

September 2019

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

**Directorate/ Service: GET Highways Asset Management**

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:**  
ADEPT Live Labs Project Kent

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:** Carol Valentine/Andrew Loosemore

**Version:** 0.1

**Author:** Carol Valentine

**Pathway of Equality Analysis: Portfolio Project Board, Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee**

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

**Context**

Highways asset management is responsible for the inspection and maintenance of 5,000 miles of road and 4,000 miles footway; 122,000 streetlights, 500,000 trees, 250,000 drains and 2,200 bridges. In inclement weather we treat 57 salting routes which covers 30% of the road network. In addition, the service is the front facing part of the highways function and deals with over 100,000 enquiries each year.

Data for these assets are captured on a range of systems and platforms and utilised to deliver the best possible service to residents and visitors to Kent. Having data on a variety of systems can however result in unconnected systems, potentially leading to slower decision making and customer dissatisfaction. Kent as a place is continuing to grow and the pressures on our services are increasing at the same time as customers are getting used to dealing with sophisticated online systems and shopping and expecting similar streamlined, relevant and timely services from the public sector.

- **Aims and Objectives**

With the ever-increasing development in technology, the opportunity now exists to further improve our services using data analytics that will enable faster and more efficient decision making by highways managers and officers and providing up to date, relevant information to people using the Kent network. In recent years there has been a wide range of innovation in the use of new technologies including new road surface materials, digital networks and sensors, and construction / maintenance techniques but many of these have not been deployed at scale or been subject to commercial, real world rigour. The Live-Labs project will deploy cutting edge technology e.g sensors, satellite and laser imagery, to deliver an intelligence-led, technology-based approach to Highways maintenance and management.

- **Summary of equality impact**

We recognise that 'one size does not fit all' and accessibility for some people with disabilities could be impacted when accessing online information and services therefore, alternative means must be provided for customers to get information to us. The entire tool will be mobile friendly and options for using either a map based version or text only

Updated 26/09/2019

September 2019

version will be enhanced to assist those with visual impairments as evidence has shown that customers with visual impairments prefer to use the text fields rather than the map functionality. Together with assistive technology including webchat and on-screen help prompts, we will enable more customers to self-serve using online tools rather than being limited to telephone and this is particularly aimed at assisting customers who have hearing or visual impairments as well as those with learning difficulties.

**Adverse Equality Impact Rating Medium**

**Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning **Live Labs Kent project**. I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

**Head of Service**

Signed: 

Name: Andrew Loosemore

Job Title: Head of Highways

Date: 26 September 2019

**DMT Member**

Signed: 

Name: Simon Jones

Job Title: Director Highways  
Transportation and Waste

Date: 26 September 2019

September 2019

**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?**

Updated 26/09/2019

3

This document is available in other formats, please contact  
Carol.valentine@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 03000 418181

Protected Group	Please provide a brief commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age			<p>Access to online services may impact on the older population with limited access and skills to use these services. However, there is research in the UK that shows that the older population are increasingly using the Internet via either a laptop or mobile device – OFCOM – ‘Rise of Social Seniors Revealed 2017’; Age UK ‘Technology and Older People Review’.</p>	<p>Younger people (18-24) are accessing many services and goods online and are more likely to search for council services online than phone or write in (Internet research)</p> <p>Technology use amongst older people (over 65) is rising at a rapid pace and access to council services online will have a benefit to this group (Age UK ‘Technology and Older People Review’)</p>
Disability			<p>Accessibility of online information and services may impact on people with disabilities (physical, learning, sensory) who have specific communication needs.</p>	<p>Increased accessibility of online information and services e.g. where the telephone is a barrier or physical mobility is restricted upon face to face transactions. Assistive technology may</p>

			Without alternative provision and additional assistance these customers will be unable to utilise online services equally	help to improve accessibility and assist people to stay online to ensure these customers are able to utilise online services equally.
Sex			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on men or women as it is accessible to all genders	
Gender identity/ Transgender			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
Race		Online services may negatively impact people whose first language is not English and where the default online is English The effectiveness of communication with Black and Minority		A considered and informed approach to the project can ensure the language communication needs of people from BME backgrounds are provided for, as well as English speakers with low literacy levels. Assistive technology

		Ethnic (BME) and Eastern European customers could be inequitable, where English is not their first language.		utilising webchat and online help prompts in differing language formats could improve service accessibility for this group. Potential to assist in decreased social isolation.
Religion and Belief			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
Sexual Orientation			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
Pregnancy and Maternity			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
Marriage and Civil Partnerships			It is not considered that alterations to the system will have any greater impact on this	

			group than it does on the general public.	
Carer's Responsibilities				The strategic platform has the potential to improve the online access to highway services which could benefit those who are limited in leaving the house due to caring responsibilities

September 2019

## **Part 2**

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

#### **Protected groups**

Disabled people using assistive technologies could be affected if the operational and strategic platforms were not compatible

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

GOV.UK information 'Make things accessible and inclusive'; The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018

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

So far desk research has been carried out doing an Internet Search. The Government has carried out stakeholder engagement with people with disabilities using assistive technology and this has informed The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018. KCC is following this guidance and has produced an Accessibility statement and is providing guidance to directorates to implement the regulations. To date correspondence has been had with the Corporate Equalities team and the GET Business Partner for technology.

#### **Analysis**

No direct engagement – see above

#### **Adverse Impact,**

KCC and partner agency staff with disabilities also need to be able to access and input necessary data sources into the platforms. Work will be undertaken throughout the project to ensure product design incorporates the requirements of The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Representation of the language communication needs of people within Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities can be accessed internally from KCC business intelligence data including current customer base information to inform service design. The full impact of the improvements on 'Race' is not known at this stage, however, further reassessment to understand the impacts will continue throughout the implementation of the online tool and customer feedback will be used to inform future developments.

#### **Positive Impact:**

The Live Labs strategic platform is a Smart Cities platform that will utilise engaging visuals to inform the public about highway services. It will be user friendly and incorporate accessibility elements to enable all to use it.

Updated 26/09/2019

8



September 2019

Many people are now accessing services and goods online and are more likely to search for council services online than phone or write in (Internet research).

Technology use amongst older people (over 65) is rising at a rapid pace and access to council services online will have a benefit to this group (Age UK 'Technology and Older People Review') some of whom are already benefitting from telecare, including residents in Kent.

## **JUDGEMENT**

The Live Labs project will go ahead and adjust and continue to remove the barriers for people with disabilities, particularly those utilising assistive technologies. As the platforms are developed, the recommendations from The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 will be adopted and incorporated.

### **Internal Action Required                      YES**

There is potential for adverse impact on people with disabilities using assistive technology and we have found scope to improve the proposal by ensuring that throughout the product development attention is given to implement the recommendations from The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and any further guidance from KCC is incorporated into the product development and final strategic and operational platform development.

Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
Disability	There is potential for adverse impact on people with disabilities using assistive technology	Initial desk/Internet research done along with seeking guidance from corporate equalities and the Business Intelligence team. Also briefed external project partners on the requirements of the Government legislation and will monitor throughout all stages of the project implementation of the guidance. Also will seek	The operational and strategic platforms will conform to the standards leading to all users of the systems being able to have full access and gain from the benefits offered by the systems	Carol Valentine	September 2019- June 2021	Unknown but will be absorbed in project costs

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?**  
 Yes – regular updates will be provided to Highways Strategy Review meetings and the GET Portfolio Board

Appendix

Please include relevant data sets

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.

