

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
Remove administrative support for Councillors
1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?
This proposal supports the move towards a statutory service only delivery model and would realise a financial saving of £175,000 which contributes to the savings target of the organisation to achieve a balanced budget. There is no statutory obligation to provide a support service to our Elected Members.
The outcome from this would be that Elected Members would be responsible for managing the types of task currently undertaken by the Members Support team. For example (not an exhaustive list):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diary management - Email management - Arranging meetings - Case load management - Logging/ reporting of constituent enquiries
1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?
New
1.4 Is this report going to a committee?
Yes
1.5 Committee name and date:
Budget Meeting, Council, 6 March 2024
1.6 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:
CE18

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?

With regards to our citizens, age and disability groups may be more likely to contact their Elected Members than other groups to receive support and reporting issues they are experiencing. Removing the administrative support for Elected Members may result in it taking longer to respond to these issues as they are spending more time on administrative duties and caseload management than trying to understand and resolve the issues of their constituents. The assessment for these groups has therefore been assessed as low.

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?

Equalities monitoring data is not collected and therefore the assessment is based on knowledge within the team.

The gender make up of both the Members Support team and the Councillors have been considered and there is no significant variance in the number of males or females that would result in either one of these genders being disproportionately impacted by this proposal.

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

Discussions have taken place with some members of the Extended Corporate Management Team around alternative options for the Members Support operating model, such as multi skilling across support teams.

This proposal was also considered by the Legal Team who advised that there's not a duty to provide a member's support service. However, s58 of the Equality Act 2010 specifically extends equalities protections to Councillors. This includes the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for

Councillors with disabilities. The Council is also prohibited from discriminating against or harassing Councillors.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments could include providing Members with support and assistance to enable them to carry out their duties. As such, although there is not a duty to provide member's support per se, there is a duty to provide support and assistance to Members who require a reasonable adjustment.

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)?

Aberdeen City Council launched a three-part public consultation around the 2024/25 Budget and future spending plans from July 2023 to January 2024. In part 1, which ran throughout July 2023, people were asked to award points across different service areas to indicate where they thought the council's spending priorities should be. In part 2, the public could either increase, decrease or not change the level of expenditure in areas listed.

There were 3,192 responses to part 1 and 2,654 responses to part 2. Part 3 was undertaken online and face-to-face where 126 people with protected characteristics took part and 377 comments were received.

From part 3 of the consultation process, there was one specific comment on this proposal and another relating to this proposal. These stated, *“Anything that reduces the transparency of how the Council is making decisions, how effective their local elected member is performing in looking after their interests, where public money is being spent and how public property is to be treated or disposed of is unhealthy and undemocratic.”* And *“Consider the impact on staff - increased stress. People differ on how they handle stress both the staff undertaking the PA work but also the elected members and directors etc. Creates or impacts mental health issues. Can have a knock on effect for demand for NHS which in turn has a wider impact on others accessing NHS”*

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

None. The one citizen who directly commented on this proposal did recommend *“Have one group of staff that provides support for both elected members and senior management. Increase the number of people they support or go part time.”*

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?

This policy will increase the administrative tasks undertaken by Elected Members in the organisation (e.g., managing meetings, diary management, case work management, email management, printing) which takes them away from delivering on their role to represent and support their constituents and undertake their democratic duty to lead Aberdeen City Council. This has the potential to slow down policy/ legislation implementation and the corporate decision making process, which could lead to a delay in citizens in the above groups, businesses and communities accessing services on which they rely.

It is also possible that if there was no support service on offer, this could deter/ prevent people with certain disabilities applying to become a Councillor.

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?

There is no qualitative data on this matter.

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

As explained above, discussions have taken place with some members of the Extended Corporate Management Team around alternative options for the Members Support operating model, such as multi skilling across support teams.

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?

Aberdeen City Council launched a three-part public consultation around the 2024/25 Budget and future spending plans from July 2023 to January 2024. In part 1, which ran throughout July 2023, people were asked to award points across different service areas to indicate where they thought the council's

spending priorities should be. In part 2, the public could either increase, decrease or not change the level of expenditure in areas listed.

There were 3,192 responses to part 1 and 2,654 responses to part 2. Part 3 was undertaken online and face-to-face where 126 people with protected characteristics took part and 377 comments were received. There were no comments specifically relating to the socio economic impacts of this proposal.

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

There may be an issue if one of the Elected Members fell into one of the protected groups above, e.g. had a disability that meant they couldn't type/ write, if this proposal were implemented and there was no support this would have a significant impact on them. Therefore, to mitigate this, the duties associated with supporting an Elected Member in this situation would have to be met by identifying an appropriate existing employee who could undertake these duties in addition to their own and capacity would be limited.

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?

If this proposal is implemented, there's potential that critical decisions that have City/ Region wide implications for citizens, businesses, communities and the environment could take longer to realise as Elected Members are spending time undertaking tasks that the Members Support service currently carries out for them. There is a low possibility that progress and implementation on certain issues may take longer, which could, potentially, mean that vulnerable customers may not be able to access services/ support as quickly as

they do currently.

Elected Members are the decision makers within the Council and through the Committee Meeting and full Council democratic infrastructure agree on how the Council should be run and how services should be accessible to citizens. The remit of these Committees and full Council will include certain areas of a citizens' life which will include the responsibility for equalities, housing, education and local elections. This policy will increase the administrative tasks undertaken by Elected Members which takes them away from delivering on their remit/ portfolio as a democratic leader within the Council.

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?

If this proposal is implemented, there is potential that critical decisions that have City/ Region wide implications for citizens, businesses, communities and the environment could take longer to realise as Elected Members are spending time undertaking tasks that the Members Support service currently carries out for them. There's a low possibility that decisions certain issues to be taken at Committee or full Council may take longer, which could, potentially, mean that children and their families may not be able to access services/ support as quickly as they do currently.

The remit of Elected Members includes being accountable for the delivery of Education and the support of young people and their families. This policy will increase the administrative tasks undertaken by Elected Members which takes them away from delivering on their remit/ portfolio which includes ensuring the education and wellbeing of children and young people within the City.

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	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?

The [Workforce Reduction, Restructure and Redesign IIA](#) provides information around the potential impact on the workforce and the mitigations in place. It should be noted that approximately 70% of the Council Workforce is female whereas the profile of team that operate from the Town House is relatively evenly split, therefore the impact of this proposal is not disproportionate towards any of these groups.

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

There are no mitigations that can be put in place, therefore, there have been no changes made.

Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.

Elected Members, along with the Corporate Management Team and Extended Corporate Management Team will monitor the delivery of key policies, legislation and regulations.

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

The Council has a legal obligation to deliver a balanced budget and this proposal assists with this requirement.

Assessment Author	Bruce Reid
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Chief Officer	Lucy McKenzie
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