

Integrated Impact Assessment

The purpose of Aberdeen City Council is to protect the people and the place of Aberdeen from harm, enabling them to prosper and supporting them in the event of harm happening.

The purpose of an Integrated Impact Assessment is to evidence that Aberdeen City Council are making decisions in an informed way, and that the impact of decisions made is understood and accepted. The legislation that is considered within this assessment are:

- Section 2 [Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics](#)
- Section 3 [Socio-Economic](#)
- Section 4 [Human Rights](#)
- Section 5 [Children and Young People’s Rights](#)

The term ‘policy’ is used throughout this document and applies to policies, proposals, strategies, provision, criteria, functions, practice, budget savings and activities that includes delivery of our services.

1. About the Policy

1.1 Title

CG3- Cultural Development Programme Reduced

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

Reducing the Culture Development Programme budget by 50% (£156,000), **this** is the budget for the Spectra Festival of Light and supports APA Festivals, specifically Granite Noir and True North. The consequences of this proposal could mean these festivals are no longer sustainable and would be stopped.

Spectra has become recognised as Scotland Festival of Light, is the largest event in Northeast and attracts over 100,000 visits each year. Festival has become an important footfall driver for the city centre with it being several hospitality businesses busiest weekend for turnover. Following feedback, the event has made changes delivery including local delivery company, education and community programmes. more local artist opportunities and improved accessibility and queuing systems.

Granite Noir is the annual crime-writing festival, presenting author talks (local, national, and international), hosted conversations family events, workshops, dramas and exhibitions. Festival has won several notable awards and attracts audience of 15,000 (including online)

True North was the annual festival of contemporary music but has not taken place since 2022, instead APA have focussed more on their other festivals including Rise Up, a festival celebrating Black and People of Colour creatives in the region and Light the Blue, festival of youth arts.

1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?

New

1.4 Is this report going to a committee?

Yes – as part of 2024 budget report.

1.5 Committee name and date:

Council - 6 March 2024

1.6 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:

Budget proposal CG3

Impacts

This section demonstrates the considerations that have been made in relation to the policy - and that the impact of proposals made is understood and accepted.

2: Equality Act 2010 - Protected Characteristics

Aberdeen City Council wants to ensure everyone is treated fairly. This section identifies the [protected characteristics](#) that the policy potentially affects and records the impact and mitigating steps.

2.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below groups?

Protected Characteristic	What is the impact?				
	Negative			Neutral	Positive
	High	Medium	Low		
Age		x			
Disability		X			
Gender Reassignment				X	
Marriage and Civil Partnership				X	
Pregnancy and Maternity				X	
Race				x	
Religion or Belief				x	
Sex				x	
Sexual Orientation				X	

2.2 In what way will the policy impact people with these protected characteristics?

Age

Potential loss of Spectra and Granite Noir impacting on level of cultural participation opportunities for older people and children and young people. leading to barriers to engagement.

Loss of creative funding supported project impacting on level of cultural participation opportunities for older people and children and young people. leading to barriers to engagement.

Risk of increased isolation of participants and volunteers through loss of opportunities.

impact on retention for young people/ recent graduates – will have less opportunities.

Reduction of cultural activity at care homes, hospitals etc. loss of activities impact on participants health and wellbeing

Young people and families- loss of education programme and Family workshops impacting on health and wellbeing.

Disability

Reduction in opportunities for cultural projects which support homelessness, mental health, wellbeing, special education needs.

Reduced opportunities for cultural organisations to access funding to support accessibility (i.e., targeted programming, specialist equipment etc.)

Race

Reduced access to cultural participation for groups in regeneration areas with higher demographic of ethnic minorities.

Discontinued opportunities for the activity led by ethnic minority groups or targeted at participants from ethnic minority groups.

Sex

Reduction in opportunities for cultural activity for projects which engage women in opportunities where they are underrepresented (politics, film etc)

Sexual Orientation

Reduction in opportunities for LGBT cultural activity and opportunities for LGBT groups and creatives.

2.3 What considerations have been made in reaching the above assessment?

What internal or external data has been considered? What does this data tell us?

The Culture Programme (Spectra, Granite Noir and True North) has been subject to Cultural Funding and Delivery Review, which was approved at Council on the 7th of February. The Review has been undertaken by an independent consultant agency, as part of the process they have been provided with range of data sets from both the Council and external cultural organisations, this includes analysis of audience and participant data, analysis of funding allocations (benefactors, target audiences etc.) The analysis has shown where the gaps and demand in respect to cultural opportunities which has been profiled against City SIMD datazones and audience segmentation maps.

Spectra evaluation of the 2023 event informed the need for further improvements in accessibility. This has resulted in specific accessibility programme, partnership with AbleDeen and WeToo to support attendance for those requiring mobility assistance and families with additional needs, particularly around ASD and ADHD. The programme included special 'quite night' previews for children and families with additional needs, introduction of help desks, fast track passes to allow access.

What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with officers and partner organisations?

To date the consultants have undertaken a review of the current investment and organisations supported and analysed the Council's current approach and rationale for support. Organisations and initiatives subject to the review include APA, Castlegate Arts, Peacock Visual Arts, Citymoves Dance Agency, Sound Festival, Jazz Scotland, SPECTRA Festival, Nuart Aberdeen and the open application project fund, Creative Funding. As part of the process the Review team have carried out consultations with all 'core' funded cultural organisations, Council cultural service managers, Creative Funding

recipients, Culture Aberdeen, Visit Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen Inspired, COSLA and national public sector funders.

What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy (e.g., citizens, community groups, or other people/groups)?

Having reviewed the data from the phase 2 budget consultations, it should be noted participants were not giving any detail on what the funding actually supported in terms of outputs or outcomes nor asked to give specific comment in relation to protected characteristics. Despite this many of the comment's reference the importance of arts in culture for mental health, well-being and in particular the contribution to young people from education and beyond.

Highlighted comments relating to protected characteristics were:

AGE

- Don't touch that arts & culture budget - especially when it comes to children and young adults' access. It's vital for mental health well-being, and for developing citizenship values.
- We do not need to reduce funding for Culture and Sport as this directly helps in the health and mental well-being of people, particularly young children.
- We don't have enough as it is and really important to encourage tourism & students. Also important as a means to support anti-social behaviour, care experienced children and those who have experienced trauma.
- Any reduction in grants or removal of funding is detrimental to the society, the mental wellbeing of citizens especially children/youth and would result in far more serious crime & violence that will cause additional spending.
- Post lock downs and so much closing down in the centre of town -such as public libraries, Belmont Cinema and Bon Accord baths left empty means there is a dearth of community culture. The culture and community of the art gallery and sports spaces is important to the life and sense of community. Therefore, they should be accessed at the present hours of opening. The sense of community is breaking down in the city. The opportunities for families and especially children are dwindling.
- Don't touch that arts & culture budget - especially when it comes to children and young adults' access. It's vital for mental health wellbeing, and for developing citizenship values.
- Getting rid of Arts, Culture & Sport will ruin Aberdeen. These are some of the only things that keep people happy in Aberdeen, especially since the high street closed. These things are amazing for keeping young people off the streets, bringing in young professionals, excellent for families, and are accessible to the older generation which is so important.

DISABILITY

- Accessible events and social spaces are very important to people with disabilities.
 - If people cannot attend events due to support available, for example guidance for people who are visibly impaired, this will have a negative impact on their overall wellbeing and could mean they rely on other council or public services for assistance and support.
 - ...reducing these will disproportionately impact on the poorest in our society and those with less means. That would tend to be single mothers, care experienced people and people from minority ethnic communities.
 - I think this would have a major impact on community. There are little things to do in Aberdeen as it is. By doing this you are taking away opportunities for children and young people. They will have no option but to hang about the streets causing trouble if there is nothing to do.
-

- For people with severe autism, having access to a variety of stimulating activities is really essential for improved learning, stimulation and socialisation with others. This is the case whether it takes the form of performance by others; artistic activities for the individual; or access to sport and exercise for the individual. Any major reduction in funding of these activities would be a huge blow to level 3 autistic people. The arts and sport are not just 'nice to haves', but as stated above, essentials for fulfilling lives for all participants.

Spectra also conducts annual visitor surveys (500+ responses), some key findings from the 2024 edition which supports the above statements includes -

- 84% of attendees rated the event as excellent/good.
- 94% Agreed they want to see Spectra return in 2025.
- 91% Agreed Spectra had increased pride in Aberdeen.
- 76% Agreed Spectra has a positive impact on my wellbeing.
- 78% Agreed Spectra was accessible to all.

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?		
Officers have secured £275,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to cover 'core programme' costs for Spectra 2025. While this provides some assurance the event can continue it still leaves a substantial fundraising target to cover full event delivery costs which stand at around £450,000 (based on 2024 event) leaving around £175,000 to be found. If this money cannot be secured elements of the programme will need to be scaled down (accessibility/education activity) or an attendance charge will need to be considered. Which will reduce access to the event.		
With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?	High	
	Medium	
	Low	X
	Negative Impact Removed	

3: Socio-Economic Impacts

This section is used to consider the impact of the policy on people who might be **unemployed, single parents**, people with lower **education** or **literacy**, **looked after children**, those with **protected characteristics** as examples.

Use this guide to understand more on socio-economic inequalities: [The Fairer Scotland Duty: Guidance for Public Bodies \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/the-fairer-scotland-duty/guidance-for-public-bodies/pages/1-to-4.aspx)

3.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below groups?

Group	Negative			Neutral	Positive
	High	Medium	Low		
Low income / income poverty – those who cannot afford regular bills, food, clothing payments.		X			
Low and/or no wealth – those who can meet basic living costs but have no savings for unexpected spend or provision for the future		X			
Material deprivation – those who cannot access basic goods and services, unable to repair/replace		X			

broken electrical goods, heat their homes or access to leisure or hobbies					
Area deprivation – consider where people live and where they work (accessibility and cost of transport)		x			
Socio-economic background – social class, parents' education, employment, income.		X			

3.2 In what way will the policy impact people in these groups?

LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Reduction in free access to culture and leisure opportunities in the city centre, particularly impacting low-income households and children in poverty as access would be restricted beyond current opening hours.

MATERIAL DEPRIVATION

Previous Creative funded supported activity has removed barriers to participate in culture, providing free or low-cost activities within the community. These programmes would no longer be available.

AREA DEPRIVATION

Reduction in targeted participant opportunities for those from areas of deprivation, this includes free and low-cost activities based with their communities. Previous Creative Funding grants have also covered transportation costs to allow participants to attend city centre venues, this policy would remove this provision.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Reduction in cultural activities and programmes in schools within priority areas.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Reduction in free-to-access leisure and culture facilities would have an overall negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of the city's residents.

3.3 What considerations have been made in reaching the above assessment?

What internal or external data has been considered? What does this data tell us?

Analysis was undertaken of Spectra, True North and Granite Noir through Cultural Funding **and** Delivery Review as well as the Culture Impact Review, both presented to Council on the 7th of February. The former included analysis of audiences and participants of the cultural organisations as cultural attendance, which indicated attendance to cultural activity in Aberdeen (across all wards) was higher than the national average, which is backed by the finding if the 2021 Household Survey results as well.

What consultation and engagement and has been undertaken with officers and partner organisations?

Aberdeen Performing Arts participated in the Cultural Funding and Delivery Review (as did officers leading on Spectra delivery). Spectra also conducts a series of debriefs with delivery partners including internal services and external's such as Abledeen and WeToo.

What consultation and engagement and **has been undertaken** with people who may be impacted by this policy? citizens, community groups, or other people/groups impacted by this policy?

Having reviewed the data from the phase 2 budget consultations there were no clear links socio-economic impacts for people with protected characteristics.

Feedback from targeted engagement included a focus on potential reduction in offer for tourists, as well as impact on mental wellbeing and quality of life for all residents in the city, with particular focus on free access, safe spaces and warm spaces that could be accessed for free and without stigma.

Highlighted comments relating to socio-economic impacts:

LOW INCOME

- If services are cut or additional fees are required for arts, culture and sports this would negatively affect those on fixed incomes and relying on benefits. Feelings of wellbeing, good mental and physical health are linked to access to these events. If people cannot attend events due to support available, for example guidance for people who are visibly impaired, this will have a negative impact on their overall wellbeing and could mean they rely on other council or public services for assistance and support.
- Arts and culture are extremely important to society and especially to enriching the lives of vulnerable people.
- Again, reducing these will disproportionately impact on the poorest in our society and those with less means. That would tend to be single mothers, care experienced people and people from minority ethnic communities.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Arts and culture are important for mental wellbeing and quality of life.
- These are vital resources for all of the community. Places for people to gather and be together which is vital for health. Also, they are part of a provision of warm spaces for people and opportunities for health and leisure. Overall physical and mental health will be reduced by removing these services and the inequality gap will widen as those who can afford to go to private provision will do so and those who cannot afford this will have nothing. Then, their poor health will deteriorate further and for young people this will mean less positive life outcomes.

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?

Officers have secured £275,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to cover ‘core programme’ costs for Spectra 2025. While this provides some assurance the event can continue it still leaves a substantial fundraising target to cover full event delivery costs which stand at around £450,000 (based on 2024 event) leaving around £175,000 to be found. If this money cannot be secured, elements of the programme will need to be scaled down (accessibility/education activity) or an attendance charge will need to be considered. Which will reduce access to the event.

With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?	High	
	Medium	
	Low	X
	Negative Impact Removed	

4: Human Rights Impacts

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Human Rights Act came into force in the UK in October 2000

The Act sets out our human rights in a series of 'Articles'. Each Article deals with a different right.

Use this guide to understand more about [Human Rights](#).

4.1 What impact could this policy have on Human Rights?

Human Rights Article	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Article 6: Right to a fair trial		X	
Article 7: No punishment without law		X	
Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence		X	
Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief and religion		X	
Article 10: Freedom of expression		X	
Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association		X	
Article 12: Right to marry and start a family		X	
Article 14: Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms		X	
Article 1 of Protocol 1: Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property		X	
Article 2 of Protocol 1: Right to education		x	
Article 3 of Protocol 1: Right to participate in free elections		X	

4.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

Having reviewed the data from the phase 2 budget consultations there were no clear links to Human Rights.

Feedback from targeted engagement focused on impact on access to education, ability to gather in social settings especially for people with no religion who may otherwise struggle to maintain community ties.

Highlighted comments relating to Human Rights impacts were:

- Arts and culture are extremely important to society and especially to enriching the lives of vulnerable people.
- These are vital resources for all of the community. Places for people to gather and be together which is vital for health. Also, they are part of a provision of warm spaces for people and opportunities for health and leisure. Overall physical and mental health will be reduced by removing these services and the inequality gap will widen as those who can afford to go to private provision will do so and those who cannot afford this will have nothing. Then, their poor health will deteriorate further and for young people this will mean less positive life outcomes.
- I think this would have a major impact on community. There are little things to do in Aberdeen as it is. By doing this you are taking away opportunities for children and young people. They will have no option but to hang about the streets causing trouble if there is nothing to do.
- ... having access to a variety of stimulating activities is really essential for improved learning, stimulation and socialisation with others.

4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?		
None		
If mitigations are in place, does this remove the negative impact?	No – negative impact remains	x
	Yes – negative impact reduced	
	Yes - negative impact removed	

5: Children and Young People’s Rights Impacts

The United Nations Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child’s life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

Children’s rights apply to every child/young person under the age of 18 and to adults still eligible to receive a “children’s service” (e.g., care leavers aged 18 – 25 years old).

The Conventions are also known as the “General Principles”, and they help to interpret all the other articles and play a fundamental role in realising all the rights in the Convention for all children. They are:

1. Non-discrimination (Article 2)
2. Best interest of the child (Article 3)
3. Right to life survival and development (Article 6)
4. Right to be heard (Article 12)

You can [read the full UN Convention \(pdf\)](#), or [just a summary \(pdf\)](#), to find out more about the rights that are included.

5.1 What impact could this policy have on the rights of Children and Young People?

UNCRC and Optional Protocols	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Article 1: definition of the child		X	
Article 2: non-discrimination		X	
Article 3: best interests of the child		X	
Article 4: implementation of the convention		X	
Article 5: parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities		X	
Article 6: life, survival and development		X	
Article 7: birth registration, name, nationality, care		X	
Article 8: protection and preservation of identity		X	
Article 9: separation from parents		X	
Article 10: family reunification		X	
Article 11: abduction and non-return of children		X	
Article 12: respect for the views of the child		X	
Article 13: freedom of expression		X	
Article 14: freedom of thought, belief and religion		X	
Article 15: freedom of association		X	
Article 16: right to privacy		X	
Article 17: access to information from the media		X	

Article 18: parental responsibilities and state assistance		X	
Article 19: protection from violence, abuse and neglect		X	
Article 20: children unable to live with their family		X	
Article 21: adoption		X	
Article 22: refugee children		X	
Article 23: children with a disability		X	
Article 24: health and health services	x		
Article 25: review of treatment in care		X	
Article 26: social security		X	
Article 27: adequate standard of living		X	
Article 28: right to education		X	
Article 29: goals of education		X	
Article 30: children from minority or Indigenous groups		X	
Article 31: leisure, play and culture	X		
Article 32: child labour		X	
Article 33: drug abuse		X	
Article 34: sexual exploitation		X	
Article 35: abduction, sale and trafficking		X	
Article 36: other forms of exploitation		X	
Article 37: inhumane treatment and detention		X	
Article 38: war and armed conflicts		X	
Article 39: recovery from trauma and reintegration		X	
Article 40: juvenile justice		X	
Article 41: respect for higher national standards		X	
Article 42: knowledge of rights		X	
Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure			

5.2 In what way will the policy impact the rights of Children and Young People?

Having reviewed the data from the phase 2 budget consultations there were no clear links to the rights of Children and Young People.

Feedback from targeted engagement focused on impact on wider access to education, ability to gather in social settings especially for young people.

Highlighted comments relating to Children and Young People were:

- Again, reducing these will disproportionately impact on the poorest in our society and those with less means. That would tend to be single mothers, care experienced people and people from minority ethnic communities.
- I think this would have a major impact on community. There are little things to do in Aberdeen as it is. By doing this you are taking away opportunities for children and young people. They will have no option but to hang about the streets causing trouble if there is nothing to do.

Access to cultural programmes have been evidenced to benefit mental and physical health for children.

a significant amount of supported activity is aimed at schools, ranging from support for national visiting companies' education programmes to bespoke arts programmes targeting those from disadvantaged backgrounds and or special needs.

Reduced access to cultural participation for groups in areas of deprivation with higher demographic of ethnic minorities.

5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?

None

If mitigations are in place, does this remove the negative impact?

No – negative impact remains

Yes – negative impact reduced

X

Yes - negative impact removed

6: Sign Off

Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?

VISITOR ECONOMY/ CITY CENTRE RECOVERY

No consultation has been undertaken with these groups, a reduction in cultural offer will have an impact on the city's attractiveness as a destination which in turn lead to reduced visits, impacting the wider economy (accommodation and hospitality providers) who are facing significant economic challenges in the current climate, with an employee base disproportionately high in respect to protected characteristics. The importance of cultural activity as a driver to city centre economy cannot be underestimated, several city centre businesses reported record breaking turnover as a result of Spectra festival of light, several businesses attributing it as essential to stay afloat.

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6359023/spectra-aberdeen-businesses-aberdeen-city-centre/>

Organisers of Spectra will need to explore alternative charges and fees option to cover costs, but this will impact on grant funding requirements or audience downturns.

While core funding for Spectra 2025 has been secured through UKSPF there is no support beyond next year's event. There is a significant risk without continued general revenue funding the event will become unsustainable, weakening leveraging ability which would lead 2025 being the last year of the event.

Overall summary of changes made as a result of impact assessment.

None

Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.

Supported projects are subject to annual monitoring and reporting. The Council approved the establishment of a new Cultural Investment Framework for 2025/26 and the impacted organisations will need to provide impact information as part of a new application process. This will help identify reductions in participants, activities, or match funding as a result of this policy.

If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.

As there are no mitigations in place the negative impacts will remain.

Assessment Author	Mark Bremner
Date	26/02/2024
Chief Officer	Julie Wood
Date	26/02/2024