

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

Reduction in online and social media communication by the Council to citizens

1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?

The budget option will bring about savings in response to a consideration that the People & Citizens cluster redesigns the approach to non-statutory communications and resource requirements are adjusted accordingly.

The vast majority of the Council’s external (public-facing) communications is carried out by Communications and Marketing (C&M) and Customer Development (CD). Teams include Customer Experience Officers; Designers; Communication Business Advisers (CBAs); and an Audio-Visual Content Editor. Tools include the website, chatbot, social media, our (third-party) public consultation tool, and media releases.

Local authorities have a number of statutory duties placed on them by the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005* during an emergency:

- o Warn and inform the public
- o Provide advice to the public

From the Council’s perspective, an emergency is regarded as an event or situation that causes or may cause loss of life; illness or injury; homelessness, damage to property; disruption of a supply of money, food, water, energy or fuel, a system of communication, of facilities for transport, or services relating to health. CBAs are on a weekly on-call rota that allows us to provide 24/7 cover in responding to an emergency and supporting Duty Emergency Response Co-ordinator (DERC) with more general messaging e.g. road closures during flooding.

Another statutory duty currently residing with the cluster is posting notifications to the London Stock Exchange about decisions and events etc that might have a significant bearing the Council’s financial position, as required under the Council’s Bond protocol.

This proposal would mean undertaking redesign across the named teams to reduce budgetary capacity and, whilst maintaining our statutory functions and seeking to maintain current service provision within that envelope, may mean reducing output in some areas of work should future

demand exceed resource capacity. This is because overall resilience may be reduced, however redesigns would seek to mitigate these risks. This may include the following implications: -

- Less proactive sharing of information with the public and the media about council services, projects, committee decisions and events. (In 2024/25, event promotion accounted for approximately 30% of C&M work.);
- Our social media channels may not be monitored to the same extent;
- The corporate website would not be maintained and updated with the same frequency;
- Public consultations may need to be created and managed by the relevant service without support from the Customer Development Team. The reduction in governance would carry risks in terms of quality and consistency of website content, surveys and consultations which links to accessibility standards;
- A reduction in assistance for services in making sure that communications were clear, consistent and compelling;
- Reduction in the design/production of maps, diagrams, graphics, promotional posters, logos, and still/moving images - all of which can aid clear and compelling communication. Our visual productions (graphics) significantly enhance the professionalism of external communications and help shape (and preserve) the Council's brand identity;
- Reduced support available for the production of internal as well as external materials, including committee papers and annual reports;
- Reduction in reactive communications;
- Media inquiries less likely to be answered from a corporate position.

1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?

A strategic proposal.

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, March 5, 2025

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

CE-19

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?

The cluster regularly communicates information about how to access welfare support and encourages behavioural change aligned with the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. This includes initiatives aimed at making Aberdeen an inclusive, prosperous city.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Scottish Specific Duties require us to ensure our Council is accessible and that information is shared in an accessible and timely manner as part of our statutory duty. The Community Empowerment Act puts emphasis on consultation, and the cluster works to encourage and facilitate participation in decision-making; and capturing feedback about potential impacts on people with protected characteristics.

Specifically:

- We promote events and activities whose primary audience is protected groups (e.g. Pride, Mela, baby & toddler groups etc), as well as campaigns that raise awareness for certain groups and issues, improve inclusion and the sense of belonging, and to advance community relationships and understanding – for example, promoting celebration days, awareness days and religious festivals.

-- Therefore, people with Race, Religion or Belief, or Sexual Orientation as a protected characteristic may be negatively impacted by these proposals should the teams not have capacity to undertake the necessary promotional and consultation activity.

- We publicise employability events, activities, as well as updates around cost of living and financial / welfare support. These are targeted at people who already face barriers to employment and experience socio-economic disadvantage. This can include parents, especially women; people with a disability; and those aged over 50. A large proportion of our Facebook and Instagram followers are female and therefore reductions in content will impact them disproportionately.

-- Therefore, people with Age, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex or Disability as a protected characteristic may be negatively impacted by these proposals should the teams not have capacity to undertake the necessary promotional activity.

- We work to place information with the print and broadcast media, which enables us to reach people who are not online or digitally-enabled.

-- This includes a disproportionality high number with Age as a protected characteristic (and who are socially-disadvantaged).

It is not anticipated that the proposals would negatively impact people with a Protected Characteristic relating to Gender Reassignment or partnership status.

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?

Corporate Aberdeen City Council accounts:

- Facebook (@AberdeenCC) - 38,000+ followers
- X (@AberdeenCC) - 53,000+ followers
- Instagram (@aberdeen_cc) - 6,000+ followers

Nearly two-thirds of our Facebook followers are female and more than 2,000 are over 65 years of age.

Here are some campaigns relating to welfare and safety.

Subject	Campaign added	Posts	Views
Fairer Aberdeen Fund	Feb 2021	6	12.7k
Adoption	Apr 2015	40	129.4k
Benefits and Money Advice	Sep 2021	39	71.8k
Benefits for the Elderly	May 2022	2	6.1k
Budget Consultation 24/25	June 2023	65	76.8k
Business start-up grant scheme	July 2024	3	12.8k
Climate Change	Dec 2021	84	77.3k
Cost of Living	Oct 2022	134	473k
Flooding	Nov 2022	130	762k
Fostering	Apr 2014	269	461.4k
Housing	Jan 22	83	309.1k

Education	Aug 2023	159	859.9k
Waste	Jan 2018	722	2.2 million
Storms	Feb 2022	264	1.1 million
LOIP	Dec 2016	65	110.2k

Over the last 12 months there were 134,207 link clicks, taking people to supplementary information, including news posts reporting committee decisions.

Marischal College is lit to mark certain national days and solidarity with vulnerable groups. Since March 2016, when we started recording post views, there have been 240 posts showing MC lit, with total views equalling just over 927,000.

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

Discussion with colleagues in Equalities, Legal and People and Organisational Development about potential impacts. The potential to reduce communications activities was described in Phase 1 of the Budget Consultation 2025/26, and links to the consultation were shared directly with many external partner organisations, including those representing people with protected characteristics.

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 4,278 responses across the four areas consulted on during Part 1 of the online consultation and 1,535 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.

The summary of comments about personal impact regarding this budget option included:

- **Concerns About Digital-Only Access:** Many respondents highlighted that digital-only access would exclude those without internet access or digital skills, particularly affecting older and vulnerable populations;
- **Social Media and Communication:** Respondents emphasised the need for effective social media and digital communications to keep citizens informed;
- **Need for Transparent Communication:** Respondents called for more transparency and better communication from the Council to build trust and ensure citizens are well-informed about services and charges.

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)?

If a lower resilience in the team meant that corporate messages were going to be missed that have an impact on groups or individuals with protected characteristics, in these instances services could communicate directly with residents through social media. The lack of governance and monitoring would pose a risk to the quality of the communications and potential reputational damage.

Services may lack the requisite skills - that is, an ability to marshal, distil and disseminate information at pace; ensure material is jargon-free and non-partisan; understand the subtleties of the corporate/political/public interface; possess the technical skills needed to manage the website and social media content management systems; possess the people skills needed to safely manage public interactions; draw value from the data generated. These skills could be taught, though services may lack the capacity to carry out the extra work.

In time, technologies like generative AI may help (as a tool) with the above but there is nothing currently in place.

A service redesign would be undertaken and teams multi-skilled where appropriate to maximise capacity within the team. Activities could be prioritised based on risk and impact.

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 \(www.gov.scot\)](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
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?

Welfare support may no longer be promoted on corporate channels should the teams not have capacity to flag help available. As an example of the work, in 2023, we helped encourage 3,723 people to access unclaimed benefits worth £606,298 a week, using social media to direct people to an online benefits calculator on our website.

Opportunities for engaging on council policies may not be shared as widely, potentially denying people a voice in decisions that may impact them – again should the teams not have capacity to undertake the necessary consultation activity.

Some events benefit certain groups. This includes our employability events and activities, as well as updates about cost of living and financial / welfare support. These are targeted at people who already face barriers to employment and socio-economic disadvantage. Reducing communications about events, activities and support packages may result in some people missing out.

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?

See 2.3.

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

Discussion with colleagues in Equalities, Legal and People and Organisational Development about potential impacts. The potential consequences of reducing communications were captured in Phase 1 of the Budget Consultation 2025/26, with links to the consultation shared directly with many partner organisations.

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

See 2.3

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)?		
Services could communicate directly via citizens' alerts, assuming people have signed up for them. Redesign will seek to mitigate the impact by ensuring that these messages will still be shared as part of the redesign of the teams and the priorities going forwards.		
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
Individuals	x		
Small businesses	x		

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

Individuals and small business buy, use or receive goods, services or information supplied by Aberdeen City Council. This can include the provision of statutory services where no alternative service provider exists, such as waste and recycling services, burial services, and welfare support and grants. The Council also offers services such as housing that can be more affordable than the private market.

There would be a reduction in the promotion of these goods and services should the teams not have capacity to undertake the work/demand increase. The cluster helps people transact online (increasing convenience) by regularly updating the website and ensuring that accessibility requirements are met.

The cluster service is involved in canvassing the views of people on what would be fair/acceptable charges for many services (eg parking, rent), and then publishing the feedback and updating website information.

The regeneration of the city, including new infrastructure projects, can have an impact on businesses. The cluster shares information about how these might be mitigated - for example, the Open for Business campaign running in conjunction with the redevelopment of the former market site on Union Street.

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)?

Services could communicate directly via citizens' alerts, assuming people are signed up for them. Redesign will seek to mitigate the impact by ensuring that these messages will still be shared as part of the redesign of the teams and the priorities going forwards.

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

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 Council's primary function is safeguarding life. Prevention is regarded as the best way to get upstream of physical and mental health issues, and social challenges such as isolation. Sharing information about welfare support and self-directed action that increases community resilience can assist with that.

In order to participate in free elections, individuals need to know what voting rights they have, as well as when and how to vote. The policy would reduce the degree to which this information is shared. Our web stories about the 2024 General Election results were viewed by approximately 10,000 people.

Our social media channels are not simply broadcast tools but used to facilitate two-way communication with the people and communities we serve; they exist to establish a dialogue (and hopefully the sharing of our information across wider networks). They allow citizens to comment on the Council's activity, critique its performance, and provide general feedback, which can be used to improve performance. In the last 12 months, there were just over 6,000 inward messages on our Facebook account.

The Council has carried out Participatory Budgeting (PB) - giving people a direct say over how money is spent - which the cluster service has been active in promoting. PB offers the potential to achieve better outcomes for individuals and communities by involving and engaging local people in having a direct say in how public money is spent in their community. Wider benefits include increasing community cohesion, strengthening local democracy, and supporting effective service design.

According to the Scottish Government, PB can:

- help deliver on outcomes in Scotland’s National Performance Framework that 'we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' and 'we tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally';
- complement aspirations in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to give communities more powers to achieve their own ambitions;
- help deliver the Public Sector Equality Duty by advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups;
- support the principle of Public Service Reform that says people should have equal opportunity to participate in decisions shaping their local community and society.

With the Council’s Budget Consultations 2024/25 and 2025/26, we have moved towards mainstream PB, to better understand the impacts of potential service changes on people with protected characteristics. The cluster was involved in quality assuring the consultation; producing supporting graphics and animation; drafting and issuing media releases, social media and stakeholder messaging; curating web content; visiting schools to facilitate participation; writing report content for committee; and sharing the results publicly.

Were the proposals here to be enacted, some of the promotional work described above may reduce, along with the placing of paid-for marketing (boosted social media posts; advertising).

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)?	
The skills involved are wide-ranging and no one service could cover everything needed. They might be able to use their own social media accounts to share a link to consultations, but the Council is currently aiming to consolidate activity and quality-assure content by using, in the main, corporate channels. We could look to public sector partners (Electoral Commission, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership) to increase their communications work. Redesign will seek to mitigate the impact by ensuring that these messages will still be shared as part of the redesign of the teams and the priorities going forwards.	
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

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
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?

Article 17 of the UNCRC says children and young people should be able to access information from "many places". Not using our website, social media and traditional media to share information would go against that.

Article 12 says there should be respect for the views of the child. Part of the cluster's work included promoting engagement with school pupils on consultations.

Should capacity reduce/demand increase, we might have to limit resharing information on national campaigns relating to child welfare - welfare support available to families, encouraging people to report abuse, campaign to encourage adoption, City of Play opportunities etc.

As part of engagement work supported by the service, schools have been involved in sharing project information with children and inviting them to provide feedback. As an example, a workshop for approximately 120 children was used to develop the City Centre Masterplan, capturing ideas through writing, drawing and modelling. Schools have also been involved in the Budget Consultation.

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)?

Services could communicate directly with residents through social media. Redesign will seek to mitigate the impact by ensuring that these messages will still be shared as part of the redesign of the teams and the priorities going forwards.

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

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?

A significant part of operations relates to promoting action that can be taken to safeguard and enhance the environment. The protection of people and place is treated as being inter-dependent.

Examples include:

- Opportunities for nurturing and managing green spaces (especially through community collaboration);
- Marking and celebrating achievements = positive reinforcement of good habits
- Promoting greener travel options
- Actions to reduce immediate and future flood risk
- The scope and value of recycling in Aberdeen
- Helping reposition Aberdeen as a renewable energy capital; highlighting its pioneering work in producing and distributing green hydrogen, including the bp Joint Venture
- Educating people about climate change and how they can help us achieve Net Zero ambitions.

News stories help embed Net Zero in the public conscience. Stories shared in 2024 include:

- Pupils across Aberdeen becoming responsible global citizens thanks to their participation in a wide range of educational initiatives on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Net Zero throughout 2023 and 2024;
- Place as an element of the LOIP, in particular to tackle Climate Change, increase walking and cycling, and improve the Built and Natural Environment;

- Grants available through LEAF (Local Environmental Action Fund), a pilot fund aimed at supporting projects which provide community benefits and environmental improvements in local neighbourhoods;
- Construction of a new Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC), which will provide a range of reuse and recycling facilities in Bridge of Don;
- Promotion of LEZ in Aberdeen that will help the city reach its climate change targets by reducing road transport's contribution to emissions and prioritising active and sustainable travel;
- Connection of over 3,500 homes to the district heating network, as part of a number of actions taken to combat the climate and nature emergency;
- Campaign for people to help Clean Up Aberdeen launched with Aberdeen Football Club guest helping Hazlehead Primary School pupils;
- Highlighting the city's natural beauty and ecosystems.

The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap sits alongside six thematic, place-based strategies and Aberdeen Adapts, a climate adaptation framework. The Natural Environment Strategy forms one of the six. One action is to "provide information on the nature crisis for all stakeholders to understand" with the goal of "raising awareness of the value the natural environment has for the health and wealth of our city and its people, now and in the future". The Strategy states that improved health and well-being can be attained by empowering stakeholders through communication: "We shall communicate, collaborate and act to raise awareness, empowering stakeholders including the public and communities, to participate in the challenge we face to enhance and protect our natural environment in our just transition to Net Zero."

The cluster has been asked to contribute to a report to the Net Zero Committee in 2025, outlining a marketing and engagement strategy to improve understanding of climate change challenges, and how travel choices can help lessen its contribution to global warming.

The cluster, particularly Designers, are heavily involved in producing reports and explanatory documentation.

Design work - for example, the production of graphs, infographics - can be especially helpful in conveying statistical information in an easily-digestible form. As indicated earlier, people respond to visual information, so being able to produce bespoke photographs and video can be an enticement. Social media posts with an embedded image (including graphics) and video achieve significantly higher engagement rates.

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?

Many of the 722 waste posts made since 2018 - attracting 2.2 million views - related to recycling, home composting, and how to dispose of electrical items.

The cluster helps address misconceptions and combats information about climate change. Key themes emerging from the Council's Transport survey included:

- Climate change is a hoax;
- Confusion over carbon emissions versus air quality;
- Belief that because air quality is improving, no further action is needed;

Aberdeen City Council placed in the top ten of single tier UK councils, and joint second in Scotland, in acting on climate change, following an assessment by Climate Emergency UK. This is in part a down to the cluster spreading key messaging.

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.

We work closely with groups like NESCAN (the most recent meeting took place in November 2024) and partners in Community Planning Aberdeen to understand how people can collaborate in creating a cleaner, greener, more sustainable city.

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)?

Invite partner organisations to reshare Council information aimed at positively impacting the environment. Redesign will seek to mitigate the impact by ensuring that these messages will still be shared as part of the redesign of the teams and the priorities going forwards.

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

Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?
The Workforce Reduction, Restructure and Redesign IIA provides information around the potential impact on the workforce and the mitigations in place.
Does the policy relate to the Council's Equality Outcomes? If yes, how.
Yes – the service has promoted it extensively.
Overall summary of changes made to the policy as a result of impact assessment.
None.
Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.
Elected Members, along with the Corporate Management Team and Extended Corporate Management Team will monitor the delivery of key policies, legislation and regulations. The impact on our ability to meet statutory accessibility requirements with regards to the website will be monitored through ongoing assessment. Feedback received in relation to the quality of social media, website and public consultation content will be monitored, as capacity allows.
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.

Assessment Author	David Ewen and Lucy McKenzie
Date	08/10/24
Chief Officer	Isla Newcombe
Date	21/02/25