

Aberdeenshire Council

Integrated Impact Assessment

Speech and Language Therapy and Health Visitor Contract with Early Years

Assessment ID	IIA-001885
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1. Overview

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

There is funding in place with Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and the Health Visitor service, to allow for enhanced and targeted support for Early Years across Aberdeenshire.

The SALT provision supports funding for three additional SALT staff (1 FTE band 6, 1 FTE band 7 and 1 FTE band 8A). The Early Years funding contributes to part funding of 4 posts (Family Support Worker Band 5 0.8 FTE, Health Visitor band 7 2 FTE and Community Nursery Nurse band 4 1.96 FTE). These posts support parents from pregnancy to 5 - when child starts attending school. The staff will work with Social Work, Early Years staff and other agencies in relation to early intervention work.

The proposal is that the Early Years Service will cease additional funding for SALT and Health Visitors, which will mean that a statutory service is in place, rather than the current enhanced service. There has been ongoing discussion with the relevant NHS services to prepare for withdrawal of funding.

During screening 6 of 10 questions indicated that detailed assessments were required, the screening questions and their answers are listed in the next section. This led to 3 out of 5 detailed impact assessments being completed. The assessments required are:

- Children's Rights and Wellbeing
- Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty
- Health Inequalities

In total there is 1 positive impact as part of this activity. There are 10 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 3 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by julia.matthew@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?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's wellbeing?	Yes

3. Impact Assessments

Children's Rights and Wellbeing	All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated
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. 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. Rights Indicators

<p>UNCRC Indicators upheld by this activity / proposal / policy</p>	<p>Article 1 - Definition of a child Article 2 - Non-discrimination Article 3 - Best interests of the child Article 4 - Protection of rights Article 5 - Parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities Article 6 - Life, survival and development Article 7 - Birth registration, name, nationality, care Article 8 - Protection and preservation of identity Article 9 - Separation from parents Article 10 - Family reunification Article 11 - Abduction and non-return of children Article 12 - Respect for the views of the child Article 13 - Freedom of expression Article 14 - Freedom of thought, conscience and religion Article 15 - Freedom of association Article 16 - Right to privacy Article 17 - Access to information; mass media Article 18 - Parental responsibilities and state assistance Article 19 - Protection from all forms of violence Article 20 - Children deprived of a family Article 21 - Adoption Article 22 - Refugee children Article 23 - Children with disabilities Article 24 - Health and health services Article 25 - Review of treatment in care Article 26 - Social security Article 27 - Adequate standard of living Article 28 - Right to education Article 29 - Goals of education Article 30 - Children of minorities / indigenous groups Article 31 - Leisure, play and culture Article 32 - Child labour Article 33 - Drug abuse Article 34 - Sexual exploitation Article 35 - Abduction, sale and trafficking Article 36 - Other forms of exploitation Article 37 - Inhumane treatment and detention Article 39 - Recovery and rehabilitation of child victims Article 40 - Juvenile justice Article 42 - Knowledge of rights</p>
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4.3. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
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Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
<p>Included</p>	<p>The funding for SALT is there to provide a very enhanced level of support for children requiring access to/assessment by SALT. The current waiting list for a Speech Therapist in Aberdeenshire is 1 week. There is a risk the withdrawl of funding from Aberdeenshire Council could increase the waiting times for SALT in Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawl of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs)and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Timescale October 2023 to August 2024 and ongoing.</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Included	<p>Potential negative impact on support for ASN due to reduction in SALT funding.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Investment in resources for families in supporting their child/ren. Continued investment in supporting practitioners with training and development opportunities, to develop capacity in relation to SALT across the entire childcare sector.</p> <p>That the level of engagement from the public in accessing materials produced by SALT, is continuing to increase, as is the use of these materials.</p> <p>That the capacity to support children with SALT needs, is being increased in parents/ carers as well as practitioners.</p> <p>Engagement with SALT produced materials for families</p> <p>That there is an increasing take up and confidence amongst staff in supporting children with speech and language support needs.</p> <p>Capacity is being developed amongst those working in childcare - Council and non Council provision.</p> <p>Timescale October 2023 to August 2024 and ongoing.</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Nurtured	<p>The Family Support Worker works with the Health Visitor team including community nurse nurses and with partner agencies including nursery staff and social work. There is a focus on vulnerable children and families. Priorities include:</p> <p>0-3 Early Interventions. Breast Feeding best practice supports - UNICEF Baby Friendly Trained. Parenting in groups and 1:1 Triple P/Mellow Bumps trained. Sleep management planning – Sleep Scotland. Infant Massage in groups and 1:1(Colic management). Relationship Building. Play therapy at Home. First Aid/Resus at home/at nurseries. Post Natal Group – Accident Prevention, First Aid, Resus and Choking, Play and Development, Responsive Parenting, Car Safety</p> <p>There is the possibility that this work could be reduced. The Early Years Service funds a small proportion of this post.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs)and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Timescale February 2022 to August 2024</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Nurtured	<p>Possible negative impact as a result of removal of early intervention work taking place in Garioch.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs) and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.</p> <p>Timescale February 2022 to August 2024 and ongoing</p>

4.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	Engagement with SALT produced materials for families	That the level of engagement from the public in accessing materials produced by SALT, is continuing to increase, as is the use of these materials.	That the capacity to support children with SALT needs, is being increased in parents/carers as well as practitioners.
Internal Data	Training and Development programme	That there is an increasing take up and confidence amongst staff in supporting children with speech and language support needs.	Capacity is being developed amongst those working in childcare - Council and non Council provision.

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Data	Setting visits carried out by Early Years staff and ASN assessments	That children are being supported better in general by settings, rather than input being exclusively from the SALT service.	That children are being supported and challenged to achieve more in terms of their developmental milestones and their early education.

4.5. Accounting for the Views of Children and Young People

The views that have been taken on board as part of this proposal, have been the views of the NHS services, rather than the families themselves.

4.6. Promoting the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

For the Health Visitor aspect of the proposal, the service provision will be changed to allow for greater equity across Aberdeenshire. Currently, the funding is more ad hoc and historical. The reviewed/change in provision will allow for a more equitable and consistent approach across Aberdeenshire.

4.7. Upholding Children and Young People's Rights

Not applicable

4.8. Overall Outcome

All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.

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		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. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact

Impact Area	Impact
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs) and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.</p>

5.4. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
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Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Younger)	<p>More than 6,500 children are currently waiting for initial contact with a speech and language therapist in Scotland, figures obtained by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) have revealed.</p> <p>As of June 2023, 6,503 are on waiting lists to see a speech and language therapist, according to freedom of information requests carried out by the RCSLT across all of Scotland’s health boards, local authorities and health and social care partnerships covering the last five years.</p> <p>The average longest wait for initial contact with a speech and language therapist has increased in the last five years by 7.6 months.</p> <p>There is a risk that there could be an adverse impact on the development of children, as a result of funding withdrawal from SALT.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.</p> <p>INvestment in resources for families in supporting their child/ren. Continued investment in supporting practitioners with training and development opportunities, to develop capacity in relation to SALT across the entire childcare sector.</p> <p>Timescale October 2023 to August 2024 and ongoing</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Age (Younger)	<p>Impact on children with speech and language requirements due to the fact that the waiting list will increase should there be a reduction of FTE in Speech and Language Therapists.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Investment in resources for families in supporting their child/ren. Continued investment in supporting practitioners with training and development opportunities, to develop capacity in relation to SALT across the entire childcare sector. That the level of engagement from the public in accessing materials produced by SALT, is continuing to increase, as is the use of these materials. The capacity to support children with SALT needs, is being increased in parents/carers as well as practitioners. Engagement with SALT produced materials for families That there is an increasing take up and confidence amongst staff in supporting children with speech and language support needs. Capacity is being developed/improved amongst those working in childcare - Council and non Council provision. This is being achieved through training and development, as well as through support visits by Aberdeenshire Early Years staff and SALT staff.</p> <p>Timescale October 2023 to August 2024 and onwards.</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Given the remit of the post in Garioch in supporting those most vulnerable children and parents or parents to be, there could be an adverse impact on those in the Garioch area.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs) and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created. Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.</p> <p>Timescale February 2022 to August 2024 and onwards</p>

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Sex	<p>Due to the reduction in funding for Health Visitor services from Aberdeenshire, this could potentially have an adverse impact on those who are pregnant or with children from 0 to 5 years of age. The Family Support Worker provides a focus on vulnerable children and families across the Garioch area.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs) and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Timescale Feb 2022 to August 2024.</p>
Sex	<p>Given the nature of the funding impact, women will be impacted on more than men in relation to the funding for Health Visitors, Community Nurses and Nursery Nurses.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation Through reviewing ways that services can work together more to develop capacity across practitioners and families, the impact will be reduced/mitigated significantly. There is evidence that the support for children can actually be better whereby there is a whole setting approach to improving capacity. This way, there is more time and support in place in supporting children. Also, parents/carers have skills to better cope and to support their children.</p> <p>Timescale February 2022 to August 2024 and onwards.</p>

5.5. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
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Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Data	Training and Development - take up of courses and feedback from staff/settings	That there is an increasing take up and confidence amongst staff in supporting children with speech and language support needs.	Capacity is being developed amongst those working in childcare - Council and non Council provision.
External Data	Engagement with SALT produced materials for families	That the level of engagement from the public in accessing materials produced by SALT, is continuing to increase, as is the use of these materials.	That the capacity to support children with SALT needs, is being increased in parents/ carers as well as practitioners.

5.6. Engagement with affected groups

Engagement has taken place with staff - those delivering childcare, health visitors and SALT staff but there hasn't been engagement with those who are most likely to be affected.

5.7. Ensuring engagement with protected groups

This hasn't taken place, as the mitigations have been getting developed and are continuing to be developed.

5.8. Evidence of engagement

Not applicable

5.9. Overall Outcome

Only Some Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

A significant level of investment is taking place to train staff in universal approaches in supporting children with speech and language needs, as well as developing capacity in parents/ carers. However, regardless of the level of early intervention and capacity building that is taking place, the waiting list will increase. The waiting list in Aberdeenshire is believed to be the lowest in Scotland and this won't be sustainable. The waiting list has increased across Scotland by 7.6 months on average, whereas Aberdeenshire has actually reduced.

The level of impact will be mitigated through a range of approaches and will continue to be mitigated through collaborative working between Council services, NHS Grampian and other relevant external agencies. The work of Health Visitors etc will be improved through working with Community Nurse and Nursery Nurser remits. This will improve equity across Aberdeenshire. The waiting list in Aberdeenshire is exceptionally good. The level of funding from ELC will be reduced over time, in order to allow the service to adapt and for continued improvements across the sector to be put in place.

5.10. Improving Relations

There has been good relations and collaboration between Health and the Council in relation to these areas. The work continues to develop and evolve. There have been a number of improvements and areas developed to support families, which have been made possible through good relations with NHS.

5.11. Opportunities of Equality

The changes to Health Visitors etc, will improve equity of access. There will be an increased universal offering through capacity building for SALT provision also.

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	

6.2. Negative Impacts and Mitigations

Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
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Impact Area	Details and Mitigation
Mental health	<p>The family support worker (Band 5 0.8 FTE) based in Kemnay focuses on vulnerable children and families. Supporting a range of priorities, including:</p> <p>0-3 Early Interventions. Breast Feeding best practice supports - UNICEF Baby Friendly Trained. Parenting in groups and 1:1 Triple P/Mellow Bumps trained. Sleep management planning – Sleep Scotland. Infant Massage in groups and 1:1(Colic management). Relationship Building. Play therapy at Home. First Aid/Resus at home/at nurseries. Post Natal Group – Accident Prevention, First Aid, Resus and Choking, Play and Development, Responsive Parenting, Car Safety, Childsmile. One day immunising. Assisting UVHVP.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council, Early Years Service funds approximately 15% of this role. There is a risk that the fte could be reduced, if funding was withdrawn.</p> <p>Can be mitigated Yes</p> <p>Mitigation There has been additional funding to support 500 more Health Visitors across Scotland. Also, discussions started in February 2022 between Aberdeenshire Council's Early Years Service and the operational lead for Children and Families (NHS Grampian), in relation to withdrawal of funding. The NHS has been reviewing and developing a standard approach to these historical posts going forward and continuing to meet with team leads responsible to ensure they move towards a model for Community Nursery Nurses (CNNs)and Community Nurses (CNs) as opposed to health visitors. This will support the intervention work that families across Aberdeenshire need and will allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire, rather than only in areas where there have been "additionality" posts created.</p> <p>Timescale February 2022 to August 2024.</p>

6.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
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Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Consultation	Consultation with existing NHS staff	Through making use of Nursery Nurses and Community Nurses, this would allow for a more consistent approach across Aberdeenshire and also allow for improving the capacity of Health Visitors, who are under a lot of demand.	The equity of provision will be improved upon through the new model in development by NHS Grampian.

6.4. Overall Outcome

All Negative Impacts Can Be Mitigated.

Currently the early intervention work being carried out by the Family Support Worker will be able to be replicated across Aberdeenshire. At present, due to the historical nature of the funding, the provision is limited in its reach. Through working with Community Nurses and Nursery Nurses, it will be possible to actually increase equity and have a positive impact on more vulnerable families across Aberdeenshire.

7. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details
Development of Training and Development programme	<p>Lead Officer James Martin</p> <p>Repeating Activity No</p> <p>Planned Start Monday January 01, 2024</p> <p>Planned Finish Friday June 28, 2024</p> <p>Expected Outcome Increased capacity across the entire childcare sector in supporting children with speech and language support requirements</p> <p>Resource Implications Training and Development budget prioritisation and staff time.</p>
Continued investment in resources and materials for parents/carers	<p>Lead Officer James Martin</p> <p>Repeating Activity No</p> <p>Planned Start Monday January 08, 2024</p> <p>Planned Finish Friday August 30, 2024</p> <p>Expected Outcome Parents and carers will have increased skills, knowledge and skills in order to be able to support their child in the home.</p> <p>Resource Implications NHS officer/practitioner time.</p>
Making use of data/feedback from relevant areas to target resources in supporting families with children 0 to 5	<p>Lead Officer James Martin</p> <p>Repeating Activity No</p> <p>Planned Start Monday January 08, 2024</p> <p>Planned Finish Friday August 30, 2024</p> <p>Expected Outcome Funding, staffing and resources that are made best use of in providing early intervention and support to families across Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Resource Implications Existing NHS funding, deployment of staffing and committed external agency funding.</p>