

The purpose of an Integrated Impact Assessment is to evidence that Aberdeen City Council is meeting its legislative duties by assessing the potential impacts of its policies and decisions on different groups of people and the environment. The legislation considered within this assessment is:

- Section 2 [Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics](#)
- Section 3 [Socio-Economic](#)
- Section 4 [Consumer Duty](#)
- Section 5 [Human Rights](#)
- Section 6 [Children and Young People’s Rights](#)
- Section 7 [Environmental impacts](#)

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

Budget Consultation Phase 2 – 2025/26

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

Like all local authorities, Aberdeen City Council faces rising costs for delivering public services. Some extremely tough decisions will need to be made to stay within budget. To help guide these tough decisions, Aberdeen City Council is committed to listening to the views of our citizens. In addition, the Consumer Scotland Act (2020) aims to put the consumers interests at the heart of strategic decision-making across the public sector to deliver better policy outcomes for Scotland. We want to understand our citizens priorities, so that spending plans are made with these in mind. To gather this information citizens are being asked to participate in a consultation and completing surveys.

The survey allows participants to provide their views on:

- Aberdeen City Council budget options, which provides potential options that have been identified for making savings or generating income.
- Health and Social Care Partnership offers various options for service changes.

In each section, participants can share insights on how the possible choices might affect their protected characteristic as well as their social economic status.

Participants will be asked to fill in optional demographic data. This information will be used to understand the demographics of those who have engaged with us and to assess the participation and representation from diverse groups across the city.

Citizens will also have the option to attend engagement sessions, which will provide the opportunity for participants to discuss potential impacts face to face.

The purpose of this Integrated Impact Assessment is to assess the consultation process itself. It is proposed that the consultation will take place over the period of three weeks. It will consist of:

- Digital survey (developed using a simulator supplied by Commonplace)
- Engagement sessions held with communities (virtual and in person options), supported by our GREC partners

- A series of focus group sessions for community groups offering an in-depth discussion on impacts and suggestion. Including a British Sign Language Session supported by BSL interpreters.
- Alternative formats of the survey made available *e.g. large print, braille, alternative language.*

The digital surveys will be conducted using a consultation platform provided by Commonplace.

Information about the consultation will be available on the website, which complies with accessibility requirements and includes the ReciteMe accessibility tool.

A briefing will be shared with Chief Officers and Service Managers to allow them to cascade the budget consultation and any potential impacts to their teams prior to launch on the 21<sup>st</sup> October. The survey will be featured on the internal platform Intranet, which is accessible to most staff members who are encouraged to participate and complete it.

Community and equality groups have been consulted to find the best methods for encouraging community involvement.

Key stakeholders and community groups will be invited to promote and participate in the consultation. In addition, we plan to conduct engagement sessions via our Equality Participation Network to distribute the survey among those groups and individuals who are typically underrepresented.

Digital assistance is available at local libraries and at the Customer Service Centre, Marischal College during opening hours.

We are hosting pop-up events to offer digital assistance for completing this year's survey. During these sessions Aberdeen City Council officers will provide citizens support in completing the survey.

The results will be shared with all political group leaders, who will be encouraged to explain how the consultation feedback has informed their Budget proposals when bringing them forward in 2025.

**1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?**

N/A

**1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?**

Feedback from Phase 2 consultation will be presented to Council on 11 December 2024

**1.5 Is this report going to a committee?**

Yes

**1.6 Committee name and date:**

Council 11 December 2024.

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

General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme - 2023/24 to 2027/28

**1.8 Function and cluster:**

People and Citizen Services

## Impacts

Aberdeen City Council has a legal requirement as a public sector organisation to assess the impact of its work on equality groups and assess against human rights, children's rights and our socio-economic duty. This is our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED has three key parts:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations by tackling prejudice, promoting understanding.

This following five sections in the Integrated Impact Assessment demonstrate that these considerations that have been made in the policy, that the impact of proposals made is understood and accepted, and what mitigating steps can be taken to reduce any negative impact of the policy.

## 2: Equality Act 2010 - Protected Characteristics

Aberdeen City Council wants to ensure everyone is treated fairly. This section identifies what impact the policy may have on people with [protected characteristics](#).

### 2.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below groups?

Protected Characteristic	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?

During the last budget consultation 23/24 , aside from the engagement sessions, there were no paper surveys requested, leading to the choice of conducting the survey digitally.

The proposed consultation should have a positive impact on people with any of the above protected characteristics because it involves the use of a consultation tool to collect and analyse their feedback. It also looks to include engagement sessions, both virtually and in person which will be undertaken by the Equalities Team, who will reach out to particular groups. In providing participants the opportunity for each proposed option to share insights on how the possible choices might affect their daily lives it provides the opportunity to capture as much information as possible from people with protected characteristics.

Citizens with certain disabilities require tools to aid them in accessing, understanding, and engaging with online surveys. To ensure as many people as possible can access and engage with the consultation hub, the provider, Commonplace is accessible to WCAG 2.11 AA Standards. Users can amend the display elements, use screen readers, and navigate using their keyboards. There is a voice recording tool for users to submit their ideas and feedback, which will assist citizens who have difficulties in communicating via text.

For citizens with protected characteristics that might impact them accessing the survey digitally, support will also be provided to aid completion within local libraries and our customer service centre at Marischal College. Additionally, a British Sign Language session will be held.

### 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?**

Aberdeen City Council conducts a biennial [Population Needs Assessment](#) (PNA) for the city. The aim of the PNA is to provide a high-level analysis of key groups, priorities, and challenges across public services, including service performance and information available on the customer perspective. The data used within the PNA is also included in the online [Aberdeen Outcomes Framework](#) which is maintained with the latest data as it becomes available.

By way of background, [The Consumer Scotland Act 2020](#) ('the 2020 Act') introduced a duty ("the consumer duty") on 'relevant public authorities' in Scotland, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise their functions, to have regard to:

- the impact of those decisions on consumers in Scotland, and
- the desirability of reducing harm to consumers in Scotland

An outcomes-based approach should be taken to meet the duty with a focus on providing better quality services and outcomes for consumers, as users of public services.

Through consultation, stakeholders voiced the need for a comprehensive process to capture the interests of consumers and integrate these interests into public authority strategic policy and decision making to help achieve positive outcomes for consumers.

The budget impacts every citizen within Aberdeen City boundaries and beyond. The [latest population data](#) for Aberdeen City is from 2021 which states the total population is 227,430, with a projected population 228,970 for 2025 ([nrscotland](#)). The demographic age groups are as follows: -

- 15.8% under 16, 68.9% working age, 15.4% pensionable age.
- 10,897 aged 0-4
- 11,924 aged 5-9
- 13,038 aged 10-15

The [Population Needs Assessment](#) (PNA) for the city Survey 2023, reported that 91.4% of households has access to the internet, with 96% reporting to have access to at least one device (laptop or PC, smart phone, or tablet). [City Voice](#) survey 2024 indicates 78.5% completed surveys was completed online.

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

Consultation has also taken place with the Equalities Team, Customer Experience and External Communications to ensure a focus on accessibility.

Equalities group GREC, has been consulted to support and cater with accessibility.

Consultation is planned with the Community Planning Partnership to help inform the approach going forwards.

#### **What consultation and engagement has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy?**

Engagement with Aberdeen Youth Movement to identify ways in which young people would wish to participate in the consultation.

Engagement with Grampian Regional Equality Council has taken place to determine the most effective methods for capturing impact posed by language barriers.

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

##### **What can be done to remove or reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?**

As the consultation platform is an online system it can only be accessed by those with internet access and digital ability. In the event that someone cannot access the online tool, council officers will support in aiding participants in completing this and obtain feedback directly from the citizens and include these in the consultation. We will also promote engagement events across the city in accessible locations, support will be provided for participants to complete the consultation.

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

<b>High</b>	
<b>Medium</b>	
<b>Low</b>	
<b>Negative Impact Removed</b>	

### 3: Socio-Economic Impacts

Aberdeen City Council has a duty to reduce the inequalities of outcome that can arise from socio-economic disadvantage. This section is used to consider what impact the policy may have on people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage – and how any inequalities of outcome arising from the policy can be reduced.

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/pages/introduction.aspx)

3.1 What impact could this policy have on people who experience the following aspects of socio-economic disadvantage?

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<b>Low income</b> – those who have insufficient earnings to meet basic needs, such as food, clothing, housing, or utilities.	X		
<b>Low/ no wealth</b> – those who have no savings for unexpected spend or provision for the future.	X		
<b>Material deprivation</b> – those who cannot afford or access goods or services that are considered essential or desirable for a decent quality of life, such as food, clothing, heating, transport, internet, cultural, recreational and social activities.	X		
<b>Area deprivation</b> – those who live in an area with poor living conditions, such as higher levels of crime, pollution, noise, congestion, or lack of infrastructure, amenities, or green spaces.	X		
<b>Socio-economic background</b> – social class, parents’ education, employment, income.	X		

3.2 In what way will the policy impact people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?

It is possible that people on low incomes will not have unrestricted access to the internet/ devices. This means they are not able to access the consultation online from their own home.

Low-income household may have restricted ability to fund travel, limited their involvement in engagement session.

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?**

[4. Internet - Scottish Household Survey 2022: Key Findings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings/pages/internet.aspx)

91% of households in Scotland have access to the internet, meaning 9% of households do not. Only 84% of households in the most deprived areas of Scotland have access to internet. Additionally, 80% of those in social rented housing had internet access, compared with 94% of households who owned their home. These statistics back up the assumption that socio-economic factors impact people’s access to the internet and as much as 20% of council house tenants may not have access to the internet at home.

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

Consultation has also taken place with the Equalities Team, Customer Experience to ensure a focus on accessibility.

Equalities group GREC, has been consulted to support and cater with accessibility.

Consultation is planned with the Community Planning Partnership to help inform the approach going forwards.

**What consultation and engagement has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy?**

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

**What can be done to reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?**

To mitigate this issue, we will be promoting engagement events for citizens to attend and find out more about consultations. We are also committed to promoting hubs where citizens can get free Wi-Fi and computer access in order to take part in surveys.

In promotion of engagement events cross the city in accessible location, limited the costs associated with travel.

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

**No – negative impact remains**

**Yes – negative impact reduced**

**Yes - negative impact removed**

X

## 4: Consumer Impacts

The Consumer Scotland Act 2020 places a Consumer Duty on the public sector to put consumer interests at the heart of strategic decision-making, emphasising the need for accessible and affordable public services, especially during times of financial pressure. This person-centred approach is intended to result in better quality services and outcomes for the public as consumers of public services across Scotland.

This section of the IIA is used to consider the impact of the policy on consumers of any services that the policy is intended to change.

Use this guide to understand more on the consumer duty: [How to meet the consumer duty: guidance for public authorities](#)

### 4.1 What impact could this policy have on any of the below consumer groups?

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<b>Individuals</b>		X	
<b>Small businesses</b>		X	

### 4.2 In what way will the policy impact people in these consumer groups?

N/A

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

**What can be done to remove or reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?**

**No – negative impact remains**

If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?	Yes – negative impact reduced	
	Yes - negative impact removed	

## 5: 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](#).

### 5.1 What impact could this policy have on Human Rights?

Human Rights Article	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Article 2: <a href="#">Right to life</a>		X	
Article 4: <a href="#">Prohibition of slavery and forced labour</a>		X	
Article 5: <a href="#">Right to liberty and security</a>		X	
Article 6: <a href="#">Right to a fair trial</a>		X	
Article 7: <a href="#">No punishment without law</a>		X	
Article 8: <a href="#">Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence</a>		X	
Article 9: <a href="#">Freedom of thought, belief and religion</a>		X	
Article 10: <a href="#">Freedom of expression</a>			X
Article 11: <a href="#">Freedom of assembly and association</a>			X
Article 12: <a href="#">Right to marry and start a family</a>		X	
Article 14: <a href="#">Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms</a>		X	
Article 1 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property</a>		X	
Article 2 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to education</a>		X	
Article 3 of Protocol 1: <a href="#">Right to participate in free elections</a>		X	

### 5.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

The consultation will have a positive impact on articles 10 and 11 as it gives people the route to express their opinions and how council proposals may impact on their beliefs.

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

What can be done to remove or reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?	
N/A	
If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?	No – negative impact remains
	Yes – negative impact reduced
	Yes - negative impact removed

## 6: 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 – 26 years old).

There are 4 articles known as the “General Principles”. They help to interpret the other articles. 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)

For ease, the articles have been grouped in three categories to support assessments against the Convention, those most directly related to the **PROVISION** of services, those most directly related to the **PROTECTION** of children and young people, and those to encourage their active **PARTICIPATION in decision making**. You can [read the full UN Convention \(pdf\)](#), or [just a summary \(pdf\)](#), to find out more about the rights that are included.

### 6.1 What impact could this policy have on the rights of Children and Young People?

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<b>PROVISION</b>			
Article 2: non-discrimination		X	
Article 3: best interests of the child provision and protection		X	
Article 5: parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities		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 22: refugee children		X	
Article 23: children with a disability		X	
Article 24: health and health services		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 39: recovery from trauma and reintegration		X	
Article 40: juvenile justice		X	
<b>PROTECTION</b>			
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 protection		X	
Article 11: abduction and non-return of children		X	
Article 15: freedom of association		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 25:</b> review of treatment in care		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 32:</b> child labour		X	
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>			
<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 42:</b> knowledge of rights		X	

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

For most articles, the impact will be neutral. For some, the impact could be positive as the council may collect opinions from children and/or parents/guardians that will feed into proposals to better service the needs of disabled children and contribute towards leisure, play, and culture.

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

<b>What can be done to remove or reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?</b>	
N/A	
<b>If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?</b>	<b>No – negative impact remains</b>
	<b>Yes – negative impact reduced</b>
	<b>Yes - negative impact removed</b>

## 7: Environmental Impacts

Aberdeen City Council has a duty to meet its legal environmental responsibilities by working towards Net Zero emissions, adapting to climate change, and acting in a way it considers most sustainable. We must also fulfil the [biodiversity duty](#) and [sustainable procurement duty](#).

This section in the Integrated Impact Assessment demonstrates that these considerations that have been made in the policy, that the impact of proposals made is understood and accepted, and what mitigating steps can be taken to reduce any negative impact of the policy.

Use this guide to understand more on the legal climate change duty: [Climate change - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) and find out more about how Aberdeen is adapting to Climate Change: [Aberdeen Adapts | Aberdeen City Council](#)

7.1 What is the impact of this policy on any of the below climate, environmental and waste considerations?

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<a href="#">Council or City-wide carbon emissions</a>		X	
<a href="#">Active and sustainable travel</a>		X	
<a href="#">Facilities for local living</a>		X	
<a href="#">Resilience and adaptability</a> to flooding and weather events		X	
<a href="#">Biodiversity improvement</a> and <a href="#">wildlife/habitat connectivity</a>		X	
Water consumption and drainage		X	
Pollution (air, water, noise, light and land contamination)		X	
Impact on resource use and <a href="#">waste</a>			X
<a href="#">Sustainable procurement</a> of goods and services		X	

7.2 In what way will the policy impact the environment?

Conducting the consultation as a digital survey will positively affect 'Impact on resource use and waste' by reducing paper waste.

7.3 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 digital surveys will be conducted using a consultation platform provided by Commonplace. Commonplace have provided public consultation tools to more than 300 public sector organisations. They have published over 3,500 engagement sites, including many budget consultations for local authorities in the UK. Over 3 million contributions have been processed and analysed via these platforms. The engagement platform is compliant with web content accessibility guidelines version 2.1 AA standard.

### What consultation and engagement has been undertaken with local groups, partner organisations, experts etc? Where required, identify any other environmental assessments that have been completed.

Consultation has also taken place with the Equalities Team, Customer Experience to ensure a focus on accessibility.

Equalities group GREC, has been consulted to support and cater with accessibility.

Consultation is planned with the Community Planning Partnership to help inform the approach going forwards.

7.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

<b>What can be done to remove or reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?</b>		
<b>If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?</b>	<b>No – negative impact remains</b>	
	<b>Yes – negative impact reduced</b>	
	<b>Yes - negative impact removed</b>	

## 8: Sign Off

<b>Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?</b>
N/A
<b>Does the policy relate to the Council's <a href="#">Equality Outcomes</a>? If yes, how:</b>
<p>Yes.</p> <p>Equality Outcome 1 – This proposal will improve and increase participation of people with protected characteristics to have access to information and participate in the decision-making process that may have an impact on them.</p> <p>Equality Outcome 2 – The proposal aims to support the participation of diverse communities to foster good relations and feeling of belonging.</p> <p>Equality Outcome 3 – The proposal aims to enhance participation and representation of people with protected characteristics. The outcomes of the consultations and this impact assessment will support elected members and leaders in their decision making.</p>
<b>Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.</b>
<p>It has highlighted the need for officers to be able to collect feedback on consultations from citizens who cannot access the internet or may have other issues restricting them from responding online.</p> <p>The need to promote engagement sessions throughout the city in accessible locations, which reduces travel from those with restricted travel means.</p> <p>The use of the Commonplace tool improves accessibility with features such as voice recording capabilities.</p>
<b>Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.</b>
<p>Responses to consultations will constantly be monitored to ensure that we are receiving feedback on proposals from citizens in every demographic and targeted engagement to reach communities with low take up.</p>
<b>If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.</b>
N/A

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<b>Date</b>	14/10/2024
<b>Chief Officer</b>	Isla Newcombe
<b>Date</b>	17/10/24