

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

**Volunteers Policy**

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

- **This policy sets out how any volunteering activity for Aberdeen City Council (ACC) will be managed to ensure uniformity of processes and to mitigate against any potential risks to the Council through the use of volunteers. The Policy will specifically aim to reduce risk as set out in section 6 around:**
  - ⊖ **the health and safety of volunteers, employees and our communities**
  - **any potential legislation breaches including data**
- **ACC recognises that volunteering activities are a choice made freely by the individual.**
- **ACC recognises volunteers as playing a complementary role alongside paid employees. Benefits gained include building stronger relationships with our communities, opportunities to deliver more effective projects and to learn from volunteers who bring different experiences and knowledge.**
- **ACC recognises that volunteers should be involved in appropriate volunteering activities which complement but never substitute the work of paid employees or the work formerly carried out by paid employees. Examples of where the Council has volunteers include Libraries, Educational establishments, Environmental Services, Museums and Galleries, Archives and our City Events service.**
- **There are a variety of volunteering opportunities across the Council which provide high quality experiences that are positive, enriching and enjoyable for all participants. All ACC volunteers will have access to relevant training, support and guidance throughout their time volunteering with ACC, offering quality opportunities to develop and broaden skills for learning, life and employability. Volunteering provides opportunities to tackle social isolation and improve health and wellbeing.**

- ACC is a Volunteer Charter Champion and will use the [Volunteer Scotland Volunteer Charter](#) alongside this policy to ensure that volunteers are engaged in rewarding, appropriate and sustainable volunteering activity.
- ACC (People and Citizen Services) will maintain a 'pool' of its own employees who wish to volunteer for specific volunteering activities such as Emergency Resilience. This is separate to their substantive roles and contracts of employment.
- This policy sets out the requirements on ACC managers to uphold best practice in selecting volunteers and in the management of and providing support to our volunteers. Relevant procedures are set out in the accompanying guidance with reference to national and local volunteering strategies as well as ensuring compliance with Data Protection and Equality legislation and protecting vulnerable children and adults.

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

No

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

New Policy

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

Yes

**1.6 Committee name and date:**

Staff Governance Committee, 27th January 2025

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

CORS/24/294

**1.8 Function and Cluster:**

Corporate Services, People & 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	X
<a href="#">Sexual Orientation</a>				X	

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

This policy will provide a fair and equitable approach to opportunities that will promote good practice in equality enabling people with protected characteristics to participate and contribute.

The policy will have a positive impact on Age as data from Volunteer Scotland has identified that those aged 11-16 are less likely to undertake volunteering however ACC offer opportunities to volunteers aged 14+ to gain skills and knowledge during their Duke of Edinburgh which may have a positive impact on their future. ([Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges](#))

[Scottish Household Survey 2022](#) reveals that 31% of adults aged 16 and over volunteered formally at least once a month in 2022. Offering volunteering opportunities to individuals aged 16 and over can help broaden their skills for learning, life and employability.

The Volunteers Policy could have a positive impact on the protected characteristic Race as Volunteer Scotland have identified volunteering differs among ethnic groups. Offering opportunities could encourage a higher number of individuals from different ethnic groups to volunteer and develop their skills for life and employment. ([Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges](#))

Volunteer Scotland have identified that disabled adults were less likely to volunteer than non-disabled adults. The Volunteers Policy provides a fair and equitable approach to volunteering which will promote good practice in equality and could encourage more disabled adults to participate and contribute to volunteering activities. ([Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges](#))

Volunteer Scotland have identified that men and women were also equally likely to undertake formal volunteering, however women were more likely to report having participated in informal volunteering ([Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges](#)). The national data shows the wider gender trends and ACC will undertake more work at a local level to identify the demographics of their volunteers. The Volunteers Policy will support this.

### 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?**

External research has identified that in 2022, 46% of adults in Scotland have volunteered, which is a reduction of 2% from 2018. This overall figure combines those who have **volunteered formally** (providing unpaid help through an organisation or group) with those who have **volunteered informally** (helping someone who is not a friend or relative). Volunteer Scotland have identified that COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis have contributed to this decrease. ([Volunteer Scotland: Volunteering in 2022](#))

Data from the [Scottish Household Survey 2022](#) and the [Young People in Scotland Survey 2022](#) has identified that the demographic of volunteering is diverse.

**Age:** Despite a fall in participation rates from 2019, [young people](#) aged 17-18 exhibit a formal volunteering participation rate of 68%, indicating their resilience in engaging in volunteer activities compared with those 11-16. The Scottish Household Survey reveals that 31% of adults aged 16 and over volunteered formally at least once a month in 2022. Those aged 60+ are engaged more in 'religion and belief' volunteering compared to those aged 16-34 of which 34% support 'youth/children's activities outside school'. Both groups are equally involved in 'Local community or neighbourhood' volunteering.

**Gender:** Gender disparities in volunteering have diminished, with [equal participation rates between boys and girls](#). Historically, girls have had higher participation rates in volunteering. [Men and women were also equally likely to undertake formal volunteering, however women were more likely to report having participated in informal volunteering.](#)

**Ethnicity:** [Volunteering engagement also varies among different ethnic groups.](#) Those identifying as 'white – other British' have the highest participation rate at 27%, while other ethnic groups, such as 'white Scottish,' 'white – other,' and 'minority ethnic,' exhibit slightly lower participation rates. Nonetheless, involvement in community and neighbourhood volunteering is consistent across all groups.

**Disability:** [Disability remains a key factor in participation rates.](#) Disabled adults were less likely to volunteer than non-disabled adults (17% vs. 23%), which maintains this long-term disparity in engagement. Counterintuitively, [young people with long-term health conditions](#) (LHCs) had higher volunteering participation rates, both formally and informally, compared to those without LHCs.

[\(Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges\)](#)

The findings above have considered four of the nine protected characteristics however it does not cover the following; Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion or Belief or Sexual Orientation.

ACC will undertake more work at a local level to identify the demographics of their volunteers. The Volunteers Policy will support this.

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

Volunteer Scotland and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) invited ACC to sign up to the Volunteer Charter and become a charter champion. By becoming a volunteer champion, ACC will have an impact on the experiences of volunteers, volunteer practice and volunteering within Scotland and ensure fair and equal treatment of everyone participating.

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

None

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)?**

N/A

**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

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/)

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?

ACC recognises volunteers as playing a complementary role alongside paid staff. The policy will offer the citizens of Aberdeen the opportunity to undertake a variety of volunteering activity which provide high quality experiences that are positive, enriching and enjoyable for all participants. All ACC volunteers will have access to relevant training, support and guidance throughout their time with ACC, offering opportunities to develop and broaden skills for learning, life and employability. Volunteering provides opportunities to tackle social isolation, improve health and wellbeing and learn from volunteers who bring different experiences and knowledge. The policy will also enable the improvement of community resilience through community groups supporting each other.

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?

Individuals living in the most deprived areas exhibit lower formal volunteer participation rates compared to those in less deprived areas. However, [community and neighbourhood volunteering rates remain relatively consistent across all deprivation levels](#) with 27% of adult volunteers supporting their local communities. This may be connected to the community-based volunteering which emerged during COVID-19 and it indicates this type of volunteering is inclusive. ([Volunteer Scotland: The state of volunteering in 2023 Trends and Challenges](#))

Research has also identified that the Cost-of-Living crisis is adversely impacting almost half (49%) of Scottish adults’ mental health, with 34% experiencing increased anxiety. Volunteering has the

potential to have a positive impact with volunteers reporting improvements to their mental health. Lower formal volunteering participation rates indicates that fewer Scottish adults are realising the benefits from volunteering at a time of increased mental health need. ([Volunteer Scotland: Volunteering in 2022](#))

Research from NCVO has identified that over three-quarters of volunteers (77%) have reported that volunteering improved their mental health and wellbeing. This benefit was more widespread than physical health benefits (53%). ([NCVO: Volunteer Impacts](#))

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

A steering group has been established comprising managers from all clusters / teams across the organisation who utilise volunteers. The policy has been co-developed with their input.

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

None

3.4 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**

## 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?

The volunteers policy will have a positive impact on individuals as the activities undertaken by volunteers enables other consumers to use the services provided by ACC. Examples include Football Coaching, Libraries, Environmental Services volunteers who help Aberdeen’s green spaces clean and well maintained, Museums and Galleries and City Events.

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)?	
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



## 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?

N/A

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.

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	
Article 19: protection from violence, abuse and neglect		X	
Article 20: children unable to live with their family		X	
Article 21: adoption		X	
Article 25: review of treatment in care		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 32: child labour		X	

PARTICIPATION			
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 42: knowledge of rights		x	

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

The Volunteers Policy has a neutral impact on the rights of Children and Young People based on the articles above however it does provide them with opportunities to volunteer and develop and broaden skills for learning, life and employability.

6.3 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	

## 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?

ACC has volunteers within Environmental Services who assist with Clean Up Aberdeen, Friends Groups and Community Gardening Groups to help keep Aberdeen's green spaces clean and well maintained. This links to the LOIP "Prosperous Place" outcome with people benefiting from spending time outdoors whilst maintaining the appearance and appreciating the nature of Aberdeen.

ACC has volunteers who undertake volunteering activity within schools on environmental projects, for example, developing fruit and vegetable allotments. This links to the [Keep Beautiful Scotland](#) Eco-Schools initiative which ACC supports through a pupil-led approach to learning for sustainability.

ACC has volunteers within the Library and Community Learning service who provide lifestyle choices briefings on growing fruit and vegetables. This links to the LOIP "Prosperous People (Adults)" outcome by encouraging healthier lifestyles through improved healthy eating behaviours and "Prosperous Place" through the reduction of household waste.

ACC will ensure that where expenses are required to be paid for travel, these are agreed with the named person and that the volunteer uses public transport (where possible) to help achieve Net Zero Emissions by 2045.

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?**

Data has been obtained from various sources to inform the policy and IIA and the impact volunteering has for ACC and the citizens of Aberdeen.

While the amount of household waste generated increased in 2020 and 2021 compared to the preceding years, the amount going to landfill has decreased – falling from 58,021 tonnes in 2016 to 9,376 tonnes in 2021 (Local Outcome Improvement Plan). The data has identified a reduction in waste going to landfill which suggests that households overall are recycling however this increased in 2020 and 2021. This could be linked to the Covid 19 pandemic, and the restrictions placed on households. A continued reduction in waste will help Scotland achieve their Zero Waste Plan which proposes long term targets of recycling 70% of all Scotland's waste, and only 5% of remaining waste ending up in landfill by 2025. (Scotland's Zero Waste Plan)

There is a national and local commitment to meet the target of Net Zero Emissions by 2045. Since 2005, CO2 emissions in Aberdeen have fallen by 40.4% since 2005 to 1,130 kt in 2021. (Local Outcome Improvement Plan). The data has highlighted that the citizens of Aberdeen have supported the initiative through a reduction in CO2 emissions and will help ACC achieve their target of Net Zero Emissions by 2045. The volunteer policy would support this target through encouraging volunteers to use public transport (where possible) when undertaking their volunteering.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires every local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area to identify land that could be used to grow food and describe how provision for community growing, in particular in areas which experience socio-economic disadvantage, can be increased. (Granite City Growing). ACC works in Partnership with (CFine) to provide various training opportunities to the citizens of Aberdeen which will help improve Aberdeen’s green spaces, reduction in household waste and healthier lifestyles.

**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.**

A steering group has been establishment comprising managers from all clusters / teams across the organisation who utilise volunteers. The policy has been co-developed with their input and examples of volunteering which has an impact on the environment identified.

#### 7.4 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**

## 8: Sign Off

<b>Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?</b>
<p>The volunteers policy could have a positive impact on ACC employees as managing and supporting volunteers will allow employees who do not currently manage a team to upskill for any future career developments.</p> <p>Providing volunteering opportunities enables individuals to see the work undertaken by ACC employees which could enhance our reputation of being an employer of choice.</p>
<b>Does the policy relate to the Council's <a href="#">Equality Outcomes</a>? If yes, how.</b>
<p>Yes - This policy will provide a fair and equitable approach to opportunities that will promote good practice in equality enabling people with protected characteristics to participate and contribute.</p>
<b>Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.</b>
<p>No changes.</p>
<b>Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.</b>
<p>Regular reporting on the usage of volunteers will be undertaken by each Cluster as set out in the accompanying guidance. The impact of the volunteering activities undertaken across ACC will be monitored by People and Citizen Services.</p>
<b>If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.</b>
<p>N/A</p>

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<b>Date</b>	02/10/2024
<b>Chief Officer</b>	Isla Newcombe
<b>Date</b>	18/11/24