



# 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

Mental Health Action Plan Update 2024

### 1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

The purpose of Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Update is to present committee with a revised approach to our Mental Health Action Plan, that aligns with our Workforce Delivery Plan and our approved approach to culture change.

The plan outlines the actions that have been taken to support employees wellbeing across Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership from January 2023 to December 2024. This enables us to give focus to our priorities while providing guidance, promoting training opportunities and support and proactively preventing wellbeing issues becoming bigger by supporting positive employee wellbeing.

We are continuing to update on the progress of our Mental Health Action Plan and to deliver the proactive actions taken to address and support positive employee mental health during the next 12 months and looking for approval of the updated Mental Health Action Plan for 2024.

The focus on improving and maintain employees positive Mental Health and Wellbeing remain one of Aberdeen City Council's top priorities for the year ahead.

### 1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?

Existing

### 1.4 Is this report going to a committee?

Yes

### 1.5 Committee name and date:

Staff Governance Committee

26 June 2024

**1.6 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:**

CORS/24/184

**1.7 Function and cluster:**

Corporate Servies - People and 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?				
	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?

The plan has been developed to improve and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership employees who may also hold an intersection of protected characteristics. While some areas may not have data specific to an individual characteristic, the policy has been assessed for the holistic impact it may have.

**Age:** Aberdeen City Council has an ageing workforce and programmes of physical wellbeing activity and awareness raising campaigns specifically targeting employees from the over 50 age range is part of the plan. In addition to specifically aiming activities and campaigns at the older workforce, initiatives targeting the younger workforce are also made available.

The plan looks at what improving opportunities for ages to access various initiatives to maintain and improve overall wellbeing.

**Disability:** Activities, including physical, are done with particular consideration of employees with physical disabilities and providers used must have accessible options available to ensure inclusion. Information campaigns are done in collaboration with our disability and inclusion working group and thoughts

**Pregnancy and Maternity, marriage and civil partnership** – some campaigns and awareness raising are specifically targeting these protected characteristic groups and information specifically highlight the various support that is available particularly around baby loss has been a focus during 2023

**Race, religion or belief** – specific sessions are tailored for women only to improve access to information and participation in activities

**Sex, Gender reassignment, sexual orientation** – All of our wellbeing campaigns, opportunities and activities are gender neutral but some campaigns may be targeted specifically with a sex in mind for example prostate awareness raising campaign and menopause awareness and support will be specifically targeting a sex however materials and wording are being particularly tailored to make them more inclusive to LGBTQ+

### 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?**

Absence data on CoreHR – tell us that psychological absence is the one of the three most common reasons for reported. We also consulted data from previous years – and see that this has not changed.

Looking further at the data, we can see that within psychological absence in 2023, stress is the main cause for psychological absence. It is not possible from the CoreHR data to know whether this is work related or personal related. After stress, is general 'mental health', then anxiety and finally depression. [Stress Statistics UK | 2023 Data | Champion Health](#) - In comparison to our internal data, the national findings on stress corroborates it as being the top common reason for psychological absences in 2023.

We also consulted data reported by our Employee Assistance Programme on the reasons for referrals for support – and we learned that for January 2023 – December 2023 – stress accounts for 38% of referrals, anxiety accounts for 17% of referrals, and depression accounts for 13%. And it is clear within this data that personal stress accounts for significantly higher referrals (38%) than work related stress (10%).

We consulted national data from CIPD and SimplyHealth to see how our findings compare – and their survey showed stress to be a significant factor for both short- and long-term absence, with over 76% of respondents reporting stress-related absence in their organisation in the past year. Heavy workloads remain by far the most common cause of stress-related absence (67%), followed by management style (37%). [Simply Health | CIPD - Health and Wellbeing at Work Report 2023.](#) The report emphasises the need for organisations to take a holistic approach to employee wellbeing and concur that health and wellbeing services play a key role in supporting a health workforce and helps prevent or get people back to work faster when they do fall ill. Our action plan is driven by early intervention and awareness raising campaigns to help early diagnosis and prevent longer term/more severe illness.

Engagement was undertaken with the workforce through a 'Wellbeing Pulse Check' in winter 2023 (see results in the report) and the results of this have been used to shape the Mental Health Action Plan for the upcoming year.

#### [Mental Health Foundation Survey and Research](#)

Mental Health Foundation national survey and research also concur the UK population is experiencing widespread levels of stress, anxiety and hopelessness in response to financial concern.

#### [Scottish Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan](#)

The Delivery Plan sets out the actions that the Scottish Government will take to make progress towards the outcomes and priorities in our new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which was published on 29 June 2023. Like the Strategy, this Delivery Plan and our accompanying Workforce Action Plan are jointly owned by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and Scottish Government. This recognises the importance of local and national leadership, the role of the social determinants of mental health, and the importance of prevention and early intervention in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our communities. This is also reflected in the recent Audit Scotland report on Adult Mental Health. Our Mental Health Action Plan is aligned to the Scottish Governments Wellbeing Delivery Plan and aligns itself to it's 3 key areas of focus, Promote, Prevent and Provide.

#### [Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016 - 2026](#)

Aberdeen City Council hold mental health and wellbeing among it's top priorities and this can be seen as outlined in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Mirroring this commitment internally through our Mental Health Action Plan is vital to ensuring our workforce is supported to deliver the Council's vision for Aberdeen to be a place where everyone can prosper.

#### [Local government in Scotland: Overview 2023 \(audit.scot\)](#)

The 2023 Audit Scotland Local Government Overview report notes that councils have never faced such a challenging situation where service demands have increased and funding has reduced. Workforce pressures relating to a competitive labour market and pressures mounting around employee retention and high sickness absence levels are adding to the pressure. This report concludes that wellbeing initiatives must continue.

Consideration of all the findings of these reports has agreed with the internal data gathered from sources such as our wellbeing pulse check survey, and absence figures and lead us to conclude that the emphasis on Aberdeen City Council's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy needs to not only continue but gather momentum and build on what has already been delivered in 2023. 2024 plans to see more awareness of all the various initiatives and support available to employees and an every greater visibility especially among frontline employees improving its inclusivity and accessibility.

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

The initial mental health action plan was developed with consultation with officers who were part of our Employee Good Health Group (EGHG) and previously staff survey carried out highlighted the need for support around mental health for employees in particular. Partners on the group included officers who worked out in the communities, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, collaboration with SAMH, NHS Grampian, SHMU and other Third Sector colleagues. Engagement was also undertaken with the workforce through a 'Wellbeing Pulse Check' in winter 2023 (see results in the report) and the results of this have been used to shape the Mental Health Action Plan for the upcoming year.

### **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)?**

We sought views from employees across the organisation with a pulse check survey going out in 2023 to help identify areas of improvement and areas to target initiatives. The initial survey received 154 responses and a further survey is planned for the early summer. Through the delivery of roadshows we have engaged and sought feedback from frontline manual workers and through colleagues across the Education services, gather feedback from our outlying communities which includes members of the equality ambassador network and other Equality, Diversity and Inclusion groups. Regular consultation and engagement also takes place with our Trade Union colleagues.

## 2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

No direct negative impacts have been identified because of this policy.

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

High
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 \(www.gov.scot\)](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?

The anticipated outcome for employees may be that they access better information and advice and particularly support at an earlier stage to prevent long term issues and improve quality of life by providing access to initiatives not previously considered or afforded.

#### 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?**

[Stress Statistics UK | 2023 Data | Champion Health](#)  
[Mental Health Foundation Survey and Research](#)  
[Scottish Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan](#)  
[Simply Health | CIPD - Health and Wellbeing at Work Report 2023](#)  
[Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016 - 2026](#)  
[Local government in Scotland: Overview 2023 \(audit.scot\)](#)  
 Internal Absence Figures

Consideration of all the findings of these reports has agreed with the internal data gathered from sources such as our wellbeing pulse check survey, and absence figures and lead us to conclude that the emphasis on Aberdeen City Council’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy needs to not only continue but gather momentum and build on what has already been delivered in 2023. 2024 plans to see more awareness of all the various initiatives and support available to employees and an even greater visibility especially among frontline employees improving its inclusivity and accessibility.

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

As listed in section 2.3 of this assessment

**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?**

As listed in section 2.3 of this assessment

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

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

There are no negative impacts as a result to those in socio-economic disadvantage.

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

High	
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
<b>Article 6:</b> <a href="#">Right to a fair trial</a>			X
<b>Article 7:</b> <a href="#">No punishment without law</a>			X
<b>Article 8:</b> <a href="#">Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence</a>			X
<b>Article 9:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of thought, belief and religion</a>			X
<b>Article 10:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of expression</a>			X
<b>Article 11:</b> <a href="#">Freedom of assembly and association</a>			X
<b>Article 12:</b> <a href="#">Right to marry and start a family</a>			X
<b>Article 14:</b> <a href="#">Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms</a>			X
<b>Article 1 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property</a>			X
<b>Article 2 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to education</a>			X
<b>Article 3 of Protocol 1:</b> <a href="#">Right to participate in free elections</a>			X

4.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

There is the perceived impact that the policy will improve the Human Rights of employees through the provisions of various information, good and services relating to the Mental Health Action Plan by ensuring there is fair access to activities linked to each article.

4.3 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

There are no negative impacts identified because of this policy to the Human Rights of our employees.

**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
<b>Article 1:</b> definition of the child			X
<b>Article 2:</b> non-discrimination			X
<b>Article 3:</b> best interests of the child			X
<b>Article 4:</b> implementation of the convention			X
<b>Article 5:</b> parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities			X
<b>Article 6:</b> life, survival and development			X
<b>Article 7:</b> birth registration, name, nationality, care			X
<b>Article 8:</b> protection and preservation of identity			X
<b>Article 9:</b> separation from parents		X	
<b>Article 10:</b> family reunification		X	
<b>Article 11:</b> abduction and non-return of children		X	
<b>Article 12:</b> respect for the views of the child		X	
<b>Article 13:</b> freedom of expression			X
<b>Article 14:</b> freedom of thought, belief and religion		X	
<b>Article 15:</b> freedom of association		X	
<b>Article 16:</b> right to privacy		X	
<b>Article 17:</b> access to information from the media			X
<b>Article 18:</b> parental responsibilities and state assistance			X
<b>Article 19:</b> protection from violence, abuse and neglect			X
<b>Article 20:</b> children unable to live with their family		X	
<b>Article 21:</b> adoption		X	
<b>Article 22:</b> refugee children		X	
<b>Article 23:</b> children with a disability		X	
<b>Article 24:</b> health and health services			X
<b>Article 25:</b> review of treatment in care			X
<b>Article 26:</b> social security			X
<b>Article 27:</b> adequate standard of living			X
<b>Article 28:</b> right to education			X



<b>Article 29:</b> goals of education		x	
<b>Article 30:</b> children from minority or indigenous groups		x	
<b>Article 31:</b> leisure, play and culture			x
<b>Article 32:</b> child labour		x	
<b>Article 33:</b> drug abuse			x
<b>Article 34:</b> sexual exploitation		x	
<b>Article 35:</b> abduction, sale and trafficking		x	
<b>Article 36:</b> other forms of exploitation		x	
<b>Article 37:</b> inhumane treatment and detention		x	
<b>Article 38:</b> war and armed conflicts		x	
<b>Article 39:</b> recovery from trauma and reintegration			x
<b>Article 40:</b> juvenile justice		x	
<b>Article 41:</b> respect for higher national standards			x
<b>Article 42:</b> knowledge of rights			x
<b>Optional</b> Protocol on a Communications Procedure			x

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

There could be positive impacts on the rights of Children and Young People with information regarding wellbeing and improvement being made to employees health having a positive effect on home lives affecting social, mental, physical and financial wellbeing.

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

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

There are no negative impacts identified because of this policy to the Children's Rights of employees.

**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?**

There could be positive improvement and maintenance of employees mental health and wellbeing due to having vital awareness, support and opportunities available through the workplace with access to mental health and wellbeing activities through partnership with organisations. Improved knowledge and taking part in activities and making new connections can impact on confidence to and drive an ability to self-help as well as improve resilience.

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

Engagement undertaken has helped identify areas of focus that are now present in the Mental Health Action Plan for 2024.

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

Annual updates on progress towards Mental Health Action Plan are provided to Staff Governance Committee.

Data and activity relating to disability as a protected characteristic are also presented in the Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report on a biannual basis and is next due in 2025.

Activity relating to communication and engagement around wellbeing initiatives specifically for frontline operational areas, are reported on a monthly basis to Trade Unions.

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

All positive impacts.

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<b>Date</b>	14/06/24