

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 all dedicated support for staff on mental health and wellbeing
1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?
This budget option proposes to achieve savings by ceasing the non-statutory mental health and wellbeing provision for employees. This Integrated Impact Assessment includes an assessment of the impact of reduction of wellbeing provision for the workforce, and the impact of reduction in posts on the individuals within the team.
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:
Budget Proposals POD7
1.7 Function and cluster:
Corporate Services, People & Citizen Services

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?

Specific impacts

Age:

There are certain groups that may be more likely to require mental health and wellbeing support, for example those who are older or younger than the average workforce. Removing in-work services could affect their ability to deal with the challenges and transitions that come with different life stages, such as retirement, career development, or family responsibilities.

A total of 148 employees have attended in person menopause support events over the past 12 months.

Disability:

Mental health may be related to disability or could be a disability in its own right. Reducing mental health and wellbeing provisions, reduces support for people with disabilities but also reduces awareness and understanding across the organisation.

Sex

There are certain groups that may be more likely to required mental health and wellbeing support, for example those undergoing gender transition. There is still stigma around mental health amongst men which we could not address.

Recent front line service mental health and wellbeing roadshows were run for Waste Services (predominantly male workforce) and Education (predominantly female workforce).

The Waste Services event was attended by over 50 employees. And over 160 employees attended the Education session.

Sexual orientation

There are certain groups that may be more likely to required mental health and wellbeing support, for example those who are LGBTQ+ and may not get family or community support.

Race and ethnicity

There are certain groups that may be more likely to require mental health and wellbeing support, for example those who experience racism or discrimination based on their race or ethnicity. Removing in-work services could leave them without adequate resources to cope with the stress and trauma of such experiences.

Disability

There are certain groups that may be more likely to require mental health and wellbeing support, for example those who have a disability that affects their physical or mental health. Removing in-work

services could limit their access to reasonable adjustments, accommodations, or adaptations that could help them perform their roles and manage their wellbeing.

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

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

The Council's workforce diversity data is available [here](#).

In addition, the Council's workforce equality, diversity and inclusion [action plan](#) considered data when developing actions, including actions which relate to training and development.

According to the Scottish Health Survey 2019, an estimated 19% of adults aged 16 and over in Scotland had a possible psychiatric disorder, such as anxiety or depression. This was higher among women (22%) than men (15%). The prevalence of possible psychiatric disorders varied by age group, with the highest rates among those aged 16-24 (27%) and the lowest among those aged 65 and over (13%).

Mental health and wellbeing in the workplace is a significant issue that affects both individuals and organisations. According to the Scottish Government's report on mental health and employment (2020), 12.7% of working-age adults in Scotland had a common mental disorder in 2018/19, up from 11.1% in 2008/09. The report also found that common mental disorders were more prevalent among workers in low-skilled occupations, those with low educational attainment, and those with low income. Furthermore, the report estimated that poor mental health cost the Scottish economy £2.15 billion in 2016/17, mainly due to reduced productivity, sickness absence, and staff turnover.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and wellbeing in the workplace has been profound and unprecedented. A survey by the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) in 2020 revealed that 50% of workers in Scotland felt their mental health had worsened as a result of the pandemic. The main sources of stress and anxiety for workers were fear of infection, lack of personal protective equipment, increased workload, isolation, and uncertainty. The survey also highlighted the unequal effects of the pandemic on different groups of workers, such as women, young people, disabled people, and ethnic minorities, who faced additional barriers and challenges in accessing support and maintaining their mental health and wellbeing.

There is evidence to support the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of in-work mental health and wellbeing services, especially when they are tailored to the specific needs and preferences of different groups of workers. A systematic review by McDaid et al. (2017) found that various types of in-work mental health and wellbeing services, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, problem-solving therapy, mindfulness-based interventions, and mental health first aid, were associated with positive outcomes for workers' mental health and wellbeing, as well as reduced sickness absence and improved work functioning. The review also found that the economic benefits of such services outweighed the costs, with return on investment ranging from £1.50 to £9.98 for every £1 spent.

In relation to the impact on staff directly providing the service, one female member of staff would be affected by the disestablishment of the dedicated Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator post.

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

Informal discussions have taken place with the People and Organisational Development team and the individual affected by this proposal

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.

As the primary impact of this budget option is on staff, the specifics of this budget option did not form part of the public consultation and as a result there is no feedback from the public consultation relating to specific impact of this budget option on people with protected characteristics in the city.

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

A range of support is available via employee assistance programme, signposting to external organisations and occupational health.

[Mental Health and Wellbeing \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Employee Benefits/Assistance Programme \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Occupational Health \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

The member of staff currently in post would be redeployed to alternative work in the Council.

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

High	
Medium	X
Low	
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 cost-of-living crisis may have an impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, and they may need additional help and support.

The cost-of-living crisis is more likely to affect those who experience socio-economic inequalities.

These services can help employees cope with stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues that may arise from the cost-of-living crisis. In-work mental health and wellbeing services can benefit people from low socio-economic backgrounds in several ways:

- They can improve employee productivity, performance, and retention, which can lead to higher income and job security.
- They can reduce absenteeism, presenteeism, and turnover, which can lower the costs for employers and the public sector.
- They can enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty, which can foster a positive work culture and social support.
- They can prevent or mitigate the negative effects of mental health problems on physical health, family life, and community participation, which can improve quality of life and well-being.

Therefore, by removing these services, we may not get these benefits and it may impact in the opposite.

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

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

To support this assessment, we have considered the following data sources:

- The Mental Health Foundation's report on Mental Health and Income, which shows that low income is associated with higher rates of mental health problems, lower access to treatment, and worse outcomes.
- The CIPD's report on Employee Well-being and Productivity, which demonstrates that employee well-being is linked to organisational performance, customer satisfaction, and innovation.
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidelines on Workplace Health: Management Practices, which provide evidence-based recommendations on how to promote and protect employee mental health and well-being.

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

Informal discussions have taken place with the People and Organisational Development team and the individual affected by this proposal

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?

N/A

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

Third sector support is available locally and nationally and this could be signposted instead. Currently the employee assistance programme is provided via the employee benefits contract for no additional cost. This would continue for as long as the contract is in place. The Council will continue to provide an occupational health service for employees.

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

n/a

4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

n/a

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

No – negative impact remains

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		X	

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

n/a

5.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

n/a

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

No – negative impact remains

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?
It is appreciated that socio-economic disadvantage is often also linked with other factors than protected characteristics, such as being care-experienced, leaving the armed forces or having a history of offending, which means that these groups may also face financial barriers to wellbeing support if this option is accepted.
Overall summary of changes made as a result of impact assessment.
No changes made.
Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.
Monitoring of absence data Monitoring of Occupational Health Service management information Monitoring of Employee Assistance Programme management information
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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