

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
Review of working arrangements for Town House reception
1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?
The proposal will see the removal of the dedicated Town House reception service which provides a frontline service to visitors to the building including staff, constituents and citizens accessing services delivered from the Town House e.g. Archives.
The proposal is for a staff member from the Members Support Team, located within the Town House to work from the reception desk on a rota basis to assist individuals that need support to mitigate the impact. This will mean that the staff located at reception will be interrupted from undertaking their normal duties when a visitor arrives.
1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?
No
1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?
New
1.5 Is this report going to a committee?
Yes
1.6 Committee name and date:
Budget meeting, Council, 5 March 2025
1.7 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:
CE-12
1.8 Function and cluster:
Corporate Services, People and Citizen Services

Impacts

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

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

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

2: Equality Act 2010 - Protected Characteristics

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

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

Protected Characteristic	Negative			Neutral	Positive
	High	Medium	Low		
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?

It is recognised that a range of meetings are regularly held in the Town House which are attended by visitors and staff within protected characteristic groups. For example, Tenant Participation meetings and Committees. Given that the proposal will mean that a team member from the Member’s Support Team will be at the reception desk to support visitors arriving at the Town House the impact will be neutral on groups with protected characteristics.

There is a risk of impact on vulnerable individuals within the groups of age and disability that visit the Town House regularly, should the staffing at the reception change frequently. This is because some individuals feel more comfortable and less anxious to interact with people that they are familiar with. Should this change, this could have a negative impact on the visitors and also the staff should this result in challenging behaviour from the visitor who finds it difficult to cope with the situation. It is proposed that the reception would be staffed by a small team and therefore the risk would be low.

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?

Over the last 12 months there have been 7 meetings of the Disability Equity Partnership and 65 tenant meetings and events that have been held at the town house.

The data below shows demand over the last 12 months at Town House Reception.

Town House	3523
Car Park	423
Drop Off / Pick Up	333
Information / Sign Post	671
Keys Drop Off	1
Police Scotland	3
Telephone	271
Visitor	1821
Grand Total	39457

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

The proposal has been discussed with the Extended Corporate Management Team and People and Citizen Senior Management Team. Feedback has also been gathered from other officers that are stakeholders.

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

Feedback has been gathered from some elected members.

A related proposal was described in Phase 2 of the Budget Consultation 2024/25, however the proposal was to remove staff provision at the reception, whereas the 2025/26 proposal is to make alternative arrangements to ensure support is still available when needed. There was one comment which related to the Town House reception proposal although the impact was not specified:

“Do not reduce customer enquiries or remove in person council reception or security guard.” No specific impacts were specified.

Engagement has also taken place with the team that currently undertakes the reception duties and the team that would potentially be undertaking the role going forwards. Their feedback regarding potential impact has been incorporated into this document.

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)?

There is a risk that breaks or unplanned absence may mean that the reception desk is not staffed and citizens arriving for a meeting will be left un-supported. To ensure this does not occur, forward planning of lunches should be organised and where there are gaps due to unplanned absence then other teams in the Town House or elsewhere within the organisation should be approached to cover. Arrangements are currently in place with the Building Assistants to provide break and lunch time cover and it is anticipated that these arrangements would continue therefore there is no increased risk.

The risk around frequent staffing changes would also be mitigated by ringfencing the reception duties to a small team.

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?

No impact

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?
N/A
What consultation and engagement has been undertaken with officers and partner organisations?
N/A
What consultation and engagement has been undertaken with people who may be impacted by this policy?
N/A

3.4 What mitigations can be put in place?

What can be done to 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
Individuals		x	
Small businesses		x	

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

No impact

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?

No impact

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?

No impact

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?

No impact

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?

These proposals may have IIA workforce considerations in terms of the individuals who would instead provide the reception cover – e.g. they may have a disability which would make covering reception difficult. Some training may also be required for staff covering reception and there are courses available to support in this area. There is currently a panic alarm and radio system which the Security Guards and colleagues within Customer Services respond to. It should be noted that this is linked to another budget option regarding a review in Security Guard provision and the response time may be slower should it be progressed.

Does the policy relate to the Council's [Equality Outcomes](#)? If yes, how:

EO 1 - All people with protected characteristics will access information, goods and services knowing that social and physical barriers are identified and removed, with a focus on Age, Gender reassignment and Disability. – ensuring that people with protected characteristics can access public meetings in the Town House easily.

Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.

Personal provision for visitors with disabilities such as visual impairments is needed, Member Support staff would need to be trained in how to support. Contact Scotland BSL can also help staff engage with sign language users where required.

Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.

Visitor feedback will be monitored to ensure a positive citizen experience for those visiting the Town House.

If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.

The Council has a legal obligation to deliver a balanced budget and this proposal assists with this requirement.

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