

# Aberdeenshire Council

## Integrated Impact Assessment

### Budget Saving Proposal 2025/26 - Urban Street Lights - Part Night Switch Off

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# 1. Overview

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

This assessment considers the impact of switching off street lights in urban settings for a period during the hours of darkness. The assessment is based on turn off of lights in residential streets from 0100 to 0500. In designated town centres, or areas with a significant night time economy, the times of switch off will be shortened to reflect the needs of the night time economy, particularly at weekends. Times are still to be determined and the assessment is based on 0200 to 0500 in these locations.

During screening 6 of 11 questions indicated that detailed assessments were required, the screening questions and their answers are listed in the next section. This led to 4 out of 5 detailed impact assessments being completed. The assessments required are:

- Childrens' Rights and Wellbeing
- Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty
- Health Inequalities
- Sustainability and Climate Change

In total there are 3 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 9 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 1 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by alan.wood@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?	Yes
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?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the environment, wildlife or biodiversity?	Yes
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?	Yes
Does the activity / proposal / policy relate to budget proposals?	Yes

## 3. Impact Assessments

Children's Rights and Wellbeing	Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated
Climate Change and Sustainability	No Negative Impacts Identified
Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty	Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated
Health Inequalities	Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated
Town Centre's First	Not Required

## 4. Childrens' Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

### 4.1. Wellbeing Indicators

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Safe			Yes	
Healthy			Yes	
Achieving		Yes		
Nurtured		Yes		
Active			Yes	
Respected		Yes		
Responsible		Yes		
Included		Yes		

### 4.2. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Active	<p>Proposal would result in urban streets being unlit for a period during the hours of darkness. Concerns of safety, or perceived safety, could lead to modal shift away from active travel options</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Healthy	<p>Proposal would result in streets in urban areas being unlit during a period of darkness. This has the potential to increase the risk or perceived risk of using the road networks and therefore being less active</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Safe	<p>Proposal would result in streets in urban areas being unlit during a period of darkness. This has the potential to increase the risk or perceived risk of using the road networks</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

### 4.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	National Institute for Health Research (Public Health Research, No. 3.11)	"Switch-off (permanently turning street lights off) was not associated with an increase in night-time traffic collisions or crime; however, the results are imprecise because of the small number of areas in which switch-off was implemented, and so should be treated with caution"	There is insufficient data to conclusively predict the effect on public safety of switching off streetlights. However, given the potential activity levels during the times of the switch off the impacts are considered to be limited

### 4.4. Accounting for the Views of Children and Young People

n/a

### 4.5. Promoting the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

n/a

### 4.6. Upholding Children and Young People's Rights

n/a

### 4.7. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

The effect of making this saving would inevitably result in an increase in unlit streets for a period during the hours of darkness. The hours chosen mitigate the impacts to an extent as this is a time where the usage by vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians is low.

n/a

## 5. Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

### 5.1. 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		

### 5.2. Socio-economic Groups

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

### 5.3. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Older)	<p>Concerns over safety could discourage elderly people from leaving their home and increase isolation.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Younger)	<p>Proposal would result in streets in urban areas being unlit during a period of darkness. This has the potential to increase the risk or perceived risk of using the road networks.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Disability	<p>Switching off street lights could reduce the visibility of footway defects leading to a greater risk of tripping, particularly for those with visual or mobility impairments.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Sex	<p>Removal of street lighting could potentially lead to a greater feeling of being unsafe for females walking in unlit streets.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

## 5.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	ONS - Perceptions of personal safety and experiences of harassment, Great Britain	Concerns over personal safety during the hours of darkness are relatively greater for females, the elderly, the disabled and the most deprived.	The switching off of street lights would have a disproportionate effect on certain protected groups.

## 5.5. Engagement with affected groups

None at this stage

## 5.6. Ensuring engagement with protected groups

n/a

## 5.7. Evidence of engagement

n/a

## 5.8. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

The effect of making this saving would inevitably result in an increase in unlit streets for a period during the hours of darkness. The hours chosen mitigate the impacts to an extent as this is a time where the usage by vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians is low.

A justification for continuing despite unmitigated negative impacts has not been entered.

## 5.9. Improving Relations

n/a

## 5.10. Opportunities of Equality

It does not.



## 6. Health Inequalities Impact Assessment

### 6.1. Health Behaviours

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Healthy eating		Yes		
Exercise and physical activity			Yes	
Substance use – tobacco		Yes		
Substance use – alcohol		Yes		
Substance use – drugs		Yes		
Mental health	Yes		Yes	

### 6.2. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Mental health	Reduced exposure to night-time light is linked to multiple health benefits.

### 6.3. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Exercise and physical activity	<p>Removal of street lighting could potentially lead to a reduction in active travel if concerns over personal safety are heightened.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Mental health	<p>Concerns over safety could discourage people from leaving their home and increase isolation. Lack of lighting may also cause increased anxiety around housebreaking and vandalism.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Times chosen from the switch off are where usage of the network is minimal for vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

### 6.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
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Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	Nature Mental Health - Day and night light exposure are associated with psychiatric disorders: an objective light study in >85,000 people	"Greater night-time light exposure was associated with increased risk for major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, PTSD, psychosis, bipolar disorder, and self-harm behavior... Avoiding light at night and seeking light during the day may be a simple and effective, non-pharmacological means of broadly improving mental health."	Less exposure to night-time light can reduce disturbance to circadian rhythms and offer health benefits.

## 6.5. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

The effect of making this saving would inevitably result in an increase in unlit streets for a period during the hours of darkness. The hours chosen mitigate the impacts to an extent as this is a time where the usage by vehicles, wheelers and pedestrians is low.

n/a

## 7. Sustainability and Climate Change Impact Assessment

### 7.1. Emissions and Resources

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

### 7.2. 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		

### 7.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Quality of environment	Reducing artificial lighting levels through the night can have a beneficial impact on wildlife.
Consumption of energy	Switching off residential street lights during part of the night could reduce the energy consumption associated with street lighting by around 30%.

### 7.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
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Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	Science Advances - Vol. 7, Issue 35 - Street lighting has detrimental impacts on local insect populations	"Caterpillar abundance was substantially lower in habitat areas illuminated by streetlights." "...our results show that ALAN (artificial light at night) acts as an important contributory driver for moth populations at the local scale, with ramifications for ecosystem processes including pollination and prey provision."	Reducing artificial light at night may be beneficial for wildlife.

## 7.5. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

The identified impacts with regards to Sustainability and Climate Change were all positive.

# 8. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details
Promote the rationale behind the part night switch off, the mitigations that have been put in place, and the benefits	<p><b>Lead Officer</b> John Bruce</p> <p><b>Repeating Activity</b> No</p> <p><b>Planned Start</b> Wednesday January 01, 2025</p> <p><b>Planned Finish</b> Wednesday April 30, 2025</p> <p><b>Expected Outcome</b> Better public awareness of the project</p> <p><b>Resource Implications</b> Delivered within the wider R&amp;I Team</p>