

ES4 – Increase Allotment Charges Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment



There are separate guidance notes to accompany this form – “Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment – the Guide.” Please use these guidance notes as you complete this form.

STEP 1: Identify essential information (To complete this section please use the notes on page 8 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment.)

1. Name of function, policy or procedure

Environment & Infrastructure Proposals for Budget Savings 2009 – 2010:
ES4 –Increase Allotment Charges.

2. Is this function, policy or procedure New Reviewed

3. Officers completing this form

Name	Designation	Service	Directorate
Norrie Steed	Head of Service	Shelter & Environment	NSS Directorate Neighbourhood Services (South Area)

4. Date of Impact Assessment 12 November 2008

5. Lead council service(s) involved in the delivery of this function, policy, procedure

Environment (within Environment & Infrastructure)

6. Who else is involved in the delivery of this function, policy or procedure? (for example other Council services or partner agencies)
(if none go to question 8)

Not applicable

7. How have they been involved in the equality and human rights impact assessment process?

Not applicable

STEP 2: Outline the aims of the function, policy or procedure (To complete this section please use the notes on pages 9 -10 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment.)

8. What are the main aims of the function, policy or procedure? Please list

To consider the Budget proposals for 2009/2010 for Environment & Infrastructure with respect to service efficiencies.

9. Who are the main beneficiaries of the function, policy or procedure? Please list

The Council and allotment holders who currently pay for water supplies: the service is currently subsidised by the Council and water charges are not uniformly distributed.

10. Is the function, policy or procedure intended to increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action or action to redress disadvantage?

Yes –it is intended to redress the disadvantage faced by some allotment holders who are currently charged for water supply, whilst others are not.

366 allotments are supplied with water, but only 130 of those are charged for their water supply.

11. What impact will the function, policy or procedure have on promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

Could have a negative impact because of possible negative perception of the Council raising charges and it may cause friction between those who currently pay for water and those who do not.
However, it is intended to review the allotments policy and involve the allotment holders to a greater extent in the running of the service they receive, in an effort to reduce costs and mitigate the effects of this proposal, should it be accepted.

STEP 3: Gather and consider evidence (To complete this section please use the notes on pages 11 - 12 of the guide to the equality and human rights impact assessment)

12. What evidence is there to identify any potential positive or negative impacts?

Evidence	Details
Consultation	Consultation through Challenge Forums, voluntary sectors and partners during November/December 2008 will feed into the process:
Research	Usage levels/ water charges/costs of maintaining services to the allotments holders, such as waste disposal.
Officer knowledge and experience (including feedback from frontline staff)	Officers involved in preparing the proposals have taken account of volume and demand information, finance, potential impact on allotment holders.
Equality monitoring data	None
User feedback (including complaints)	Allotment holders. Complaints system.
Other	See above. Also, service will use complaints system to measure reaction.

STEP 4: Assess likely impacts on equality strands (To complete this section please use the notes on pages 13 –14 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment)

13. Which, if any, equality target groups and others could be affected by this function policy or procedure? Place the symbol in the relevant box.

Equality Target Group	Positive Impact(+)	Neutral Impact (0)	Negative Impact(-)
Race*		0	
Disability		0	
Gender **		0	
LGB***		0	
Belief		0	
Younger		0	
Older		0	
Others (low income)			-

*** The Human Resources view on the potential impact for staff groups is to follow as part of a Strategic Overview, which will consider the proposals for staffing reductions/changes as a corporate exercise.**

- * Race include Gypsies/Travellers
- ** Gender includes Transgender
- *** LGB: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual

14. From the groups you have highlighted above, what positive and negative impacts do you think the function, policy or procedure might have? Detail the impacts and describe the groups affected.

Positive impacts (describe groups affected)	Negative Impacts (describe groups affected)
<p>The increased charges will enable the Council to better maintain the services currently provided to all allotment holders.</p> <p>The increase in charges is still very small when considered on an annual basis:</p> <p>Full plot From £50 to £70 ¾ plot £40.95 to £52.50 ½ plot £34.30 to £35</p> <p>These costs are inclusive of water charge.</p>	<p>Increased charges will not be popular amongst the community of allotment holders.</p>

Through the establishment of an Allotment Working Group, further efficiencies and improvements to allotments will be identified and other potential funding sources contacted.	
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* The Human Resources view on the potential impact for staff groups is to follow as part of a Strategic Overview, which will consider the proposals for staffing reductions/changes as a corporate exercise.

STEP 5: Apply the three key assessment tests for compliance assurance

(To complete this section please use the notes on pages 15 – 17 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment.)

15. Does this policy/procedure have the potential to interfere with an individual's rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998? State which rights might be affected by ticking the appropriate box (es) and how. **If you answer "no", go to question 19.**

- Article 3 – Right not to be subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment
- Article 6 – Right to a fair and public hearing
- Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Article 10 – freedom of expression
- Other article not listed above

It could be considered as affecting the right to private life in terms of the cost of pursuing a hobby –Article 8.

Legality

16. Where there is a potential negative impact is there a legal basis in the relevant domestic law?

Not applicable

Legitimate aim

17. Is the aim of the policy a legitimate aim being served in terms of the relevant equality legislation or the Human Rights Act?

It is submitted that the standardisation of charges is a legitimate aim in terms of equal rights.

Proportionality

18. Is the impact of the policy proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued? Is it the minimum necessary interference to achieve the legitimate aim?

Yes.

STEP 6: Monitor and review (To complete this section please use the notes on page 18 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment).

19. How will you monitor the implementation of the function, policy or procedure?
(For example, customer satisfaction questionnaires)

- Scrutinise complaint categories
- Feedback from User Groups e.g. Allotment holders
- Ongoing review process

20. How will the results be used to develop the function policy or procedure?

- Will shape and inform any future budget proposals.
- Service management team will regularly consider this as part of the work of its Performance Board
- Budget Monitoring Board meeting regularly to assess progress.

21. When is the function, policy or procedure due for review?

It will be kept under constant review as there is not a standard review process. The monitoring will inform the delivery of Environment & Infrastructure services in future years.

STEP 7: Report results and summary of EHRIA to the public (To complete this section please use the notes on page 19 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment).

22. Where will you publish the results of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment?

Please indicate as follows by ticking the appropriate box(es).

- Summary of EHRIA will be published in committee report under section "Equality Impact Assessment"
- Full EHRIA will be attached to the committee report as an appendix
- Summary of EHRIA to be published on council website within relevant service pages
- Other, please state where:

23. Please summarise the results of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment and give an overview of whether the policy, procedure or function will meet the Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and human rights. This summary needs to include any practical actions you intend to take / have taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse negative impacts.

These budget proposals are necessary as the Council has for many years absorbed the actual maintenance costs while receiving one of the lowest block grant settlements in Scotland. The Council can no longer afford to subsidise services where it does not have a statutory responsibility to do so and where other comparable Authorities do not provide that service.

Through the establishment of an Allotment Working Group, further efficiencies and improvements to allotments will be identified and other potential funding sources contacted.

STEP 8 SIGN OFF (To complete this section please use the notes on page 20 of the guide to the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment)

The final stage of the EHRIA is to formally sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment.

Person completing the impact assessment

Name	Date	Signature
Norrie Steed	12/11/2008	

Quality check: document has been checked by

Name	Date	Signature
Norrie Steed	12/11/2008	
Sandra Bruce	13/11/2008	

Head of Service (Sign-off)

Name	Date	Signature
Norrie Steed	12/11/2008	

Now –

Please send a copy of your completed EHRIA form together with the Policy/Strategy/Procedure to:

Head of Service
Community Planning and Regeneration,
Strategic Leadership
Aberdeen City Council
St. Nicholas House
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1GZ