

Aberdeenshire Council

Integrated Impact Assessment

Customer Services Budget Proposals 2026/27

Assessment ID	IIA-003418
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Approved By	Kate Bond
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1. Overview

This document has been generated from information entered into the Integrated Impact Assessment system.

C&DS revenue budget 2026/27 savings proposal to reduce permanent Customer Services staffing. The reduction in staffing will be realised by the closure of Inverurie Service Point, with council signposting and customer support activity moved online and by telephone.

During screening 4 of 12 questions indicated that detailed assessments were required, the screening questions and their answers are listed in the next section. This led to 2 out of 5 detailed impact assessments being completed. The assessments required are:

- Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty
- Town Centres First

In total there are 0 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 11 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 4 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by kate.bond@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

The remainder of this document sets out the details of all completed impact assessments.

2. Screening

Could your activity / proposal / policy cause an impact in one (or more) of the identified town centres?	Yes
Would this activity / proposal / policy have consequences for the health and wellbeing of the population in the affected communities?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e) in the Council or community and / or the procurement, use or disposal of physical resources?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the resilience to extreme weather events and / or a changing climate of Aberdeenshire Council or community?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the environment, wildlife or biodiversity?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have an impact on people and / or groups with protected characteristics?	Yes
Is this activity / proposal / policy of strategic importance for the council?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy impact on inequality of outcome?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's rights?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's wellbeing?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy relate to budget proposals?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy impact on consumers of Council services?	Yes

3. Impact Assessments

Children's Rights and Wellbeing	Not Required
Climate Change and Sustainability	Not Required
Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty	All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated
Health Inequalities	Not Required
Town Centre's First	Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated

4. Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

4.1. Protected Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Age (Younger)		Yes		
Age (Older)			Yes	
Disability			Yes	
Race		Yes		
Religion or Belief		Yes		
Sex		Yes		
Pregnancy and Maternity		Yes		
Sexual Orientation		Yes		
Gender Reassignment		Yes		
Marriage or Civil Partnership		Yes		

4.2. Socio-economic Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Low income			Yes	
Low wealth			Yes	
Material deprivation		Yes		
Area deprivation			Yes	
Socioeconomic background		Yes		

4.3. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Older)	<p>Some older customers rely on Service Points as a support mechanism and a way of maintaining social interaction with others if they have no relatives/friends who live nearby. Removing Service Points for these customers may have a negative impact on them.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet there are public access PC's for free in libraries.</p> <p>Timescale April 2026</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Disability	<p>Customers with physical disabilities who use Service Points to access Council services, may experience issues travelling to alternative sites if they are further away. Those with other disabilities may struggle to access Council services online or by telephone.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet there are public access PC's for free in libraries.</p> <p>Timescale April 2026</p>
Area deprivation	<p>Removing Service Points in areas of deprivation may negatively impact the local area, by reducing footfall to town centres.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet there are public access PC's for free in libraries. Therefore some footfall may continue.</p> <p>Timescale April 2026</p>
Area deprivation	<p>Many residents in deprived areas may lack access to devices (smartphones, tablets etc); reliable internet connections and have poor digital literacy, meaning they may not feel confident navigating online forms or Council websites.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet, there are public access PC's for free at libraries.</p> <p>Timescale N/A</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Area deprivation	<p>People in deprived areas often face multiple challenges such as housing insecurity, unemployment and health issues which may require personalised support, which is harder to deliver online or over the phone. They may also require multi-agency collaboration which is easier to coordinate in person.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet, there are public access PC's for free at libraries.</p> <p>Timescale N/A</p>
Area deprivation	<p>In-person services offer quicker intervention in emergency situations and on-the-spot referrals to food banks, housing support or safeguarding services, which are often required more in areas of low deprivation.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Consideration will need to be given to this to mitigate this possible impact</p> <p>Timescale N/A</p>
Low income	<p>Those on low income who use Service Points, may be negatively impacted by the removal of a Service Point in their local area, making it more difficult for them to access Council services.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet there are public access PC's for free in libraries.</p> <p>Timescale April 2026</p>
Low wealth	<p>Those with low wealth who use Service Points, may be negatively impacted by the removal of a Service Point in their local area, making it more difficult for them to access Council services. Being able to access face-to-face Council services is a more cost effective way to access Council services rather than having access to online services or having to phone.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet there are public access PC's for free in libraries.</p> <p>Timescale April 2026</p>

4.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Data	Customer Feedback	We know that customers want to have a range of contact channels available to them, to allow them to access council services in a way and at a time, that suits them.	Continuing to offer telephone access, online services, email, web chat and face to face via pre-arranged appointments will meet customer requirements.
External Consultation	Customer Service Survey	Customers want to be able to access Council services easily, through a variety of channels, in a way and at a time, that suits them.	Continuing to offer access to Council services via telephone, online services, email and face-to-face via appointments will meet customer requirements.

4.5. Information Gaps

Information Gap There may be some gaps in the information we hold as not all customers provide feedback or have completed the customer service survey.

4.6. Measures to fill Information Gaps

Measure	Timescale
Ensure that as much coverage and consultation with vulnerable groups is carried out as possible. E.g Tenant participation and lived experience group and forum.	April 2026

4.7. Engagement with affected groups

If a decision is taken to proceed with closure then formal engagement will need to be undertaken in the local area.

4.8. Ensuring engagement with protected groups

If a decision is taken to proceed with closure then formal engagement will need to be undertaken in the local area.

4.9. Evidence of engagement

Evidence will be provided once formal engagement has been completed.

4.10. Overall Outcome

All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet, there are public access PC's for free at libraries. Additional sign posting will be available at alternative council venues. Customer engagement/support will be provided in local areas, prior to closures.

We will seek to retain staff and remove vacant posts where possible - and if staff will be affected we will undertake full consultation in line with HR policies.

4.11. Improving Relations

On going consultation with relevant groups/areas.

4.12. Opportunities of Equality

Closure of the service point does not advance equality of opportunity.

5. Town Centre's First Impact Assessment

5.1. Local Factors

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Town centre assets			Yes	
Footfall			Yes	
Changes to road layouts		Yes		
Parking		Yes		
Infrastructure changes		Yes		
Aesthetics of the town centre		Yes		
Tourism		Yes		
Public safety		Yes		
Town centre business			Yes	
Cultural heritage and identity		Yes		
Social and cultural aspects		Yes		

5.2. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation	
Footfall	<p>Closing Service Points could negatively impact footfall to town centres.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Many of our LLA facilities are located in town centres (or nearby) and it is hoped that footfall to these locations will mitigate the removal of Service Points, by offering access to Council services based on the needs of the local area.</p> <p>Timescale April 26 - March 27</p>	
Town centre assets	<p>There is the potential that some town centre assets may be disposed of, dependent on requirements.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation This decision will not be taken in isolation. Property and Facilities are already considering the requirement of assets across the organisation, along with the Workstyle Programme. The impact of closing Service Points will be considered alongside all other evidence regarding town centre assets</p> <p>Timescale April 26 - March 27</p>	

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Town centre business	<p>Closing Service Points may negatively impact footfall to town centres, which may have a knock on impact on footfall to other town centre businesses.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Offering face to face appointment at Council facilities within town centres will encourage footfall to town centres and in turn mitigate the impact on town centre businesses.</p> <p>Timescale April 26 - March 27</p>

5.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Data	Customer Service statistics	Will be able to determine once reviewed	Will be able to determine once reviewed

5.4. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Face to face appointments can still be made to access council services. For those without access to personal computers or internet, there are public access PC's for free at libraries. In addition, payments for council services can be made at post offices and pay points, many of which are sited within town centres encouraging continued footfall.

Previous evidence has shown that customers will find other ways of accessing council service e.g during the covid pandemic.

6. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details	
If agreed to close Service Points, support customers in local areas to access council services	Lead Officer	Michelle Milne
	Repeating Activity	No
	Planned Start	Wednesday April 01, 2026
	Planned Finish	Thursday April 30, 2026
	Expected Outcome	Determine customer requirements and support customers on alternative ways to access council services.
	Resource Implications	Resources from Customer Service Team will complete required work.
Consultation with Area Managers and other affected Services.	Lead Officer	Michelle Milne
	Repeating Activity	No
	Planned Start	Wednesday April 01, 2026
	Planned Finish	Thursday April 30, 2026
	Expected Outcome	Agree how access to Area Offices/other Services will be managed if Service Points close.
	Resource Implications	Will be identified during discussions.
Work with LLA to provide training/support for staff to support customers with enquiries.	Lead Officer	Michelle Milne
	Repeating Activity	No
	Planned Start	Wednesday April 01, 2026
	Planned Finish	Thursday April 30, 2026
	Expected Outcome	Agree locations and appropriate support will look like for customers.
	Resource Implications	There will be some resource implications for Customers Services and LLA to complete training/support.
Develop a customer engagement plan to ensure customers are aware of how to access Council services in future and provide support to help them access online services as required.	Lead Officer	Caroline O'Shaughnessy
	Repeating Activity	No
	Planned Start	Monday March 02, 2026
	Planned Finish	Tuesday March 31, 2026
	Expected Outcome	Customers know how to access Council services and are confident in using online self-serve options.
	Resource Implications	Engagement Officer