

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Planning Development Management
<b>DATE</b>	21 August 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Health Impact Assessments
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CR&E/25/200
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	Gale Beattie
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	David Dunne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Donna Laing
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	5

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To seek approval to adopt Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG): Health Impact Assessments.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1. Approve the Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Health Impact Assessment (Appendix 1) as non-statutory planning advice;
- 2.2. Note the findings of the consultation on the Draft Health Impact Assessment Guidance Document, and subsequent responses and revisions proposed by Officers to the Draft document (Appendix 2);
- 2.3. Instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to review Section 75 agreements during the production of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2028, in order to assess how a 'health in all policies' approach can be more effectively integrated with future developer obligations; and
- 2.4. Instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to review the appendices of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Health Impact Assessment on an annual basis to ensure the data remains up to date, and to publish any updates on the Council's website.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1. The Local Development Plan 2023 was formally adopted on 19 June 2023. The Local Development Plan focuses on the vision, spatial strategy and key policies and proposals for the future development of Aberdeen. The Council can also adopt additional supporting guidance in connection with the Local Development Plan and this can be used to provide more detail on how its policies and proposals will be implemented. Appendix 4 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 outlines the guidance expected to be produced, and the majority of these have now been adopted (please see Council Report COM/23/303).
- 3.2. A draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance document on Health Impact Assessments was brought to Planning Development Management Committee in June 2024, and approved for public consultation. The document provides further guidance on Policy WB1: Healthy Developments of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and Policy 23: Health and Safety of National Planning Framework 4.
- 3.3. The public consultation on the Draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance ran for a 10 week period between 15 November 2024 and 24 January 2025. The document was made available and publicised during the consultation by the following methods:
  - Publication of the draft document on the Local Development Plan section of Aberdeen City Council's new 'Consultation Hub' – Commonplace <https://aberdeenldp.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/apg-health-impact-assessment?step=step1>
  - Hard copy of the document available for review at Marischal College Customer Service Centre during normal opening hours.
  - Social Media posts on Facebook and Twitter from Aberdeen City Council and Local Development Plan social media accounts during the consultation process.
  - Notification by email to statutory consultees, Community Councils and other interested organizations.
  - Notification to individuals, organisations and businesses signed up to the Local Development Plan 'latest news' section of the Local Development Plan Commonplace site.
- 3.4. A total of 40 replies were received to the public consultation. 29 from individuals, 10 from organisations, and 1 response from an unknown source. The new consultation system, Commonplace, allows for sentiments to be expressed along with submitting comments. The responses received can be categorised as follows, and Appendix 2 presents the responses received and officer response : -
  - general support (3 individuals and 1 organisation),

- happy with the contents and the links made to the wider environment (4 individuals and 2 organisations);
- satisfied and note the benefits of the process (8 individuals and 1 organisation);
- neutral reaction to the document (6 individuals, 2 organisations and 1 unknown);
- dissatisfied as there needs to be more focus on context - this is an onerous task when the planning system already looks to address health and wellbeing (6 individuals and 2 organisations); and,
- unhappy - there need to be more focus on context and obesity (2 individuals and 2 organisations).

- 3.5. Changes made to the document following comments received to the public consultation have included: adding a summary to identify the relationship between place, wellbeing and planning, and clarifying what a health impact assessment is and how it will be used in Aberdeen. Text was also inserted into the main body of the document to clarify the ask relating to stakeholder engagement, the proportionate nature of health impact assessments, and the requirement that a health impact assessment may be part of an Environmental Statement (submitted as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process) or may be a standalone document. The document was also benchmarked against health impact assessment guidance from the Public Health Scotland and Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment Network to ensure it complies with their standards. The document has also been developed in collaboration with colleagues from NHS Grampian Public Health Directorate and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 3.6. The APG outlines the relationship between health and wellbeing, place and planning – noting planning can be a tool to create environments that support health and wellbeing and can encourage people to make healthy choices. It notes that, in Aberdeen, HIAs are requested in appropriate planning applications and documents that are most likely to impact on human health. The APG then outlines the steps within the HIA, before providing information on data sources that will be used to understand the context of the area where the development is proposed.

#### Next Steps

- 3.7. Committee is asked to review the changes made to the Health Impact Assessment APG, and approve its adoption as non-statutory planning advice.
- 3.8. As noted above, the APG has been produced to support the Aberdeen Local Development 2023, which was developed with a 'health in all policies' approach, with local policies assessed against wider health priorities for Scotland. Work is currently underway on preparing the next local development plan for the city and, building on the work undertaken to preparing this APG, it is recommended that the LDP review consider how the 'health in all policies' approach can also be more effectively integrated with developer obligations. This could include considering improvement to open space and community facilities based on report findings, such as the open space audits.

- 3.9. Finally, it is recommended that the appendices to the APG be kept under review in order to ensure any significant changes to the data can be updated in the document. It is proposed that this be undertaken on an annual basis.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as the cost of preparing Aberdeen Planning Guidance is met through existing staff time and resource budgets.
- 4.2 The guidance documents will help to mitigate any increase in applications and queries which will result in added pressure on the finances and staff resources of the Council's planning service.
- 4.3 As a major landowner in the City, proposals for the development of land and assets owned by Aberdeen City Council and any planning applications for development undertaken by or on behalf of the City Council will, where applicable, be subject to assessment against the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance. This may have financial implications for the Council as a developer.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance will be a material consideration to inform decisions on future planning applications in Aberdeen.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance document has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening process in accordance with relevant legislation.

#### **7. RISK**

- 7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement

##### **Management Of Risk**

- 7.2 The draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents support the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and ensure continuity in the provision of comprehensive, up-to-date and relevant planning frameworks.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level</b>	<b>*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)</b>  <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	<b>*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?</b>
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<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Not delivering the aims of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan	Supports consideration of health and wellbeing to ensure population health and equality is assessed during the planning process.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Ensuring compliance with National Planning Framework 4.	The document provides advice on planning consent.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	By not providing guidance officers could, over time, provide inconsistent advice.	The document provides clarity, consistence and certainly in terms of assessment of planning applications.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	Not having timeously published and adopted supporting guidance for the new Local Development Plan could lead to uncertainty at planning application stage and potentially lead to more staff time being spent processing applications	The document should reduce the number of queries and provide clarity, consistence and certainly in terms of assessment of planning applications.	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Not providing guidance opens the possibility of	The document set parameters for the assessment of planning applications and documents	L	Yes

	inconsistency in decision making and misinformation in the public domain.	requiring health impact assessments.		
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Ensuring that planning frameworks take into consideration the relevant environmental and climate change legislation at the point of their development and production.	Ensure that robust and transparent consultation with statutory agencies is undertaken. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report was undertaken.	L	Yes

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26</u></b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A vibrant city, making our city a better place for people to live, work, raise a family and visit.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u></b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The APG will help with stretch outcome 4, improve health and reducing child poverty inequalities and stretch outcome 11: Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is 5 years longer by 2026; through encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The APG will help with stretch outcome 14 through the key driver 14.1 Supporting different ways for active travel in everyday journeys, using partners and volunteers to address safety, infrastructure, fitness, well-being and confidence.

Regional and City Strategies	The APG's will support the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 through providing more information on the content of the Plan. They will ensure Aberdeen is an excellent place to live, visit and do business.
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	N/A.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [National Planning Framework 4](#)

10.2 [Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023: Written Statement](#)

10.3 [Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment Network: A Guide to Health Impact Assessment](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Health Impact Assessments.

11.2 Appendix 2: Summary of responses received and officer responses

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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