

Communities functions - reconfiguration proposal

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool?

No

1. Explaining the matter being assessed

Is this a:

- Change to a service or function

Summarise the strategy, policy, service(s), or function(s) being assessed. Describe current status followed by any changes that stakeholders would experience.

A reconfiguration of the Communities function in Public Health will take place in the first half of 2025, with formal consultation on the proposals running from 24 February to 31 March 2025. It is anticipated that changes to the structure will come into effect from July 2025.

The proposals set out have been shaped through discussions with the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP) DLT (Directorate Leadership Team) and the corporate Strategic Design Authority (SDA), ensuring they reflect and deliver on the priorities for the directorate and the wider council.

The proposals are designed to achieve the following:

- Maintain and grow strategic oversight of community capacity building linked to the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy and SCC Corporate Strategy goals.
- Maintain and grow effective preventative support where evaluations demonstrate impact and future potential impact on Adults and Children's social care demand and reducing health inequalities in key neighbourhoods.
- Deliver the required MTFS savings (£1m over two years) with a focus first on consolidating management structures.
- Establish key components of the overall Dynamic Customer Operating Model (D-COM) and aligned Adults front door model being developed.
- Enable delivery of the agreed ambitions for Towns, Villages and Communities transformation (e.g. Team Around the Community).
- Link in with centralised models where applicable and the agreed corporate redesign principles including collaboration and retaining talent.
- Anticipate the further changes and opportunities coming through Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) to join up and enhance community-based activity and support - staying connected to communities will be as important in the future as it is now and is an area that devolution and reorganisation is intended to strengthen

There are four main interlinked components to the proposals:

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- Changes to the functions held within the service – with some functions remaining, some transferring in from other services, and some transferring out to other directorates
- A new senior management structure
- A new set of functional groupings
- Adjustments and changes within some functions

While still utilising community-connected approaches the adjusted roles will have a primary priority focus on creating consistent ways of working that convene and support SCC colleagues and those from partner organisations to work together productively in local areas (towns and villages) alongside communities – ensuring these efforts address local priorities. This reflects the ambition to develop more joined up working at local levels (as per the “Team Around the Community” model) be that through a new arrangement or evolving existing cross service and partnership groups to achieve these goals (including appropriate alignment with NHS integrated health and care teams). It will also create a strong foundation for further integration within any future unitary councils in Surrey

1. Potential Impacts on Residents

It is not anticipated that there will be significant changes in the service provided to residents through what are, in the main, internal changes to how we deliver our services. The impact on residents will be minimised by ensuring consistency with the wider ‘one council’ approach currently underway across Surrey. Moving some roles to, for example, the AWHP Front Door will ensure consistency of service.

We will also ensure that any redesign of our roles will better coordinate and support Key Neighbourhoods (KNs) and the people within them. This will ensure we keep connections that can share local insight and knowledge and allow other SCC staff and partners to work with these communities in a more focussed way.

2. Potential Impacts on Staff

Changes will be made to the staffing profile with the majority of the efficiencies targets being met from consolidation of management roles, the deletion of existing vacancies and targeted reductions.

By bringing together the strands of senior management that transferred across to Public Health in early 2024 (from the former customers and communities directorate) the number of senior managers (SP13-15) in the proposed structure will be reduced from five to two. This is proposed to arrive at a flatter structure with clear lines of accountability and reduced costs.

It is proposed there will be one Head of Communities with overall accountability for the service. Given the range of operational and strategic council and system-wide leadership responsibilities they will be supported by a Deputy Head of Communities – this role, as well as deputising across all areas, will specifically shape and lead the countywide community capacity building functions.

Also, given the importance of developing a single coherent set of functions, knitted into wider council and system changes, a Service Development Manager role is proposed to provide direct support to the Communities leadership.

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These proposed changes means that all roles in the re-configured structure will be subject to new senior management arrangements.

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

The communities functions, currently in place, were developed through transformation work and investments from 2021/22. The functions were specifically designed in response to:

- political ambition for SCC to be “closer to communities” and more responsive - in part in response to feedback on local government reorganisation proposals at the time
- learning from the Covid-19 response and the value of working more closely alongside communities to enable them, build resilience and deliver outcomes
- a desire for more holistic and joined up approaches between services and with partners

In August 2024 AWHP DLT agreed that the vision and strategic context for an effective set of communities functions remain relevant. Namely that the communities functions support and align with:

- delivery of Surrey CC and system wide strategic goals – thriving communities, tackling health inequalities and more effective prevention
- the emerging next phase of the SCC “one council” transformation and operating model
- national policy and legislative frameworks e.g. Care Act - prevent, reduce and delay
- international and national research and best practice on delivering outcomes
- local resident and community feedback
- (and more specifically) the AWHP vision statement and “connection with communities”

Latest context

The following more recent developments set the context for this updated proposal.

- **MTFS:**
 - £0.5m savings be made in 2025/26 and a further
 - £0.5m savings in 2026/27
 - noting that this is circa £1.2m after pressures are built in, resulting from the end of one-off funds and inflation.
- **One Council Transformation approach:**
 - On 29/10/24 the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) agreed a revised One Council Transformation approach. This will include the development of a Place and Communities portfolio, alongside a focus on Customer and People.
 - The Place and Communities transformation work will create a cross-council focus for some of the current communities sub functions, and the towns and villages approach more broadly.
 - The English Devolution White Paper. Local Government Reorganisation and moves towards “simpler structures” for local government.

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

- County-wide

2. Service Users / Residents

Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) to consider in your proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups (Please **refer to the EIA guidance** if you are unclear as to what this is).

- Members/Ex members of armed forces and relevant family members (in line with the Armed Forces Act 2021 and [Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty](#))
- Adult and young carers*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness*
- Looked after children/Care leavers*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage*
- Out of work young people)*
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)*
- Older People in care homes*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities*
- Other (describe below)

(*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

2. Service Users / Residents

Changes to services are unlikely to impact negatively on any residents with a protected characteristic. There are no changes envisaged in the reconfiguration that will fundamentally alter service provision and any changes that are made will not disproportionately impact any one group.

It is not anticipated that there will be significant changes in the service provided to residents through what are, in the main, internal changes to how we deliver our services. The impact on residents will be minimised by ensuring consistency with the wider 'one council' approach currently underway across Surrey. Moving some roles to, for example, the AWHP Front Door will ensure consistency of service.

We will also ensure that any redesign of our roles will better coordinate and support Key Neighbourhoods (KNs) and the people within them. This will ensure we keep connections that can share local insight and knowledge and allow other SCC staff and partners to work with these communities in a more focussed way.

3. Staff

AGE – Including older and younger people

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

- It may be more challenging for staff, particularly those who are older or younger, to adapt to any changes associated with the proposed reconfiguration. For example, coping with change, being asked to work differently or take on new roles and responsibilities.

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

- We will monitor responses to the consultation and when the final structure is agreed ensure that there is no evidence of discriminatory impact on any particular age group.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of staff? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of

- The 'one council' transformation programme will mean movement of staff across SCC and it is clear on the need to reduce staffing levels overall in order to meet efficiencies targets.
- Developments elsewhere such as, for example, with the Adults Front Door model may also impact upon this group of staff. Some staff will, as part of this reconfiguration, move to other teams within SCC.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

- There are no negative impacts than cannot be mitigated

DISABILITY

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

- It may be more challenging for staff with a disability to adapt to any changes associated with the proposed reconfiguration. For example, having to disclose a disability to, or agree reasonable adjustments with, a new line manager.

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

- We will monitor responses to the consultation and when the final structure is agreed ensure that there is no evidence of discriminatory impact on anyone with a disability.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments continue to be made for disabled staff, with independent and individualised support from Occupational Health as appropriate.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of staff? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of

- The 'one council' transformation programme will mean movement of staff across SCC and it is clear on the need to reduce staffing levels overall in order to meet efficiencies targets.
- Developments elsewhere such as, for example, with the Adults Front Door model may also impact upon this group of staff. Some staff will, as part of this reconfiguration, move to other teams within SCC.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

- There are no negative impacts than cannot be mitigated

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

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

- Staff on maternity leave may miss out on the opportunity to participate in the consultation and return to work to find their role has changed.

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

- We will ensure any member of staff on maternity leave has the opportunity to participate in the consultation.
- We will take advice and guidance from HR to support anyone who is pregnant or on maternity leave through the proposed reconfiguration.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of staff? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of

Equality Impact Assessment

- The 'one council' transformation programme will mean movement of staff across SCC and it is clear on the need to reduce staffing levels overall in order to meet efficiencies targets.
- Developments elsewhere such as, for example, with the Adults Front Door model may also impact upon this group of staff. Some staff will, as part of this reconfiguration, move to other teams within SCC.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

- There are no negative impacts than cannot be mitigated

CARERS PROTECTED BY ASSOCIATION

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

- It may be more challenging for staff with a caring responsibility to adapt to any changes associated with the proposed reconfiguration. For example, having to travel to different office bases, or venues across Surrey.
- Staff with a caring responsibility may have to disclose this to, or agree reasonable adjustments with, a new line manager.

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

- We will monitor responses to the consultation and when the final structure is agreed ensure that there is no evidence of discriminatory impact on anyone with a caring responsibility.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of staff? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of

- The 'one council' transformation programme will mean movement of staff across SCC and it is clear on the need to reduce staffing levels overall in order to meet efficiencies targets.
- Developments elsewhere such as, for example, with the Adults Front Door model may also impact upon this group of staff. Some staff will, as part of this reconfiguration, move to other teams within SCC.

Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

- There are no negative impacts than cannot be mitigated

4. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken
- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
 - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
 - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.
- **Outcome Four: Stop and rethink the policy** when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (For guidance on what is unlawful discrimination, refer to the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance and Codes of Practice on the Equality Act](#) concerning employment, goods and services and equal pay).

Recommended outcome:

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken

Explanation:

There are no negative impacts than cannot be mitigated.

5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

Insert your action plan here, based on the mitigations recommended.

Involve you Assessment Team in monitoring progress against the actions above.

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/ Closed
1	24 February 2025	Monitor responses to the consultation and when the final structure is agreed ensure that there is no evidence of discriminatory impact on any particular age group, staff with a disability, or a caring responsibility	Director Public Health	31 July 2025		
2	24 February 2025	Ensure reasonable adjustments continue to be made for disabled staff, with independent and individualised support from Occupational Health as appropriate	Director Public Health	31 July 2025		
3	24 February 2025	Ensure any member of staff on maternity leave has the opportunity to participate in the consultation	Director Public Health	31 March 2025		
4	24 February 2025	Take advice and guidance from HR to support anyone who is pregnant or on maternity leave through the proposed reconfiguration	Director Public Health	31 July 2025		

6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1	Initial draft	Patrick Lines	25 February 2025
2	Feedback on behalf of the Directorate Equalities Group	Kathryn Pyper	24 March 2025

The above provides historical data about each update made to the Equality Impact Assessment.

Please include the name of the author, date and notes about changes made – so that you can refer to what changes have been made throughout this iterative process.

For further information, please see the EIA Guidance document on version control.

Equality Impact Assessment

6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

The level of EIA sign off will depend on who the change affects. Generally speaking, for strictly internal changes, Head of Service/ Exec Director sign off should suffice. For changes affecting residents, the Cabinet Member is required to approve completed EIAs.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service	Ruth Hutchinson – Director, Public Health – 25 March 2025
Executive Director	
Cabinet Member	
Directorate Equality Group/ EDI Group (If Applicable) (arrangements will differ depending on your Directorate. Please enquire with your Head of Service or the CSP Team if unsure)	Kathryn Pyper – 24 March 2025

Publish:

It is recommended that all EIAs are published on Surrey County Council's website.

Please send approved EIAs to: equalityimpactassessments@surreycc.gov.uk

EIA author:

6c. EIA Team

Equality Impact Assessment

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role
Patrick Lines	Lead Project Manager	AWHP	Programme Manager
Nick Sponder	Assistant Business Partner	People & Change	Business Partner
Dan Shurlock	Strategic Lead – Thriving Communities	Public Health & Communities	Strategic Lead
Jane Last	Head of Community Investment & Engagement	Public Health & Communities	Strategic Lead
Jean-Pierre Moore	Head of Community Partnerships & Prevention	Public Health & Communities	Strategic Lead
Linda Fernandes	Project Officer	AWHP	Project Support

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