

CABINET

Report Title	Digital and TEC (technology enabled care) Strategy				
Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 9 April 2025				
Report Author	Martin Furber				
Lead Officer	Director Adult Social Care				
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health & Well-being				
Why is this a key decision?	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">1. Expenditure over £1 Million+</td> <td style="text-align: right;">no</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards</td> <td style="text-align: right;">yes</td> </tr> </table>	1. Expenditure over £1 Million+	no	2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	yes
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2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	yes				
Wards Affected	(All Wards);				
Is the report urgent?	Yes				
Reasons for urgency (only where applicable)	The strategy is ready for full implementation. Delays to sign off has the potential for the strategy not to reach its full potential.				
Appendices (if any)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital and Technology Enabled Care Strategy 2024 - 2028 2. EQiA 				

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Digital and Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Strategy for Adult Social Care and partners, covering 2024 to 2028.
- 1.2 The strategy outlines plan to integrate digital and TEC solutions into care pathways to enhance efficiency, improve quality, and empower residents to live independently.
- 1.3 The strategy aligns with Sandwell's Vision 2030 and the "What Good Looks Like" (WGLL) framework to create a digitally inclusive and accessible care model. The Cabinet is asked to approve the strategy and its implementation plan to enhance care services through technology-driven innovation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Cabinet approve the Digital and Technology Enabled Care Strategy 2024 – 2028 as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That in connection with 2.1 above, to authorise the Director of Adult Social Care to ensure the implementation of the Strategy across adult social care services with a coordinated approach to embedding technology in adult social care and its partners, including the including procurement and award of contracts and partnership agreements.
- 2.3 That the Director of Adult Social Care be authorised to establish a governance framework to ensure accountability and strategic oversight of Technology Enabled Care adoption.
- 2.4 That approval is given to the allocation of funding to support digital inclusion, Technology Enabled Care deployment, and workforce training.

3. Proposals – Reasons for the recommendations

- 3.1 The strategy provides a structured approach to integrating technology into care pathways to improve efficiency, enhance service quality, and support independent living, for longer, for residents.

3.2 Background and Drivers

- 3.3 The demand for adult social care is increasing due to an ageing population and resource constraints. TEC provides an opportunity to improve care outcomes while reducing pressure on frontline services.

Policy Outcomes and Objectives

The strategy delivers:

3. Increased independent living through remote monitoring and assistive technology.
4. Greater efficiency and cost savings in adult social care operations.
5. Improved collaboration across health and social care sectors.
6. Digital inclusion initiatives to reduce inequalities.
7. A sustainable approach to care that aligns with climate goals.

Proposals and Delivery

- The TEC implementation roadmap (2024-2028) includes:

- Embedding TEC in 70% of care packages by 2028.
- Training workforce and creating TEC Champions.
- Rolling out remote monitoring, self-referral tools, and telecare solutions.
- Expanding digital literacy programs for residents.
- Establishing a TEC governance committee.

Costs & Savings

- TEC adoption has the potential to generate savings of approximately £1.38 million p.a. if implemented effectively.
- Estimated savings of £380,000 per 10% increase in TEC adoption.
- The savings can be impacted by the cost of any TEC or digital solutions that we may implement. It is far too early to estimate those costings.
- Digital and TEC elements that we may test and learn from, haven't been identified as yet. When they are, a process for understanding their effectiveness, cost and benefits will be analysed on a case by case basis.
- Government have indicated that support for the implementation of Digital and TEC will be forthcoming – but as yet we don't have an indication of what that might be
- Workforce efficiencies by reducing in-person care visits and administrative tasks.

4 Alternative Options Considered

Alternative options were assessed to determine the most effective approach, with full TEC adoption providing the highest efficiency, cost savings, and quality improvements.

- 4.1 **Do nothing:** This would result in continued inefficiencies, higher costs, and missed opportunities to modernise care services.

- 4.2 **Partial TEC implementation:** While beneficial, a fragmented approach would fail to achieve full efficiency gains and resident empowerment.
- 4.3 **Full TEC adoption (recommended):** A comprehensive approach ensures systematic integration, cost-effectiveness, and improved care quality.

Consultation

The Strategy has been developed through a strong partnership approach, engaging with staff, residents, care providers, NHS organisations, and technology providers to ensure collaborative and inclusive implementation

5.1 The strategy has been developed in collaboration with:

- Residents and service users (via co-production sessions)
- Care providers and workforce representatives
- Health and social care partners, including NHS organisations
- Technology providers and digital inclusion experts

6. Financial Implications

The funding requirements align with Sandwell Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Investment in TEC is expected to generate long-term savings through reduced hospital admissions and streamlined care pathways.

Funding sources include local government grants, private sector partnerships, and pooled funding models.

7. Legal and Governance Implications

- 7.1 The implementation of TEC complies with the Care Act 2014 and Health and Social Care Act 2022.

- Data protection measures will align with UK GDPR and information governance standards.

8. A TEC Leadership Committee will oversee implementation, ensuring accountability and alignment with the Sandwell Co-Production Charter **Risks**.

- Digital inclusion – Digital literacy training, accessible technology, and targeted resident support programmes
- Workforce resistance – TEC Champions and ongoing professional development programs
- Financial sustainability – multi-year funding strategy, cost benefits analysis, cost-sharing with partners, and phased implementation
- Data Security Risks – Compliance with GDPR and cybersecurity measures,
- Inoperability Issues – Collaboration with NHS and technology providers for systems integrations

9. **Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)**

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed to ensure TEC solutions are accessible to all residents, including those with disabilities and limited digital skills.

The strategy includes inclusive design principles, ensuring TEC solutions are user-friendly and widely available.

10. **Other Relevant Implications**

- ICT/Digital Implications: The rollout will involve integration with existing council and NHS systems.
- Procurement Implications: Strategic partnerships with technology providers will be established to ensure cost-effective solutions.
- Climate Change Impact: Reduction in travel-related emissions through remote care solutions.
- Health and Wellbeing: Improved health outcomes by enhancing preventive care and reducing hospital visits.

11. **Background Documents**

- Sandwell Vision 2030
- What Good Looks Like (WGLL) Framework
- Sandwell Digital Inclusion Strategy
- TEC Business Cases (Remote Monitoring, Telecare, Digital Hubs)
- EQiA
- Digital and TEC Strategy supplementary documents
- Sandwell co-production charter

12. How does this deliver the objectives of the Strategic Themes?

- Growing up in Sandwell
- Living in Sandwell
- Healthy in Sandwell
- Thriving Economy in Sandwell
- One Council One Team Approach.

12.1 Healthy in Sandwell: TEC enhances preventive care, reduces hospital readmissions, and improves health outcomes.

Living in Sandwell: The strategy supports independent living and reduces reliance on traditional care models.

Thriving Economy in Sandwell: Digital inclusion and workforce training contribute to local skills development and employment opportunities.