

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

Offering all new contracts of employment at a maximum of 35 hours per week.

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

The purpose of this IIA is to capture the impact of the implementation of offering new contracts of employment based on a maximum of 35 hours per week, for both internal and external appointments. This does not apply to Teachers and those on SNCT terms and conditions.

The Budget Meeting on 6 March 2024 approved the budget option ‘changes to organisational design to reduce operating costs’ within which the negotiation / exploration of the potential to change the standard working week from 37 to 35 hours is one way to achieve the agreed budget saving of £5m over the next 2 years contributing towards the need to reduce the council’s pay bill by approximately £40m over the next 4 years. This approach would allow the council to continue with the current commitment of no compulsory redundancies. As a result, a further IIA has been drafted capturing ongoing considerations under negotiation with trade unions through collective bargaining and would be finalised at such time that any decisions about the implementation of such an approach were to be taken.

In September 2024, the Council entered a collective bargaining process with Trade Union representatives, in which employees, through their trade unions, negotiate contracts with their employers to determine their terms of employment, including pay, benefits, hours, leave, job health and safety policies, ways to balance work and family, and more. The Council is in constructive dialogue with the Trade Unions to seek their views or alternative suggestions on transitioning from a standard 37-hour week to a 35-hour week.

In consultation with Trade Union colleagues, a decision has been reached to advertise all new full-time vacancies, both internal and external on a 35-hour working week, rather than 37. As a result, all new appointments will have a maximum contracted working week of 35 hours. This change represents staff undertaking part time working hours, as opposed to altering our standard term for employees on the length of the working week.

This decision is separate to, and does not preclude the outcome of the collective bargaining discussions

on a move of the standard working week from 37 to 35 hours for existing staff. As a result, the Council's standard working week will remain at 37 hours, whilst discussions with Trade Unions continue.

Whilst the overarching considerations of impact are captured within the draft IIA for the overall proposal on working week amendments, this IIA relates specifically to the change for new starts.

1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?

No

1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?

Change to existing: ACC routinely appoints individuals to work hours below the 37 hour standard working week, therefore this is not a new policy. The activity to appoint any new staff at 35 hours or below, as a broad approach is new, and is taken through the Establishment Control Board at the point at which the delegations regarding recruitment to vacancies is exercised.

1.5 Is this report going to a committee?

No – considered under delegated powers

1.6 Committee name and date:

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

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

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

Impact on recruitment

There is minimal negative impact on applicants with protected characteristics. Individuals choose to apply for a vacancy based on the information provided prior to recruitment – set out in the advert for the vacancy, including the 35-hour work week. This is unlikely to affect application numbers, as candidates may seek employment or appreciate the work-life balance offered. The Council's attractive benefits, such as generous annual leave, pension, employee benefits including flexible working, also play a significant role.

Internal Movement

Existing employees may seek to apply for promotions or lateral moves. For a 35-hour post at the same grade, a lateral move could mean a salary reduction, deterring applications and limiting career development. This may impact:

- Younger employees early in their careers with ambitions to work in different areas.
- Employees nearing retirement focused on pension contributions.
- Full-time female employees, who are higher in number than male employees, may be disproportionately affected.

If it was a promoted post, then the financial implications are reduced and whilst the hourly rate for the promoted post would be higher, there could still be an impact. For example, if an employee who is currently at top of Grade G9 at 37 hours (£15.32 per hour / £29,476 per annum) was to move to a Grade G10 post at 35 hours, point 1 of that scale is £15.33 per hour / £27,901 per annum so a slightly higher hourly rate but less annual salary due to working 2 hours less a week. In those situations, the manager would have discretion to

appoint the employee at a higher point on the scale to mitigate the impact, so in this example point 3 of the Grade G10 grade at 35 hours would be £16.10 per hour / £29, 357 a year.

Trainees or apprentices who complete their programmes and secure a role will move to a 35-hour contract. This change positively impacts younger employees by offering significant pay grade advancements, such as moving from a Grade G4 Modern Apprentice to a Grade G9 permanent role.

Work life balance and Flexible Working

A 35-hour working week can support a healthy work-life balance, boosting productivity, morale, and overall well-being. It offers time for personal activities, family commitments, and caring for dependants, benefiting all individuals with an intersectionality of protected characteristics.

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?

Our internal staff data shows that 43.2% of our workforce are part-time, with 87.3% of them being female, and may be part time due to personal circumstances and caring responsibilities. A 35-hour working week may be more appealing to these part-time female workers than a 37-hour working week.

A 2020 CIPD report found that flexible working improves representation and progression for people with protected characteristics, such as women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, older workers, and carers. It also benefits employee wellbeing, engagement, and productivity. The report recommends a flexible-by-default approach for job advertisements unless a business reason prevents it and suggests providing training and support for effective flexible working.

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

Engagement with Directors, Chief Officers and Senior Management teams.

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

All staff were engaged with via online and paper surveys on the 35 Hour week proposal and feedback from that process has been used to inform this IIA.

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)?

Low negative impact identified for Age and Sex. However, as application to a role which is advertised on a 35 hour working week contract would be by choice, this risk is low and all staff will have an opportunity to ask questions about any new contracts they sign up to.

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

High	
Medium	
Low	X
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 \(www.gov.scot\)](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.

For internal employees, moving to a 35-hour role as described in section 2.1 may have potential negative financial impact, if they already experience socio-economic disadvantage. They may choose not to apply for the internal position.

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?

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

Consultation with directors, chief officers and trade unions was undertaken as part of the process.

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

As described in 2.3 above, engagement with employees was undertaken regarding the wider 35 hour working week proposal and as part of that 523 employees selected ‘socio-economic disadvantage’ as being a group that might be impacted.

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

What can be done to reduce any negative impacts of this policy (if applicable)?	
Where negative impact has been identified, staff will be made aware at interview stage and throughout the selection process, of the choice they have prior to accepting any new contract.	
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
Individuals		x	
Small businesses		x	

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

Where there are any decisions that need to be taken regarding impacts and changes to service delivery, individual services will undertake an IIA.

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)?	
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?

The implementation of this policy approach is anticipated to have neutral impact on Human Rights.

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)?	
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	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?

Article 3 & 23 There are potential impacts to the above Articles. If an employee who is employed on a 35 hour contract is unable to undertake all the required work within their contracted hours, this may present some risks to vulnerable children in Children's Social Work for example. This may be the case when there is a particularly challenging situation where the postholder is required to continue to undertake their duties over their contracted hours.

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)?		
Managers will support employees on options within these situations to ensure that harm is avoided to the most vulnerable when exceptional circumstances arise. This includes the options to receive the working time back through TOIL, Flexi Leave or Overtime with the approval of management.		
If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?	No – negative impact remains	
	Yes – negative impact reduced	X
	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?

Neutral impact – there will be no negative impact as a result of this policy.

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?

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.

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)?

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?
Does the policy relate to the Council's Equality Outcomes? If yes, how:
Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.
Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All new starts have a structured induction process, and we are in the process of expanding the use of probationary periods. The probationary period is a supportive and developmental process that will provide the appropriate level of support and training for new employees to ensure an employee's success in the role.• New staff will be contracted for a maximum of 35 hours per week. All vacancies are subject to approval, during which the Talent Team will discuss with the Service Manager or Chief Officer the operational impact and mitigation plans for the reduced hours.• The Talent Team also have a 35 hour control log in place to monitor all relevant posts and the outcomes of these discussions. The Establishment Control Board will also be kept up to date and informed on the different vacancies which are impacted by the change and feedback provided to Clusters. Ongoing monitoring of our recruitment data via ECB will continue as well as follow up with services in 6 months' time to review progress and understand any further impacts.
If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.

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Date	18 October 2024
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Date	30/10/24