

# Aberdeenshire Council

## Integrated Impact Assessment

### Budget Saving Proposal - Stop Supplying Community Sandbag Stores

Assessment ID	IIA-002615
Lead Author	Gavin Penman
Service Reviewers	Philip McKay
Subject Matter Experts	Claudia Cowie, Yvonne D'Ambruoso, Kakuen Mo, Jane Wilkinson, Ricki Lyon, Jade Fitzpatrick
Approved By	Philip McKay
Approved On	Thursday January 16, 2025
Publication Date	Thursday January 16, 2025

# 1. Overview

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

Stop supplying filled sandbags to community storage containers/buildings.

During screening 4 of 11 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
- Sustainability and Climate Change

In total there are 2 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 6 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 2 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by philip.mckay@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?	No
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?	Yes
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?	Yes
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

## 3. Impact Assessments

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

## 4. Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

### 4.1. Protected Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Age (Younger)		Yes		
Age (Older)		Yes	Yes	
Disability		Yes	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	Yes	
Material deprivation		Yes		
Area deprivation		Yes		
Socioeconomic background		Yes		

### 4.3. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Older)	<p>This proposal may affect older residents in communities who could rely on the community to help them protect their properties from flooding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      Yes</p> <p>Mitigation                      Sandbags are not effective at protecting properties from flooding. It is the responsibility of property owners to take appropriate steps to protect their properties from flooding and Aberdeenshire Council has no statutory responsibility to provide sandbags.</p> <p>Though it will not always be possible to prevent flooding, there are products on the market which can be purchased to help reduce the risk of damage. Aberdeenshire Council retains a stock of a small selection of these products and is willing to sell them to the public at cost price. The prices reflect the discounts available to the Council through bulk purchasing and are likely to be less than can be obtained by purchasing direct from suppliers.</p> <p>The products available are flood gates, vent guards and floodsaxs. Flood gates are used for protecting against water ingress through doorways and come in different sizes to suit the door opening. Vent guards are used to cover air vents and come in two sizes. Floodsaxs are a lightweight, easily stored, biodegradable alternative to sandbags, which come flat and contain an absorbent polymer gel which expands on contact with water.</p> <p>Timescale                      April 2025 onwards</p>
Age (Older)	<p>This proposal may affect older residents in communities who could rely on the community to help them protect their properties from flooding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      Yes</p> <p>Mitigation                      Communication and information to communities on next steps and what further things they need to consider.</p> <p>Timescale                      April 2025 onwards</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>This proposal may affect disabled residents in communities who could rely on the community to help them protect their properties from flooding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      Yes</p> <p>Mitigation                      Sandbags are not effective at protecting properties from flooding. It is the responsibility of property owners to take appropriate steps to protect their properties from flooding and Aberdeenshire Council has no statutory responsibility to provide sandbags. Though it will not always be possible to prevent flooding, there are products on the market which can be purchased to help reduce the risk of damage. Aberdeenshire Council retains a stock of a small selection of these products and is willing to sell them to the public at cost price. The prices reflect the discounts available to the Council through bulk purchasing and are likely to be less than can be obtained by purchasing direct from suppliers. The products available are flood gates, vent guards and floodsaxs. Flood gates are used for protecting against water ingress through doorways and come in different sizes to suit the door opening. Vent guards are used to cover air vents and come in two sizes. Floodsaxs are a lightweight, easily stored, biodegradable alternative to sandbags, which come flat and contain an absorbent polymer gel which expands on contact with water.</p> <p>Timescale                      April 2025 onwards</p>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>This proposal may affect disabled residents in communities who could rely on the community to help them protect their properties from flooding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      Yes</p> <p>Mitigation                      Communication and information to communities on next steps and what further things they need to consider.</p> <p>Timescale                      April 2025 onwards</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Low wealth	<p>Individuals in communities may not be able to afford property level flood defences.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      No</p> <p>Justification                      Although Aberdeenshire Council can assist with property flood protection products, these can only be supplied at the cost from the manufacturer.</p>

#### 4.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	The Scottish Flood Forum	<p>The Scottish Flood Forum advises that traditional sandbags have many limitations:</p> <p>They may not hold back water unless a waterproof sheet is placed under them.</p> <p>They can be expensive, heavy, difficult to transport and labour intensive to assemble into flood defence barriers.</p> <p>They are prone to leakage, rot very quickly after use and contain viral and bacterial infections often present in flood water.</p> <p>They require proper environmental disposal.</p> <p>Alternative products, such as barriers, often provide more effective long term protection, are more easily deployed and have greater reliability when fitted correctly.</p>	Confirmation that sandbags are not effective.

#### 4.5. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Sandbags are not effective at preventing flooding. We would encourage residents to invest in products that have been proven to reduce the risk of damage.

Although some residents may be unable to afford property flood protection products, the alternative (sandbags) has been proven to be ineffective at preventing ingress of floodwater.

## 5. Sustainability and Climate Change Impact Assessment

### 5.1. Emissions and Resources

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Consumption of energy	Yes		Yes	
Energy efficiency		Yes		
Energy source		Yes		
Low carbon transition		Yes		
Consumption of physical resources	Yes		Yes	
Waste and circularity		Yes		
Circular economy transition		Yes		
Economic and social transition		Yes		

### 5.2. Biodiversity and Resilience

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Quality of environment		Yes		
Quantity of environment		Yes		
Wildlife and biodiversity		Yes		
Infrastructure resilience		Yes		
Council resilience		Yes		
Community resilience			Yes	
Adaptation		Yes		

### 5.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Consumption of energy	By stopping supplying sandbags, less natural resources will be consumed (quarrying sand) and less energy will be consumed through reduced transportation.
Consumption of physical resources	Reduced volume of quarried aggregates will be required.

### 5.4. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Community resilience	<p>Stopping supplying sandbags to community stores may reduce their resilience to flooding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Continue to support communities to invest in property level protection products.</p> <p>Timescale April 2025 onwards.</p>



Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
<b>Consumption of energy</b>	<p>Although this will be a saving to the Council of fuel and resource, residents will individually have to seek resources instead which will be multiple individual journeys (whether for sandbags or alternative).</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      No</p> <p>Justification                      It would not be possible to stop residents seeking alternative protection measures.</p>
<b>Consumption of physical resources</b>	<p>Personal effects/flooring/furniture could be affected by not having sandbags to divert water from properties which will result in an increase in consumption of resources for the residents.</p> <p>Can be mitigated                      Yes</p> <p>Mitigation                      An effective communications plan to advise residents of the research/evidence of the ineffectiveness of sandbags and advise of suitable alternative flood prevention measures.</p> <p>Timescale                      April 2025</p>

## 5.5. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
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Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	The Scottish Flood Forum	<p>The Scottish Flood Forum advises that traditional sandbags have many limitations:</p> <p>They may not hold back water unless a waterproof sheet is placed under them.</p> <p>They can be expensive, heavy, difficult to transport and labour intensive to assemble into flood defence barriers.</p> <p>They are prone to leakage, rot very quickly after use and contain viral and bacterial infections often present in flood water.</p> <p>They require proper environmental disposal.</p> <p>Alternative products, such as barriers, often provide more effective long term protection, are more easily deployed and have greater reliability when fitted correctly.</p>	Confirmation that sandbags are not effective.

## 5.6. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

There is a risk that some communities could be less resilient to flooding by not supporting their sandbag supplies.

Sandbags are not effective and should not be seen as the solution to stopping flooding. Stopping supplying sandbags to community stores might encourage residents to invest in more effective property level protection products.

## 6. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details	
Stop all sandbag provision to community stores.	<b>Lead Officer</b> <b>Repeating Activity</b> <b>Frequency</b> <b>Duration</b> <b>Expected Outcome</b>  <b>Resource Implications</b>	Gavin Penman Yes Every year One year. Less reliance on Aberdeenshire Council replenishing supplies. Greater ownership within communities. None
Engage with those communities who have sandbag stores advising them of the decision. Encourage the use of alternative property protection products.	<b>Lead Officer</b> <b>Repeating Activity</b> <b>Planned Start</b> <b>Planned Finish</b> <b>Expected Outcome</b>  <b>Resource Implications</b>	Gavin Penman No Tuesday April 01, 2025 Thursday May 01, 2025 Understanding within communities (that previously received sandbags for replenishing their supplies) that Aberdeenshire Council will no longer be supplying sandbags. Greater uptake of property protection products. Staff time