

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

Use of Probationary Periods for all new employees with Aberdeen City Council.

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

It is recognised that a supportive and structured probationary process is important in providing the appropriate level of engagement, training and development for new employees on commencement of employment to enable an employee’s success in the role. This will run in tandem with a structured induction, regular 1-2-1’s with the line manager and an annual appraisal as part of continuous review and development (CR&D).

The purpose of the probationary period is to:

- assess how the new employee is settling into the role and identify and provide any support, training and development needs throughout the probationary period as it facilitates equality of opportunity by considering the potential differing needs of diverse people.
- monitor capability, skills, performance and general conduct against the requirements of the role with regular meetings with the line manager throughout the probationary period.
- ensure two-way communication between the employee and line manager as part of regular meetings and gateways throughout the probationary period.

The probationary period is a supportive measure for both new employees and managers. It may also avoid lengthy processes from poor appointments affecting performance or conduct.

Monthly review meetings will assess the new employee's ongoing suitability for the role. If, after 6 months, they have met the requirements of the probationary period, the employee will have successfully completed their Probationary Period. If, despite any support provided, they have been unable to meet the requirements of the probationary period, the Line Manager may extend the probation by up to 3 months or recommend termination.

This will not apply to existing Aberdeen City Council employees moving roles within the organisation. The existing trial and introduction period in place as part of the re.cr.uit scheme for internal movement of staff / internal recruitment will be utilised to provide a structured induction and development period to support them in their new role.

1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?

Yes

1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?

New

1.5 Is this report going to a committee?

No

1.6 Committee name and date:

N/A

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

N/A

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

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

There is a potential low negative impact on Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Sex.

New employees with a disability may require additional support and reasonable adjustments during the initial stages of employment and during the probationary period.

Periods of absence may impact the probationary period, this could be a pregnancy related illness, maternity leave or absence related to a disability.

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?

Benchmarking with other organisations, and research indicates that most organisations have probationary periods, as standard, within their contracts of employment and these can vary from 3 – 6 months.

The Scottish Government, the University of Aberdeen and Bon Accord Care have probationary periods for all new starts to their organisation. Feedback has been that these have in a large proportion of cases resulted in employees being successful.

The UK Government has published the Employment Rights Bill which will bring forward various employment law reforms including consulting on the introduction of a statutory probationary period for new employees. This will continue to be monitored as developments arise.

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

Bon Accord Care, one of our arms length external organisations have had probationary periods in place for new employees for a number of years. Discussion, feedback and learning from their experience has been built into our process and guidance.

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)?

Key to this supportive and structured probationary process is having regular contact and communication between the employee and their line manager. There will be monthly probationary period review meetings where any additional support can be discussed and any reasonable adjustments considered, or in the case of prolonged periods of absence, extending the probationary period. Alongside the formal monthly meetings, there will be regular 1-2-1 meetings and an annual appraisal as part of continuous review and development (CR&D).

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

High	
Medium	
Low	
Negative Impact Removed	X

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 \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

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

	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Low income – those who have insufficient earnings to meet basic needs, such as food, clothing, housing, or utilities.		X	
Low/ no wealth – those who have no savings for unexpected spend or provision for the future.		X	
Material deprivation – 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	
Area deprivation – 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	
Socio-economic background – social class, parents’ education, employment, income.		X	

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

Neutral impact identified at this stage as any new external applicant would be aware of the detail of the contract and terms and conditions prior to starting and would make this decision based on their own personal circumstances.

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?

None.

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

None.

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 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	

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
Individuals			X
Small businesses		X	

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

Probationary periods could have a positive impact as this is a supportive and structured process to try and ensure success in the role which could have a positive impact on consumers and the service they receive.

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

5.2 In what way will the policy impact Human Rights?

There is no evidence to indicate the Human Rights of people would be impacted as a result of probationary periods.

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
PROVISION			
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	
PROTECTION			
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?

There is no evidence to indicate that there would be a direct impact on the rights of children and young people as a result of probationary periods.

Any additional support will be identified through formal monthly probation review meetings. For example, extension of probation period where required. This could impact staff who are young / this is their first employment role.

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

7.2 In what way will the policy impact the environment?

There is no evidence to indicate there may be negative impact on the environment as a result of probationary periods.

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?

N/A

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.

N/A

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

Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?
<p>The probationary period guidance has been developed to ensure that the probationary process is undertaken for all new employees and is applied in a fair and consistent manner, providing an inclusive and supportive work environment where all new employees, including those with any protected characteristic have the opportunity to succeed, in line with our equality, diversity and inclusion principles.</p> <p>New employees may potentially feel anxious during those initial stages of employment and the probationary period. However this should be addressed through the structured process that is in place that will set clear expectations and expected standards that should enable the employee to understand what is expected of them, alongside the monthly probationary period review meetings and regular communication with their Line Manager.</p>
Does the policy relate to the Council's Equality Outcomes? If yes, how:
<p>Yes, the policy will support service provider outcome 1 where people will have access to information and any barriers are addressed, removed or reduced. Probation periods allows increased time for support where needed.</p> <p>Employer outcome 1 where probation periods may support us in improving the diversity of our workforce and address any areas of underrepresentation, ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all protected groups.</p>
Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.
Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.
<p>Through feedback from managers who have used the process. The guidance will be reviewed and updated as necessary.</p>
If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.
<p>N/A</p>

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Date	19 th December 2024
Chief Officer	Lesley Strachan (with the delegated authority of the Chief Officer)
Date	20 th December 2024