Notice of Meeting

Resources and Performance Select Committee

Date & time	Place	Contact	Interim Head of Paid Service
Thursday, 18 July 2024 at 10.00 am	Council Chamber, Woodhatch Place, Reigate	Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer Tel: 07971 663 794 Jake.Chambers@surreycc.gov.uk	Michael Coughlin We're on Twitter: @SCCdemocracy

If you would like a copy of this agenda or the attached papers in another format, eg large print or braille, or another language please either call 020 8541 9122, or email Jake.Chambers@Surreycc.gov.uk.

This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer.

Elected Members

Nick Darby (The Dittons), Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East), David Harmer (Waverley Western Villages), Edward Hawkins (Heatherside and Parkside), Robert Hughes (Shere) (Chairman), Riasat Khan (Woking North), Robert King (Egham), Andy Lynch (Horley West, Salfords & Sidlow), Steven McCormick (Epsom Town and Downs) (Vice-Chairman), John O'Reilly (Hersham), Lance Spencer (Goldsworth East and Horsell), Lesley Steeds (Lingfield) (Vice-Chairman) and Hazel Watson (Dorking Hills)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

- Finance
- Orbis Partnership Functions
- HR&OD
- IT and Digital
- Business Ops
- Property
- Procurement
- Equalities and Diversity
- Internal/External Communications
- Legal and Democratic Services
- Customer Services

AGENDA

1   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Purpose of the item: To receive any apologies for absence and substitutions.

Apologies have been received from Cllrs Steeds and Forster-Warner.

2   MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 15 MAY 2024   (Pages 5 - 16)

Purpose of the item: To agree the minutes of the Resources and Performance Select Committee held on 15 May 2024 as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Purpose of the item: All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter:

I.   Any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or

II.   Other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at this meeting.

NOTES:

- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

- As well as an interest of the Member, this includes any interest, of which the Member is aware, that relates to the Member's spouse or civil partner (or any person with whom the Member is living as a spouse or civil partner).

- Members with a significant personal interest may participate in the discussion and vote on that matter unless that interest could be reasonably regarded as prejudicial.

4   QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Purpose of the item: To receive any questions or petitions.

NOTES:

1.   The deadline for Members' questions is 12:00pm four working days before the meeting *(Friday 12 July 2024)*.

2.   The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting *(Thursday 11 July 2024)*.

3.   The deadline for petitions was 14 days before the meeting, and no petitions have been received.

5   VERBAL UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE DIGITAL BUSINESS AND INSIGHTS (DB&I) TASK GROUP

Purpose of the item: To give a brief update on the progress of the group's final report and its progress to Cabinet.

6   CUSTOMER TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

Purpose of the item: The report provides an update on the Customer Transformation Programme, including an overview of the approach and work to date and plans for the next phase of delivery, including investment requirements.

7   DIGITAL INCLUSION

Purpose of the item: To share the outcomes of research into digital exclusion in Surrey with Members and the proposed response to the findings of the research. The report seeks the Committee's endorsement of the proposed way forward.

8   PERFORMANCE MONITORING SESSION NOTES 19 JUNE 2024

Purpose of the item: To publish the notes of the Performance Monitoring Session conducted on 19 June 2024.

9   FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER

Purpose of the item: For the Select Committee to review the attached Forward Work Programme and Recommendation Tracker, making suggestions for additions or amendments as appropriate.

10   DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Resources and Performance Select Committee will be held on Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 10:00am.

There will be an informal briefing on scrutiny of the budget setting process on Friday 20 September at 1.00pm.

be made aware of any filming taking place.

Use of mobile devices, including for the purpose of recording or filming a meeting, is subject to no interruptions, distractions or interference, or any general disturbance to proceedings. The Chairman may ask for mobile devices to be switched off in these circumstances.

It is requested that if you are not using your mobile device for any of the activities outlined above, it be switched off or placed in silent mode during the meeting to prevent interruptions.

Thank you for your co-operation

MINUTES of the meeting of the **RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 15 May 2024 at Council Chamber, Woodhatch Place, Reigate.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 18 July 2024.

Elected Members:
rNick Darby
*Will Forster
*Tim Hall
*David Harmer
*Edward Hawkins
*Robert Hughes (Chairman)
*Robert King
*Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
*John O'Reilly
 Becky Rush
*Lance Spencer
*Lesley Steeds (Vice-Chairman)
*Hazel Watson

*present at the meeting
r=Remote attendance

10/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

None received.

11/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 12 MARCH 2024 [Item 2]

The minutes of the Resources and Performance Select Committee held on 12 March 2024 were formally agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

12/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

13/24 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

No questions or petitions received.

14/24 CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY [Item 5]

Witnesses:
Kevin Deanus, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resillience

Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure
Shella Smith, Director for People & Change
Glenn Woodhead, Assistant Director- Workplace & Facilities
Lesley Graham, Head of Health and Safety

Key points raised during the discussion:

Audit Response

1. The Chairman asked what involvement the Cabinet had in the Council's Health and Safety Improvement Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience explained that the leader of the Council had signed the Corporate Health and Safety And Wellbeing Policy, which was reviewed annually and there was good engagement with himself as the portfolio holder. There were quarterly reviews on health and safety performance and the Cabinet Member had a monthly review and portfolio reviews with the Leader of the Council, where performance and risks were discussed. An update on health and safety had gone to a meeting of the informal Cabinet in January 2024, which included progress on the actions from the internal audit. Once the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan was developed, it would be shared with the formal Cabinet. Each portfolio lead within the Cabinet had a nominated individual as the health and safety lead.

The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure joined the meeting at 10.06am

2. The Head of Health and Safety added that one of the actions from Internal Audit report was a member's briefing, which resulted in the named health and safety leads being supplied to all the portfolio holders.

3. A Member asked how effective the Corporate Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and its reporting system was. The Head of Health and Safety explained that new KPIs expanded on previous KPIs and provided a more detailed level of reporting and trend data, which easily identified areas for improvement. The KPIs were first recorded in the organisational effective report in March 2024 which showed a decline in the completion rates of accident incident reviews and the mandatory health and safety training. There was therefore a bigger focus from the health and safety leads within their directorates to ensure that report and improvement rates improved. The quarterly KPIs were taken to the Central Joint Health, Safety and

Wellbeing Committee (CJHSWC), chaired by a member of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). Actions were taken back from service and health and safety leads to ensure directorates helped to support improvements. These KPIs are therefore more reflective than before but would continue to be reviewed over the next 12 months.

4. The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience explained that officers are measuring KPIs against the same quarters in previous years to gain an understanding of seasonal differences and trends.

5. A Member asked for an explanation of the role and importance of the Chair of the CJHSWC and if the chair's rotation among CLT members effected the continuity of expertise and clear accountability. The Head of Health and Safety explained that the chair was responsible for overseeing the committee meetings. The Chair ensured this was reported to CLT, where minutes and slides were also shared to provide the key findings from the meeting. The CJHSWC is tasked with promoting and improving Health, Safety and Wellbeing across the council and complying with health and safety legislation. The chair of the CJHSWC was an important role, demonstrating the council's commitment and legal responsibility to consult with its employees and representatives on health and safety matters. Having a member of CLT chair the meeting was reflective of the importance attributed to the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and the communities the council serves.

6. In relation to rotating the role of the Chair among CLT members, the Head of Health and Safety explained that it provided the opportunity for each member of CLT to be responsible for and involved in the promotion and improvement of health, safety, and wellbeing, and to understand their legal responsibility. It promoted a wider perspective of issues and areas for improvement across the whole council – rather than just in one directorate - and strengthened the message that health and safety is a collective responsibility. The CLT chair served for a whole year, which provided continuity and accountability for that year.

7. A Member asked if the health and safety training for senior management included executive leaders. The Member also asked why the health and safety refresher training would not be delivered until the new Chief Executive takes their post. The Head of Health and Safety confirmed that the training would be for Executive Directors and Directors but would confirm this

outside of the meeting. The reason that the refresher training would begin after the new Chief Executive was in post was due to changes in the Corporate Leadership Team, with three new executive leaders being appointed. The mandatory health and safety training was refreshed every three years.

Action I: The Head of Health and Safety to check if the Health and Safety refresher training is for all executive leaders including Executive Directors.

8. The Head of Health and Safety added that the audit report highlighted a completion date for the refresher training of sometime around 31 May, and it had been agreed with Internal Audit that this date could be extended to 31 December. It was aimed to be completed before this.

9. The Vice-Chairman asked about the anticipated progress that the follow-up internal audit would report and what improvements were expected. The Head of Health and Safety explained it was anticipated that the follow-up audit would demonstrate *Reasonable Assurance* or *Substantial Assurance*, given that all but one of the internal audit's actions had been completed. The Health and Safety Team were operating as expected to manage the key risks. Actions were agreed and were completed by the agreed timescales. Currently, the Strategic Lead for Health and Safety was the Deputy Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Resources. Therefore, a new Strategic Lead would need to be appointed for Health and Safety once the new Corporate Leadership Team structure had been agreed.

10. The Vice-Chairman asked about the planned timescales for Internal Audit's review of Health and Safety. The Head of Health and Safety explained that internal audit had scheduled health and safety's review for quarter two 2024/25, due to the target dates for implementing the two high risks actions. The first was reporting to the Resources and Performance Select Committee and the second was the Corporate Strategy and Action Plan which was going to a meeting of the Central Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee on 16 May for approval. The actions were expected to be completed by the end of May. The Health and Safety review would hopefully start by the beginning of June.

Asbestos Management in Community Schools

11. The Vice-Chairman asked why the 23 schools that did not procure asbestos reinspection through the Council were not picked up and challenged sooner, and what methodology was

employed in contacting schools to check what works had been undertaken. The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure explained that all schools received revenue funding, which was used for the day-to-day running costs of the schools, such as head teacher remuneration, energy bills, teaching materials and maintenance tasks, and that schools can choose where they procure their property services. The Council offered property buyback schemes that were available to non-academy and academy schools. The schemes allowed schools to purchase various Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) compliance inspections with the appropriate remediation and reactive works. The buyback scheme was currently administered by the buyback co-ordinator employed by the Council. From 1 July 2024, this post would move to Macro, the Council's facilities management supplier. There was an expectation that Macro would increase services offered to schools over the coming years, and potentially offer the service to other providers such as family centres. There was no process in place at the time of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visit, but a process had been developed following the inspection. A compliance questionnaire had been sent out to schools and site visits would be considered to audit schools' responses to this. The schools not in the buyback scheme were contacted by phone to verify their arrangement and establish if they had asbestos containing materials (ACMs). The schools that had no ACMs and were not in the buyback scheme were visited by a school health and safety advisor to discuss arrangements, provide advice where gaps were identified, and action plan completion timescales were put in place where necessary. Where an urgent plan was issued, progress against the actions was followed up by advisors using a risk-based approach.

12. A Member suggested that better promotion of the buyback scheme and an explanation to schools of how it worked would be beneficial. The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure agreed, noting that there is a process in place for the knowledge transfer, though the governing body had to hold Headteachers to account. Each school had their own access to an online system, and it was found that some schools had not logged onto the system when inspectors visited them.

13. The Assistant Director for Workplace and Facilities added that the scheme had been improved, making it more accountable in terms of the spend, the cost, and the services received through the buyback scheme. Therefore, it was more customer focussed and tailored to individual needs. There was now a drive to promote the buyback scheme, as it would ultimately be put

through the Macro framework, which would provide incentives to grow the scheme compared to when it was a purely internal scheme. Within a few months, the buyback scheme should be an improved service.

14. The Chairman raised if it should be recommended to schools to have a governor responsibility for safeguarding. The Head of Health and Safety explained that all schools should appoint a Health and Safety Governor who should be part of the schools' committees, and that the Council provided schools with a health and safety policy template. When a council Health and Safety Adviser performed an inspection of the school, they would ask the school governor, or the governor given the responsibility for health and safety, to attend the inspection to discuss this with them.

15. A Member asked if officers could provide more details on what was involved in the joint approach being undertaken by the Health and Safety Team, Land and Property Workforce, and Facilities Team to audit and monitor asbestos management plans where the Council was the employer. The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure clarified that the school Health and Safety Advisers visited 25 schools between October 2023 and March 2024. A further 25 inspections were scheduled for April to July 2024 as agreed with the Health and Safety Executive. This did not include the 13 schools that were audited in June 2023. Using the Councils asbestos contractor, Tetra Tech, was being considered to provide additional capacity to increase the number of schools visited. Land and Property are liaising with Tetra Tech, who would become one of Macro's subcontractors if pursued – the facilities management contractor responsible for managing all elements of building compliance for SCC, including asbestos management. The day-to-day responsibility for health and safety is delegated to the Headteacher and School Management Team, to ensure risks were effectively managed at the school. Monitoring visits were an opportunity to review performance with the school and where gaps had been identified the schools were provided with an action plan, which was then followed up on.

16. The Member asked if there were any schools where the council is the employer in which health and safety performance was of a concern to the Council. The Head of Health and Safety explained that they were not aware of any concerning schools with respect to health and safety performance. The monitoring visits would give the Council the opportunity to provide a targeted action plan.

17. The Member asked whether the HSE is satisfied with the Council's timeframe for monitoring the schools. The Head of Health and Safety explained that a discussion with the HSE took place in March 2024, and the principal inspector present at the meeting recognised that it was a significant undertaking, with around 100 schools where the council is the employer. It was agreed with the HSE that an additional 25 visits would be undertaken in addition to those already completed. The two-year monitoring programme had been benchmarked against the performance of other neighbouring authorities. The HSE agreed that this was adequate for 2024.

18. A Member raised a concern around burdening schools with asbestos management when schools already work in a challenging environment, especially given rising costs. The Assistant Director for Workplace and Facilities explained that this was covered in the Asbestos Management Plans developed for each of the different sites and schools. It was ensured that the Council's legal responsibilities were covered and, within the plans, it would be identified where the asbestos was and whether it could be contained or removed. The Assistant Director highlighted that schools, with the number of pupils moving around the building, were at a higher risk of having asbestos that was not contained being disturbed. When asbestos reviews were completed, school sites are assessed to ascertain whether the asbestos-containing areas could be adequately contained. It was noted that Facilities Management use a system called *Teams* to record information about the specifics of each different school site and their asbestos-containing materials.

19. A Member asked what sanctions could be placed on schools if issues relating to asbestos raised by the council, or advisers, were not addressed. The Assistant Director for Workplace and Facilities stated that they would confirm this and respond to members after the meeting. The council seek to ensure that those situations were managed correctly, which so far was done very well. The HSE had managed to identify some weaknesses within the current process, which work had been done to improve. Within schools where the council had control, it was easier to ensure asbestos was managed correctly, compared to schools where the council were not the employer or had lesser control under the particulars of the lease agreement.

Action II: The Assistant Director for Workplace & Facilities to check if there are any sanctions for schools that do not comply with requested asbestos works.

20. The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure added that there was a high compliance rate of 96%, meaning that such sanction regimes are seldom necessary. With the Facilities Management service being outsourced to Macro, this would hopefully improve further.

Children's Homes

21. The Vice-Chairman asked if there were any children's homes where the council was the employer in which health and safety performance was of concern. The Head of Health and Safety explained that aside from the children's homes opened so far in 2024, all the homes had had health and safety inspections. Where gaps were identified, the Home Manager was provided with an action plan and dates for the implementation of actions. These actions would be followed up with an adviser within the agreed timeframes. The Children, Families and Lifelong Learning (CFLL) directorate's Health and Safety Advisers had a good relationship with the Home Managers. One of the children's home managers sat on the CFLL Health and Safety Committee, representing the other Home Managers and ensuring effective two-way communication regarding risks and issues, feeding these back to other managers. The significant findings from the inspections demonstrated that the children's homes had systems in place to manage health and safety arrangements. There were nevertheless some gaps such as with some of the building compliance records, with statutory certificates not available during the inspection, gaps in knowledge around the children's homes health and safety roles and responsibilities, risk assessments overdue for reviews and on-site traffic management.

22. The Chairman asked if some context could be given around the 119-workplace health and safety incidents involving employees and service users recorded on OSHENS (a tool for reporting and reviewing health and safety incidents and injuries) in the past year. The Chairman also asked what kind of incidents would be placed in each category, and if the number was what was expected. The Head of Health and Safety explained that the health and safety advisers had been promoting the reporting of incidents on OSHENS with staff in their directorate for the past year. This resulted in an increase in numbers being reported, which was seen as a positive change in reporting, creating an improved health and safety culture and engagement with staff. It provided opportunities to share learning and discuss what more the Council could do to support staff and service users.

23. The Head of Health and Safety provided an overview of the reported incidents categories. There were 14 incidents placed in the 'Abuse, threat and violence' category, comprising verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, assault, and behavioural issues. Most of those incidents related to managing challenging behaviour in young people where staff were unable to put in suitable de-escalation techniques. Once incidents were reported, they would follow-up actions and staff training where gaps were identified, with support from managers. There were 18 'near-miss' incidents, which fell into the categories of 'Self-harm', 'Medication errors', 'Illness', 'Unplanned medical interventions', 'Harmful substance or exposure to harmful substance', 'Burns through hot liquids or surfaces', 'Contact where children were hit by a fixed object' 'Contact where children were hit by a moving vehicle', and 'A fall from height'. The increase in near-miss reporting provided insightful data and demonstrated understanding of the service to record incidents. It was recognised one or two should have been reported as an injury rather than a near-miss. There were 87 incidents of injury, including injuries to staff, children, and young people. These were within areas of 'Self-harm', 'Violence', 'Slips, trips, and falls', 'Behavioural issues', 'Cuts', 'Injuries involving electricity', 'Burns' and 'Contacts'. Incidents of abuse and violence against staff or other residents often lead to injury, some of which could be minor. The more serious incidents were around self-harm and violence/assault on a person.

24. The Chairman asked if there was an indication of how the categorisation of incidents compared to that of other local authorities. The Head of Health and Safety explained that other authorities had a different make-up and may have had a different number of homes, children, and age ranges. There had been an increase in the number of reports, due to the awareness and improved reporting. The Health and Safety Team worked hard with service leads and representatives to ensure staff were encouraged to report. It would therefore be difficult to compare to other local authorities with the different variables involved.

25. The Head of Health and Safety noted the nature of the incidents, particularly around incidents of abuse, threats, violence, and self-harm, were not likely to reduce due to factors such as the experiences of children and young people in homes.

Resolved:
The Resources and Performance Select Committee recommends that:

1. In order that Cabinet takes accountability for the Council's Health and Safety Improvement Strategy (as recommended by

the Local Government Association), Cabinet (in addition to the Central Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee) endorses the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2026;

2. In order to promote awareness of the key risks across all directorates, all Executive Directors are informed and updated on the Central Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee by its rotating chair;

3. The new suite of Corporate Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators agreed with the Corporate Leadership Team on 19 September 2023 are presented to Cabinet Members quarterly and included in the quarterly Resources and Performance Select Committee performance monitoring reports;

4. Ahead of May 2025, the Members' Induction booklet must refer to Health and Safety (H&S), clarifying how and to whom members should refer any H&S issue that comes to their attention.

15/24 PROGRESS UPDATE- DIGITAL BUSINESS AND INSIGHTS (DB&I) TASK GROUP [Item 6]

Witnesses:
Steven McCormick, Task Group Chairman
Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer
David Lewis, Cabinet Member of Finance and Resources
Anna D'Alessandro, Director- Corporate, Finance & Commercial- S151 Officer

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman noted the work of the Task Group Chairman and the work of the Scrutiny Officer on the DB&I Task Group.

2. The Task Group Chairman stated that the draft report was nearly finished, and the updated timelines in the report would be delivered.

3. The Committee Members noted the report.

16/24 PERFORMANCE MONITORING SESSION NOTES 18 MARCH 2024 [Item 7]

The Committee noted the Notes of the Performance Monitoring Session.

**17/24   FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND RECOMMENDATION
        TRACKER [Item 8]**

The Chairman asked for an update on when the EDI action plan would
likely be delivered.

The Committee noted the Actions and Recommendations Tracker and
Forward Work Programme.

18/24   DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 18 July 2024.

Meeting ended at: 11.04am

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                                                            Chairman

RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

18 July 2024

Customer Transformation

Purpose of report: The report provides an update on the Customer Transformation Programme, including an overview of the approach and work to date and plans for the next phase of delivery, including investment requirements.

Introduction:

1. To achieve excellent services for all, and be a high performing council, significant transformation is required to improve the way we interact with customers. Investment in improving these interactions will contribute to the Council's four priority objectives which are underpinned by the guiding principle of 'no one left behind':

   - Growing a sustainable economy
   - Tackling health inequality
   - Enabling a greener future
   - Empowered and thriving communities.

2. The programme will enable consistently good customer experience across all council services, including customer 'contact points' (e.g. libraries, registry offices, social care interactions etc.). The programme will work closely with all services and teams within the Council to achieve this, making better use of customer insights to improve effectiveness and reduce avoidable contacts and demand.

3. Currently, a significant number of our customers face challenges in their interactions with the council, which leads to frustration, unnecessary effort, waste, and reputational damage. Although there are many examples of positive day-to-day engagement and delivery with customers (as evidenced by compliments received about services), evidence from the customer satisfaction survey and complaints data show that the Council is not always delivering the consistently good experiences it aspires to.

4. Given the national and local financial context, there is a need to drive efficient processes and systems to support customer interactions. This programme aims to enhance customer satisfaction and drive efficiencies by improving the speed of service access and the quality of interactions. This will ensure the Council

remains able to support the changing needs of the population and support its most vulnerable customers in the most appropriate way. All improvements and process efficiencies will be tracked to ensure we are able to make conscious decisions about investment levels in services as part of our budget setting processes.

5. The Customer Transformation Programme was established in January 2024. The programme Steering Group sits within the broader Transformation and organisational governance structures, and membership includes the Section 151 Officer. The Steering Group oversees development of the Business Case and programme delivery, including benefit definition and realisation. The initial phase of work culminated in an Outline Business Case (approved by the Strategic Design Authority in March 2024). The Full Business Case now builds on that, setting out an approach to investment in the detailed design and implementation of a new way of working that maximises digital capabilities and makes it easier for everyone to access what they need via self-serve, assisted self-serve approaches or providing more targeted and specialist support for those who require it.

Case for Change

6. The Council's customer base is significant in scale and diversity. Our definition of a customer is 'people who contact and interact with Surrey County Council, which may include residents, those who work, visit, study or travel in the county, as well as partner organisations.' With almost 1.2m residents it is vital that we ensure that their experience, along with those of the wider customer community, is central to our transformation work.

7. A snapshot of data relating to customer interactions managed by the contact centre (excluding direct contact to other services, such as social care) shows that, on average annually there are over 357,000 customer service interactions, including:

- over 250,000 phone calls to the contact centre
- over 8,000 contacts via social media channels
- approximately 95,000 emails
- more than 17,000 web chats

8. Data also shows that there is evidence of failure demand and a lack of clarity over when and how customers can engage, resulting in more interactions than necessary. Customer feedback shows that there is often frustration with processes and wait times for issue resolution and feedback, while 80% of contact centre interactions are resolved at the first point of contact and calls are answered within the 120 second target, many customers are not satisfied with SCC's services (all services not just the contact centre).

9. During the year 2023/24, Surrey County Council recorded a total of 2,598 complaints, a 5% increase across the board compared to the previous financial year (2,467).

10. Discovery work has demonstrated limitations with gaining customer insights due to:
   - multiple systems and platforms that do not integrate with each other leading to unreliable data; data is fragmented meaning consolidation is administratively heavy and susceptible to human error.
   - multiple front doors and microsites meaning there is no central view of customer interactions,
   - limited reporting capability to identify the number of touchpoints in the journey to resolution,

11. The combination of challenges outlined above makes it harder to target and provide high quality customer experiences that are measurable.

Purpose of the Customer Transformation Programme

12. To make the improvements set out in the case for change, we will deliver a three-to-five-year change programme. The purpose of undertaking this transformation is to ensure the Council:

   - takes a 'customer first' approach by creating a step change in customer experience, outcomes, satisfaction, and efficiency of delivery through an organisation-wide operating model.
   - reviews the way it does things, not only structures, but also flexing and redesigning services where it needs to, to both streamline and improve the outcomes for customers.
   - takes full advantage of innovative digital technology and improve internal systems and data to reduce inefficiencies.
   - delivers innovation, cost reduction and service improvements to support prevention, helping to create the conditions for a sustainable council that can meet the financial pressures and challenges ahead.
   - creates inclusive approaches, ensuring our self-serve experience connects customers to the right assistance and support at the right time.

Approach and Work to Date

Phase 1: Discovery and Design phase January – June 2024

13. The programme aims to improve service delivery by focusing on outcomes for customers, encouraging self-service, using digital tools, and adopting preventative measures for better results and financial sustainability.

14. In the first phase (January – June 2024), the programme team worked with external partners to build in-house skills. The programme used a collaborative approach, forming multi-disciplinary teams to test and improve services, especially in Adults Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP) and Environment Infrastructure and Growth (EIG).

15. The programme created Customer Design Principles to guide this transformation and ensure a consistent focus on customer needs. These principles, along with the Customer Promise and The Surrey Way framework, will shape the organisational culture to prioritise customer needs. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are central to the programme, aiming to create inclusive and accessible experiences.

16. The team is supporting services that are already working on improvements for customers (for example improvements to communications with children and families) and building on where customers have fed back positively on changes so far (for example where chatbots have been introduced to support customers with booking an appointment). The team is also coordinating with other transformation programmes to explore opportunities across the Council, optimise technology use, and embed systematic changes. The first year will focus on establishing foundations for long-term efficiencies.

17. The proposed model for the future is specifically a *dynamic* rather than *target* operating model, meaning it can be flexible to customer needs as the programme progresses. There are three main elements, which represent where Surrey County Council can significantly positively impact on customer experiences. These relate to:
    - How customers will be able to engage digitally
    - How customers will be able to engage via 'locality hubs' – interacting with the Council in community locations
    - How customers will be able to engage via the County Council's 'customer hubs' – including access points in Adults and Children's specifically

18. The enhanced customer service model will improve customer interactions with council services by offering:
    - Clearer, more concise guidance for people who want to self-serve, for example when applying or paying for a service
    - More flexible contact options so people can interact with us at a time that suits them, without having to wait to speak to someone during normal working hours
    - Automated updates to keep people informed as their request progresses

- Chat bots to offer quick and additional support where appropriate
- The option to still speak to a human being, for those who need to (quicker thanks to more people able to self-serve)
- Better use of physical places – such as libraries – to increase face-to-face support options (including access to technology, guidance, signposting etc.)

The model will ultimately mean customers can access a wide range of online information or support, via a type of interaction that suits them, at a time that suits them.

19. In some services, customers will see early improvements as we are taking a 'Test and Learn' approach in areas where we can make changes quickly. This work will take place alongside longer term improvements to ensure customers are seeing the benefits of new processes and improvements as quickly as possible, whilst testing to ensure effectiveness. For example, some improvements are in very specific areas (e.g. processing applications for scaffolding licences) and will provide learning to enable improvements to be rolled out at scale (e.g. across processing applications in other areas).

20. The model also recognises the extensive community-based offer in Surrey through multiple providers that is routinely supporting residents and wider customers well before they have any interaction with council services.

Phase 2: Detailed Design and Implementation phase: July 2024 – 2027/28

21. Phase 2 will focus on designing and implementing the Dynamic Customer Operating Model (Appendix 2). This involves engaging with customers to test and understand how the model meets their needs, and working together to develop it. The Test and Learn approach means that there will be focused work to make improvements in areas like Adults Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP), Children Families and Lifelong Learning (CFLL), blue badge applications, and highway enquiries. As a result, customers will see immediate changes in those specific areas of focus, and the lessons learned will feed into wider improvements. An example would be testing how effective automation of an application process is in one specific area. As well as improving the experience for customers using that application process, the Test and Learn approach will increase our understanding of how to improve other application processes, including whether rolling out the same approach would meet customer needs, or whether a different context means that a different approach is needed. The lessons learned will help further develop the model.

22. This phase will also emphasise understanding and enhancing technical and digital capabilities. This includes evaluating Surrey County Council's IT infrastructure to find opportunities for efficiency by streamlining systems. The

development of the model will include testing new digital tools, such as automation for self-service processes, enquiry updates, and chatbots for customer assistance.

23. Additionally, the programme will plan for the long-term implementation of the model, including potential staffing changes and system procurement. Options and recommendations will be presented for decision-making through the programme's governance.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

24. The level of investment estimated as being required for this programme reflects the complexity and scale of innovative change which requires the appropriate subject matter expertise and capability to design and embed a new Dynamic-Customer Operating Model for the organisation and create a customer-first culture. Investment is needed to deliver innovation, cost reduction and service improvements to support prevention and provide sustainability.

25. At the current stage of the programme, without having all the data and insights available we have taken an approach of using data from other Local Authorities who are undertaking Customer Transformation programmes to benchmark and make some assumptions on what the return on investment could be. It is difficult to draw too many conclusions on this data as many other local authority customer programmes are in their infancy and yet to deliver the planned savings. The programme, in conjunction with other cross cutting transformation programmes, have currently identified £17m savings. Work is being undertaken to quantify further benefits across the programmes, updates will be provided through the programme governance board to ensure appropriate member and senior officer oversight.

26. To deliver value for money, the programme will use in-house resources wherever possible or bring in new resources via fixed term contracts. Due to the short-term nature or urgency of some of the customer transformation work, it is expected that the programme may need to use an agency or consultancy at times. Steps will be taken throughout the process to assess the options available to the programme to minimise the spend where possible but ensuring the programme has the right skills and capacity to deliver on the projected outcomes.

27. The table below shows the £11.3m investment requirements for the customer transformation programme in totality across the four years to 2027/28.

Investment requirements	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2027/28 £000's	Total £000's
Customer Transformation	3,461	4,408	2,436	960	11,265

28. Included within the £11.3m is £3.5m investment requirement for 2024/25, this excludes investment needed in Data and Digital which are both enablers for the programme, further info on those elements are captured below.

29. Customer Transformation programme spend incurred to date totals £0.7m, with £1.5m committed for this financial year. This investment has delivered a dynamic operating model, design principles and customer analysis, an analysis of our as is delivery model, two tangible changes to customer processes, and a guide for staff to enable further change across the council, a full business case and a wide range of cultural change activities amongst other key deliverables.

30. With the interdependencies between Customer, Core Function Redesign, Data and Digital transformation programmes, it is important to assess the scale of investment in totality to be able to fully deliver its ambition. The table below captures the investment ask across all these programmes, totalling c£26m. The cumulative scale of investment requirements is projected to exceed the available transformation budget in 2024/25 and 2025/26, it is therefore recommended that the Customer Transformation programme is funded from reserves.

31. The request for funding assumes an immediate draw down of reserves for investment totalling £3.5m in 2024/25 and then drawn down in phases from 2025/26 onwards following appropriate update and review of the business case, and approval by the governance boards to evidence the benefit realisation.

Investment Requirements	2024/25 £m's	4 Year Total 2024/28 £m's
Customer Transformation	3.5	11.3
Other cross cutting		
Core Function Redesign	1.7	5.0
Digital, Data + Ai Partner	2.2	9.3
Total Investment ask	7.4	25.6

32. Work is underway to strengthen our assessment of the financial benefits being delivered across the programmes pending approval of the full business cases:

- Research from other authorities shows that significant benefits can be realised from investment in such programmes, particularly through the development of digital solutions and use of AI (Artificial Intelligence).
- We are taking a multi-year approach to the levels of investment and efficiencies across our three council-wide programmes. The level of efficiencies is anticipated to increase as we continue to develop the programme.

Conclusions:

33. This programme is critical to the success of the ambition of the council of no one left behind, with a key focus on driving improved customer experience and outcomes. The programme is also a key enabler for other transformation programmes including Adults Wellbeing and Health Partnership (AWHP) demand management and Core Function Redesign, both with significant efficiencies to be developed to contribute to a sustainable future.

Recommendations:

34. That the Resources and Performance Select Committee:

   - Note the progress made to date in the discovery and design phase
   - Endorse the programme and its ambition
   - Provide any feedback and comment

Next steps:

35. Cabinet will consider a full report on 23 July 2024, with the recommendation to approve the customer transformation ambition and approach, and the in principle £11.3m investment requirement over four years.

36. Year 1 (2024/2025) is focused on detailed design, and following approval of the Full Business Case, a change partner for Phase 2 (Detailed Design and Implementation) of the programme will be procured, to ensure quality and pace of progress. This will include a requirement for transfer of capability to County Council Design and Transformation teams (including digital and service colleagues where relevant), reducing reliance on external support in the future.

37. Detailed design work will continue to shape the Dynamic Customer Operating Model, with a focus on engaging and collaborating with customers and partners to ensure it meets their needs.

38. The approach to implementation (for example by directorate or function) across the organisation will be decided in close consultation with directorates, and other major transformation programmes, to ensure alignment of resource and deliverability are balanced with an evidence-based approach to the greatest opportunity for impact. Detailed design and implementation will progress in line with the agreed approach.

39. Further collaborative co-design work will be undertaken across directorates, with a focus on testing and iterating the application of each aspect of the Dynamic Customer Operating Model, as well as delivering improvements in the specific areas of focus.

40. Digital capabilities will be developed and tested, mapped to the requirements of the Dynamic Customer Operating Model, with early introduction of capabilities (such as automation and productivity and efficiency technology) where possible to bring early benefits.

41. For years 2-3 (2025/6 - 2026/7) the focus is on implementation, and the longer-term implementation of the full model, including any large-scale staffing changes or systems procurement, will be set out with options and recommendations (including financial implications within the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy) for decision through programme and organisational governance.

Report contact

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Sources/background papers

[List of all documents used in compiling the report, for example previous reports/minutes, letters, legislation, etc.]

- Customer Promise

Appendices:

1. Customer Design Principles

2. Dynamic Customer Operating Model

3. High level plan

4. Risks, assumptions and constraints

5. Stakeholder engagement plan

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Design Principles are the *internal commitments* of Surrey County Council that directly impact its operating model.

They work in tandem with:

The Surrey Way

Surrey's cultural ethos.

Customer Promise

Surrey's external commitments.

Surrey's Strategy and Priorities

Nobody is left behind	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	Tackling health inequality	Enabling a green future	Empowered and thriving communities

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COUNTY COUNCIL

Design Principles

1
Customer-Centric Design

Embed an inclusive Voice of Customer in all aspects of the operating model and take an outside-in approach to ensure continuous innovation.

2
Prevention

Collaborate with communities and partners to anticipate customer needs and target community capacity building and earlier holistic support.

3
Clear Roles & Responsibilities

Clear communication, ownership and accountability for customer outcomes across all levels of Surrey County Council

4
Tech Enabled

Use tech where appropriate to enable customer experience. Be innovative and courageous in making cases for new tech .

5
Evolving Processes

Design streamlined and intuitive processes that minimise the unnecessary and eliminate workarounds, so the experience shines through.

6
Empowered Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Equip teams with clear roles, resources, and authority. Build a transparent culture of trust and collaboration that works in the open and encourages sensible risk taking and experimenting.

7
Actionable Metrics

Gather data that provides insights and enables targeted decision making. Champion data that connects our ambitions with action.

8
Solution-Driven Delivery

Ensure the right channel is used at the right time, with human expertise readily available. Finding solutions for customers is key to delivery.

These Design Principles will serve as Surrey's north star for operating model development and governance, ensuring consistency, reliability and alignment with strategic goals and desired outcomes across the organisation.
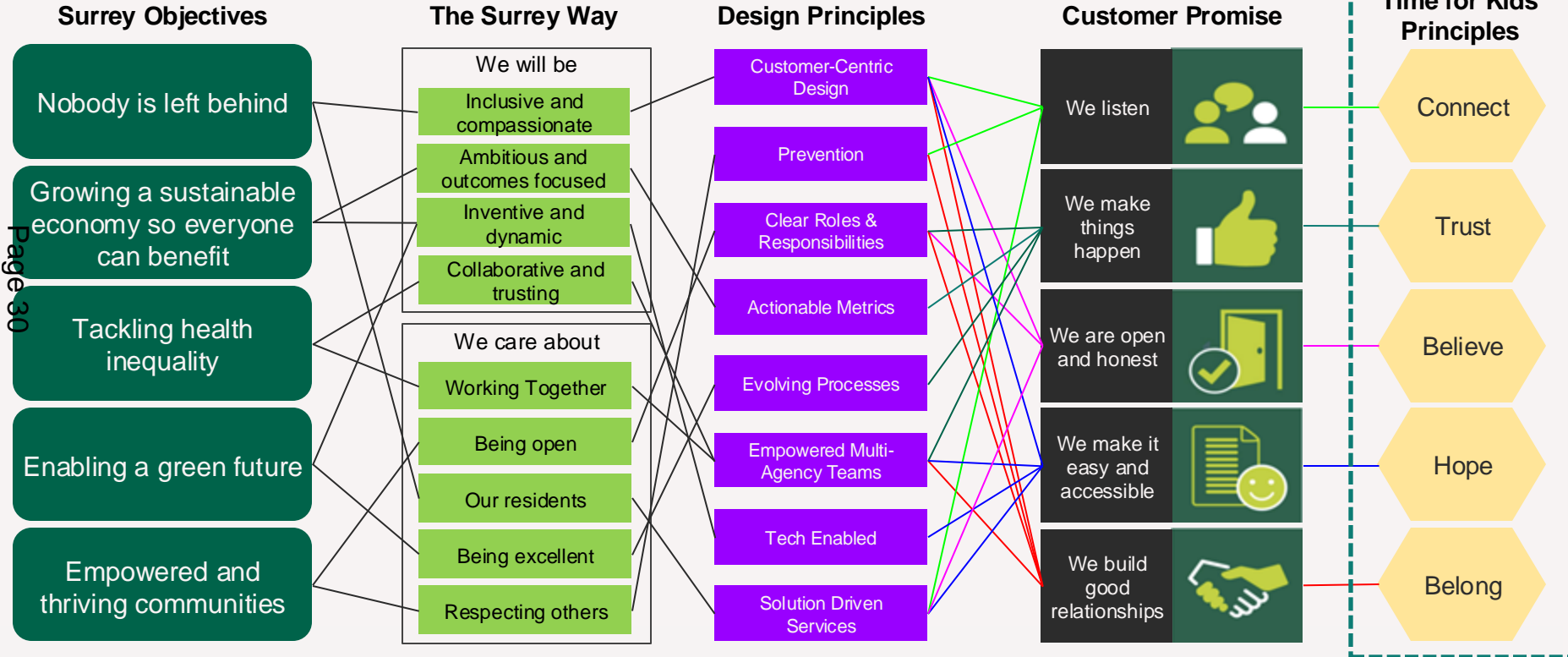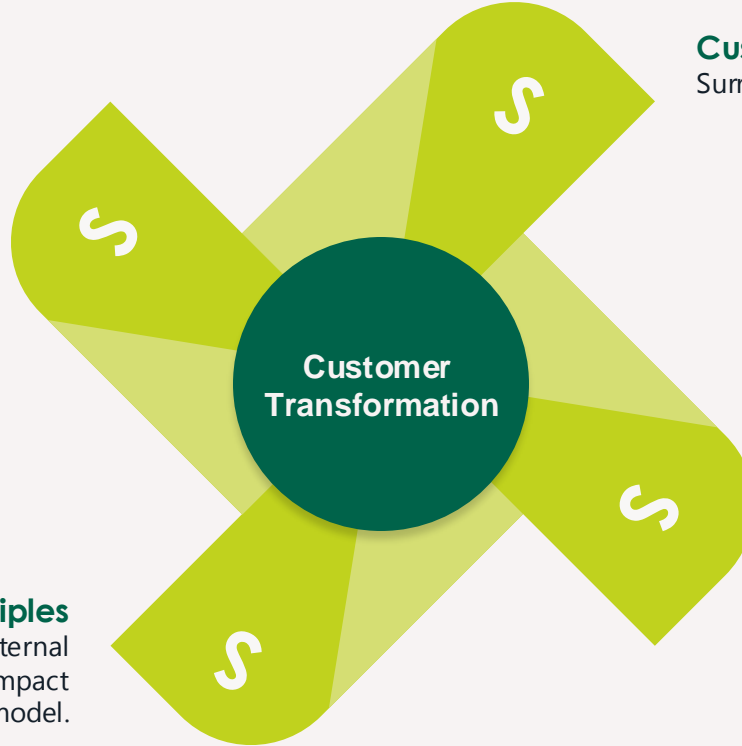
D-COM
Dynamic - Customer Operating Model

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Golden Thread

Localised Application

Surrey Objectives

- Nobody is left behind
- Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit
- Tackling health inequality
- Enabling a green future
- Empowered and thriving communities

The Surrey Way

We will be
- Inclusive and compassionate
- Ambitious and outcomes focused
- Inventive and dynamic
- Collaborative and trusting

We care about
- Working Together
- Being open
- Our residents
- Being excellent
- Respecting others

Design Principles

- Customer-Centric Design
- Prevention
- Clear Roles & Responsibilities
- Actionable Metrics
- Evolving Processes
- Empowered Multi-Agency Teams
- Tech Enabled
- Solution Driven Services

Customer Promise

- We listen
- We make things happen
- We are open and honest
- We make it easy and accessible
- We build good relationships

Time for Kids Principles

- Connect
- Trust
- Believe
- Hope
- Belong

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The desired outcomes of the Dynamic - Customer Operating Model as well as Surrey's cultural ethos and external promises are intrinsically linked to its internal commitments.

Surrey's Customer Propeller

Customer Promise
Surrey's external commitments.

The Surrey Way
Surrey's Cultural Ethos

Customer Transformation

Surrey Objectives
Surrey County Council's key customer and business objectives

Design Principles
Surrey County Council's internal commitments that directly impact its operating model.

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Customer Groups

Resident

"I live in Surrey, have a wide range of needs and use SCC services."

Supported by Surrey

"I am supported by Surrey and rely on their services; I don't always live there. (e.g., care experienced young person who lives outside Surrey)."

Learns in Surrey

"I am educated in Surrey and want / need something from SCC."

Visitor to Surrey

"I don't live in Surrey, but I want to enjoy everything SCC has to offer, and/or I need something in Surrey which SCC has a role in (e.g. Surrey relative)."

Business with Surrey

"I am a business in Surrey or am a provider to Surrey and want / need something from SCC."

Works in Surrey

"I work in Surrey and want / need something from SCC."

SCC Employee

"I work for Surrey County Council."

SCC Partner

"I partner with SCC and am critical to their operations (e.g. police)."

SCC Member

"I serve Surrey as a council member."

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SURREY

Assistance Matrix

Self-Serve

- Information and advice
- Signposting to services and information
- Guidance on applications and processes

Self-Serve / Assisted Self-Serve

- Applying for permits and licensing
- Applying for a Blue Badge
- Paying for social care
- Booking an appointment
- Reporting a pothole

Case Management

- School admissions
- Registering a birth, death or marriage
- Complex business advice
- Permit applications
- EHCP Application

High & Complex Need Case Mgmt.

- Adult services
- Corporate parenting
- Children's services
- Safeguarding

There may sometimes be a **disconnect** between a Customer's assistance wants / needs and Surrey's operating model, leading to service inefficiencies and a gap in the experience desired and the one provided.

Emergency services to be represented in the DCOM

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High & Complex Need Customers

Health & Wellbeing examples of high & complex need customer groups with non-traditional support needs are below:

People who experience the poorest health outcomes:
- *Carers and young carers*
- *Looked after children and adults with care experience*
- *Children with additional needs and disabilities*
- *Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism*
- *Disabled people and people with long term health conditions or sensory impairments (updated language)*
- *Older people 80+ and those in care homes*
- *Minoritised ethnic groups (updated language)*
- *Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities*
- *Young people out of work*
- *People experiencing domestic abuse*
- *People with serious mental illness*
- *People with drug and alcohol problems*
- *People experiencing homelessness*

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Health & Wellbeing Priorities

1. Physical Health

Supporting people to lead health lives by preventing physical ill health and promoting physical well-being

2. Mental Health

Supporting people's mental health and emotional well-being by preventing mental ill health and promoting emotional well-being

3. Full Potential

Supporting people to reach their potential by addressing the wider determinants of health

Reducing health inequalities so, nobody gets left behind

People living in geographic areas (Lower Super Output Areas, LSOAs) which experience the poorest health outcomes in Surrey

- *Canalside*
- *Westborough*
- *Bellfields and Slyfield (previously Stoke)*
- *Stanwell North*
- *Dorking South (previously Holmwoods)*
- *Tattenham Corner & Preston Court*
- *Ashford North and Stanwell South*
- *Goldsworth Park*
- *Englefield Green West*
- *Walton South*

- *Horley Central and South*
- *Farnham Heath End*
- *Stanwell North*
- *Godalming Central and Ockford*
- *Chertsey St Anns*
- *Redhill West and Wray Common*
- *Ash Wharf*
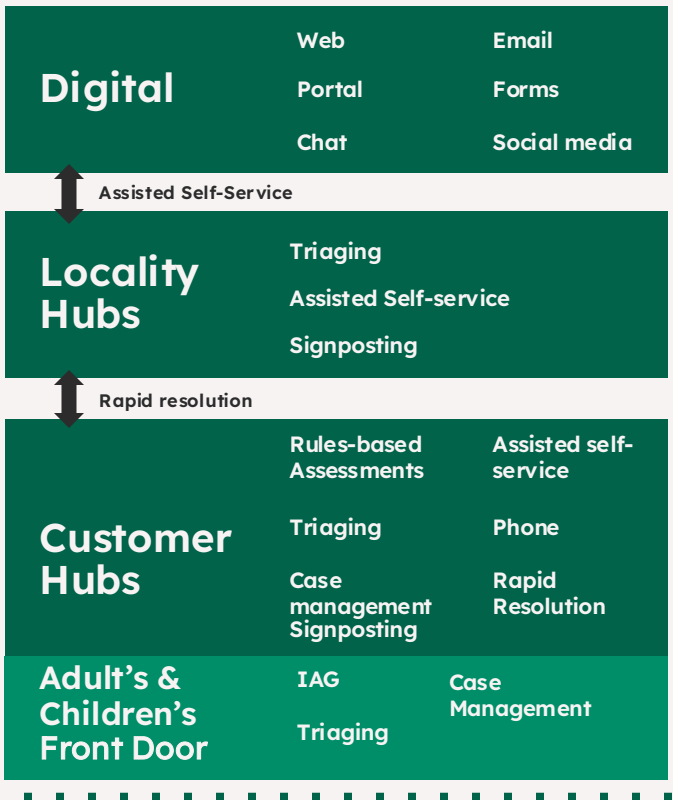- *Walton North*
- *Cobham and Downside*
- *Old Dean*

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Customer Transformation Programme – HIGH LEVEL PLAN

Phase 1 (Mar 2024 - Jun 2025): Design	Phase 2 (June 2025 - March 2027): Significant Change	Phase 3 (Apr 2027-up to 5 years from initiation): Embedding
Foundation work, Customer TOM (CTOM) Design, Improvement/Quick wins, System optimisation	**Significant improvements to implement the new CTOM design**	**Hypercare period with resource to embed and create a continuous improvement culture; Transition to BAU**
✓ Structure programme to align with Strategic objectives and delivery of benefits. Set up appropriate governance ✓ Establish Communications & Engagement approach ✓ Identify and implement quick wins in EIG ✓ Data capture leads to insights which improve operational effectiveness ✓ Design Test & Learn approach in EIG and AWHP ✓ Detailed analysis of customer technological	✓ Customer journeys in priority areas provide more seamless, effortless and swifter resolutions ✓ Streamline processes to reduce cost and maximise efficiency and effectiveness ✓ Data capture leads to insights which improve strategic effectiveness ✓ Redesign journeys to enable focus on early intervention, prevention and targeted support ✓ Increased use of AI and robotics to deliver seamless interactions	✓ Technological solutions facilitate more effective working practises ✓ All areas (as appropriate) transitioned to BAU ✓ CTOM established and embedded ✓ Continuous improvement culture

Deliverables

Initiate programme
- Outline and Full Business Case with clear identification of benefits
- Identification and delivery of quick wins
- Engagement with key stakeholders
- Governance in place
- Recruitment of team
- Communications Strategy development
- External Partner discovery and design work

Clear deliverables
- Improved technology usage to support working practices
- Reduced demand on statutory services
- Improved customer and staff experiences
- Enhanced information advice and guidance offer
- Improved accessibility
- New customer performance report
- High-level CTOM

Benefits realisation
- Realisation of benefits: Customer Experience / Satisfaction, Cost Avoidance (non-cashable), Cost Reduction (cashable)
- Accelerated achievement of Directorate's MTFS

Increased momentum
- Improved working processes across SCC
- Consolidated capabilities, by transferring resources or activities into one customer hub
- Acceleration of delivery of outcomes and benefits in related programmes across directorates

Evaluation and review
- Transitioned to BAU
- Definition of the next phase in the journey
- Learning Review

Towns & Villages approach
- More effective solutions for residents
- Accessible service
- Maximised engagement opportunities through networks

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Risks, Assumptions, Constraints and Dependencies

The risks to the programme have been considered and the programme team consider there to be adequate control measures in place to ensure the risks are mitigated against.

Risk theme	Description	Mitigation(s)	Probability	Impact	Owner
Complex organisational change	This is a wide and complex change programme, and it will only be successful if there is cross-service engagement and accountability of the work. This needs to be carefully managed to: o ensure the scale of change is manageable o ensure services see this is a joint priority and engage collaboratively to make impact o ensure the work is prioritised. There are multiple change programmes running in parallel which could create pressure and affect the capacity of critical and enabling areas to engage in and support the change	Careful planning and sequencing of the work required, combined with a methodology of co-design and a risk-based approach to making change has been established. The programme reports to a strong governance board and has the benefit of a steering group with cross-service representation and a focus on shared accountability and participation to ensure cohesive progress. Services are engaged as part of programme planning process to understand business as usual and transformation pressure points	High	High	Senior Responsible Owner Customer Transformation Steering Board
Directorate Alignment	There is a risk that individual directorates procure or design solutions and improvements in isolation that do not align with the Customer Programme / D-COM	Internal protocols and boards have been established to manage co-ordination. Internal protocols governing procurement, the strategic design authority and wider transformation oversight are in place to ensure the focus is on programme alignment and a council wide approach to change.	Medium	High	Senior Responsible Owner Customer Transformation Steering Board
Digital	There is a dependency on digital investment and transformation, ensuring the right capacity and capabilities are in place to support the change required to deliver the programme	The programme has worked closely with the Digital Programme to identify the dependencies and requirements shape the investment required in digital to enable the programme.	Medium	High	Senior Responsible Owner

					Customer Transformation Steering Board

Assumptions

Financial:
- The financial position of the Council does not alter, beyond what is known / expected
- That the budget envelope will be made available
- That inter-dependent programmes will have their budget approved
- Directorates will reflect savings in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and include resources needed to make those savings

Organisational:
- That forthcoming national and local elections will not alter the path of the programme
- The incoming CEO will be supportive of the programme continuing
- That Digital and Core Function Redesign will deliver their milestones to time, enabling Customer Transformation to also deliver to time
- Corporate Leadership Team changes do not delay the work and they continue to be supportive of the programme
- Directorates support the programme to deliver the customer transformation
- Benefits will be tracked and realised by Directorates but enabled by this programme

Technical:
- Investment will be available to create the right infrastructure required
- Specialist IT & Digital resource will be allocated to the work as part of business case procedures

Design:
- Design capability (Digital Design and centralised Design capability) will be made available
- The organisation will adopt a design-led approach to the work

Resource:
- Supporting functions will allocate resource for delivery
- Required training, recruitment and / or upskilling can take place

Constraints

Most of the constraints below will be managed by governance processes to ensure that any emerging risks associated with the identified constraints can be mitigated against:

- **Cross-Organisational Programmes:** the interdependencies between Customer, Core Function Redesign, Data and Digital mean that unless investment is provided to all these programme Customer Transformation will not be able to fully deliver on its ambition
- **Time:** the programme is expected to be delivered by September 2027
- **Cost:** the Council continues to operate in a very challenging financial environment. Local authorities across the country are experiencing significant budgetary pressures

- **Technical:** The organisation's technical capability and capacity could be a barrier to what can be achieved.
- **Quality:** The quality of service experienced by customers cannot decrease at any point during delivery, or as a consequence of the programme.
- **Legal:** The programme will be delivered adhering to procurement rules.
- **Customer:** Meeting the varying needs of customer groups, based on demographics, protected characteristics and socio-economic factors will have possible constraints placed upon design of the customer offering.
- **Environmental:** the Councils Climate Change Delivery Plan needs to be adhered to

Dependencies

The Customer Transformation Programme team is working closely with other cross-cutting transformation programmes to ensure that any opportunities identified within each programme can be explored across the Council to ensure that it is able to optimise use of technology and supporting functions as widely as possible, and to effectively embed systematic changes in systems, processes and ways of working.

- There is an overarching dependency on this work being viewed as a cross cutting priority, to ensure sufficient focus and resource from across the organisation. This will require both practical prioritisation (e.g. linked to the risk highlighted around volume of change placing pressure on key business areas), and strong, consistent messaging at leadership level.
- **With enabling projects**: this programme will have a dependency on the digital and data programmes and Core Function Redesign. Ensuring alignment between these programmes is essential to collectively achieving the ambition set out in the Surrey Way Strategic Framework.
- **Related directorate transformation**: the programme will require ongoing alignment with customer facing Directorates- notably in relation to customer-focused change. As noted in the benefits section, there will be a dependency on this programme's enabling work for the realisation of efficiencies relating to customer in some directorates. Strategic Finance are supporting identification and tracking of this
- **Resources in enabling services**: this programme is dependent on the capacity and capabilities of enabling services, some of which (e.g. People and Change) have their own transformation programmes in progress.
- Consideration will be given to external dependencies, e.g. partner organisations' processes and procedures, so that any change is effectively co-produced and co-ordinated

Customer Transformation Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Ongoing engagement, to ensure the ambition and design of the new model continue to respond to and meet customer need, forms a key part of the next phase of work.

The programme team are engaging regularly across the organisation to ensure all relevant stakeholders are updated on programme development. There is a detailed stakeholder engagement plan with associated plans for specific engagement to inform the design work around the Dynamic Customer Operating Model. Staff roundtables have secured insight and views from a wide range of council employees.

The programme has developed a structured member engagement plan, including attendance at the upcoming Select Committee, as well as presenting the programme at a Member Development session in September 2024.

Wider engagement with external stakeholders will take place over the summer. This will include working through existing engagement teams and take a range of forms to ensure accessibility, for example roundtables with residents and consultation sessions to validate and sense-check the D-COM. The change management team are working with the Legal team to ensure the programme meets consultation requirements.

There is a Customer Panel in development through the Resident Insight Unit, which will be designed to hear a wide cross section of customer voices and provide essential insight and feedback throughout the programme. This panel will also provide a forum for detailed collaboration with customers on the design to ensure it meets customer need. In addition, we will involve voluntary, community and social enterprise groups, participation groups (for example the children's user voice and participation team), and links through our community liaison officers to lesser heard voices and residents in communities, to ensure that we are co-designing in a fully inclusive way.

Stakeholder Group	Key Stakeholders & Business Area	Engagement to date	Forward Plan
Leadership teams	CLT DLTs ELF	One-to-ones with SRO Attended CLT 4th June	3x ELF presentations: 10th, 17th, 23rd July To set up DLT workshops over summer to socialise D-COM

		Chief of Staff network attended in February	
Cabinet / Political	Tim Oliver Denise Turner-Stewart David Lewis Sinead Mooney Mark Nuti Paul Deach Steve Bax Matt Furniss Clare Curran Keith Deanus Marisa Heath Natalie Bramhall Catherine Powell Will Forster	Monthly oversight group between Liz Mills, Sarah Hardman, Denise Turner Stewart, Paul Deach, Matt Furniss R&P Select Committee attended in April One-to-ones between Liz and member	Return to R&P Select Committee 18th July Meetings being offered to party leads and their groups To attend iCab on 17th June and Cabinet on 23rd July Member Development session 2nd September Ongoing oversight group and one-to-ones when appropriate
Partners	Districts and Boroughs Health partners Gate1 / Public Digital		
Trade Unions			Attending next Corporate Joint Consultative Committee on 17th July
Programme team	**Leadership team** Liz Mills Dawn Tomlyn Sarah Hardman Suzanne Sumner	N/A	N/A

	Louise Forde		
	Core team		
	Ben Newsam		
	Lottie Wood		
	Maria Buyet		
	Samantha Higgins		
	Clare Kellow		
	Wider team		
	Hannah Dwight		
	Sarah Bugonovic		
Enabling SCC Staff	**Customer Strategy team**		
	Comms – Andrea Newman, Rich Neale, Katherine Shipton, Abbey Cortazzi		
	Contact Centre staff		
	Customer Services		
Wider SCC staff	All SCC staff	Show and Tell/Weeknotes	Show and Tell/Weeknotes
	Champions network	Roundtables	Summer/Autumn roundtables
		Monthly Champions network meetings for 'improvement projects'	CT Sharepoint page to be published in July
			27th June Champions session to socialise D-COM
External community groups		This work is at planning stage currently	To connect via colleagues involved in Citizen's Panel, TAC pilots, Community Participation and Engagement team activity.

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RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday 18 July 2024

Digital Inclusion

Purpose of report: To share the outcomes of research into digital exclusion in Surrey with Members and our proposed response to the findings of the research. The report seeks the Committee's endorsement of the proposed way forward.

Introduction:

1. A report was brought to the Select Committee in April 2023 detailing the need to improve digital inclusion in Surrey to reduce inequality of access to essential services. The report also noted research being undertaken by Citizens Online into the extent of digital exclusion in Surrey, and a commitment was given to bring back the results of this research and our proposed responses to its recommendations.

2. Since then, we have launched our ambitious customer transformation programme, a key SCC priority which will set out how we engage with all our customers to ensure no one is left behind. We recognise that Digital Inclusion is a key component to delivering on our customer transformation ambitions, and our response to the Citizen's Online research will be incorporated into the Customer Transformation programme. This report sets out for Members how the research has helped shape a draft Digital Inclusion strategy for the county, which will help inform the future of our customer services offer going forwards.

Digital Inclusion in Surrey

3. We recognise that access to digital services and opportunities are ever more crucial in people's personal and work lives. The opportunity to access services online can be transformative for many people and can help support SCC's ambition of having 'no one left behind'. We know there are people in Surrey who are currently digitally excluded, for example through lack of digital skills, lack of access to technology or internet connectivity. We also recognise that there will be some people in Surrey who for various reasons will never want or be able to access services online. It is essential that we continue to provide alternative contact options for this cohort, which we will be better placed to do by enabling more people to access services online who want to do so.

4. Citizens Online, a national organisation that works to promote digital inclusion, carried out research in Surrey in 2023 to establish the extent of digital exclusion in the county. They also provided recommendations for how we can enable as many people as possible who wish to become digitally enabled to do so. The full report from Citizens Online is attached in appendix B and some key findings include:

    •   Up to 50,000 people in Surrey are currently digitally excluded.
    •   5.7% of adults in Surrey are offline.
    •   7.5% of homes in Surrey do not have internet access.
    •   18% of adults in Surrey lack the skills that the Government defines as essential skills for life and 19% lack the skills considered essential for work.
    •   19% do not have a laptop or PC and 14% do not have a smartphone.

5. The research shows that reasons for people being digitally excluded are multi-faceted. The most obvious are an inability to afford either the technology (phones, tablets, or computers) or the connectivity these need (broadband and mobile data). A further key barrier is not having the required skills and training to use key digital services. Many digital services are also not designed with accessibility in mind, meaning that they may not be accessible to people who need to use assistive technology to access them, for example screen readers for people with visual impairments.

SCC response to Digital Inclusion report

6. Since the Citizens Online report was received, work has been undertaken in a number of areas to address digital inclusion in Surrey, including activity in our Libraries to provide advice, support and access to technology and work to improve our own staff digital skills. There is more information on the digital inclusion support provided by our Libraries service in Appendix C.

7. However, we recognise that digital exclusion is a complex and wide-reaching issue and that we need to do more to address it in a holistic way. This is also an issue that is not SCC's alone to address and the response to it will require us to work in partnership with key stakeholders, including the voluntary, community and faith sector in Surrey. We are working with the group set up to address this partnership working, the Surrey Digital Inclusion Steering Group, which brings together key players including District and Boroughs, the Coalition of Disabled People in Surrey and Sight for Surrey.

8. The first step for us as an organisation is to set out what our priorities are in this area. We have done this via an overarching Digital Inclusion Strategy which

sets out our ambitions and priorities to address the barriers. This strategy is set out in appendix A and is built around 5 priority areas:

- Enabling access to digital resources and data for residents facing financial challenges
- Ensuring all digital content is optimised and designed for digital inclusion
- Enhancing digital skills and confidence among residents and increasing awareness of available support services
- Working in partnership to ensure maximum impact
- Using social value from our procurement contracts to create opportunities to reduce digital exclusion

9. As noted above, there are a number of partners we will need to work with in order to tackle digital exclusion in Surrey. We also know that there is already activity underway both at SCC and elsewhere, including in the voluntary, community and faith sector and District and Borough Councils, working directly with residents and communities.

10. In order to ensure that work progresses at pace to tackle this important issue, we have set out key actions that can be taken in the next 3-6 months to build on work already underway. This is set out in the Digital Inclusion Strategy in appendix A. We will then work with partners to assess progress against the following to enable us to set future direction for digital inclusion:

- The range of work already underway, its effectiveness and reach
- Where the gaps are in existing work and who is not being reached in our communities
- Which additional partners need to be engaged with this work, and what any support offers are that they currently provide
- What resources we can engage with this work, including via our Team Around the Community approach
- How to embed the governance of this work so that it becomes a part of business as usual at SCC

This will ensure that we do not 'reinvent the wheel' and that we are able to maximise the opportunities for partnership working, while not duplicating or displacing work that other groups or organisations are better placed to undertake in our communities.

Digital Inclusion and the Customer Transformation programme

11. As noted above, this work will form a vital part of our Customer Transformation programme. This programme will create a culture shift in how we engage with our residents to improve their experiences and outcomes through a new

customer operating model proposed for the Council. Embedding Digital Inclusion into this transformation programme will have benefits for both areas of work. Firstly, it will ensure that the principles of digital inclusion are built into the new customer operating model. This will include issues such as ensuring that any digital offer is designed with accessibility as a primary function, and that as we move to a more digitally enabled customer offer, we build in the support that people may need to help them access this.

12. By aligning with the Customer Transformation Programme, the Digital Inclusion lead will have access to resources allocated via the transformation programme and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and improve the reach of the programme without duplication.

Member development and digital inclusion

13. The Committee also requested in April 2023 that digital skills training be provided to Members. The Members Digital Skills Development Approach is currently being drafted by IT & Digital, due to be presented to the Member Development Steering Group at their September meeting.

14. It will cover the end of the current council term, where we will be testing whether personal development plans for individual Members, based on their training needs feedback, provides an additional benefit. Overall, the Members Digital Skills Development Approach will be weighted to deliver for the next Council term (2025-29).

15. In the 2025-29 term, the initial focus will be on promoting training on the day-to-day tools used by Members. Subsequently, it will look for opportunities to develop advanced skills and Members' understanding of Digital, utilising the in-person member development days. A joint IT & Digital and Democratic Services Working Group will review progress and iterate the approach, reporting to the Member Development Steering Group.

Conclusions:

16. Work to improve Digital Inclusion in Surrey will be a key enabler of the Council's Customer Transformation Programme. The research carried out by Citizens Online has enabled us to better understand the extent of the digital inclusion gap in Surrey and what actions will help us to bridge this gap. By embedding this work into a major transformation programme that is at the heart of everything we do for our customers, we can ensure that this approach is mainstreamed and has the resource and influence it requires to be successful.

17. By enabling more people to access services digitally who have the potential and the desire to do so, we will be able to use our face to face and telephone resources in a more targeted way for those who cannot use digital. This will help to deliver on the Council's overall ambition of having no one left behind.

Recommendations:

18. The committee is recommended to endorse:

    a) The draft Digital Inclusion Strategy
    b) The approach of embedding digital inclusion within the Customer Transformation Programme to ensure its reach and sustainability

Next steps:

Progress on Digital Inclusion will be reported alongside the wider work on Customer Transformation.

We will establish clear links to existing governance arrangements and key stakeholder groups to drive forward the partnership elements of this work.

We will continue to engage via the Surrey Digital Inclusion Steering Group and identify other key community groups who will work with us on delivering the strategy.

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Sources/background papers

Draft Digital Inclusion Strategy

Citizens Online research

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Surrey's Digital Inclusion Strategy

Louise Halloway, Paul Fenton, Ioni Sullivan

June 2024

Digital Inclusion for Surrey County Council

Introduction: Using digital technology to access information and services online is an essential skill for living in society today. Surrey County Council recognises this and wants to help those who do not have the ability or confidence to use the internet.

This strategy describes how we will make sure that no one is left behind by helping everyone to access technology and be part of our digital world. Although the strategy focuses on the role of the Council, many other private and voluntary organisations are also involved.

Surrey County Council's Vision: By 2030, we want Surrey to be a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.

Ambition for Digital Inclusion and Accessibility

Every resident in Surrey has the ability and confidence to access digital services and information.

Rationale and Benefits: The government considers digital skills to be essential to live in our society today. Yet a report carried out by Citizens Online revealed that 18% of adults in Surrey lack all essential digital skills, 19% lack digital skills for work and 5.7% are entirely offline.

The economic and social benefits of digital inclusion are substantial, ranging from improved health and wellbeing to enhanced employment opportunities and cost savings. Recent research estimates the return on investment (ROI) for every £1 in digital inclusion to be £9.48 aligning with Surrey County Council's ambition to create an inclusive and prosperous community by 2030.

For the council, supporting this work will drive digital transformation, modernisation, and channel shift. Improving digital maturity, culture and working practises will future proof the Council to deliver outstanding public services in a more efficient way.
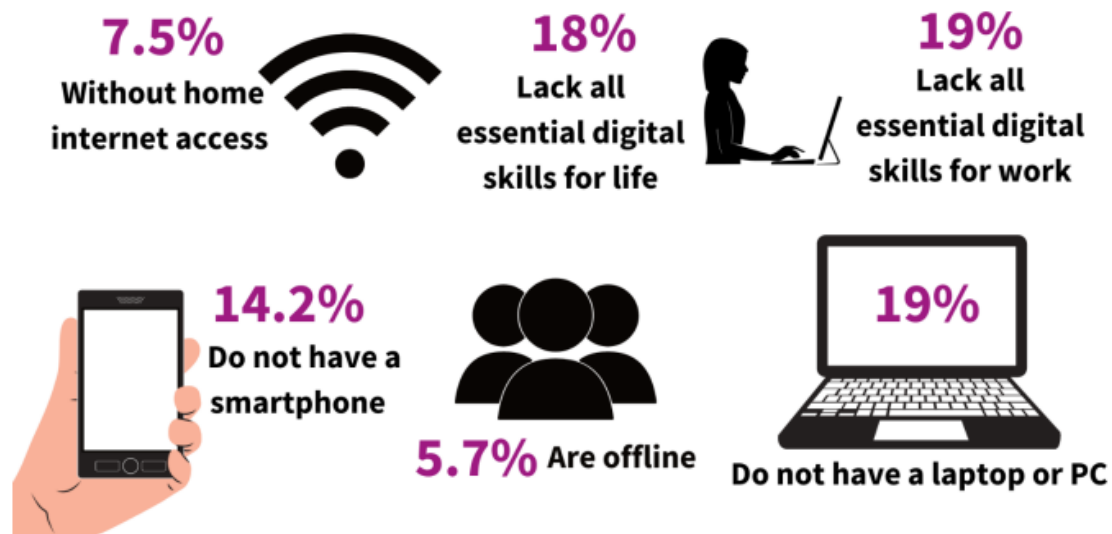
Independent Research – [Citizens online June 2023](#)

Executive Summary (Extracted from Report)

'Digital' permeates everything. How we communicate, work, learn, travel, and entertain ourselves today is a world away from 20 years ago. Digital skills are classed by the government as 'essential' to live in our society today.

The social benefits for residents are significant: improved health and wellbeing, social inclusion, better employment opportunities and saving money. Recent research calculates the ROI for every £1 in digital inclusion to yield £9.48 in economic benefits. These positive outcomes support Surrey County Council's 2030 ambition to, 'make Surrey a uniquely special place for people to live, work and learn, and where no one is left behind'.

………. The problem of digital exclusion is not going away, it is only changing. For example, changes in technology such as assistive technology, remote working, a cashless society, the switch-off of analogue phone lines will bring new challenges to inclusion. There is a misconception that this issue will be solved with changing generations.'

Digital Inclusion Strategy – v0.5 DRAFT

Digital Exclusion Stats - Adults in Surrey

7.5% Without home internet access

18% Lack all essential digital skills for life

19% Lack all essential digital skills for work

14.2% Do not have a smartphone

5.7% Are offline

19% Do not have a laptop or PC

Alignment with organizational priorities & transformation

Our recommendations align with the four priorities in Surrey County Council's organisational strategy:

- **Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit:** Ensuring our customers have digital skills will contribute to sustainable economy and allow organisations to scale as they work in a more efficient way.
- **Tackling health inequality:** With increasing use of digital health tools, digital skills are an important part of accessing health care and reducing inequalities in access to support.
- **Enabling a greener future:** Reducing the number of journeys people make to access services, as well as device recycling and refurbishing are all part of creating a greener future.
- **Empowering & thriving communities:** Supporting digital inclusion will empower residents to come together to improve their communities.
- **High Performing Council:** Our Customer Operating Model, Team Around the Community (TAC) model for key neighbourhoods, towns & villages programme all require digital inclusion and accessibility to be successful.

This strategy intersects with other strategies and services, including those related to:

- equality, diversity, and inclusion
- customer service
- health and care
- education
- adult education.

An initial group has been formed and the first meeting took place in June 2024. This group of Surrey County Council staff will focus on this area and contribute to the action plan. We intent to re-engage with partners as there have been funding changes and we wish to build on improved relationships.

Digital Inclusion Strategy – v0.5 DRAFT

Approach

Digital inclusion is vital to create a society where everyone can participate and thrive.

The lack of **Ability** and **Confidence** to go online is the most important area of focus because research shows that 19% of adults in Surrey lack these vital skills. To help improve this we must consider:

- **Infrastructure** – is the necessary infrastructure in place to allow connectivity to get online?
- **Finance** – can people afford the device and pay for internet access?
- **Design for digital inclusion** – are we ensuring that our information is accessible and easy to use by everyone?
- **Digital literacy (training and support)** – do people have the skills and confidence to access information and services online?

Surrey has many rural areas and so ensuring access to high-speed internet infrastructure underlies anything that we do. Some years ago, Surrey invested in this via its Superfast Broadband Programme. Since then, the Government support has become available via initiatives such as the Superfast Broadband National Project and Gigabit rollout.

We recognise that there will always be residents who are either unable, or will choose not to, access digital services. We will retain non-digital access for these residents, such as our Contact Centre where staff mediate enquiries and support residents as part of our customer model.

Objectives that Surrey should focus on in the next 24 months:

The objectives below are based on the recommendations in the Citizens Online report and on good practice in other areas. Some objectives will be delivered by Surrey County Council, but some may be better delivered through a partnership approach.

We have developed a short-term action plan (see appendix A) to define this, which will help to develop a roadmap for longer term work.

1. Digital Literacy

Objective: Enhance digital skills and confidence among residents and staff and increase awareness of available support and services.

This is a priority area in the Citizens Online report which highlights a significant number of people that do not have sufficient (or any) digital skills (19%). There are various existing partnerships working in Surrey to address skills issues and it is essential that this work is aligned with existing activity.

Approach

- Analyse insight and data from communities and our staff to identify need and agree a framework for prioritising activity and measuring impact.
- Encourage our staff to engage in their local community on their volunteering days (This is an activity that is being taken forward as part of the Customer Champions network). A framework for this is being created to ensure a consistent level of training and support and this activity will take place in October to support the National "Get Online Week" initiative.
- Verify minimum standards for digital skills training on available courses and implement the measures of success with defined outcomes and benefits.

Digital Inclusion Strategy – v0.5 DRAFT

- Identify organisations, both voluntary and private such as Barclays Digital Eagles, who are already delivering training sessions and understand their effectiveness.
- Leverage Social Value commitments to skills within current contracts and highlight need within procurement for upcoming contracts.
- Use resources such as the Essential Digital Skills Framework and digital maturity assessments.

2. Financial Exclusion

Objective: Enable access to the internet to residents facing financial challenges.

Approach:

- Continue and promote the partnership with organisations such as 'The Good Things Foundation' and libraries who offer access to free data and SIM cards via schemes such as The National Databank.
- Analyse insight and data from communities to identify localised need and work with other SCC teams alongside priority communities to pilot and test approaches in these areas.
- Expand and promote SCC initiatives to deliver digital skills training and support to economically disadvantaged communities including the work in libraries, adult learning and our lifetime of learning commitment.

3. Design for Digital Inclusion

Objective: Ensure that all Surrey County Council's online content is designed with inclusion in mind – start with user needs

20% of users have an impairment which makes accessing non-complaint online services difficult or impossible.

Approach:

- Validate and communicate our design principles with everyone who creates online content.
- Continue to provide support and funding to meet our legislative requirements around digital accessibility. This enables work to continue around the Public Sector Accessibility Requirements
-

4. Partnership and Collaboration

Objective: Work in partnership with key partners to maximise impact

Approach

- Work with existing partnerships focusing on Digital Inclusion in Surrey.
- Build on work done by Surrey Heartlands to improve access to digital health resources, working alongside voluntary organisations, private sector and district and borough councils.

Identify organisations, both voluntary and private such as Barclays Digital Eagles, who are already delivering training sessions and understand their effectiveness.

5. Social Value

Digital Inclusion Strategy – v0.5 DRAFT

Objective: Extract social value from our procurement contracts to create opportunities to reduce digital exclusion

As a large council with significant expenditure, we should ensure our contracts enable us to create opportunities to reduce digital exclusion.

Approach

- Collate existing social value commitments within contracts and support contract managers to deliver them.
- Review social value commitments in current contracts to identify those relating to digital inclusion and work with contract managers to understand their impact.
- Engage with national networks and initiatives to collaborate on broader digital inclusion efforts. Put in place a way of measuring its impact.
- Output will deliver Social Value ROI and Social Value benefits and insights to allow further informed decisions to service provision and community activity.

Conclusion:

This strategy underpins our digital inclusion ambition. It sets out five objectives on which the Council should focus resources over the next 24 months.

To do this effectively, the Council must target activity where it is most needed and have a clear framework for assessing the impact of interventions. The Council must also identify and obtain the resources required to deliver the agreed activity, as this area of work currently does not have any associated funding.

We have set out below the actions that will be taken in the short term (3-6 months) to develop the evidence base and framework for a longer-term approach (6-24 months). These are set out against the five objectives in this strategy.

See Appendix A below for short term action plan.

Appendix A – Digital Inclusion action plan

Overarching activity

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
Evidence base established via Citizens Online report, Digital Inclusion Index, and Understanding Digital Inclusion in Surrey report.	Finalise digital inclusion framework informed by trailblazer authorities around UK and develop agreed evaluation framework for Surrey-based activity.	Digital Inclusion project officer	• Framework finalised and agreed

Theme 1: Financial Exclusion

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
370 computers provided across 52 libraries in Surrey.	Promote free computing resources in libraries as part of 'Get Online Week' 2024.	Libraries, external communications.	• Number of participants • Feedback from participants
Provision of 'data banks' via SCC libraries for people who are financially excluded to access data sims for internet connectivity.	Where possible extend provision to include device banks. Seek funding for data and device bank activity, including offers by telecommunications providers. Work with other SCC teams and partners to identify areas and communities in most need.	Libraries Good Things Foundation	• Update of data banks • Update of device banks • Funding leveraged for additional provision • Number of community groups engaged

Theme 2: Design for Digital Inclusion

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
Digital transformation in SCC provides support and advice on digital matters including design for inclusion.	Provide guide on digital inclusion for smaller change programmes not supported by the digital transformation team.	Transformation team	• Number of change projects using design guide
Digital accessibility work including web audits against statutory requirements, ongoing website user testing	Implement measures to prevent 'under threshold' procurements from purchasing non-compliant software/applications.	Web and Digital team Orbis Procurement	• Number of non-compliant software applications purchased

	Embed Digital Inclusion considerations in Equality Impact Assessment framework.	Corporate Strategy and Policy EDI Team	• Number of EIAs referencing digital inclusion
and use of 'accessibility bot' for automated accessibility checking.			

Theme 3: Digital Literacy

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
Digital Surrey website provides list of support services in Surrey.	Work with partners to establish future plan for sustainability of website.	Surrey Heartlands Digital Inclusion project officer	• Sustainable future for Digital Surrey website established
Support provided in libraries – digital wellbeing support project ended in March 2024. Independent skills courses starting in June 2024 will have a digital inclusion element.	Plan and seek resourcing for a pilot approach to improving digital literacy in a digital exclusion hotspot with clear evaluation framework to measure outcomes.	Libraries Customer Transformation	• Pilot project established and evaluated
Lifetime of Learning Strategy for Surrey.	Map landscape of provision of digital inclusion skills in Surrey including DWP, colleges and Adult Learning and Skills team.	One Surrey Growth Board Skills	• Skills map produced
Tech Advocates provide support and training to SCC staff.	Identify staff in non-knowledge based roles who lack key digital skills to engage with current training offers and identify future training needs.	Tech Advocates Commercial services teams.	• Number of staff engaged • Number of non-knowledge based staff engaged
Member Digital Skills approach being presented to September Member Development Steering Group.	Test personal development plans for Members.	IT& Digital and Democratic Services working group.	• Evaluation of personal development plans

Theme 4: Partnership and Collaboration

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure

Digital Inclusion Strategy – v0.5 DRAFT

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
SCC internal Digital Inclusion working group established.	Expand work to include further key departments including Local Skills Partnership and Team around the Community.	Web and Digital Digital Inclusion working group.	• Engagement of key departments with working group
SCC engage with Heartlands-led Digital Inclusion steering group.	Establish sustainability of the group and future partnership working framework for Surrey.	Web and Digital Customer Transformation	• Development of steering group

Theme 5: Social Value

Current activity	Planned 3–6-month activity	Key partners and responsible officers	Success measure
New Social Value framework being established for SCC.	Work with new framework to establish ways of embedding digital inclusion into social value offer.	Customer Transformation Communities and Prevention.	• Number of social value commitments referencing digital inclusion

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Digital Inclusion in Surrey

Citizens Online

June 2023

![Citizens Online logo]

CONTENTS

CitizensOnline

"Digital" permeates everything. How we communicate, work, learn, travel and entertain ourselves today is a world away from 20 years ago. Digital skills are classed by the [government as 'essential'](#) to live in our society today . Yet, **18% (21,560) adults in Surrey do not have all of these skills** and **5.7% (50,000) adults in Surrey are offline**. Many more people **lack the recommended digital skills for work (19%)**. Improving digital inclusion has a wide range of benefits. For the Council, supporting this work will drive more successful digital transformation, modernisation and channel shift. Improving digital maturity, culture and working practices will future proof the Council to deliver outstanding public services in a more efficient way. The social benefits for residents are also hugely significant; improved health and wellbeing, social inclusion, better employment opportunities and saving money. Recent research calculates **the ROI for every £1 in digital inclusion to yield £9.48[1] in economic benefits**. These positive outcomes support Surrey County Council's 2030 ambition to, 'make Surrey a uniquely special place for people to live, work and learn, and where no one is left behind'.

From our research with stakeholders and experience in this field we have co-produced a digital inclusion action plan to recognise existing work being delivered in Surrey, and included actions for the future, to form a roadmap to improve digital inclusion and make it sustainable. The problem of digital exclusion is not going away, it is only changing. For example, changes in technology such as 2factor authentication, assistive technology, remote working, a cashless society, the switch-off of analogue phone lines and the metaverse will bring new challenges to inclusion. There is a misconception that this issue will be solved when older people reach their natural end. Digital skills gaps still exist and our young people are not all 'digital natives'.[2] **Digital skills are an enabler** and this action plan will deliver benefits to support a wide range of SCC priorities and other strategies. This recommended approach aims to embed digital inclusion and make this work part of business as usual.

Many of the barriers to improving digital inclusion in Surrey can be overcome with a **collaborative networked approach**. Surrey Heartlands currently have funding for this purpose and have established a digital inclusion steering group, which currently has around 80 organisations involved. We recommend that SCC collaborates with Surrey Heartlands to grow and develop a digital inclusion network, and to adopt and monitor the action plan. A networked approach has been adopted successfully in other areas such as; [Digital Dorset](#), [100% Digital Leeds](#), [Digital Brighton & Hove](#), [Greater](#)

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[1] [Economic Impact of Digital Inclusion 2022](#)
[2] [Digital Poverty Alliance Evidence Review 2022](#)

[Manchester](link). Other barriers to inclusion highlighted by stakeholders including raising awareness of support to residents, a joined-up understanding of digital inclusion support provision (mapping of activity), access to devices, funding and training of digital champions – all of which can all be better addressed in a digital inclusion network. Having a network will enable sharing or best practice and amplifying key messages to reach more residents in need.

The residents most at risk of digital exclusion are more likely to include some of the most vulnerable groups[3]. Including people who are; older, disabled, people with low formal education or living on low-income. These groups will also feel the impact of the rising cost living - potentially cancelling broadband contracts[4], being unable to buy devices and data thus further exacerbating digital poverty. There is a need for sustainable access to low cost of gifted devices in the County. Refurbishing schemes also contribute to environmental goals such as reducing landfill waste. Raising awareness of low-cost broadband offers ('social tariffs') should also be prioritised.

Surrey County Council has some good examples of digital inclusion work and crucially, the Council recognises that not everyone will be able to transact online and alternative options to engage with the Council are open. The libraries offer digital skills support and funding for **two Digital Welfare Officers**, has improved capacity for digital skills support available to residents. A **digital skills strategy and training offer for staff** has supported over 10,000 participants, all of which will increase the digital maturity of SCC and enable more efficient ways of working. New roles within digital service design have also broadened user research and increased accessibility of digital products. Essential digital skills courses are available as part of the Adult Learning offer. However, for SCC to fully recognise the social and economic benefits of this work more importance of this work there is a need for support and recognition for it at Senior Leadership level and **clear ownership** within the Council structures. **Dedicated resource to drive collaboration internally** between different directorates at SCC, and **externally with other organisations** working to reduce digital exclusion is required.

The fantastic contributions from stakeholders during this consultation has demonstrated the tremendous passion for this work. We hope that SCC will commit to the recommendations to reap the
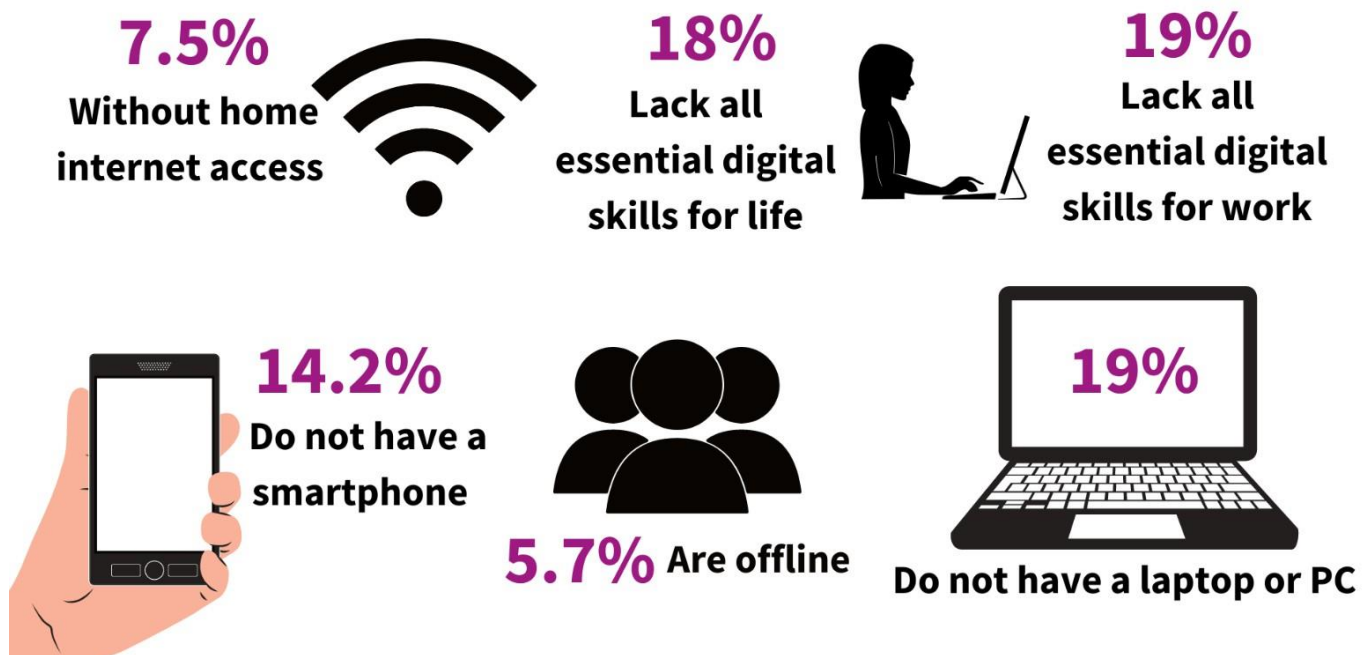
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[3] Older people are more likely to not be online, 85% of UK population who are estimated to have never used the internet are aged 65 or over (2.8 million); and among people living with disabilities 14.9% have never used the internet (2.3 million people), compared to 3.4% of those who are not disabled [ONS 2020](link).
[4] [One million people cancel broadband](link)

benefits that digital inclusion can deliver; not only from modernising service delivery, but also from the life changing impact that digital inclusion can have for residents.

Digital Exclusion Stats - Adults in Surrey

7.5% Without home internet access

18% Lack all essential digital skills for life

19% Lack all essential digital skills for work

14.2% Do not have a smartphone

5.7% Are offline

19% Do not have a laptop or PC

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Citizens Online were commissioned to research and review Surrey County Council and its partners' approach to Digital Inclusion. Our findings in this report provide:

- A better understanding of digital exclusion and inclusion issues
- A picture of current digital inclusion provision in the County
- An action plan based on recommendations to improve Digital Inclusion

Our research has included engagement with 86 stakeholders from 38 organisations. We have conducted interviews (n=37), an online survey (n=60), a workshop (n=26), desktop research and a strategic document review.

The scope of the report includes residents who are "Digitally Excluded" through recognised barriers: digital skills, motivation, confidence and trust, and access to and affordability of data and devices. Whilst there is a need to support anyone who is digitally excluded to access the benefits of the internet, it is also important to recognise that there will be residents who will never be able to use a digital service or will need assistance to do so. The accompanying action plan details interventions which will enable digital participation and boost a range of other social and economic outcomes.

We hope our recommendations are agreed and adopted to embed digital inclusion access into business as usual, not only for Surrey County Council, but also other organisations transforming digitally across the County. This will help to deliver outstanding, inclusive digital services and enable everyone to benefit from the digital world we now live in.

Surrey County Council's Vision

By 2030 we want Surrey to be a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.

ACTIONS

To achieve the vision of Surrey County Council, digital inclusion actions will focus on three areas:

CREATING THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE DIGITAL INCLUSION HAPPENS

We need to raise awareness of digital inclusion work at a County wide level, including at a senior level within the Council. This will ensure this work is treated as a priority as the key enabler it is for residents to live better, heathier lives and the County to prosper. Asking residents about their digital skills and access as standard for all public and community services will help us to gather data and target support. This will also help to embed digital inclusion into organisations and reminds staff that digital skills are everyone's responsibility. Having this evidence base will also enable better funding opportunities and leverage more support from social value in contracts.

BUILDING DIGITAL SKILLS, MOTIVATION, CONFIDENCE AND TRUST

These are key barriers that prevent people from being digitally included and organisations in the County must work together to solve them. There is a need to train more trusted digital champions who can help residents to overcome these barriers. From our consultation the key concern was raising awareness of what support is available. There are many people who need help but don't know where to go.

CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO DEVICES

Access to devices was the second key concern from responses in our consultation. As the cost of living crisis deepens, and more services move online, we know that people will continue to need support

with access to suitable devices. Encouraging more recycling of devices will also contribute to the green agenda. With uptake at only 3%[5] for people who are eligible for social tariffs, more must be done to promote these offers.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Creating the environment where digital inclusion happens**

1. Make digital part of the conversation. Embed digital inclusion within all Council work streams, public and community services
2. Raise awareness of the barriers to digital inclusion
3. Continue to learn from and implement digital inclusion best practice
4. Seek opportunities to support and fund digital inclusion work from organisations, charitable trusts and leverage social value from relevant contracts</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Supporting residents to access the benefits of the internet**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Building digital skills, motivation, confidence & trust**

5. Establish a Digital Inclusion Network to:
   - Train and support more digital champions
   - Promote best practice
   - Facilitate a joined up approach
   - Signpost to provision and resources, including specialist support for key at risk groups[6]
6. Raise awareness of digital inclusion support for residents and promote the benefits of technology
7. Create a common approach to assess digital exclusion eg. Level of skills, confidence and access to devices for residents</td><td>**Connectivity and access to devices**

8. Establish a sustainable solution for residents to access free or low cost devices
9. Ensure availability of free-to-use devices in public settings through libraries, community hubs and other facilities.
10. Promote social tariffs, free and low cost data packages and availability of free wifi to residents</td></tr>
</table>

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[5] Ofcom 2020
[6] Disabled, Learning disabilities, dementia, older people, care leavers, care givers, English as an Additional Language, Low income, neurodiverse

PRINCIPLES

It is recommended that SCC and other organisations as part of the Surrey Heartlands Digital Inclusion network, learn from best practice in digital inclusion around the UK and adopt the following design principles:

AN EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH

We will ensure that everything we do to tackle the digital divide will be based on the best available evidence. We have mapped digital exclusion risk in the County and gathered views from cross sector stakeholders' views and experiences of digital. We will improve understanding with more work with residents.

PARTNERSHIP AND JOINT WORKING

Digital inclusion is too big an issue for one single organisation to tackle. We will encourage and facilitate better partnership working via the Surrey Heartlands ICB digital inclusion network. We will also learn from other networks such as Digital Poverty Alliance.

PROVIDING SUPPORT TO RESIDENTS WHEN AND WHERE THEY NEED IT

We know that people's needs vary, and our approach will ensure different types of support continue to be available to residents in varied settings. Working with a wide range of organisations and different types of digital champions to make this happen.

SECURING INVESTMENT TO BUILD SUSTAINABILITY

Digital inclusion is a cross cutting priority and by raising the profile of this work at a strategic level we seek to secure funding from a range of sources. We will seek out further funding and investment from contracts, corporate donors and charitable trusts and foundations.

KEY RESEARCH

Within Surrey County Council (SCC), there are examples of good digital inclusion practice but it varies between services. The action plan contains recommendations to standardise best practice throughout the Council to support the Council's vision *"to help everyone in Surrey benefit from all the opportunities on offer in our county, and to ensure that no one is left behind. Now, and in the future."* Embedding digital inclusion in to the design and delivery of services is a significant part of ensuring Surrey residents can benefit from the opportunities on offer and that those who are vulnerable are not excluded further. SCC, along with other organisations in the County, need to 'Create the environment for digital inclusion to happen'. These actions are aimed to make this work sustainable and part of 'business as usual'. Some actions are already in progress, others are longer term aims.

The recommendations in this report support the four priority objectives in SCC Organisational strategy:

- Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit – ensuring local residents have digital skills will contribute to sustainable economy and allow organisation to scale as they work in a more efficient way,
- Tackling health inequality – with increasing use of digital health tools, digital skills and access are an important part of accessing health care,
- Enabling a greener future – device recycling and refurbishing is a part of the solution to greener future,
- Empowering & thriving communities – supporting digital inclusion will empower residents and communities.

Digital inclusion does not sit within one sector but crosses many agendas. The recommendations in this report link to the following strategies and services. These should include considering the barriers digital exclusion can create for residents:

- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2022 to 2023
- Customer promise
- Health and Care:
  - Adult social care vision
  - Living Well in Later Life - Older People's Commissioning Strategy 2021-2030
  - Surrey Carers Strategy 2021-2024

- o Joint Health and Social Care Dementia Strategy for Surrey 2022 to 2027
- o Surrey's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- o Public Health Team Service Plan 2023-24
- Digital Strategy 2025
- Surrey Skills Plan 2022
- Children and Young People; Education
- Adult education

Other key organisations and strategies across the County include:

- Surrey Heartlands Digital inclusion strategy
- District and Borough Councils: Corporate or Core Strategy; Communications and Customer Service Strategies; IT and Digital Strategies.
- Housing associations and voluntary sector organisations.

Figure 1: Priorities to tackle digital exclusion in Surrey (survey responses, n=60).

Priorities to tackle digital exclusion in Surrey (survey responses)
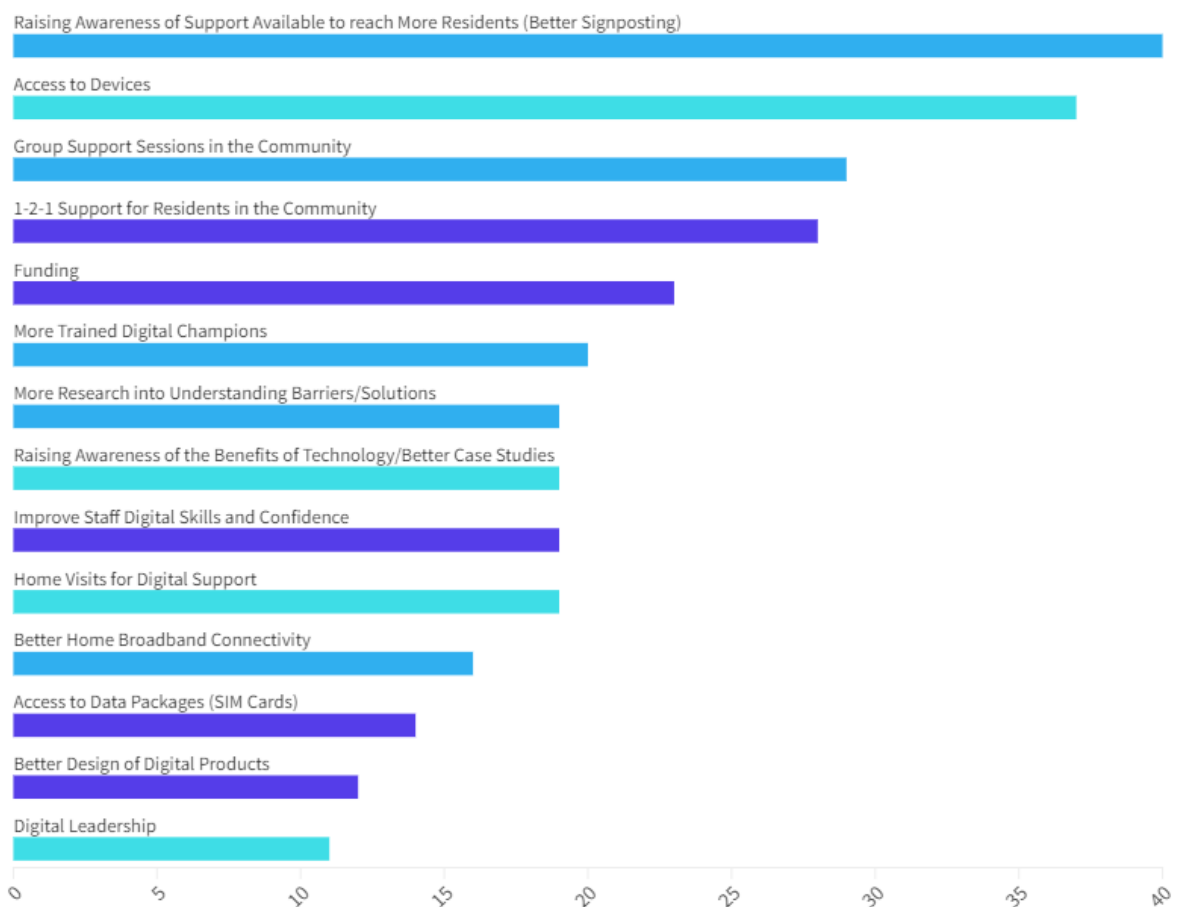
The barriers to digital inclusion in Surrey were examined with stakeholders in the survey, interviews, and the workshop. See figure 1 for responses to this question in the survey.

SUPPORTING RESIDENTS WITH DIGITAL SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

Providing support to residents with digital skills and confidence should come in many forms to meet their needs. In the survey these were:

- Group support sessions in the community (48%)
- 1-to-1 support for residents (46%)
- Having more Digital Champions (33%)
- Home visits for digital support (19%)

The role of informal support has been highlighted often in sector research.[7] This is something many of us are familiar with - think back to the last time you were struggling to do something online – you may have searched online for a solution, but on the whole most people ask someone near to them. This type of support can have limitations, friends and family can lack patience and do the task for someone, rather than supporting learners to learn to perform the task themselves.

A coordinated digital champion (DC) programme across the County would **enhance current activity** and offer a **more sustainable way of delivering digital skills support**. Having a dedicated trainer and using resources from organisations such as Digital Unite, Digital Eagles and Learn my Way would help to increase provision. There is interest in this work, 22 respondents in the survey stated an interest to receive free training up upskill their staff/volunteers. Half of those interested in this were SCC staff. When overcoming digital exclusion, SCC staff also thought that training Digital Champions was a priority (38%), compared to the total respondents (33.3%). When speaking to departments, there was no coordinated approach or training for staff to support residents digitally. We strongly advocate for Embedded Digital Champions. These are staff members (usually in a customer or staff facing role who are trained to digitally support colleagues and residents with digital services. There are some already in place in Adult Social Care, Community,

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[7] Centre for Ageing Better & Citizens Online 2021: Digital Skills to Connect. This research was conducted with people aged 50-70 years old on lower incomes during the pandemic

Investment and Engagement, Highways, IT and Development. There is potential to develop this further, embedded Digital Champions can include:

- Customer Contact staff supporting a range of online services
- Revenues and Benefits advisors assisting people with online benefits claims
- Employment support workers helping someone to job search online
- Social prescribers helping residents improve health outcomes through digital health apps
- Carers supporting others with long term health conditions
- Library staff supporting residents use in-house devices

Research indicates that digital inclusion projects that use an embedded digital champion approach were able to maintain participant engagement for longer.[8]

Our research also highlighted a need for digital support **home visits**. 20% of survey respondents put this in the top 5 of priorities for overcoming digital exclusion. It is positive there is a cross-county awareness that those who are fully or partially housebound are further disadvantaged from accessing digital support. Utilising pre-existing support that visits people's home, such as homecare, the library home delivery service or meal services offer avenues to train staff as digital champions and provide in the home digital support.

An interviewee raised that there was not enough information on residents digital skills and access, to be able to support them. The SCC Digital Skills Team told us they collect feedback forms after their sessions with staff. **Monitoring and data collection** of learners (residents and staff) should be integrated across the county. We recommend SCC conduct **a resident insight survey** on digital access and skills, and work in partnership with external stakeholders to share the findings. This survey could additionally develop understanding and lead to work streams on characteristics that increase the likelihood of being digitally excluded, such as: English as an Additional Language, jobseekers, dementia/memory issues, and learning disabilities.

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[8] SCVO (2017) Digital Participation Challenge Fund Review

ACCESS TO DEVICES AND DATA

Access to devices was the second most often chosen barrier to digital inclusion, with **62% of respondents** to the survey stating this is a key priority.

STAFF DIGITAL SKILLS

There are examples of great digital inclusion and digital skills activity taking place across the SCC and other organisations. SCC has developed a Staff Digital Skills strategy and have a Digital Skills Team who support staff, offering a range of support depending on what individual staff members needed. In addition, staff Tech Advocates support colleague with Microsoft 365 training. This is a great example of good practice.

Across all organisations we spoke to, there is a strong willingness for skilled staff to support residents. SCC's organisational strategy demonstrates the importance of staff skills, with a priority that "*people's needs are met by skilled staff who offer a consistent and good quality service".* However, there is more to be done to ensure that staff have the *digital* skills to support residents. **Upskilling staff** was a slightly higher priority for Surrey CC staff (43%) compared to all survey respondents (32%). Lack of confidence amongst staff in different organisations of how they could help residents ranged from a lack of personal digital skills, lack of Digital Champion training, and lack of knowledge of where they could signpost residents. Improving staff digital skills through awareness and training, working in partnership between SCC, District and Borough Councils, health, voluntary sector and private organisations is key to overcoming digital exclusion.

One of the barriers to digital inclusion highlighted in the interviews was that not all **operational staff** at SCC and District and Borough Councils have the digital skills needed, often don't have digital devices provided by their work place, and in some cases are not provided staff email addresses. To ensure all staff are digitally included, these barriers must be assessed and addressed. We were told that a new project within SCC was aimed to reach more community-based members of staff – this is a strong step to increasing staff digital skills but needs to be incorporated county wide to ensure that all staff employed by local authorities have the access to devices, connectivity, and digital support.

Citizens Online

Only 32% of stakeholders surveyed said that they **ask residents about digital skills and access**. 43% asked these questions 'sometimes'. As digital skills are classed as essential for all UK adults in today's society it's important to embed this as part of the conversation. And when service providers identify that residents need further support with digital skills, they need to be aware of where to signpost them for further support. 62% of those surveyed signpost residents to digital support – but **67% said that more needs to be done to raise awareness of support available to residents**.

In interviews, many participants also discussed this, noting that to improve digital inclusion, a mapping of digital inclusion activity in the county (n=5), and more joined up understanding of cross-county projects (n=8)= would be helpful. Similarly, not having a road map/cohesive plan across the county, and lack of awareness of support offers were cited as barriers. Other national research also supports this finding, The Centre for Aging Better reported that 87% of 50-70yr olds on household incomes of under 25K, did not know where to go to get help with digital skills.[9]

[9] Centre For Aging Better Digital Skills to Connect July 2021

There isn't a consistent approach about how to support digitally excluded residents. A lack of a: cohesive road map, digital inclusion strategy, and approach to digital transformation, was cited as a barrier to digital inclusion by stakeholders. An approach to digital skills training that is consistent across departments, that could be shared with external organisations, would enable all resident facing staff to support residents more effectively, and boost their own skillset. In addition to boosting staff members' digital knowledge, how to share this knowledge with others is key in supporting residents.

A lack of joined up understanding and partnership working, both within SCC and amongst partner organisations were identified in our research as creating a significant barrier to digital inclusion. Many staff across SCC and District and Borough Councils felt that there is **not strong enough support from senior leadership**, and they therefore did not have confidence that digital inclusion will be incorporated into business plans to be embedded into everyday practice. Having confidence and trust within departments, organisations, and across organisations is key to successfully embedding digital inclusion work. One SCC staff member felt that there was a lack of staff comms and engagement around digital inclusion. Embedding digital inclusion as an organisational priority could encourage staff motivation to embed it into their daily practice. It is key that this prioritisation comes from all areas of the organisation – especially leadership.

Staff and volunteers should feel confident sharing support resources, signposting learners/residents, raising awareness about being safe online, and promoting the benefits of the digital world. There was a reoccurring theme in our research that staff across SCC, District and Borough Councils and other organisations did not know what digital support was out there, and strongly felt a joined-up county approach would help overcome this. Need for **'joined up understanding of projects'** was the most cited priority in interviews. Similarly in the survey the most often cited priority, with just over half (52%) of respondents choosing it, was '**Raising awareness of support to reach more residents'**. To be able to successfully triage residents between organisations and support services, **partnership working** with resource and knowledge sharing at the centre is essential. Mapping of activity across the county was also strongly cited as a need by those we interviewed.

Overall, digital inclusion work needs to be executed collaboratively, to enable staff the tools and confidence to support learners within a supportive environment. Better understanding of the barriers to digital inclusion, and SCC, District and Borough Councils, and voluntary and sector working in partnership to pool knowledge and share good practice will support this. Concerns about **funding** for this work as a barrier was also in the top 5 priorities for 38% of survey respondents, and 37% of interviewees. Closer collaboration between organisations can also support fundraising for this work.

PROGRESS SO FAR

CREATING THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE DIGITAL INCLUSION HAPPENS

Work that is already taking place in Surrey includes:

- Surrey Heartlands have established a Digital Inclusion network
- SCC's staff skills strategy and training provided by Digital Skills Team
- Design of SCC digital products both being accessible and also tested with users who have low digital skills

In addition to this, as highlighted in our key findings, it is essential that staff have an understanding of digital exclusion, and awareness of the digital inclusion support available to residents. We encourage **staff to discuss with residents in any interaction about their digital access and confidence**. This can be as simple as asking:

1. Do you have a device you can connect to the internet with?
2. Are you confident to download an app or navigate a new website on your own?

This would help to raise awareness as if the answer to either of the questions is no, staff should either help residents there and then, or signpost them to support. Asking these questions helps to embed this work, making staff aware that essential digital skills are an integral part of providing a service.

When residents need further support, **a signposting website** developed by Surrey Heartlands (due to be launched in 2023) will be a useful resource, with information about support for residents' digital skills and access. Linking up this website with other information services such as Surrey Information Point and Family Information Service will reduce duplication and ensure everyone has access to current information.

BUILDING DIGITAL SKILLS, MOTIVATION, CONFIDENCE AND TRUST

Across Surrey County there are:

- At least 37 organisations offering some type of digital skills support to residents, and

- At least 17 organisations who have staff in Digital Champion roles[10]. These include SCC Digital Welfare Support Officers who provide support to residents who are more likely to be digitally excluded, and Digital Angels from Surrey Coalition.
- There are also many volunteer Digital Champions in the county, including 46 volunteer Digital Buddies in SCC Libraries.

When supporting residents with digital skills, resident-facing SCC departments and other organisations had mixed approaches. Demonstrating the benefits of being online to residents is good practice and should be shared widely across all residents and staff. Using a person-centred approach to potential and current learners is key to increasing digital inclusion. Our research has shown that this motivation can range from contacting friends and family online, to accessing health care to learning a hobby. All staff and volunteers across the county should be aware that digital inclusion is not a 'one size fits all', and often different people have different motivations to going online.

CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO DEVICES

Surrey Library Service have computers within libraries that can be booked by residents to use. Surrey Libraries are also members of the National Data Bank and will join the National Devices Bank when it is up and running, and are developing a tablet loan scheme. The County would benefit from further raising awareness to residents, schools and organisations supporting people in need where to access low cost or free devices. Again, a network and action plan provide ideal opportunities to support this.

To increase access and recycle devices to prevent landfill waste, there are opportunities that can be explored. While there are local organisations running device schemes in localities[11], there is need for more device refurbishment schemes operating across the County. This should include encouraging donations of old devices from residents, potentially via libraries (as in North Yorkshire) and businesses. More awareness is needed for other organisations to donate old tech. The Digital Inclusion Toolkit also has information on options for devices.

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[10] See details in Appendix 2.
[11] See details in Appendix 2.

It is estimated that only 3% of those eligible have taken advantage of lower cost broadband via 'social tariffs', more should be done to promote these particularly in the current context of Cost of Living and rising inflation. Some of the local organisations already provide free SIM cards to service users[12], and more should be encouraged to do this to reduce data poverty.

DIGITAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

We have co-produced an action plan that includes recognition of digital inclusion work already taking place in Surrey, and suggested actions for future ambition to improve impact. The action plan aims to address barriers to digital inclusion and build a sustainable approach, plug gaps in current provision, and target support to the people who are most at risk. We have categorised actions to impact on three pillars discussed earlier in the report.

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[12] These can be achieved through Vodafone's Charities Connected, which provides free SIM cards to charities to distribute to their service users.

CitizensOnline

Digital exclusion in Surrey	Population	Percentage
Non-users of internet[13]	50,000	5.70%
Without full Essential Digital Skills for Life[14]	216,560	18%
Without Essential Digital Skills for Work [15]	228,592	19%
Without internet access at home[16]	74,000	7.5%
Don't have laptop/PC at home[17]	187,500	19%
No smartphone[18]	139,800	14.2%
% of premises without access to superfast broadband[19]	-	1.5%
% of premises without access to USO download speeds[20]	-	0.31%

DIGITAL EXCLUSION RISK MAP

- Areas with high digital exclusion risk include **several areas in Spelthorne**, and **Reigate and Banstead**, and one each in Guildford, Elmbridge and Woking.

Digital exclusion is not caused by any single risk factor. There is also no single measure or dataset that tells us what the scale of digital exclusion is across an area. Because of this, we use a variety of data sources that tell us about the levels of certain risk factors among a population in an area.

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[13] ONS Internet users; UK 2020.

[14] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index 2022

[15] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index 2022

[16] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2019.

[17] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2019.

[18] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2019.

[19] thinkBroadband, accessed 24/05/2023. This is higher than England average (2.1%) and similar level as South East (1.6%)

[20] thinkBroadband, accessed 24/05/2023. From 20 March 2020, if someone cannot get a download speed of 10 Mbit/s and an upload speed of 1Mbit/s, they can request an upgraded connection from BT, under the "Universal Service Obligation for Broadband", government legislation giving the right to request a 'decent' broadband connection. This is lower than England average (0.7%) and South East (0.45%)

The digital exclusion risk mapping has been completed using Surrey Digital Exclusion Map-tool, created by Surrey County Council Population Insight Team. The mapping tool brings together social and technology datasets. Areas with high risk of digital exclusion are shown below on map (Figure 2), and listed with their risk factors in Figure 3. In both the data is shown on the level of a Middle Layer Super Output Area, (MSOA)[21].

Figure 2: Digital Exclusion Risk in Surrey County.[22]

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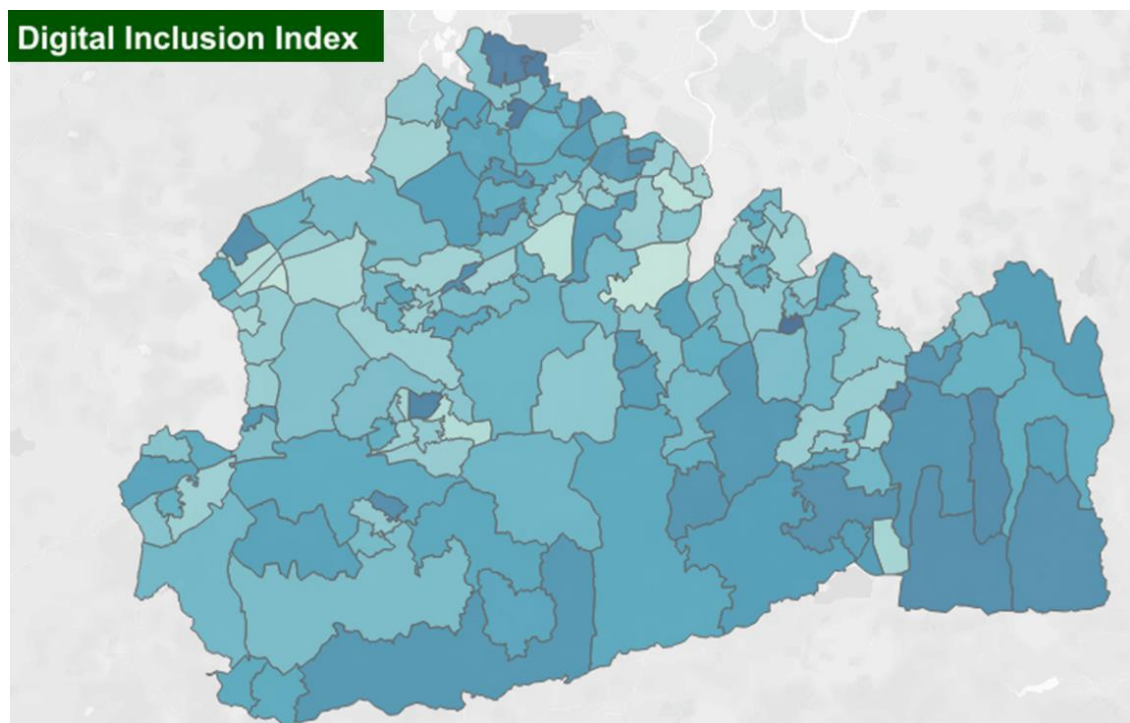
[21] An MSOA is a commonly used unit of measurement in a geographical area. MSOAs have an average population of about 7,500 people, or 4,000 households. Wards typically have several MSOAs; MSOA are known by codes, they don't have names. When we are referring to specific MSOAs, we will use the name of the ward it belongs in. Further information can be found here: https://ocsi.uk/2019/03/18/lsoas-leps-and-lookups-a-beginners-guide-to-statistical-geographies

[22] The mapping is done using Surrey Digital Exclusion Map-tool. The darker the MSOA area, the higher the digital exclusion risk.

Figure 3: Areas with high digital exclusion risk in Surrey and risk factors for each area (social indicators).[23]

MSOA	Local authority	Pensioners in poverty (Pension credit)	Disability benefit (DLA)	Prevalence of Learning Disability	Households in Poverty	Universal credit	People w no qualifications	Social rented housing
Tattenham South	Reigate and Banstead	X			x	x	x	x
Stanwell South	Spelthorne	X	X		x	x	x	x
Staines South West	Spelthorne	X	X		x		x	x
Stanwell North & Stanwell Moor	Spelthorne				x	x	x	x
Bellfields, Slyfield & Weyfield	Guildford	X	X		x		x	x
Merstham	Reigate and Banstead		X	x				x
West Molesey South	Elmbridge	X				x		
Sheerwater	Woking	X			x	x	x	x
Godstone	Reigate and Banstead			x				
Sunbury Common	Spelthorne					x	x	

DEMOGRAPHICS

Older people are more likely to be digitally excluded – to be offline, to lack digital skills, and are less likely to have access to digital devices. **85% of** UK population who are estimated to have **never used the internet are aged 65 or over (2.8 million)**[24]. Age alone is not a simple predictor of digital exclusion - the **majority of people aged 65 and over**

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[23] The mapping is done using Surrey Digital Exclusion Map-tool. For the social indicators, the mapping tool also includes data about population over the age of 65, and pensioners living alone. These were not factors in any of the MSOA areas with highest digital exclusion risk.
[24] Internet use in the UK; annual estimates by age, sex, disability and geographical location (ONS, 2020), accessed 12/09/2022

(71.1%) are internet users. Income/deprivation, education and other factors will also be important. **18.88% of Surrey population is aged 65 or older**. This is similar as England as a whole (18.41%).

Disabled people are among the demographic groups research has consistently identified as being more likely to be digitally excluded. ONS data on internet users shows *the proportion of disabled adults who have never used the internet remains considerably higher than not disabled (*14.9% compared to 3.4% in 2020)[25]. And **18.4% of disabled people are not regular internet users** (2.5 million people) - considerably higher than for adults who are not disabled (5%).[26] In Surrey, **21.3% of residents reported a disability or a long-term health condition** in 2021 Census.[27] This was highest in Runnymede and Tandridge. **Assistive technology** and other technological developments do also help some of those with impairments to use online services.

DEPRIVATION

Low income and low educational level are associated with higher likelihood to not having essential digital skills or internet access. The groups **more likely not to have internet access at home** continue to be those aged 75+[28] (26%), those in DE households (14%) and those who are most financially vulnerable (10%).[29] A large majority (83%) of those without home internet access were also not accessing it anywhere else.[30] **25% of people earning under £11,499/year have skills in each of the five Essential Digital Skills groups**, compared to 61% of people earning over £25,000.[31] **In Surrey, 42.9% of households were classified as deprived** in some way – this is lower than across England (51.6%) and South East (48%).[32]

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[25] Internet users - Office for National Statistics, 2020

[26] According to the ONS Internet Users data for 2020, 14.9% of disabled people have never used the internet (2.3 million people), compared to 3.4% of those who are not disabled (1.3 million people). A further 3.5% of people with disabilities last used the internet over three months ago, and may thus also be considered effectively offline. This makes a total of 18.4% of disabled people who are never, or not regularly, online (2.5 million people). Internet users - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[27] Census 2021: Disability (Surrey-i)

[28] ONS, Internet Access 2020

[29] Ofcom, Adults' Media Use and Attitudes report 2022

[30] Ofcom, Adults' Media Use and Attitudes report 2022

[31] Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2019. Likewise, The 2018 Lloyds CDI found that just 64% of those earning under £17,499 a year had all five Basic Digital Skills, compared to 84% of those earning up between £17,500 and £39,999, and 94% of those earning over £40,000

[32] Census 2021: Household deprivation (Surrey-i)

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

People of different ethnicities, migration status, and with English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be confident internet users – there is nothing about any of these characteristics that should be considered a barrier to digital inclusion. However, digital inclusion programmes should consider targeting engagement to take account of different backgrounds, experiences, and challenges when trying to reach digitally excluded people within these demographic groups (those who are excluded because of other factors discussed elsewhere in this report around age, disability or low income, for example). There are **80,792 residents whose main language was not English (6.9%** of the population above age 3) in Surrey. This is highest in Woking and Spelthorne.[33] Of these only 12.3% reported they could not speak English well or at all.

DIGITAL SKILLS

Digital skills are of an ever-increasing importance in our society. A lack of digital skills also holds our workforce back from increased productivity, embracing technological change and future ways of working. The Essential Digital Skills Framework ([Department of Education, 2018](#)) is divided into Foundation skills, Essential Digital Skills for Life, and Essential Digital Skills for Work (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Essential digital skills framework ([Department of Education, 2018](#))

An estimated 216,560 of Surrey residents (18% of adult residents) lack the full Essential Digital Skills for Life, which are needed to safely benefit from, participate in and contribute to the digital world. Many of these adults will be 'Narrow' internet users who only participate in a limited number of internet

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[33] [Census 2021: Main Language | Surrey-i (surreyi.gov.uk)](#)

activities. (Ofcom, 2018). An estimated 228,592 Surrey residents (19% of adult residents) don't have the full Essential Digital Skills for Work.[34]

Connectivity across Surrey is good, and better than the average connectivity across England and South East. The latest data from thinkbroadband[35] reports that 98.82% of residential and business premises in Surrey have access to **Superfast Broadband** ('SFBB' – speeds of up to 24Mbps). While this is the overwhelming majority of premises, it still leaves a small proportion of population without access to these speeds. **Ultrafast speeds** of up to 100Mbps are available to a significant proportion properties (80.54%). This is slightly higher than that across East Midlands and England (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Coverage data for Surrey, South East and England (thinkbroadband)

	Surrey	**South East**	**England**
Below 2 Mbps down	0.08%	0.11%	0.22%
Below USO (<10 Mbps, <1 Mbps up)	0.30%	0.44%	0.69%
Superfast (UK definition, >24 Mbps)	98.82%	98.60%	98.11%
Ultrafast (>100 Mbps)	80.54%	80.06%	78.54%

Similarly, access to connections in relation to **minimum download speeds** in Surrey is better than the national and regional average. Ofcom identify that 10Mbps is the minimum speed currently needed to meet an average household's digital needs, which is

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[34] We have used Census 2021 data with Lloyds Digital Skills 2021 data to estimate the figures for Digital Skills.
[35] thinkbroadband, Accessed 19/05/2023. "Coverage percentages include both residential and business premises and is based around postcode level data. The speed available are determined by a model that reconstructs the Openreach exchange/cabinet based network, and takes into account the distance limitations of ADSL2+ and VDSL2/G.fast (FTTC) services. …By running our model we are able to provide a verification for the Ofcom data and are not reant on quarterly data releases but can update data on a daily or weekly basis as needed. The largest factor for any differences with the Ofcom analysis is down to the timing of publication."

included in the "Universal Service Obligation" rate (USO).[36] However, it is important to remember that good connectivity does not imply uptake. People may not have home broadband packages, even if they are available to them, for many reasons: for example cost, or whether they think it's worth having.

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[36] From 20 March 2020, if someone cannot get a download speed of 10 Mbit/s and an upload speed of 1Mbit/s, they can request an upgraded connection from BT, under the "Universal Service Obligation for Broadband", government legislation giving the right to request a 'decent' broadband connection.

Citizens Online

APPENDIX 2: DIGITAL SUPPORT PROVISION IN SURREY

Organisation	Resident Group(s) supported	Area Covered	Access to wifi	Devices / details	Digital Champions	Type of Support
Active Surrey	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Families, Other Organisations, People with healthcare needs, People with English as an Additional Language, Care Leavers	County Wide				
Age Concern Empson & Ewell	Older people (55+)	Epsom and Ewell			Yes	Home Visits
Age UK Surrey	Older people (55+)	County Wide		Tablets	Yes	Face to face appointments, Drop in sessions, Tablet loan scheme
Ash Parish Council	Everyone	Guildford			Yes	
Bramley Parish	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Families, People with healthcare needs	Waverley			Yes	
Caterham Valley Parish Council	Older people (55+), Younger people (under 25), Families	Tandridge		Tablets, phones, smart speakers, data	Yes	Group support, 1:1 support
Chiddingfold Parish Council	Older people (55+), Younger people (under 25), Families, Other Organisations	Waverley			Yes	

Citizens Online

Organisation	Resident Group(s) supported	Area Covered	Access to wifi	Devices / details	Digital Champions	Type of Support
Citizens Advice Surrey Heath	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Jobseekers / unemployed, Families, People with healthcare needs, People with English as an Additional Language	Surrey Heath		Data	Yes	Embedded digital champions
Citizens Advice Tandridge	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Jobseekers/unemployed, Families, People with healthcare needs, People with English as an Additional Language, Care Leavers, Prison Leavers	Tandridge			Yes	
CREST Cancer Support	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Families, People with healthcare needs; Cancer patients and carers	Elmbridge, Spelthorne, Runnymede			Yes	
Elmbridge Council	Everyone	Elmbridge	Yes	Yes	Yes	Embedded digital champions
Farnham Town Council	Older people (55+), Younger people (under 25), Jobseekers / unemployed, Families, Other Organisations, People with English as an Additional Language	Waverley			Yes	
Hale Community Centre	Older people (55+), Younger people (under 25), Families	Waverley	Yes		Yes	Embedded digital champions
Horley Town Council	Older people (55+)	Reigate and Banstead			Yes	

Citizens Online

Organisation	Resident Group(s) supported	Area Covered	Access to wifi	Devices / details	Digital Champions	Type of Support
Mascot	Older people (55+), Jobseekers / unemployed, Families, People with English as an Additional Language	Woking	Yes	Laptops	Yes	
Methodist Homes Association (MHA)	Older people (55+), People with healthcare needs	Reigate and Banstead, Tandridge			Yes	
Oxted Parish Council	Other Organisations and Residents of Oxted Parish	Tandridge				
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	Everyone	Reigate and Banstead			Yes	Embedded digital champions, iPad group
Ripley Parish Council	Everyone	Guildford			Yes	
Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25),Families, Other Organisations, People with English as an Additional Language	Reigate and Banstead			Yes	
South Tandridge Parish Council - Oxted Health Centre	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25),Jobseekers/ unemployed, Families, People with healthcare needs, People with English as an Additional Language, Care Leavers	Tandridge			Yes	
Stanwell Events	Everyone	Spelthorne				
Superhighways	18+, Low income	Kingston		Data		

Citizens Online

Organisation	Resident Group(s) supported	Area Covered	Access to wifi	Devices / details	Digital Champions	Type of Support
Surrey CC - Adult Social Care	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Jobseekers / unemployed, Other Organisations, People with healthcare needs, Care Leavers	County Wide			Yes	Embedded digital champions
Surrey CC - Community Investment and Engagement	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25), Families	County Wide			Yes	
Surrey CC - Customer Services	Everyone	County Wide			Yes	Embedded digital champions
Surrey CC - Highways	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Younger people (under 25)	County Wide			Yes	
Surrey CC - IT & D	Surrey CC Staff	County Wide				Internal Courses
Surrey CC - Libraries			Yes	Computers, printers, data	Yes	
Surrey Choices	Younger people (under 25), Disabled People				Yes	
Surrey Coalition of Disabled People	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Jobseekers / unemployed, People with English as an Additional Language, People with healthcare needs	County Wide		Data, devices	Yes	Embedded digital champions
Surrey Community Action	Other Organisations	County Wide			Yes	

Citizens Online

Organisation	Resident Group(s) supported	Area Covered	Access to wifi	Devices / details	Digital Champions	Type of Support
Tandridge Council	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Families, People with healthcare needs, People with English as an Additional Language	Tandridge				Embedded digital champions
Volunteer Woking	Other Organisations	Woking			Yes	
Waverley Borough Council	Everyone	Waverley			Yes	Embedded digital champions
Woking Council	Older people (55+), Disabled People, Jobseekers / unemployed, Families, People with English as an Additional Language, Younger people (under 25), Care Leavers, Prison Leavers, People with healthcare needs	Woking	Yes		Yes	Embedded digital champions

Briefing Note: Digital Inclusion in Surrey Libraries

Digital & Information Offer to inform, inspire and innovate

Through the Digital & Information Offer we:

- Provide quality information and digital support.
- Enable individuals and communities to develop learning skills to find answers and to inform life choices.
- Offer help to children and adults to engage and feel safe online.
- Ensure resources and opportunities are accessible and embrace creative and innovative technology.

Statistics

- 52 Libraries in Surrey
- 319 public computers available across the library network
- 146,823 available hours of free access to Wi Fi and internet
- 18,403 Volunteer hours are given to support residents, including Library Digital Buddies.
- Free Wi-Fi in every Surrey Library
- Trained library staff to support residents

Additional support for residents

- Access to free computer courses provided by The Good Things Foundation Learn My Way courses Learn My Way | Develop Your Digital Skills
- Sign posting to Surrey Adult Learning Adult learning courses - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)
- Information on how to get started using a computer, tablet or smartphone
- Citizens Advice (CA) - All of the CA information is now on-line at Citizens Advice
- Barclays Digital eagles
  How the Digital Eagles can help you (uk.barclays)
  https://digital.wings.uk.barclays/our-digital-courses/keeping-children-safe-online/online-gaming/support-your-child-with-gaming/helping-children-take-control/

Campaigns & Promotions

We run regular scams awareness sessions in libraries working with our Trading Standards colleagues and also promote special events, e.g. Friends against scams, Scams awareness Fortnight.

Money Management

We also promote a range of online web pages aimed at children and young people,

older adults (aged 75+) and working age hardship among adults relating to low skills, including:

- [Free and impartial help with money, backed by the government | MoneyHelper](#)
- [Money management | Financial advice | The Prince's Trust (princes-trust.org.uk)](#)
- [Money and legal advice for seniors | Age UK](#)
- [The Pensions Advisory Service - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

National Databank in Surrey Libraries

Good Things Foundation created the National Databank with Virgin Media O2, supported by Vodafone and Three. It works like this:

- Our partners Virgin Media O2, Vodafone and Three regularly donate mobile data SIM cards to us at Good Things
- Members of the **National Digital Inclusion Network, which is a network of organisations helping people in their communities** powered by Good Things, can apply for data packages anytime
- Members of the National Digital Inclusion Network receive, activate and gift the free mobile data to people experiencing data poverty or living on a low income in their community
- People experiencing data poverty or living on a low income can pick up a free mobile SIM card from their **local National Databank. (There's over 1,600 organisations currently providing the National Databank across the UK!)**

RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

NOTES OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING SESSION

19 June 2024 at 11am (Remote Meeting)

Attendees: Cllr Bob Hughes (Chairman)
Cllr Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr David Harmer
Cllr Lesley Steeds
Cllr Riasat Khan
Cllr Nick Darby
Cllr David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Officers: Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer
Anna D'Alessandro, Director for Finance Corporate & Commercial (Interim s151)
David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
David Oates, Head of Performance & Data Management
Richard Supple, Performance Insight Analyst
Bella Smith, Head of Insights, Systems & Governance
Matt Scott, Chief Digital Information Officer
Gary Clothier, Freedom of Information Officer
Asmat Hussain, Director of Law & Governance
Louise Lawson. Strategic Finance Business Partner- Improvement & PPG

Key points raised during the discussion:

Residents- SCC (Surrey County Council) Resident Survey

1. ***PSR16: Satisfaction that the Council acts on the concerns of residents***: The Vice-Chairman asked which and how many residents were questioned about their degree of satisfaction that the Council acted on the concerns of residents in the SCC Resident Survey. The Head of Performance & Data Management stated said this could be ascertained, but believed it was a random sample of people.

Action I: PSR16: ***Satisfaction that the Council acts on the concerns of residents***: A Member requested further information on how many residents were surveyed.

Resources- People and Change

2. ***PC13: % of Off payroll spend of total pay bill:*** The Chairman asked for reasons why 6.3% was reported for the Off payroll spend of total pay bill in May 2024. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that Off payroll spend tended to follow a pattern every year -at the beginning of the year the percentage tended to be slightly lower than average, the percentage then plateaued in quarter 2 and quarter 3, usually increasing towards the end

of quarter 4. This was generally a pay and billing issue. The percentage was expected to decrease towards the beginning of quarter 1 whilst directorates identified their requirements. The Council needed to be mindful of the 7% target and ensure that it was not exceeding the target earlier than 2023/24.

3. A member asked why April tended to see a decrease in the percentage of Off payroll spend each year. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance clarified this tended to be the time that billing was submitted, but there was also a slight delay at the beginning of each financial year as directorates identified the Off payroll staffing requirements, which resulted in a delay in April.

4. The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that Off payroll spend was discussed regularly at CLT meetings to ensure effective management. Moving forward, it would be included in the monthly report to CLT to ensure monitoring and that the Council remained at or below target.

5. *PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%):* Vice-Chairman Cllr Steeds asked how many staff members were represented by the increase of 0.1% in staff with disabilities. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that this was taken from the headcount, and that this figure could be retrieved for the committee, though would only factor staff that have chosen to share that they have a disability.

Action II: PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%)- The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance to provide the number of staff that had declared disabilities.

6. A member noted interest in seeing the percentage of Surrey's general population with disabilities compared to the percentage employed by SCC. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that this was tracked through census data, though one challenge with the most recent census data was that it does not break down easily into people of working age against all others. The census did break down disabilities into different categories, such as significant disabilities, learning disabilities, etc., though it was difficult for the Council to break this down further into working ages. The census data for the South-East was also considered, as well as the census data for Surrey.

Action III: *PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%)*- The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance to share figures for how the percentage of disabled staff mirrors that of the Surrey population as a whole.

7. It was clarified by the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources and the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that the corporate body of the Council employed around 8,700 people, excluding schools and therefore a 0.1% increase in staff with disabilities represented in the range of eight to ten people.

Digital- Digital and agile capabilities

8. ***ITDO3: Cyber Attacks: Successfully blocked cyber-attacks:*** The Chief Digital Information Officer explained that the number of cyber-attacks blocked by the council was recorded monthly and was also broken down by category. This data could be provided to the committee outside of this session.

Action IV: *ITD03: Cyber Attacks: successfully blocked cyber-attacks*: The Chief Digital Information Officer to provide a breakdown of halted cyberattacks by category.

Finance

9. ***FINO3: % of Budget Accountability Statement returned:*** The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that the figure of Budget Accountability Statements returned had since increased to from 64% to 72% since the Performance Report was published. 100% of returned Budget Accountability Statements was being pursued, as was achieved last year. The Childrens, Families & Lifelong Learning Directorate was delayed.

10. The Chairman asked for clarification that the ***FINO3: % of Budget Accountability Statement returned*** Performance Indicator was not necessarily the spend. The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151) clarified that it was not. Every year a Budget Accountability Statement was sent to all the budget holders stating clearly what their revenue and capital budget allocation had been for the year. This was to attain budget holders' agreement that they would remain within their budget and that there was understanding of their budget envelope. Conversations with budget holder's business partners had been with the full knowledge of what the budget holders were accountable for.

Legal and Democratic

11. ***LDO4.1: % Responses to Freedom of Information (FOI)/Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests within statutory timescales- ICO target 90.0%- by Council and Directorate:*** The Chairman noted that the May 2024 figure of 95.5% responses to FOI and EIR requests was impressive. The Freedom of Information Officer explained there was a significant increase in the volume of FOI requests in 2024, with close to 500 requests by March 2024. Officers were doing well to complete FOI requests on time. The target was being met or exceeded every month.

12. The Vice-Chair asked if the type of FOI requests was known. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that the FOI requests were given a classification when logged onto the system, which provided a report on the most popular categories of FOI requests. Potholes and road conditions were popular types of request. The Council also received a lot of requests that were for borough and district councils rather than SCC. Childrens Services received a lot of FOI

requests around areas such as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Action V: *LD04.1 Responses to Freedom of Information (FOI)/Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests within statutory timescales – ICO target 90.0% - by Council and Directorates:* The Director of Law & Governance to provide a breakdown of FOI requests by category.

13. Vice-Chairman Cllr McCormick clarified that there was a public website called 'WhatDoTheyKnow' that provided further information on FOI requests. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that a disclosure log had been implemented at the council from the start of 2023, with every request that SCC had received with every response, viewable on SCC's website. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources added that Cabinet received, fortnightly, the list of FOI requests received.

14. ***LDO8.1 No of personal data breaches across Directorates***: The Freedom of Information Officer explained that the 57 data breaches in May 2024 was the number that had been reported to SCC. The actual number of breaches may be lower than the numbers in the Performance Report.

15. The Chairman raised that the way the metric on data breaches was put together would be re-looked at. The Freedom of Information Officer confirmed this was the case. The way data breaches were reported would be reviewed to ensure the information was correct and people were aware that SCC was looking at the number of the breaches rather than just what was reported.

16. A Member asked why there was an increase in data breaches in February 2024. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that it was sometimes difficult to know what the exact reasons were for trends in the volume of data breaches. It could have been the result of more communications around how to report data breaches which made people more aware and thus likely to report incidents. Some teams had also done their own work to make other officers aware of what was and was not a breach.

17. The Chairman asked for confirmation that none of the personal data breaches were reportable to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The Freedom of Information Officer confirmed that none of the data breaches were reportable to the ICO.

Resources- Project Indicators

18. ***Transitioning MySurrey ERP to BAU: Entering the 'Steady State' Phase:*** The Chief Digital Information Officer explained that SCC had now transitioned MySurrey ERP from a project state to 'business-as-usual' activity undertaken within the IT & Digital service structure and processes. The Officer suggested working through a new set of indicators.

Action VI: Resources Project Indicators: *MySurrey ERP* to *BAU*: The Chief Digital Information Officer suggested adopting new indicators for *MySurrey* now that it has transitioned to 'Business-as-usual' (BAU). The Scrutiny Officer to set up a meeting with The Chief Digital Information Officer, Cllr McCormick, and relevant Officers.

Transformation

Finance Update

19. ***BUDGET MONITORING POSITION- as at M11 2023-24:*** Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick asked whether the budget monitoring position in the report took account of the latest update position from the 2023/24 outturn financial Cabinet report, published on 14 June. The Strategic Finance Business Partner - Improvement & PPG explained that due to the postponement of the May Cabinet, the outturn figures could not be provided in this Performance Report due to timings. Therefore, this report did not correspond perfectly to the outturn position from the Cabinet financial outturn report. The outturn position was an improvement of £0.5 million on the numbers presented in the Performance Report.

20. ***Efficiency Plan Delivery:*** The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151) explained that the Council ended the year, in terms of outturn, on nearly 78% of efficiencies delivered. It was not unusual, as the Council went through the year, for the situation to change and therefore the Council would end up not delivering all efficiencies originally planned. Business Partners worked with directorates to find mitigations for efficiencies that were not able to be delivered. The Council had ended the financial year strongly, with consideration that the planned efficiencies were set some time ago.

21. Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick asked why more up-to-date information was not being shared on efficiencies. The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that the outturn information did not go to Cabinet when originally planned due to the cancellation of the May Cabinet, which was why Month 11 was being discussed.

Action VI: *Efficiency plan delivery:* Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick requested that the efficiency Plan be updated and recirculated, as it was now out-of-date due to the cancellation of May Cabinet. This is to be provided before questions could be sent by Members to Officers/the Strategic Finance Business Partner- Improvement & PPG.

22. The Chairman noted that the big areas were demand-led and therefore difficult to forecast. The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) stated that AWHP and CFLL were problematic areas. The Director summarised key issues involved price and volume, inflationary impacts, demand impacts, Adults and Children placements and home-to-school transport, which would continue into 2024/25.

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Resources and Performance Select Committee
Forward Work Programme 2024

	Resources and Performance Select Committee | Chairman: Cllr Bob Hughes Scrutiny Officer: Jake Chambers | Democratic Services Assistant: Hannah Clark				
Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Purpose	Outcome	Relevant Organisational Priority	Cabinet Member/Lead Officer
23 October 2024	**Data Strategy Transformation Programme**	Progress report on the business plan for the Data Strategy Transformation Programme.	Monitor progress of recommendations made by Committee in February 2023.	Empowering communities	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; Emma McGowan, Director - Design & Transformation; Angela Lawrence, Head of Data
	Strategic Investment Board Mid-Year Report	Select Committee to provide monitoring and feedback on the mid-year investment update.	Oversight to ensure transparency and good value for money within the investment portfolio.	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Property and Waste; Leigh Whitehouse, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Resources; Anna D'Alessandro, Director, Corporate Finance and Commercial; Neil Jarvey, Strategic Finance Business Partner; Simon Crowther, Director – Land & Property Charles Maxlow-Tomlinson, Managing Director – Halsey Garton Property

	Cabinet response to the Final Report of the Digital Business and Insights (DB&I) Task Group	Select Committee to consider the response of Cabinet to the Final Report of the Digital Business and Insights (DB&I) Task Group, considered by Cabinet on 23 July 2024.	Consider response to the report's recommendations and begin monitoring their implementation.	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; Anna D'Alessandro, Director, Corporate Finance and Commercial;
5 December 2024	**Draft Budget 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2029/30**	Scrutinise the draft budget, Medium-Term Financial Strategy and other relevant information before it is finalised in January 2025.	To ensure the 2025/26 budget delivers good value.	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; Anna D'Alessandro, Director, Corporate Finance and Commercial; Liz Mills – Interim Executive Director – Customer, Digital & Change Rachel Wigley, Director - Finance, Insights and Performance; Nicola O'Connor, Strategic Finance Business Partner; Louise Lawson, Strategic Finance Business Partner
	Treasury Management Strategy	Receive information on the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) as part of the 2024/25 budget process.	For the Select Committee to offer any input or recommendations on the TMS.	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources; Nicola O'Connor, Strategic Finance Business Partner

Task and Finish Groups					
Timescale	**Issue for Scrutiny**	**Purpose**	**Outcome**	**Relevant Organisational Priority**	**Membership**
Report to SC on 1 July 2024, recommendations to Cabinet on 23 July 2024	**Unit4/MySurrey**	Review lessons learned from implementation delays and overspend	To avoid a repeat of issues	Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit	Membership: • Steve McCormick (Chairman) • David Harmer • John O'Reilly • Edward Hawkins • Bob Hughes (*ex-officio*)

Performance Monitoring Sessions: 19 September & 16 December.

Standing Items

- **Forward Work Programme (FWP) and Recommendations Tracker:** Review of the Select Committee's forward work programme, and monitoring of the Select Committee recommendations and actions.

- **Notes of Performance Monitoring Session:** A record of the most recent informal Performance Monitoring session (conducted every 2-4 months).

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The actions and recommendations tracker allows Committee Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each meeting. Once an action has been completed, it will be shaded green to indicate that it will be removed from the tracker at the next meeting.

KEY	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

Date	Item	Recommendation	Responsible Member/ Officer	Deadline	Progress check	Recommendation response accepted/ implemented
24 April 2023	Digital Inclusion [Item 6]	**RPSC 19/23:** That the Service ensures that Citizens Online shares the findings from its online survey once complete and the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources brings their final report with recommendations to a meeting of the Resources and Performance Select Committee.	David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources Sarah Bogunovic, Assistant Director - Registration, Coroner's Services & Customer Strategy Jo Blount, Portfolio Lead, Digital, Data, Technology & Culture	3 October 2023	Feb 2024	**Response:** Initial survey findings were circulated on 5 June 2023. Final report is due to come to Committee on 18 July 2024.

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KEY	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

| 15 May 2024 | Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5) | **RPSC 6/24:** In order that Cabinet takes accountability for the Council's health and safety improvement strategy (as recommended by the Local Government Association), Cabinet (in addition to the Central Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee) endorses the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2026; | The Head of Health and Safety | | 8 July 2024 | **Response:** The strategy and action plan was presented to the Corporate Leadership Team and Informal Cabinet in June, to provide further governance and accountability. CLT and Informal Cabinet were asked to note the aims and objectives to continually improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the Council's staff and any person affected by its activities. Cabinet is responsible for making key decisions; those that have a significant impact/effect on communities and result in expenditure or savings with a value of £1 million or over. The process for including an item on the Cabinet Forward Plan is that it is a key decision, the strategy and action plan is not within the scope for inclusion. |

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KEY	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

| 15 May 2024 | Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5) | **RPSC 7/24:** In order to promote awareness of the key risks across all directorates, all Executive Directors are informed and updated on the Central Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee by its rotating chair; | The Head of Health and Safety | | 8 July 2024 | **Response:** This recommendation has been implemented. |
| 15 May 2024 | Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5) | **RPSC 8/24:** The new suite of Corporate Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators agreed with the Corporate Leadership Team on 19 September 2023 are presented to Cabinet Members quarterly and included in the quarterly Resources and Performance Select Committee performance monitoring reports; | The Head of Health and Safety | | 8 July 2024 | **Response:** As advised by Democratic Services, Cabinet is responsible for key decisions. The Health and Safety key performance indicators are presented to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Cabinet Member for Health and Safety on a quarterly basis. They will be included in the quarterly Resources and Performance Select Committee performance monitoring reports from September.

This recommendation is therefore to be revised to remove the requirement that key performance indicators are presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. |

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KEY	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

| 15 May 2024 | Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5) | **RPSC 9/24:** Ahead of May 2025, the Members' Induction booklet must refer to Health and Safety (H&S), clarifying how and to whom Members should refer any H&S issue that comes to their attention. | The Head of Health and Safety | | 8 July 2024 | **Response:** The Member Services Manager confirms this will be included in the revised Member's Handbook, to be issued to all councillors following the May 2025 elections. |

ACTIONS

Date	Item	Action	Responsible Member/ Officer	Deadline	Progress check	Action response. accepted/ implemented
12 March 2024	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update (Item 6)	**RPSC 6/24:** In summer 2024, EDI Team to share the longer-term visions within the EDI Strategy.			Late Summer 2024	Shared with Committee on 12/04/2024 **Response:** This is a longer-term action and will be available following a period of co-design with partners in late summer. We will share this as soon as it is ready.
15 May 2024	Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5)	**RPSC 9/24:** The Head of Health and Safety to check if the Health and Safety refresher training is for all executive leaders including executive directors.	The Head of Health and Safety		22 May 2024	The Head of Health and Safety confirmed that the Health and Safety refresher training is for all executive leaders including executive directors.

RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE
ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER
July 2024

The actions and recommendations tracker allows Committee Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each meeting. Once an action has been completed, it will be shaded green to indicate that it will be removed from the tracker at the next meeting.

KEY	No Progress Reported	Action In Progress	Action Completed

Date	Item	Action	Responsible Member/ Officer	Deadline	Progress check	Action response. accepted/ implemented
15 May 2024	Corporate Health and Safety (Item 5)	**RPSC 10/24:** The Assistant Director for workplace & Facilities to check if there are any sanctions for schools that do not comply with requested asbestos works.	Assistant Director for Workplace & Facilities		18 June 2024	**Response:** Having discussed this matter with our Education colleagues they have advised that there are existing sanctions for schools' non-compliance, such that if SCC have exhausted all avenues, then we should consider issuing a warning notice under Section 60 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006. More information can be found in this publication 'Schools Causing Concern' https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416554/Schools_Causing_Concern_Jan2015.pdf section 2 (page 9). Clearly, we would work closely with schools' to avoid such a course of action, an approach which has been successful to date.

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