

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>
Remove the funding support for the X14 bus service
<b>1.2 What does this policy seek to achieve?</b>
Indicative saving of £165k from the removal of supported service X14, Kingswells < - > City Centre. The service received £165k funding from Bus Lane Enforcement monies in financial year 2024/25. This value was insufficient to fund the service, with the appointed service provider withdrawing service from November 2024 because the service wasn’t economically viable for them to run, even with the support given. The service was retendered and a new provider appointed to provide service from 25 November 2024, at an increased cost of £309,760 per annum, funded from Bus Lane Enforcement monies.
<b>1.3 Is this a strategic programme/proposal/decision?</b>
The proposal should be considered strategic, and it will be considered at Full Council as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.
<b>1.4 Is this a new or existing policy?</b>
New
<b>1.5 Is this report going to a committee?</b>
Yes
<b>1.6 Committee name and date:</b>
Council, 05 March 2025
<b>1.7 Report no and / or Budget proposal number and / or Business Case reference number:</b>
OSM-12
<b>1.8 Function and Cluster:</b>
Corporate Landlord/Families & Communities

## 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?

Removal of local bus services could negatively affect those who rely on services within the target of a 400m walk to a bus service and as a result would mean no access to public transport services.

The Council uses a policy to endeavour that access to bus services are within the application of maximum walking distance standards of 400 metres, which is in line with Transport Scotland and wider public transport planning guidance.

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some. This distance may be challenging for a number of bus users, particularly those who have mobility difficulties. This could impact those with protected characteristics of age, disability and pregnancy, where in which groups, there is a higher potential for bus users to experience mobility difficulties and find a walk of up to 2km more challenging.

### 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?

Reference to previous EHRIA’s and IIA’s.

Patronage Figures.

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

Chief Officers from all other services have had sight of all budget options being put forward.

### **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.

The option which this IIA relates to was included in the phase 1 consultation. In summary, opinion from those who responded to the consultation was as follows:

**Public Transport Essential:** Many respondents emphasise the importance of the bus service for accessing work, education and healthcare, especially for those who cannot afford cars or taxis.

**Impact on Vulnerable Groups:** The removal of the bus service would particularly affect the elderly, disabled and low income families who rely on it for essential travel.

**Environmental Concerns:** Several comments highlight that cutting the bus service would lead to increased car usage and pollution, counteracting efforts to promote public transport and reduce environmental impact.

**Economic and Social Impact:** Respondents note that the bus service supports local businesses and helps maintain social connections, and its removal could lead to economic and social isolation.

**Criticism of Subsidising Private Companies:** Some feedback criticises the Council for subsidising a private transport company, arguing that public funds should not support private profits.

**Calls for Better Alternatives:** There are suggestions for assessing the usage of bus services and exploring better alternatives before making a decision, ensuring that any changes do not disproportionately impact certain groups.

**Concerns About Hospital Access:** Many respondents stress the importance of maintaining bus routes to the hospital, as it is crucial for patients, visitors and healthcare workers.

## 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)?**

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance. The Council's Community Transport service could support those unable to use conventional public transport services, but this is only available Monday to Friday between 10:00 – 14:30, so would not meet every priority trip purpose.

<b>With mitigations in place, what is the new overall rating of the negative impact(s)?</b>	<b>High</b>	
	<b>Medium</b>	
	<b>Low</b>	X
	<b>Negative Impact Removed</b>	

### 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?

	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>
<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?

Removal of local bus services. Medium Negative impact on access to Work, Education, Shopping, Health as those who cannot walk or cycle, may have no other alternative or be able to afford car/fuel costs and rely on public transport services.

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?**

Reference to previous EHRIA's and IIA's.

Patronage Figures.

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

Chief Officers from all other services have had sight of all budget options being put forward.

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

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**Concerns About Hospital Access:** Many respondents stress the importance of maintaining bus routes to the hospital, as it is crucial for patients, visitors and healthcare workers.

### 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)?**

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance. The Council's Community Transport service could support those unable to use conventional public transport services, but this is only available Monday to Friday between 10:00 – 14:30, and is at an enhanced fare over public transport, so would not meet every priority trip purpose and would not be an affordable option.

**No – negative impact remains**

If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?	Yes – negative impact reduced	X
	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
<b>Individuals</b>	X		
<b>Small businesses</b>	X		

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

The proposal would have an impact on residents who would find it more difficult to access city centre businesses and on the small businesses who operate in the city centre, who may suffer a decrease in customer numbers.

We would be unable to demonstrate that we would be applying the Access consumer principle as removal of the service would make access to services more difficult.

We would be unable to demonstrate that we would be applying the Choice consumer principle as removal of the service would mean less choice in how consumers are able to travel.

We would be unable to demonstrate that we would be applying the Safety consumer principle as removal of the service may make it more difficult for consumers to access healthcare services, or force them to walk further to be able to continue accessing them.

### 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)?

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance. The Council's Community Transport service could support those unable to use conventional public transport services, but this is only available Monday to Friday between 10:00 – 14:30, and is at an enhanced fare over public transport, so would not meet every priority trip purpose and would not be an affordable option.

**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: <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?

Public transport can be key in enabling citizens to access education, particularly higher education which does not tend to be local to a citizens home as school education would be.

### 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)?

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance.

If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?

No – negative impact remains

X

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>			
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	
<b>PROTECTION</b>			
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	

<b>Article 32:</b> child labour		X	
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>			
<b>Article 12:</b> respect for the views of the child		X	
<b>Article 13:</b> freedom of expression		X	
<b>Article 14:</b> freedom of thought, belief and religion		X	
<b>Article 42:</b> knowledge of rights		X	

6.2 In what way will the policy impact the rights of Children and Young People?

Public transport can be key in enabling citizens to access education, particularly higher education which does not tend to be local to a citizen's home as school education would be.

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)?**

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance.

**If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?**

**No – negative impact remains**

X

**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?

The removal of the X14 service may push more residents who currently use the service to reach their destination, to travel by private motor vehicle which would negatively impact on city carbon emissions and sustainable travel ambitions.

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?

It is safe to assume that those who continue to visit the city centre would seek alternative means of transport and the most obvious means of ensuring this would be the case should the X14 service cease would be that they would travel by private motor vehicle.

### 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.

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**Concerns About Hospital Access:** Many respondents stress the importance of maintaining bus routes to the hospital, as it is crucial for patients, visitors and healthcare workers.

#### 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)?

Public transport services would continue to be available, although these would be up to 2km walk for some and would not be of benefit to those unable to walk this distance.

**If mitigations are in place, does this remove or reduce the negative impact?**

**No – negative impact remains**

X

**Yes – negative impact reduced**

**Yes - negative impact removed**

## 8: Sign Off

<b>Any further positive or negative impacts on individuals or groups that have been considered?</b>
No other impacts considered.
<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>
No changes.
<b>Outline how the impact of policy will be monitored.</b>
Liaison with community councils and public engagement for feedback.
<b>If there are any remaining negative impacts after mitigation, what is the justification for why this policy should proceed.</b>
<p>There is a requirement to ensure the Council sets a balanced budget, which requires difficult decisions to be taken and this includes proposals with negative impacts.</p> <p>This proposal would be contrary to Supported Service Policy/Duty and would be contrary to Local Transport Strategy. There is a statutory Duty to consider provision under Transport Act 1985 and policy would need to change to remove this statutory duty.</p>

<b>Assessment Author</b>	Andy Campbell
<b>Date</b>	31 Jan 2025
<b>Chief Officer</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>Date</b>	21 Feb 2025