

# Integrated Impact Assessment

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

<b>1.1 Title</b>
Stop public access to online Council meeting broadcasts
<b>1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?</b>
This proposal considers the impact of ceasing webcasting of Council and Committee meetings in order to generate a budget saving.
This would result in all Council and Committee meetings no longer being webcast live online, nor recordings being available for subsequent viewing. It is important to highlight that the organisation’s hybrid meeting arrangements for Council and Committee meetings relies upon the webcasting technology in terms of cameras, camera automation and microphones, therefore if the webcast contract was ceased (or not renewed), hybrid meetings could no longer take place in the way they currently operate. If there was a desire to continue with hybrid meetings, alternative technology would need to be used or sourced, which would either result in a financial impact or an inferior arrangement for hybrid meetings to that which is currently experienced.
<b>1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?</b>
It is not considered that this is a strategic programme or proposal.
<b>1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?</b>
n/a
<b>1.5 Is this report going to a committee?</b>
Council
<b>1.6 Committee name and date:</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> March – Budget Meeting

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

GV-02

**1.8 Function and Cluster:**

Corporate Services – Governance. Chief Officer - Governance

## 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?

The proposal will affect people with protected characteristics but the biggest impact will be on older people, people with disability and those who are pregnant or on maternity or paternity leave.

Prior to webcasting Council/Committee meetings, the only way people could watch a meeting was to physically attend the meeting in the Town House and observe from the public gallery. This was the practice for many years and attendances varied from meeting to meeting depending on the agenda and subject matters being considered. Since webcasting of Council meetings started approximately 10 years ago and webcasting of committee meetings started during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, physical attendance by the press/public/partners has certainly dropped as many people now prefer to watch the webcast from the comfort of their home/office or elsewhere. Returning to the previous arrangement of physical attendance only would be a sizeable shift in practice and would have the biggest impact on the elderly and infirm and people with disability, who may struggle to get to the Town House without additional support, both in terms of transportation and possible need for a friend or family member to assist them. The reality is that many people in that category who watch the webcasts at the moment will simply not come to the Town House if it is too difficult for them. There would also be an impact for those who are heavily pregnant or on maternity/paternity leave as they would also face the same challenges in terms of transportation and possible additional support, or they may decide that they require to use childcare instead to allow them to attend the Town House.

As mentioned earlier, if the Council could not put in place alternative arrangements to hold meetings on a hybrid basis then these impacts would also be felt by Councillors, officers and colleagues from partner organisations who regularly participate in meetings via Teams, rather than simply watching meetings via the webcast. The same protected characteristics also apply here as there are (and will be in the future) people in the high categories set out above, namely age, disability and pregnancy and maternity. Having held almost all Council and Committee meetings on a hybrid (or fully virtual) basis for over 4 and a half years now, it would undoubtedly be a retrograde step to go back to requiring all Councillors, officers, partners, press and public to be in the meeting room to take part or observe.

### 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?**

We don't have data on who accesses the website so the above information makes assumptions about which people are most likely to be affected.

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

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

Aberdeen City Council undertook a two-part public consultation around the 2025/26 Budget and future spending plans from August 2024 to November 2024.

In Part 1, conducted throughout August 2024, participants were asked to provide feedback on four key areas: Budget Options, Council Tax, Service Area Prioritisation, and Capital Programme Expenditure. Under Budget Options, respondents were queried about the potential impacts of proposed options, including both reduction strategies and income-boosting charges. Regarding Council Tax, input was sought on acceptable levels of increase and their potential impacts. Citizens were also invited to express their views on which service areas should be prioritised for spending and to offer their opinions on capital programme expenditure.

In part 2, which took place throughout November 2024, the Council consulted on additional budget options, again focusing on the impact if implemented. The phase 2 consultation included budget options relating to the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership.

There were 4278 responses across the four areas consulted on during part 1 of the online consultation and 1535 responses to part 2. Respondents had the option to indicate which protected characteristics would be affected.

Various approaches were offered to support participation. Throughout both phases, opportunities were offered for the public to attend face to face and digital sessions to discuss the proposals in more detail. There were 2 face to face sessions, including British Sign Language options and 4 digital sessions, with a total of 24 attendees

62% of respondents indicated cease webcasting of council meeting would have no impact, while 18% indicated low negative impact, 10% medium negative impact and 10% high negative impact. Summary of comments: Accessibility issues raised about the accessibility of council meetings for those who cannot attend in person, such as disabled individuals or those with other commitments.

### 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)?**

Explore alternatives to the current contract eg Teams recording.

**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>	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
<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?

The option to participate in council and committee meetings online provides easier access to people in socio-ec disadvantage as there is no need to travel/park to attend the meeting in person.

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?**

We don’t have data on who accesses the website so the above information makes assumptions about which people are most likely to be affected.

**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?**

Public engagement in August included this option.  
See 2.3 above.

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)?**

Explore alternatives to the current contract eg Teams recordings.

**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?

Accessing democracy and understanding decisions that have been made will become more challenging if there is no online access.

4.3 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>	
Explore alternatives to the current contract eg Teams recordings.	
<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>
	x

## 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?

None.

### 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>			
<b>Article 2:</b> non-discrimination		X	
<b>Article 3:</b> best interests of the child provision and protection		X	
<b>Article 5:</b> parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities		X	
<b>Article 16:</b> right to privacy		X	
<b>Article 17:</b> access to information from the media		X	
<b>Article 18:</b> parental responsibilities and state assistance		X	
<b>Article 22:</b> refugee children		X	
<b>Article 23:</b> children with a disability		X	
<b>Article 24:</b> health and health services		X	
<b>Article 26:</b> social security		X	
<b>Article 27:</b> adequate standard of living		X	
<b>Article 28:</b> right to education		X	
<b>Article 29:</b> goals of education		X	
<b>Article 30:</b> children from minority or indigenous groups		X	
<b>Article 31:</b> leisure, play and culture		X	
<b>Article 39:</b> recovery from trauma and reintegration		X	
<b>Article 40:</b> juvenile justice		X	
<b>PROTECTION</b>			
<b>Article 6:</b> life, survival and development		X	
<b>Article 7:</b> birth registration, name, nationality, care		X	
<b>Article 8:</b> protection and preservation of identity		X	
<b>Article 9:</b> Separation from parents		X	
<b>Article 10:</b> family reunification protection		X	
<b>Article 11:</b> abduction and non-return of children		X	
<b>Article 15:</b> 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	

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?

None.

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?

Increased use of fossil fuels for transport or energy (people travelling into Town House by car/bus in order to watch meetings).

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?

We don't have data on who accesses the website so the above information makes assumptions about which people are most likely to be affected.

### 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.

Public engagement – see 2.3 above

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)?

Explore alternative arrangements to current contract eg Teams recordings.

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

## 8: Sign Off

<b>Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?</b>
No.
<b>Does the policy relate to the Council's <a href="#">Equality Outcomes</a>? If yes, how.</b>
No.
<b>Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.</b>
If this option is taken, we would explore alternatives mechanisms for recording and publishing meetings.
<b>Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.</b>
Feedback from the public, including businesses, will allow us to understand the impact of the removal.
<b>If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.</b>
This would proceed as a budget saving only – there are no other benefits to be taken from it.

<b>Assessment Author</b>	Martyn Orchard
<b>Date</b>	24/01/25
<b>Chief Officer</b>	Vikki Cuthbert
<b>Date</b>	24/01/25