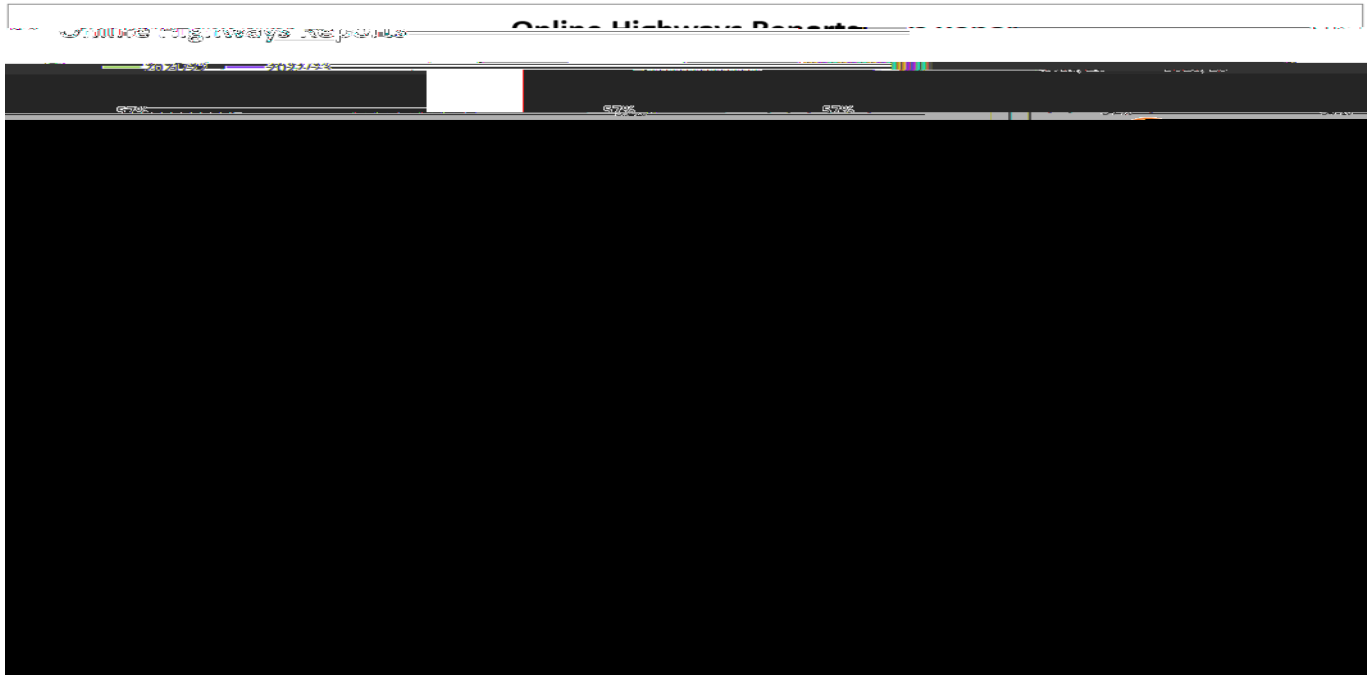


# Equality Impact Assessment

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The number of adults who have either never used the internet or have not used it in the last three months, has been declining over recent years. Since 2011, this number has almost halved, but in 2019 there were still 4.8 million adults in the UK, or 9.1% of the adult UK population, in this situation. An estimated 200,000 people suffer from digital exclusion in Surrey. (Source Surrey-i).

Digital exclusion is inextricably linked to wider inequalities in society and is more likely to be faced by those on low incomes. (Source Local Government Association). With the current cost of living crisis there are likely to be more people who cannot afford to replace old or broken devices and/or remain connected to internet services.

Although, in general, internet use continues to increase, we are aware that some people will not be able to access digital reporting systems. We will therefore continue to offer a discrete mediated services for customers who are digitally excluded or unable to use the online reporting system. This will ensure that people with protected characteristics are not disadvantaged or excluded from making highways reports and enquiries.

We will also continue to work collaboratively with the library service so that customers visiting local libraries can get the help and support they need to access digital channels. This will assist in driving forward early engagement and help in communities, provide a more joined up customer experience and achieve better outcomes for residents.

We anticipate that the reduction in calls will mean that our establishment can be reduced by 1FTE resulting in savings of £30K. This will be achieved by natural wastage and will not have an impact on staff, including those with protected characteristics.

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This document sets out the potential equality impacts on individuals who live, work and/or travel through Surrey arising from this proposed change.

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

The proposed change supports the following aspirations in the Community Vision:

Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer.

Businesses in Surrey thrive.

Well connected communities, with effective infrastructure, that grow sustainably.

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

County-wide

**Assessment team** A key principle for completing impact assessments is that they should **ind**BT/F2 u0.00

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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

Adult and young carers\*

Those experiencing digital exclusion\*

Those experiencing domestic abuse\*

Atis(d)-ge 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 wuvers\*

# Equality Impact Assessment

## AGE

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

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

The contact centre will continue to offer a discrete mediated service for those who are unable to use digital channels. Our IVR messaging will advise customers who telephone and are unable to access the website that their call will be answered.

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of people/already in place**

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## DISABILITY

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

In 2020, only 84% of those with a disability were recent internet users, compared to 91% of non-disabled people, and twice as many disabled people reported to have not used the internet in the last 3 months (8%) (ON







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In 2018, it was estimated that 20% of the gypsy and traveller population had never used the internet, which was twice the national average and only 42% used it daily (approximately 50% less than the national average). Those who had never accessed the internet were all over 40.

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

The contact centre will continue to offer a discrete mediated service for those who are unable to use digital channels or need additional support to do so. Our IVR messaging will advise

# Equality Impact Assessment

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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

None identified.

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

N/A

**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?**

N/A

## MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

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

None identified

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

N/A

**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?**

N/A

# Equality Impact Assessment

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

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

Due to the current cost of living crisis some people may not be able to engage digitally due to the affordability of devices, broadband, data etc. Those with a sensory impairment may be unable to afford enabling aids such as magnification or voice activated software.

(Source Data Digital Inclusion in Surrey Heartlands Strategy 2021/22)

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

The contact centre will continue to offer a discrete mediated service for those who are unable to use digital channels or need additional support to do so. Our IVR messaging will advise customers who telephone and are unable to access the website that their call will be answered.

**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?**



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## Recommended outcome:

Two

## Explanation:

While this impact assessment has identified the potential for negative impacts on certain protected groups, established mitigations are in place to minimise these impacts. Some groups will benefit from the offer of improved digital reporting tools. It will also reduce costs and free up capacity to support those who need us the most.

## 5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

The contact centre will continue to offer a discrete mediated service for those who are unable to use digital channels or need additional support to do so. Our IVR messaging will advise customers who telephone and are unable to access the website that their call will be answered.

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/ Closed
1	02/01/2023	Staff awareness and training on call appropriate call handling techniques for customers unable to access the website.	Rachel Bearman	31/03/2023		

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Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/ Closed
4	Ongoing	Continue to work in collaboration with the library service so that customers can obtain assistance and support from local libraries in accessing digital channels, including the reporting of non-urgent highways issues	Rachel Bearman	Ongoing		

## 6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1.1	Initial EIA completed	Carole Comfort	16/11/2022
1.2	Update of content following feedback	Carole Comfort	22/11/2022

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.



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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.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service Susan Grizzelle	16/11/2022
Executive Director	29/11/2022
Cabinet Member	01/12/2022
Directorate Equality Group	

### Publish:

Please send approved EIAs to: **INSERT SHARED EMAIL ACCOUNT ADDRESS**

### EIA author:

## 6c. EIA Team

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role
Susan Grizzelle	Head of Customer Services	Surrey County Council	EIA co-author
Rachel Bearman	Customer Contact & Systems Manager	Surrey County Council	EIA co-author
Carole Comfort	Customer Services Project Lead	Surrey County Council	EIA author