



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Infrastructure Services
Section	Roads, Landscape and Waste Services
Title of the activity etc.	Landscape Services
Aims of the activity	<p>Budgets allocated to Landscape Services support the management and maintenance of the parks and open spaces across Aberdeenshire along with the provision of a Burial Service.</p> <p>The approved Parks and Open Spaces Strategy fully details the principles of service delivery and has the stated Vision to:</p> <p>“Provide high quality multi-functional open space that is easily accessible, safe, welcoming, rich in biodiversity and sustainably managed for the future; which encourages a sense of belonging, and enhances the quality of life of those people who live, work in and visit Aberdeenshire”.</p> <p>It is widely recognised that Burial Grounds and Cemeteries play an important part in residents’ lives. This is to be reflected in the policies standards and maintenance to ensure that the public’s long term needs and requirements are satisfied.</p> <p>For clarity this EqIA considers the impacts of the budget reductions proposed for 2018/19 only. These total £255,000.</p>
Author(s) & Title(s)	Philip D McKay, Head of Roads, Landscape and Waste Services

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.

Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Citizen's Panel Corporate Compliments, Comments Complaints Reputation Tracker Undertakers Survey
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Landscape Services Management Team, Team Briefing Roads and Landscape Services Management Team.
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	Citizen's Panel Survey, Survey Monkey Attendance at Community Council/forum meetings Consultation with local Fishing Groups
External data (census, available statistics).	Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) Performance Networks, Scottish Bereavement Benchmarking Group, Greenspace Scotland
Other (general information as appropriate).	

### Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	Yes. There is currently little evidence to gauge the view of the public on the change to a less formally maintained estate.
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### Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.

What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:
	Further consultation and discussions will take place in relation to the reduced level of service for some elements of open space maintenance.	Ongoing through 2018

**Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.**

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger		Yes		
Age – Older		Yes		
Disability		Yes		
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)		Yes		
Religion or Belief		Yes		
Gender – male/female		Yes		
Pregnancy and maternity		Yes		
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)		Yes		
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)		Yes		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		Yes		

**Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?**

Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.		Burial Ground charges – the proposed increase in charges may impact across all people using the burial service regardless of protected characteristics

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**Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?**

<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>Burial Charges - A consultation exercise was undertaken in November/December 2017.  An online consultation survey was publicised via the Councils web site asking respondents to comment on the proposals for fees &amp; charges for Council services.  This was Distributed to all Aberdeenshire Community Councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent to all contact lists held by managers for relevant areas eg all Trade Waste customers, all community mini bus hire groups</li> <li>• Publicised on the council website</li> <li>• Publicised via Council social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter)</li> <li>• Publicised via a press release to local media.</li> </ul>
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**Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?**

	Mitigating Steps - Burial Ground Charges	Timescale
<p>These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>	<p>The proposed increases will be spread across two financial years to allow customers to prepare/make arrangements for funeral costs</p>	<p>2 years</p>

**Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?**

<p>These should be included in the action plan.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
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**Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?**

<p>N/A</p>
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**Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?**

These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	The Service will continue to make use of the Citizen's Panel and the internal Reputation Tracker.
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**Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?**

Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	N/A	
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	N/A	
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen
	Negative impacts are associated with the increase in burial charges. These will not be fully mitigated by spreading the increase over two years.	

**\* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.**

Burial Charges - The provision of the burial service (including maintenance and development of all burial facilities) currently operates with a significant deficit (£585k) under the current financial climate the Council has a responsibility to reduce/remove any areas of financial loss. The burial service is a statute duty for the Council therefore it is considered appropriate that the charges/fees for service cover all costs. Within the Scottish Local Authorities Burial charges table 2017-18 Aberdeenshire Council fees/charges for burial services sit slightly above the Scottish average in 3 categories and slightly below the Scottish average in 1 category.

The recent (2017) consultation survey concluded that - It is a general principle that charges levied for services provided should aim to achieve cost coverage, the proposed increases adopt this principle and will facilitate the continued operation of the services in question.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Road and Landscape Services	
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	Landscape Services Budget	(if appropriate)
	3) <b>Authors:</b> I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Philip D McKay Position: Head of Roads and Landscape Services Date: 23 January 2018 Signature:	Name: Graham Wall Position: Business Development Manager Date: 23 January 2018 Signature:
		Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Date:	
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Stephen Archer Position: Director of Infrastructure Services Date: 23 January 2018	Name: Position: Date:
	6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.	Date:	
	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire	Date:	
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO			Date:

