

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

Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF)

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

The purpose of the Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF - ‘the Fund’)) is to empower communities to take positive action in the places and on things that matter to them, with a focus on climate change and nature recovery.

The Fund also directly supports the Prosperous Place stretch outcomes of the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan \(LOIP\) 2016-26](#) with outcomes having consultation undertaken with the public and a broad range of community groups and stakeholders via [Community Planning Aberdeen](#).

13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.

14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling and wheeling as main mode of travel and a 5% reduction in car miles by 2026.

15. 26% of Aberdeen’s area will be protected and/or managed for nature and 60% of people report they feel that spaces and buildings are well cared for by 2026.

The Fund will also directly deliver the LOIP Improvement project aim to Increase by 50% the number of community groups delivering local environmental improvements in their neighbourhoods by 2026.

The Fund aims to help deliver one of the underlying actions to achieve these stretch outcomes through a Community Planning Aberdeen Improvement Project “Empowering Community-led Environmental

Action” which seeks to increase by 50% the number of community groups delivering local environmental improvements in their neighbourhoods by 2026.

The Fund will enable communities to support the delivery of [Aberdeen Adapts](#), the [Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap](#), underlying [Aberdeen Empowerment Strategy](#) and [Natural Environment Strategy](#), as well as help to deliver the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026](#).

The kinds of projects that will be supported include:

- Environmental projects that provide social benefits as well as aiding and encouraging nature, promoting local biodiversity, or improving the natural environment.
- Environmental projects that help communities address or respond to climate change, including nature-based solutions.
- Proposals that help leverage additional funding for larger-scale projects that meet either of the above criteria. For example: match funding or feasibility studies and retrofit assessment/plans.

Projects should also aim to achieve at least one of the following outcomes:

1. Protect, enhance, and increase biodiversity, nature, and high-quality greenspaces.
2. Improve existing or develop new spaces that benefit communities including parks, public gardens, playing fields, woodlands, natural "rewilded" areas, play areas, rivers, ponds, coastal habitats, allotments, community gardens and public spaces.
3. Help communities mitigate, adapt to and build resilience to climate change, including the use of nature-based solutions.
4. Raising awareness of and prompting action on nature, biodiversity, climate, and the environment.

Applications should show how the project will support the following:

1. Local place or locality plans, community priorities and needs.
2. Equity, inclusion, and diversity.
3. Building the skills and capacity of groups or organisations and communities.
4. Encourage collaborative working across groups or organisations, communities, partnerships, and localities.
5. Create long-term change.
6. The long-term viability of your organisation and initiative.
7. A just transition to net zero.

1.3 Is this a new or existing policy?

Expansion of existing proposal and funding model

1.4 Is this report going to a committee?

Yes

1.5 Committee name and date:

Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee - 03 September 2024

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

CR&E/24/256

1.7 Function and Cluster:

City Regeneration & Environment - Strategic Place Planning

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 | | | | | ✓ |
| Disability | | | | | ✓ |
| Gender Reassignment | | | | ✓ | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | | | | ✓ | |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | | | | ✓ | |
| Race | | | | ✓ | |
| Religion or Belief | | | | ✓ | |
| Sex | | | | ✓ | |
| Sexual Orientation | | | | ✓ | |

2.2 In what way will the policy impact people with these protected characteristics?

Nature is a key asset underpinning the economy, quality of life, and the health and wellbeing of all citizens. Appreciating nature for nature's sake and understanding the importance of nature for our neighbourhoods and individual wellbeing will have no negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics. Projects that improve the accessibility and quality of greenspaces could have a positive impact on groups with protected characteristics.

A full summary of the Fund and its aims and priorities can be found on the Fund's website:

<https://www.nescan.org/leaf-funding-1> Projects that will be supported by the Fund could include the elements below which are examples given of projects that could be supported on the fund webpage:

- Creating more inclusive and accessible spaces e.g. providing inclusive furniture such as wheelchair-accessible picnic benches and seating or similar accessibility improvements.

These types of improvements would have a positive impact on protected characteristics such as age and disability as they would create resting places and improve access, allowing more people to use and enjoy the outdoor and greenspaces.

- Street or green space furniture such as benches, picnic benches, outdoor classrooms, wildlife observatories, and promoting active travel, outdoor learning, and natural play.

Street furniture and places to meet are important as resting spaces and can also provide opportunities for social interaction and opportunities for people to be in nature, which can improve health and wellbeing for people of all ages. Opportunities for outdoor learning and natural play are also important for young people and can improve their understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment.

- Physical environment improvements such as signage, information panels, interpretation, and way markers; to promote, educate, and increase enjoyment of greenspaces and biodiversity e.g.

by helping to identify local animal, insect, bird, and plant species or to inform about the histories and stories of people and place.

Improved signage, information and way markers can make it easier for people to navigate and move around outdoor spaces.

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?

Improving natural, green and open spaces has multiple health and well-being, economic, and environmental protection benefits. They improve health and wellbeing while also giving us opportunities to connect with nature and people, tackle the global climate-nature crisis, promote nature recovery, and make positive environmental changes.

There is a wealth of data detailing the importance of nature and the benefits nature provides for our communities, neighbourhoods and our individual wellbeing. Key sources of data include:

- [People, Place and the Climate Emergency: The contribution of Nature to Community Planning Partnership Priorities | NatureScot](#)
- [Nature: How connecting with nature benefits our mental health - Scotland | Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [The State of Nature Scotland Report 2023](#)
- [A nature positive Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

[The State of Nature Scotland Report 2023](#) shows that since systematic monitoring of 407 Scottish species began in 1994, the numbers of those species have declined on average by 15%. While some of these species have seen increases, in the last decade 43% have declined.

- Environmental projects help communities address or respond to climate change, including nature-based solutions.
- Providing health, environmental and economic benefits. Blue and green infrastructure delivers multiple functions including climate mitigation, nature restoration, biodiversity enhancement, flood prevention, and water management
- Green networks and corridors linking spaces promotes biodiversity and enables movement of wildlife
- Reduce CO² emissions by providing non-vehicular travel routes encouraging walking and cycling
- Provide carbon storage and sequestration in vegetation
- Managing flood risk: living roofs, large trees and soft landscape areas absorb heavy rainfall
- Provide for storage of surface water in times of peak flow in SUDS and other water features
- Clean and cool the air, water and soil, countering the 'heat island' effect of urban areas

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

Engagement with the [North East Scotland Climate Action Network \(NESCAN\)](#) a regional network of people and community-led organisations that are or want to act to reduce and adapt to climate change in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire helped to identify the need for a fund and shape its priorities. Engagement with other teams and colleagues further helped to develop the Fund.

NESCAN Hub who are delivering the fund are the North East of Scotland's primary resource on climate action. This provides a wide-ranging knowledge base on these issues as well as a joined-up approach to action on climate and nature with NESCAN Hub representing more than 60 member organisations from the north of east of Scotland.

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)?

The purpose of this fund is to empower communities to take positive action in the places and on things that matter to them, with a focus on community led projects that tackle climate change and nature recovery. Community empowerment places a focus on enabling and building strong personal and community resilience, where people have as much control over their lives as possible.

The Fund directly encourages citizen participation in and encourages individuals to work together as a local community to influence and action improvements to their local environment which are important to them.

The Fund also directly supports the Prosperous Place stretch outcomes of the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan \(LOIP\) 2016-26](#) with outcomes having consultation undertaken with the public and a broad range of community groups and stakeholders via [Community Planning Aberdeen](#).

2.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

No negative impacts identified.

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 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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. | | | | | ✓ |
| Low and/or no wealth – those who can meet basic living costs but have no savings for unexpected spend or provision for the future | | | | | ✓ |
| 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 | | | | ✓ | |
| Area deprivation – consider where people live and where they work (accessibility and cost of transport) | | | | ✓ | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| Socio-economic background – social class, parents' education, employment, income. | | | | ✓ | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|

3.2 In what way will the policy impact people in these groups?

Blue and green infrastructure has multiple health, wellbeing, economic, and environmental protection benefits. They improve health and wellbeing while also giving us opportunities to connect with nature and people, tackle the global climate-nature crisis, promote nature recovery, and make positive environmental changes. Green infrastructure and open space areas can include parks, gardens, playing fields, woodlands, river corridors, play areas, allotments, and civic spaces.

Social

Improving opportunities for food growing can improve access to affordable, nutritious food for communities and individuals, particularly those on low incomes. Well-managed and maintained spaces can create opportunities for all sections of the community. They can promote a sense of place and be a source of community pride, and offer opportunities for people to play an active part in caring for the local environment. Open space provides opportunities for sport and recreation, helping to promote active and healthy lifestyles, and can open opportunities for environmental education for local groups, schools and individuals.

Economic

Well-designed and managed spaces can raise the quality of business, retail and leisure developments, making them more attractive to potential investors, users and customers. Areas of open space can also provide economic benefits in their own right; for example, produce from allotments, timber, and other wood crops. The quality of civic spaces undoubtedly helps define the identity of towns and cities, which can enhance their attraction for living, working, investment, and tourism.

Environmental

Green networks and corridors linking spaces also promote biodiversity and enable movement of wildlife. Trees and planting provide shade for both wildlife and people. Trees also play a role in the control of air and water pollution, noise reduction and contribute to energy reduction by providing shelter for buildings. They can also help to soften the impact of development and make green and civic spaces more appealing.

- Blue and green infrastructure delivers multiple functions including climate mitigation, nature restoration, biodiversity enhancement, flood prevention, and water management.
- Green networks and corridors linking spaces promotes biodiversity and enables movement of wildlife.
- Communities benefit from accessible, high-quality blue, green and civic spaces.

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 a wealth of data detailing the importance of nature and the benefits nature provides for our communities, neighbourhoods and our individual wellbeing. It is not possible to list all data sources here. Key sources of data include:

- [People, Place and the Climate Emergency: The contribution of Nature to Community Planning Partnership Priorities | NatureScot](#)
- [Nature: How connecting with nature benefits our mental health - Scotland | Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [The State of Nature Scotland Report 2023](#)
- [A nature positive Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Tackling the Nature Emergency - Scottish biodiversity strategy to 2045 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#)

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

Engagement with the [North East Scotland Climate Action Network \(NESCAN\)](#) a regional network of people and community-led organisations that are or want to act to reduce and adapt to climate change in Aberdeen City and

Aberdeenshire helped to identify the need for a fund and shape its priorities. Engagement with other teams and colleagues further helped to develop the Fund.

NESCAN Hub who are delivering the fund are the North East of Scotland’s primary resource on climate action. This provides a wide-ranging knowledge base on these issues as well as a joined-up approach to action on climate and nature with NESCAN Hub representing more than 60 member organisations from the north of east of Scotland.

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?

The purpose of the Fund is to empower communities to take positive action in the places and on things that matter to them, with a focus on community led projects that tackle climate change and nature recovery. Community empowerment places a focus on enabling and building strong personal and community resilience, where people have as much control over their lives as possible.

The fund directly encourages citizen participation in and encourages individuals to work together as a local community to influence and action improvements to their local environment which are important to them.

The Fund also directly supports the Prosperous Place stretch outcomes of the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan \(LOIP\) 2016-26](#) with outcomes having consultation undertaken with the public and a broad range of community groups and stakeholders via [Community Planning Aberdeen](#).

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

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

No negative impacts have been identified.

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 |
|--|----------|---------|----------|
| Article 6: Right to a fair trial | | ✓ | |
| Article 7: No punishment without law | | ✓ | |
| Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence | | ✓ | |
| Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief and religion | | ✓ | |
| Article 10: Freedom of expression | | ✓ | |
| Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association | | ✓ | |
| Article 12: Right to marry and start a family | | ✓ | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Article 14: Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms | | ✓ | |
| Article 1 of Protocol 1: Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property | | ✓ | |
| Article 2 of Protocol 1: Right to education | | ✓ | |
| Article 3 of Protocol 1: Right to participate in free elections | | ✓ | |

4.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

There are no negative impacts identified. The impact will be neutral.

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 | | ✓ | |
| Article 2: non-discrimination | | ✓ | |
| Article 3: best interests of the child | | ✓ | |
| Article 4: implementation of the convention | | ✓ | |
| Article 5: parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities | | ✓ | |
| Article 6: life, survival and development | | ✓ | |
| Article 7: birth registration, name, nationality, care | | ✓ | |
| Article 8: protection and preservation of identity | | ✓ | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Article 9: separation from parents | | ✓ | |
| Article 10: family reunification | | ✓ | |
| Article 11: abduction and non-return of children | | ✓ | |
| Article 12: respect for the views of the child | | ✓ | |
| Article 13: freedom of expression | | ✓ | |
| Article 14: freedom of thought, belief and religion | | ✓ | |
| Article 15: freedom of association | | ✓ | |
| Article 16: right to privacy | | ✓ | |
| Article 17: access to information from the media | | ✓ | |
| Article 18: parental responsibilities and state assistance | | ✓ | |
| Article 19: protection from violence, abuse and neglect | | ✓ | |
| Article 20: children unable to live with their family | | ✓ | |
| Article 21: adoption | | ✓ | |
| Article 22: refugee children | | ✓ | |
| Article 23: children with a disability | | ✓ | |
| Article 24: health and health services | | ✓ | |
| Article 25: review of treatment in care | | ✓ | |
| Article 26: social security | | ✓ | |
| Article 27: adequate standard of living | | ✓ | |
| Article 28: right to education | | ✓ | |
| Article 29: goals of education | | ✓ | |
| Article 30: children from minority or indigenous groups | | ✓ | |
| Article 31: leisure, play and culture | | | ✓ |
| Article 32: child labour | | ✓ | |
| Article 33: drug abuse | | ✓ | |
| Article 34: sexual exploitation | | ✓ | |
| Article 35: abduction, sale and trafficking | | ✓ | |
| Article 36: other forms of exploitation | | ✓ | |
| Article 37: inhumane treatment and detention | | ✓ | |
| Article 38: war and armed conflicts | | ✓ | |
| Article 39: recovery from trauma and reintegration | | ✓ | |
| Article 40: juvenile justice | | ✓ | |
| Article 41: respect for higher national standards | | ✓ | |
| Article 42: knowledge of rights | | ✓ | |
| Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure | | ✓ | |

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

Projects should aim to achieve at least one of the following outcomes:

- Protect, enhance, and increase biodiversity, nature, and high-quality greenspaces.
- Improve existing or develop new spaces that benefit communities including parks, public gardens, playing fields, woodlands, natural "rewilded" areas, play areas, rivers, ponds, coastal habitats, allotments, community gardens and public spaces.
- Help communities mitigate, adapt to and build resilience to climate change, including the use of nature-based solutions.
- Raising awareness of and prompting action on nature, biodiversity, climate, and the environment.

Improving greenspace areas and play areas improves opportunities for formal and informal play for children and young people directly supports Article 31: (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

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.

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?

N/A

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

N/A

Outline of how impact of policy will be monitored.

The Fund pilot will end on 5th August 2024 with £30,000 allocated. The LEAF Pilot Summary Report will outline the Fund pilot's outcomes and a summary of the projects funded as well as lessons learned to develop the Fund further.

Progress against the LOIP improvement project charter aim will be measured as part of the improvement project model for improvement Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle and officers are to include updates on the Fund and impacts within the Council's existing Annual Climate and Nature Reports, presented to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

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

N/A

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Assessment Author | Guy Bergman – Environmental Planner |
| Date | 19/07/2024 |
| Chief Officer | David Dunne |
| Date | 21/08/2024 |