

**Kent County Council  
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

**Directorate/ Service: Adult Social Care**

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:** Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) countywide offer

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:** Helen Gillivan, Senior Accountable Officer  
Making a difference every day

**Version:** v0.5

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**Pathway of Equality Analysis:** Kent County Council (the authority) trialled the proposed way of working or the authority's long-term Technology Enabled Care Service between May 2022 and March 2023. This way of working was tested in 4 areas of Kent: Thanet, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe. The build and test was delivered in partnership with NRS Healthcare and learning from these areas has shaped the long-term countywide offer. A separate EQIA was completed for the build and test contract and this document will focus on the impact of the countywide TECS offer. This document will be maintained as a live document throughout the procurement of the countywide Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Service.

The procurement for the countywide TEC Service was issued to the market in December 2022 and the contract will be awarded in June 2023, with the ambition for the service to go live in September 2023.

**Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.**

**Context**

Technology Enabled Care is key element within Kent County Council's Making a difference every day approach and is aligned with the Council's priorities set out in "Framing Kent's Future – Our Council Strategy 2022 – 2026: *Seize opportunities to embed technology and digitally-enabled care and support services in meeting people's current and future care needs*". The purpose of Technology Enabled Care is to support people to remain as independent for as long as possible in the environment they choose to be in and empower them to have better choice and control over their care and support.

The Care Act 2014 places general responsibilities on local authorities relating to the care and support for adults and support for carers in its area. In exercising these statutory duties, the authority must provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities and resources, or take other steps which it considers will promote an individual's well-being, contribute towards preventing or delaying needs for care and

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support, promote integration of care and support with health services etc., provide information and advice, promote diversity and quality in provision of services, cooperate generally and cooperate in specific cases with relevant partners in the exercise of their respective functions relating to adults with needs for care and support and/or relating to carers.

The current Telecare contract was awarded in 2015 and has been adapted at times to better meet the needs of the people we support. In addition to the Telecare offer, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic the authority also entered contracted with Alcove to provide Kent residents with KARA videophones. This enabled people we support to continue to maintain contact with their family, friends and loved ones whilst also engaging in community activities throughout COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

The existing KARA and Telecare contracts will end in August 2023, and the new Technology Enabled Care Services contract will incorporate an equivalent technology offer and transition existing users to the new contract. Additionally, the people drawing on care and support from the build and test service will be supported by NRS until August 2023 and will then transition to the new service provision. The Technology Enabled Care Services contract will be implemented from June 2023 and in the first phase of the contract will focus on mobilising existing Telecare, KARA and build and test users into the new service.

### **Aims and Objectives**

To design and procure an innovative digital assistive technology offer that supports a person to maintain or improve their independence, safety and wellbeing and for the authority, its partners and contracted providers to maintain a person-centred approach by being responsive to people's needs.

In the event the authority enters in to a contract with a new provider, consideration will be given to existing Telecare, KARA and build and test users to ensure they receive an equitable or improved service and that there is no break in service if there is a change in provider. The authority has a responsibility to ensure that people currently using Telecare, KARA and build and test services can still have their needs met and that the new offer is fit for purpose in supporting their independence.

### **People receiving only a Technology Enabled Care service (TEC-Only)**

- 1) People will have the option to self-fund Technology Enabled Care regardless of protected characteristics. The technology market is well established and extremely competitive with many varieties of most equipment and usually different options of specialist technology enabling people to have a choice which supports their independence. There are no groups with particular protected characteristics who are expected to be in a better financial position to afford this than others.
- 2) It is currently anticipated that a Technology Enabled Care-only service will not be chargeable, as keeping the service free will support in encouraging take-up and meeting the authority's strategic objectives. The decision to treat the service as non-chargeable will be applied across all Kent residents and therefore ensure that all protected characteristic groups have equal access to the service. People will be assessed for eligible needs in line with the

authority's statutory duties under the Care Act and will also receive a financial assessment. Where people receive Technology Enabled Care Services alongside another service such as Care and Support in the Home or Supported Living, they may pay a contribution towards the overall cost of their care and support. However, where people receive only a Technology Enabled Care Service this will be non-chargeable.

### **New and Existing provision**

The provision of a service to new and existing people will continue as before and will be prescribed by Practitioners employed by the authority following a Care Needs Assessment and eligibility determination, Adult Social Care Practitioners will have access to specialist expertise and advice from a provider, Technology Enabled Care Facilitator or Technology Officer which will ensure the prescription of appropriate technology to meet people's individual outcomes.

It is anticipated that the service will initially support approximately 4,700 people who will be comprised of existing users of Telecare, KARA videophones and Technology Enabled Care Services transferring from the build and test in East Kent. Over the life of the contract, the ambition will be to grow the service so that a greater number of people are supported by Technology Enabled Care; this could grow to up to as many as 50% of people receiving support from Adult Social Care by 2027.

### **Adverse Equality Impact Rating Low**

#### **Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS). I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

#### **Head of Service**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **DMT Member**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1 Screening**

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?**

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?**

Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age		<p>There is a recognition that many Technology Enabled Care devices are dependent on people having wifi in their homes and that many people still do not have wifi readily available in their homes. According to the Office for National Statistics, in 2018 only 44% of people aged 75 and over were internet users. There is therefore a risk that people aged 75 and over will have more limited access to Technology Enabled Care devices due to a lack of internet in their home environment.</p>	<p>The recent COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of technology by all age groups due many people developing their technological skills and capabilities to work and keep in touch with friends and family during lockdown restrictions.</p> <p>Kent has an aging population. Forecasts show that the number of 65+ year olds is forecast to increase by 44.9% between 2019 and 2039, yet the proportion of population aged under 65 is only forecast to increase by 12.2%.</p>	<p><b>New people who draw on care and support</b>                      People will be assessed for eligible needs in line with the authority's statutory duties under the Care Act and will also receive a financial assessment. Where people receive Technology Enabled Care Services alongside another service such as Care and Support in the Home or Supported Living, they may pay a contribution towards the overall cost of their care and support. However, where people receive only a Technology Enabled Care Service this will be non-chargeable.</p> <p><b>Existing people who</b></p>

		<p>However, this impact could be mitigated by schemes such as Digital Kent which are working to improve digital inclusion and have schemes such as the Community Wifi scheme which will introduce public wifi to particular areas of Kent with high levels of digital exclusion.</p> <p>The Technology Enabled Care Service team will continue to engage with the Digital Kent team to identify joint working opportunities and risk mitigations.</p>	<p>All people we support in receipt of a service provided by the authority will receive training and support at the time of installation with opportunities for carer(s)/ family member(s) to also receive training on new devices where appropriate.</p> <p>Access to a wide range of devices will ensure that people's confidence and comfort with technology is taken into account at the point of assessing for technology, and that people are only given devices that are determined to meet their particular outcomes and align with their comfort in</p>	<p><b>draw on care and support</b></p> <p>Everyone currently in receipt of a KARA or Telecare service will be reviewed to understand whether they are still using their existing devices and would continue to benefit from a Technology Enabled Care Service. People already receiving KARA or Telecare provisions will be prioritised in the mobilisation of the new Technology Enabled Care Service, and this will form a key element of the contract specification.</p> <p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the</p>
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			<p>using technology. Additionally, people who do not have access to wifi may be referred to the Digital Kent scheme for additional support which would enable access to a wider range of technologies.</p> <p>People of all ages will have access to a range of devices that are specifically tailored to their requirements, which may include non-connectivity devices if they do not have Wifi access.</p>	<p>preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>
<b>Disability</b>			<p>Technology Enabled Care is not a replacement for care; it will enhance and give people more choice.</p> <p>81.6% of Kent</p>	<p>People will be assessed for eligible needs in line with the authority's statutory duties under the Care Act and will also receive a financial assessment. Practitioners exploring options for</p>

			<p>residents describe their health as being very good or good and 17.6% of Kent's population have an illness or condition which limits their day to day activities in some way. The number of Kent residents who are claiming disability benefits is 128,186 (8.1%) this is equal to the national figure but higher than the South East region (6.8%).</p> <p>Access to a wide range of devices will ensure that people's confidence and comfort with technology is taken into account at the point of assessing for technology, and that</p>	<p>meeting people's outcomes via the Technology Enabled Care Service will establish their needs and match technology solutions with the person's ability to engage with and utilise different devices.</p> <p><b><u>Positive</u></b>          The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p> <p>A range of devices and apps have been identified</p>
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			people are only given devices that are determined to meet their particular outcomes and align with their ability to use technology. Linking to the Digital Kent programme and referring people into Digital Kent schemes could also support people in building their confidence to use technology and accessing a wider range of technologies.	as being particularly beneficial in supporting people with learning disabilities, and have the potential to realise benefits for individuals by improving their independence and empowering them with more choice and control.
<b>Sex</b>		Of the existing Telecare-Only & Telecare-Enhanced users, 65% are female and 35% are male. Therefore, when existing users are transitioned to the new Technology Enabled Care Service there will be a slightly higher	The future Technology Enabled Care Service will be available across all cohorts of people and in areas. Across the county, 52% of the population is female and 48% of the population is male. There is no evidence to suggest that people	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more

		<p>impact on females than on males. However, this will be mitigated by a robust mobilisation plan for the new contract which prioritises moving existing users onto the new service in the first phase of the contract.</p>	<p>would be adversely impacted as a result of this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>
<p><b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b></p>			<p>Data is not currently collected on gender identity/ transgender protected characteristics to understand the number of people who have this protected characteristic currently using the Telecare and KARA services or the potential impact of the new service. However, there is no evidence to suggest that people who fall under this protected characteristic would be adversely impacted.</p>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people’s eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>

<p><b>Race</b></p>		<p>The largest ethnic group in Kent is White. 93.7% of all residents are of white ethnic origin, and 6.6% are of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic origin. The largest single BME group in Kent is Indian representing 1.2% of the total population.</p> <p>Across Kent some districts have a higher Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population which needs to be considered in terms of communicating any potential changes regarding service change or re-design as English may not be a first language in these communities. For instance, previous service consultations</p>	<p>The introduction of a Technology Enabled Care Service should not adversely affect groups based on their race and will be available to all Kent residents. However, targeted work may need to be undertaken with some ethnic groups and specific communities to ensure they have equitable opportunities to access the service and benefit from the outcomes that can be delivered via technology.</p>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people’s eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p> <p>Learning from the Technology Enabled Care build and test project has already identified the importance of access to devices which do not require Wifi connectivity. These devices will be included in the countywide offer and will be of benefit to groups and</p>
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		<p>in the Gravesend area have worked with translators to ensure access to information for Punjabi speaking residents and engaged with the Gurdwara to promote the consultation and ensure the local residents have good opportunities to give their feedback.</p> <p>Further work needs to take place to understand more about Gypsy Roma and Traveller community use of a Technology Enabled Care Service; many of the resources in the service will depend on people having a fixed address and access to Wifi which may be barriers for this group.</p>		<p>communities who may not have a fixed address or regular access to Wifi. The Digital Kent programme's development of a Community Wifi scheme may also be beneficial.</p>
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		<p>Whilst Technology Enabled Care will be a countywide service and will be accessible to all residents and protected characteristics, targeted work may need to be undertaken with some ethnic groups and specific communities to ensure they have equitable opportunities to access the service and benefit from the outcomes that can be delivered via technology.</p>		
<p><b>Religion and Belief</b></p>			<p>In the 2011 Census, 62.5% of Kent residents described themselves as Christian, whilst the largest non - Christian religious group is Muslim (1%).</p> <p>This is not a significant</p>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people’s eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more</p>

			<p>consideration for the analysis as the Technology Enabled Care Service will be available to all people regardless of their religion.</p> <p>There may be some religious groups for whom the use of technology is restricted or limited due to their faith. However, statistics are not available on these specific groups and it is thought that in Kent this would be a very small proportion of the population. Practitioners will need to understand the individual needs of all people they are supporting, including</p>	<p>choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>
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			those with religious beliefs which may impact on their ability to use technology, and consider how best to meet their individual outcomes. Access to a wide range of technological devices and alternative services will enable practitioners to support people using a person-centred approach.	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			Whilst specific data about sexual orientation is not available for Kent residents, this is not a significant consideration for the analysis as the Technology Enabled Care Service will be	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more

			<p>responsive to all individual needs and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Practitioners will need to understand the individual needs of all people they are supporting and consider how best to meet their individual outcomes. Access to a wide range of technological devices and alternative services will enable practitioners to support people using a person-centred approach.</p>	<p>choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			<p>Whilst specific data about pregnancy and maternity is not currently available, population forecasts for Kent show that there is going to be a significant growth in</p>	<p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people’s eligible needs and support the</p>



			<p>population (19% by 2019). This is likely to be due to a combination of migration and births, and means that there may be a higher proportion of pregnant people accessing the Technology Enabled Care Service in the future.</p> <p>This is not a significant consideration for the analysis as the service will be responsive to needs related to Pregnancy and maternity. Practitioners will need to understand the individual needs of all people they are supporting and consider how best to meet their individual</p>	<p>preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p>
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			outcomes. Access to a wide range of technological devices and alternative services will enable practitioners to support people using a person-centred approach.	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>			This is not a significant consideration for the analysis as the Technology Enabled Care Service will be accessible to all Kent residents, regardless of marriage or civil partnership status.	<b><u>Positive</u></b> The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.
<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>		According to the 2011 Census, in 2011 151,777 people, or		Technology Enabled Care will have a Medium impact on carers responsibilities

		<p>10.4% of Kent's total population, provided unpaid care. This proportion is higher than the regional average of 8.9% and the national average of 10.2%. 23.6% of all unpaid carers in Kent provide care for 50 or more hours a week.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for Technology Enabled Care to make a significant positive difference to carers' lives by giving them peace of mind through the provision of technology and monitoring for the person they support.</p> <p>However, consideration should be given towards carers 'fighting for their person' by ensuring</p>		<p>as carer gain peace of mind and will take some time to trust equipment.</p> <p><b><u>Positive</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver a wider range of Technology Enabled Care options to meet people's eligible needs and support the preventative agenda. People will have more choice and control about the technology they want to access and how it is used to support the outcomes that are important to them.</p> <p>For carers, Technology Enabled Care has the potential to improve outcomes by providing reassurance about the safety and wellbeing of the person they support.</p>
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		<p>the person they support receives all that they are entitled to. It is expected that carers may not initially have complete confidence in Technology Enabled Care and will need evidence of its success before trusting the provision. They may also require targeted support in terms of supporting the person they care for to access and use technology.</p> <p>Additionally, there is a risk that if some technologies are monitored by a friend or family member instead of a formal monitoring agency, this could place increased pressure on the carer. Practitioners</p>		<p>Technology could improve their quality of life by reducing the need for them to deliver interventions and by reducing stress and worry.</p>
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		<p>will need to understand the individual needs of all people they are supporting and consider how best to meet their individual outcomes. This should include giving consideration to the friends, family and carers around a person and the wellbeing of the people providing informal caring support. Access to a wide range of technological devices and alternative services will enable practitioners to support people using a person-centred approach, and this should include considering the needs and wellbeing of carers networks.</p>		
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## **Part 2**

### **Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment**

#### **Information and Data used to carry out your assessment.**

MOSAIC Data, the 2021 Census and statistics about Kent's population published on kent.gov.uk have been used for this assessment.

Of the information available:

#### **Existing Telecare-Only & Telecare-Enhanced People**

- 65% are female
  - 15.4% are aged under 26
  - 16.3% are aged between 26 and 54
  - 17.7% are aged between 55 and 69
  - 50.6% are aged 70 and over
- 35% are male
  - 12.8% are aged under 26
  - 16.8% are aged between 26 and 54
  - 23.4% are aged between 55 and 69
  - 46.9% are aged 70 and over
- 90% are White
- 3.6 are Non-White
- 6.3% have a not stated ethnic origin

As limited information was available through MOSAIC, the 2021 Census (published in July 2022) has also been used which identified the overall population of Kent:

- 52% are female
  - 6.6% are aged under 26
  - 49.4% are aged between 26 and 54
  - 23.2% are aged between 55 and 69
  - 20.9% are aged 70 and over
- 48% are male
  - 7.3% are aged under 26
  - 50.3% are aged between 26 and 54
  - 24% are aged between 55 and 69
  - 18.4% are aged 70 and over

#### **Who have you involved consulted and engaged?**

ASC Directorate  
CYPE Directorate  
Strategic Commissioning  
Finance

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Occupational Therapy  
Sensory Services  
NHS

## Analysis

The analysis carried out has incorporated information and statistics from a number of different sources to ensure that the potential impact on all protected characteristics has been given due consideration.

The analysis has evidenced that overall there is significant opportunity to achieve benefits for all groups through the implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service. The risk of a negative impact is low for the majority of groups and mitigating actions have been identified to ensure that people from all protected characteristic groups have equitable access to the service and opportunity to access technology that can meet their individual needs.

The main potential negative impact identified is on the 'age' protected characteristic, because of the high proportion of Telecare users aged 70 and over. Further analysis on the impact for this group and mitigating actions is outlined below.

**Age:** The vast majority of people in receipt of as the existing Telecare service are 70+ and Telecare has been prescribed to give the person and their family about their safety in their home. There is a risk that this group could be adversely impacted by the transition from the existing Telecare contract into the new Technology Enabled Care Service. However, the existing Telecare contract has been extended to August 2023 and the new Technology Enabled Care Service contract will begin in September 2023. From April 2023 to August 2023, the focus will be on safely and smoothly transitioning existing Telecare users to the new service offer and ensuring there is no gap in provision.

**Disability:** A number of the people we support rely on the existing Telecare service to enable them to lead independent and safe lives. As outlined in the 'Age' section above, the focus on a safe and smooth transition from the existing Telecare offer to the new Technology Enabled Care Service will mitigate the impact on people who fall under the Disability protected characteristic.

**Race:** As outlined in the Part 1 'Screening' section of this document, consideration will be given to the need for additional engagement with some ethnic minority groups to ensure they have equitable access to services and

the benefits of accessing services. This may include engaging with specific community groups and translating service information and materials.

**Carers:** The existing Telecare service provides reassurance to carers and can support the carer in their caring role. By extending the existing contract and focusing on the mobilisation from the Telecare service into the new Technology Enabled Care Service, the authority will ensure there is no gap in provision and mitigate any potential adverse impact on carers.

**Positive Impact:**

Technology Enabled Care will be prescribed to achieve a number of outcomes for people which will contribute to improving or maintaining their wellbeing, independence and choice and control. Access to a wider range of devices will ensure that Kent residents are able to benefit from the technologies now available in the market and that practitioners are empowered to access the technologies that can best meet the needs of people they support.

The implementation of a Technology Enabled Care Service will contribute to the strategic direction of the authority and ensure that services are designed to be futureproof for the long-term needs of a changing population. Evidence from a range of other local authorities shows that an effective Technology Enabled Care Service will deliver benefits for the authority, the wider health and social care system and Kent residents.

**JUDGEMENT**

- **Adjust and continue** - adjust to remove barriers or better promote equality

**Internal Action Required                      YES**

There is potential for adverse impact on particular groups and we have found scope to improve the proposal.



### Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
<b>Carers Responsibilities</b>	Impact on Carers	<p>Evidence base to be created showing benefits of Technology Enabled Care.</p> <p>Stock of training material/ advice to be prepared to support carers grow confidence in Technology Enabled Care.</p> <p>Co-Production group with user and carer attendance to be formed.</p>	<p>Carers to grow confidence in Technology Enabled Care.</p> <p>Co-Production group created to enable People we support and their carers to shape the offer The authority will proceed with.</p>	ASC, CYPE, Commissioning	August 2023	TBC
<b>Race</b>	Potential limitations on engaging in the service in communities where English is	Across Kent some districts have a higher BAME population which needs to be considered in	Equitable access to information about Technology Enabled Care across all groups	ASC	April 2023	TBC

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	<p>not the first language</p>	<p>terms of communicating any potential changes regarding service change or re-design as English may not be a first language in these communities.</p> <p>As the Technology Enabled Care Service is rolled out county-wide, areas that could be impacted by this should be proactively identified and work undertaken with the Consultation and Engagement team to explore appropriate ways to mitigate the impact.</p>	<p>and benefits from access to technology are available to all groups.</p>			
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**Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan? (If no please state how the actions will be monitored)**

No – the proposed course of action is subject to decision

### Appendix

Links to relevant datasets located in the body of the document.



census2021firstresu  
ltsenglandwales1.xl:

Please forward a final signed electronic copy and Word version to the Equality Team by emailing [diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk](mailto:diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk)

If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqIA must be submitted to committee services along with the relevant Cabinet report. Your EqIA should also be published .

The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.