

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment - the Form

There are separate guidance notes to accompany this form – “Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment – the Guide.” Please use these guidance notes as you complete this form. Throughout the form, **proposal** refers to policy, strategy, plan, procedure or report.

STEP 1: Identify essential information

1. Committee Report No.

2. Name of proposal.

3. Officers completing this form.

Name	Designation	Service	Directorate
Aftab Majeed	Environmental Planner	Planning and Sustainable Development	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure

4. Date of Impact Assessment.

5. When is the proposal next due for review?

6. Committee Name.

7. Date the Committee is due to meet.

8. Identify the Lead Council Service and who else is involved in the delivery of this proposal. (for example other Council services or partner agencies)

Planning and Sustainable Development is the lead Council Service. The Strategy has been developed involving Officers across the Council Services, and partners: Aberdeen Greenspace, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Forestry Commission Scotland, Grampian Police, The Aberdeen Outdoor Access Forum, North East Scotland Biodiversity Action Plan, North East Scotland Biological Records Centre, Community Councils, other local community groups, Aberdeen Youth Forum, Disability Advisory Group, Aberdeen Play Forum and a range of other partners.

9. Please summarise this Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment, (EHRIA). This must include any practical actions you intend to take / have taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse negative impacts (if necessary continue on blank sheet of paper). **Please return to this question after completing EHRIA.**

This EHRIA is carried out on the Draft Open Space Strategy for Aberdeen City. The Open Space Strategy sets out a vision for new and improved open spaces in the City. The main purpose of the strategy is to improve the quality of the city's open spaces, ensure an appropriate quantity of open space across the City and enhance their accessibility to the communities around them. The strategy is also concerned with reducing social, environmental and health inequalities.

The assessment did not identify any adverse negative impacts associated with the open space strategy. It identifies mostly positive impacts for the citizens of Aberdeen and its visitors. These included positive contributions to health, such as promoting healthy lifestyles through physical activity and mental wellbeing, improving the environment, social inclusion and quality of life. The open space strategy has a positive impact on the following equality target groups: older, younger, disability, gender and poverty. The open space strategy also promotes good relations and encouraging more cohesive and inclusive communities.

The implementation of the open space strategy will be monitored in order to identify any unanticipated negative impacts. If negative impacts are identified, these will be addressed and the strategy will be updated at the next review.

10. Where will you publish the results of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment? Tick all that apply.

- ✓ Summary of EHRIA will be published in committee report under section "Equality Impact Assessment"
- ✓ Full EHRIA will be attached to the committee report as an appendix
- ✓ Summary of EHRIA to be published on Council website within relevant service pages

STEP 2: Outline the aims of the proposal

11. What are the main aims of the proposal?

The Scottish Government, through its national policies on open space, physical activity and natural heritage recognises that good quality and accessible open space contributes towards people's health, well being and the environment.

The Open Space Strategy aims to provide good and equitable access to a network of

quality open spaces that promote stronger, responsible and proud communities, promotes healthier lifestyle, ensuring Aberdeen is an attractive and appealing place to enjoy living, working and investing, enhance and value our environment for current and future generations.

The Open Space Strategy will help the Council, developers, land managers, businesses and partners plan, design, management and maintain open space, create a wider green space network and protect our natural environment.

12. Who will benefit most from the proposal?

The Open Space Strategy promotes the use of open spaces for more outdoor recreational activities and providing opportunities for social interaction, leading to a range of benefits for all of society.

Promoting and creating quality open spaces will help to deliver physical and mental health benefits by encouraging participation in active, outdoor pursuits. An increase in responsible and legitimate use of open spaces can discourage anti-social behaviour and will contribute towards social inclusion. This may improve perceptions of safety for its users.

Quality parks and open spaces will increase the value and use of open spaces for health, education, play and lifelong learning. The strategy also promotes active travel (cycling and walking) which can help reduce travel costs and support an integrated and accessible transport system, which can be of particular benefit for those on lower incomes.

The Strategy promotes wider environmental agendas in promoting biodiversity, reducing, mitigating and adapting to climate changes such as more severe flooding incidents.

13. Tell us if and how the proposal will increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action to redress disadvantage?

The open Space Strategy has been developed to benefit all members of society. It does not specifically target one equality group and has been developed in line with best practice guidance in order to improve the quality, accessibility and the use of open spaces to all user types and abilities.

Also see response to question 12.

14. What impact will the proposal have on promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

By promoting and encouraging the use of open spaces it will positively influence health and well being, through promoting physical activity. Social interaction and cohesion can be positively influenced by good quality local open spaces.

Research and review of open spaces carried out as apart of the open space audit suggests that poor quality open spaces discourage their use and may even have negative impacts on health. The strategy takes into account the results of the open space audit and intends to promote quality and accessible open spaces. It promotes a healthier and greener environment which has a positive impact on people's lives.

The Strategy promotes an increase outdoor activities and enhances social interaction and the use of public spaces. For example, allotments and community gardens can enhance community interaction and build local capacity and self-esteem by bringing different communities together as they offer opportunities for informal contact between groups and individuals.

Community involvement in managing open space can improve the attitudes of residents towards their neighbourhood and promote more organisation within communities and improve social networks.

Providing welcoming, attractive and appealing open spaces, can help to foster caring attitudes and a sense of pride in the local area, contributing to quality of life and community cohesion. Open spaces provide opportunities to the residents to engage with nature and care about their environment.

STEP 3: Gather and consider evidence

15. What evidence is there to identify any potential positive or negative impacts in terms of consultation, research officer knowledge and experience, equality monitoring data, user feedback and other?

Consultation

- A detailed review of various documents and extensive community consultation, undertaken in 2010 across the city has identified the current and future need of open spaces. People want better quality open spaces. Accessibility, promotion and lack of information on various types of open spaces and the types of facilities provided in open spaces were identified as major factors in terms of open space use. Many people want more natural and multifunctional types of open space. The Strategy considers issues identified during the community consultations and seeks to address these.
- The Open Space Audit Working group set up to oversee the open space audit and strategy process included key partners, Aberdeen Greenspace and Scottish Natural Heritage. Other stakeholders include land managers, user groups, communities, Forestry Commission Scotland, NHS Grampian, Grampian Police and Community Councils.

Data/ Information

- Greenspace Scotland's guidance on preparing open space strategies and auditing open space. has been used to prepare the strategy and carry out the open space audit. Other relevant plans, policies and strategies have also been taken into consideration.
- The base line information on the quantity, quality and accessibility, along with customer satisfaction data gathered during the Aberdeen Open Space Audit has been used to prepare the Strategy and inform this EHRIA.
- Planning Advice Note PAN 65 planning and open space provides further advice on various types of open spaces, an demonstrates how local authorities can prepare strategies for maintaining and enhancing open space provision and provide quality open spaces and green networks in towns and cities. This advice has been followed during the development of the Strategy.
- Scottish Planning Policy highlights a need to undertake an audit of open space and how well it meets the needs of the community. It highlights the need to prepare open space strategies using the results of the open space audit. It encourages local authorities to improve the access to existing open space via green networks and paths. This policy has been followed to prepare the Strategy. The Government considers that a network of open spaces will contribute to the delivery of health, social, economic and environmental benefits.
- Aberdeen Green Space mapping and Characterisation study 2007 provided a comprehensive greenspace Geographic Information Systems GIS data set for all the city's greenspace, including the land within 500 metres of settlements. The mapping data identified the open space resource and its distribution. It also enabled the analysis of open space alongside other social, economic and environmental datasets. This data has been used to prepare the open space strategy.

Officer Knowledge and Experience

- A core group of officers have been closely involved throughout the development and preparation of the open space strategy and audit. This has allowed them to gain a direct understanding of the issues.

Equality Monitoring Data

- Population and monitoring data generated by the Councils research and information team has been used to inform this strategy. The Strategy also proposes its own monitoring plan.

User Feedback

- A customer satisfaction survey and community consultation has been carried out and taken into account in preparing the strategy.

STEP 4: Assess likely impacts on equality strands

16. Which, if any, equality target groups and others could be affected positively or negatively by this proposal? Place the symbol in the relevant box.

(Positive +, neutral 0, - negative)

Equality Target Group					
Race*	0	Disability	+	Gender**	+
LGB***	+	Belief	0	Younger	+
Older	+	Others e.g. poverty	+		

* Race includes Gypsies/Travellers

** Gender includes women, men, Transgender

*** LGB: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual

17. Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on the groups you have highlighted above? Detail the impacts and describe the groups affected.

Positive impacts	Negative Impacts
<p><u>Older</u> Improving the quality and accessibility of open spaces through the implementation of the strategy will encourage participation in outdoor pursuits. An increase in active, outdoor activity will have associated physical and mental health benefits. Better promotion of open spaces can contribute to increased social inclusion as open space users interact with each other. It will improve quality of life, wellness and wellbeing by enabling people to be in contact with nature and to have fresh air. The implementation of the Strategy will also improve access to the outdoors as a resource which can be used by community groups. Increased use will give confidence to older people and sense of safety and security against anti-social behaviour which sometimes discourages the use of open spaces due to perceived safety concerns. Open Spaces, including forests and woodlands will provide an attractive environment away from urban traffic and pollution.</p> <p><u>Disability</u> Implementation of the Strategy will encourage participation in outdoor access pursuits. An increase in active, outdoor activity will have associated physical and mental health benefits. Better promotion of open spaces and events in the parks and open spaces can contribute to social inclusion as users meet and interact with each other. Increased use will have a positive impact on those with a disability who may wish to use open spaces but are discouraged due to perceived anti-social behaviour and safety concerns. The Strategy sets out open space quality standards and encourages well designed spaces accessible to all abilities, including those with physical and sensory impairments and learning difficulties.</p> <p><u>Gender</u> Increased use as a result of better promotion will have a positive impact on women who may wish to use open spaces but are discouraged due to anti-social behaviour and other perceived safety concerns.</p> <p><u>Younger</u> Better promotion of open spaces and green space network will encourage use by schools and other community clubs. This will provide opportunities for environmental education. Increased understanding of the environment can help to foster caring attitudes and a sense of pride in the local area, encouraging younger people to look after their local environment. This in turn will bring wider community benefits. Accessible and quality open spaces will also encourage younger people to use active travel modes for travelling to school and other activities, bringing associated health and environmental benefits. Greater use of the green infrastructure and path network will also help to address perceptions of safety for young people and their parents. Promotion of parks and open spaces will encourage children to enjoy greater freedom and fear of crime. Open spaces with a range of facilities and different features will attract children and youth.</p> <p><u>Poverty</u> Increased use and improving the quality of open spaces will raise the profile of those communities who are ignored and socially neglected. Providing quality open spaces at their door steps will discourage long distance travel, which will benefit those on lower incomes by reducing travel costs. It will also bring health benefits for a group often associated with lower levels of health and well-being.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

STEP 5: Apply the three key assessment tests for compliance assurance

18. Does this policy/procedure have the potential to interfere with an individual's rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998? State which rights might be affected by ticking the appropriate box(es) and how. **If you answer "no", go to question 22.**

- Article 3 – Right not to be subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment
 Article 6 – Right to a fair and public hearing
 Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
 Article 10 – freedom of expression
 Other article not listed above

NO

How?

N/A

Legality

19. Where there is a potential negative impact is there a legal basis in the relevant domestic law?

N/A

Legitimate aim

20. Is the aim of the policy a legitimate aim being served in terms of the relevant equality legislation or the Human Rights Act?

N/A

Proportionality

21. Is the impact of the policy proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued? Is it the minimum necessary interference to achieve the legitimate aim?

N/A

STEP 6: Monitor and review

22. How will you monitor the implementation of the proposal? (For example, customer satisfaction questionnaires)

- Monitoring of customer satisfaction of open spaces will be carried out on a five-yearly basis, as part Open Space Audit reviews.
- The monitoring data would include how often people visit open spaces, how satisfied people are with their quality and how they access open spaces.
- A standard questionnaire will be developed and the data will be broken down into wards and community councils. In addition monitoring data from city voice questionnaire will all be used to record customer satisfaction
- Information received from Council officers, partners, land managers and members of the public will be used to monitor the progress of the strategy.

23. How will the results of this impact assessment and any further monitoring be used to develop the proposal?

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques will be considered in monitoring open spaces.

A GIS database will be maintained and used to monitor changes in the provision of open space.

To oversee the progress of the strategy an environmental policy and monitoring group will be set up with specific focus on open spaces alongside other policy areas.

STEP 7 SIGN OFF

The final stage of the EHRIA is formally to sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment.

Person(s) completing the impact assessment.

Name	Date	Signature
Aftab Majeed	31 January 2011	

Quality check: document has been checked by

Name	Date	Signature
Rachel Sharp	31 January 2011	

Head of Service (Sign-off)

Name	Date	Signature
Maggie Bochel	31 January 2011	

Now –

Please send a copy of your completed EHRIA together with the proposal to:

Head of Service
Customer Service and Performance
Aberdeen City Council
St. Nicholas House, Broad Street
Aberdeen, AB10 1GZ