

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

Archives shut down except for statutory elements

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

The purpose of this IIA is to seek to reduce expenditure through a reduction in service to statutory only, dramatically reducing all public access to the city’s archive as a result. In this scenario, ceasing all public access would put the council in breach of its statutory obligations under Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011, and the Council may be challenged on any significant reduction to current service.

The statutory obligations of the Council with regard to archives are defined in the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 which states that the authority must make “proper arrangements” for the management of its public records. These “proper arrangements” are determined by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland and cover constitution, finance and staffing.

The council’s records must be transferred to an archive in recognition of their enduring value and need to be kept for permanent preservation. The archive must have clear objectives in place regarding collections policies, standards of care and the services it will provide, including public access.

Under the Act, the council must ensure that sufficient funding is made available to run the service appropriately. With regard to staffing, archivists provide expertise in selecting, appraising, cataloguing and interpreting records and making them or information about them available.

Outwith the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011, the archive assists the council in meeting its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Freedom of Information legislation defines much of what the archive holds as “otherwise accessible”: if the archive service reduced its operations, the council would still be required to provide access to this information by alternative means.

Since 2017, the archive team has been heavily involved in the council's response to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI). During this time they have responded to 298 SCAI-related inquiries, equating to approximately 85 days of work. This support would cease and the responsibility would revert to the SCAI team solely.

The service would not be able to process, catalogue, keep the records of the council up to date and provide public access with just 1 FTE responsible for Aberdeen City Council records: the service currently operates with 4 FTE (2 of which are funded by the City) and frequently struggle with demand.

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:

CG09

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?

Employee impact

One member of staff would be lost from a team of 4, two of which are contracted to deliver against an SLA agreement with Aberdeenshire.

This limits the real impact to two key members of staff, with intersectional characteristics.

Customer Impact

There would be no access to the archives for non-statutory enquiries, including ongoing research work on historic documents such as the UNESCO recognised Burgh registers.

This would impact on all groups, but regular users fall in to the older age bracket and university students (undergraduates to postdoctoral).

The speed of response to enquiries like Scottish Child Abuse, or FOISA would be severely affected.

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?

In a team comprising 4 FTE. The four members of staff hold intersectional characteristics.

However, our employee diversity data can only go so far – some of our employees may not have disclosed their protected characteristics or may not be aware of their protected characteristics.

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

As part of any business case or restructure, employee engagement and consultation, as well as trade union engagement and consultation is undertaken.

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)?

None

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

Cross reference “Changes to organisational design-IIA-Budget 2024”

All reduction, restructure and redesign processes are undertaken in line with legislative requirements and ACAS guidance. This includes full consultancy processes with employees and trade unions.

As this proposal will have financial impacts, it will include engagement and consultation with affected employees, including how best to implement any changes and transition arrangements.

With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?	High	X
	Medium	
	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 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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?

Cross reference [CR-07 Changes to Organisational Design to reduce operating costs - IIA - Budget 2024.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

Employee impact

One member of staff would be lost from a team of 4, two of which are contracted to deliver against an SLA agreement with Aberdeenshire.

Customer Impact

There would be no access to the archives for non-statutory enquiries, including ongoing research work on historic documents such as the UNESCO recognised Burgh registers.

The service would be unable to develop ancestral tourism/ genealogy product for tourism market, or contribute to key regeneration programmes such as Our Union Street / Granite Noir / Tall Ships 2025 / Heritage & Place Programme.

Free access to shared heritage resources would cease.

No current data exists re: socio-economic background of service users.

Opportunities to further develop income related to digitisation of the archives would be curtailed.

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?

Cross reference "Changes to organisational design-IIA-Budget 2024"

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

As part of any change to staff structure and/or displacement, employee engagement and consultation, as well as trade union engagement and consultation is undertaken.

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?

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

Any options which have financial impacts will include engagement and consultation with affected employees. This will include how best to implement any changes and transition arrangements.

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

High	
Medium	X
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?
 As the archives is a shared service under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Aberdeenshire, any reduction in investment from Aberdeen City Council is likely to be reciprocated by Aberdeenshire Council.

The reduction in service will also significantly impact the decant of Old Aberdeen House to make way for St Peter's School expansion. The deadline to vacate the premises would not be met.

This proposals would have negative impact on a diverse group with a multitude of lived experiences. Current projects such as those with Four Pillars LGBTQIA+ group and Grampian Regional Equality Council would cease, severely limiting the development of untold stories hidden in the archives / records of the city.

The age-range, gender, race and disability make-up of all public access researchers and users is varied.

An appropriate archive will employ staff who are professionally qualified as archivists or records managers to manage the records in its care and carry out any services it offers. The number of staff an archive employs must be appropriate to the operational need.

In Financial Year 2022-23:

- 9140 documents were accessed in person by 417 members of the public (whilst numbers were still recovering to pre-pandemic levels)
- 85 enquiries from within Aberdeen city Council were supported and responded to
- 566 requests, in addition, for information from the public were answered
- 24 outreach events for those who cannot easily access the archives on site

Since 2017, the archive team has been heavily involved in the council's response to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI). During this time they have responded to 298 SCAI-related inquiries, equating to approximately 85 days of work. This support would cease and the responsibility would revert to the SCAI team solely.

The service would not be able to process, catalogue, keep the records of the council up to date and provide public access with just 1 FTE responsible for Aberdeen City Council records: the service currently operates with 4 FTE (2 of which are funded by the City) and frequently struggle with demand.

The archives service offers guidance for public enquirers to explore their own past and that of oppressed and under represented groups in the city's history, as well as understand the wider impact of civic value.

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

None

Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.

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

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