



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

### SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS REPORT JULY – DECEMBER 2010

#### **KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

To consider the report and the matters to which the Chief Executive draws attention.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

##### **Introduction**

1. This is the third of my six-monthly reports to Members. The previous two were specific responses to the issues raised in my predecessor's parting report. The intention was to provide Members with an assessment of the progress we were making against the themes in that report. We have moved a long way since July 2009 and it is timely for this report to reflect that development. I have also listened carefully to the feedback from Members on my previous reports and have altered the format in response to that. This report is intended as an overview of progress over the past six months and a look forward to the challenges ahead.
2. This report begins with an overview and is then structured around our corporate objectives as set out in the *Making a difference Corporate Strategy 2010*. That strategy says "**our aim is to become a world class Council and improve outcomes for our residents and businesses. Our strategy is to provide excellent value for money services with highly skilled staff and low costs**".
3. The Strategy identifies four key objectives that guide the whole Council (see below). We report progress on delivery against them quarterly to the Cabinet. Here I will go into more detail on key areas.

<b>Residents</b> To provide excellent value for money	<b>Costs</b> To have costs as low as the most efficient of other Councils
<b>Staff</b> To have highly skilled people who are proud to work for SCC	<b>Performance</b> To outperform other Councils

## Overview

4. It has been a tough and demanding period and I would like to acknowledge immediately the contribution of colleagues across the Council who have worked very hard to improve services and reduce costs. In a period of uncertainty and difficult change colleagues have remained focussed on improving services to make a difference for residents.
5. I am also grateful for the support of Members in continuing to challenge the Council to improve its performance. This is particularly noticeable in the accountability meetings, Public Value Reviews and Select Committees.
6. **Over the past six months we have continued to make strong progress. I believe we are probably one of the most improved Councils in the country. There is no question that we are a much more effective and efficient organisation than we were in July 2009.**
7. However, despite that very significant improvement in performance our position is still fragile. As indeed it is for other high performing Councils. This is due to the sheer scale of the challenges facing us and in particular the holy grail of trying to continue to improve services and outcomes whilst using fewer resources.
8. It is apparent that elsewhere Councils are abandoning any notion of “more for less” and are simply adopting a “less for less” strategy as they reduce service standards. Even though we face severe demographic pressures our Public Value Review process has so far enabled us to identify genuine efficiencies so that we have been reducing costs while raising quality. The extent to which we can continue to do that is the test of whether we can become the best Council in the country.
9. This will depend fundamentally on the passion, commitment and creativity of our staff. I hope that Members will continue to support us in focussing on creating an organisation and environment where each member of staff is enabled to take responsibility for optimising their contribution to what we are trying to achieve.
10. We achieved a major milestone on our improvement journey during this period when both Adult Social Care services and Children, Schools and Families services were judged to be performing well by external regulators<sup>1</sup>. For those who are aware of how critical these regulators are becoming of such services elsewhere the achievement is all the more remarkable.
11. Since July we have focussed our efforts on six interconnecting themes:
  - a) continuing to identify ways to **reduce costs**;
  - b) testing proposed changes for **fairness** and the **protection of the most vulnerable residents** we are here to serve;
  - c) **continuing to improve the equipment and development of our staff** to enable them to become more productive;
  - d) **engaging with the new coalition government** and seeking ways for Surrey to benefit from new policy directions;
  - e) trying to identify ways in which we can **support economic recovery**.
  - f) **working in partnership with other Councils** through “Surrey First” and “SE7” developments.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the Children, Schools and Families annual assessment judgement is provisional and subject to final confirmation and publication by Ofsted on 9 December 2010

12. I anticipate that these will continue to be the major themes for us over the next year. We have also started to respond to the implications of the *Health White Paper*. The responsibilities and opportunities that changes in the NHS bring will become a dominant theme over the next two years. We will approach this in the same way that we have other partnership work namely a pragmatic willingness to consider anything that reduces waste and duplication and/or provides better value for residents.
13. During the next year all public service organisations will have to learn to stop being precious about organisational boundaries and protecting their own perceived self interest. The public will expect us to **focus ruthlessly on what's best to reduce cost, increase quality and improve impact**. That is what we will do and we will work tirelessly to support others to do the same.
14. The improvements we have made should be recognised and celebrated, but as ever there is much more to do. There are huge challenges ahead, and the next year will be especially tough when the Spending Review kicks in and our budgets are significantly reduced. Meanwhile demand for services continues to increase and Surrey's residents continue, rightly, to expect strong value for money.
15. There are significant opportunities ahead that we need to grasp as the Government passes greater responsibility to Councils. Nevertheless, it's going to be a tough 12 months. The Spending Review asks a lot of Councils and it asks us to do it quickly. We have to make our most significant contribution to rebalancing the public finances in the next two years while the work on longer term welfare changes is put in place. This will be difficult as demand for our services continues to increase and expectations continue to grow about quality of service.
16. Over the past 18 months we have established an approach and developed the tools that can enable us to get through this. The key lesson I have re-learned over the past six months is that when we all (Members and staff) stay focussed on what matters and think about how we can work more smartly with partners we can tackle the toughest things. When we get distracted and sidetracked it is much more of a struggle.
17. We have established a "business as usual" model that can see us through what is the toughest challenge local government has faced for more than 60 years. It is working. We have to stick with it.
18. I will now look in more detail at each of the four Corporate Strategy objectives in turn drawing on the [Quarter 2 scorecard](#) that went to the Cabinet on 26 October 2010<sup>2</sup> and assessing our progress:
  - Residents - pages 4-12
  - Costs - pages 12-15
  - Staff - pages 15-18
  - Performance - pages 18-23

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<sup>2</sup> The Quarter 3 report will go to the Cabinet on 25 January 2011.

## **CORPORATE OBJECTIVE: RESIDENTS**

*Objective: To provide excellent value for money*

*Measured by – the majority of residents consider us to be good value for money*

**Q2 result – 42% against a 2010/11 target of 42.6%<sup>3</sup>**

(2009/10 baseline of 34%)

19. This section sets out the progress we have made on some issues of key concern to our residents: the economy; dealing with severe winter weather; the county's roads; and residents' overall customer experience. It sets out how we are collaborating with partners to improve outcomes and provide value for money. It also considers the changing relationship with residents and businesses as we move increasingly to extend personal responsibility and local decision-making.

### **The economy**

20. The Council has remained focused on supporting Surrey's residents and businesses through the current economic downturn and strengthening prospects for strong future growth. Through the summer the Leader worked with the Chair of the Surrey Economic Partnership and a range of business stakeholders to orchestrate a positive, business led response to the Government's plans to replace Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).
21. The resulting bid to form a **Surrey LEP "Surrey Connects"** has been given an "amber light" from the Government, providing an opportunity to develop our plan in further discussion with partners. However, regardless of the exact form of governance that is established, the bid process - alongside the recently completed and published local economic assessment of the county – has helped to clarify how we can support and encourage strong business growth in Surrey and remain a powerhouse of the UK economy. In summary, it confirmed that we are already on the right track and need to continue to drive economic success in three main areas:
- infrastructure projects such as transport and super fast broadband;
  - providing support for new business start ups and helping existing businesses reach their full potential; and
  - working to ensure the workforce continues to have the right skills base.
22. Some good progress is already being made in these areas. For example, a joint project is underway to deliver a **super fast broadband** infrastructure to those areas of Surrey that are not likely to be reached by the market. We are working with infrastructure providers, communications technology companies, and partners to develop a model for infrastructure roll out by June 2011.

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<sup>3</sup> Targets for 2010/11 are set as milestones en route to more stretching world class levels of performance in future years

23. The next **Surrey Transport Plan** is being prepared ready for publication in April 2011. It will set out the County Council's highway and transport strategy and implementation plans. It is an important document to attract funding from government, developers, and other sources. In September the Government announced plans for a new Local Sustainable Transport Fund and we will be preparing funding bids to develop transport packages.
24. In recent months the focus of the **Surrey Infrastructure Capacity Project** – which has gained national recognition - has shifted from strategic to local infrastructure needs required to manage future growth. The findings of the project so far have underpinned the development of a draft interim Surrey Local Investment Plan that focuses on the delivery of affordable housing over the next three to five years.
25. The grant funding secured by the Surrey Economic Partnership in the summer to establish a **Surrey Future Jobs Fund** has been put to effective use, enabling to date an extra 265 young people who have been out of work for a year to secure employment in Surrey. The work lasts for six months and gives young people the skills to find a permanent position or continue in their current role. Surrey County Council, waste company SITA, Woking YMCA and the Surrey Care Trust are among those providing jobs.
26. Joint work on **teenage homelessness** with Surrey's District and Borough Councils is another example of how we have supported vulnerable residents through difficult times.

#### **Addressing teenage homelessness**

In September 2009 the County Council and all 11 Borough and District Councils agreed a protocol on joint working with young people aged 16 and 17 at risk of becoming homeless. The protocol includes joint social care and housing assessment arrangements for young people who present themselves as being homeless and includes joint panels to help those young people who need access to appropriate supported housing rather than unsuitable B&B accommodation. In the first two joint panel meetings 22 young people were re-housed away from B&B accommodation.

A joint Young People's Housing Plan includes initiatives on preventing homelessness and improving the supply of emergency and supported housing for young homeless people.

27. Activity to ensure that Surrey maximises economic benefits from the **2012 Olympics** has been stepped up in the last six months. Efforts to encourage Olympic teams to base themselves in Surrey and bring benefits to our local economy have helped secure an agreement with the Antigua and Barbuda team for use of the Surrey Sports Park and Guildford Spectrum. A dozen other nations have visited Surrey facilities and talks are ongoing. Work is also underway to secure Olympic events to take place in the county. We are optimistic that this work will be successful.
28. Work with organisations that **support Surrey businesses** has helped 159 Surrey businesses secure contracts related to the Games, worth millions of pounds to the local economy. This represents more contracts than any other local authority in the South East, and almost 25% of all Olympic contracts awarded to companies in the region.

29. We are also now working to ensure there is a **lasting and sustainable 2012 legacy** for Surrey. For example, an Olympic / Paralympic style School Games will be launched in 2011, and will align with a national competition that is due to take place from 2012. This annual county festival of sport will be a fitting legacy for young people, which will benefit the county for many years after the Games themselves.

### Winter preparations

30. My last report reflected on the disruption at the start of the year caused by the worst snow in the region for 30 years. The Council and partners responded well given the circumstances but there were things that could have been done better and we have taken action as a result.
31. Following excellent scrutiny work by the Transportation and Safer and Stronger Select Committees and Member task groups, in September the Cabinet agreed to put an extra £1m into the **highways winter maintenance funds**, upping the budget by two thirds to £2.5m. Among other things this has enabled the Council to order 13,000 tonnes of salt for the winter - 50% more than last year. This will help to keep roads moving during poor weather, keeping our economy moving, and ensuring that vital services for vulnerable people are sustained.
32. The preparations are not just about roads. All services, including schools, libraries, social care and the fire service, have improved plans so we work better together with partners. **Information for residents has been improved** and they are being encouraged to be prepared so they can help themselves and us by clearing snow from properties and by checking on elderly and vulnerable neighbours during cold winter weather. The help of 27 extra farmers with ploughs has been enlisted to bring the total to 35, while the support of the South East 4x4 Club, whose 90 volunteers use their vehicles to help people get around in harsh weather, has been secured together with support from other organisations including the Salvation Army.

### Highways

33. The condition of our highways remains a major concern for residents and the Council has invested in-year with **£1m of additional funding for Local Committees** to fund local highways improvements.
34. An important milestone was reached on 30 November when the Cabinet agreed the **new contract for the maintenance of Surrey's highways**. This will deliver savings and a wide range of quality improvements including:
- potholes that meet our maintenance criteria being permanently fixed within 28 days;
  - a new winter gritting vehicle fleet;
  - mobile technology to improve performance; and
  - an easy to use website to allow residents to log and track enquiries.
35. The new highways contract builds on hard work over the past two years that made us three times more productive at filling potholes, reduced costs per km for resurfacing and increased customer responses from 10% to 85% on time. However, the fact remains that residents are dissatisfied with the quality of highways and we have more to do.

36. In July, the Leader tabled a motion at the Local Government Association annual meeting calling for the Government to provide the funding required so we can properly address road quality, rather than simply repairing sub standard surfaces year after year. We will continue to press for this, but with national finances under pressure, the onus is on us to work with partners - such as the SE7 - and residents to find smarter and more sustainable solutions.

### **Customer service**

37. Further improvements have been made to our service for residents. As the first point of contact for the majority of Surrey's residents wishing to use Council services, the **Contact Centre and website** are key to the Council's operation and reputation.
38. Customer satisfaction with the Contact Centre is 95% for the year-to-date and in September 2010 it was awarded second place in the prestigious European Call Centre Awards - the highest ranked public sector entrant. After a six-month trial the Council has also launched its inbound **text messaging service** meaning that residents can contact the Council and have their queries answered by the Contact Centre by text.
39. **Complaints performance** (measured by the proportion of complaints resolved within agreed timescales) remains below target, at 83% against a target of 90% for 2010/11. In a number of services the target is being exceeded, but improvement is needed, especially in the Adult Social Care and Children, Schools and Families Directorates. These Directorates have taken ownership of the issues and are working hard to make the necessary improvements.
40. A **Tell Us Once** project with the Department of Work and Pensions and Surrey's District and Borough Councils will implement from May 2011 the first phase of an Information Technology solution to remove the need for residents to inform multiple agencies of changes to their personal circumstances. It will start with the service to register deaths and be expanded to the birth registration service. It will provide a significant improvement in service to residents at difficult times in their lives while reducing our costs. Further opportunities will be explored in the future.
41. The Council **website** continues to outperform most other local authorities with a customer satisfaction level of 82%, nearly 20% higher than the national average. Visitor numbers have continued to rise steeply with an expected annual figure of over 7m visits being forecast, up 23% on last year.

### **Collaboration**

42. We have accelerated work with partners to ensure our efforts are joined up and provide excellent value for money, in particular through the Surrey First project and the SE7 consortium of seven major Councils in the region.
43. Surrey County Council, the 11 District and Borough Councils and Surrey Police have formed a **Surrey First Joint Committee**. The committee oversees the delivery of joint working in Surrey, particularly in relation to five core work streams of Human Resources, Asset Management, Information Technology, Waste Management and Joint Procurement. The committee will shortly be considering for approval the recommendations and activities that will contribute to delivering World Class Waste Solutions (see below) and work on the Surrey Public Sector Estates Review.

### **World Class Waste Solutions**

The County Council has taken a strategic lead in agreeing a new waste management approach for Surrey, called World Class Waste Solutions. All 12 Surrey local authorities have joined together through the Surrey Waste Partnership. Following comprehensive research an assessment of performance improvement and cost saving opportunities will be presented to the Surrey First Joint Committee in December 2010.

Following the implementation during 2011 of the new model for waste management, Surrey will be an example of best practice, achieving world-class targets and sustainable efficiency savings.

A key element of the “World Class Waste Solutions” is an Eco Park, which will be the first of its kind in the country. The Eco Park will be a cutting edge recycling and energy centre, which will include both gasification and anaerobic digestion technologies alongside recycling, reuse and education facilities. It will reduce the carbon impact and cost less than previous solutions, making it the best value option for taxpayers.

44. The **Surrey Public Sector Estates Review** has brought together partners in Surrey including the 12 local authorities, Surrey Police, Central Government and Surrey NHS. All current properties have been mapped and a property analysis toolkit has been developed to analyse this information and identify opportunities to drive out efficiencies and improve service integration. To date seven opportunities workshops have been held with partners. The Surrey First Joint Committee will consider an outline business case in December. The approach taken on this project has been commended by the Office for Government Commerce and is set to be replicated by other local authorities in the South East.
45. As part of the **Making A Difference** programme and a component of the Estates Review, we are discussing with our borough and district partners how we can effectively co-locate services to improve how we offer public services in communities. For example, offering a more integrated adult care service to the public. Discussions are going well with nine of our partner councils and this could mean over 400 staff being co-located with them.
46. There are close links between Surrey First projects and workstreams being progressed through the **SE7 regional collaboration**. Work is underway through Surrey First to agree and implement a **Joint IMT Strategy**, and a plan for a **Surrey Public Service Network and Shared Data Centre**. Through the SE7 this work has been extended to the regional level so opportunities to exploit collective IMT purchasing power can be identified and used to drive down costs. We have also started exploring options for collaboration with some **London Boroughs**.
47. Over the past six months the Corporate Leadership Team has continued to visit one **District or Borough** each month to hold joint meetings, discussing the challenges and opportunities we each face. The purpose of these meetings is to develop agreements around areas of joint working. This approach to partnership working has been very well received by our colleagues in Districts and Boroughs and has helped progress some of Surrey’s key strategic projects. Among other positive outcomes, the joint meetings have supported discussions on how on-street parking is managed across the county.



48. We continue to invest time in forging ever-stronger relationships with our NHS partners in **health services**. The NHS economy in Surrey is facing severe financial pressures and we need to work with them to address this.
49. Effective relations with the NHS are particularly crucial in view of the recent **NHS White Paper**, which presents huge opportunities for local authorities to play a more substantive and leading role in public health. The Cabinet has recently adopted a Section 75 agreement with Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to enable health staff to undertake carers' assessments. Allowing appropriately qualified health staff to undertake these assessments along with social care staff will help the Council ensure carers' assessments are consistently undertaken. This will also help ensure that carers' needs are identified and appropriate support offered.
50. There are also some excellent examples later in this report of how new **joint approaches to commissioning** and providing services have already been put in place.

### Localism

51. Although work is underway we have made much slower progress than I would have liked to advance localism in Surrey. Work with partners will be accelerated over the next six months to aim to become leading edge on this agenda that would align with the Government's thinking on the **Big Society**. The Surrey Strategic Partnership conference on 22 November focussed on developing what the Big Society means for Surrey.
52. Over the coming months **Surrey-wide partnership structures** and working arrangements will be simplified and refocused. The intention is that strategic partnership work will focus on those complex and/or large-scale issues that require a Surrey-wide multi-agency approach to solve problems and deliver improvements.
53. The Surrey Strategic Partnership has also agreed some high-level principles for developing more **streamlined local decision-making** structures. The intention is that the **Community Budgets pilots** underway in Woking and Mole Valley will lead the way and learning from these will be taken into other areas of the county to ensure decision-making and budgets are devolved and joined up at the local level wherever practical and appropriate.
54. At the neighbourhood level, work in the four **Priority Places** of Merstham, Stanwell, Sheerwater and Maybury and Westborough continues with organisations and services aligning priorities and budgets to deliver shared outcomes. Looking forward, **single community budgets** for identified areas offer a significant opportunity to shape spend around specific local needs to optimise impact.
55. The Council has continued to work in collaboration with the **Voluntary, Community and Faith sector** (VCFS), with a particular focus on managing the impact of savings on the sector at a time when its role is ever more crucial to local communities. The VCFS Assembly has established a Transition Group to support groups affected by changes to funding or commissioning, and as part of this we have we have established increased support and dialogue with the sector. In August we agreed a new Framework for working with the sector. The framework has also been developed for adoption by the Surrey Strategic Partnership.

56. In October we completed a public consultation on our revised **Single Equality Scheme 2010-14**. The Scheme - developed with local public, voluntary, community and private sector leaders - sets out our commitment to deliver fair and accessible services for all Surrey communities. It is now being updated to take account of the consultation feedback and a revised scheme will be launched early in 2011.
57. The Drive SMART initiative is an excellent example that demonstrates how more local targeted approaches that actively involve communities can improve outcomes.

#### **Drive SMART**

In response to anti-social driving being highlighted as a major concern by Surrey residents, Surrey County Council and Surrey Police have run a successful Drive SMART initiative over the last year. The activity was deliberately designed to be sympathetic to both the needs of drivers and local communities impacted by anti-social driving.

As well as using publicity to communicate key messages, local residents have been encouraged to get involved in Community and School Speedwatch Schemes. Over the year a further 25 Speedwatch Schemes were added to the 75 already in place and 42 more are planned for 2011.

The activity has contributed to wider efforts to improve road safety. In the last year there were 80 fewer people killed or seriously injured on Surrey's roads. As well as improving public attitudes towards safety and anti-social driving, there has also been a local focus on the issue. Each Borough and District Council now has a problem profile for antisocial driving, drawn from local knowledge and public consultation, which can be used to use to target activity. In light of its success the Cabinet has agreed that the initiative should continue into 2011/12.

58. As part of the Council's work on **sustainability and climate change**, a £50k Climate Change Fund was made available in 2010/11 and has been distributed to those Local Committees that made successful bids. The objective is to support local actions to raise awareness and develop local solutions for tackling climate change and improving local resilience. Successful projects to date have included the creation of a community orchard and allotment in the Preston area of Reigate and Banstead.
59. The Council has committed to using **wood fuel** as a preferred choice of heating fuel. Surrey is the most wooded county in England and wood is a sustainable crop with immense potential. So, our Wood Fuel policy makes good sense in terms of using local resources and is an example of our wider recognition of the potential environmental and financial benefits of renewable energy. A pilot scheme is currently underway with the installation of a wood fuel boiler at the High Ashurst Centre, Dorking.

#### **Engagement and transparency**

60. The Council has continued to strengthen its engagement with residents and its commitment to transparent decision-making. The views of residents are vital given the tough decisions that need to be made to manage reduced budgets. The Have Your Say "Question Time" style events from the first half of the year have been incorporated into a wider **Have Your Say Campaign**, which was launched in October. We secured funding from IBM to support this programme.

### **Have Your Say campaign**

Surrey's public sector organisations have teamed up on this activity to invite residents to have a say and help shape the delivery of different, but better, services that offer value for money.

There is a dedicated Have Your Say website - with discussion threads, and views can be posted, emailed or phoned in. Residents are also being encouraged to talk to their local councillor or download an online toolkit to host their own discussions. On 18 November a Have Your Say public debate was held featuring a panel of key public, voluntary and business sector representatives.

In the first three weeks the Have Your Say website attracted approximately 2,000 visitors.

61. In November the Council launched the **You Choose** online budget calculator tool which allows residents to model different savings scenarios by adjusting spending on services, giving views on specific saving options, and indicating where there may be options to generate income. The tool automatically shows some of the potential consequences of suggested changes on services and how much each choice would save the Council. Residents can submit their proposals and these can be considered by Members before the Council decides on future budgets.
62. Other engagement and transparency developments include **publishing all spend** over £500 on the Council's website, **webcasting** Council, Cabinet, and planning meetings, and the growing use of the Council's **e-petitions tool**. We are exploring the benefits of using social media such as twitter and discussion forums. This will increase in coming months.
63. A number of events were held during **European Local Democracy Week** in October to encourage greater public participation in the Council's work. A Marketing Challenge event at County Hall on 14 October saw teams of pupils from eight Surrey schools competing to present their ideas on how to engage more young people in local democracy. On the following day there was a Councillor Question Time session, with members of staff invited to pose questions to a panel of Members from each of the County Council's political groups. The event was well received, with staff and Members keen to hold a repeat event elsewhere in the county.

### **Championing Surrey's interests**

64. Over the last six months we have strengthened our voice and influence at a regional and national level to champion Surrey's interests. A **briefing for Surrey MPs** on key local authority issues was held in September at County Hall. Transport Secretary, Philip Hammond, Prisons Minister Crispin Blunt, Employment Minister, Chris Grayling and Esher and Walton MP Dominic Raab discussed, among other issues, how public sector bodies are working together to help tackle the national public debt.
65. In September the Leader took up an invitation from the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, to sit on the **Ministerial Advisory Group for Education and Children's Services**.
  1. The Leader also sits on the **Local Government Association's Improvement Programme Board**, and is chair of the **South East Strategic Leaders (SESL)** group.

67. The Department for Transport (DfT) has set up a **national highway maintenance programme** strongly influenced by the Surrey County Council led proposals for the SE7 Highways Alliance. Recognising this, the DfT have asked Jason Russell (Head of Change and Performance in the Environment and Infrastructure Directorate) who has led the SE7 work to chair the Business Improvement workstream of the national programme and to sit on the programme board.

#### **CORPORATE OBJECTIVE: COSTS**

*Objective: To have costs as low as the most efficient of other Councils  
Measured by – ranked net expenditure by head of population*

**Q2 result – 11<sup>th</sup> best out of 27 Counties against target of 12th for 2010/11**  
(2009/10 baseline of 13<sup>th</sup> out of 27)

68. The implications of the **Spending Review** are every bit as tough as we thought they would be. Although the Review covers a four-year period, most of the impact for us will be in the first of those years. We have a very tough financial year ahead.
69. It is good news that most grants will no longer be ring fenced from April 2011. This means the Council will have **increased local flexibility** to decide what it spends these resources on. However, the removal of ring fencing and consolidation of grant funding into the main single formula grant does present challenges.
70. For Surrey County Council it means over £40m of area based and specific grants will be rolled into our overall formula grant. While specific grants tend to be calculated based on the pockets of high need in the county, the formula grant is distributed according to a complex averaging of “need factors” which tends to mean our pockets of high need do not get recognised. In addition, the distribution methodology assumes that there is a relatively high ability to raise income through council tax as an alternative to needing formula grant. So, we **continue to lobby central government** making the case for Surrey.
71. There is also a concern that the headline 28% reduction in funding to councils might be more severe for authorities such as Surrey. A 28% reduction in grant nationally equates to an average 15% reduction in gross spending. For Surrey a 28% reduction in grant would be around £110m. However if the reduction were made against gross spending then a 15% reduction in spending would be around £150m. As more grants are absorbed in to the formula grant we expect the 'equal cut in budget effect' to become more pronounced and therefore a reduction in grant of up to £150 over four years is a real possibility.
72. In our **Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2010-14** we had been working towards total savings of £180m over four years. Now, we are more likely to be looking at making savings of at least £250m by 2015. So we were right to prepare and start to make changes in the way we have.
73. We began an **enhanced planning process** for developing our new Medium Term Financial Plan 2011-15 in May. Based on feedback from the previous year the process was improved to join up more closely with partners, involve stakeholders

earlier, better engage with the public and include scenario planning for different funding outcomes and spending needs.

74. The precise implications of the Spending Review will not be known until the **Local Government Financial Settlement** is provisionally announced in December and then confirmed in January 2011. Our final Medium-Term Financial Plan 2011-15 will be presented to the Council on 8 February.
75. This makes delivery of our **2010/11 savings** even more crucial and we are on track to deliver £62m efficiency savings against the £60m targeted, in addition to the extra £6m in-year cuts that followed the Coalition Government's emergency budget in June. Back office costs have been reduced by 10%, driven by the need to get value for every penny we spend and minimise the impact on frontline services. The tools and approaches we have developed to support robust financial management and deliver savings are working well and will help us tackle future challenges.
76. The **Fit for the Future Change Programme** continues to monitor overall progress on delivery of efficiencies and change across the Council and to manage and mitigate risks to delivery. Progress is monitored monthly by the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure that resources are prioritised and activities are well planned going forward. This is underpinned by robust programme assurance and reporting processes which ensure a coordinated approach to projects and communications.
77. **Budget monitoring** is now timelier, with process improvements enabling the latest budget monitoring information to be reported publicly to the Cabinet within less than one month of the end of the period, rather than the two months that it used to take.
78. Our more strategic approach to investment, contracts and commissioning is delivering better value for money. The **Investment Panel** is fully established in its role of scrutinising, reviewing, and approving (or rejecting) business cases for capital schemes and invest to save proposals.
79. The **Procurement team** is continuing to work closely with Services, building on the £10m it saved in 2009/10 to deliver a minimum target of £17.5m in cashable savings this financial year. To date £15m has been achieved. This programme of work includes projects with the Adult Social Care Directorate to manage a 0% inflation increase across a variety of care package contracts that has delivered a £3.2m saving to date and a review of high cost placements that is targeted to save a further £1.3m. In addition, work is underway to target the Council's key suppliers by spend to identify opportunities for savings within our existing long-term contracts.
80. In September our **streetlight replacement scheme** won the best public procurement category in the CIPS Supply Management Awards. Elsewhere our procurement and finance teams negotiated a five-year contract for all our major insurance policies that will save £4m compared to the last contract.

### Procurement recognised as 'best' in the public sector

In September our streetlight replacement scheme won the best public procurement category in the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Management Awards.

Our agreement with the Skanska Laing consortium will see all of the county's 89,000 streetlights replaced or upgraded, with the latest lighting and dimming technology, in the biggest project of its kind seen in Britain. The contract began on 1 March 2010 and more than 3,000 outstanding faults have already been repaired and in excess of 7,000 streetlights installed.

The project also delivers a substantial benefit to our carbon footprint by reducing carbon emissions by more than 60,000 tonnes, saving taxpayers an estimated £12m in energy bills over the lifetime of the contract.

The CIPS Judging Panel concluded "*the whole cost of the project was less than the current maintenance bill. There are huge benefits for stakeholders and it's good for the prevention of crime and disorder*".

81. The Council's approach to **commissioning**<sup>4</sup> is developing well, ensuring a consistent approach to the way services are procured and commissioned. A good example is the Adult Social Care **HIV/AIDS Joint Commissioning Strategy** with NHS Surrey. Following a successful commissioning and procurement exercise, a new service was implemented from 1 September 2010. A single provider replaced four separate contracts and services are now aligned to the NHS clinics and the new Adult Social Care geographic areas.
82. Another example is the Council and NHS Surrey jointly commissioning a range of **integrated care and health services for children and young people**. By the New Year we expect to have a joint commissioning team between the Council and PCT in place.
83. We are taking a more strategic approach to **income generation** in the MTFP (2011-2015), by enhancing our database of fees and charges, reviewing our policies and governance, and developing alternative income streams. The existing MTFP 2010-14 already includes proposals to increase income generation in the period by £1.5m, and a further £5.5m of potential additional income has now been identified through budget scenario planning exercises. The **Income Strategy** is scheduled to be presented to the Cabinet in December 2010 as part of Medium-Term Financial Plan / budget progress update.
84. We are tackling **agency and overtime costs** where they add unnecessary costs, but are retaining the flexibility to use them where they meet genuine need. Agency costs of £12.3m for a rolling 12 months to the end of September are down by £2.95m compared to the 12 months to the end of March 2010. The 2009/10 10% reduction target that was agreed during the Recruitment Public Value Review is currently on course. Overtime costs are at £9.8m for the 12 months to the end of September 2010 so there is more to do to reach our stretch target to reduce this to £7.5m per annum.

<sup>4</sup> Commissioning is the process of analysing and prioritising needs, specifying, designing and planning services, procuring and delivering these services, and an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluating the outcomes to ensure they meet the needs of the customers and communities we serve.

85. Through the **Making a Difference programme** staff have risen to the challenge of suggesting how we can work smarter and be more efficient (see below). The Corporate Leadership Team has taken some difficult but informed decisions, such as deciding to leave offices in Leatherhead (A01) and Guildford (A03). These were not easy decisions, but are the right thing to do. The combined annual saving is £3.8m. Work is now underway to reconfigure the remaining offices to create more flexible ways of working, which will be supported by new technology to reduce dependency on desks.

#### **Staff suggestions on smarter working**

Staff have made over 300 suggestions about how the Council can work 'smarter'. Each idea has been considered with the response fed back to staff. Many of the suggestions have been implemented already, for example:

- Improvements have been made to our teleconferencing facilities to reduce the time and cost of travelling to meetings.
- Use of non-branded cartridges has saved £82,000 on the cost of printing.
- A new postage policy has been introduced, limiting the use of first class post and giving guidance on envelope size.
- Encouraging parish councils and residents groups to maintain roadsides.
- Electronic payslips are currently being piloted.

We continue to be open to suggestions through the Making a Difference conversations and will continue to communicate progress through dedicated pages on S-Net.

86. The three-year programme of **Public Value Reviews (PVRs)** that started last July has identified £43m of savings so far to be achieved over the current Medium-Term Financial Plan period. The Cabinet has now signed off a total of eight reviews, including in the last six months reviews on; Looked After Children; Fire and Rescue; Waste; Transport Coordination Centre; Chief Executive's Office; and Highways. A further 12 reviews are currently in progress and all services/functions will be reviewed by 2013.
87. Using **in-house teams** for the PVRs and other change projects has avoided the potential cost of external consultants (estimated £9m to date) and provided an opportunity to build capacity and share learning across the organisation.

#### **CORPORATE OBJECTIVE: STAFF**

*Objective: To have highly skilled people who are proud to work for SCC  
Measured by - a significant majority of staff will report they are proud to work for SCC*

**Q2 – 37% against a target for of 38% for 2010/11**  
(2009/10 baseline 35%)

88. Our staff are our greatest asset. Over the past six months we have continued to invest time and energy in ensuring staff are engaged, motivated and equipped to do their job as well as they can. The last report set out actions designed to address the disappointing results in the 2009/10 **Staff Survey**. Since then we have focused on the

following main themes: Leadership; Managing Change; Staff Engagement; Communication; and Equality and Inclusion.

89. To help test progress on these issues a (sample) “**dip survey**” was sent to 10% of employees from each Directorate in September. The headline results are listed in the table below.

Theme	Indicator Question	SCC March 2010	Targets for Dip Sept	Results for Dip Sept
Leadership	Top managers are visible and accessible	12%	20%	23%
	Top managers listen	28%	40%	38%
	Top managers have a clear vision	33%	40%	42%
Managing Change	Change is well managed	18%	20%	24%
	I can influence change	10%	12%	17%
	The reasons for change are well communicated	43%	45%	55%
Communication	Feeling informed about the whole council	40%	50%	55%
	Top managers act on feedback	15%	20%	30%
Engagement	I would speak highly of SCC as an employer	35%	38%	37%
	My manager creates a supportive workplace	68%	70%	75%
	I have a say in how I do my work	61%	65%	68%
Equality and Inclusion	Promotion is based on merit	20%	26%	29%
	People are treated with fairness and respect	62%	68%	60%
	I have experienced an incident of B/H	13%	10%	10%
	I have witnessed an incident of B/H	16%	10%	21%
	The incident was reported	46%	55%	37%

90. There are some encouraging signs with good improvements to responses about top managers being visible and accessible, ability to influence change and top managers acting on feedback. However, there is still a long way to go and the Corporate Leadership Team has set challenging targets to raise performance.
91. The results include declines on responses on being treated with fairness and respect, witnessing incidents of bullying and harassment and reporting it. The Corporate Leadership Team is very concerned by this, and is taking steps to re-iterate the leadership commitment to zero tolerance of bullying and harassment. Further in-depth research into these issues is being conducted, using results from the survey to target Services where support is most needed. A new **Ending Bullying and Harassment Policy** was launched in October, a **Mediation Service** has been established, and the Council’s **Whistle Blowing policy** has been re-launched.
92. It is vital that we maintain a sharp focus on addressing and **improving staff advocacy and motivation**. Even where results have improved in recent months – such as staff pride up from 35% to 37% - or are above the local authority average, we are well below where I would like us to be. The tailored employee survey action plans each Service owns will help to do this and the Corporate Leadership Team will continue to scrutinise progress and make interventions where required.
93. Another key strand of the Making a Difference programme is ensuring we have the right **information technology** to help staff do their job while reducing costs. To date money saving suggestions have been investigated following the Making A Difference conversations for audio conferencing, printing, paper and print cartridges, mobile phone and Blackberry usage, greener IT, Webinars, video conferencing, document imaging, use of Open Source Software and S-Net improvements.



94. We are tackling years of underinvestment in our Information Technology. A refresh of the Council's **desktop and laptop PCs** is well underway, with in excess of 400 devices completed to date, and the remainder planned over the next 16 months. Improvements to our mobile capability will enable front-line staff to work more effectively and reduce reliance on offices for administrative tasks. These changes will deliver a long overdue leap forward in our technological capability.
95. IMT has been working closely with Services, using **Directorate Technology Boards**, to plan and deliver priority work. Key developments in the last six months include the successful introduction of the **Adults Integrated System (AIS)** to support a new web based Self Directed Support Process for Adult Services; go-live on phase one of the new **Integrated Children's System (ICS)** as a core system for the whole Service; procurement of new systems to support Library Management, Highways, Web Content Management and Online Booking; and assistance with re-structures and office moves across the Council.
96. The **Organisational Development Strategy** continues to drive the development of the Council's leadership, management and wider workforce. The **Leadership Development Programme** launched in June. The initial focus has been on coaching skills and the feedback from participants has been extremely positive. Coaching is a powerful lever for improving performance and confidence – both are vital in times of change. As we extend the rollout, we expect this coaching programme to make a significant impact on leadership throughout the organisation.
97. Take up of the **STARS** (Stretching Talent And Raising Skills) programme launched in April has been high. As at 30 October a total of 6,806 staff had attended STARS sessions, and future bookings are high.
98. In addition to a core skills offer for managers, a new set of ILM-recognised management modules - known as the 'Management Pathways – have been introduced in response to demand for help to **improve managers' skills**. These cover topics such as absence management, bullying and harassment, managing change, and leadership capability. Council staff are delivering these sessions to reduce costs and ensure content is relevant to attendees.
99. There has also been a concerted focus on enhancing **project management capability** across the Council to support delivery of change projects. This has included a refresh of project management tools, the drafting of a new competency framework for project management and attendance on a pilot course certified by the Association of Project Managers.
100. We are investing in our **future managers and leaders**. A further set of management courses with ILM accreditation are being offered to aspiring and first-line managers. Following a successful graduate recruitment exercise in partnership with the Local Government National Graduate Development Programme, the Council recruited four new graduate trainees in October 2010.
101. Regular **workforce monitoring** reports have highlighted areas where we are doing well, and those that need more attention. **Sickness absence rates have fallen every quarter** since March 2008 (8.9 days per FTE), and stand at 6.94 days per FTE, a reduction that represents an additional 14,377 productive days over 12 months, and is better than our target of 7.2 days per FTE for the current year. This is good, but we continue to tackle those areas where rates are higher, and seek further improvements across the whole Council.

102. A range of initiatives is in place to ensure **equality and diversity** is embedded in our employment practices. These include STARS training modules, and innovative projects such as New Start which aims to place up to 25 people with mental health disabilities in employed positions in the Council.
103. The action plan for achieving the **South East Charter for Elected Member Development** is on track, helping to ensure our Members are fully equipped and supported in their community leadership role. The Member Development Steering Group has agreed a Learning and Development Framework to cover the four-year Council term. The Group has also considered the individual training records of all County Councillors and agreed an approach for identifying learning needs and encouraging participation.
104. A number of Members have been invited to and attended personal development planning sessions facilitated by Local Government Improvement and Development. These sessions have helped identify ways of developing skills and knowledge and have also informed the overall **Member Learning and Development Programme**. Meanwhile the Member seminar programme has continued to provide an opportunity for officers and Members to share ideas on the key issues facing the Council such as the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Surrey Transport Plan (LTP3), and the Winter Maintenance plans.
105. Democratic Services have worked with the Select Committee Chairmen's group to agree key actions that will help to **strengthen the role of Member scrutiny**. The Chairmen's group is now focusing on coordinating the work of the different committees, supporting Members and driving improvements. Dedicated office space has been provided for the Chairmen to help them work effectively together.

#### **CORPORATE OBJECTIVE: PERFORMANCE**

*Objective: To outperform other Councils*  
*Measured by - resident satisfaction with the way the Council runs things*

**Q2 result - 66% against a target of 65.5% for 2010/11**  
 (2009/10 baseline 55%)

106. Over the last six months the Council has consolidated progress made in the first half of the year and made further tangible **improvements to performance**. Quantitative measures such as performance indicators, resident survey results and efficiency savings point in the right direction. The latest batch of awards (see Annex A) provides further encouraging evidence.
107. We recently received two important judgements from government regulators. Both **Adult Social Care and Children's Services are rated as performing well** in their Annual Performance Assessments from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted<sup>5</sup> respectively. This is a significant milestone given the severity of the problems identified two years ago.

<sup>5</sup> Note that the Children, Schools and Families annual assessment judgement is provisional and subject to final confirmation and publication by Ofsted on 9 December 2010.

108. The report now focuses in turn on the specific performance improvements in these Services.

## Children, Schools and Families

109. Improvements in services for children in Surrey reflect the progress made through the first half of a four year planned improvement journey, which began in 2008 after the Joint Area Review (JAR) judged services to be inadequate. Recognising this, on 26 October the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families agreed to the **formal closure of the Government Improvement Notice** that was served following the 2008 inadequate judgement.
110. Each inspection and external assessment since the JAR in 2008 has shown continued improvement, leading to the overall annual **Ofsted assessment of performing well<sup>5</sup>**.
111. A joint **Ofsted and CQC inspection of safeguarding and Looked After Children** in September judged that services were adequate overall and that many aspects of services were good. The areas that inspectors judged as being good were performance management and workforce development across all services; value for money in safeguarding services; and arrangements to ensure that Looked After Children stay safe, make a positive contribution and are involved in planning their services.
112. The inspection team reported that *“significant improvements have been achieved in a range of core safeguarding services”* and that *“Surrey County Council provides strong, visible leadership and commitment to improving safeguarding services for children”*.
113. The inspectors also identified some key areas for further improvement, such as services to ensure that Looked After Children are healthy, and the structure and membership of the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board. There is more to do to support all children to achieve good outcomes, but we are on the right track. Improvement actions from the inspection are reported to **Select Committees and Cabinet Members will receive progress reports** on improvement actions in January and April 2011. A further report will go to the Cabinet in May 2011 to confirm that all necessary actions have been completed.
114. Other **performance highlights** from services for children and young people include:
- Another very successful year of exam results for Surrey’s schools and pupils - 78% of students achieved at least five A\*-C grades in the summer, a rise of 6% on the previous year.
  - Closing the achievement gap at age 19 for those from low-income families more quickly than elsewhere in the country.
  - 74% of primary schools and 70% of secondary schools judged to be good or outstanding, compared to 50% nationally.
  - All special schools and pupil referral units judged to be good or outstanding.
  - Reduction in the number of young people entering the youth justice system – down by a third to 984.
115. The next two years of the improvement journey will seek to sustain and embed improvements to date, and create a modern children’s service that meets the needs and aspirations of residents. It will need to do this against a backdrop of rising volumes and demand, and reduced funding. The **Children, Schools and Families Fit for the Future change programme** is designed to meet this challenge by putting children and families at the centre of the design and delivery of re-shaped services. **Adult Social Care**

116. The last report focused on the achievements in Adult Social Care and further significant progress has been made since then, culminating in the **Care Quality Commission (CQC) annual judgement** that overall services are performing well.
117. CQC reported that *"it is clearly evident from people who use services, carers, other stakeholders and partners, for example NHS organisations and voluntary organisations, that there has been a significant change in Surrey and that senior management within the Council has successfully managed the start of the implementation of their plans"*. They also accurately reflected the challenges ahead, concluding that *"the Council still has work to do to realise its full ambitions for adult social care in Surrey but significant progress has been made through good leadership to improve the outcomes and experience of people who use services and their carers"*.
118. At the core of the transformation and improvements in Adult Services is the shift from residential and nursing care to **personalised community based care**. 3,214 adults are now benefiting from personal control of services, helping to reduce permanent residential and nursing placements from 1,198 a year ago to 546. We are supporting 1,359 people with learning disabilities to live at home. These changes are a great example of using new thinking, technology and co-designed approaches to achieve better outcomes for residents.

#### **Epsom User Led Organisation**

On 13 September 2010 the Epsom User Led Organisation citizen hub opened to the public. This is an advice centre on the high street for people with disabilities run by disabled people. It is staffed by a team of local disabled volunteers who provide information about services including transport, benefits, services and access to mobility equipment.

The hub provides a great opportunity for disabled people and carers to not only improve access to the information and support they need, but also to provide these services themselves. It promotes greater choice and independence.

The trained hub volunteers are on hand to draw on their experiences to give valuable guidance and information. The hub is also be accessible via a website, e-mail, telephone, text and minicom.

Another hub in Redhill is due to open in December.

119. The **working together differently programme** in Adult Social Care is coordinating the significant changes taking place across the Directorate - changes to places of work, processes and systems, new practices focused on personalisation and Re-ablement, and the delivery of efficiencies and savings.
120. Planning is also underway to prepare for the fundamental changes heralded by the **Liberating the NHS White Paper** published on 12 July. This provides opportunities for a new role for local authorities, including taking over public health responsibilities, and developing partnership arrangements with GPs who will be given powers to direct budgets and commissioning.

### **Dementia Strategy**

We are leading the way in the country on developing a Dementia Strategy.

Collaborative working between Surrey County Council and Friends of the Elderly, is delivering a national peer support site in Woking on Dementia. Surrey County Council is sponsoring the site, which provides support for people suffering dementia and their carers. The Bradbury Centre is run by Friends of the Elderly where those with dementia and their carers can be assessed, find support and take part in joint social activities. They work in conjunction with home care and care management support from the Woking Social Care Team.

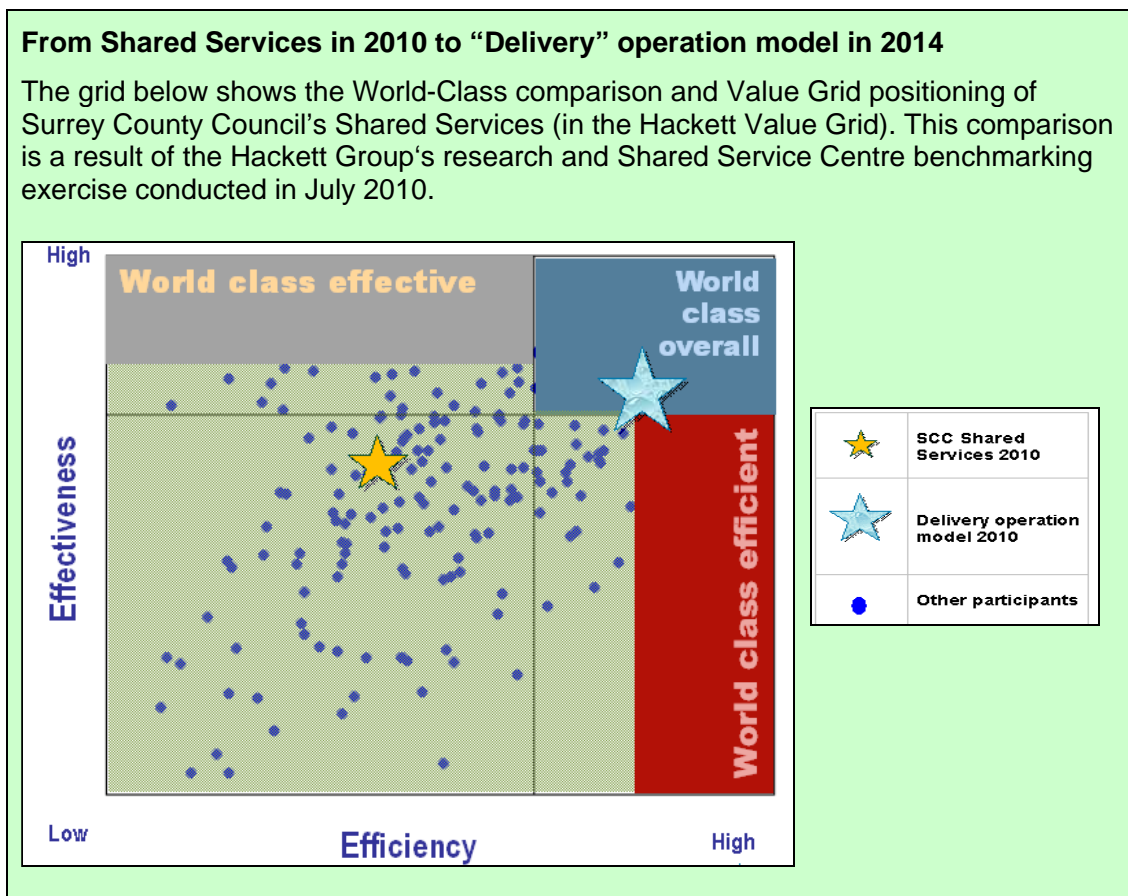
Services available include the lending library; the "Four Seasons" restaurant (Dementia café); and activities for those with dementia such as reminiscence activity. People with dementia are able to have quality time taking part in activities with the help of staff and other group members, while their carers can socialise with other carers and support staff, providing them with a break from day to day care and the ability to build new and supportive friendships.

This illustrates what can be done locally between agencies to support people with dementia to remain in the community as valued citizens. The Dementia Strategy is committed to establishing peer support and Dementia Cafes across the county so we can offer this service to people in their local area.

### **Driving performance improvement and quality assurance**

121. Maintaining and further improving performance across the Council at a time of financial constraint will not be easy. However, we have demonstrated that we can overcome tough challenges, and we have a robust set of **quality assurance and performance tools** that can help us continue improving.
122. Fulfilling the earlier commitment made by the Leader, in September the Cabinet agreed to the implementation of a cross Council **Quality Management Framework**. The approach builds on the tools and approaches that have served us well over the last year and will ensure we do these things in a coherent and smart way, underpinned by common principles and quality standards. It includes universal aspects that apply across the whole Council and each Directorate will be publishing their own more detailed and specific local quality management arrangements by April 2011.
123. In further developing our quality approach we need to consolidate and simplify the different frameworks, policies and governance mechanisms that are in place, so we have more outcome focused and risk based arrangements. One way we plan to do this is by the Corporate Leadership Team fulfilling the role of a **Quality Board** once a quarter from April 2011, with other existing officer boards ceasing as result. We will be inviting a Chief Executive from the Surrey Chief Executive's Group to become an independent member of the Quality Board to provide external perspective and challenge.
124. Since July we have further refined existing quality and performance management tools and approaches (e.g. business planning, Public Value Reviews, accountability meetings, scorecard reporting) and added some new developments that are described below.

125. October saw the start of **quarterly Chief Executive intensive performance conversations with Heads of Service** to review key achievements and issues and share thinking. These meetings are being used to assess the arrangements that Services have in place to ensure continuous improvement and value for money.
126. The **PerformancePlus** IT system has been introduced to simplify and automate corporate performance reporting, enabling the Corporate Leadership Team to review “live” performance data. The next step in the implementation of the system will be for Directorates to consider how the system can benefit their own performance management arrangements including the automation of regular performance reporting and providing analysis capability.
127. Better approaches to **benchmarking** are being developed. Each Service now uses the best tools and benchmarking groups for their area of business. A good example is the Shared Service Centre “World-Class Grid” which compares the service on effectiveness and efficiency using industry benchmark research.



128. The Council’s approach to **risk management** has been streamlined through the introduction of a Strategic Risk Forum. This group challenges and helps shape the Strategic and Directorate risk registers prior to reporting to the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet.
129. Phase 1 of the implementation of a Local Information System – known as **SURREYi** has been completed. We are now well on the way to having a single shared source of needs

and performance data for Surrey, which will help the Council and partners to better understand local communities and target resources effectively.

130. It is vital that we can maintain quality services during any periods of disruption and work has been done to implement the action plan from the **peer review of emergency management** in May. There is still work to do to increase our level of resilience and preparedness and the Emergency Management Team will continue to work with Services to address this. Particular preparation needs to be made to ensure we have robust contingency arrangements in place to support residents and visitors during the 2012 Olympics.

### **Governance**

131. The last report summarised actions that had been taken in response to the **Governance Task Group** recommendations to Council in December 2009. Over the last six months the Audit and Governance Committee has continued to monitor progress against the action plan. These actions have dovetailed with those stemming from the Council's Annual Governance Statement, which was signed off by the Leader and Chief Executive in July.
132. Examples of more recent developments include the launch of a revised Whistle Blowing policy, and a Task Group review of statutory officer reporting lines - the conclusions of which are presented in a separate report to the 14 December Council meeting.

### **Conclusion**

133. Over the next six months we will continue to build on the good progress we are making. As this report has set out we face some very difficult challenges. In Spring 2011 our refreshed Corporate Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan 2011-2015 will formally set out our approach for the next four years.
134. These will reflect our continuing work on the key strands outlined in paragraph 11 namely:
- (a) cost reduction;
  - (b) protection of our most vulnerable residents;
  - (c) continuing to improve the equipment and development of our staff;
  - (d) engaging with the new policy direction of the coalition government;
  - (e) trying to identify ways in which we can support economic recovery; and
  - (f) working in partnership with other councils.
135. We will continue to develop positive relationships with residents that enable local decision-making and promote personal responsibility and independence. And we will take every opportunity to ensure each pound we spend makes a difference for Surrey residents.
136. I would like to thank all our staff for their continuing efforts over the past six months. I am deeply appreciative of the way in which our colleagues have responded to the challenges we face. I would also like to thank Elected Members who have continued to work constructively with officers to find effective solutions. I am confident that we have developed the right approach and strategies and that we will continue to improve.
137. I will bring a further report on progress against our objectives to the Council in six months time.



<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
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That Council notes the report of the Chief Executive, thanks the staff of the Council for the strong progress made during this year and confirms its support for the actions outlined to ensure continued progress.

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**Lead/Contact Officer:**

David McNulty, Chief Executive, 020 8541 8018

**Sources/background papers:**

Q2 2010/11 business report to Cabinet, 26 October 2010

Chief Executive report to Council, 15 December 2010

Chief Executive report to Council, 15 June 2010

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## **Annex A – Examples of awards and praise received**

- Our **Contact Centre** team was Highly Commended in the “Best Centre for Customer Service” category at the **European Call Centre Awards**. That means we have the second best team in Europe. Simon Pollock, Head of Customer Services, received a Special Judges Award for his efforts to raise the standard of performance in public sector call centres.
- **Jane Gillett** (Surrey Children’s Services) finished third in the **National Social Worker of the Year Awards** for the good work she has done in her role as a referral and assessment social worker in the Guildford area. Jane was one of 16 finalists chosen by an independent panel of senior social work practitioners.
- Surrey County Council won a national award for its **streetlight replacement scheme** that will save the authority £12m. The scheme won the best public procurement category in the **CIPS Supply Management Awards**.
- **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service** finished in the top ten at the World Rescue Challenge in Cork, Ireland where teams competed against the clock to cut victims free from mock car crashes.
- The UK’s digital inclusion champion, Martha Lane Fox, praised Surrey County Council for being among the leading authorities for **processing applications for school places online**.
- Surrey County Council’s **Martin Knowles** was named **Transport Planner of the Year**. The prestigious award from the Transport Planning Society is given to an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to the profession. Martin was recognised for the key role he has been playing in the Airtrack, Guildford hub and Redhill and Reigate hub projects and handed his award by Princess Anne during a ceremony at the University of York.
- A Surrey County Council school became the first secondary for pupils with learning disabilities in the country to win a coveted award. The **Abbey School, Farnham**, was given the **Every Child Matters Standards (ECM) Award** after an assessment that covered all aspects of education provided by the school. The categories covered included the school’s ethos, the environment provided for pupils, leadership and management, the curriculum, personalised learning and professional development for staff.
- **Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD)** received three separate quality awards:
  - The AHOEC (Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres) **Gold Standard** – these are the most rigorous quality standards for the industry and SOLD was the only recipient of the gold standard in the South of England.
  - The **Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge**. Awarded by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom.
  - The **Adventuremark** - a non-statutory safety scheme devised by the Adventure Activity Industry Advisory Committee for providers of adventurous activities that are outside the scope of the Adventure Activity Licensing regulations.

- The pension fund overseen by the Council has been shortlisted in trade magazine **Local Government Chronicle's 2010 Investment Awards**. The Council has been named one of three finalists in the **pension fund of the year** category.
- Surrey County Council has been shortlisted by the **Local Government Chronicle** for its award "**Most Improved Council**"
- Surrey County Council has been shortlisted by the **Local Government Chronicle** for its award "**IT Initiative of the Year**"