

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
Cease supplementary free catering provision in Primary Schools, outside of Universal and statutory free school meals
1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?
Consider removal of ACC funded school catering initiatives where outcomes are covered by the introduction of Free School Meals these are: a) Free breakfast provision in 7 Primary Schools, schools in the areas of multiple deprivation in the city; b) Free fruit, which is provided once per week to P1, P2 and P2/3 composite classes; c) Free milk which is available as a drink choice with Primary School meals. Unlimited drinking water would be available as the alternative. The service feels that expanded free school meal provision in Primary Schools has overtaken the need for providing free breakfasts, fruit and milk. All P1-5 pupils receive universal free lunch, with P6 and 7 to follow. Further expansion is likely to include universal breakfast provision. Minor equalities concern, age of the affected audience. The proposal aims to bring about a £200,000 annual budget efficiency.
1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?
Repeated from previous year’s budget proposals. Budget proposal was not taken by Council.
1.4 Is this report going to a committee?
Will be considered as part of the 2024/25 budget proposals
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:
OSM-02

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?

This will impact on children in our Primary School across the city.

It may also have a negative impact on Mothers, who are generally the primary care giver.

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?

Provision of the free breakfast service is a historic offering which predates universal free school meal provision in Primary Schools. As we move towards all Primary School pupils having access to universal meal provision, it is thought that it is an appropriate time to remove this provision, as the nutrition children receive is now available for P1 to 5 children at lunch time, with P6 and 7 children soon to follow.

Provision of fruit is a historic offering which predates universal free school meal provision in Primary Schools. As the age of the pupils who are currently in receipt of this provision are those who now have access to universal meal provision, it is thought that it is an appropriate time to remove this provision, as the nutrition children receive is now available universally at lunch time.

Provision of milk as a drink option with a Primary School meal is a historic offering. Those who would most benefit from milk in the early years will still receive milk as part of ongoing provision through Scottish Government funding which has continued post EU milk scheme. Unlimited drinking water is provided in school throughout the school day and will be freely available at lunch time from the school kitchen.

Data from the phase 2 consultation process has been reviewed and the option is clearly unpopular with the citizens of Aberdeen due to concerns for the future prospects of children and young people.

There were no additional concerns for impacts on people with protected characteristics, other than those which had been highlighted by the service pre-consultation.

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

Chief Officers from all other services have had sight of all budget options being put forward.

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. In part 3, which took place throughout January 2024, there were two face to face sessions for the public to attend and an online consultation. There were 3,179 responses to part 1, 2,564 responses to part 2 and 285 responses to part 3. Included in all parts of the consultation was a specific question regarding the proposal to cease supplementary free catering provision in Primary Schools, outside of Universal and statutory free school meals.

In part 2, 70% of respondents wanted no reduction in expenditure, with only 13% in favour of a 50% reduction and 17% in favour of a 100% reduction.

There were no positive comments received in part 3 with all commentary being against the proposal proceeding, with a selection of comments below:

"Removing free provisions and giving vouchers does not mean the child will receive what they need/school will give them. Stopping children having vital nutrition is disgusting."

"Ending school kitchens would also be a grave loss. So many of our children depend on these meals. It's one of the things that makes Scotland such a lovely place to live in. All of these losses would be a shame."

"I am so angry reading all of these options. There are many young children in school with the option of getting free school meals who have family that can afford it. We are one of those families and I give my child packed lunch as it seems incredibly unfair that she's allowed them. An all encompassing approach is not working when you are then forced to get to a place where you are then considering reducing school hours due to funding. Utterly ridiculous. I'd rather my child have a proper education."

"Free school meal cuts SHOULD NOT EVEN HAVE BEEN A SUGGESTION. There are working parents who are borderline, live pay packet to pay packet yet not entitled to any financial support whatsoever and rely on these meals daily. This free lunch for a lot of children is the ONLY hot meal per day."

"Cutting free provision for families who can afford to pay should be fine, but borderline cases should be considered closely."

"Removal of catering with school is disappointing. That 1 hot meal a day could be the only hot meal a child receives and to remove it and hand out shopping vouchers does not solve the problem it creates more problems."

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

The service will continue to encourage all customers of the service, whether they are entitled to a free school meal or not, to take their lunch in school on a daily basis.

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 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty/guidance-for-public-bodies/)

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?

Supplementary free food and drink provision will no longer be available to those who need it most.

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?

Part of the provision is delivered in 7 of our schools in the areas of greatest multiple deprivation in the city.

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

Chief Officers from all other services have had sight of all budget options being put forward.

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?

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“Removing free provisions and giving vouchers does not mean the child will receive what they need/school will give them. Stopping children having vital nutrition is disgusting.”

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“I am so angry reading all of these options. There are many young children in school with the option of getting free school meals who have family that can afford it. We are one of those families and I give my child packed lunch as it seems incredibly unfair that she's allowed them. An all encompassing approach is not working when you are then forced to get to a place where you are then considering reducing school hours due to funding. Utterly ridiculous. I'd rather my child have a proper education.”

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3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

The service will continue to encourage all customers of the service, whether they are entitled to a free school meal or not, to take their lunch in school on a daily basis.

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
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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?

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that 'The authority must provide or secure the provision of a school lunch free of charge' where entitlement is via the low income route. The Act also states that 'The authority may provide or secure the provision of food or drink to other pupils.'

4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

The option here is to remove free provision which was previously grant funded by Scottish Government. This funding is no longer provided, as Scottish Government funding pivoted to the increased universal provision, but to date Aberdeen City Council has continued to provide this additional free provision. The parents and carers of Primary school pupils who are entitled to free provision, whether that be universal or low income free school meals entitlement, would still receive that free provision at lunch time.

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

No – negative impact remains

Yes – negative impact reduced

Yes - negative impact removed

X

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?

It could be argued that ceasing supplementary free provision, particularly for children who attend schools in areas of multiple deprivation, isn't in the best interests of the child.

It could be argued that the free breakfast, free milk and free fruit would be beneficial to a child's development

5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

Continuing universal and low-income free school meal provision.

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

No – negative impact remains

Yes – negative impact reduced

Yes - negative impact removed

X

6: Sign Off

Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?
No other impacts considered.
Overall summary of changes made as a result of impact assessment.
No changes, but continued encouragement for all customers to take lunch in school.
Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.
Through discussion with Head Teachers, Premises Responsible Persons, Service Managers and Chief Officers.
If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.
<p>There is a requirement to ensure the Council sets a balanced budget, which requires difficult decisions to be taken and this includes proposals with negative impacts.</p> <p>That being said, the service cannot justify this proposal going ahead, as the provision of compliant, healthy and nutritious food for our young people in our schools has positive impacts on educational and long term health outcomes.</p>

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Date	01/02/2024
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Date	26/02/2024