

Notice of Meeting

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning & Culture Select Committee

**Date & time**

Tuesday, 21
January 2020 at
10.00 am

Place

Ashcombe Suite,
County Hall, Kingston
upon Thames, Surrey
KT1 2DN

Contact

Ross Pike, Committees
Business Manager
Room 122, County Hall
Tel 0208 541 7368

Chief Executive

Joanna Killian

We're on twitter:
@SCCDemocracy

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This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Ross Pike, Committees Business Manager on 0208 541 7368.

Elected Members

Amanda Boote, Mr Chris Botten (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Liz Bowes, Mr Robert Evans, Mrs Kay Hammond (Chairman), Mrs Yvonna Lay, Mr Peter Martin, Mrs Lesley Steeds (Vice-Chairman), Ms Barbara Thomson, Mr Chris Townsend, Mr Richard Walsh and Mrs Victoria Young

Independent Representatives:

Mr Simon Parr (Diocesan Representative for the Catholic Church), Mrs Tanya Quddus (Parent Governor Representative) and Mr Alex Tear (Diocesan Representative for the Anglican Church, Diocese of Guildford)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

Children's Services (including safeguarding)
Early Help
Corporate Parenting
Education
Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
Adult Learning
Apprenticeships
Libraries, Arts and Heritage
Voluntary Sector

AGENDA

- 2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 13 DECEMBER 2019** (Pages 5 - 12)
- To agree the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture as a true and accurate record of proceedings.
- 5 SCRUTINY OF REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2020/21** (Pages 13 - 38)
- Purpose of report:* To provide details of the budget for scrutiny prior to Cabinet and Council meetings.
- 6 CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY** (Pages 39 - 58)
- Purpose of report:* to review and agree the Corporate Parenting Strategy which will be published and become a Council wide document
- 7 UPDATE ON OFSTED AND CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER INSPECTIONS** (Pages 59 - 78)
- Purpose of report:* to provide a summary of the recent inspections of Surrey's children's services including the latest Ofsted Monitoring Visit and the final review by the Children's Commissioner.
- 8 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 79 - 88)
- Purpose of report:* For the Select Committee to review the attached Recommendations Tracker and Forward Work Programme, making suggestions for additions or amendments as appropriate.

**Joanna Killian
Chief Executive**

Published: Tuesday 14 January 2020

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MINUTES of the meeting of the **CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING & CULTURE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 1.30 pm on 13 December 2019 at Guildford Borough Council, Millmead, Guildford, GU2 4BB.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Tuesday, 21 January 2020.

Elected Members:

- * Amanda Boote
- * Mr Chris Botten (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mrs Liz Bowes
- * Mr Robert Evans
- * Mrs Kay Hammond (Chairman)
- * Mrs Yvonna Lay
- * Mr Peter Martin
- * Mrs Lesley Steeds (Vice-Chairman)
- * Ms Barbara Thomson
- * Mr Chris Townsend
- * Mr Richard Walsh
- * Mrs Victoria Young

Co-opted Members:

- * Mr Simon Parr, Diocesan Representative for the Catholic Church
- * Mrs Tanya Quddus, Parent Governor Representative
- * Mr Alex Tear, Diocesan Representative for the Anglican Church, Diocese of Guildford

In attendance:

Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families
Cabinet Member for All Age Learning

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Tanya Quddus.

10 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 12 SEPTEMBER 2019 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

12 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

None received.

13 UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families

Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All Age Learning

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families highlighted that progress was continuing at pace in Children's Services. The Member informed the Committee that the Children's Commissioner's report which noted substantial progress had been delayed due to the general election and would be published on Wednesday 18 December 2019. The feedback meeting with the Children's Commissioner was positive and they would be recommending to the Minister that Children's Services would no longer need to be under the auspices of the commissioner.
2. A Member of the Committee asked the Cabinet Member for All Age Learning and the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families whether in future budget updates the Cabinet Members could separate their figures into their two respective areas of responsibility, in order to avoid ambiguity. The Cabinet Members agreed that the budget update should be clearer next time.
3. The Cabinet Member was questioned about the commissioning of the new Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS) including the response from the market and recruitment to permanent post vacancies. The Cabinet Member advised that there had been positive market engagement so far. The Cabinet Member also stated the importance of dealing with the current waiting list problems and explained that there was ongoing work with the provider, Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SaBP), to improve this and added it was crucial to be honest about poor performance.
4. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families highlighted that there had been a recent increase in the number of children entering the care system and that the service needed to increase its efficiency, albeit there had been an increase in recruitment for foster care placements. The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the council's residential homes for children were of very good quality, with Libertas having just been given an outstanding grading by Ofsted and more money from the capital budget enabling greater capacity of these homes in the future. The Cabinet Members stated that there were now permanent directors and service managers in Children's Services but there was still a shortage of social workers both in Surrey and nationally.
5. A Member asked the Cabinet Member for All Age Learning to elaborate on how specialist independent providers might be successfully negotiated with to ensure placements were value for money and improved children's outcomes. The Cabinet Member stated that they had put capital investment into increasing available places in the county for children with special needs and that additional places on supported internships and Life Skill based programmes for those on the Adult Social Care (ASC) pathway were being

commissioned. They asserted that the traditional focus on purely qualification-based, “school” type education did not necessarily give the most appropriate preparation for adulthood for all children. Finally, they informed the Committee that the commissioning team were agreeing the cost of packages to meet Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) stipulations and ensuring that there was clarity on what was included and what fell to other partners, such as health providers, to pay for.

6. A Member welcomed a future Ofsted inspection and asked whether the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families could give a timetable of progress vis-a-vis moving clinical psychologists closer to schools. The Cabinet Member stated that it was likely that between June and September they would receive an ILACS (Inspecting Local Authority Children’s Services) inspection. They appreciated that the training for support staff in schools - Targeted Approach to Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) – in the CAMHS contract had not been understood well. In September, therefore, schools were reminded of the training that they could receive for emotional wellbeing support. The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that they would be able to discern the percentage increase of uptake of this support, relative to the previous term, soon
7. The Chairman of the Select Committee highlighted that in relation to initial health assessments for looked after children, a third of the deadlines had been missed. They asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families how they were working to improve this. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families replied that the Executive Director had been speaking to his NHS equivalent to keep initial health assessments working at a high level of timeliness. When the success rate had reached 90%, this communication stopped and within a month there had been clear deterioration. This was therefore reintroduced and needed to become business as usual. They stated that within the last month there had been a reduction from 58 to 38 children who were not in the right timescale for their assessment. Regardless of this improvement, there remained problematic issue areas such as out-of-county placements, but this was something they would be focusing on in the future.
8. The Chairman also asked whether school governors’ support for looked after children (LAC) was an issue and whether the Committee should be scrutinising this. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families suggested that the committee could scrutinise support for all vulnerable learners, rather than just support for LAC. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families informed the Committee that they would be writing to all of Surrey’s elected councillors in January outlining their responsibilities in working together to safeguard children. Additionally, the Cabinet Member requested that the Committee scrutinise the new Corporate Parenting Strategy at its next meeting and suggested that a Corporate Parenting annual report was scrutinised thereafter.
9. The Cabinet Member for All Age Learning highlighted that, in Surrey, disadvantaged pupils in early years, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and

Key Stage 4 achieved below national results albeit the picture was mixed as to whether the gap had widened or closed since the 2018 data. Notwithstanding they had made improvements both in the Virtual School and with how each child's progression was monitored. SEND was a significant area of overspend and home to school transport both mainstream and to special school places was a key element of that overspend. A board was being established to provide detailed oversight. The Vice Chairman of the Select Committee informed the Cabinet Member that the SEND Task Group would be developing these issues and reporting its findings in the next Committee meeting.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

- i) Clearer presentation of budget figures in future Cabinet Member Update reports.
- ii) Addition of scrutiny item on school governing body support for vulnerable learners including looked after children and children with SEN. This in future can be based on the corporate parenting board annual report.

14 CHILDREN'S SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families
Dr Lisa Bursill, Assistant Director Early Help and Hubs, Family Resilience and Safeguarding
Jackie Burke, Director Family Resilience and Safeguarding
Benedicte Symcox, Operations Lead for Family Voice Surrey

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Operations Lead for Family Voice Surrey shared her excitement at seeing employees at the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) working in such a collaborative and nurturing manner in their endeavour to help Surrey's most vulnerable families. They informed the Committee that they were very grateful to have been given the opportunity to visit the CSPA. All Members agreed with this sentiment and stated that they had been very impressed by the visit, the setup of the CSPA, and all the improvements that had been made since its inception.
2. The Operations Lead expressed their concern that very few parents of SEND children were aware of the CSPA. They also highlighted ongoing difficulties vis-a-vis gaining support either from early help or from the Children With Disabilities team; lack of knowledge about CSPA could have been contributing to the problems that parents faced when trying to access early help.

3. The Chairman asked about some IT difficulties that Members were informed of at the visit. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families said that there was an end-to-end review underway and the computer system was being upgraded to the newer Windows 10. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families said that they would raise the IT issues again at the performance meeting.
4. The Vice Chairman of the Select Committee stated that a number of head teachers of small schools with part-time Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) had very little support with children with difficult needs and thus would benefit from having someone to talk to about how to cope with supporting such children. They said that they would like to see an increase in the level of support and counselling for head teachers who were managing traumatised children.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

- i) For Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families to raise IT issues in the service at the subsequent performance meeting.

**15 HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT POLICY
PUBLIC CONSULTATION [Item 7]**

Witnesses:

Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All Age Learning
Mary Burguieres, Assistant Director of Systems and Transformation –
Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture
Benedicte Symcox, Operations Lead for Family Voice

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Cabinet Member for All Age Learning informed Members that the public consultation, which involved focus groups and Family Voice, on home to school/college travel and transport would be concluding on 15 December. They explained that the consultation had essentially been divided into two sections: how to better support independence and preparation for adulthood and a review of the discretionary provision. They stated that high-level analysis of the feedback received from the consultation would be undertaken.
2. The Cabinet Member described that the consultation comprised face-to-face meetings with families, organisations, carers and head teachers, online consultations and focus groups with children.

3. The Assistant Director of Systems and Transformation summarised the Home to School/College Travel and Transport Policy Public Consultation overview document. Regarding 'independent travel', they informed the Committee that this would mean different things for different children at different stages of their lives and that the service had been looking at how independence could be facilitated and better supported. They stated, however, that parents had concerns regarding their children being able to cope with the risks associated with travelling independently.
4. The Cabinet Member for All Age Learning stated that they would be looking at how to communicate effectively to both parents and children the key benefits of independent travel. Pertaining to 'collection points', the Assistant Director of Systems and Transformation explained that these were well regarded and seen as a step towards independence. Providing they were assessed for suitability, the Assistant Director stated that a range of locations could be used as collection points. Finally, the Assistant Director raised her concern that the travel allowance was not well used and there was a need to understand the barriers to uptake and how it could be made more attractive. They identified the key benefits of a travel allowance as flexibility (especially regarding extracurricular activities after school) and shorter journey times to and from schools, whilst the most significant barriers were distance from schools and lack of suitable public transport. They stated that, overall, the council was spending up to three times more than its statistical Local Authority comparators and yet this overspend had not translated into a better service.
5. The Chairman of the Select Committee asked the Operations Lead for Family Voice how the organisation had been dealing with the issues (above) raised by the Cabinet Member for All Age Learning. The Operations Lead highlighted the difficulty that parents of SEND children had with interacting with their child's school (due to distance). They stated, firstly, that the travel allowance had been perceived as being unfair and incurring costs for families and, secondly, that the work of Family Voice indicated that the proposed changes to home-to-school travel were likely to cause a loss of trust in the council's SEND strategy. They stressed the importance of the council maintaining trust with parents and carers for the SEND transformation programme. Whilst Family Voice agreed with the council that decreasing travel distance for all ages was key, the Operations Lead relayed the organisation's concern that children who had been placed in a specialist nursery were no longer being provided transport, which was preventing some from receiving the early intervention that they needed. They suggested, firstly, that savings could be made within the statutory provision of support and, secondly, decreasing the distance that nursery level children had to travel for specialist placements. They informed the Committee that parents would like a response and advice on how to get the right support.
6. The Vice Chairman informed Members that a witness statement from the head teacher at Brooklands School reflected the concerns of the Operations Lead and suggested that recommissioning of places close to home should be a priority.

7. The Assistant Director agreed that travel distance needed to be solved first, but that this would take time. They stressed, firstly, that issues of safety were paramount to parents and, secondly, the service wanted to ensure in its communication with parents that it was striking the right balance between safety and supporting independence. The Operations Lead for Family Voice stated the importance of conveying the right message regarding independent travel to those parents with very vulnerable children.
8. The Operations Lead for Family Voice asked whether there would be an opportunity for people to give comments before the final decision was made. The Cabinet Member for All Age Learning stated that the consultation would close on 15 December and Officers would pull together the feedback alongside the equality impact assessment. The Chairman of the Select Committee informed the Operations Lead for Family Voice that feedback could still be made following the end of the consultation.
9. The Chairman asked for Members' comments on the consultation. A Member of the Committee said they favoured having transport for the whole academic year for a child, regardless of when that child turned eight years old. The Operations Lead for Family Voice stated that a child's school year was far more relevant than their birthday and they also conveyed parents' beliefs that transport support should be the same for all the children in that year group. The Chairman stated that they believed in equity of provision and therefore believed if a child was born in September, they would benefit more than a child born in July, for example.
10. The Assistant Director informed Members that there were no proposed changes to the travel allowance because they believed this did not pose as much of a barrier as travel distance and the availability of suitable public transport.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

- i) Response to parents with advice regarding how to get the right support for their child.

16 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 8]

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman stated that the Committee would scrutinise the budget in January 2020.

2. The Director of Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture suggested that a review be carried out in September 2020 of the grades of schools in Surrey to ensure they continue to do as well as they have done.

Liz Bowes left the meeting at 3.19pm

3. The Chairman suggested that the item on Schools Alliance for Excellence be rescheduled from the January meeting to the Select Committee meeting in March. The Director of Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture stated that this would lead to more effective discussion of the overarching impact of the framework.
4. The Chairman stated that the reports from the commissioner should be included in the January Select Committee meeting.
5. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families informed the Committee that scrutiny of the corporate parenting strategy needed to take place at the January 2020 meeting, before Council meets to consider it in March.
6. The Chairman stated that the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board annual report should be added to the agenda for the Select Committee meeting in March 2020.

Resolved:

The Committee Forward Work Programme be updated to include the above proposed items.

17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

The next meeting of the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee would be held on 21 January 2020 in Ashcombe Suites, County Hall at 10:00.

Meeting ended at: 3.22pm

Chairman

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture

2020 – 2025 Budget Scrutiny

21st January 2020

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Context

- Last year - A budget that didn't rely on Reserves and helped stabilise our finances
 - This year - Moving from short to long term: **investing for impact** and for financial sustainability
 - Next year - Outcome focused and comprehensive medium-term plan
 - Significant progress towards financial stability and good performance
- Plus the injection of additional resources from Central Government, once again mean **no use of Reserves**, and a more medium-term and investment based outlook
- Continuing medium-term challenges:
 - Uncertainty about funding levels from 2021
 - Continuing high demand for services
 - A refreshed Organisation Strategy and Phase 2 Transformation

OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS 2020 - 2025

We are changing and improving what the Council does and how it delivers services to reflect the ways in which our residents and communities now live their lives. We are now a year into our transformation to become a leading council. We are ambitious about our future and here we outline where our focus lies in the years ahead.

<p>Tackling inequality Working with residents in every area of Surrey to identify and address causes of inequality, especially in life expectancy for everyone.</p> 	<p>Supporting independence Helping residents help themselves and each other within their community.</p> 	<p>More joined up health and social care Integrating health and council services so they're more effective, efficient and seamless for residents.</p> 	<p>Creating a greener future Tackling the causes of climate change and become a carbon-neutral county as soon as possible.</p> 
<p>Embracing Surrey's diversity Recognising the benefits of a diverse workforce and population to ensure Surrey is a place full of opportunity.</p> 	<p>Partnership Working with residents, businesses, partners and communities to collectively meet challenges and grasp opportunities.</p> 	<p>Supporting the local economy Investing in the infrastructure Surrey needs to build a strong and resilient economy.</p> 	<p>Digital revolution Making the most of new technology to innovate and improve services, and the way we work, to help Surrey and residents thrive.</p> 

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OUR VALUES: we care about -

-  our residents
-  being excellent
-  being open
-  working together
-  respecting others

THE PRINCIPLES GUIDING OUR WORK:

- 1** Focus on ensuring no one is left behind
- 2** Take a fresh approach to working in partnership
- 3** Support people to help themselves and each other
- 4** Involve and engage residents earlier and more often in designing and delivering services, and responding to challenges

To read a full list of our achievements from the past year and to read our Organisational Strategy in full, please go to www.surreycc.gov.uk

Transformation Programme 2020 - 2025

There are 28 individual programmes across different stages: 13 are continuing and 15 are newly introduced into the transformation programme

Discover & Define

Design & Develop

Deliver

PEOPLE

Adults with learning disabilities and autism
NEW

Health and social care integration
NEW

Working differently with communities
NEW

Domestic abuse **NEW**

Preparing for adulthood

Libraries and cultural services

Accommodation with care and support

Adult social care practice improvement

Adult social care market management

Adult mental health (including staff transfer) **NEW**

Family resilience

SEND transformation (including transport)

PLACE

Greener future **NEW**

Countryside **NEW**

Economic growth **NEW**

Rethinking transport

Rethinking waste **NEW**

Improving infrastructure **NEW**

Creating Environment, Transport and Infrastructure **NEW**

Community protection (including Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Transformation)

ORGANISATION

Data insights **NEW**

Digital

Agile workforce

Customer experience

Transforming our core business processes
NEW

Land and property **NEW**

Becoming more entrepreneurial **NEW**

Moving closer to residents

Headline Capital Schemes to commence 20/21- 24/25

Over £650M invested in the County
(c£530m over the medium-term)

Highways - Further **£92M** of spend to improve and maintain our highway network which includes 3000 miles of road, over 3000 miles of pavements; from a deteriorating to steady state.



Extra Care-up to 165 units across first three planned extra care sites, with an estimated pre-planning land value of £5.5M. SCC capex of **£1.8M**. Total investment of **£7.3M**. Future phases to deliver up to 725 units.



SEND - Up to **£31M** on specialist provision and a new SEND school. Further phases in future years.

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River Thames Flood Alleviation Scheme - £237M and Wider Surrey Flood Alleviation Scheme - £33M to protect thousands of homes and businesses from the risk of flooding.



Schools Basic Need - SCC will invest a further **£70M** to provide school places.

Community Investment Fund - £100M fund to regenerate high streets and visible investment in communities over the medium term.



Greener Futures – Various projects including a Solar Farms; EV charging point pilot; ULEV purchases and electrification of various transport services, including. Total spend **c£84M**.

Improved Access to the Countryside – Maintenance and improvements to the rights of way network and visitor improvements totalling **£3M**.



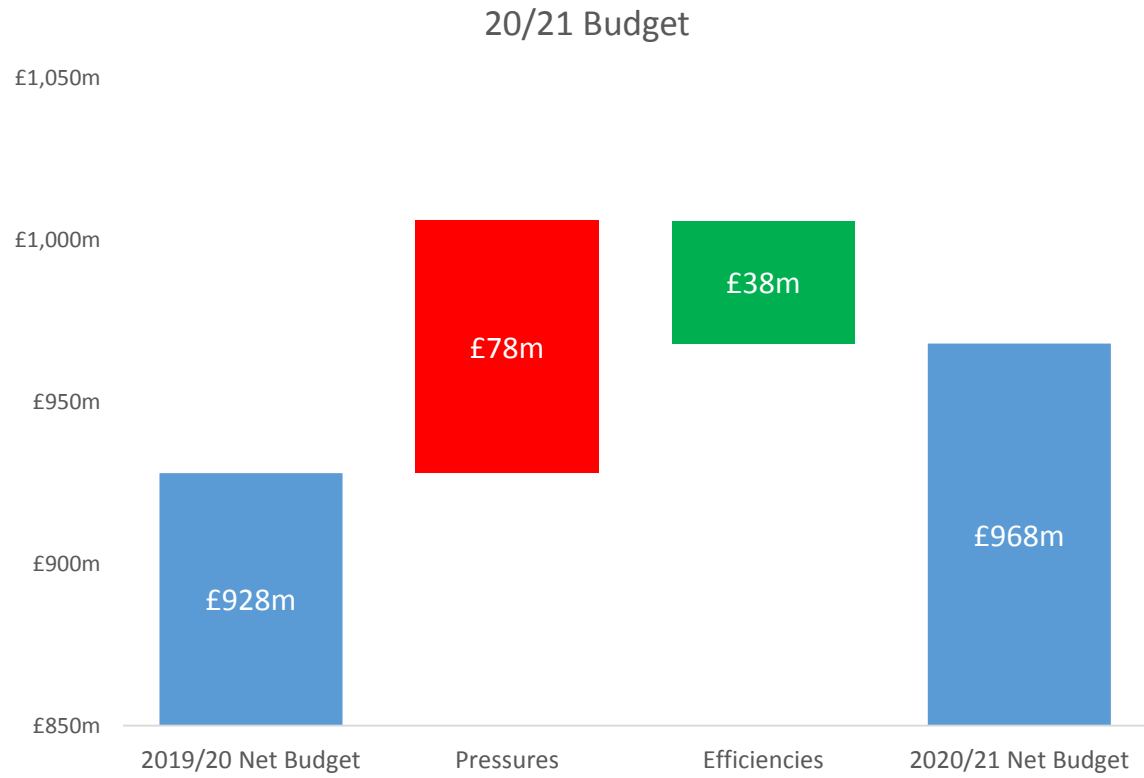
Draft Funding announcements from Central Government

- Draft funding was announced on 20th December (called the Provisional Settlement) - broadly followed our planning assumptions
- It was largely a roll forward of the 2019/20 position and provided additional funding for:
 - Adults Social Care (£14.2m)
 - Children with SEND (£13.5m)
- A new Social Care Precept of 2% (=£14.6m) and Council Tax threshold of 1.99% (=c£16m)

Key Budget Highlights for 20/21

- Additional **c£38M plus £13.5M SEND** from Provisional Settlement, one-year only – waiting on Final Settlement in Jan 2020 to confirm
- Total net funding of **£968M**
- Pressures of **£78M** – including pay and contract inflation
- Efficiencies of **£38M**, of which £24m to be delivered by Transformation
- Future year funding remains very uncertain - **provisional gap of c£160M by 24/25**

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Budget build 19/20 to 20/21 by Directorate

- New funding, additional pressures, pay and contract inflation as well as efficiency proposals identified through the budget process = **Net Budget for 2020/21 of £968M for SCC**

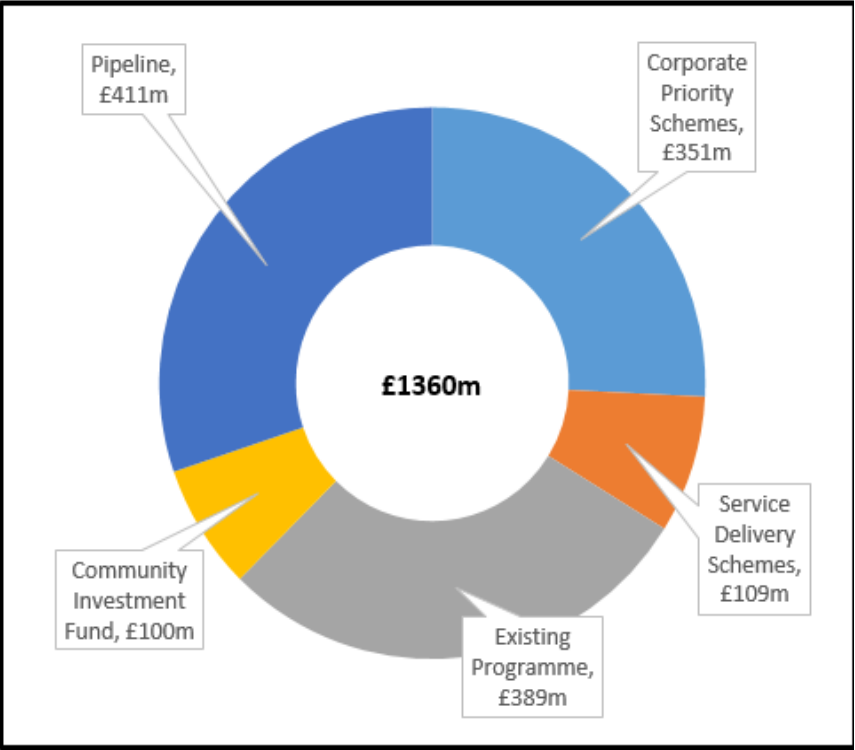
Directorate	2019/20 £m	Pressures £m	Pay Inflation £m	Contract Inflation £m	Efficiencies £m	2020/21 £m
Children, Families, Learning & Culture	243.7	5.7	3.0	3.8	-12.0	244.2
Public Health	30.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.3	30.2
Adult Social Care	363.9	11.7	1.4	7.4	-12.3	372.1
Environment, Transport & Infrastructure	162.6	4.8	1.3	3.5	-4.0	168.2
Transformation, Partnerships & Prosperity	16.9	2.9	0.3	0.1	-1.0	19.1
Resources	65.7	2.6	0.9	1.2	-4.1	66.3
Central Income & Expenditure (1)	45.6	27.1			-4.4	68.2
Total Net Expenditure	928.6	55.0	6.8	16.1	-38.1	968.4
Total Funding	-928.6					-968.4

Note (1) The increase in CIE from 19/20 to 20/21 is mainly attributable to the following increases: £7.5m Transformation Fund, £5m Feasibility Reserve, £10m additional Contingency and additional MRP. This will be further detailed in the final report

Proposed Capital Programme 20/21 – 24/25

- Capital Programme continues to be developed; **c£1.4B** over the period
- **Corporate Priority Schemes** - £351M including SEND, Highways, River Thames, Extra Care
- **Service Delivery Schemes** - £109M of projects being finalised
- **Pipeline Schemes** - £411M of projects at early stages
- **Community Investment Fund** - £100M of schemes to be developed
- **Current Programme** - £389M

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- 9 • Detailed programme to be presented in January Budget Report



Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture



Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Strategy

The Council, with its partners, is going through a process of major change in response to two consecutive Ofsted ratings of 'Inadequate' and the organisation's own acknowledgement that improving outcomes for our most vulnerable children had not been effective in the past. Services for children and families are being transformed at pace with a much-needed focus on quality and consistency of practice.

Changes carried out in the first stage of the improvement programme:

- Top to bottom reorganisation of the structure with new service model in place
- Implementation of new front door arrangements
- Creating of a new Quality Assurance division
- Launch of Surrey Children's Services Academy providing a learning & development offer for staff across the partnership
- New Safeguarding Partnership arrangements designed to ensure strong and effective partnership working in child protection and safeguarding practice across the county and to promote the continuous improvement of these services
- Implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model including the relocation of the NE Quadrant to Walton to be closer to the community they serve

CFLC – where is the money spent?

Type of income / expenditure	19/20 Gross expenditure Budget £m	19/20 Income Budget £m	19/20 Net expenditure Budget £m
Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture (exc Schools)	282.0	(185.4)	96.6
Family Resilience	40.6	(2.2)	38.4
Corporate Parenting	110.3	(14.3)	96.0
Quality and Performance	10.3	(1.8)	8.5
Commissioning	65.4	(59.4)	6.0
Directorate efficiencies*	(2.5)	-	(2.5)
Total 2019/20 CFLC budget	506.1	(263.1)	243.0

*Directorate efficiencies relate to amounts not allocated to specific service and are not anticipated to be delivered in 19/20. For the 20/21 budgets all efficiencies have been allocated to services

CFLC budget summary

Budget movement	£m	Comments
Prior year budget	242.3	
Structure changes	1.4	Commercial services to Resources and other minor changes
Revised opening balance	243.7	
<u>Growth pressures</u>		
Placements 2019/20 pressure	3.0	19/20 proposal delayed due to the ongoing improvements within Corporate Parenting and Family Resilience.
Pay inflation	3.0	
Non pay inflation	3.8	Transport, social care placements and other contract inflation
Transformation funding	2.1	SEND and Strategic Commissioning moving to BAU from transformation
EMS implementation	0.3	New Education Management System
Other funded pressures	0.3	Care Leavers Council Tax and child death reviews
Total growth pressures	12.5	
Efficiencies	(12.0)	See next slide for a detailed list
Final 2020/21 budget	244.2	

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture efficiencies

Efficiency title	2020/21 £m	Transformation programme
Reduction in SEND reserve	5.1	SEND Transformation
Early Help Transformation	2.4	Family Resilience
CCG Funding	2.0	
Libraries and Cultural services transformation	0.8	Libraries and Cultural transformation
Short Breaks	0.3	
Contact Services	0.3	
Registrars commercialisation	0.3	
Care Leaver Packages	0.2	
Reunification project	0.2	
Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development (SOLD)	0.2	
Early Help Commissioning	0.1	Family Resilience
Schools income	0.1	
Total planned efficiencies	12.0	

20/21 CFLC Budget

Key service	Employee cost	Non Employee cost	Gross Exp	Income	Govt Grants	20/21 Net cost
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Family Resilience	31.0	8.4	39.4	(1.5)	(1.1)	36.8
Education, Lifelong Learning & Culture	54.3	227.3	281.6	(20.0)	(165.7)	95.9
Commissioning	5.6	60.7	66.3	(0.1)	(59.8)	6.4
Quality & Performance	8.9	1.3	10.2	(0.7)	(0.4)	9.0
Corporate Parenting	32.8	74.9	107.7	(4.0)	(9.6)	94.1
Directorate wide efficiencies	0.2	1.7	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Total – Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture	132.9	374.3	507.2	(26.3)	(236.6)	244.2

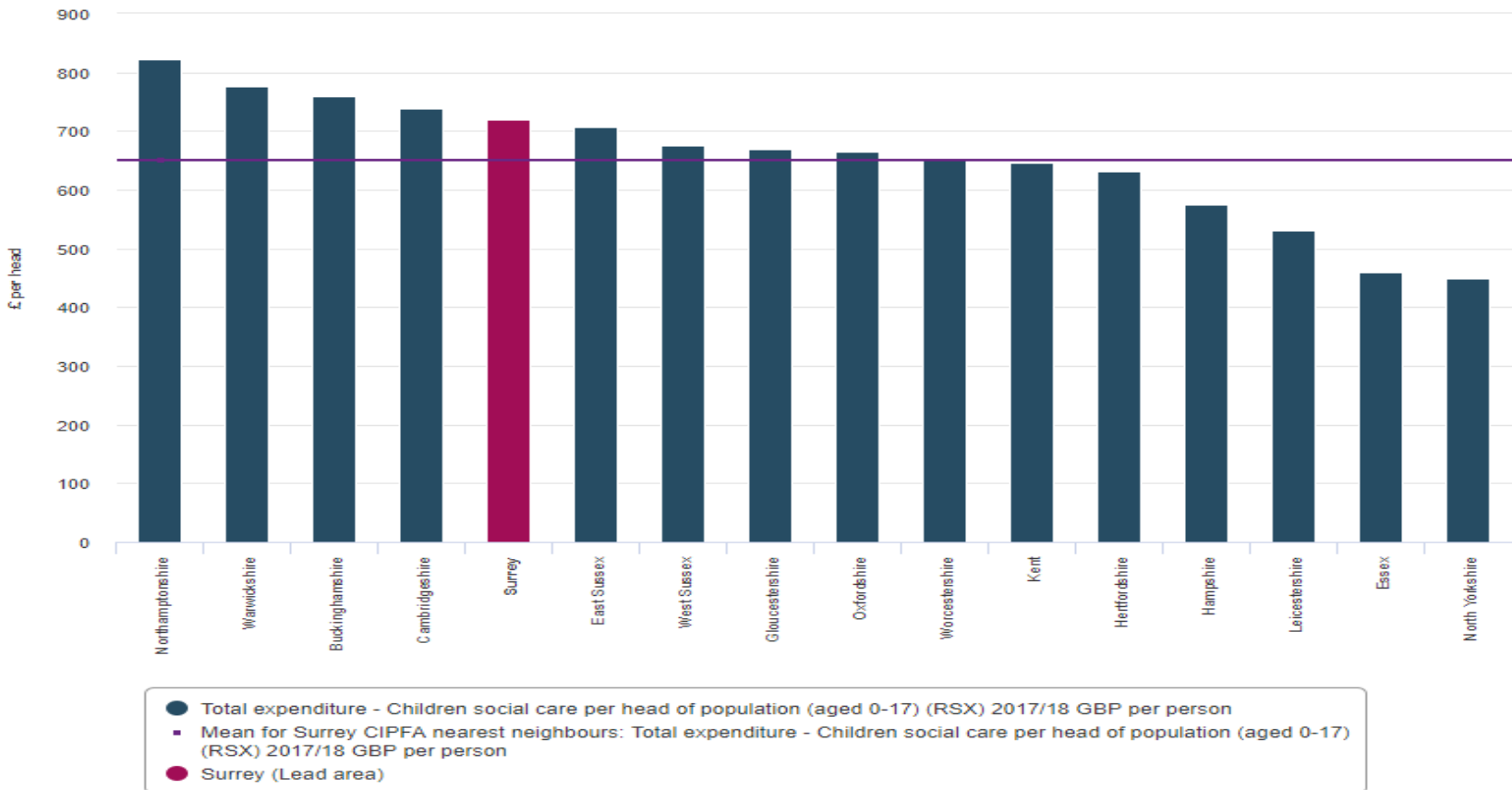
20/21 Budget Key risks

- External Residential and Fostering placement numbers remain above budgeted levels resulting in a 20/21 pressure.
- If actual demand and inflationary pressures are higher than estimated, this would require additional efficiencies and cost avoidance to be delivered.
- Anticipated additional contributions from other parties may take time to negotiate and agree.
- SEND overspend is building up a deficit on the Council's balance sheet. Government are currently consulting on how to account for this liability which could impact on future funding requirements.

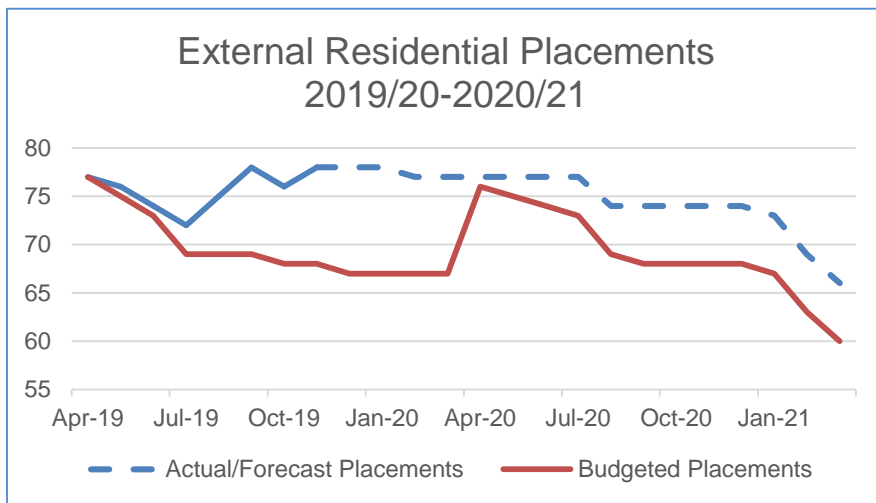
These risks are now explored in more detail on the following slides along with a comparison of Surrey's Children's Social Care spend against nearest neighbours.

In 2017/18, Surrey spent above median for its statistical nearest neighbours on children and young people

Total expenditure - Children social care per head of population (aged 0-17) (RSX) (2017/18) for Surrey & Surrey CIPFA nearest neighbours



Key budget areas – External/Residential placements

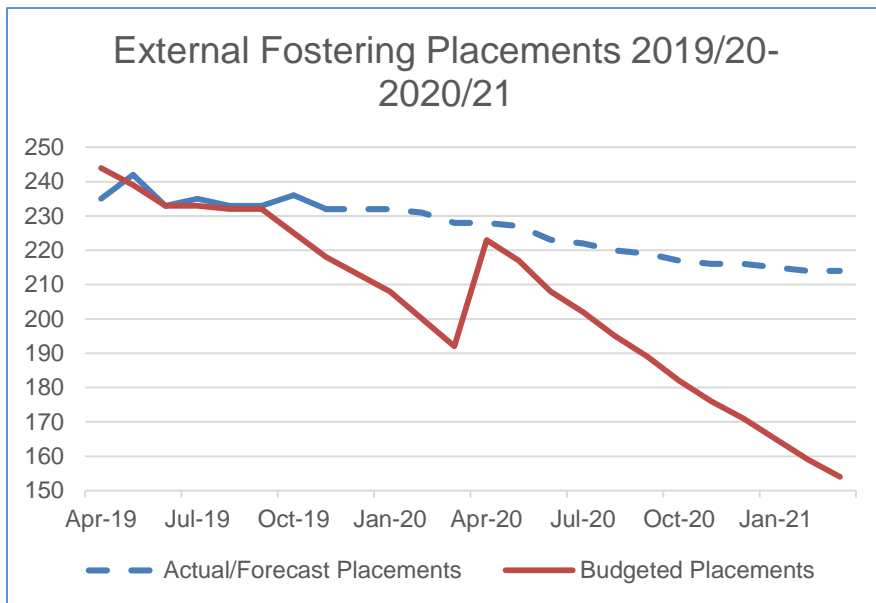


For both charts, the solid blue line represents the actual number of placements in 19/20 **and the dotted blue line the forecasted number** going forward based on the number of children turning 18.

The red line is the budgeted number of placements each month, the difference between the red line and the blue line represents the number of placement moves required in order to stay within budget.

This assumed any new demand will be met in-house.

The previous MTFs budget reduction for placements in 20/21 has been removed but this action is required in order to ensure the budget reduction proposed for 19/20 are delivered and flow through into future years.



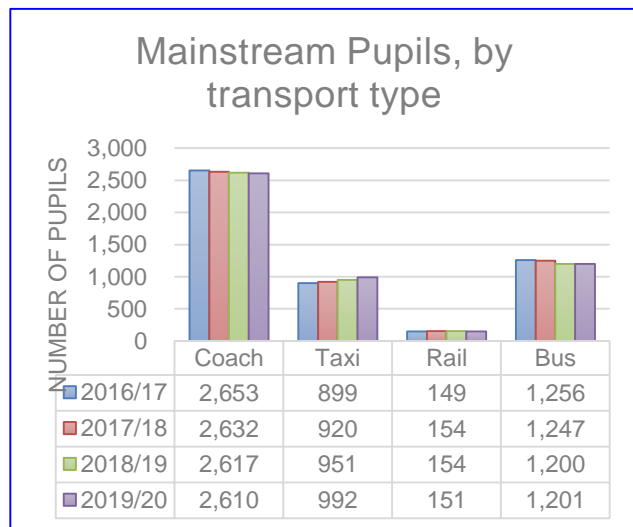
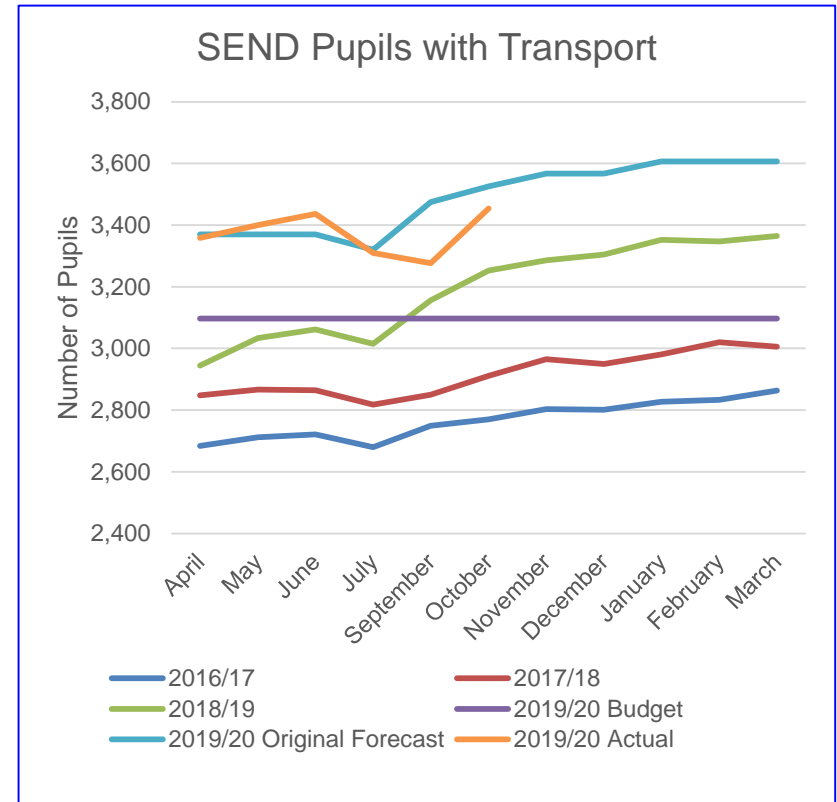
This assumed any new demand will be met in-house. The budget takes account of the expected increase in in-house foster carers following the late increase in 19/20.

Key budget areas – Transport

Transport expenditure is split into three main categories:

- SEND
- Mainstream
- Alternative provision

Despite being for SEND pupils, expenditure on these journeys is not fundable by the DSG so is a cost for the General Fund to bear.



When looking at trends over the past four years the number of SEND pupils with transport has increased.

The overall number of mainstream pupils has stayed broadly similar but there has been a trend towards Taxi over other forms of transport which can be more expensive.

Key budget areas – Health Funding

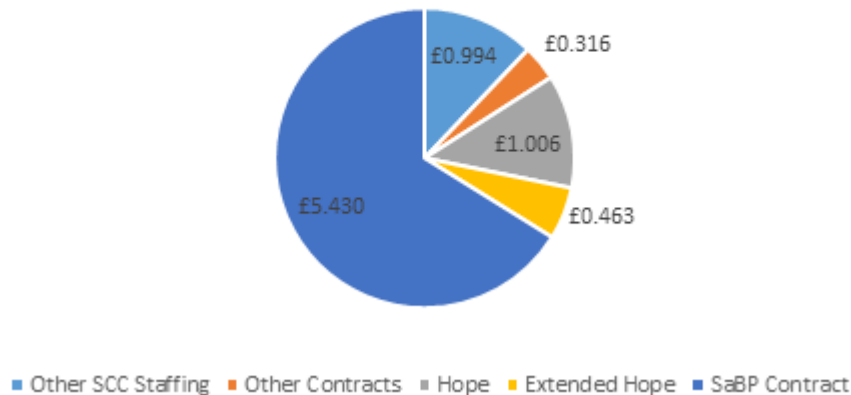
Ensuring costs are appropriately allocated to relevant bodies is a key part of the financial strategy in the future. In the past CFLC have been paying for costs that should sit elsewhere, often within Health. As well as the financial impact, this arrangement can sometimes lead to a “cliff edge” moment where a young person reaches 16 or 25 and is no longer eligible for this funding.

There are a number of budget reduction proposals, either within the General Fund (GF) of DSG High Needs Block (HNB) linked to this principle, which are summarised below.

Title	Description	20/21 efficiency £'000	Funding
CCG Funding	SCC are paying for 100% of services that should be part-funded by health.	2,000	GF
Health Contributions (part of SEND)		1,500	DSG HNB
Adult Social Care (part of SEND)	Post 16 funding decisions can improve the split of allocations between ASC and Childrens	500	DSG HNB
Continuing Health Care (part of SEND)	Increase contribution rate from existing 0.04% to benchmarked 5%	4,000	DSG HNB
Total		8,000	

Key budget areas – CAMHS

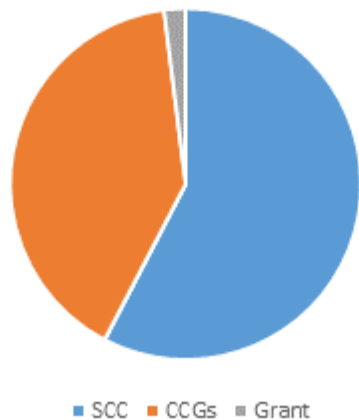
2019/20 CAMHS Expenditure £m
(excludes transformation funding)



The overall spend in this area is over £8m broken down in this first chart by the type of spend.

That funding comes from a number of sources which is then shown in the second chart.

2019/20 CAMHS Funding Split
(excludes transformation funding)

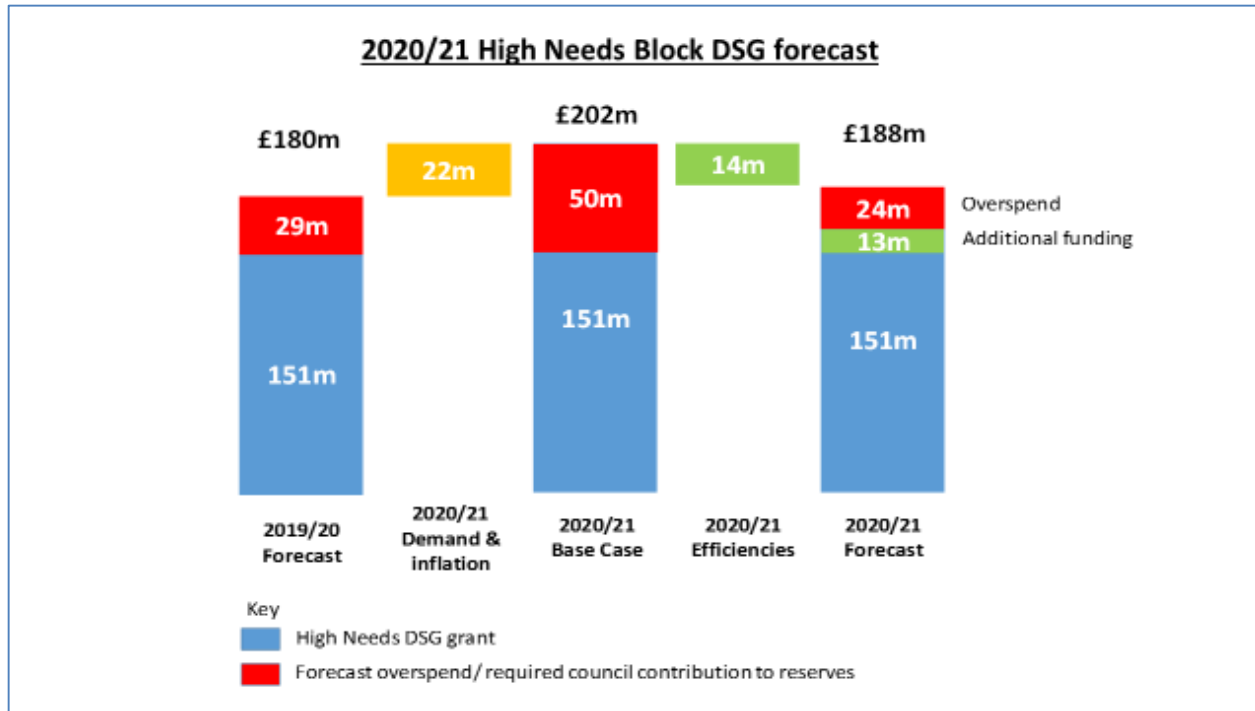


These contracts are due to go out for re-procurement in early 20/21 as part of the recommissioning of Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health services in Surrey. This will be a joint process with the CCGs.

The CCG NHS transformation funding is not included within these figures as this has yet to be confirmed.

Key budget areas – SEND Transformation

The SEND transformation programme is focused on reducing the DSG High Needs Block (HNB) overspend. The forecast position as at period 8 for 19/20 is a £29m overspend as shown below.



- Overall DSG High Needs Block (HNB) pressure in 20/21 is forecast to be c£50m including inflation and demand increases
- Current overspend on HNB is £29m in 19/20 which is planned to reduce to £24m in 20/21 (the £5m MTFS efficiency)
- The balance of the £26m gap (£50m minus £24m) is to come from the additional £13m DSG HNB funding plus additional cost avoidance/efficiency of £14m

CFLC Capital Budgets

- There are also a number of Capital projects within the 20/21 budget for CFLC.
- These are split into two categories, those that are directly managed by CFLC and those where CFLC is the client and other Council services, such as property, manage the delivery of these projects.
- The schemes included in the 20/21 budget and beyond are summarised on the following slides.

CFLC Capital Budgets (1)

Project	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	Forecast						
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Adaptations For CWD	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.7
Devolved formula capital	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	5.7
Foster carer grants	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.0
Education Management System	-	0.9	0.2	-	-	-	1.1
Schools Exp Funded By Income	3.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
School Kitchens	0.4	0.2	-	-	-	-	0.2
Library Kiosks	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total CFLC managed schemes	6.4	2.6	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	9.5
Schools Basic Need	19.5	5.0	15.0	20.4	25.1	5.7	71.1
SEND Strategy	3.0	8.9	10.0	7.6	-	-	26.5
Recurring Capital Maintenance Schools	9.7	4.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	4.3	31.3
Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Schemes	-	0.8	-	-	-	-	0.8
Schools Basic Need	-	13.3	14.7	18.0	18.6	-	64.6
Recurring Capital Maintenance Schools	-	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	48.9
SEND Strategy	-	0.2	-	-	-	-	0.2
Cranleigh School Scheme	0.3	6.1	6.2	1.0	-	-	13.3
Henley Fort	0.1	0.4	-	-	-	-	0.4
PSBP2 school projects	-	5.8	-	-	-	-	5.8
Priority Schools Building Programme	-	2.2	-	-	-	-	2.2
Reigate Priory School	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woking Library	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Horley Library	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total CFLC client projects within Property	32.9	56.9	63.1	64.3	61.0	19.7	265.0
Overall Total	39.3	59.5	65.0	66.0	62.6	21.4	274.5

CFLC Capital Budgets (2)

- In addition to the budgets shown on the previous slide there is a further £72.3m of CFLC schemes contained within the corporate pipeline allocations. These include;
 - Surrey Outdoor Learning
 - Looked After Children Properties
 - Pupil Referral Unit
 - Quadrant Hubs; and
 - Priority Schools Building Programme
- These schemes are yet to go through the full governance process so will be held in the pipeline until this is completed.

Summary

- Whilst there is a comprehensive efficiency plan in place as shown earlier in these slides and also within the accompanying budget report, there are also a number of risks which may impact on the delivery of these plans
- Implementing the strategies and service transformation within CFLC will be the key to ensuring these financial benefits are met.
- Regular and effective monitoring of progress through the Council's governance process will help to identify any divergence at the earliest opportunity allowing for potential mitigating action to be taken.
- Capital schemes need also to be delivered on time to ensure the benefits intended are realised.

Children's, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

21 January 2020



Purpose of report:

The Select Committee are asked to review and endorse the Corporate Parenting Strategy which will be published and become a Council wide document.

Introduction:

Corporate Parenting is one of the most important responsibilities any local authority undertakes. This strategy has therefore been written to provide clarity about the legislation, principles guidance, and governance relating to such responsibilities.

Strategy Content:

1. The report draws on the requirements of the Social Work Act 2017 and the seven principles any local authority must consider. The strategy defines the Surrey vision for Corporate Parenting and how it fits with the wider Surrey community vision and its clear commitment to promoting the wellbeing of all children.
2. It incorporates the 2018 promise to Looked after Children and Care Leavers and provides additional detail on how the council will deliver on each area.
3. The report defines how Surrey will measure success and the roles of the Corporate Parenting Operational Group and the Corporate Parenting Board in monitoring and challenging these.
4. Of particular relevance to this committee is the request for it to receive an annual report on the implementation of this strategy and to make recommendations as required.
5. The User Voice and Participation team, which includes a number of care experienced apprentices are currently producing a summary document of the strategy for children and young people. A web based version with additional graphics will also be made available once approved.
6. Attached to the Strategy is an appendix with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee is asked to endorse the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Next steps:

To agree a date for the committee to receive the annual report as recommended.

Report contact: Tina Benjamin Director of Corporate Parenting

Contact details: tina.benjamin@surreycc.gov.uk

Surrey County Council
Corporate Parenting Strategy

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Appendix One – Key legal responsibilities towards Looked After Children and Care Leavers

Introduction

In the community vision for Surrey, there is a clear commitment to promoting the wellbeing of children and to ensuring that 'no child is left behind'. This aim applies to all children and young people in the county but we must have a particular commitment to those children and young people who are 'looked after' by Surrey County Council.

The council's relationship with looked after children, and with those leaving the council's care, is unlike any other we have with Surrey's residents. We are 'Corporate Parents' to these young people and, as such, we have legal and moral responsibilities towards them like to those we have towards our own children. In simple terms we need to be good parents who aim to be the best possible parents we can be.

Looked after children need and deserve good parents. We must help many recover from and overcome damage and disadvantage they have experienced before coming into the council's care. We must help all thrive and flourish; reach and exceed their potential and expand their life chances. We must help our care leavers become resilient and independent adults.

For the council to be a good corporate parent, or better, we need to have the highest ambitions for children and young people looked after and have a 'whole council' approach to their care and upbringing, involving staff, carers and Elected Members alike. We need to engage the hearts and minds of all and the resources and capacity of many in helping to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

We are passionate about doing the best for our looked after children and young people and we want everyone connected to the council and our partners to share this passion. This document describes our vision for children and young people looked after by the council and the values which inform the way we will meet our corporate parenting responsibilities. It goes on to outline our priorities and the actions we will take to ensure that no child looked after by the council is 'left behind'.

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families

Dave Hill, Executive Director of Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture

Looked After Children and Care Leavers

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally 'looked after' if, under the age of 18yrs, s/he is provided with accommodation for a continuous period for more than 24 hours; or is subject to a Care Order or Placement Order. In certain circumstances this includes disabled children in receipt of a series of 'respite care' placements.

The council's key duty towards looked after children is to 'safeguard and promote' their welfare and to 'make such use of services available for children cared for by their own parents as appears to the Authority reasonable'.

Children cease being looked after when they return home; are adopted or made subject to Special Guardianship. Other young people cease being looked after on their 18th birthday when, in line with the Care Leavers Regulations 2010, they become young adults many of whom are eligible for support and assistance as care leavers until aged 21yrs or, if pursuing education or training, aged 25yrs.

Further detail of the legal responsibilities towards children looked after and care leavers is found in **Appendix One**.

Corporate Parenting – Legislation and Guidance

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 states that a Local Authority is the corporate parent of children looked after and care leavers. It should act in the best interests of these children and young people; keeping them safe; promoting their physical and mental wellbeing, encouraging them to express their views, wishes and feelings; taking account of these views. It should make sure that they live in stable homes, have consistent education or training, and healthy relationships. It should have high aspirations for these children and help them prepare for adulthood and independent living.

Statutory Guidance to the Act (2018) states that the role that councils play in looking after children is one of the most important things they do. It describes the 'unique responsibility' councils have towards these children and defines a simple and critical question for corporate parents to ask when considering matters affecting looked after children and care leavers – 'would this be good enough for my child?'

The Guidance goes on to stress that all elected members and officers of a council should share corporate parenting responsibilities towards children looked after and care leavers. A test of the strength of a corporate parenting approach is that these responsibilities are a priority for everyone, both elected members and officers, and all are concerned about looked after children and care leavers – 'as if they were their own'. Good corporate parents will recognise all looked after children and care leavers as individuals who need, like all children, 'stability...and to be loved, cared for and feel safe,' but will also recognise that good corporate parenting must at the same time promote and enable recovery, resilience and wellbeing. This means that regard, capacity and resources from all council departments and elected members

need to be harnessed to promote the best outcomes possible for children looked after and care leavers.

While specific corporate parenting responsibilities do not apply to partner agencies, the Guidance notes that councils with the highest ambitions for looked after children and care leavers will seek to engage other agencies in meeting the needs of their young people. Some, but not all, of these agencies will have general duties to co-operate with the council in fulfilling its corporate parenting responsibilities. This means that councils will need to be the strongest advocates for their looked after children and care leavers to secure services from other agencies to meet the needs of individual children and the looked after population as a whole.

Levels of Corporate Parenting Responsibility

Research on putting corporate parenting into practice (NCB 2008), identified different levels of understanding and responsibilities for council officers and elected members in respect of their corporate parenting duties. For Surrey County Council these differentiated roles can be illustrated as follows (diagram to follow):

- The Chief Executive; Leader of the Council; Executive Director of CFLLC; and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families together share overall responsibility for ensuring the council is a good corporate parent. The Cabinet Member chairs the Corporate Parenting Board which drives and monitors the council's corporate parenting strategy.
- The Director of Corporate Parenting; operational LAC service managers and staff and carers working directly with looked after children and care leavers; Elected Members sitting on the Corporate Parenting Board or relevant select committees together have specialist and specific corporate parenting responsibilities.
- All other council officers and Elected Members together have general responsibilities to have regard for looked after children and care leavers, to understand the needs of these children and young people and to contribute where possible to Surrey's overall corporate parenting priorities.

Corporate Parenting Principles

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 set out seven corporate parenting principles to which councils should have regard in exercising their responsibilities to looked after children and care leavers:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.

3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
7. To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

These principles are not new requirements, but rather describe a way of embedding a positive culture in local authorities towards looked after children and care leavers and provide a framework which helps local authorities understand and comply with their duties to these young people. The council welcomes and supports these principles and their aims and is determined that officers, carers and elected members act according to the principles in their corporate parenting roles.

Our Vision and Values

Our corporate parenting vision is:

To be the best corporate parents we can be, working together to provide children and young people in our care with happy and healthy childhoods, helping them reach and exceed their potential and aspirations, and supporting them into successful adulthood.

The values we bring to help us realise our vision are:

- We must be the strongest champions of and advocates for all our looked after children and care leavers.
- We should have positive regard for all looked after children and care leavers and make sure that all are nurtured, feel loved and supported.
- Looked after children and care leavers are 'our' children and young people and we must have strong ambitions and aim high for all.
- All our young people are individuals and unique and we must parent each child as such.
- We must build trusting relationships with our children and young people so they feel able to give us their views and can talk to us about their wishes and feelings, their anxieties and hopes.
- We must listen to our children and young people and take account of their views on all matters which affect them.
- We must be resilient and persistent parents with an uncompromising approach to doing the best for our children and young people and a willingness to 'go the extra mile'.
- We want to continuously improve as corporate parents and continuously improve outcomes for our young people.

Our Promise to Looked After Children and Care Leavers

During 2018 we talked to looked after children and care leavers about their expectations of us as corporate parents. Through these conversations we developed a promise to our young people. In implementing our corporate parenting strategy we need to be mindful of this promise and do our utmost to act by it:

(insert into highlight box):

We will do the best we can to make sure where you live is right for you.

We will help you keep in touch safely with the important people in your life.

We will tell you about options and involve you fully in making plans about your life.

We will support you with your education and help you grow up with good skills for life.

To keep you safe and ensure that you feel safe.

Developing the promise with young people also led to the creation of a list of 'must dos' in respect of our actions and behaviours. These are detailed in **Appendix Two**.

Our Corporate Parenting Priorities and Actions

Taking account of the seven corporate parenting principles and the promise we have made to young people, we have identified a number of priorities for our corporate parenting strategy. These priorities are set out below with the actions we will take to address them.

Safeguarding

Helping children and young people be safe, feel safe and have stability in their lives is an essential role for all parents. This is particularly important for us as corporate parents of looked after children and young people, many of whom will have entered our care because of neglect and abuse and some of whom will remain vulnerable, for example to exploitation, while in our care. We need to do everything we can to keep children safe, help them recover from trauma they may have experienced and protect them from further harm. We will:

- Provide high quality safeguarding training to all staff and carers working with children and young people looked after.
- Ensure that safeguarding is a central consideration in all care plans, placement plans and pathway plans.
- Do all we can to provide children and young people with safe placements in safe environments.

- Work persistently to reduce the extent of children and young people going missing from their placements and to reduce the risks faced by young people who go missing.
- Ensure that all looked after children and young people who go missing have 'return home' interviews on their return.
- Work closely with other agencies including the Police and District and Borough councils to minimise risks for our looked after children and young people associated with going missing or living in local environments which pose particular risks.
- Help children and young people looked after access and benefit from high quality therapeutic help.
- Ensure that the safeguarding of looked after children and young people is prominent in the work of Surrey's Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Engaging with Young People – The User Voice

The young person's voice must be at the centre of our approach to corporate parenting. We want mutually respectful and collaborative relationships with our children and young people. This means embedding a culture of fully involving young people in all matters affecting them, welcoming and encouraging their participation, actively listening to and genuinely taking account of their views. We will:

- Involve all children and young people looked after and care leavers, subject to their age and understanding, in any assessment, plan or review in respect of their own lives and upbringing.
- Support young people to express their views in meetings such as child protection conferences, looked after children statutory reviews, pathway planning meetings and in their care placements.
- Provide advocates and supporters to help young people's views to be heard in these settings.
- Evaluate the extent and quality of young people's participation in all casework auditing undertaken for quality assurance purposes.
- Canvas and survey the views of children and young people on their experience of our care on a regular basis.
- Support the operation, further development and 'reach' of Surrey's Children in Care Council to enable a wider spectrum of young people to express views and challenge about their experiences in the council's care.
- Ensure that messages from the CICC are widely disseminated to officers and elected members and that responses are provided consistently.
- Members of the Corporate Parenting Board and senior managers will routinely offer to attend meetings of the CICC if requested and will take opportunities to meet, talk to and be with young people at events such as awaydays, celebration events and parties.

- Offer training on young people's participation to council officers, carers and elected members.

Assessment and Planning

We know that children and young people are more likely to thrive in their own families and that outcomes for children looked after typically lag behind those of their peers. This means that, first and foremost, we need to support children to live, or return, to their own families wherever possible. When we look after a child, we need to do so with a clear purpose – to help change circumstances to enable a return home; to prepare a child and to obtain an alternative permanent family via adoption or Special Guardianship; or, for older young people who may not choose to be adopted, to provide stability and long-term care. We will:

- Work relentlessly in line with our overall Family Resilience in Surrey practice framework to ensure that our early help services, our new service models (eg Family Safeguarding) and our overall work with partners are effective in helping vulnerable children remain safely with their families and prevent the need for children to come into the council's care.
- Allocate a qualified social worker for all children looked after.
- Ensure that every child looked after has the highest quality assessment of their needs and a realistic care plan which focusses on permanency and stability.
- Help return children to their families when it is safe and in a child's best interests to do so.
- Ensure that permanency plans for children do not drift and are implemented in a robust and timely way.
- Seek to complete court processes efficiently and find prospective adoptive families for children as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that every child looked after has their health and education needs regularly assessed and met through specific plans.
- Review plans for all children looked after regularly with reviews chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers.
- Ensure that each young person leaving care has a pathway plan specific to their needs.
- Routinely examine key performance and quality assurance information to ensure the quality and impact of our assessment and planning practice.
- Implement a workforce strategy to enable children looked after to have consistent social workers, independent reviewing officers, leaving care workers and carers.

Placements

What we typically call placements are homes for our looked after children which play a key part in their care and upbringing. As such they need to be of the highest quality. Our children have a very diverse range of needs and having a wide range of placements is essential to meet those different needs – the lack of placement choice can be an issue for social workers and young people alike. As young people move towards independence, we also need a wide variety of supported, semi-independent placements and permanent housing options for our young people. We will:

- Always seek to enable children looked after to live with extended family or kinship members when possible.
- Consider foster care as a first option of choice for all our children and young people
- Recognise that residential care may be a positive choice for some young people.
- Maintain our strong focus on recruiting more in-house foster carers and residential workers, investing strongly in their support and training and validating the contribution they make to our corporate parenting.
- Continue to implement our capital investment programme across our residential estate moving towards a model of smaller 'ordinary homes'.
- Seek to extend our placement options by implementing a robust placement sufficiency strategy.
- Strive to place our looked after children with providers rated independently as 'good' or better and minimise the use of unregulated provision.
- Seek to minimise the number of placement moves looked after children may experience, especially those which are unplanned.
- Maintain a constant focus on increasing the numbers of our looked after children who are able to live within the county and close to their communities.
- Closely and routinely monitor key data and information about our placements at both operational and strategic levels.
- Commission all placements for our children whether with in-house carers or with other providers so that our expectations of placements are absolutely clear – each child will have a placement plan which we will review as part of the statutory review process.
- Work with district and borough councils on placement choice, especially semi-independent and permanent housing options for older young people.

Education, Training and Employment

Like all good parents, we must focus our efforts to ensure that looked after children receive the best possible education and reach and exceed their potential - we must recognise the educational disadvantages our children may well have faced, the poorer educational outcomes looked after children typically achieve and challenge

ourselves and our young people to change this situation in Surrey. We must also recognise that a school is, for most children, a key place where friendships are made and where childhoods can be enriched through access to sport, leisure and cultural activities. We want all our young people to enjoy and achieve in their schools, be able to access further and higher education if they wish or high quality apprenticeships and training with increasingly good prospects for employment as adults. We will:

- Work with our carers and officers to increase their ambition and support for the educational outcomes which can be achieved by our looked after children and young people.
- Challenge our Virtual School to be the strongest advocates for our looked after children's education in their dealings with individual schools and local authorities.
- Ensure that all looked after children of or approaching school age have an individual personal education plan reviewed regularly and updated.
- Ensure that any looked after child or young person with special educational needs or disabilities has a comprehensive education, health and care plan.
- Work with schools to make best use of Pupil Premium entitlement to promote the educational outcomes of individual looked after children.
- Always seek to enable looked after children to remain in the schools they were attending when they come into our care.
- Strive to reduce the number of changes of school experienced by looked after children.
- Always look to place our looked after children in schools rated by Ofsted as 'good' or better.
- Work closely with schools and carers to support a child's transition to a new school setting.
- Ensure a constant focus on school attendance and exclusions of looked after children, keeping to a minimum the time our children are out of school.
- Work with further education providers, employers, district and borough councils and other public sector partners to expand the post 16 education, training and employment offer which can be accessed by older young people in and leaving our care.

Health and Wellbeing

Good parents want their children to enjoy good health and wellbeing and are the strongest advocates for good healthcare for their children. In the same way, we must be attentive and vigilant towards the health needs of looked after children and young people. We need to provide all looked after children with good routine healthcare, making sure that they access more specialist treatment when necessary. Many looked after children will have experienced damage through neglect or abuse in their

earlier lives and some will experience trauma while in our care. It is particularly important, therefore, that looked after children can access and benefit from high quality child and adolescent mental health services. We will:

- Ensure that every child has an initial health assessment on becoming looked after which is reviewed at least annually.
- Ensure that our carers and officers are attentive to both the physical and the emotional or mental health needs of our children, as well as health needs arising from 'risky' behaviours such as substance misuse.
- Provide support and consultation to carers and residential staff in respect of caring for looked after children and young people with challenging health needs.
- Encourage carers to provide and promote healthy lifestyles to children and young people they are looking after.
- Work with Public Health and other colleagues to make prominent the health needs of looked after children and young people in Surrey's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Work with NHS commissioners and providers to ensure the continued commissioning and provision of specialist CAMHs services in Surrey (3Cs, Hope and Extended Hope) to meet the emotional and mental health needs of looked after children and to prevent placement breakdown.
- Strive to ensure that all young people placed outside of Surrey are able to access relevant NHS services to meet their physical and mental health needs which are local to their placements.
- With NHS commissioners, continue to lobby NHS England and central government for investment in local services, including in-patient provision, to meet the needs of young people with acute mental health conditions and to avoid the need for placements for young people at considerable distance from their homes.
- Promote the smoothest transitions possible from children's to adults' health services for those of our care leavers who have continuing healthcare needs.

Leisure, Culture and Life Skills

Like all children, looked after children need and deserve opportunities which can enrichen their lives. As corporate parents we need to encourage and enable our children to participate in, and benefit from, a wide range of leisure, sport and cultural opportunities such as attending a youth club; learning a musical instrument; playing for a sports team or pursuing other hobbies and interests. We also recognise that there are life skills it is essential for our young people to gain. We will:

- Ensure that staff and carers actively promote enrichment opportunities for children and young people in their care.

- Encourage our carers to spot talent and particular interests in young people in their care and support and encourage their development.
- Be clear in our expectations that funding notionally allocated to helping children and young people access leisure and culture and pursue hobbies and interests specified in fostering allowances and placement fees is used for these purposes.
- Ensure that all children and young people receive pocket money and allowances to enable them to make choices and gain an understanding of managing money.
- Help looked after children and young people to purchase items such as personal laptops and driving lessons according to their age and stage and in line with our financial assistance procedures.
- Encourage young people to take up part-time jobs to experience the world of work.
- Engage with schools, district and borough councils and others in the county to maximise access to leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for looked after children and young people.

Leaving Care

Leaving care, like leaving home, is a critical transition for our young people and supporting them through this transition into adulthood is a major responsibility for us as corporate parents. This is not simply a matter of helping young people acquire a checklist of life and independent living skills – although it is those things – but also helping young people develop resilience, have a comfortable sense of self and have options for their futures. We need to recognise that young people mature at different paces and that some young people will struggle to gain independence and struggle in independence. We need to aim to be there to pick up and back up our young people when we are needed. A key test of our worth as corporate parents is the ability of young people to choose and enjoy enduring relationships with us – our carers, residential and leaving care staff and social workers in particular. We will:

- Ensure that all young people in our care over the age of 16yrs has a pathway plan specific to their needs and aspirations and an allocated personal advisor.
- Ensure that all pathway plans have a specific focus on care leavers being able to access suitable accommodation and education, employment or training.
- Expect our foster carers and residential homes to provide opportunities for young people to develop independent living skills appropriate to their age and stage.
- Seek to provide the offer of 'staying put', to young people 18-21yrs old living with foster carers subject to their wishes.

- Ensure Surrey's children's homes are able to be welcoming and supportive of young people leaving their care to 'stay close'.
- Work with partners in district and borough councils; providers of registered social housing and third sector organisations to commission and provide a range of supported, semi-independent accommodation and permanent housing options for our care leavers.
- Provide leaving care financial support, grants (eg setting up home) and other forms of financial relief (eg from council tax) to care leavers in line with our financial assistance policies.
- Fully support any young person who wishes to pursue higher education to obtain places and apply for student loans. We will fund vacation accommodation for young people as necessary.
- Continue our work with further education colleges, employment training providers and Chambers of Commerce to help young people access high quality training and apprenticeships,
- Challenge ourselves and our partners to provide specific internship, apprenticeship and employment opportunities for our looked after young people and care leavers.

Success Measures

Councils are accountable to central government for the outcomes for looked after children and young people and are required to submit data in annual collections. In Surrey, our managers and staff need 'real time' performance information on all aspects of their work, obtained through use of IT systems and the publication of monthly performance 'compendiums'. Senior managers and Elected Members need information to assist their strategic management and leadership roles, provided by regular reports to relevant management groups and committees. The LGA's publication 'Corporate Parenting - resource pack' (2018) advises that reports should be published regularly on key indicators in relation to looked after children and young people including:

- Placement stability.
- Children in care placed out of area or at a distance.
- Health data.
- Educational attainment.
- Proportion of care leavers that the council has regular contact with.
- Availability of suitable accommodation for care leavers.

The Corporate Parenting Board will receive regular reports on these indicators and has decided that the following additional indicators will be reported:

- Entries into care, exits from care and length of time in care.
- Placement categories.
- Young people in care going missing.

- Young people in care at risk of exploitation.
- Proportion of care leavers in education, employment and training.

While data is an important source of information to manage performance and judge success, we also need to consider subjective and qualitative information to gain a more rounded view of how effective and 'good' corporate parents we are. This includes:

- Consistently and persistently seeking the views of children and young people about their care and upbringing – in day to day situations, in meetings, through surveys and at events.
- Regularly canvassing the views of our carers and staff.
- Undertaking routine quality assurance of casework with looked after children and young people.
- Examining escalations made by Independent Reviewing Officers and the wider content of their annual report.

Governance

Corporate Parenting Board

The Corporate Parenting Board, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families will champion and monitor the corporate parenting strategy and help drive its implementation. The Board of cross party members and senior managers will meet regularly, receive reports including performance reports, undertake strategic and thematic enquiry into specific elements of the strategy and seek ways of resolving barriers to its success. Collectively and individually, Board members will engage regularly with children, young people, staff and carers to help their understanding of issues affecting our looked after children and care leavers.

The Corporate Parenting Operational Group

This group will take forward issues and decisions arising from the Board which require the engagement of operational services in and outside the council. The group will consist of senior managers in the council and, importantly, key partner agencies eg NHS; Police; schools, enabling their direct input into the implementation of the strategy.

Children in Care Council

This is a self-selecting group of children and young people which, amongst other things, makes representations about issues which affect and interest them. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families and top managers will routinely offer to attend CICC meetings and may be 'called in' to do so. The CICC should be informed of and involved in decisions and service developments affecting Surrey's looked after children and care leavers.

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee

This select committee will consider and scrutinise the implementation of the council's corporate parenting strategy via an annual report to the committee and other reports as requested. Any comment and recommendations arising will be made to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families and the council's Cabinet.

Appendix One – Key legal responsibilities towards looked after children and care leavers

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is legally 'looked after' if, under the age of 18yrs, s/he is provided with accommodation for a continuous period for more than 24 hours; or is subject to a Care Order or Placement Order. In certain circumstances this includes disabled children in receipt of a series of 'respite care' placements.

The council's key duty towards looked after children is to 'safeguard and promote' their welfare and to 'make such use of services available for children cared for by their own parents as appears to the Authority reasonable'.

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 place a duty on the Local Authority to prepare a care plan for each looked after child and to review the care plan at statutory intervals. Before each placement, a placement plan needs to be prepared, and reviewed as part of the statutory review process.

The Children Act 1989 describes the accommodation to be provided to children looked after as local authority foster placements (including with family, friends and kinship carers approved as foster carers) or placement in a registered children's home. Such placements should, in most circumstances, be with siblings who are also looked after; and as near to a child's home as possible to avoid disruption to contact with family members or with friends, or to education or training.

The Local Authority must ensure that a health assessment is undertaken for each child when they become looked after and a personal education plan is drawn up. These should be reviewed at least annually.

An Independent Reviewing Officer should be appointed for each looked after child.

Children cease being looked after when they return home; are adopted or made subject to Special Guardianship. Other young people cease being looked after on their 18th birthday when, in line with the Care Leavers Regulations 2010, they become young adults many of whom are eligible for support and assistance as care leavers until aged 21yrs or, if pursuing education or training, aged 25yrs.

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a duty on the Local Authority to enable a looked after child to remain with their foster carer beyond their 18th birthday and up to their 21st birthday subject to their wishes or those of their foster carer – known as ‘staying put’. Although this duty does not apply to young people living in residential care, the council is committed to developing ‘staying close’ arrangements for young people to continue to receive support from residential homes.

Appendix Two - Top 10 must dos....as per flyer.

- 1) **Believe in us** - Believe in us always and help us to achieve our hopes and dreams.
- 2) **Be on time and reliable** - Turn up when you say you will. Keep us updated with phone calls or messages and always return our calls when we get in touch. If you promise something, make sure you keep it. Let us know and remind us when you are coming, we have lives too.
- 3) **Have an open and curious mind** - Ask us questions and talk to us about what we need. Look for creative ways to support us and get to know us, believe what we tell you.
- 4) **Have time for us** - The quality of the visit is more important than how long the visit is - Not everyone wants to sit and talk for an hour. Sometime we want to do an activity while we talk, the review does not count as a visit.
- 5) **Be honest** -Tell us why we are in care. Always tells us the truth and have honest conversations with us.
- 6) **Documents for life** - Always check to see if we have a passport and a birth certificate. Always clarify a child or young person's status. If this can't be done, make sure you tell us the reason why.
- 7) **Help us keep in contact** - Help us to keep in touch with family and extended family. We also want help with keeping in touch with extended family members. Support us to make contact as good as possible. If there is a reason why we can't have contact explain it, do not just say no.
- 8) **Listen to us** - Our views are important and it is important to listen to us and hear what we are saying.
- 9) **Let us know what we are entitled to** - Tell us what we are entitled to and remind us of this as we get older. We may not want to know when we are younger.
- 10) **Treat us like individuals** - We are all different and you need to get to know us to find out how we work and what we need. Take the time to get to know us as individuals.

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Children's, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee

21 January 2020



UPDATE: Ofsted and Children's Commissioner Inspections

Purpose of the Item:

To provide a summary of the recent inspections of Surrey's children's services including the latest Ofsted Monitoring Visit and the final review by the Children's Commissioner for Surrey.

The reports from the Ofsted Lead Inspector and the Commissioner are attached to this report and provide further detail for the Select Committee.

Introduction:

1. This report is being provided for information to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee and follows the Cabinet Member Update at the 13 December 2019 ([Item 5](#)) meeting of the Select Committee; reports of the inspections and further details of the findings and feedback are now available and outlined in this report.
2. Further detail on the content of the report and the inspections is available if required along with information regarding the actions being taken by the service.
3. This information is also being reported to Cabinet as part of the 'Children's Improvement Update' on 28 January 2020.

Ofsted Monitoring Visit:

4. Children's services in Surrey were judged by Ofsted in May 2018 to be in a critical state. As a result Ofsted are carrying out a series of 'Monitoring Visits' approximately every 3-4 months, focussing on a different part of the service each time, and assessing the quality of practice for supporting and safeguarding children and families in Surrey.
5. On 31 October and 1 November 2019 Ofsted carried out their fourth Monitoring Visit of Surrey's children's services. The focus of this visit was on the effectiveness of child protection investigations, the

quality of statutory assessments and the impact of child protection and child in need plans in reducing risks and improving children's circumstances.

6. A letter from the inspectors following the visit detailing their findings was [published on the Ofsted website](#) on 18 December 2019 and a copy is attached here (*see Annex A - Ofsted Monitoring Visit Letter 18.12.19*).
7. The inspectors found that we have made substantial progress over the last year. They were really pleased to see improvements in both the timeliness and quality of interventions. They saw that thresholds were more appropriately managed, that caseloads are more manageable and that management oversight is regularly recorded on records, although the impact of this is variable. They found practitioners to be confident, skilled and enthusiastic when talking about children and their work.
8. While the progress made in these areas of children's services has been recognised by Ofsted, there is still more to do and the inspectors commented that "practice is not yet consistently strong for all children"; some specific issues highlighted by the inspectors include:
 - Ensuring practice is consistent across all teams, services and quadrants so that children and families receive the same high quality of service.
 - Supervision and management oversight needs to be more reflective and focussed on improving outcomes for children.
 - Continue the recruitment of new specialist workers to achieve multi-disciplinary social work teams.
 - Child protection conference chairs must document their analysis and evaluation clearly and concisely.
 - While documenting children's views has improved, they must be better evaluated to generate well-informed questions and hypotheses about future levels of risk.
 - Child in need and child protection plans must be made consistently 'smarter' with a greater concentration on the progress and measurement of plan objectives.
 - Continue to introduce the 'neglect assessment tool' currently being piloted in the South East across all quadrants.
 - Further improve and evolve outreach work with children who are at acute risk of exploitation.
9. Ofsted will conduct the next Monitoring Visit on 7 & 8 April 2020. With agreement from the Lead Inspector, this next visit will be treated like a full inspection so we will not be aware of the services being inspected until just before the visit. Following this fifth visit, Ofsted will then assess whether Surrey's children's services are ready for a full re-inspection and we currently expect this to take place later in 2020.

Children's Commissioner Visit – Review of Progress & Final Recommendations:
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10. Following the 2018 full Ofsted inspection a Children's Commissioner was also appointed by the Department for Education (DfE) to make a judgement about whether children's services should continue to be retained by Surrey County Council (SCC). The Commissioner conducted an initial comprehensive review of children's services in September 2018 concluding that SCC had a credible improvement plan in place and acknowledged that "the Council recognised and accepted the depth and complex nature of the issues it faces in children's social care".

11. A further 'interim review' was carried out in April 2019 as a check on our progress towards implementing our new structure and new model and to ensure we were on-track to improve the culture and practice for our staff, management and leadership and also our partners. The findings from the interim review were reported to the DfE in May 2019 and the Commissioner's interim conclusion was as follows:

"The authority has made rapid and solid progress since I submitted my original report. It is important to emphasise that this is from a starting point of seriously failing services and there is still some way to go before there is clear evidence that vulnerable children and their families are being better served. Nonetheless, I can give a positive message on the Council's progress and the effectiveness of the leadership that has been put in place. I will report again in 6 months but I am able to commend the progress that has been made whilst continuing to emphasize the magnitude of the task."

12. The Commissioner has now carried out a final review of progress in November and December 2019. Feedback was shared with Surrey County Council on 12 December 2019 and we have now received the Commissioner's final report to the Minister and DfE (*see Annex B - Report of the Non-Executive Commissioner for Children's Services Surrey - 20 December 2019*).

13. The methodology of the Commissioner's final review was the same as his previous reviews. Senior Managers and practitioners from Cornwall County Council completed on-site visits to Surrey's children's services, meeting with practitioners, managers and partners as well as holding focus groups both with staff, young people and partner agencies. The review also included audits of around 40 children's cases along with analysis of the following:
 - New / updated policies and procedures;
 - Strategies and frameworks;
 - Our plans (e.g. Improvement plan, Transformation plans, Corporate Parenting Board, Safeguarding Partnership plans etc.);
 - Child and young people records;
 - Performance information and intelligence.

14. The Commissioner's findings were overall very positive with recognition of the "significant progress that has been made in all ten areas" that were highlighted in his first report in September 2018. In summary, **the Commissioner's view is that "sustainable improvement is underway in the Authority and that an alternative delivery model no longer needs to be a consideration"**.
15. Further information is available in the attached report (Annex B) with the key findings and conclusions from the Commissioner as follows:
- Progress has been impressive and there is clear evidence of practice improvement and cultural change.
 - Staff morale is good and they report a positive working environment.
 - The introduction of performance management processes and quality standards based on sound data has been particularly impressive.
 - There is now a clear expectation of what is required of staff, linked to an understood social work model.
 - There is still variability across the four quadrants but consistency is much improved along with an overall rise in standards.
 - The North East area has moved to high quality accommodation and in some areas, is leading the way in terms of improvement.
 - The political support has been consistent and delivered on the promises made when the authority went into intervention.
 - The senior management team is strong and the authority has demonstrated a commitment to improving and prioritising children's services.
 - There is still much work to do and maintaining pace will be a significant challenge but the authority has come a long way in a short time in terms of improving services to children, young people and families in Surrey
16. We are now awaiting agreement from the Minister on the Commissioner's recommendation and the publication of the Commissioner's report. The report will be published by the DfE and the Select Committee will be informed once this has happened.

Conclusions:

17. The service has embarked upon a comprehensive transformation programme with a major restructure of children's services completing last year to support the shift to a model based on early support and prevention. The significant internal and external scrutiny of the improvement programme, including the recent feedback from Ofsted and the Commissioner, shows the huge amount of progress made to improve and demonstrates that Surrey's children's services are progressing well on the improvement journey. This scrutiny is welcome and provides important insight into the impact of the work

however we continue to maintain that this is our journey to providing good and outstanding services for the children, young people and families that we support because they deserve nothing less.

Recommendations:

- The Select Committee notes the overall findings and feedback from the recent Children’s Commissioner Visit and the fourth Ofsted Monitoring Visit.
- The Select Committee receives a further update at the 25 June 2020 meeting on the delivery of the Children’s improvement programme and the findings from the April 2020 Ofsted Monitoring Visit.

Next steps:

The Commissioner’s report and subsequent recommendations detailed in this report will be reviewed by the Minister (Undersecretary of State for Education or equivalent) and the Department for Education. The Minister will then confirm any further specific action that is required by the Authority however the formal involvement of the Commissioner for Surrey’s children’s services has now ended (subject to formal agreement by the Minister).

Ofsted will next carry out a Monitoring Visit on 7 & 8 April 2020 and the report outlining the findings will be published late-April 2020. At this point, Ofsted will make a judgement on whether Surrey’s services are ready for a full re-inspection and if so, it is expected that a full re-inspection will take place later this year.

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Contact details: howard.bromley@surreycc.gov.uk

Annexes:

- Annex A - Ofsted Monitoring Visit Letter 18.12.19
- Annex B - Report of the Non-Executive Commissioner for Children’s Services Surrey - 20 December 2019

Sources/background papers:

None

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18 December 2019

Mr Dave Hill, CBE
Director for children, families, lifelong learning and culture
Surrey County Council
County Hall
Kingston Upon Thames
KT1 2DN

Dear Dave

Monitoring visit of Surrey children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the monitoring visit to Surrey children's services on the 31 October and 1 November 2019. The visit was the fourth monitoring visit since the local authority was judged inadequate overall in May 2018. The inspectors were Nick Stacey and Margaret Burke, Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated: the timeliness and effectiveness of strategy meetings and child protection investigations; the quality and timeliness of assessments completed about children and families; the progress made for children who are the subjects of child in need and child protection plans; and the response to older children who are experiencing, or who are at risk of, child exploitation.

Overview

Senior leaders and managers have made substantial progress in improving the response to children who are at risk of significant harm, and children who have subsequently become subject to child protection and child in need plans, since this area of practice was last evaluated at the September 2018 monitoring visit. A new practice model is being rolled out through a phased implementation programme, and all social workers seen during the visit have undertaken some initial training and have taken part in development activities. Critically, social worker caseloads in the assessment and family safeguarding teams have reduced markedly to an average of 15 cases, and these manageable workloads are enabling social workers to undertake an improving standard of assessment, planning and direct work with children. Overall, improvements in the quality of social work, management oversight and supervision are gathering momentum, but practice is not yet consistently strong for all children.

Social workers and managers have a better understanding and approach to children who are the subject of repeated assessments and plans, often over periods of many years. The impact and durability of multi-agency work with children is more

rigorously evaluated before cases are stepped down to early help or are closed. Management oversight and supervision are visible and regular. The recording of supervision often comprises lengthy reviews of work undertaken, and rarely features evidence of proactive, inquisitive approaches, generating questions and ideas for social workers to help them address entrenched difficulties, such as domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and mental illness. The planned recruitment of a range of new specialist workers to social work teams over the next few months, who have skills in working with complex adult difficulties, including domestic abuse, adult substance misuse and mental illness, is eagerly anticipated. Some specialist workers, notably child and adolescent mental health professionals, are already working alongside social workers, helping them to formulate ideas and plans in order to strengthen their direct work with children and parents.

Findings

Most strategy meetings are attended by relevant agencies, and all known information about children is considered. Decisions about whether to continue to a child protection enquiry are well evidenced, and initial steps and safety plans are set out well. Management decisions are clearly written, and demonstrate careful consideration of information relating to previous episodes of agency involvement with families. A small number of strategy meetings were limited to discussions between social workers and the police; in these instances, not all pertinent information about children was shared in order to inform an initial assessment of risk.

The outcomes of child protection enquiries are well recorded. Children are promptly seen, on their own, and, where necessary, repeatedly to ensure that their accounts and experiences are captured and understood. Social workers engage parents and carers thoughtfully, and a wide range of multi-agency information and previous history is thoroughly evaluated. Concluding decisions are carefully recorded by service managers, providing consistent senior management oversight of early safeguarding interventions.

The timeliness of initial child protection conferences (ICPCs) has declined in recent months. Inspectors did not see any further risks to children because of short delays, but the effectiveness of these meetings is inconsistent. ICPCs are typically well attended, and the participation of children and their carers is strongly promoted. Minutes often comprise dense and highly detailed verbatim recordings rather than concise informative summaries, reducing the accessibility of these important records. The views of children are captured, but, frequently, are not used to produce a clear picture of their lives at home, and the degree of continuing risk they may be exposed to. The practice of documenting risks, strengths and worries in columns, and the prevalent use of scaling exercises, can sometimes overcrowd and obscure, rather than illuminate, children's core risks and needs. Conference chairs do not always document their analysis and evaluation of risk crisply and clearly, and this indicates a lack of rigour in their expert decision-making responsibilities. Plans often feature numerous actions that are not prioritised to help parents and professionals work on the most important elements in a sequential way.

Assessments are completed within reasonable timeframes, and the reasons for undertaking them are set out clearly alongside initial plans. The improved threshold management and gatekeeping at the children's single point of access, the local authority's 'front door', continues to be effective. This results in fewer children and families experiencing assessments that are inappropriately either discontinued or that culminate in no help being provided. Parental histories and previous episodes of involvement are helpfully summarised. This provides an understanding of recurring adult vulnerabilities that adversely affect the provision of reliable, safe and nurturing parenting. Chronologies are routinely completed by social workers, and most helpfully highlight key events and changes. Determined efforts are made to contact and include birth fathers and extended family networks, and family group conferences and network meetings are now more prevalent. Visits to children, parents and carers are conducted with purpose, and the input of other agencies is prominent and informative.

The outcomes and concluding analyses of assessments are of a mixed quality. Most encapsulate the main risks, worries, needs and strengths, but they often feature lengthy bulleted columns rather than a coherent summary of salient themes and findings. Children's views are documented but are frequently not evaluated to generate well-informed questions and hypotheses about future levels of risk that should be considered in subsequent plans and interventions.

The quality of child protection and child in need plans is improving, but further work is required to ensure that they are consistently SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely). Danger statements crisply and incisively outline the main risks that children are exposed to. Child protection conference chairs' summaries and explanations are not consistently strong and sharp, particularly when plans are ended or stepped down to lower intervention levels. Some plans are too lengthy and are saturated with dense professional language. Comprehensively recorded core groups are held regularly for children who are subject to child protection plans. Many would be further improved by a greater concentration on the progress and measurement of plan objectives, and fewer lengthy activity descriptions.

Children are seen promptly and regularly by social workers, both during assessments and when they are the subjects of statutory plans. Imaginative approaches are often used by social workers to engage with children of all ages in order to understand their daily lives. This work could be further strengthened if plans and management supervision were more explicit about the objectives of direct work, and provided more guidance on how it should be approached. Nevertheless, social workers who have been allocated to children for longer periods undertake constructive and insightful work with children to elicit their feelings, worries and interests and what they would like to change in their family lives. Social workers record their visits to children conscientiously and many records appropriately align the purpose and content of visits to the progression of plan objectives.

The impact on children of living in neglectful home conditions is not conveyed clearly enough in all cases. This means that the extent, severity and adverse impact on children's daily well-being and safety is not explained clearly enough. Some social workers very precisely observe and record unhygienic features in homes and in the standard of physical care provided to children. Other records are too generalised, using terms such as 'unsatisfactory' or 'dirty'. Senior managers are aware of this and are appropriately introducing a well-known neglect assessment tool to develop this area of safeguarding practice. Children living in homes where there are longstanding patterns of domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health or substance misuse are starting to benefit from child protection and child in need reviews, which evaluate the capacity of their parents and carers to make and sustain positive changes. This sharper focus is starting to address the substantial legacy of cases where repeated referrals, assessments and plans over many years have not improved the lives and damaging circumstances experienced by many of the most vulnerable children.

Older children who are at risk of or who are experiencing child exploitation are quickly assessed and engaged by social workers, family support and targeted youth support workers. These workers are predominantly situated in adolescent safeguarding teams. Nearly all children who go missing from home are offered timely return home conversations, and workers follow up with those who decline. Useful information provided by children in return home conversations is immediately passed to specialist police officers, who use it to undertake intelligence mapping, disruption and dispersal activity. Regular multi-agency risk management meetings review and oversee risk reduction work with those children who are at the greatest risk, but the information and intelligence from these meetings is not always easily discernible in social work case records and intervention plans. Senior managers recognise that assertive, persistent outreach work with children who are at acute risk needs to evolve and improve further, and they have realistic plans to build on the current constructive direct work carried out.

Management oversight of frontline practice is consistently evident in strategy meetings, child protection enquiries and assessments. Threshold decisions are largely explicit, proportionate and well evidenced. Management supervision of cases allocated to social workers in family safeguarding teams is regular and recorded. Senior managers' decisions are well documented when children's difficulties at home escalate. The pre-proceedings stages of the public law outline and care proceedings are initiated when needed. Social workers appreciate the advice and support provided by their managers. Written supervision records illustrate that the work undertaken is reviewed and that further tasks are clearly set out. There is limited evidence, however, of reflective, curious questioning evaluating how the cumulative impact of busy multi-agency interventions are improving children's lives, and scant evidence that managers are advising social workers about how they should approach their direct work.

Social workers enjoy working in Surrey. This includes many longer-serving agency workers, some of whom are actively considering applying for permanent positions. Senior managers' efforts to increase the proportion of permanent social workers continue to be successful, and these staff now comprise the large majority of the

workforce. A substantial number of skilled non-social work qualified workers are being supported through social work degree programmes in a fruitful partnership with a local university. Social workers recognise that the major recent structural changes in the service, and the ongoing implementation of a new practice model, present valuable opportunities to provide evidence-based interventions and sustainable improvements in the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. They are embracing the changes willingly and constructively. Permanent managers have been appointed through all layers of the service, presenting a solid base on which to build continuous practice improvements.

An extensive audit programme continues to provide managers with a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the quality of social work practice and frontline management oversight. The significant time and effort invested in a high standard of quality assurance activity is a cornerstone of continuing effective improvement work. Inspectors agreed with the findings of a small sample of audited cases they evaluated and recognised the rigour and quality of the local authority's auditing work.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education. It will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Stacey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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Report of the Non-Executive Commissioner for Children's Services

Surrey County Council

20 December 2019

Trevor Doughty

Children's Services Commissioner for Surrey County Council

- 1.1 I was appointed non-executive commissioner for Surrey County Council following the Ofsted Inspection carried out under the Single Inspection Framework between 26 February and 22 March 2018. The report was published on 16 May 2018. Ofsted rated Surrey's children's services 'Inadequate'. Following consideration of the report, the Secretary of State concluded that the Council is failing to perform to an adequate standard for some or all of the functions to which Section 497a of the Education Act 1996 is applied by Section 50 of the Children Act 2004 (Children's Social Care functions). On 25 June 2018 I was appointed Commissioner for Children's services in Surrey. My primary focus as the Commissioner is the 'presumption test', that is "In cases of persistent or systemic failure, children's social care services will be removed from local authority control for a period of time in order to bring about sustainable improvement unless there are compelling reasons not to do so".
- 1.2 In reporting to the Minister as part of my recommendations I said the following.

"It is too early to make a secure judgement about whether the steps that have and are being taken will bring about sustainable improvement in the effectiveness of children's social care services in Surrey. The Council now recognises and accepts the depth and complex nature of the issues it faces in children's social care. It has appointed a sector leader as the Director of Children's Services and a Chief Executive who understands the challenge and how to support her DCS and what to look for. However, it is too early to expect the improvements required to rectify the deep and long-standing problems identified by Ofsted and confirmed by my review. Given the clear intention of the Council and significant resources allocated to the task, at this early stage I do not believe that taking the Service out of the control of the Council will accelerate progress, rather that it could serve as a distraction to the considerable efforts of the DCS to make the necessary improvements. It is for these reasons, I recommend that the Minister allows the Council a further 12 months to demonstrate that the action plan it has put in place is working. It is particularly important that there is continuity in an ongoing dialogue to monitor improvement in addition to the monitoring visits by Ofsted. I would, therefore, also recommend that Commissioner

oversight should continue with further reviews and assessment of progress against the findings of this first review in around 6 and 12 months. In my view this would strike a proper balance between concern arising from the previous 'false starts' and an acknowledgement of the recent but palpable change in the attitude and approach by the Council to bring about sustainable improvement."

- 1.3 I submitted my interim report to the Minister on 16 May 2019 and the interim conclusion was as follows

"The authority has made rapid and solid progress since I submitted my original report. It is important to emphasise that this is from a starting point of seriously failing services and there is still some way to go before there is clear evidence that vulnerable children and their families are being better served. Nonetheless, I can give a positive message on the Council's progress and the effectiveness of the leadership that has been put in place. I will report again in 6 months but I am able to commend the progress that has been made whilst continuing to emphasize the magnitude of the task."

- 1.4 This report is my final submission following the 12 month review I undertook to complete in my first report.

- 1.5 The methodology has been as in my previous two reports. In November 2019 Senior Managers and practitioners from Cornwall Council completed on site visits auditing around 40 cases meeting with senior practitioners, managers and partners as well as holding focus groups. They were made welcome by the County Council and partners and as in the previous two visits, all staff and partners were open and candid. I met with the DCS and senior Members and managers following the visit to give feedback on the findings.

- 1.6 People and Leadership

In my initial report I emphasised the dependence and reliance on the appointments of a new Chief Executive and DCS with strong and established reputations. In my interim report I noted that senior appointments had been made at an impressive rate and leadership and responsibility was therefore more evenly distributed and there was no longer over dependence on the DCS. There is

now sufficient capacity at middle manager level to provide quality assurance of practice and this can be seen in case audits where managers had identified practice that required improvement.

1.7 Help and Protection

Over the last 12 months there has been good and rapid work to put in place a structure, management team, quality and performance management arrangements that have the compacity and drive to address the long-standing systemic failures in helping and protecting children and families in Surrey. There has been significant investment in the resources available to the service.

There are clear signs that performance and quality of practice are improving. Appropriate systems are in place. It is obviously important that the Council maintains the focus and energy on using the arrangements to deliver the stated vision of multi-disciplinary working and evidence base practice.

1.8 Children in Care and Care Leavers

Corporate parenting is developing well with a strong lead from members and the chair of the board. It is recognised that there is further work to do with partner membership and representation of young people. Children are being seen and plans undertaken and this has been the primary focus with further work to do around the clarity of the service methodology. The commitment of managers is clear. The numbers of children placed out of County remains high and the Council is aware of this and plans are in place to reduce those numbers but this will take time and continued effort to make a significant impact. Initial health assessments have improved considerably and the virtual school has been remodelled with a positive impact on Personal Education Plans anticipated but yet to be delivered.

1.9 Front Door and Early Help

The improvements to the front door outlined in my interim report have continued and there has been strong investment on training in the resilience model which has been cascaded to partners and has been well received. New arrangements are in place for contact and referral with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) being replaced by a Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA). The introduction of the new threshold document "Levels of Need" has

been positively received by practitioners and managers and there is evidence this has lowered caseloads. The Early Help Hub has moved to new premises which has been a significant improvement. Morale seems high and the newly appointment Early Help Hub Manager is very positive with a clear grip on process and vision for the direction of travel. The closure and recommissioning of Children Centres now Family Centres working across ages 0 -11 is mostly completed. However the Early Help offer is not always clear to partner agencies or social work teams and the challenge remains to make it fully understood and effective.

1.10 Quality Standards/Workforce Development and Safeguarding Partnership

There has been impressive and rapid improvement in terms of quality assurance overall. The quality assurance service and team have a clear understanding as to why QA is in place and how it drives service improvement. It is reassuring that the quality assurance and performance systems which have been given priority in underpinning service development, are delivering honest and thorough audits and performance reports giving senior managers a clear measurement of progress. There is evidence of culture change with the lived experience of the child being more evident. Practitioners and Practice Supervisors can go beyond compliance and can articulate the learning that arises from audits. Audits are used to reflect on practice. The CP Chair and the IRO service has reviewed data and practice throughout the year and produced a comprehensive report outlining various aspects. The service is a good example of how data has prompted enquiry and changes to service delivery. The performance data available to the whole service is comprehensive. It is relevant, well-presented, and flexible. Anomalies are picked up and there are now clear routes for interrogation, with an expectation that data will inform performance and practice. Practice supervisors have reported very favourably about "Tableau" and authentically discussed how they use it in their daily business and to challenge and use it in supervision.

The new Safeguarding arrangements are in place and are being implemented in compliance with the 2017 Act. The independent Chair and Scrutineer provides strong and inclusive leadership and scrutiny. This is matched by a strong and positive lead from the

decision-making executive and reflects a genuine partnership approach. The new partnership forum structure which allows involvement and discussion has been well received. The business support function is working well. Some education partners however, continue to voice frustration and it is important their concerns are listened to and responded to. Multi agency training is largely effective but there are some reports of variability of quality.

1.11 Conclusion and Recommendation

In my recommendations to Surrey County Council in my report of 19 September 2018 I highlighted ten issues for the Council to address. Significant progress has been made in all ten areas. That report was very stark in setting out the long term and systemic failures in Surrey which were still very apparent at the time of the report submission. Progress has been impressive and there is clear evidence of practice improvement and cultural change. Staff morale is good and they report a positive working environment. The introduction of performance management processes and quality standards based on sound data has been particularly impressive. There is now a clear expectation of what is required to staff linked to an understood social work model. There is still variability across the four quadrants but consistency must improve along with an overall rise in standards. The North East area has moved to high quality accommodation and is no longer as seen as the poorest performing area and indeed, in some areas, is leading the way in terms of improvement.

Of course there is still much work to do and maintaining pace will be a significant challenge but the authority has come a long way in a short time in terms of improving services to children, young people and families in Surrey. The political support has been consistent and delivered on the promises made when the authority went into intervention. The senior management team is strong and the authority has demonstrated a commitment to improving and prioritising children services.

As this is my final report as Commissioner, I am now in a position to make a clear recommendation. There has been significant improvement identified in the two follow up reviews undertaken by Cornwall Council staff. This view is shared by the published Ofsted Monitoring Visits. My view is that sustainable improvement is

underway in the Authority and that an alternative delivery model no longer needs to be a consideration.

I would like to thank Surrey County Council and partner agencies for their openness and co-operation in my work as Commissioner.

Trevor Doughty
Commissioner for Surrey's Children's Services

20 December 2019

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Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee

21 January 2020

Recommendation Tracker and Forward Work Programme

The Committee is asked to review its recommendation tracker and forward work programme, including the forward work programmes of the other Select Committees which are attached.

Recommendation:

That the Committee reviews the attached forward work programme and its recommendations tracker, making suggestions for additions or amendments as appropriate.

Next Steps:

The Select Committee will review its work programme and recommendations tracker at each of its meetings.

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**CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURE SELECT COMMITTEE
ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER – DECEMBER 2019**

The actions and recommendations tracker allows Committee Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each meeting. Once an action has been completed and reported to the committee, it will be removed from the tracker.

Date of Meeting	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	Update/ Response	Responsible Officer/ Member
26 JUNE 2019	Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) Transformation Programme.	Requests that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families works with officers to develop a training offer promoting skills related to identifying and supporting emotional wellbeing and mental health. This is to be created in partnership with others involved with training in Surrey, including schools, psychologists, the children’s Rights and Participation team and Surrey Borders Partnership Trust. It is further requested that details of the available training offer are submitted to the Select Committee within six months with the intention to promote and challenge its contents.	<p>The Targeted Approaches to Mental Health for Schools Training Programme is due to be relaunched in September 2019. Officers highlighted that the impact of the Select Committee recommendation, combined with the Mental Health Green Paper and the new Surrey Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy, has combined to drive up the capacity of the programme to deliver core training across all our schools.</p> <p>It has been requested that details of the Targeted Approaches to Mental Health for schools training programme are shared with the Select Committee for feedback.</p>	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families.
12 JUNE 2019	Safeguarding of Children in Surrey	That the Committee’s Performance Sub-Group monitors the quality of social work practice, service user experience and the performance of the new Family Resilience model via its regular scrutiny of the Children’s Service		Performance Sub-Group.

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		compendium and feeds back to the Committee as appropriate e.g. future agenda item.		
13 DECEMBER 2019	UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS [Item 5]	Clearer presentation of budget figures in future Cabinet Member Update reports.		
		Addition of scrutiny item on school governing body support for vulnerable learners including looked after children and children with SEN. This in future can be based on the corporate parenting board annual report.		
	CHILDREN'S SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS [Item 6]	Raise any IT issues at CSPA at subsequent performance meeting.		Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families.
	HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT POLICY PUBLIC CONSULTATION [Item 7]	Issue response to parents with advice regarding how to get the right support for their child.		

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURE SELECT COMMITTEE
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Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee Forward Work Programme 2020

Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee (Chairman: Mrs Kay Hammond, Committees Business Manager: Ross Pike, Democratic Services Assistant: Bryony Crossland Davies)

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Date of Meeting	Scrutiny Topic	Description	Outcome	Cabinet Member / Officer
<p style="text-align: center;">26 MARCH 2020</p>	<p>Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE).</p>	<p>The Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE) is led by schools in partnership with Surrey County Council and other key partners in the education community. The SAfE’s aim is to take responsibility for the quality of education in the county, acting as an engine of improvement, brokering connections and initiatives across schools in Surrey. The partnership has a particular focus on incentivising schools to uphold the Council’s vision to be inclusive and leave no child behind. Members will seek to understand the vision of the SAfE taking into consideration the impact on children and young people in Surrey.</p>	<p>For the Committee to receive a report outlining the purpose and impact of the SAfE seeking assurances that it is meeting the Council’s core statutory duties for school improvement, as well as steering the changes needed to support the achievement of the community vision. Making recommendations as necessary.</p>	<p>Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning</p> <p>Liz Mills, Director – Education, Learning and Culture</p>

	Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	To review the last year's annual report, understand the new safeguarding arrangements for children and identify any areas for further scrutiny	Understanding of duties, focused scrutiny identified	Simon Hart, Independent Chair of the Surrey Safeguarding Board
	Report of the SEND Task and Finish Group	Members to receive an update on the work of the SEND Task and Finish Group.	Recommendations made to the Cabinet as appropriate	Chris Botten, Vice-Chairman of the CFLC Select Committee
Items to be Scheduled				
21 SEPTEMBER 2020	Update on the delivery of the Children's improvement programme	Committee to be apprised of the council's progress in improving its children's services including the outcome of the April 2020 Ofsted monitoring visit	Lead Member for Children and Senior Officers held to account	Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families
	Children's Educational Attainment in Surrey	The Committee to review most up to date statistics on the attainment of children in Surrey's schools and review trends	<i>In development</i>	Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning Liz Mills, Director – Education, Learning and Culture
	Scrutiny of school governing body support for vulnerable learners including LAC and children with SEN	The Committee to understand the level and type of support offered to vulnerable children and young people in schools and any gaps in service.	Assurance that students are getting the support they need in schools.	Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning

				Liz Mills, Director – Education, Learning and Culture Tina Benjamin, Director – Corporate Parenting
	Corporate Parenting Annual Report	The first annual report of the council’s work with looked after children following the adoption of a new strategy	Assurance that the council is performing against the aspirations included in the Corporate Parenting Strategy	Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families Tina Benjamin, Director – Corporate Parenting
DATE TBC	Library Transformation	Scrutiny of changes to the council’s library offer to ensure value for money and benefit to residents.	<i>In development</i>	Julie Iles, Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning Liz Mills, Director – Education, Learning and Culture
	CAMHS Commissioning	To scrutinise preparations for a new service that meets the needs of children and young people and improves on current service levels.	<i>In development</i>	Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families Hayley Connor, Director - Commissioning
	Outcomes of Family Resilience Service	To review the impact of the change in service approach following a period of embedding.	<i>In development</i>	Jacquie Burke, Director – Family Resilience & Safeguarding

Task Groups

<p>September 2019 – March 2020</p>	<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Task Group</p>	<p>The Council has identified this service as one of its key areas for transformation. There are significant demand and budget pressures and a case for change that make this a topic for scrutiny.</p>	<p>The Task Group is trying to answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the commissioning of SEND placements been successful to date in delivering the needs of service users, what are the milestones for improvement and what assurances can be provided that they will be met within a sufficient timeframe 2. What support is provided to mainstream primary schools for the early intervention of children with SEND and is the support sufficiently publicised and resources? 3. In terms of SEND services, how is the resource gap in the school sector being addressed, and what impact does it have on SEND services as demand continues to rise. 	<p>Membership:</p> <p>Chris Botten (Chair)</p> <p>Chris Townsend</p> <p>Barbara Thomson</p>
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Standing Items (to be considered at each formal Select Committee)

- **Update on Cabinet Member priorities-** For the Select Committee to receive an update on work that has been undertaken by Cabinet Members and areas of priority work/focus going forward.