

Aberdeenshire Council

Integrated Impact Assessment

Mearns Counselling Service

Assessment ID	IIA-002011
Lead Author	Susan McKechnie
Additional Authors	Carina Ebdy
Service Reviewers	Stephanie Duguid
Subject Matter Experts	Susan Forbes, Kakuen Mo, Caroline Hastings, Annette Johnston
Approved By	Pamela Milliken
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1. Overview

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

Review of service provision

During screening 4 of 10 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
- Health Inequalities

In total there are 0 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 4 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 1 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by pamela.milliken@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?	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?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy impact on inequality of outcome?	Yes
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

3. Impact Assessments

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

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Age (Older)	<p>This service provides a time-limited intervention to improve individuals mental health and wellbeing. If this service is no longer available then alternative options may have a different provision and may require a longer waiting time therefore there may be a delay in provision of service to positively impact mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Alternative service provision is available subject to access. Current alternative services include: Aberdeenshire Primary Care Psychological Therapies Service, Penumbra - WELL Aberdeenshire, Specialist Link Worker Service, Mental Health Improvement and Wellbeing Service. Support to individuals and staff will be provided throughout the process.</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>
Age (Younger)	<p>This service provides a time-limited intervention to improve individuals mental health and wellbeing. If this service is no longer available then alternative options may have a different provision and may require a longer waiting time therefore there may be a delay in provision of service to positively impact mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Alternative service provision is available subject to access. Current alternative services include: Aberdeenshire Primary Care Psychological Therapies Service, Penumbra - WELL Aberdeenshire, Specialist Link Worker Service, Mental Health Improvement and Wellbeing Service. Support to individuals and staff will be provided throughout the process.</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Disability	<p>This service provides a time-limited intervention to improve individuals mental health and wellbeing. If this service is no longer available then alternative options may have a different provision and may require a longer waiting time therefore there may be a delay in provision of service to positively impact mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Alternative service provision is available subject to access. Current alternative services include: Aberdeenshire Primary Care Psychological Therapies Service, Penumbra - WELL Aberdeenshire, Specialist Link Worker Service, Mental Health Improvement and Wellbeing Service. Support to individuals and staff will be provided throughout the process.</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

4.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Consultation	Engage HQ survey	The service was assessed positively by staff who refer to it. Referrers said that they are not aware of alternative services.	Those who refer to the service consider it to be very valuable. Referrers believe that if this service was to cease, the burden of support would divert to GP's.

4.5. Information Gaps

Engagement has not been undertaken regarding possible cessation of the service.

4.6. Measures to fill Information Gaps

Measure	Timescale
Communication will be shared with affected staff and stakeholders when an outcome is known.	Communication commenced with the service provider and referrers in January 2024. Further communications have been drafted if required for Elected Members.

4.7. Engagement with affected groups

Engagement has not yet been undertaken

4.8. Ensuring engagement with protected groups

Communication with those in receipt of services will commence from the earliest opportunity.

4.9. Evidence of engagement

Communication with staff and affected individuals will be undertaken if the proposal is approved.

4.10. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

There are alternative services available but accessibility may be different in terms of waiting times and location of services.

This service is a unique and local provision that is not replicated elsewhere in Aberdeenshire. Cessation of the service would result in members of this community having the same access to alternative services as other areas. It is not anticipated that they would receive a lesser service than other areas.

4.11. Improving Relations

All staff and individuals will be made aware of the potential service closure at the earliest opportunity and support will be available for those affected throughout the process.

4.12. Opportunities of Equality

All staff and individuals will be made aware of the potential service closure at the earliest opportunity and support will be available for those affected throughout the process.

5. Health Inequalities Impact Assessment

5.1. 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	

5.2. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Mental health	<p>Potential impact on mental health of those who will need to wait longer for an alternative service.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Support for individuals and referrers will be available to seek alternative support services.</p> <p>Timescale Ongoing</p>

5.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Consultation	Engage HQ survey	The service was assessed highly by those who use it.	Service users rate the service very highly and report being able to achieve desired outcomes.

5.4. Overall Outcome

All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Alternative services are available.

6. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details
<p>Communicate with service provider, referrers and Elected Members once an outcome is known.</p>	<p>Lead Officer Susan McKechnie</p> <p>Repeating Activity No</p> <p>Planned Start Monday March 25, 2024</p> <p>Planned Finish Tuesday April 30, 2024</p> <p>Expected Outcome All affected parties will be aware of the outcome of decisions regarding the continuing operation of the service.</p> <p>Resource Implications This is an indicative timeline which will be reviewed once an IJB decision has been taken and any dates will be confirmed subject to that.</p>