Appendix 3

Initial Equality Screening Assessment

Completed to ensure that the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group have and continue to give proper consideration to equality and diversity when undertaking activities and actions that are designed to improve digital inclusion.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decisions made. It helps determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out a more detailed Equality Impact Assessment

1. Title

Title: Digital Inclusion Programme

Assessment reviewed and accepted by:	On:
Digital Stakeholder group Members	21st March

2. Please provide a brief description of what has been screened

The Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Programme was established to:

- Tackle inequalities within our communities that digital exclusion contributes to
- Work with the third sector to develop and support community engagement and a sustainability model
- Maintain and build the Digital Inclusion Partnership
- Identify and capitalise on social accountability across health and social care
- Establish a temporary 'digital inclusion group' to support the above outcomes and ensure all interested parties and organisations are involved
- Work with partners to improve and expand their digital offers
- Identify and pool potential match funding to support the programme and future sustainability
- Increase the take up of online services across the borough and sustain and grow digital engagement to the benefit of all
- Engage with multiple boards, networks and organisations across Rotherham to ensure the programme is aligned with work already happening across the borough.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

Digital inclusion remains a challenge for some people in Rotherham and lack of digital access can have a detrimental impact on residents. The associated problems can be

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significant for citizens and families contributing to educational and economic disadvantage, health inequalities and increased social isolation.

The Digital Inclusion programme therefore seeks to better understand the barriers that prevent people within our community from accessing digital services by consulting with local people and using this insight to co-design a future strategy that helps support, encourage 9ncrease the take up of online services across the borough to the benefit of all.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	X Positive	
Could the proposal affect service users?	X Positive	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how the organisations represented by Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group members commission or procure activities and the way they are organised, provided, located and by whom?	X Positive	
Could the proposal affect the workforce of organisations represented by Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group members	X Positive	

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

- **How has the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group considered equality and diversity?**

Equality and diversity is at the heart of the Digital Inclusion programme. Research suggests that digital exclusion is more prevalent amongst groups who are elderly, disabled, and from BAME and socially deprived communities.

- **Key findings**

Phase 1 of the programme (**Knowledge Gathering**) has been completed.

- An independent research specialist was appointed (Attain) to produce a Rotherham place baseline review which involved:

  o National and Rotherham population level analysis

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o Consultation with residents:

- 454 online surveys received

- 67 postal surveys returned (500 sent out)

- 9 focus group sessions held across the borough in areas with high levels of deprivation and groups where English isn't the first language

The findings of the Digital Inclusion Rotherham Place Review identified that:

- Groups most at high-risk groups of digital inclusion:

  - Older People
  - Deprivation
  - LTC / Learning Disability
  - Disadvantaged Young People

- Common barriers to digital inclusion:
  - Internet availability in venues such as sheltered housing.
  - Language
  - Residents wanting more one to one support to help them use their own devices and be more aware of internet safely.
  - Age –increasing age increases the need for digital support, but there are also pockets of younger people who are at risk of being digitally excluded
  - Based on the survey responses around 54% of residents need some form of digital support

- **Actions**

Phase 2 of the Digital Inclusion programme:

The Digital Inclusion working group will use the findings of Phase 1, to co-design a strategy that sets out the key areas of focus, improvement aims and objectives, delivery approach, and measurable outcomes.

It is expected that the strategy will underpin a place-based approach to:

1. intervention work with high-risk groups and wards, focussing on areas of deprivation to bring communities together through activities and initiatives that enable targeted support
2. creating the structural foundations for tackling digital inclusion at scale through partnership and collaboration; working together to resource provision and plug any gaps.
3. establishing a social movement to drive the digital enablement of residents who want to become digitally competent, providing co-ordinated borough wide support and more bespoke offers where appropriate to specific customer groups and communities
4. measuring impacts and outcomes using a governance framework that ensures accountability to the Rotherham Together Partnership.

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Date Equality Analysis considered and scoped:	Completed March 2023
Next review of Equality Analysis	August 2023

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Name	**Details**	**Timelines**
Digital Inclusion project Manager – P. Woodhouse RMBC	Creating draft EIA screening document	March 2023
Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Group	Sign off of the EIA

Continuous review of the EIA | March 2023

Every 6 months |

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

A copy of **all** screenings will be made publicly available on the Rotherham digital website.

Date this screening published	TBC

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