

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)



1. Topic of assessment

EIA title	Customer Experience
EIA author	Carole Comfort

2. Approval

	Name	Date approved
Approved by	Michael Coughlin (Executive Director, Customer, Digital and Transformation)	14 January 2019
Approved by	Charlotte Morley (Cabinet Member for Corporate Support)	16 January 2019

3. Quality control

Version number	1	EIA completed	14 January 2019
Date saved	14/01/19	EIA published	21 January 2019

4. EIA team

Name	Job title	Organisation	Team role
Carole Comfort	Project Lead	Surrey County Council	Customer Services
Susan Grizzelle	Customer Services Group Manager	Surrey County Council	Customer Services
Sarah Baker / Janet Polley / Deborah Chantler	Legal Services Manager / Senior Principal Solicitors	SCC	Legal Advice
Adam Whittaker	Policy and Strategic Partnerships Manager	SCC	Advice

5. Explaining the matter being assessed

What policy, function or service is being introduced or reviewed?

As part of the transformation programme which Surrey County Council is undertaking, there is a drive to change the way in which residents can contact the council and access some of its services.

Through the promotion of digital and self-service options and the expansion of the established front door model, the requirement for consistent and cost effective access to council services will be met.

This increased use of digital and expansion of the front door together entail the Customer Experience programme.

The council's Organisational Strategy 2019-2023 identifies that to keep up with the digital demands of society we need faster, quicker and better public services available through multiple channels and devices.

It further states the council's commitment to get better at seeing things from a resident's perspective, giving customers a more consistent experience while reducing costs. It identifies that currently customers have to transact, interact and get information from the council in a number of different ways and that an improved customer experience will be created by streamlining and simplifying this to a single point of contact where appropriate.

Initial scoping has identified the following as potential opportunities to bring new services into the existing front door model:

- Children's MASH
- SEND
- Adult's triage
- Adult's MASH
- Coroner
- Online school wait list checker (digital)
- Online bus pass system (digital)

What proposals are you assessing?

The contact centre operates as the front door to the majority of council services. In order to realise required efficiency savings, and provide customers with more flexibility and control in the way they contact the council, it would like to deliver services digitally wherever possible.

Working with our partners in IT& Digital to identify options to improve the ability of customers to self-help and self-serve, we can provide economy of scale for the council and free up more costly specialist officer time within services.

The strategy is being assessed to serve as an overarching policy when considering any proposals to withdraw or reduce mediated telephone access to services via the council's contact centre. Additional EIAs will be carried out on a service by service basis as and when individual proposals are made.

This model will also allow us to focus our most expensive methods of communication, e.g. telephone, for our most vulnerable residents and customers, add most value and ensure we do not exclude those who are not digitally enabled.

<p>Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?</p>	<p>Centralising enquiry management by expanding the existing single front door model will deliver economy of scale and an improved, consistent customer experience. It will enable a more transformative change to the provision of self-service options through utilising enhanced technology.</p> <p>It will also enable a comprehensive and joined up picture of Surrey residents and customers. Customer insight and feedback gathered by customer services in a centralised performance management framework will ensure that the customer is at heart of service delivery and policy change.</p> <p>The Customer Experience strategy supports customers to self-serve wherever possible. The aim is to provide customers with more flexibility, choice and control over when they can contact us while at the same time realise efficiency savings</p>
	<p>All customers who currently access those services which will have their point of access changed as a result of the expanded front door, as well as those who chose to telephone the contact centre in order to access council services (as these services will largely move to digital platforms).</p> <p>Any savings associated with staffing reductions will be achieved by natural wastage wherever possible, therefore these proposals are unlikely impact on staff.</p> <p>Additional EIAs will be undertaken, where necessary, as and when specific proposals are received for services coming into the single front door.</p>

6. Sources of information

Engagement carried out

Engagement and consultation will be carried out with customers as necessary, as and when individual proposals are made..

Data used

The contact centre call logging system is used to identify the number of calls received by the contact centre on specific call types. Web data is analysed to identify levels of online uptake.

Surrey has a low rate of digital exclusion. Data indicates that there is an upward trend of customers preferring self-serve options for straightforward transactions (see graphs).

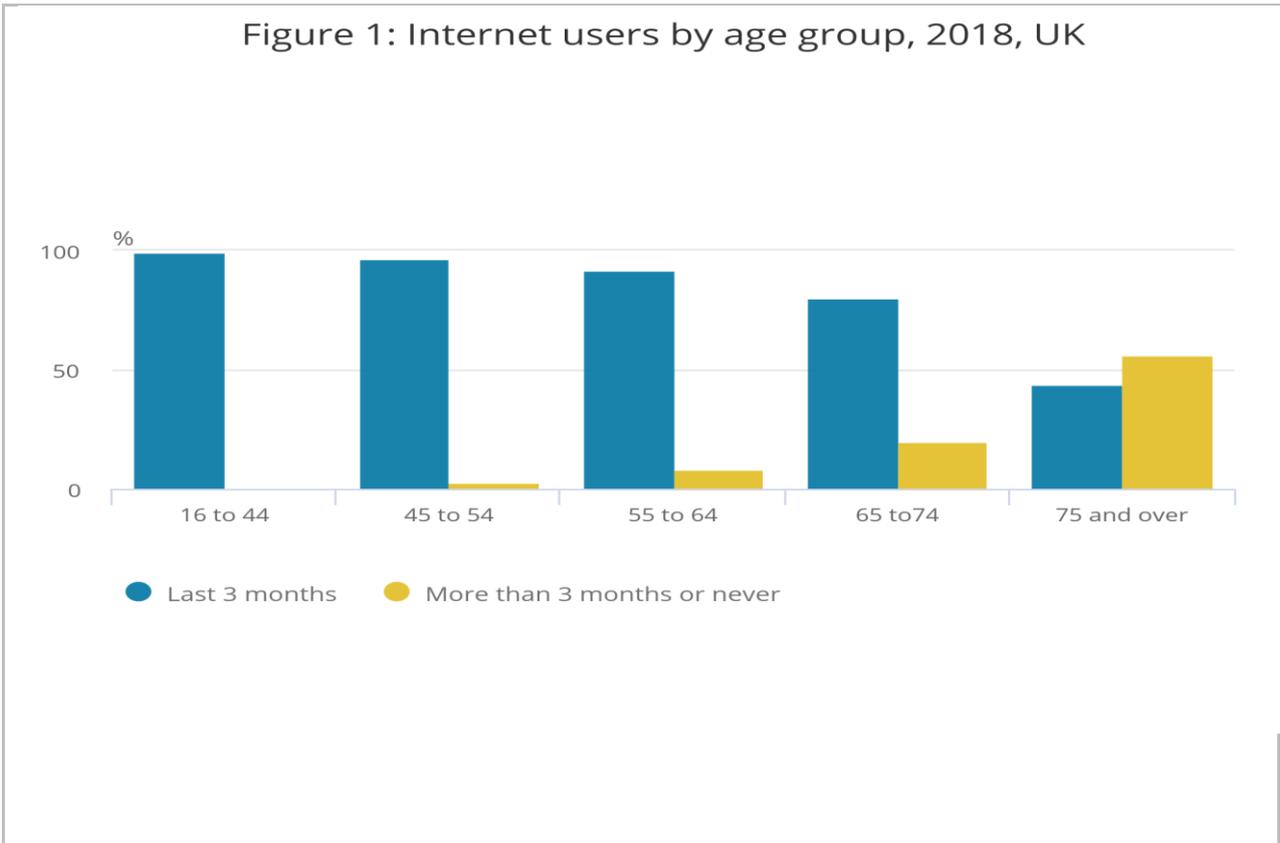
Data on digital inclusion*:

- 93.4% of adults in Surrey go online regularly
- 77%-80% (3% variance between districts and boroughs) of Surrey residents have all 5 digital skills needed to participate fully online, i.e.
 - Managing information – e.g. able to search for information and store data
 - Communicating – e.g. use email, instant messaging, post on forums
 - Transacting – e.g. order shopping
 - Problem solving – e.g. access support services such as live chat
 - Creating – e.g. create a text document, create a social media post
- 98% of premises in Surrey can receive broadband of at least 10mps, 85% of households can access superfast broadband
- Surrey County Council's website receives approximately 6.5 million visits each year, 36% of visits take place out of office hours
- In 2018 there was a larger difference in recent internet use for adults aged 75 years and over; 39% of disabled adults in this age group were recent internet users, compared with 49% of non-disabled adults**
- Overall, the proportion of recent internet users was lower for adults who were disabled compared with those who were not**
- Just over 7,000 people in Surrey either do not speak English well or at all

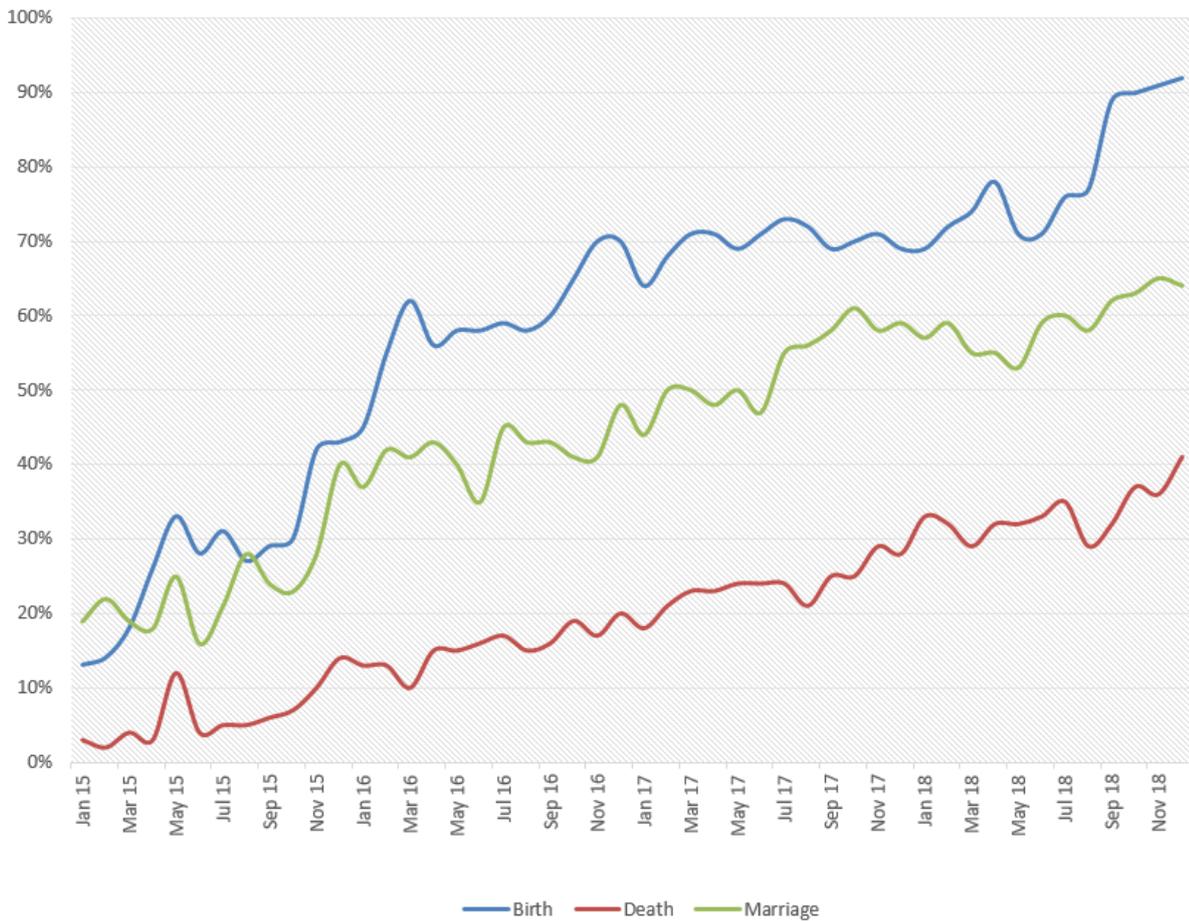
*Data obtained from Ofcom, ONS, DotEveryone, Surrey County Council, Surrey-i

**ONS Internet Users UK:2018

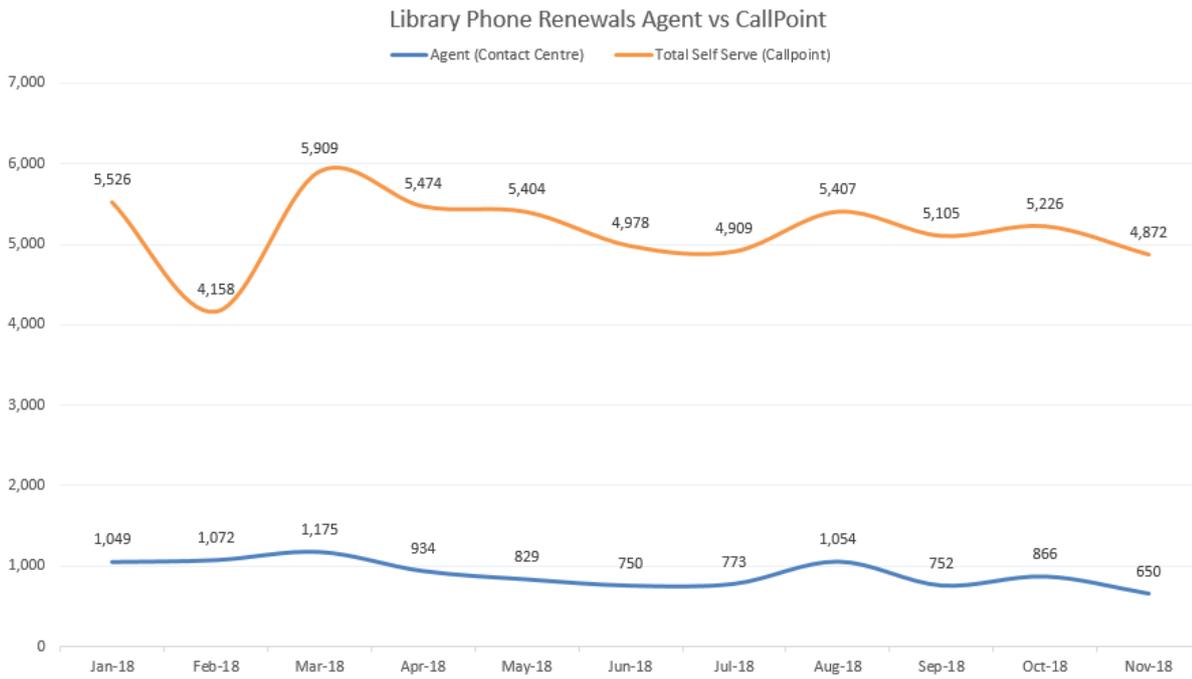
Figure 1: Internet users by age group, 2018, UK



Birth, Death and Marriage appointments booked online



Annex 7b – Customer Experience Equality Impact Assessment



7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	<p>People who prefer to self-serve will benefit from this policy. This may include younger people.</p> <p>A single point of access for all council services will make it easier for customers to access the information and services they need.</p>	<p>People who are digitally excluded will be impacted by this policy. This group may include older people.</p>	<p>Data shows (see point 6 above) that almost all adults age 16-54 regularly use the internet. This drops to 41% in those aged 75+.</p>
Disability	None	<p>People who are unable to self-serve will be impacted by this policy. This group may include people with certain types of disability.</p>	<p>Latest data (see point 6 above) from ONS states that 39% of adults with disabilities aged 75+ used the internet recently compared with 49% of non-disabled adults.</p>
Gender reassignment	None	None	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None	None	None
Race	None	<p>Some people who do not speak English as a first language may have difficulty understanding and/or following online or automated instructions.</p>	None
Religion and belief	None	None	None

Sex	None	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None	None
Marriage and civil partnerships	None	None	None
Carers (protected by association)	This policy may assist carers to access services, advice and information at a time that best suits them.	None	None

7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	None	None	None
Disability	None	None	None
Gender reassignment	None	None	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None	None	None
Race	None	None	None
Religion and belief	None	None	None
Sex	None	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None	None

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Marriage and civil partnerships	None	None	None
Carers (protected by association)	None	None	None

8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change

9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
Customers will be able to access information and services from a single point channels across a range of contact channels.		N/A	N/A
The potential withdrawal of telephone based mediated access to some services will have a negative impact on customers who are digitally excluded and/or unable to self-serve. This group is most likely to include older people and people with disabilities	<p>We recognise that some of our customers may not be able to self-serve. Customers who are digitally excluded will still be able to contact the council through traditional methods such as telephone. The contact centre will provide instruction and support to any customers who experience difficulty in using digital or automated services.</p> <p>A discrete mediated service will be offered to vulnerable customers who are unable to self-serve, even with assistance. Although some customers may still require assistance from the contact centre this channel shift strategy will lead to an overall significant reduction in call volumes.</p> <p>Training will be provided to contact centre staff to ensure that vulnerable customers are correctly identified and provided with appropriate support and/or mediated access. The customer services in-house training team will</p>	Customers will receive additional support as, and when, required	N/A

	deliver this training to ensure take up by all staff.		
The withdrawal of telephone based mediated access to some services may have a negative impact on customers who do not speak English as a first language	<p>Customers who do not speak English as a first language may have difficulty in reading or understanding online instructions.</p> <p>The contact centre has access to a telephone interpretation service and would offer this as part of a mediated service to customers who are unable to use online or automated services due to language difficulties in the same way as they do at present.</p>	Customers will receive additional support as, and when, required	N/A
The proposed changes will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the ability of the majority of Surrey residents, including those with protected characteristics, of 24/7 self-serve options for a number of transactions	Some residents and other customers may find it easier to use self-serve options. The channel shift strategy will help to promote online self-serve options which are available 24/7.	N/A	N/A

10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected

11. Summary of key impacts and actions

<p>Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The communications team will be consulted to ensure that appropriate messaging is undertaken for each proposal that may impact customers, including those with protected characteristics. The approach for each proposal is likely to vary depending on what service is being considered. • Staff briefing sessions and training will be undertaken to ensure that vulnerable customers and those unable to self-serve due to digital exclusion are given appropriate assistance and support to access the services they need
<p>Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents who are digitally excluded, including older people and people with disabilities, will be impacted by these proposals. • People who have English as a second language may find it challenging to understand/follow online and/or automated instructions. • Opportunity to raise awareness of 24/7 self-serve options for a number of services which may benefit some people with protected characteristics.
<p>Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A discreet mediated service will be offered by the contact centre to vulnerable customers, and customers who do not have English as a first language, if they are unable to self-serve, even with guidance and instruction. • Training will be provided to contact centre staff to ensure that vulnerable customers are correctly identified and provided with appropriate support and/or mediated access
<p>Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated</p>	<p>N/A</p>