Equality Impact Assessment

EIA for Technology Enabled Care & Homes Service

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool? (Delete as applicable)

Yes

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1. Explaining the matter being assessed

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- Change to a service or function
- A new strategy or policy

Summarise the strategy, policy, service(s), or function(s) being assessed. Describe current status followed by any changes that stakeholders would experience.

The Technology Enabled Care & Homes (TECH) Service is seeking to develop and implement an enhanced offer of technology to individuals funding their own care and eligible adults and young people in transition within Surrey. A piece of discovery work commissioned by Surrey County Council (SCC) into the technology landscape in Surrey delivered by Public Digital in 2020 showed that there was an opportunity to maximise technology in order to support people's independence. The TECH Service subsequently designed and piloted a TEC offer with the objective to leverage rapid advances in the sector and reduce high-cost packages of care in instances where technology could enable greater independence at home.

In April-July 2024, a change in leadership of the TECH team presented opportunities to review and consider the expansion of the current TECH offer to ensure that SCC is fully utilising technology to meet the needs of various cohorts across AWHP. The review looks to move from bespoke and targeted pilots towards an integrated model of TECH delivery across AWHP.

As part of the expanded and integrated offer, a strategy will be developed as well as new specifications for TECH services in Surrey. This will allow SCC and its partners to capitalise on technology solutions that will enable independence, choice, control, dignity, connection and safety for Surrey residents. Technology will be bespoke, flexible and inclusive to address the diverse needs of different cohorts.

Stakeholders will experience a more personal TECH offer with more bespoke solutions and products for people with care and support needs. Practitioners will find the technology offer easier to navigate and understand and will be able to easily implement technology solutions for their clients. SCC will also work more effectively with its partners and providers to jointly identify, implement and fund technology solutions.

How does your service proposal support the outcomes in [the Community Vision for Surrey 2030](#)?

- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life.
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing.
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place.
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.
- Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer.

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- Everyone has a place they can call home, with appropriate housing for all.

In particular, TECH will:
- Enable residents to achieve the outcomes they want through more personalised and independent solutions to their health and care needs ensuring no one is left behind.
- Support our economy by working with local suppliers and services to maximise opportunities for business growth, employability and service sustainability.
- Tackle health inequality driven by demographic challenges that can cause inequitable access to services and support.
- Reduce the need for staff, carers and families to travel to deliver low level care and support tasks.
- Empower greater connectivity and social movement, ensuring people can remain at home and access and contribute to their own communities, for longer.
- Embrace the power of technology and data insights to ensure we can identify areas of high performance and maximise these for the benefit of our residents, the Council and our partners.

Are there any specific geographies in Surrey where this will make an impact?

- County-wide

Assessment team

Detail here who you have involved with completing this EIA. For each include:
- Barbara Anu, EDI Manager for Adult Social Care
- Kathryn Pyper, Chief of Staff, Adult Social Care - EID lead for Adult Social Care
- Ryan Mckeaveney, Performance Data Analyst, AWHP
- Dan Stoneman, Head of Commissioning for Older People, AWHP
- Mikaela Wall, Senior Manager for TECH, AWHP
- Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and groups has taken place to inform this EIA, including: Autism Reference Group, Autism Board, LD&A Partnership, the Directorate Equalities Group and attendees at the TECH Engagement Day.

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2. Service Users / Residents

Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) to consider in your proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups (Please **refer to the EIA guidance** if you are unclear as to what this is).

- Members/Ex members of armed forces and relevant family members (in line with the Armed Forces Act 2021 and Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty)
- Adult and young carers*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness*
- Looked after children/Care leavers*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage*
- Out of work young people)*

- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)*
- Older People in care homes*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities*
- Other (describe below)

 (*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

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1. Age, including younger and older people (and older people in care homes)

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The usually resident population of Surrey, counted by the 2021 Census, was 1,203,108. This represents an increase of 70,718 (6.2%) since 2011. The largest 5-year cohort across Surrey are those aged 50-54 years, with a population of 87,327. The fastest growing cohort compared to previous census are those aged 70-74, with a growth of 34.1% (an additional 14,869 persons. Other older-age groups have also increased - those aged 75-79 by 18.1%, and those aged 80 or older by 14.6%. The overall effect of this is that Surrey's population is made up of a large and growing proportion of people aged over 70. Surrey residents also have longer life expectancies than the South-East as a whole and the South-East has longer life expectancies than the rest of England.

A key focus of our TECH offer is on Surrey adults in need of care and support and in particular the elderly, more frail cohort who can benefit from support to live more independently at home with more dignity, choice and connection. Benefits so far show that technology such as remote monitoring sensors can provide older, frail people with the confidence to remain at home for longer. The service will therefore have a positive impact on Surrey's elderly population. A focus on the elderly, frail population will remain a key part of the future offering as we know that this is a group where the impact of TECH to live more fulfilling, independent lives can be significant.

Apps and smart home equipment have been piloted in other cohorts across AWHP but more work is needed to ensure we are using technology to support adults of all different ages in Surrey with the challenges and barriers they face, including working age adults.

In addition, as part of the TECH offer, it will be necessary to consider the differing levels of digital-awareness and inclusion across different ages. The possession of, for instance, smart phones, will differ across age groups and therefore reduce the ability of some people to interact with the technological solutions. Furthermore, internet connectivity and access is reduced in more rural areas of the county with, generally, an older population living in these areas. Work will therefore need to take place to make sure that age is not a factor in access to certain pieces of technology.

TECH will also look at the transition cohort the potential for children's services to benefit and access offer, including young carers and neurodivergent young people transitioning to adult services, for instance. Their unique needs will be considered in the delivery of technology.

In terms of older people in care homes, TECH offers an opportunity to right size packages of care and may therefore reduce dependence on expensive residential home care for those who are elderly and frail. Bringing technology into packages of care may therefore mean that there are fewer older people in care homes and an increased number of older people living in supported or independent living facilities.

For those in care homes, technology can help to prevent and manage falls, as well as monitoring for any signs of deterioration. Furthermore, technology can reduce the possible intrusion of staff and allow for more dignity and choice for the individual. However, an important consideration is the fact that older people may value face-to-face care and the interaction and connection this brings. In these instances, technology could therefore impact negatively on an individual's life. We will need to be mindful in our technology offer of the need for personal and bespoke solutions that match individual need.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

A key part of the development of the TECH Strategy and of the new specification will be the consideration of opportunities available for TECH to support cohorts of all ages in Surrey. This will

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ensure that technology benefits a broad range of adults of all ages in Surrey. The Strategy is being drafted currently and the new specification is likely to be in place by September 2025. The TECH Team will be responsible for delivering these activities.

We aim to provide opportunities for Surrey residents of all ages to access technologies that help them to achieve specific outcomes. We will tailor processes and information for specific learning needs but the offer will be inclusive to all ages.

The TECH team will be working with other teams and partners to address digital inclusion and connectivity across Surrey, particularly in rural areas. The provision of additional technology (routers and modems) and training will be considered to support these initiatives. This provision and training will take into account the specific needs of Surrey's older population.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

The TECH team are working closely with other teams and with partners on initiatives such as:

- The development of increased extra care housing and independent living facilities to reduce dependency on care homes.
- The discharge to assess model, including the Virtual Ward initiative (Surrey Heartlands).
- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners
- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition
- Own systems design and transformation – Liquidlogic Adult's Social Care System/Tableau

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No. The only negative impact is digital exclusion and availability. These are mainly financial or logistical. We can plan for these with clearly thought through finance proposals and a specified service that is inclusive of all areas of Surrey and all appropriate residents based upon eligibility and technology suitability. We will maximise social value in council contracts and improve information and advice services to overcome any negative impacts of technology adoption based upon access and availability.

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2. Disability

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

In the 2021 census, 5.1% (61,835) of the population in Surrey were classified as disabled under the Equality Act where their day-to-day activities were limited 'a lot' and 8.7% (104,266) of residents were classified as disabled under the Equality Act, whereby their day-to-day activities were limited 'a little'. The table below shows the number of people supported by Adult Social Care by primary reason for support, as can be seen, learning and physical disabilities make up a significant percent of ASC cases.

Primary Support Reason	Number of open cases (27 Nov 2024)	% of open cases (27 Nov 2024)
Learning Disability Support	4,137	17.1%
Mental Health Support	2,984	12.3%
Physical Support - Access and Mobility Only	1,911	7.9%
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	8,261	34.2%
Sensory Support - Support for Dual Impairment	51	0.2%
Sensory Support - Support for Hearing Impairment	104	0.4%
Sensory Support - Support for Visual Impairment	129	0.5%
Social Support - Asylum Seeker Support	5	0.004%
Social Support - Substance Misuse Support	138	0.6%
Social Support - Support for Social Isolation/Other	199	0.8%
Social Support - Support to Carer	3,479	14.4%
Support with Memory and Cognition	938	3.9%
Unknown	1,845	7.6%
Total	**24,181**	**100.0%**

Our current TECH offer is enabling people with disabilities to live more independent and connected lives. Technology has the opportunity to remove some of the many barriers that prevent adults with disabilities from living a 'normal' life. For instance, smart home, falls pendants and GPS location technology are offering people with disability more freedom and independence and reducing the intrusion that can be caused by staff.

However, as part of expanding and growing our TECH offer, SCC needs to be maximising opportunities to support those with disabilities by understanding the diversity of need and the availability of technology to meet these needs. Technology will need to be adaptable to truly support individuals with disabilities in Surrey and deliver care and support that makes a difference to their goals and aspirations.

Furthermore, as we implement technology solutions across various cohorts (for instance elderly residents), we will need to continue to consider any additional needs (for instance hearing or visual impairments or reduced mobility) that may make interacting with the technology more complicated. Any accessibility challenges will need to be addressed, for instance for those with cognitive and sensory impairments. It should be noted that disabilities intersect with other protected characteristics (such as age, race and socioeconomic status) potentially creating compounded barriers to access which will need to be addressed.

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Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

For our strategy and specification development, we will ensure we consult and engage with adults with disabilities in Surrey to understand the challenges and opportunities of TECH for this cohort. It is key that we hear directly from people with lived experience about what matters to them and how TECH can support their lives.

The TECH team continues to work with providers to make changes to products and services to best meet the needs of residents, including those with disabilities. Kits can be adapted for different needs and circumstances and this will need to be an ongoing dialogue.

Work is also needed with providers and practitioners to ensure that TECH is trusted to improve outcomes and that individuals can make the most of the freedom and independence that TECH can offer.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners
- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition
- Own systems design and transformation – Liquidlogic Adult's Social Care System/Tableau

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No. Same as previous regarding digital inclusion. Also, some disabilities may require higher cost and more complex solutions.

3. Gender Reassignment

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There is a need to consider how TECH might support those who are undergoing gender reassignment ~~of~~ or who are experiencing uncertainty around their gender. In particular, adults with autism are more likely to undergo gender reassignment. TECH currently is playing a role in meeting the social care and health needs of those with LD&A in Surrey but there is more to do to grow the offer.

Those who are undergoing gender reassignment may also be living with or experiencing mental health symptoms and technology can support with crisis management as well as the development of coping techniques and strategies to aid with self-management. It may be that technology can also help connect those undergoing gender reassignment to communities and networks of those going through the same experience.

We also need to ensure that the TECH we commission and offer is accessible and inclusive to all, including by working with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for those undergoing or who have undergone gender assignment. For instance, in terms of privacy, dignity and communication.

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Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Consider the needs of those undergoing gender reassignment and whether TECH can play a role in meeting those needs. Explore with all adult social care teams the numbers undergoing gender reassignment in their services and whether TECH can add meaningful support.

Work with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for those undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

4. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There is a need to consider how technology will work for those that speak other languages and may have difficulty communicating in English. In particular, in terms of instructions for usage, the alarm receiving centre and community responder service. Interpretation and/or translation services (included translated written materials) may be required depending on demand and need.

Furthermore, there is also a need to ensure that technology solutions are culturally appropriate and to co-develop culturally sensitive training and communication materials, incorporating feedback from community leaders and advocacy groups representing ethnic minorities in Surrey. As examples, residents from certain backgrounds may be more likely to live in intergenerational housing or to want to care for their loved ones in their own house. Technology may also be perceived differently by people of different ethnicities. Communication and engagement may therefore need to be adapted and practitioners and providers may need to work differently with these residents.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

For our strategy and specification development, we will ensure we consult and engage with adults of different races in Surrey to understand the challenges and opportunities of TECH. It is key that we hear directly from people with lived experience about what matters to them and how TECH can support their lives.

The TECH team continues to work with providers to make changes to products and services to best meet the needs of residents, including those from different races. Kits can be adapted for different needs and circumstances and this will need to be an ongoing dialogue.

Work is also needed with providers and practitioners to ensure that TECH is trusted to improve outcomes and that individuals can make the most of the freedom and independence that TECH can offer.

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What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

5. Sexual Orientation

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There is a need to consider how TECH might support adults who may be uncertain about or struggling with their sexual orientation. The LGBTQ+ community may also be living with or experiencing mental health symptoms and technology can support with crisis management as well as the development of coping techniques and self-management strategies. It may be that technology can also help those who are struggling to connect with communities and networks of those going through the same experience.

We also need to ensure that the TECH we commission and offer is accessible and inclusive to all, including by working with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for the LGBTQ+ community. For instance, in terms of privacy, dignity and communication.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Consider the needs of those who are uncertain about or struggling with their sexual orientation and whether TECH can play a role in meeting those needs. Explore with mental health colleagues whether there is a specific need for the LGBTQ+ community for TECH to address.

Work with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for the LGBTQ+ community. Incorporate consultation with SCC's LGBTQ+ staff network to ensure their specific needs are captured and addressed.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

6. Members/Ex members of armed forces and relevant family members

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Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There is a need to consider how TECH might support members and veterans of the armed forces, in particular in terms of mental health, loneliness and isolation and to support with any disabilities and/or health conditions that they may have. TECH can provide support for those with anxiety and depression by offering crisis management as well as the development of coping techniques and self-management strategies. Smart Home, motion sensor and traditional telecare technology can offer enhanced independence, safety and connection to their community for those that may need extra support to live independently. Environmental controls and assistive technology in the home can facilitate independent living and improved quality of life of life, helping to meet the needs of any physical disabilities.

We also need to ensure that the TECH we commission and offer is accessible and inclusive to all, including by working with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for members and ex-members of the armed forces. For instance, being able to adapt the look, sound and feel of the TECH we deploy to ensure it is personalised and considerate of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Consider the needs of members and veterans of the armed forces and whether TECH can play a role in meeting those needs. Working with adult social care teams including occupational therapists regarding supporting technology access through disabled facilities grants and with the community and prevention teams for support groups tackling isolation and loneliness.

Work with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for members and veterans of the armed forces

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

N/A

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

7. Adult and young carers

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

According to the 2011 Census, 18,400 (9.6%) Surrey residents reported that they provide unpaid care. The proportion has changed little since 2001 when 9.4% were providing care. Most carers are providing less than 20 hours per week, but 11,000 are providing 20 to 49 hours per week and 18,474 (1.63%) are providing more than 50 hours per week**.**

We recognise the many opportunities that technology can offer carers in terms of piece of mind, breaks and independence as well as connection. Our technology offer will capitalise on these opportunities. In terms of carers, solutions will be tailored both for the person being cared for and the carer themselves. The overall impact on carers is therefore likely to be positive.

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Some of the barriers to technology for carers may be ensuring that the trust is there with pieces of technology, for instance where a carer can leave the house or the individual being cared for can leave the house because there is monitoring, GPS location or other technology in place. A focus will be on building an understanding and confidence in technology. Similarly, some carers may feel that they are letting their loved one down by using technology to improve their independence, connection and health and wellbeing. SCC will need to work with these carers to guide and support them.

A consideration with carers is the large number of informal carers that have not registered with SCC or another partner and who are therefore not being supported with their carer duties. It will be challenging to reach this cohort to support with technology solutions.

Furthermore, a current barrier to capitalising on technology for the carer cohort is the lack of opportunity, advice and guidance to use funding for technology as this is not currently an eligible form of funded support.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

SCC TECH Team will work with carers to understand the opportunities and barriers for this cohort. Solutions will be focused not only on the person being cared for but the carer themselves. Through the strategy and new specification development, we will consult with a diverse range of carers about the technology services and products that matter to them.

We will be setting up a TECH Reference Group and will recruit an adult with LD&A in Surrey to be part of that group. We will be able to look at opportunities and challenges and test products with that group.

We will work with the Carers Practice team and Commissioners for Carer services to ensure there is appropriate guidance, support and training for the use of technology. This will include support for less digitally enabled carers as well as those in more rural parts of the county. Furthermore, we will work with these colleagues to look at opportunities for technology solutions to be eligible for carers' funding.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners
- Own systems design and transformation – LAS / AOSS / Tableau

We will work closely with other initiatives for carers, including use of carers' funding (offered by SCC and partners like GPs). The TECH team may also need to interface with other key carers' initiatives- personal breaks and carer passports for work etc.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

8. Those experiencing domestic abuse

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

There is a need to consider how TECH might support those who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, in particular in terms of mental health and to support with connection. Those

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experiencing domestic abuse may need support to live independently and to overcome trauma. TECH can offer crisis management as well as the development of coping techniques and strategies to support mental health and wellbeing. Smart Home technology can offer enhanced independence, safety and connection for those that need extra help. Technology can also support with connecting people to networks and communities of people who have similar lived experience and it can provide help with independent living, traveling and gaining employment.

By deploying technology to support those who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse, we may be able to offer more agency and control for the individual and offer more flexible support to individuals (for instance virtual calls and support might mean better access at any locations and time).

We also need to ensure that the TECH we commission and offer is accessible and inclusive to all, including by working with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for those that are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. For instance, being able to adapt the look, sound and feel of the TECH we deploy to ensure it's personalised and considerate of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Consider the needs of those experiencing domestic abuse and whether TECH can play a role in meeting those needs, including by working with the Community Safety and Changing Futures teams.

Work with providers and partners to overcome any additional barriers that might be in place for those that are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners
- Changing Futures
- Community Safety Partnership work

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

9. Those experiencing digital exclusion

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Digital exclusion is a significant concern for the implementation of technological solutions and poses a risk for the success of TECH initiatives. In particular, digital exclusion may affect certain key cohorts such as those who are elderly and/or frail.

Some products may depend on use of existing technology, for example a smartphone or a reliable internet connection. In some instances, carers or family members may be relied upon to support with the operation and upkeep of technology for an individual.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

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As far as possible, technology will be made easy to use and interact with and, for some of the core offer (for instance motion sensors), there will be no need for the individual to have a knowledge and understanding of the technology. Routers and modems are being supplied currently to boost internet connection when needed and the TECH team will ensure it works with relevant SCC teams and partners on the digital inclusion agenda.

Where existing technology is needed for the use of a funded TECH offer (for instance smart phones for apps or for smart homes), the TECH team will, as far as possible, work with teams and partners on the provision of necessary equipment. Individuals will also be supported through training and guidance to support use of and adherence to technology.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

Links will be made with the digital inclusion and internet connectivity agenda across SCC teams and partners.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

10. Those living in rural/urban areas

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Internet connectivity and access is reduced in more rural areas of the county which can present a significant barrier to technology use and access in this cohort. Generally, the population is older in more rural areas and work will therefore need to take place to make sure that rural living and age are not a factor in access to certain pieces of technology.

Furthermore, a nationwide digital switchover means internet access will be integral to the use of technology solutions from 2027 (with preparations underway currently). There is therefore a more significant risk that those in rural areas will be technologically disadvantaged.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

The TECH team works with our motion sensor provider currently on the provision of routers and modems to boost internet connectivity. This work will need to continue as a priority. The new specification will need to make provision for those in rural areas and ensure that the provider works with SCC to reduce connectivity limitations for those living in rural areas.

SCC is also liaising with D&B colleagues on the digital switchover to ensure the toolkit is being used and information sharing arrangements are being progressed with networks etc. This will need to be maintained as a focus as the digital switchover progresses.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

See work on the digital switchover above. The TECH team will also be linking with colleagues across SCC and partners on the digital inclusion agenda.

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Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

11. Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

For those with statutory needs, means-testing (as currently takes place across packages of care) will enable SCC to ensure that those below financial thresholds are provided with the technology they need to stay safe, independent and connected. For those who do not meet statutory responsibility thresholds or who are not eligible for free care and support, the TECH service and offer will need to consider how it can take a technology-enabled approach to ensure these individuals can still benefit from technology and receive information, advice and guidance on options for technology to support them.

Where technology (such as apps or Alexas) necessitates an individual owning existing technology (such as smart phones), SCC may wish to consider (alongside its partners) the provision of equipment to enable different socioeconomic groups to take full advantage of the TECH offer. The TECH team will also work alongside other teams on barriers such as internet connectivity and speed which may disproportionately affect those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Where individuals receive direct payment or other forms of payment to pay for their own care and support, the TECH team will be working with teams across AWHP to ensure individuals are offered robust and personal advice on technology that could support them. For instance, the LD&A teams and Carer Practice teams.

The TECH team may decide to provide advice to those who do not meet statutory needs or who are not eligible for free care and support. Where it recommends options, SCC would need to be mindful of the cost of different products and provide a balanced view of available technology and the cost implications for the individual.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Nobody left behind agenda, including targeting key neighbourhoods in Surrey

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

12. Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism

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Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Our current TECH offer is enabling people with LD&A to live more independent and connected lives. Technology has the opportunity to remove some of the many barriers that prevent adults with LD&A from living a 'normal' life. Currently, apps have been trialled and implemented to support independent living, employment, mental health, independent travel and time management etc. There is therefore, overall, a strong positive impact of the TECH service and offer on adults with learning disabilities and/or autism.

When consulting Surrey's Autism Reference Group, we heard, among other things, about the opportunities of technology to support mental health, aid time management and help in the workplace. Some of the challenges and opportunities for technology that were raised by the group were:

- Object permanence whereby someone with autism may forget that an object exists because it is not in front of them. They may therefore forget that an app exists to help them navigate a certain situation.
- The need to personalise support and instructions sufficiently to ensure technology provides meaningful help.
- That crises often happen in the evening so having an app to support can be invaluable.
- People with LD&A often lack a personal support network or don't want to feel like they are bothering people so technology can provide invaluable support and connection.

As part of expanding and growing our TECH offer, SCC needs to be maximising opportunities to support those with LD&A. Furthermore, as we implement technology solutions across various cohorts (for instance elderly residents), we will need to consider any additional needs that may make interacting with the technology more complicated.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

For our strategy and specification development, we will ensure we consult and engage with adults with disabilities in Surrey to understand the challenges and opportunities of TECH for this cohort. It is key that we hear directly from people with lived experience about what matters to them and how TECH can support their lives.

We will be setting up a TECH Reference Group and will recruit an adult with LD&A in Surrey to be part of that group. We will be able to look at opportunities and challenges and test products with that group.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners
- Corporate Transformation across Older People, Reablement, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities & Autism and Transition
- Own systems design and transformation – Liquidlogic Adult's Social Care System/Tableau

TECH can support SCC's ambition for an increase in adults with LD&A living in independent settings and gaining and sustaining employment.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

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13.   People with drug or alcohol use issues

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The use of and benefits of technology for those with drug and alcohol issues has not been fully explored. It is likely that this technology is currently being under-utilised for this cohort. Similarly, use of and adherence to technology for those with drug or alcohol use issues that are part of other cohorts (elderly and/or frail or those with disabilities or LD&A) needs to be fully considered. Technology could offer medication reminders, companionship, support and purpose in this cohort. It may also be that technology could reduce the intrusion of staff for individuals being cared for by SCC and partners who have drug or alcohol use issues.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Explore with Public Health and Health colleagues the potential for technology to support this cohort. In particular, link in substance misuse colleagues and with the Changing Futures team.

Explore with providers ways in which technology can be adapted to meet the needs of this cohort, for instance if mobility, manual dexterity, mobility etc. are reduced.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

Changing Futures is focused on those with multiple disadvantage, including those with substance misuse issues. Technology is being explored as part of this initiative.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

14.   People on Probation

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The use of and benefits of technology for those on probation has not been fully explored. TECH might be able to support those who are on probation, in particular in terms of mental health, connection and living independently. TECH can offer crisis management as well as the development of coping techniques and strategies to support mental health and wellbeing. Smart Home technology can offer enhanced independence, safety and connection for those that need extra help. Technology can also support with connecting people to networks and communities of people who have similar lived experience and it can provide help with independent living, traveling and gaining employment.

By deploying technology to support those who are on probation we may be able to offer support with leading a more fulfilling life and therefore divert people away from criminality.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

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Explore with Community Safety and Public Health colleagues the potential for technology to support this cohort. In particular, link in with the Changing Futures team and the adult social care Prisons Team.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Community Safety
- Changing Futures is focused on those with multiple disadvantage, including those who have been in prison. Technology is being explored as part of this initiative.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

15. Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including severe mental illness SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Please see section 2 for the impact that the TECH service might have on those with a disability.

TECH has the potential to positively affect those with a long-term health condition by enabling greater independence, control and connection. TECH has the potential to support the monitoring and management of long-term health conditions which can support this cohort to live healthier, more fulfilling lives with increased agency and dignity. To fully leverage this potential, it will be necessary to work closely with Health and Public Health colleagues. It will also be necessary to refine the process for monitoring, including response to alerts and reviewing data collection. Furthermore, it will be necessary to ensure that TECH solutions for other cohorts (for instance those with LD&A and those who are elderly and frail) are suitable for those with long-term health conditions when they need to access them. This might involve different training and guidance or tweaking the product itself.

For those with an SMI, technology has a profound ability to support mental health and wellbeing and bring increased independence, control, connection and dignity to this cohort. In 2020/21, SMI prevalence was 0.73% of the Surrey population- 9,343 people. Apps can offer support out of hours and reduce the sense of being a 'burden' that individuals can feel when they need help and support. One individual at the Autism Reference Group who accessed mental health support via an app told us that crises often come in the evening and that they were lacking a personal support network and did not want to feel like they were bothering people. Technology can also offer prompts and reminders as well as support with daily activities for independent living, employment etc.

As above for those with long-term conditions, it will be necessary to ensure that TECH solutions for other cohorts (for instance those with LD&A and those who are elderly and frail) are suitable for those with SMI. This might involve different training and guidance or tweaking the product itself. Recently, the TECH team worked with a provider to use a different product (which was more discrete) for monitoring for an individual with an SMI as they were uncomfortable with the standard motion sensors.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

For our strategy and specification development, we will ensure we consult and engage with adults with long-term health conditions and an SMI in Surrey to understand the challenges and opportunities of TECH for this cohort. It is key that we hear directly from people with lived experience about what matters to them and how TECH can support their lives.

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The TECH team will work with colleagues on developing clearer guidelines about the level of mental health support offered by apps when they offer an advice or crisis line.

The TECH team will continue to explore with providers way in which technology can be adapted to meet the needs of this cohort.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Corporate Transformation across OP, Reablement, MH and LD&A
- Own systems design and transformation – LAS / AOSS / Tableau
- Coordinate with Health re. work on MDTs and on virtual wards.
- Explore the Kooth licencing in Surrey which currently is targeted at CYP rather than adults.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

16. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are more likely to be living in more remote, rural and 'off-the-grid' areas in which connectivity and digital exclusion may be a significant challenge. Some members of the GRT community may not reside in permanent housing and the installation and accessibility of technology is therefore likely to be more challenging. This might compromise our ability to provide technology that would support members of the GRT community.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Working with our partners and providers, there is a significant focus on digital inclusion in Surrey. Our TECH providers can provide sim cards/routers/modems/gateways etc. that can boost connectivity in properties, allowing technology to be installed in areas that may experience poorer internet connection. In complex cases involving the GRT community, it is likely that the TECH team would need to work with providers as well as Economy & Growth and IT&D to ensure that connectivity is not a barrier to accessing Surrey's TECH offer. Explore with Public Health links to work they undertake with GRT community.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

- Digital inclusion
- Digitising social care with NHS partners

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

No.

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3. Staff

Age including younger and older people

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

We do not anticipate the Technology Enabled Care & Homes Service will have an impact upon staff with protected characteristics. There are likely to be barriers to staff being familiar with the technology and become confident in using new products and processes that are introduced. However, this is not likely to be linked to certain groups or cohorts.

4. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken
- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
    - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
    - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.
- **Outcome Four: Stop and rethink the policy** when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (For guidance on what is unlawful discrimination, refer to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance and Codes of Practice on the Equality Act concerning employment, goods and services and equal pay).

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Recommended outcome:

- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?

Explanation:

The TECH service will have an overall strongly positive impact on many of the groups identified in this EIA, in particular older people, adults with a disability, LD&A, SMI or long-term health conditions. TECH has the potential to give these cohorts independence and agency over their own care and support. It can have a positive impact on such areas as independent living, employment, mental health and wellbeing, travel, relationships and safety. The rollout of TECH is therefore an imperative for SCC and its partners. As a system, it is important we capitalise on opportunities to support these groups who need care and support and reduce the barriers they face in daily life.

It is recommended that we adjust the policy and service to ensure nobody is disadvantaged by technology, in particular those who experience digital exclusion and those living in rural areas. Additional support, guidance and technology is likely to be needed to ensure that these cohorts can access the technology offer. Furthermore, our technology solutions and service will need to be continually reviewed and refined to make sure many different cohorts can engage with the offer and use technology successfully. This may mean tweaking and shaping new products with the provider, rolling out additional training or providing bespoke solutions and information, advice and guidance. The TECH team is confident that the proposed adjustments listed in this document will remove the barriers faced by groups who need care and support.

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5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

Insert your action plan here, based on the mitigations recommended.

Involve you Assessment Team in monitoring progress against the actions above.

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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/ Closed
1	August 2024	TECH Strategy Development	Senior Commissioning Manager for TECH	Q1 2025	Rigorous co-production and engagement with various stakeholders (many of which are listed in this document) to take place as part of the strategy development process. This will be a chance to consult with many groups on the opportunities and challenges offered by technology and make sure we do not disadvantage any cohorts.	Open
2	September 2024	New TECH Specification	Head of Commissioning for Older People and Senior Commissioning Manager for TECH	September 2025	Develop a new TECH service and offer that capitalises on all of the opportunities technology offers. This includes developing an equitable technology offer and one that supports Surrey residents most in need of care and support. The new service will tackle equality impact concerns, including addressing digital inclusion and internet connectivity.	Open

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3	September 2024	Establishing a TECH Reference Group	Senior Commissioning Manager for TECH	January 2025	We will be able to look at opportunities and challenges and test products with this group. The group will have broad representation from many of the groups with protected characteristics listed in this EIA. Through this group, the TECH team will check and challenge progress.	Open
4	August 2024	Digital Switchover Support	TECH Team	Ongoing	Liaise with D&B colleagues on the digital switchover to ensure the toolkit is being used and information sharing arrangements are being progressed with networks etc. This will need to be maintained as a focus as the digital switchover progresses.	Open
5	September 2024	Coordination with Health on their funding to implement Sensor Based Falls Prevention and Detection Technology in CQC registered care homes.	Senior Manager & Senior Commissioning Manager for TECH	December 2024	Support with the selection of suitable care homes to make the most of the technology on offer.	Open
6	2023	Drop-in sessions for staff	Senior Manager for TECH, Senior Practice Lead and TECH Advisor(s)	Ongoing	Run by the TECH team to support managers and staff with concerns and challenges and to showcase equipment.	Open

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7	July 2024	Changes to LAS	Senior Manager for TECH	January 2025 (LAS Freeze dependent)	Make it easier for staff to refer for technology and identify where technology can support Care act needs.	Open

6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1	Initial Draft	Helen Tindall	25/09/2024
2.	Updated to incorporate changes on behalf of Directorate Equalities Group (DEG)	Helen Tindall	18/12/2024

The above provides historical data about each update made to the Equality Impact Assessment.

Please include the name of the author, date and notes about changes made – so that you can refer to what changes have been made throughout this iterative process.

For further information, please see the EIA Guidance document on version control.

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6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

The level of EIA sign off will depend on who the change affects. Generally speaking, for strictly internal changes, Head of Service/ Exec Director sign off should suffice. For changes affecting residents, the Cabinet Member is required to approve completed EIAs.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service	
Executive Director	
Cabinet Member	
Directorate Equality Group/ EDI Group (If Applicable) (arrangements will differ depending on your Directorate. Please enquire with your Head of Service or the CSP Team if unsure)	Kathryn Pyper, Chair of AWHP DEG 17 December 2024

Publish:
It is recommended that all EIAs are published on Surrey County Council's website.

Please send approved EIAs to: equalityimpactassessments@surreycc.gov.uk

EIA author:

6c. EIA Team

Equality Impact Assessment

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role
Barbara Anu	EDI Manager	SCC	EDI Lead
Kathryn Pyper	Chief of Staff and EID Lead	SCC	EDI Lead
Ryan Mckeaveney	Performance Data Analyst	SCC	Data & Insight
Dan Stoneman	Head of Commissioning for Older People	SCC	Head of TECH and providing understanding of OP context
Mikaela Wall	Senior Manager for TECH	SCC	Operational insight and OT and LD&A background and experience

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on CD or in another language please contact us on:

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