

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

<b>1.1 Title</b>
CG08 - Close Tollbooth Museum (beyond reduction in opening hours in CG11)
<b>1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?</b>
Reduction in operating costs through permanent closure of the Tolbooth Museum - remaining closed following capital repairs  Prior to closure for Covid pandemic (and subsequent continuation of closure due to capital repairs programme), visitor figures were in the region of 28,000 per annum hitting peaks of around 1000 per week during school summer holidays. This venue is free admission.  This IIA should be read in conjunction with CG11 - Reduce opening hours of all venues (Galleries & Museums)
<b>1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?</b>
New
<b>1.4 Is this report going to a committee?</b>
Yes – as part of 2024 budget report
<b>1.5 Committee name and date:</b>
Council - 6 March 2024
<b>1.6 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:</b>
Budget proposal CG08

## 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		
<a href="#">Age</a>			X		
<a href="#">Disability</a>				X	
<a href="#">Gender Reassignment</a>				X	
<a href="#">Marriage and Civil Partnership</a>				X	
<a href="#">Pregnancy and Maternity</a>				X	
<a href="#">Race</a>				X	
<a href="#">Religion or Belief</a>			X		
<a href="#">Sex</a>				X	
<a href="#">Sexual Orientation</a>				X	

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

Reduction in free access to culture and leisure opportunities in the city centre  
This site has very limited access for people with mobility issues or those using a wheelchair

The expected impact will be a reduction in offer for visitors and those on low incomes as the venue is free to enter on level of heritage offer in city particularly impacting on tourists and the visitor economy. As a substantial free cultural offer will remain available in the city across three venues (Art Gallery, Maritime Museum and Provost Skene's House).

#### AGE

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

#### 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 with closure of the Tolbooth Museum.

The museum explored the story of religious persecution in the history of the city. This story will no longer be on public display.

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.

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Physical access is extremely limited at Tolbooth due to the nature of the building.

The proposal could be adapted to a reduced offer at the Tolbooth Museum, 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.

Highlighted comments relating to protected characteristics were limited:

##### AGE

- 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.

##### SEX

- 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.

##### 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.

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#### 2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

As a heritage estate, the offer available in three key venues (Art Gallery, Maritime Museum and Provost Skene's House) operated by the council would mitigate the closure of the Tolbooth Museum to some extent.

High

With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?	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?

The Tolbooth Museum is the oldest surviving building in the city centre and displays stories associated with the building exploring persecution, crime and punishment in the ancient Burgh of Aberdeen.

#### 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 heritage offer.

#### 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.

#### 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?**

Prior to closure for Covid pandemic, visitor figures were in the region of 28,000 per annum hitting peaks of around 1000 per week during school summer holidays

This venue is free admission

#### **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 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 to socio-economic impacts for people with protected characteristics.

Feedback from targeted engagement included a focus on impact on mental wellbeing and quality of life for all residents in the city, including safe and warm spaces to visit without stigma and at no cost. Other issues identified referred to tourist income generation and overall “wealth” of the city.

Highlighted comments relating to socio-economic impacts were:

#### **TOURIST ECONOMY**

- Tourism could suffer if arts and culture budgets are cut.
- Reduced hours of tollbooth museum could be explored rather than complete closure? This museum is an important part of Aberdeen’s history and should be kept open.
- ... 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**

- .... 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)?

As a heritage estate, the offer available in three key museums and gallery buildings operated by the council would mitigate the closure of the Tolbooth Museum to some extent.

#### 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: <a href="#">Right to a fair trial</a>		X	
Article 7: <a href="#">No punishment without law</a>		X	
Article 8: <a href="#">Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence</a>		X	
Article 9: <a href="#">Freedom of thought, belief and religion</a>		X	
Article 10: <a href="#">Freedom of expression</a>		X	
Article 11: <a href="#">Freedom of assembly and association</a>		X	
Article 12: <a href="#">Right to marry and start a family</a>		X	
Article 14: <a href="#">Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms</a>		X	
Article 1 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property</a>		X	
Article 2 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to education</a>		X	
Article 3 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to participate in free elections</a>		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.

The stories presented in the Tolbooth explore histories of persecution, crime and punishment, and how those tales have changed today. They promote civic responsibility and tolerance.

Highlighted comments relating to Human Rights impacts were:

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

#### 4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

As a heritage estate, the offer available in three key museums and gallery buildings operated by the council would mitigate the closure of the Tolbooth Museum to some extent.

For education purposes, interpretation found in the building could be made available online or in publication should the venue be closed.

**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
<b>Article 1:</b> definition of the child		X	

<b>Article 2: non-discrimination</b>		X	
<b>Article 3: best interests of the child</b>		X	
<b>Article 4: implementation of the convention</b>		X	
<b>Article 5: parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities</b>		X	
<b>Article 6: life, survival and development</b>		X	
<b>Article 7: birth registration, name, nationality, care</b>		X	
<b>Article 8: protection and preservation of identity</b>		X	
<b>Article 9: separation from parents</b>		X	
<b>Article 10: family reunification</b>		X	
<b>Article 11: abduction and non-return of children</b>		X	
<b>Article 12: respect for the views of the child</b>		X	
<b>Article 13: freedom of expression</b>		X	
<b>Article 14: freedom of thought, belief and religion</b>		X	
<b>Article 15: freedom of association</b>		X	
<b>Article 16: right to privacy</b>		X	
<b>Article 17: access to information from the media</b>		X	
<b>Article 18: parental responsibilities and state assistance</b>		X	
<b>Article 19: protection from violence, abuse and neglect</b>		X	
<b>Article 20: children unable to live with their family</b>		X	
<b>Article 21: adoption</b>		X	
<b>Article 22: refugee children</b>		X	
<b>Article 23: children with a disability</b>		X	
<b>Article 24: health and health services</b>		X	
<b>Article 25: review of treatment in care</b>		X	
<b>Article 26: social security</b>		X	
<b>Article 27: adequate standard of living</b>		X	
<b>Article 28: right to education</b>		X	
<b>Article 29: goals of education</b>		X	
<b>Article 30: children from minority or indigenous groups</b>		X	
<b>Article 31: leisure, play and culture</b>	X		
<b>Article 32: child labour</b>		X	
<b>Article 33: drug abuse</b>		X	
<b>Article 34: sexual exploitation</b>		X	
<b>Article 35: abduction, sale and trafficking</b>		X	
<b>Article 36: other forms of exploitation</b>		X	
<b>Article 37: inhumane treatment and detention</b>		X	
<b>Article 38: war and armed conflicts</b>		X	
<b>Article 39: recovery from trauma and reintegration</b>		X	
<b>Article 40: juvenile justice</b>		X	
<b>Article 41: respect for higher national standards</b>		X	
<b>Article 42: knowledge of rights</b>		X	
<b>Optional</b>			
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:

- ...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.

### 5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

As a heritage estate, the offer available in three key museums and gallery buildings operated by the council would mitigate the closure of the Tolbooth Museum to some extent, though the stories related to civic responsibility, crime, punishment and persecution would not be presented elsewhere, and the unique (and often visceral) experience of visiting an ancient gaol would be lost.

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

No – negative impact remains	X
Yes – negative impact reduced	
Yes - negative impact removed	

## 6: Sign Off

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

##### STAFF

As the Tolbooth museum has been closed since 2020, firstly due to the Covid pandemic and subsequently whilst essential building repair have been undertaken, vacancies as they arose have not been filled, therefore there would be no direct impact on currently employed staff.

##### 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 additional attraction packages, with a particular interest in the early history of the city, including the Jacobite connections in the Tolbooth Museum and associated family histories of those visiting the city.

##### 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.

The Castlegate area and Union Street are key locations for regeneration projects including the extension to the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme projects through the Heritage and Place Programme, which is in a funded development phase, with a full application to be submitted for a multi-million-pound scheme of improvements from April 2025.

Retailers and small businesses may be impacted by the reduction in cultural offer in properties around the Castlegate.

There are no reasonable adjustments that would mitigate the permanent closure of the Tolbooth Museum as a visitor attraction and contributor to the tourist economy or development and regeneration of the city centre.

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

None

**Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.**

Engagement with directly impacted groups, schools in particular, and monitoring of feedback

Further review with leading tourism sector (Visit Scotland and Visit Aberdeenshire) relating to closure in terms of impact on tourist footfall and dwell time in the city (including secondary spend)

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

Essential cost reduction in staffing and maintenance budgets

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<b>Date</b>	20/02/2024
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<b>Date</b>	26/02/2024