

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
Reduce opening hours of all galleries and museums venues
1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?
Reduction in operating costs through reduced opening hours at Art Gallery and Maritime Museum (primary venues), and Provost Skenes House and the Tolbooth Museum (secondary venues) 11am to 4pm, 7 days a week across all venues PLUS seasonal opening for Provost Skene’s House and Tolbooth Museum
A substantial free cultural offer will remain available in the city between 11:00 and 16:00, and in the height of the visitor season.
This IIA should be read in conjunction with CG08 - Close Tollbooth Museum (beyond reduction in opening hours in CG11)
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 CG11

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?			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?

Reduction in offer at primary sites (Art Gallery, Maritime Museum) that offer warm, free and fully accessible facilities 7 days per week, including access to Changing Places facilities at the Art Gallery

Reduction in access to free cultural opportunities

Secondary sites (Tolbooth Museum, Provosts Skene's House) have very limited access for people with mobility issues or those using a wheelchair.

The expected impact includes a significant reduction in offer for visitors and those on low incomes as the venue is free to enter and registered as a warm space and a "safe place" for vulnerable people in the city. It would also impact on level of heritage offer in city particularly for tourists and the visitor economy. Seasonal closure could impact on city centre footfall, city centre dwell time and secondary spend and the overall tourism offer, however historically visitor figures for Provost Skene's House and the Tolbooth Museum see a natural dip during the winter period.

Venues and services would be unable to respond to the emerging demand for extended opening hours for cruise arrivals.

There would be a correlating reduction in income through café, shop & ticketed events

AGE

Fewer opportunities for young people to gather, take part in cultural activities and learn about the history of their city

Older people will be impacted by reduced opening hours and seasonal opening, particularly in relation to “warm places” that can be accessed for free and without stigma
Demetia friendly activities for people living with and supporting someone with a dementia diagnosis run regularly
Key audiences for venues include parents with children below school age (after school drop off) and with whole family (after school pick-up) – these would be impacted by reduced opening times.

DISABILITY

Accessible events run throughout the day, particularly at the Art Gallery and Maritime Museum. These two venues also add to the accessible facilities within the city, are free to use and include a range of support and engagement opportunities – access to these facilities would be impacted should opening hours be reduced including:

- Changing Places toilet (adult changing table and hoist)
- Wheelchair accessible toilets on each level
- Autism-friendly activities, support resources and regular provision of sensory-safe tent
- British Sign Language activities
- Visual description tours for sight impaired visitors

RELIGION or BELIEF

There are very few places that people with no religion can freely be part of groups and a community of interest. This will be reduced if opening hours reduce.

SEX

The recent impact of the Art Gallery and Maritime Museum as recognised “safe spaces” as part of the “I Am Me Scotland” support network for victims of domestic violence and other vulnerable people will be significantly reduced. Leaving vulnerable people with have fewer, safe options for seeking help and support without potentially flagging their call for help to partners or others who may be the source of abuse.

Toilets at Art Gallery, Maritime Museum and Provost Skene’s House are free to use. The Art Gallery toilets comprise gendered and non-gendered toilets and all venues are Trans-friendly.

Each venue is breast-feeding friendly and staff have been trained in customer welcome and support for those that need a little more privacy.

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?

Daily visitor figures have been assessed for each venue - Existing demographic of gallery and museums’ visitors is primarily older adults, family groups, schools and young people in formal education.

Physical access extremely limited at Tolbooth due to the nature of the building. Provost Skene’s House and the Provost Ross’ House element of the Maritime Museum have restricted access due to stairs/historic nature of the buildings.

Primary venues (Art Gallery, Maritime Museum) will remain open 7 days/week offering consistent, free cultural access to the service.

Secondary venues (Provost Skene’s House, Tolbooth Museum) would have a reduced offer, retaining free entry when open to the public at peak visitor periods based on existing data analysis.

Staff costs for opening public venues seven days a week have been assessed. Considering best value against visitor figure data.

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

Review of staff costs and impacts on visitor figures with Service manager – archives, gallery & museums and Team leader – visitor and operations
Discussions with internal team most impacted – no negative feedback received

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 there were no clear links to protected characteristics.

Feedback from targeted engagement included a focus on potential reduction in offer for tourists, children and young people for this venue as well as impact on mental wellbeing and quality of life for all residents in the city, with particular focus on people impacted by domestic abuse and Level 3 autism in particular.

Highlighted comments relating to protected characteristics were:

AGE

- Art gallery is used for educational purposes for children. It is also used as a warm space so cutting opening hours could negatively impact availability.

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 is 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.
- The Art Gallery is an excellent space with superb staff and an autism friendly environment. There are adequate change facilities (changing places) which is an exception and as such this is a welcome, safe and calm environment. Access outwith school hours with occasional evenings and all weekends would be ideal as we visit at least monthly.
- The facilities at Art Gallery are superb as are staff who support a nonverbal, autistic child who is extremely happy in such a superb place and access it it at least once/twice per week.
- 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 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

SEX (Gender based violence)

- On a final note, the new training on domestic violence help provided by the Art Gallery will be effected, meaning that survivors or those who are experiencing domestic violence will have fewer options for help and support, which is already limited and the rates of which have not improved in Scotland.

RELIGION

- It may __ have a greater impact on people with no religion who rely on museums and galleries for their access to culture and community.

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

What mitigations are there against any negative impacts (if applicable)?		
None		
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 \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

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 broken electrical goods, heat their homes or access to leisure or hobbies		X			
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.

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. Evidence suggests the venues are seen as a place of respite with no stigma attached, as warm spaces and as recognised "safe places" as part of the I Am Me Scotland register and campaign focussing on people exposed to domestic violence and otherwise vulnerable people.

TOURIST ECONOMY

Reduction in opportunities for tourists visiting the city, with further impact on secondary spend in the city, as well as income in venues from café and shop sales which helps support the offer of free engagement

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?

Number of visitors across all sites in 2023 c.310,000

All venues offer free admission, free activities with minimal offer requiring paid participation (with concessions always available)

Lower visitor figures are seen, on average, after 4pm. Sunday opening hours are 11am-4pm and alignment would make promotion of any changes clearer.

Seasonal closure would make the most of the peak tourist months, with lower impact than full closure.

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

Review of staff costs and impacts on visitor figures with Service manager – archives, gallery & museums and Team leader – visitor and operations

Discussions with internal team most impacted – no negative feedback received; positive response to seasonal opening at Tolbooth Museum and Provosts Skene's House as staff wellbeing in winter months is severely impacted

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:

TOURIST ECONOMY

- Tourism could suffer if arts and culture budgets are cut.
- ... what do you expect the tourists to do when they arrive in Aberdeen?

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.

- Art galleries and museums are good places for people to go for warmth and comfort without the stigma attached to designated warm spaces, i.e. community centres.
- Arts and culture is 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.
- Rather than have museums and galleries closed for entire days, perhaps shortening the opening hours each day or having the closures staggered so that when the Art Gallery is closed, The Maritime Museum is open. This would help preserve the coverage for those who need these safe and warm spaces.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Art gallery is used for educational purposes for children. It is also used as a warm space so cutting opening hours could negatively impact availability.
- Arts and culture is 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)?

None

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:

- Art gallery is used for educational purposes for children. It is also used as a warm space so cutting opening hours could negatively impact availability.
- Art galleries and museums are good places for people to go for warmth and comfort without the stigma attached to designated warm spaces, i.e. community centres.
- Arts and culture is 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 is 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.
- It may also have a greater impact on people with no religion who rely on museums and galleries for their access to culture and community.
- ... 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)?

For education purposes, information and stories found in Provost Skene's House and Tolbooth Museum could be made available online or in publication to mitigate some impact of seasonal closures.

Group visits could be arranged out of season – which may provide an equivalent offer to limited numbers.

If mitigations are in place, does this remove the negative impact?	No – negative impact remains	
	Yes – negative impact reduced	X
	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:

- Art gallery is used for educational purposes for children.... cutting opening hours could negatively impact availability.
- ... they are part of a provision of warm spaces for people and opportunities for health and leisure... their poor health will deteriorate further and for young people this will mean less positive life outcomes.
- 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 is 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.
- The facilities at Art Gallery are superb as are staff who support a nonverbal, autistic child who is extremely happy in such a superb place and access it it at least once/twice per week.

5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

For education purposes, information and stories found in Provost Skene's House and Tolbooth Museum could be made available online or in publication to mitigate some impact of seasonal closures.

Group visits could be arranged out of season – which may provide an equivalent offer to limited numbers.

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?
<p>STAFF Staff impacted by these changes have been consulted. Any changes to contracts would be affected through the high rate of turn-over for the team and expected vacancies over the next 12 months. Many individuals are currently working on part-time contracts and provide additional cover when vacancies arise.</p> <p>TOURIST ECONOMY No consultation has been undertaken with these groups. Recent increase in the tourist visitors to the city via cruise ships has increased demand for extended opening hours rather than reduction.</p> <p>GROWTH OF CITY Development of a cultural and heritage estate in the city has been aligned to city-centre recovery post Covid pandemic, and with maintaining city centre dwell time at a time of loss of retail. As part of the forward plan for the city, culture, arts and heritage could be considered as viable leisure options to complement the existing/surviving retail offer in the city. Retailers and small businesses may be impacted by the reduction in cultural offer accordingly.</p> <p>There are no reasonable adjustments that would mitigate the reduction in opening hours at all venues.</p> <p>There may be adjustments such as increased promotional expenditure and attractive offer at all-year-round venues to mitigate seasonal closures the Tolbooth Museum and Provost Skene’s House. This may reduce the impact on the tourist economy or development and regeneration of the city centre.</p>
Overall summary of changes made as a result of impact assessment.
None
Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.
<p>Visitor figures across the estate which are now recovering from the period of Covid closures – these would continue to be monitored to identify any negative impact, as opposed to shift in visiting habits to pre-4pm and summer season only for two venues.</p> <p>Engagement with directly impacted groups, schools in particular, and monitoring of feedback</p> <p>Further review with leading tourism sector (Visit Scotland and Visit Aberdeenshire) relating to seasonal opening at Provost Skene’s House, Tolbooth Museum</p>
If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.
<p>Essential cost reduction in staffing and maintenance budgets</p> <p>Staff welfare over winter months in historic buildings with extremely limited heating</p>

Lower visitor numbers over winter periods
Lower visitor numbers after 4pm

Assessment Author	Helen Fothergill
Date	20/02/2024
Chief Officer	Julie Wood
Date	23/02/2024