Jobcentre would have a severe impact on the community because of a number of socio-economic factors, with a significant number of households living in poverty across the wider catchment area of Castlemilk
 - the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) indicate that 73% of the top 10% and 86% of the top 20% SIMD level of deprivation are in the Castlemilk area. In comparison, the Glasgow area as a whole has 26.4% of

the top 10% and 39.4% of the top 20%, with Central Scotland District at 19.1% of the top 10% and 32.34% of the top 20%.

70. With claimants travelling outside of the Castlemilk locality to attend the jobcentre, there was a disproportionate impact on them. They would have to travel into Castlemilk to enable them then travel out to Newlands Jobcentre. The detailed assessment of transport available showed the impact of these travel difficulties, which include:
 - no direct bus route between the jobcentres meaning claimants would have to make at least two and often three bus changes
 - infrequent bus service from Castlemilk, which can also mean a lengthy wait for others to connect to the onward journey to Newlands
71. The consultation has helped DWP to gather some important information into the local area and the effects the closure of this office would have on jobseekers and our staff. Having listened to what people had to say and reviewed the evidence we have decided not to close the Castlemilk Jobcentre.
72. While DWP doesn't believe that the building is suitable in the long-term because there is insufficient space and the building is of poor quality. DWP will keep it open while looking for a new site in the local community. This will also be dependent upon lease negotiations.
73. Full details of can be found at Annex C for Bridgeton Jobcentre, Annex D for Castlemilk Jobcentre and Annex E for Maryhill Jobcentre.

Annex A: consultation engagement

Consultation meetings

Invitations were sent to 98 DWP partner organisations: 21 confirmed attendance in advance and 16 took part as follows:

Shettleston Jobcentre (19 January 2017)

- Joan McClure: Manager, Easterhouse Citizens Advice Bureau
- Tracy Lennon: Employability Development Officer, thenuehousing association
- Elaine Donnelly: Business Development Manager, Glasgow Clyde College
- Ginny Jackson: Bureau Manager, Parkhead Citizens Advice Scotland
- Frank Mosson: Bureau Manager, Bridgeton Citizens Advice Scotland
- Helen Hughes: Operations Manager, Employability Team Jobs and Business Glasgow
- Amanda Currie: Wise Group

Springburn Jobcentre (20 January 2017)

- Jane Morrison: Working Matters Operations Manager, Development and Regeneration Services, Glasgow City Council

Rutherglen Jobcentre (25 January 2017)

- Patrick Murphy: Head of Benefits and Revenue, South Lanarkshire Council
- Debby Smith: Benefits Are Changing Team Leader, Housing and Technical Resources, South Lanarkshire Council
- Ross McFarlane: South Lanarkshire Council
- Susan Brown: Rutherglen and Cambuslang Citizens Advice Scotland
- Anne Hopkins Simpson: Development Officer, Planning and Economic Development, Community and Enterprise Resources, South Lanarkshire Council
- Wendy Hampson: Routes To Work South

Partick Jobcentre (27 January 2017)

- Brian Scott: Glasgow Disability Alliance
- Pauline Edmiston: Transformation Team Coordinator, Faith in Community (Scotland)

Newlands Jobcentre (27 January 2017)

- No invitees attended

Meetings with MPs and MSPs

DWP officials met with the following MPs/MSPs:

Laurieston Jobcentre on 9 December 2016:

- Alison Thewliss MP: SNP Glasgow Central
- Carol Monaghan MP: SNP Glasgow North West
- Stewart Malcolm McDonald MP: SNP Glasgow South
- Chris Stephens MP: SNP Glasgow South
- Natalie McGarry MP: INDEP Glasgow East
- Angus MacLeod: Office of Anne McLaughlin MP, SNP Glasgow North East
- Bob Doris MSP: SNP Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn
- Margaret Ferrier MP: SNP, Scottish Affairs Committee: Rutherglen and Hamilton West

Maryhill Jobcentre on 20 January 2017

- Bob Doris MSP: SNP Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn
- Patrick Grady MSP: Glasgow North

Airdrie Jobcentre on 30 January 2017

- Fulton MacGregor MSP: SNP Member for Coatbridge and Chryston

Meetings with other organisations

- Church of Scotland representatives on 19 January 2017
- Pauline Edmiston, Faith in the Community, Transformation Team Co-ordinator in Partick 27 January 2017

Additional Activities

- Each of the three sites proposed for closure had posters prominently displayed throughout the jobcentres advising claimants of the proposals, and the process to comment as part of the public consultation
- DWPs District Partnership Manager included the proposals and links to the public consultation document on GOV.UK in a weekly newsletter emailed to over 500 partner/stakeholders on the 15 December 2016.

Annex B: Central Scotland Stakeholders¹

Action For Children
Action on Hearing Loss
Arthritis Care Scotland
BeYonder Ltd
Blueprint Training
Bridgeton Citizens Advice Bureau
Cambuslang Citizens Advice Bureau
CAP Christians Against Poverty
CAP Steps to Employment Course
Castlemilk Citizens Advice Bureau
Celtic FC Foundation
Clyde Gateway
Clydesdale Community Initiatives
Connect Community Trust
Cranhill Development Trust
DGC Training
Dress for success
Drumchapel Citizens Advice Bureau
East Dunbartonshire Council
East Renfrewshire Council
Easterhouse Citizens Advice Bureau
Employment Enterprise
Enable
Faith in Community (Scotland)
Forward Training
Fuse
Glasgow Central Citizens Advice Bureau
Glasgow City Council
Glasgow College
Glasgow Disability Alliance
Glasgow Kelvin College
Glasgow Trusts Communities Co-operative
Glasgow Wood Recycling
Glasgow's Helping Heroes
Greater Pollok Citizens Advice Bureau
GTG Training
HSC FUTURES LTD
icoico creative
ICT Training Academy
Impact Arts (Projects) Ltd
Ingeus - WP
ITEC Integrations
Jobs & Business Glasgow
Lanarkshire Catering School
Land G Learning
Learn Direct
Lifeskills
Liquid Academy Training

¹ DWP has taken all reasonable care in publishing this listing and believe it to be accurate.

Maryhill & Possilpark Citizens Advice Bureau
Minority Ethnic Employment & Training Support
Momentum
New College Lanarkshire
North Lanarkshire Council
One Parent Families Scotland
Parkhead Citizens Advice Bureau
Parkhead Housing Association
Pentland
People Plus
Princes Trust
Project Scotland
Qualitas
Rangers in the Community
Rathbone Training
Remploy
Rewards Training (Scotland) Ltd
Right Track Scotland Ltd
Ritchie's Training Centre Ltd.
Rosemount Lifelong Learning
Routes To Work
Routes to Work South
Shaw Trust
Sibbald Training
Simon Community
SITE
Skills Development Scotland
Skills Exchange Scotland
South Lanarkshire College
South Lanarkshire Council
South West Community Cycles
Sporting Solutions
SSAFA-the Armed Forces charity
Street League
Street Step
Streetstep / League
Tennent's Training Academy
The RE-Tune Project
The Wise Group
Thenuue Housing
Tigers
Tomorrows People
Toryglen Community Base
Train'd Up
University West of Scotland
West of Scotland Regional Equality Council
Wise Group
Working Links - WP
YCSA
YEI (Youth Employment Initiative)

Annex C: summary of the responses for Bridgeton Jobcentre

1. Eleven responses were received which have been categorised as follows:
 - 9 responses were from members of the public
 - 1 response from Parkhead Housing Association
 - 1 response from Alison Thewliss MP for Glasgow Central

Response themes

2. The following summarises the responses by grouping issues into a series of themes.

Travel time

3. Nine respondents (73%) were concerned about the increase in travel time. These related specifically to longer journey times, inconvenience and increased difficulties, particularly for those in vulnerable groups.

Typical comments:

“The new travel times and costs... would mean claimants incur greater travel costs and will have less time to spend looking for work.”

“Those with mobility and disability problems would also be severely affected...”

Travel time response

4. DWP believes that it is reasonable, given any specific circumstances, to expect claimants to travel to an office within 3 miles, or 20 minutes by public transport from their existing jobcentre. Bridgeton Jobcentre falls outside these criteria so the department has chosen to consult publicly.
5. Through consultation, the catchment area of Bridgeton Jobcentre has been investigated and travel times and bus and train routes have been compiled. Average journey times for claimants travelling within the Bridgeton area to Shettleston Jobcentre are:
 - the shortest and longest bus journey takes between 23 minutes and 37 minutes
 - the shortest and longest train journey takes between 25 minutes and 33 minutes.

6. DWP's work coaches personalise the support provided for each claimant based on individual need and circumstance. Where claimants have limitations due to a health condition or disability or because of caring responsibilities, then this is taken into account when arranging any attendance. DWP has various ways of interacting with vulnerable claimants, including:
 - face-to-face
 - by email
 - by telephone
 - by post
 - by SMS

Travel cost

7. Seven respondents (64%) expressed concern about the potential increase in travel costs and the impact this would have on disposable income for food and other necessities.
8. There were concerns that if a claimant transferred to Shettleston Jobcentre, the cost of the journey might make it impossible for the claimant to collect food vouchers to use at a Food Bank.

Typical comments:

"A one-way journey costs £2.15. Therefore, a return journey would come to £4.30. This may not sound like a lot of money but when you are surviving on £73 per week Jobseeker's Allowance, it is a great deal."

"Another mother who came said, 'If they close Bridgeton Job Centre, I'll have to go to Shettleston. I have a daughter with asthma so I would have to take her with me and I can't afford the bus fares.'"

Travel cost response

9. DWP acknowledge that this proposal may increase travel costs for some claimants when they are required to attend Shettleston Jobcentre. This will be particularly so for those who currently live within easy reach of Bridgeton Jobcentre.
10. Average travel costs for claimants travelling within the Bridgeton area to Shettleston Jobcentre are:
 - cost of travel by bus is £1.40 for a short-hop single bus ticket and £2.15 for a long-hop single bus ticket. A day ticket costs £4.50
 - the average cost of a train journey is between £2.00 and £2.30
11. The reimbursement of travel costs, other than mandatory attendance, is considered on an individual basis in line with DWP regulations nationally. This is not new and is the case for any claimant required to attend a jobcentre throughout the UK.

12. Support to meet travel costs is also available to eligible claimants via the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card. Claimants can also request to attend a jobcentre closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.
13. Food bank vouchers are available through a range of partner organizations in the Bridgeton area.

Access to services

14. Seven respondents (64%) expressed concern that closing the jobcentre would have an adverse impact on the local community, removing access to services and support for vulnerable benefit claimants and those seeking work.
15. Concerns were also expressed about the effect the proposed closure may have on current levels of service, in particular the ability of the new office to absorb the increased caseload. For example, whether work coaches would be able to continue to devote the time required to support claimants and help them into work.

Typical comments:

“The decision to vacate existing buildings could mean that it will be some time before they are filled... This will have a profound effect on the local economy.”

“Much good work has been done over the years to tackle Glasgow’s incomparable gangland culture. It is still, sadly, not unusual for certain individuals in our city to not cross particular roads...”

“I’ve never worked with computers. I don’t know how to use them, and I can’t afford a telephone. What’s going to happen to me?”

“A study by Citizens Advice Scotland... shows that many (7/10) people lack the equipment, knowledge and skills required to access DWP services and search for jobs online. These powerful statistics reinforce the case for far greater support of jobseekers and tackling digital exclusion, rather than less support.”

Access to services response

16. DWP is not reducing its services and is committed to retaining a substantial jobcentre network in the City of Glasgow. This proposal will deliver economies of scale, which will enable DWP to deliver enhanced services to support business improvements including digital services and group information support
17. The overall aim is to provide an enhanced service in jobcentres: IT equipment will be moved and rehoused in Shettleston Jobcentre. Claimants will continue to be encouraged to bring their own electronic devices into the jobcentre to make good use of DWP’s free Wi-Fi to help them manage their online claim and support their jobsearch activities. Dedicated staff will be available to support claimants by delivering services and additional support in our digital suites.

18. DWP is confident that the additional workload can be accommodated into the new jobcentre with the capacity to expand as necessary. There will be no reduction in staff numbers following the closure of Bridgeton Jobcentre: staff resource will move to Shettleston Jobcentre ensuring the same overall work coach numbers, for example. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, claimants will retain their current work coach who will continue to deliver tailored and personalised support from the new jobcentre. Working practices and service delivery methods will continue to be reviewed and adapted to maximise the use of the estate.
19. DWP noted concerns around Bridgeton footfall, however, the office is a leased building, which the landlord may offer to new tenants should DWP's decision be to vacate.
20. Shettleston Jobcentre regularly holds jobs fairs/recruitment events attended by claimants with no reported 'gangland' incidents. The most recent event was on 22 March 2017 when approximately 898 claimants from across the District attended the event.
21. In addition, DWP successfully introduced a Youth Hub in Shettleston Jobcentre for all 16-to-24 year old claimants living in the East End. The Youth Hub provided a tailored service to meet the needs of this customer group, drawing in people from:
 - Shettleston
 - Easterhouse
 - Parkhead
 - Bridgeton
22. DWP is not aware of any issues or incidents being reported during the two years that the Youth Hub operated.

Sanctions

23. Five respondents (45%) expressed concern that the number of sanctions issued would increase if the proposed jobcentre closure went ahead.

Typical comment:

"This added travel time and unfamiliar route coupled with the fact that Jobcentre appointments can vary from week to week adds a great deal of uncertainty... because people are faced with the prospect of being sanctioned."

Sanctions response

24. DWP do not expect these proposals to result in additional sanctions.
25. The National Audit Office has estimated that a million jobseekers missed appointments between July 2015 and December 2015 compared with only 34,000 sanction referrals. On-going work to ensure claimants understand and agree expectations with their work coaches has supported this reduction.
26. All claimants receive personalised tailored support, taking account of individual circumstance recognising capability (including health conditions), disability and caring responsibilities. It should also be noted that claimants, including those with vulnerabilities, are asked to agree reasonable steps appropriate to individual circumstances.
27. Concern about public transport will continue to be considered on an individual basis. However, DWP recognises that some claimants will be taking an unfamiliar journey. Work coaches will support claimants over the transition period until they become familiar with new travel arrangements. Claimants can also request to attend a jobcentre that is closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

Outreach

28. DWP is committed to retaining a jobcentre network and continuing to serve people in all areas of the UK to make sure they can continue to access the tailored services they need. When a full-time jobcentre closes, DWP will put an 'outreach' service in place within the local community.
29. Outreach is a vital front-facing service to claimants. Host organizations offer access to their facilities as part of the on-going partnership activities with DWP. This allows work coaches and partner organizations to work together to support the joint needs of claimants. DWP is currently working with our partner organizations within the local area to develop an outreach service.
30. DWP recognises the need to ensure facilities are made available to offer additional local support to claimants. This might take the form of assistance in using IT or to make a claim, in addition to other advice and support. However, there would still be a requirement for claimants to attend the jobcentre for mandatory interventions. Also, Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) claimants use an electronic signature capture tool, which is automated to release the benefit payment and is only available in jobcentres.
31. Bridgeton is a deprived area and suffers from many associated social problems: but in addition, there are several Homeless Units in close proximity to the jobcentre. There are also concerns about the loss of support given by the local jobcentre especially in an area where digital skills and knowledge may be low.

32. The public consultation led to a number of organizations discussing the services they offer and to consider closer working. Discussions will take place with a large number of organizations in the area to help improve support for claimants. The following options are being explored:
- closer working with a wide range of support organizations to build work coach knowledge and contacts to improve access for claimants to support available in the Bridgeton area
 - working with partner organizations to establish closer working relationships and in some circumstances, exchange contact numbers to build in escalation routes to support vulnerable claimants

Conclusion and next steps

33. DWP has considered the points raised by all of the people and organizations that have responded to the consultation. The points raised by respondents do highlight difficulties raised in making these changes, but DWP has to balance the need to provide services along with the budget it has to deliver those services.
34. DWP has examined the proposal to close Bridgeton Jobcentre and concluded that it remains the best option in order to achieve improved use of space and resources, delivering value for money, providing better facilities and maintaining a high standard of service to claimants.
35. However, DWP is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in the community and proposes to leave an outreach facility to deliver local support, placing a part-time work coach service within a community location. Discussions are taking place with partner organizations to establish the delivery location and the exact nature of the services offered.
36. DWP is confident that, in proceeding with this plan, sufficient jobcentre capacity will remain across the City of Glasgow, delivering targeted service and support, able to respond to future changes in demand.

Annex D: summary of the responses for Castlemilk Jobcentre

1. One hundred and fifty seven responses received which have been categorised as follows:
 - 149 responses were from members of the public. Of these, 132 were individual public received through Stewart Malcolm McDonald MP for Glasgow South
 - 7 responses from organisations:
 - Castlemilk Law and Money Advice Centre x2
 - Ardenglen Housing Association
 - Northview Housing Association
 - Craigdale Housing Association
 - Sense Scotland
 - Gatehouse Property Management
 - 1 response from Stewart Malcolm McDonald MP: Glasgow South

Response themes

2. The following summarises responses by grouping issues into a series of themes.

Travel time

3. One hundred and forty eight respondents (94%) were concerned about the increase in travel time to attend Newlands Jobcentre. Concerns related specifically to public transport, journey times and the inconvenience and increased difficulties this presents, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Typical comments:

“...the new public transport journey required of claimants will be the longest in the whole of Glasgow by at least 15 minutes each way. In addition the public transport facilities from Castlemilk to Newlands are extremely unsatisfactory.”

“The current bus leaves Castlemilk Shopping Centre at nine minutes past the hour. If, for example, a meeting has been arranged for 9.00am, it is quite conceivable that a claimant who caught the 8.09am bus would miss the meeting due to rush hour delays with the second bus. Any claimant who had to drop a child at school could not attend an appointment at this time.”

“Newlands Jobcentre is approximately 4 miles from Castlemilk which is too far to walk.”

“Public transport links between Castlemilk and Newlands pose difficulties too; there is no direct bus link between Castlemilk and Newlands.”

“Castlemilk is however a large community geographically. This adds significantly to the journey time and simply makes the whole experience much more difficult especially for those with mobility problems. Those with mental health problems are also highly likely to find it extremely difficult to cope with the extra effort involved.”

“...during severe winter weather, the bus service to Castlemilk is often suspended and buses terminate at Croftfoot Road. The distances and costs involved could be effectively prohibitive in some instances.”

“The disabled members of the XXX are worried that the proposals will present real challenges in travelling by public transport to their nearest Jobcentre which they may now have to consider. Some will struggle to find a wheelchair accessible bus for example; two wheelchair users could not travel on the same route at the same time. Those with mental health issues or certain learning difficulties (e.g. autism) find it difficult to travel by public transport.”

Travel time response

4. DWP believes that it is reasonable to expect claimants to travel to an office within 3 miles, or 20 minutes by public transport from their existing jobcentre. Castlemilk Jobcentre falls outside these criteria so the department has chosen to consult publicly.
5. Through consultation, the catchment area of Castlemilk Jobcentre has been investigated and travel times and bus and train routes have been compiled. Average journey times for claimants travelling within the Castlemilk area to Newlands Jobcentre are:
 - the shortest and longest bus journey takes between 43 minutes and 67 minutes
 - the shortest and longest train journey takes between 38 minutes and 47 minutes
6. Claimants may request not to transfer to Newlands Jobcentre, preferring instead to transfer to a jobcentre closer to their home address, should there be one. Castlemilk has a disproportionately high number of claimants with disabilities and lone parents with young children than the other Glasgow jobcentres. The added journey time will present challenges to these groups.
7. DWP’s work coaches personalise the support provided for each claimant based on individual needs and circumstances. Where claimants have limitations due to a health condition or disability or because of caring responsibilities, then this is taken into account when arranging any attendance. DWP has various ways of interacting with vulnerable claimants, including:
 - face-to-face
 - by email
 - by telephone
 - by post
 - by SMS

Travel cost

8. One hundred and thirty nine respondents (89%) expressed concern about the potential increase in travel costs and the impact this would have on disposable income for food and other necessities.
9. Respondents in Castlemilk were concerned that if a claimant transferred to Newlands Jobcentre, the cost of the journey might make it difficult for the claimant to collect food vouchers to use at a Food Bank.

Typical comments:

“Our experience of administering food parcels (Trussell Trust)... shows that some people cannot afford the bus fare to access the services available to them.”

“Taking two buses each way means the claimant will have to buy an all-day ticket which presently costs £4.50. This is a substantial proportion of weekly benefit.”

Travel cost response

10. DWP acknowledge that the proposals may increase travel costs for many claimants when they are required to attend Newlands Jobcentre. This will be particularly so for those who currently live within easy reach of Castlemilk Jobcentre.
11. Average travel costs for claimants travelling from within the Castlemilk area to Newlands Jobcentre are:
 - cost of travel by bus is £1.40 for a short-hop single bus ticket and £2.15 for a long-hop single bus ticket. A day ticket costs £4.50
 - the average cost of a train journey single ticket is £2.20
12. The reimbursement of travel costs, other than mandatory attendance, is considered on an individual basis in line with DWP regulations nationally. This is not new and is the case for any claimant required to attend a jobcentre throughout the UK.
13. Support to meet travel costs is also available to eligible claimants via the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card.
14. A Food Bank has advised that their vouchers are also available through a range of partner organisations.

Access to services

15. One hundred and forty four respondents (92%) expressed concern that closing the jobcentre would have an adverse impact on the local community, removing access to services and support for vulnerable benefit claimants and those seeking work.
16. Concerns were also expressed about the impact that the proposed closure may have on the current level of service, in particular the ability of the new office to absorb the increased caseload. For example, whether work coaches would be able to continue to devote the time required to support claimants and help them into work.

Typical comments:

"...Castlemilk is one of the 5% most deprived areas in Scotland."

"...this loss will have huge repercussions for the area."

"The centre finds it extremely difficult to attract national or independent retailers. I will only be able to fill the empty unit with a charity shop, which is of no use to the community."

Access to services response

17. DWP is not reducing its services and is committed to retaining a substantial jobcentre network in the City of Glasgow. This proposal will deliver economies of scale, which will enable DWP to deliver enhanced services to support business improvements including digital services and group information support.
18. The overall aim is to provide an enhanced service in jobcentres. IT equipment will be moved and rehoused in Newlands Jobcentre. Claimants will continue to be encouraged to bring their own electronic devices into the jobcentre to make good use of DWP's free Wi-Fi to help them manage their online claim and support their jobsearch activities. Dedicated staff will be available to support claimants by delivering services in our digital suites.
19. DWP is confident that the additional workload can be accommodated into the new jobcentre with the capacity to expand as necessary. There will be no reduction in staff numbers following the proposal to close Castlemilk Jobcentre: staff resource will move to Newlands Jobcentre ensuring the same overall work coach numbers. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, claimants will retain their current work coach who will continue to deliver tailored and personalised support from the new jobcentre. Working practices and service delivery methods will continue to be reviewed and adapted to maximise the use of the estate.

20. DWP has noted concerns around Castlemilk footfall, however, the office is a leased building, which the landlord may offer to new tenants should DWPs decision be to vacate.
21. Castlemilk has a disproportionately high number of claimants with disabilities and lone parents with young children. The added journey time to Newlands Jobcentre will present challenges to these groups and make access to services more difficult.

Sanctions

22. Twenty respondents (13%) expressed concerns that the number of sanctions issued would increase if the proposal to close Castlemilk Jobcentre went ahead.

Typical comment:

“Given the widespread concern with regard to possible sanctions for missing or even being late for appointments; Newlands is not a viable alternative to the current service in Castlemilk.”

Sanctions response

23. The National Audit Office has estimated that a million jobseekers missed appointments between July 2015 and December 2015 compared with only 34,000 sanction referrals. On-going work to ensure claimants understand and agree expectations with their work coaches has supported this reduction.
24. All claimants receive personalised tailored support, taking account of individual circumstance recognising capability (including health conditions), disability and caring responsibilities. It should also be noted that claimants including those with vulnerabilities are asked to agree reasonable steps appropriate to individual circumstances.
25. Concern about public transport will continue to be considered on an individual basis. However, DWP recognises that some claimants will be taking an unfamiliar journey. Work coaches will support claimants over the transition period until they become familiar with new travel arrangements. Claimants can also request to attend a jobcentre that is closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

Outreach

26. Typical comments:

“If such services are to be provided in Castlemilk, they will have to be located in premises where claimants will have unhindered access to the administration type facilities, and the internet (to help source employment opportunities).”
“A mobile job van? Or of course keeping the job centres open.”

Outreach response

27. DWP is committed to retaining a jobcentre network and continuing to serve people in all areas of the UK to make sure they can continue to access the tailored services they need. When a full-time jobcentre closes, DWP will put an 'outreach' service in place within the local community.
28. Outreach is a vital front-facing service to claimants. Host organizations offer access to their facilities as part of the on-going partnership activities with DWP. This allows work coaches and partner organizations to work together to support the joint needs of claimants.
29. DWP recognises the need to ensure facilities are made available to offer additional local support to claimants. This might take the form of assistance in using IT or to make a claim, in addition to other advice and support. However, there would still be a requirement for claimants to attend the jobcentre for mandatory interventions. Also JSA claimants use an electronic signature capture tool, which is automated to release the benefit payment and is only available in jobcentres.
30. There are concerns about the loss of support given by the local jobcentre especially in an area where digital skills and knowledge may be low. If Castlemilk Jobcentre is closed claimants are likely to face increased travel costs and a longer more complex journey to access these services at Newlands Jobcentre.
31. The public consultation led to a number of organizations discussing the services they offer and to consider closer working. Discussions will take place with a large number of organizations in the area to help improve support for claimants. The following options are being explored:
 - closer working with a wide range of support organisations to build work coach knowledge and contacts to improve access for claimants to support available in the Castlemilk area
 - working with partner organizations to establish closer working relationships and in some circumstances, exchange contact numbers to build in escalation routes to support vulnerable claimants

Conclusion and next steps

32. DWP has considered the points raised by all of the people and organisations that have responded to the consultation. The points raised by respondents do highlight difficulties raised in making these changes, but DWP has to balance the need to provide services along with the budget it has to deliver those services.
33. DWP has examined the proposal to close Castlemilk Jobcentre and decided to retain the jobcentre, on a short-term lease, with a view to securing a new site in the local community, supporting modern ways of working, and capable of delivering current and future business demand. In addition, the presence of a

jobcentre in Castlemilk limits any potential impact on other jobcentres in the vicinity.

34. In response to the consultation, many respondents raised travel as a concern and the difficult journey faced by claimants in getting to Newlands Jobcentre. The impact on journey times for the majority of claimants is considerable, for example, there are no direct bus routes from Castlemilk to Newlands Jobcentre. Most claimants travelling to Newlands Jobcentre would be required to use two buses. Furthermore, the bus service on some routes is infrequent (hourly) and the journey could be longer at certain times depending on how long claimants have to wait to transfer to the second bus.
35. DWP has listened to these concerns and is confident that, in making this decision, sufficient jobcentre capacity will remain across the City of Glasgow, delivering targeted services and support, able to respond to future changes in demand.

Annex E: summary of the responses for Maryhill Jobcentre

1. Forty-two responses were received which have been categorised as follows:
 - 39 responses were from members of the public
 - 2 responses from organisations:
 - Maryhill and Possilpark Citizens Advice Scotland
 - Skills for Learning East Dunbartonshire Council
 - 1 response from Bob Doris MSP Maryhill and Springburn

Response themes

2. The following summarises the responses by grouping issues into a series of themes.

Travel time

3. Thirty-seven respondents (88%) were concerned about the increase in travel time for claimants attending Springburn Jobcentre. Concerns related specifically to public transport, longer journey times and the inconvenience and increased difficulties for all affected claimants with particular reference to vulnerable groups.

Typical comments:

“These figures make huge assumptions, which do not consider public travel connections where more than one vehicle/mode of travel is involved.”

“Claimants and the wider population already face difficulties...there is an even greater impact on people experiencing disabilities.”

“... have they [DWP] taken into consideration people with specific disabilities or learning difficulties, where a less-local centre will cause greater difficulties and stress?”

“Those with small children will need to bring them with them and it could take up to an hour to get there depending on the buses waiting for an interview and then travelling time to get home.”

Travel time response

4. DWP believes that it is reasonable to expect claimants to travel to an office within 3 miles, or 20 minutes by public transport from their existing jobcentre. Maryhill Jobcentre falls outside these criteria so the department has chosen to consult publicly.

5. Through consultation, the catchment area of Maryhill Jobcentre has been investigated and travel times and bus and train routes have been compiled. Average journey times for claimants travelling from within the Maryhill area to Springburn Jobcentre are:
 - on average the shortest and longest bus journey takes between 28 minutes and 65 minutes
 - on average the shortest and longest train journey takes between 50 minutes and 68 minutes
6. DWP's work coaches personalise the support provided for each claimant based on individual needs and circumstances. Where claimants have limitations due to a health condition or disability or because of caring responsibilities, then this is taken into account when arranging any attendance. DWP has various ways of interacting with vulnerable claimants, including:
 - face-to-face
 - by email
 - by telephone
 - by post
 - by SMS

Travel cost

7. Twenty-six respondents (62%) expressed concern about the potential increase in travel costs and the impact this would have on disposable income for food and other necessities.

Typical comments:

"The proposed closure of the Maryhill JC would be terrible because that would mean that I would either have to walk for 5 miles or get 2 buses in order to get to my appointments, I cannot afford to pay the bus fares as I am on benefits so does this mean that the Jobcentre will pay £4.50 every time I have an appointment so that I can attend?"

"JSA is 70 pounds a week. I am actively seeking work. This means in order to save up for bus or train fare if I do get an interview, I walk almost everywhere during my week in order to save funds. Moving the Centre to Springburn will mean a bus ride, or two-bus ride, for me and probably for a lot of others who are in the same position that I am in. This will be difficult to afford."

Travel cost response

8. DWP acknowledge that the proposals may increase travel costs for some claimants when they are required to attend Springburn Jobcentre. This will be particularly so for those who currently live within easy reach of Maryhill Jobcentre.

9. Average travel costs for claimants travelling within the Maryhill area to Springburn Jobcentre are:
 - cost of travel by bus is £1.40 for a short-hop single bus ticket and £2.15 for a long-hop single bus ticket. A day ticket costs £4.50
 - cost of a train journey ranges between £2.10 and £3.70 for a single ticket
10. The reimbursement of travel costs, other than mandatory attendance, is considered on an individual basis in line with DWP regulations nationally. This is not new and is the case for any claimant required to attend a jobcentre throughout the UK.
11. Support to meet travel costs is also available to eligible claimants via the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card.

Access to services

12. Twenty-three respondents (55%) expressed concern that closing the jobcentre would have an adverse impact on the local community, removing access to services and support for vulnerable benefit claimants and those seeking work.
13. Concerns were also expressed about the impact of the proposed closure on the current level of service, in particular the ability of the new office to absorb the increased caseload. For example, whether work coaches would be able to continue to devote the time required to support claimants and help them into work.

Typical comments:

“If a member of Jobcentre Plus staff were to be based in a community venue would they be able to provide full help with looking for work, with full access to information online, full range of financial advice, confidentiality for interviews etc.?”

“The lack of internet accessibility at home and the skills needed to navigate what is already an increasingly online welfare benefits landscape is worrying many clients. The digital rollout across Glasgow is not happening until September 2018, out of sync to the shocking closures of key DWP offices across Glasgow.”

“...a lot of younger people cannot go to Springburn Jobcentre because of the fear of being attacked because of the bad blood that still exists.”

“At some point, unemployment will rise and DWP must have the capacity to manage this. Those left unemployed tend to be the most vulnerable. They are likely to need the most tailored support.”

“There is a significant problem of digital exclusion in Maryhill with disproportionate numbers of local residents lacking the associated knowledge, skills and/or access to computers. The removal of these services will worsen an already acute issue in the local area”

Access to services response

14. DWP is not reducing its services and is committed to retaining a substantial jobcentre network in the City of Glasgow. This proposal will deliver economies of scale, which will enable DWP to deliver enhanced services to support business improvements, including digital services and group information support.
15. The overall aim is to provide an enhanced service in jobcentres. IT equipment will be moved and rehoused in Springburn Jobcentre. Claimants will continue to be encouraged to bring their own electronic devices into the jobcentre to make good use of DWP’s free Wi-Fi to help them manage their online claim and support their jobsearch activities. Dedicated staff will be available to support claimants by delivering services in our digital suites.
16. DWP has noted concerns about younger people travelling to Springburn Jobcentre. The department carefully considered the wider impacts on local communities, as part of the review of the estate and the safety of claimants is of paramount importance. Community Safety Glasgow (CSG), who track and analyse youth disorder, gang related activities were also contacted as part of the consultation. CSG are not aware of any issues. Furthermore, while the department is not aware of any increased risks presented as a consequence of these proposals, alternative arrangements can be considered, for those affected, on an individual basis.
17. DWP is confident that the additional workload can be accommodated into Springburn Jobcentre with the capacity to expand as necessary. There will be no reduction in staff numbers following the closure of Maryhill Jobcentre: staff resource will move to Springburn Jobcentre ensuring the same overall work coach numbers. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, claimants will retain their current work coach who will continue to deliver tailored and personalised support from the new jobcentre. Working practices and service delivery methods will continue to be reviewed and adapted to maximise the use of the estate.

Sanctions

18. Ten respondents (24%) expressed concern that the number of sanctions issued would increase if the proposed Jobcentre closures went ahead.

Typical comments:

“This will make it more difficult for those in greatest need to access the Jobcentre services appropriate for them. Several of my constituents are

concerned that... they are being put at greater risk of... the devastating impact which we know these sanctions have on people's lives."

"...I would be expected to walk a five mile round trip in the unpredictable Scottish weather and if I am even two minutes late I will get sanctioned."

Sanctions response

19. DWP do not expect these proposals to result in additional sanctions.
20. The National Audit Office has estimated that a million jobseekers missed appointments between July 2015 and December 2015 compared with only 34,000 sanction referrals. Ongoing work to ensure claimants understand and agree expectations with their work coaches has supported this reduction.
21. All claimants receive personalised tailored support, taking account of individual circumstance recognising capability (including health conditions) disability and caring responsibilities. It should also be noted that claimants including those with vulnerabilities are asked to agree reasonable steps appropriate to individual circumstances.
22. Concern about public transport will continue to be considered on an individual basis. However, DWP recognises that some claimants will be taking an unfamiliar journey. Work coaches will support claimants over the transition period until they become familiar with new travel arrangements. Claimants can also request to attend a jobcentre that is closer to their home, should there be one. Work coaches will help signpost claimants in such circumstances.

Outreach

23. Typical comments:

"It is vital that these communities retain their Jobcentres. One of my constituents stressed the area needs "quality of service offered to clients" and that "local Jobcentres provide an essential service to local people in their own areas and should continue to do so." I urge the Government to work with local organisations and stake-holders and see what service is required."

"...a member of staff could be placed in housing association office where rooms are available and in libraries where these are open in the day time and have phone and Internet facilities and printers for job seekers to use."

"Outreach facilities are able to offer additional local support to claimants. This might take the form of assistance in using IT or to make a claim, in addition to other advice and support. However, there would still be a requirement for claimants to attend the jobcentre as JSA claimants use an electronic signature capture tool, which is automated to release the benefit payment and is only available in jobcentres."

Outreach response

24. DWP is committed to retaining a jobcentre network and continuing to serve people in all areas of the UK to make sure they can continue to access the tailored services they need. When a full-time jobcentre closes, DWP will put an 'outreach' service in place within the local community.
25. Outreach is a vital front-facing service to claimants. Host organisations offer access to their facilities as part of the on-going partnership activities with DWP. This allows work coaches and partner organisations to work together to support the joint needs of claimants. DWP is currently working with our partner organisations within the local area to develop an outreach service.
26. DWP recognises the need to ensure facilities are made available to offer additional local support to claimants. This might take the form of assistance in using IT or to make a claim, in addition to other advice and support. However, there would still be a requirement for claimants to attend the jobcentre for mandatory interventions. Also JSA claimants use an electronic signature capture tool, which is automated to release the benefit payment and is only available in jobcentres.
27. Maryhill is a deprived area and suffers from many associated social problems. There are also concerns about the loss of support given by the local jobcentre especially in an area where digital skills and knowledge may be low.
28. Maryhill area is well served by many community facilities that are used by the jobcentre to help support claimants. Discussions will take place with a large number of organizations in the area to help improve support for claimants. The following options are being explored:
 - closer working with a wide range of support organizations to build work coach knowledge and contacts to improve access for claimants to support available in the Maryhill area.
 - working with partner organizations to establish closer working relationships and in some circumstances, exchange contact numbers to build in escalation routes to support vulnerable

Conclusion and next steps

29. DWP has considered the points raised by all of the people and organizations that have responded to the consultation. The points raised by respondents do highlight difficulties raised in making these changes, but DWP has to balance the need to provide services along with the budget it has to deliver those services.
30. DWP has examined the proposal to close Maryhill Jobcentre and concluded that it remains the best option in order to achieve improved use of space and resources, delivering value for money, providing better facilities and maintaining a high standard of service to claimants.
31. However, DWP is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in the community and proposes to leave an outreach facility to deliver local support.

Discussions are taking place with partner organisations to establish the delivery location and the exact nature of the services offered.

32. DWP is confident that, in proceeding with this plan, sufficient jobcentre capacity will remain across the City of Glasgow, delivering targeted service and support, able to respond to future changes in demand.

Annex F: questionnaire

The consultation paper invited responses to the following questions:

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposals? What overall comments would you like to make on the proposals?

Question 2: Will the proposals to close Bridgeton, Castlemilk and Maryhill jobcentres have a direct impact on you? If yes, please provide further details.

Question 3: If you currently use Jobcentre Plus services at these jobcentres, what impacts are there on the time and cost taken to travel to your new jobcentre?

Question 4: Are there any other particular impacts of the proposals that DWP should take into account when making a decision?

Question 5: Are there alternative services that could be provided that would be a benefit to some claimants? For example, this could be a member of Jobcentre Plus staff based in a community venue to provide help with looking for work. Please explain your answer, with specific examples and evidence of the potential demand for the service where possible.

Question 6: Please provide any additional comments that you have.

Annex G: list of respondents

In addition to members of the public and claimants who responded to the consultation, the following named individuals and organisations provided a response:

- African Challenge Scotland
 - Ardenglen Housing Association
 - Castlemilk Law and Money Advice Centre
 - Child Poverty Action Group Scotland
 - Church of Scotland
 - Citizens Advice Scotland
 - Craigdale Housing Association
 - Easterhouse Citizens Advice Scotland
 - Enable Scotland
 - Faith in Community Scotland
 - Gatehouse Property Management
 - Glasgow Centre for Population Health
 - Glasgow City Council
 - Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership
 - Glasgow City Mission
 - Glasgow Evening Times
 - Maryhill and Possilpark Citizens Advice Scotland
 - Northview Housing Association
 - One Parent Families Scotland
 - Parkhead Housing Association
 - Poverty Leadership Panel Glasgow City Council
 - Public and Commercial Services Union
 - Scottish Refugee Council
 - Sense Scotland
 - Skills Development Scotland
 - Skills for Learning East Dunbartonshire
 - SURF Scotland Regeneration Forum
 - The Poverty Alliance
 - The Wheatley Group
 - Tomorrows People
 - West of Scotland Housing Association
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- Alison Thewliss MP
 - Anas Sarwar MSP
 - Annie Wells MSP
 - Bob Doris MSP
 - Clare Haughey MSP
 - Humza Yousaf MSP
 - Natalie McGarry MP
 - Patrick Grady MP
 - Pauline McNeill MSP
 - SNP Westminster Group
 - Stewart Malcolm McDonald MP

- The Scottish Greens
- John Mason MSP
- Bill Kidd MSP