

# Equality Impact and Needs Assessment Form



NB: Use the electronic MS Word template. Add additional rows and increase box size as required. Make sure your final document is suitable for publishing.

## A) Description

Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed

Devon Strategy for Information and Communication Technology (DSICT)

Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)

Environment, Economy & Culture - Enterprise and Skills

Date of assessment (DD/MM/YY)

5<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Date next assessment due (3 years)

June 2012

Names and/or job titles of people carrying out the assessment

John Baker

Accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)

Graeme Bell

Date EINA Form approved by accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)

1. What are the aims or main purpose of the service, function or policy? What does it provide and how does it provide it?

Information and communication technology has become an essential and critical tool in almost every aspect of peoples lives across the globe – for business, learning, social entertainment and communication.

The main propose of the strategy is therefore to ensure that Devon is well positioned for creating opportunities in a global and Low(er) Carbon Economy and to ensure that there are equal opportunities for creating wealth and well being across all economic sectors, the whole of the county and within our priority communities.

The DSICT has four broad ambitions:

**1. Connectivity and Speed**

Ensuring that no one is left behind and that all areas have access to broadband at a speed fit for purpose.

**2. Capability**

Encouraging people, business and communities to adopt ICT and exploit it for their wealth and well-being, to ensure that they have equal opportunity through the intelligent use of ICT

**3. Content**

To encourage good community based content to support the delivery of high quality services.

**4. Leadership**

Good practice will come from strong and visible leadership championing the benefits and opportunities of ICT.

2. Location or any other relevant information

This is a Devon wide strategy that has particular emphasis for Rural Devon, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Devon's five priority economic sectors ( Marine, Renewable Energy, Creative, Food and Drink and Tourism) and the county's priority communities

3. List any key policies or procedures to be reviewed as part of this assessment.

4. Who is intended to benefit from the service, function or policy?

The main beneficiaries are:  
Small businesses in Devon's priority sectors: particularly Food and Drink and Tourism  
Communities and citizens, particularly in 13 priority communities.  
The environment - with ICT making a positive contribution to a Low carbon economy by encouraging and facilitating flexible working and resource efficiency measures.

5. Who are the stakeholders? What is their interest?

The main stakeholders are the members of the Devon Economic Partnership which includes representation from public, private and the third sector. Other stakeholders include community representation such as Local Area Groups and the Community Council for Devon.

Key stakeholders also include:

- Devon's SMES
- Devon's Communities
- Devon's Residents and electorate
- Elected members

These stakeholders have taken political position on issues where ICT provides a tool for achieving success in Productivity, carbon management, transport and social inclusion.

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts? For example: complaints, comments, research, outcomes of a scrutiny review. Please describe:

Information and Communication Technology - and in particular the backbone of the internet – broadband, provides increased opportunity for those that are well connected and competent in its exploitation of ICT. This strategy therefore sets out realistic targets and action to ensure that the threat of a **digital-divide** is minimised. It is therefore essential that all stakeholders are made aware of what is at stake in terms of productivity, social inclusion and the environment and that the actions are well resourced and managed to achieve success.

ICT is an enabler of achieving wealth and well being as long as there is adequate infrastructure, appreciation of ICT and the necessary skills in place. If these key issues are not addressed, ICT can compound the socio-economic factors of deprivation in the rural areas of Devon increasing the likelihood of failing to secure wealth and well being on an equal basis.

**B) Relevance – Note: if not relevant, do not complete this form**

Select **all** that apply:

		Scale of relevance	
7. Service or function that people use.	x	Low	Section C applies
8. Discretion is exercised, or potential for people to experience different outcomes or level of satisfaction.	x	Medium	
9. Employment policy – where discretion is not exercised.		Medium	Sections C & E apply
10. Employment policy – where discretion is exercised (e.g. recruitment or disciplinary process).		High	
11. Concerns at a local, regional or national level of discrimination/inequalities.		High	
12. Major change such as the closure, removal or transfer of a service/provision.		High	
13. Community and regeneration strategies, local area agreements and organisational or directorate/partnership strategies/plans.	x	High	

Other:

State why it is relevant:

How relevant (high, medium or low?):

Mark 'X' to confirm which strands are relevant to the review:

Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender (men and women)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race/ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trans-gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (state below)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any other (such as Human Rights, people on low incomes and specific sub-strands requiring particular focus such as Travellers and Gypsies, Deaf people):

People/groups unconnected, travellers, low income households

### C) Information

14. What information (monitoring or consultation data) have you got and what is it telling you? *Required where relevance is Medium or High.*

“Broadband Not spots” (data collected from individuals) illustrate significant “Not-spots” or no coverage in areas such as North Devon, Torridge and South Hams.

Point Topic and Sam Knows research illustrates the following:

- National average speed is 3.6Mbps
- 20% of South West residents get less than 2Mbps speed
- Between 40-80% of residents in Torridge get less than 2Mbps
- 20-40% of residents in West Devon, East Devon and North Devon receive less than 2Mbps

Pre credit-crunch, SWRDA reported that £3bn of productivity is at stake based on the exploitation of ICTs. For Devon, this means £.6bn over the next 5 -7 years. Whilst the current financial climate has reduced the potential for GVA uplift by exploiting ICTs, it is widely recognised that those who have adopted ICTs are likely to recover faster than those have not.

Devon Renaissance Business survey highlights that most rural business seek advice from unregulated ICT intermediaries such as accountants.

ICT Benchmarking research identifies that most (apart from the not-spots) ICTs are now in place for Devon’s SMES, but that exploitation is still lacking, particularly in the Food and Drink and Tourism sectors.

Plymouth University in conjunction with e-skills has identified the fragmented nature of people’s skills in ICT and that there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to developing ICT skills.

Empirical studies have focussed in particular on individuals aged between 45 and 65: they are more likely to possess less digital skills, which eventually can lead to an early exit from employment exacerbating financial pressures on the pension system. European research identified the following :

- 1) In the group aged 35-49 and possessing a low level of formal education, workers with no digital skills have a 5% higher probability of being unemployed than those possessing digital skills;

2) In the group aged 50-64 and possessing a high level of formal education workers with no digital skills have a 20 % higher probability of being unemployed than those possessing digital skills.

#### D) Assessment

15. Describe any NEGATIVE impacts (actual or potential):

Strand/community	Impact ( <i>how they may be affected</i> ). Include assessment of risk (likelihood and severity).
Food and drink and tourism sectors	These low adopting sectors are in danger of being left behind as technology progresses. The risk is significant as procurement procedures are increasingly dependant on ICT - which could exclude non adopters
Ageing population	<p>People without basic ICT skills, or lack awareness in the potential of ICT, are in danger of becoming isolated as more and more services are delivered on line.</p> <p>In addition, European research identifies that older people without ICT skills are more likely to have difficulty in securing employment (see information above).</p> <p>There is the risk of a skills drift as young people move out of the region.</p>
Child protection and vulnerable adults	There is a high risk of exploitation, miss-use of content, and financial exploitation as a result of user's fragmented knowledge ( eg young people are technologically savvy, but may be partaking in high-risk behaviour online). The strategy recommends adopting the Digital Mentors scheme, which will help raise awareness and user skills for managing the risks associated with ICT.

16. Describe any POSITIVE impacts:

Strand/community	Impact ( <i>how they may be affected</i> )
Food and Drink and Tourism sectors	The action plan sets out details for animating these weak sectors and supporting them with developing their skills for adopting and exploiting ICTs
Ageing population	The action plan recommends supporting a Digital Mentor Scheme and Community Reporter initiative to support all community sectors in their use of ICT.
Infrastructure	Encouraging investment in ICT infrastructure will provide a key for unlocking wealth and well being throughout Devon.
Flexible working	The provision of improved infrastructure information and advice in good practice for flexible working will assist in improved work-life balance.
Content	By implementing schemes such as Digital Mentors and

	Community Reporters communities will be able to manage online content for their own benefit
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17. Provide any information about NEUTRAL impacts that have been identified (there is neither a positive or negative impact):

Strand/community	Why there is 'no differential impact'
Sexual orientation	This strategy applies equally to all but is not specifically expected to impact on this group.
Religious belief	This strategy applies equally to all but is not specifically expected to impact on a particular group in this regard
Race/ ethnicity	As above

### E) Consultation

18. Did you carry out any consultations? *Required where relevance is High.*

YES.

19. Who was consulted? Include your findings in 15, 16 and 17 above.

Members of the Devon Economic Partnership, officers of the Community Council for Devon and representatives of the third sector.

Three consultation events were carried out in 2008.

The ICT strategy was presented in its draft form to the DMB and DEP for consultation.

20. Describe other research, studies or information used to assist with the assessment and include your findings above:

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### F) Conclusions

	Action/objective/target OR Justification	Resources required	Timescale	I/R/S/O
a)	Ensure that the technology options analysis includes details about technological solutions for people with disabilities.	None	2009/2010	I
b)	Ensure that Digital Mentors and Community Mentors are aware and trained to fulfil their DDA responsibilities			I
c)	Ensure all programmed training is compliant with DDA responsibilities			I

