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Supplementary Agenda

Items: 7 and 9

for the meeting of

THE COUNTY COUNCIL

to be held on

11 OCTOBER 2022

7 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

(Pages 5
- 42)

1. The Leader of the Council or the appropriate Member of the Cabinet or the Chairman of a Committee to answer any questions on any matter relating to the powers and duties of the County Council, or which affects the county.
2. Cabinet Member Briefings on their portfolios.

These will be circulated by email to all Members prior to the County Council meeting, together with the Members' questions and responses.

There will be an opportunity for Members to ask questions.

9 ORIGINAL MOTIONS

Item 9 (v)

Amendment by Catherine Powell (Farnham North) to the motion standing in the name of Liz Townsend

(additional words underlined in bold and deletions crossed through)

This Council acknowledges that:

The Cabinet is scheduled to agree 'A County Wide Strategic Approach To Accommodation, Homes And Housing Needs In Surrey'.

This Council notes that:

Housing is not a core responsibility of the County Council.

Its statutory duties include the maintaining and highways and infrastructure network as well as Public Health and Education functions.

This Council requests that:

The Cabinet's forthcoming strategy prioritises bringing forward key worker and affordable housing on its own land **and ensures that its core responsibilities of highways infrastructure, transport, education and health are aligned with the local planning authorities' development plans whilst cooperating with neighbouring counties** as a matter of priority and to suspend activities that are already under the statutory control of district and borough councils.

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2022

**QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1**

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

1. NICK DARBY (THE DITTONS) TO ASK:

How many Members, and separately officers are included on the Home to School Transport Appeals Panel?

RESPONSE:

Appeals are heard by three people. There is a pool of twenty Members and four officers who hear the appeals and attend the panels. The usual combination on each panel is two Members and one officer, although the Home to School Travel Assistance Policy does allow for differing combinations if this is required to expedite a decision.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

2. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK:

There is an increasingly confrontational situation between Surrey County Council (SCC), schools and parents / guardians regarding needs assessments, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) placements and Home to School Transport which is undoubtedly impacting on the retention of staff within SCC and schools and increasing the stress for all those involved as well as impacting on the children's education and increasing numbers of complaints, appeals and tribunals (4.1% in Surrey vs 1.8% nationally) with a high percentage lost by SCC.

Children's Social Care Social Workers are also under pressure due to unmet special educational needs impacting on the Family. The 'Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy / Recruitment and Retention Update' included in the agenda for the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee on 4 October does not seem to mention the confrontational situation or the stress that it causes. There is also no consideration of the need to simplify the system to not only make it more accessible to parents and guardians from more disadvantaged backgrounds but also to those that have challenges of their own that are also trying to deal with the cost-of-living crisis. Reducing the confrontational nature of the current system, will in turn reduce the stress that Social Workers and others in the services and in schools are operating under.

Streamlining and simplifying processes will reduce the time required to undertake assessments, reducing the workload on Social Workers, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and others and should allow more cases to be processed more quickly reducing waiting times and ensuring that No One is Left Behind.

- a) Can there be a system of fast tracking EHCPs for the children with the highest needs to address the COVID backlog?
- b) Can the SEND Strategy, Policies and Guidance be simplified / streamlined?
- c) Can we ask the SWs to identify where systems could be simplified and streamlined?
- d) Can we ask SENCOs to identify where systems could be simplified and streamlined?
- e) With No One left Behind in mind, can the SEND Strategy, Policies and Guidance be modified to place some priority on those in most need whether due to severity of need, other circumstances such as being a Looked After Child or previously Looked after Child or having challenging family circumstances meaning that the family has an allocated social worker?

RESPONSE:

- a) We recognise the pressures that staff and schools are under as more children are being identified with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The rise in requests for Education, Health and Care plans following Covid has created a backlog which has been exacerbated by a high number of vacancies in some of the quadrant SEN teams. There is a range of measures in place both to support staff through training and supervision and to provide support to schools to strengthen their ability to meet need. SEN and social care managers regularly liaise to review children whose needs are complex, and a joined-up approach is needed. Alongside this, recruitment to SEN teams has been concluded to secure full staffing from November. This will help alleviate pressure on existing colleagues as well as ensure continuity of support for families and schools. Greater engagement is underway with local families in areas that may have lost confidence in the local authority, through for instance a SEN surgery with families.

The SEND Code of Practice sets out the statutory process that health, social care and education partners must follow to identify, assess and meet the needs of children with additional needs and/or disabilities. It sets expectations that mainstream schools will be able to meet the needs of the vast majority of children with additional needs. Only children with the highest levels of additional needs will be receiving support through an Education, Health and Care plan. As a result, the Code of Practice requires significant input into the assessment of a child's needs across health, social care and education professionals to determine what provision is appropriate. The Code of Practice determines that this is a twenty-week process.

In terms of children who are most vulnerable, SEN currently operate a risk-based approach whereby partner agencies are informed of the children who are a priority for an assessment so that wherever possible delays are avoided for

these children. These include children in care and children who are missing education and account for approximately 70 children per month across the county.

- b) It is also recognised that the rise in SEN is linked with broader issues and a whole system approach is required. The Inclusion and Additional Needs partnership aims to fulfil this function. Work is currently underway to refresh the SEND partnership strategy for 2023-2026 and this will help to strengthen a systemic approach to meeting needs, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.
- c) We have a new role of Designated Social Worker who liaises between SEN and social care to make system improvements. Recent improvements include a refined needs assessment process whereby more children are now having their care needs assessed when not currently known by social care teams and there has been an improvement in the quality of social care advice in EHCPs which better reflects a child's needs and the provision required. There is also a strategic education, health and social care liaison meeting where senior leaders across the system work together to identify any issues and oversee system changes. An example of this is the new EHCP format training being rolled out across the sectors. This more operational meeting feeds into the partnership board.
- d) We meet regularly with SENCOs through the SENCO networks and individual school visits. This enables the local authority to listen to the issues and concerns that schools may have. SENCOs are then invited to co-produce initiatives which aim to improve and streamline SEN processes, for example SENCOs helped to design the new annual review paperwork which they report will reduce bureaucracy and better reflect the needs of the child. This new format will be rolled out in the second half of this academic term.
- e) Children who are looked after (CLA) are a priority group for the SEN team. There is a SEN Virtual School action plan which has identified actions to strengthen the work around CLA and previously CLA. As part of this work a CLA champion has been established where a senior case manager has oversight of all CLA casework in their quadrant. CLA are also a priority group for annual review attendance. In addition, every request for a statutory education health and care assessment is considered in line with the SEN legislation and SEN Code of Practice. This consideration must include the legal test: whether the child or young person has or may have special educational needs and whether they may need special educational provision to be made through an EHCP. The multi-agency assessment includes an assessment of the child/young person's care needs and any vulnerabilities.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING /
MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE
AND GROWTH**

3. CHRIS TOWNSEND (ASHTEAD) TO ASK:

Given the current challenges with Home to School Transport can anything be done to look at how improvements can be made to the public transport system, particularly mapping high demand routes between residential areas (in and out of county) and schools / colleges to increase use and reduce the need for Home to School transport and the use of private vehicles / taxis, potentially including the introduction of pilots of school buses, perhaps linked to the reduced children's and young people's bus passes previously announced by the Leader of the Council? This would also support the move towards more sustainable transport and remove private vehicles from the school transport system.

RESPONSE:

When considering children and young people who have been assessed as being entitled to travel assistance, to support them to travel to and from their place of learning, the use of public transport is always the first option considered. Where high demand exists between residential areas and places of learning, local bus services and coaches are already provided to meet the needs of entitled pupils, thus reducing the need for bespoke home to school transport to be organised. However, where high demand flows do not exist, often as a result of the complex patterns of movement between home and places of learning, local bus services are not necessarily the most cost-effective solution. A range of options are then considered, with bespoke transport only organised when other alternatives have been exhausted.

The exciting proposal to introduce a half fare bus scheme for people aged twenty and under will support the move towards more sustainable transport and independence for all residents in that cohort, including children and young people travelling to and from school and college.

There is active work and collaboration between Children Families and Lifelong Learning, Environment Transport and Infrastructure, and Adult Social Care to ensure future plans and decision making is considered across the whole Surrey transport system.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

4. MICHAELA MARTIN (FARNHAM SOUTH) TO ASK:

There are increasingly significant challenges for schools with cross border (e.g., Surrey / Hampshire) populations having to use two or more systems for everything including SEND assessments, support and funding, particularly when they are in areas of high deprivation.

What will this Council do to support schools in areas of high deprivation, particularly those that have cross county boundary populations during this very challenging

period, especially those with backlogs associated with EHCPs and agreement of SEND support to ensure No One is Left Behind? Of the 15 most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Surrey more than 50% have cross county boundary school challenges meaning that they are not just dealing with the SCC systems but also those of neighbouring authorities. Many are also not operating at their Published Admission Numbers (PAN) and therefore struggle more with the overhead costs, including fuel.

RESPONSE:

Schools with children who live in two local authorities do have to navigate two systems. The Government's SEND Green Paper is proposing alignment in some key areas to avoid this in the future. Surrey County Council participates in a number of cross border agreements that are in place, for example cross border specialist consultation agreements which help to streamline systems for special school consultation where these are received from other local authorities. The cross border agreements are coordinated through a regional group – the South East 19.

Core funding for mainstream schools is provided through the National Funding Formula (NFF), which specifies the factors we may use to fund deprivation in schools. The NFF sets funding rates for each deprivation factor, and Local Authorities are encouraged to use those rates (and Surrey is expected to converge, and in practice Surrey's rates are already close to the NFF rates).

Funding for schools must be based largely on pupil numbers and Surrey is not allowed to provide additional funding for schools with high levels of vacancies, except in a very limited range of circumstances, for example, growing schools funding which is approved at the Surrey Schools Forum.

KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

5. NICK HARRISON (NORK & TATTENHAMS) TO ASK:

First magazine in October 2022 reports that “road maintenance costs are up 22%”, in relation to pothole repairs, relaying road surfaces, other maintenance costs and capital projects.

- a) What is the experience in Surrey?
- b) As a consequence does this mean that fewer works and projects are being completed, or are budgets/ forecasts being adjusted upwards to deliver the original programme of works?

RESPONSE:

- a) Prices have been affected with increases in some highway sectors as high as 20% or more since January. This is particularly prevalent in surfacing activities where the oil prices and availability of bitumen have a significant impact on the end products in the form of asphalt. The Council has taken a pragmatic approach to how it manages these increases by paying the actual

price each month as work is carried out rather than agreeing an inflated rate for the whole year which could result in overpaying when prices start to stabilise and reduce. By implementing an “actual price” approach the Council has been able to secure the resource and supply chain to continue to deliver the programme of work without the risk of overpaying as a result of the hyperinflation being experienced in the sector.

- b) With all our highways programmes of work, officers carefully review and consider the works programmes and costs provided at the planning stage and work with our contractors to challenge material choices and design options to ensure the best value for money is achieved for all highway activities. Officers are currently working to deliver schemes within the budget levels agreed at Cabinet earlier in the year, and with the ongoing operational conversations and managed approach to paying inflation, it is not possible to determine at this point whether the full programme of works will be delivered within the agreed budget levels. We consider we are in a good position to be able to mitigate the impacts as far as possible however, with the approaches we are taking to manage the programme delivery risk.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

6. ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:

It has been reported that in some areas of Surrey over 50% of parents did not get their first choice of school for their children.

Overall, what is the picture for Surrey in respect of parental preferences and how does this compare with other similar authorities?

RESPONSE:

For normal round admission in September 2022, the following statistics applied for first preference offers in Surrey compared with national average figures and the situation across London:

Admissions round	Surrey first preference offers	National first preference offers	London first preference offers
Primary	88.7%	92.2%	88%
Secondary	81.4%	83.3%	69.95%

Surrey has a high number of good and outstanding schools and this increases the level of first preference demand for these schools, often meaning they are oversubscribed. In such cases, places are offered in accordance with each school’s oversubscription criteria and without regard to the rank order named on a parent’s application form. This is referred to as an equal preference system. As places are often allocated on distance, this may mean that children living further away from their first preference school may not be allocated a place; in most cases they will be offered a place at one of their other preferred schools. In this way, a truer reflection

of the success of Surrey's equal preference system is to consider the percentage of parents who have been offered a place at one of their preferred schools, as follows:

Admissions round	Surrey preference offers	National preference offers	London preference offers
Primary	98.2%	98.4%	98%
Secondary	95.2%	95.8%	94%

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH

7. CARLA MORSON (ASH) TO ASK:

- a) What amount of developer funding contributions have been collected for use by Surrey County Council in the last ten years? How much of it has been spent on the key County Council areas of responsibility, for example on new schools and highways infrastructure?
- b) The County Council is able to bid for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding from the Borough/District Councils. Please can the Council confirm how many bids have been submitted to Surrey's Borough/District Councils for CIL spending?

RESPONSE:

- a) Surrey County Council (SCC) currently holds £22,114,849.97 in s106 contributions collected to date.

This sum is allocated towards a large number of nominated projects for the following services:

- Education - £13,665,309.11
- Highways & Transport - £8,062,378.65
- Rights Of Way & Countryside - £242,604.18
- Libraries - £144,558.03

- b) SCC is keen to secure CIL funding and improve strategic infrastructure for Surrey communities. In 2022, SCC has made four bids to Elmbridge Borough Council for its annual strategic CIL programme totalling £4,382,000. In addition, SCC has made fifteen CIL bids to Reigate and Banstead Borough Council for its five-year strategic CIL programme totalling £14,279,000. These bids are currently in consideration.

SCC is likely to make four bids to Waverley Borough Council for its annual strategic CIL programme in mid-October. A SEND bid is currently being prepared for submission to Spelthorne Borough Council.

Mole Valley District Council, Runnymede Borough Council and Woking Borough Council do not currently have Strategic CIL bidding processes in place, and Guildford Borough Council is not a CIL charging authority.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING /
AYESHA AZAD, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

8. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:

The Government's energy price cap for schools is welcome and will help limit some of the damage caused by spiralling energy costs. However, the fact that the cap is only in place for six months and that school budgets are already struggling with the general rise in the cost of living means that there are serious concerns that a school's educational offer will be adversely impacted by these exorbitant costs and anxiety about how they will balance the budget in the medium to long term.

- a) Is the Council providing any additional financial support to its schools to help them through this challenging period and can the Cabinet Member(s) reassure pupils that there will be no interruption to their education due to a cut back on energy usage?
- b) Are the Cabinet Member(s) concerned that some schools may have to use historic budget surpluses to make up the difference in energy costs and that in turn this could be detrimental to the safety valve agreement which relies on contributions from surpluses from previous years?

RESPONSE:

- a) Outside of the price cap, the majority of maintained schools buy energy via the SCC CCS (Crown Commercial Services) route. This provides a fixed price from April 2022 through to March 2023, with the energy purchase price secured six months in advance, though it is correct to say costs had started to increase at that point (October 2021) when prices were fixed. However, as a result of this fixed price, schools had prior knowledge of prices prior to submitting their budgets in April 2022. Therefore, there are not expected to be schools going above budget for these costs. There are likely to be a few schools outside of this agreement who may be more susceptible to price increases but these will still have been factored into budget plans.

2023/24 prices are yet to be determined so there are likely to be increased cost pressures on next year's budgets as a result of energy costs. Should the cap not be in place, this could therefore increase that pressure.

- b) The safety valve agreement does not rely on surplus balances of individual schools so there is no direct link between the potential for their use for energy costs and the successful delivery of the agreement. As part of the agreement, the surplus balances refer to historic surpluses on the Dedicated Schools Grant as a whole, which sit within the Council's balance sheet and are not part of schools' estimated individual balances.

NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE

9. STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:

Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) at Dorking, Cranleigh and Warlingham remain closed for four days each week and at Bagshot for three days each week despite promises to review opening times.

Would the Cabinet Member for Property and Waste please indicate what progress has been made in seeking extended hours of opening for these CRCs?

RESPONSE:

Tonnages of waste and recycling handled at our community recycling centres have decreased from around 140,000 tonnes in 2015/16 to just over 85,000 tonnes in 2021/22 and consequently our Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) have become considerably less busy over time.

Now that the additional controls required due to the COVID pandemic have been removed, our CRCs are well able to cope with the level of customer demand within their current opening hours.

However, we have made a commitment to review these as part of post-2024 arrangements, and this will be done alongside work to confirm how these services will be delivered following the expiry of the current contract. Given the need to prioritise spending to ensure that we are able to focus on our most vulnerable residents, there does not appear to be a justification for increasing opening hours at our CRCs before that time, but we will keep the situation under review and consider any necessary changes should the current situation change.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

10. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO ASK:

The new policy for Home to School Transport means that solo transport is no longer an option provided for SEND children where there is a statutory need to provide Home to School Transport and no other alternatives are available. The parents are offered an Independent Travel Allowance (ITA) as the alternative. A recent example where the costs of the solo transport was £145 per day, or approximately £22,000 per year, the parents were offered £500 per month ITA. The parents had no car, public transport was not viable for the child and the parents had to go through a full stage 2 Appeals Panel to get the solo transport re-instated.

Can the Cabinet Member explain how this new policy ensures “No-one is left behind”? How many SEND Children have had their solo transport removed since the new policy was implemented, and how many cases are there where the parents have accepted the alternative offering of ITA?

RESPONSE:

The Council's Home to School Travel Assistance Policy does not remove the option for individual transport. The policy states the following on solo arrangements: -

In developing a travel assistance policy with a focus on enabling independence and preparing for adulthood such as employment or shared living away from home, individual transport will only be agreed in extenuating circumstances. This would normally be linked to other medical needs or where the child or young person is receiving funded one-to-one support at their educational placement.

This means that where children's needs require this solution it will be offered. An independent travel allowance is offered to all families as an option, especially where taxi routes are unable to be tendered, where there is one child travelling to one education setting or for other reasons associated with a child's needs. This provides another option for those families who can take it up.

No SEND Children have had their solo transport removed since the new policy was implemented, but fourteen families have accepted an Independent Travel Allowance who were previously on solo transport.

KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

11. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:

The hot weather this summer caused more longitudinal cracks to open up in our roads, pavements and cycle paths. Elsewhere these cracks have been seen filled with bitumen of some kind.

- a) What percentage increase in this type of damage is being seen in Surrey and what is the maintenance treatment used by Highways to address longitudinal cracks in roads and pavements?
- b) How is the impact of hotter summers on our roads, pavements and cycle paths being reflected in the council's road maintenance policies?

RESPONSE:

- a) All roads in Surrey have condition surveys for the purpose of national reporting and to assist in the asset management of our network. We conduct these surveys in accordance with national standards measuring a variety of defects to create a Road Condition Index (RCI). It is the RCI which Surrey uses to determine deterioration rates of our network and plan maintenance. We do not specifically measure longitudinal cracking as an individual metric.

An Engineer can then assess roads in poor condition on their individual merits and propose effective treatments. This process will consider the severity of defects but also the mode of failure. Longitudinal cracking can occur due to various issues caused by structural loading and reflective cracking as well as environmental factors such as heat and drought.

The treatments proposed by officers consider sustainable solutions. Introducing foreign materials into the structural layers of roads and pavements must take account of whole life strategies and future maintenance which may include suitability for recycling.

- b) Surrey County Council is reviewing its policy to develop a resilient network and is currently mapping areas of vulnerability from exposure to high temperatures. This will allow officers to specify robust materials with properties which make them last longer in extreme conditions.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

12. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:

Please confirm how much the High Needs Block in Surrey (additional Government funding for pupils with special needs) has risen since 2015/16 and how this compares to:

- a) the increase in the number of Surrey children in special needs schools; and
- b) the increase in the number of Surrey children with EHCPs?

RESPONSE:

The table below shows the High Needs Block allocations for Surrey from 2015/16 to 2021/22. Please note, in order to provide a like for like basis of comparison, this excludes £2.6m of teachers pay and pensions grant which from 2021/22 was included within the overall allocation. The reason for showing the funding up until 2021/22 is that we cannot accurately compare current funding with incomplete data on the number of EHCPs and children in specialist schools for 2022/23 as the year is not complete. Figures are submitted in the January of each academic year.

	2015/16	2021/22	Difference	% Change
SCC HNB £'m	122.6	173.9	51.3	42%
SCC children in specialist schools	2,419	3,313	894	37%
SCC EHCPs	5,694	9,247	3,553	62%

The data demonstrates that in the period 2015/16 to 2021/22 High Needs Block funding in Surrey went up by 42%. In the same period the number of Surrey EHCPs went up by 62% and the number of Surrey children in specialist schools went up by 37%.

It is important to note however, that this increase in funding was not spread evenly and during this period a disapplication of £11.5m was required (reducing the schools block) in order to increase funding in the High Needs Block. The timing of funding increases is also weighted so, during a period of growth, funding increases are received in April where increased EHCPs will have taken effect from the previous September with no backdating of funding. These things added to build the

cumulative deficit in previous years as well as the overall funding rates being behind growth in EHCPs.

KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

13. MARK SUGDEN (HINCHLEY WOOD, CLAYGATE AND OXSHOTT) TO ASK:

The Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) has recently replaced the existing physical width restriction on Clayton Road, RBK with a signed weight restriction enforced by camera, to cover vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.

Clayton Road adjoins Claygate and Claygate residents have significant concerns that this change will direct an increase in large Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) through the Village, increase air and noise pollution and create road safety issues. It may also adversely impact the Surrey County Council road network locally, with the potential need for more road maintenance.

What action can Surrey County Council take to address and mitigate these concerns?

RESPONSE:

The County Council is aware that the restriction on Clayton Road (in the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK)) has been amended from a width restriction to a 3.5 tonne weight limit. RBK has committed to monitor traffic types and offer further mitigation measures (such as advanced warning signs) should they be proven necessary. Due to how the network operates in the local area with Woodstock Lane South only connecting to the A309 / A3 via a southbound slip road arrangement, officers expect the impact on Claygate to be low. However, if any problems develop, options for mitigating those impacts will then be explored.

TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**14. NICK DARBY (THE DITTONS) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

How many Chiefs of Staff does Surrey County Council have, in which Directorates, and in each case with what specific role within that Directorate?

Also, when was each role created, and were any such appointments of Chiefs of Staff new i.e. an extra role?

RESPONSE:

Surrey County Council (SCC) has five Chiefs of Staff. They are all full time posts. There is a Chief of Staff in Resources, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, Children's Families and Lifelong Learning, Environment Transport and Infrastructure and Adult Social Care.

The Resources and Children's Families and Lifelong Learning Chiefs of Staff are both newly created roles from within the existing establishment budget.

The Surrey Fire and Rescue and the Environment Transport and Infrastructure posts has been in their establishment budget for several years.

The Adult Social Care Chief of Staff is an existing post that was renamed for consistency purposes and is also within the existing establishment budget.

All of the role profiles have been through the SCC job evaluation process. They provide broadly similar functions: working as members of the respective leadership teams leading and delivering complex programmes of work such as business planning, assurance and performance and also various programmes of transformation as well as providing leadership support.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

15. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK: (2nd Question)

The increase in school population is creating significant challenges in the allocation of appropriate school places close to home due:

- to movement of families from London into Surrey.
- the need to support refugees with children coming into Surrey.
- Significant housing building in Surrey and the surround Counties, for example I have 8,000 homes built or being built with North Farnham or a 3km radius of the boundary, these are in Hampshire (Hart and Rushmoor) and in Surrey (Waverley and Guildford). The new primary school in the largest developed has already been labelled as the most difficult to get into in Hampshire, there is no new secondary school and estate is less than 50% built.

The number of school places required and where is forecast two years out and clearly a lot has happened in the last two years and change is highly likely to continue.

- a) What is this Council doing to address these issues particularly with the complications of academy schools and their ability to set their own Published Admission Numbers (PANs) coupled with cross border issues and population movements?
- b) What is the Council doing to address changes in the school population during the two-year planning period?

RESPONSE:

In general terms, the local authority works closely with the borough and district planning authorities to ensure accurate housing data is shared and reflected in pupil place forecasts on a bi-annual basis.

In reference to the third bullet of the question, for primary education, Farnham is divided into two planning areas: Hale and Weybourne, and Farnham. Pupil place forecasts predict a surplus of places in the medium-term in both planning areas. Schools within the Hale and Weybourne planning area have the accommodation to provide additional places, should they be required moving forward, which may require discussions with local academy trusts.

For secondary education, the relevant planning area is Farnham and Ash, which includes the secondary schools within Farnham and Ash Manor School, Ash. The forecasts indicate a deficit of school places moving forward, likely to be as a result of additional local housing both in Surrey and across the border in Hampshire. We are aware of the forecasted growth in demand and are working with schools to provide additional local places for pupils from September 2023 onwards.

The Wellesley development in Aldershot falls under the county of Hampshire and they would be the responsible local authority for education place planning in this area. Surrey County Council's Education Place Planning team liaises with neighbouring authorities in order to manage the demands presented by cross-border pupil movement. The council will continue engaging with Hampshire County Council and other neighbouring local authorities to manage the demand for school places.

The specific questions raised are responded to as follows:

- a) Surrey County Council is a consultee in all academy proposals and provides responses to any published consultation based on local need. All responses will be considered by the Regional Director (formerly the Regional Schools Commissioner) before the proposal is finalised.

Every Surrey school, including academies, is signed up to Surrey's Fair Access Protocol which ensures unplaced and vulnerable children who have not been able to secure a school place through the in-year process, can be placed in school quickly, above their Published Admissions Number (PAN) if necessary. This includes children who are newly arrived in the area and refugees arriving in Surrey.

- b) The local authority works closely with the boroughs and district planning authorities to ensure accurate housing data is shared and reflected in pupil place forecasts on a bi-annual basis. Surrey County Council also engages with neighbouring local authorities to manage the demand created from additional housing and cross-border movements.

Surrey County Council utilises a forecasting tool called Edge-u-cate, which forecasts up to ten years in advance. Each year, the Education Place Planning team works with schools to analyse the forecast pupil numbers and determine what is required to maintain a sustainable education landscape. The forecasts include births and birth projections, housing data for the next ten years from the borough and district councils, and cross-border migration data both within and in and out of the county of Surrey.

Surrey County Council Education Place Planning will continue to work with schools to manage the changing landscape and amend the number of places available to ensure sustainability across the county in the long-term.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH

**16. ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

What progress has been made with regards to Surrey's plans for low traffic areas with priority for pedestrian and cycle friendly routes?

RESPONSE:

The Council is developing its countywide Liveable Neighbourhood (LNs) plans to complement the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) by extending the benefits of sustainable movement to a wider area, in particular around town and village centres. Low traffic areas/zones that prioritise pedestrian movements and cycling will be an integral part of the LNs programme. As the LN plans are developed, bids to funding sources such as Active Travel England, local funding sources, and the like, will be made. Successful bids will facilitate delivery plans for the LN roll-out across the county. More detail on the LNs programme will be made available once the full (or a sufficient part of the) programme is sufficiently funded.

It is noteworthy to state that earlier in the year, there was a successful Active Travel England funding bid for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in the Ashford area - the scheme is currently in its design stage, before moving into delivery. In addition, the £3m planned Council investment to improve road safety outside schools from 2022/23 to 2024/25 through a prioritised programme of interventions will contribute to the delivery of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as well.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE /
AYESHA AZAD, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

**17. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

- a) Please can the Council confirm how higher energy prices are impacting the County Council? Namely, what are the current energy bills for key Council buildings (such as Woodhatch Place and Quadrant Court) and services like streetlighting, what is the increase from last year and what will the bills be this time next year?
- b) Does the Council have plans to cut back on energy usage in its own buildings and in service delivery in order to mitigate soaring costs in particular over the winter period?

RESPONSE:

The impact of inflation on the Council's energy costs this year is a likely overspend of £0.6m. This is less than anticipated due to the Council agreeing the price of 80% of its energy usage before April 2022, through our procurement with the Crown Commercial Services. For the next financial year (2023/24), the Council is assuming a revenue pressure of £2.2m.

The Council is actively exploring a number of avenues to reduce energy consumption as well as further mitigate against inflation risks and higher energy costs, including:

1. Change ventilation/fresh air strategies and practices back to pre-COVID measures, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
2. Review operational times and temperature set points on heating systems across the Council's estate, so that heating to be set to maintain a reasonable temperature and only operate during the hours a building is expected to be occupied.
3. Use of Grid Edge Artificial Intelligence to analyse performance data for heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems in larger buildings to monitor and modify systems as appropriate for optimum performance.
4. Installation of remote smart meters/sub-meters across the estate to monitor energy consumption in real-time, and identify spikes in use which could indicate a fault/loss of energy.
5. Establishing Energy Management Task Force, a cross-Service initiative which will continue working on energy and cost reduction measures and opportunities.

Regarding streetlighting, for 2022/23 there is a forecast overspend of £0.5m relating to current year prices, which is offset by other unrelated underspends and income within Highways and Transport. For the financial year 2023/34, budget planning currently assumes further inflation of £0.7m, which is being kept under review.

The Council is implementing several measures to reduce energy consumption and mitigate price rises, including a programme to convert streetlights to LED (due to be complete by the end of 2022) and identifying minor and residential roads where lights can be switched off after 1am (location is taken into consideration, for example, roads near railway stations remain lit until the last train has departed).

TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

18. STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK: (2nd Question)

Is the Council considering putting forward any areas in Surrey as possible 'investment zones' under the Government's new plans?

RESPONSE:

The Government's Growth Plan sets out an intention to establish Investment Zones (IZ) to drive economic growth and ensure the benefits of this are felt by people and businesses across the UK. IZs will be specific sites, put forward and agreed to by local areas. Key planning policies to ensure developments are well designed, maintain national policy on the Green Belt, protect heritage, and address flood risk, highway and other public safety matters - along with building regulations - will continue to apply to sites identified as IZs.

The Government has launched an Expression of Interest (EOI) process for IZs, open to all upper tier local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) in England. It has made clear that the support of the Local Planning Authority for any proposal for an IZ as part of the EOI process, is critical. Lower tier local authority leaders and Chief Executives are also encouraged by the Government to engage with their upper tier local authority and MCA to make sure that any proposal is right for that area.

The County Council has until 14 October to develop and submit one IZ proposal for Surrey and has contacted all 11 Surrey District and Borough Councils to seek views on, support for and as appropriate, jointly identify potential IZ areas or sites, that can be the subject of an EOI in the timescale. Whilst only one IZ proposal can be submitted by the County Council, it could include several sites.

Government guidance confirms that submitted EOIs will be subject to an assessment of:

- **Economic Opportunity:** where places will need to set out what type of site(s) they intend to bring forward within their Investment Zones proposal, including the estimated impact of these over 10 years against a set of core metrics.
- **Pace of Delivery:** setting out what is needed to accelerate the delivery of existing plans or drive the delivery of new ones. This will include specific information regarding the size, location and make up of potential sites.
- **Wider Strategic Considerations:** including the live and potential private and public investments proposed Investment Zones can align with to drive additional growth.

Proposals that meet the minimum standard will be confirmed shortly after the bidding period. The Government will enter detailed delivery discussions with those places to determine the exact tax incentives and planning liberalisation measures that will apply.

At the time of preparing this response, potential sites are under active consideration and subject to further discussions.

DENISE TURNER-STEWART, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY / MARK NUTI, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND HEALTH

**19. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

Now energy prices have increased and the weather is changing, please confirm where the proposed Warm Hubs will be across Surrey and when these will be announced to the public?

RESPONSE:

We are currently working with the District and Borough Councils and other partners to establish a network of warm hubs across the county. Once we have worked through detailed requirements and confirmed funding, a list of locations will be shared with all Members. Where there may be opportunities for members to invest their Members Community Allocation to support local hubs in their area, they will be contacted over the coming weeks to discuss this opportunity. Our aim is to have the list publicly available on our website by 31 October to coincide with a wider cost of living mail out that Council is sending to all households, and on the assumption that venues can start operating from 1 November. A Member seminar is being scheduled for 27 October to provide further details and a finalised programme will be shared.

SINEAD MOONEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**20. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

Last week the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee heard that, of 423 social worker positions in Surrey County Council, 149 are not filled with permanent staff. 90 positions are covered by agency staff and there are 59 positions vacant.

- a) Please provide the total cost to the council of the agency social workers in Children's Services.
- b) The above figures show a 14% vacancy rate in Surrey. The equivalent nationally is 9%. Please share the communication we have with the Local Government Association (LGA), County Councils Network (CCN) and the Government regarding the national social worker shortage such that we can address this nationally as well as locally, to increase the overall number of social workers, not just compete with our neighbouring counties for a limited resource.

RESPONSE:

- a) The Council as a whole, does not split its agency cost forecasts by social worker and non-social worker posts in reporting. However, as of month 5 across Corporate Parenting, Family Resilience and Quality & Assurance teams in the Children, Families and Lifelong Learning (CFLL) directorate

(where social workers are most likely to be in post) the forecast agency spend is £12.9m for the full financial year 2022-3. The Year to date spend on social workers (which is available from Connect 2 Surrey) up to the end of September was £4.5m.

- b) The senior leadership team continues to address the challenges related to social work recruitment and retention both on a local and national basis. Within the Southeast region there is a Director of Children Services Forum which meets to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) related to agency staff recruitment and agency fees, this forum also provides the space to discuss regional challenges related to workforce and these issues are then fed into national forums which includes highlighting these concerns and issues with the Local Government Association (LGA) and national Government.

The Association of Directors for Children Services (ADCS) has a policy committee called the Workforce Development Policy Committee' ([Workforce Development Policy Committee | ADCS](#)) which is currently chaired by Surrey's DCS, Rachael Wardell. This is a national Board which looks at policy, process, and practice related to workforce recruitment and retention and draws upon learning and feedback from local authorities throughout the country.

This Board feeds directly into the current President of ADCS who provides the leadership voice for ADCS is representing the sector's challenges and opportunities within relevant central government forums who are looking at the issues facing local authorities and the workforce within Children Services. The policy committee also has extensive links with the Department for Education (DfE) and engages regularly with DfE on these matters.

The recently published Independent Review of Children's Social Care has focused significantly upon the workforce challenges the sector faces and recommendations within this review, including ways to reduce the reliance on agency social workers, are currently being considered by the relevant governmental departments. DfE has started to draw up an 'Early Career Framework' for social work professionals' and this working policy is being tested out within the sector, for example DfE attended the most recent meeting of the ADCS Workforce Development Policy Committee to seek feedback on the planning from senior leaders within the sector.

[Home - The Independent Review of Children's Social Care \(childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk\)](https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk)

AYESHA AZAD, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES

21. NICK DARBY (THE DITTONS) TO ASK: (3rd Question)

Has any acknowledgement yet been received to the former Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources' letter to HMRC requesting an increase in the 45p per mile mileage allowance?

If not, when will this be chased, and followed through?

RESPONSE:

I have confirmed with the previous Cabinet Member that no response has been received and I have therefore sent a follow up letter, I will share a response once available.

NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE

22. ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK: (3rd Question)

- a) Will the Cabinet Member give an update on fly-tipping across the county?
- b) Has Surrey assessed by how much the situation has changed since charges and reduced opening hours were introduced?

RESPONSE:

The County Council is responsible for disposing of fly tipped waste collected by the district and borough councils. The table below shows the total quantity of fly tipped material delivered to the County Council for disposal between 2015/16 and 2021/22.

Year	Total tonnes of fly tipped material disposed of by SCC
2015/16	4442 T
2016/17	3376 T
2017/18	3415 T
2018/19	4163 T
2019/20	3430 T
2020/21	3857 T
2021/22	2942 T

Charges for disposal of construction waste were first introduced in April 2016 with most of the changes to operating days and hours being introduced during 2016/17 and 2017/18. Our data shows that there is no discernible correlation between changes at our Community Recycling Centres and increases in fly-tipping. This finding also aligns with [national research](#) undertaken by WRAP.

TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**23. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:
(3rd Question)**

- a) How many and what percentage of Surrey County Council staff use foodbanks?
- b) What more is the Council going to do to ensure its own employees do not count amongst those struggling the most with rising bills this winter?

RESPONSE:

- a) We do not collect this information. However a survey by Unison of their members in February 2022 which had 285 respondents indicated that just below 10% of those staff who responded had used a foodbank in the last 2 years. In addition, in a staff survey in July 2022, 57% of respondents stated that they worry frequently about the cost of living. We know we are in difficult times and we cannot underestimate the impacts that financial worry and difficulties will have on staff as well as communities. The Corporate Leadership Team is working to find ways to support those most in need and utilise our partnership relationships to best effect to help deliver support.
- b) We know that people all across Surrey, and our staff, are feeling the impact of increasing costs and pressure on household budgets. We have put in place a range of support for staff, and they can also access much of the financial, welfare and wellbeing support we're signposting residents to via our health and welfare hub on our website.

The recent pay award given to staff was targeted at the lowest earners. Those earning the least received a pay increase of over 7%. This was paid in July, backdated to April. In addition, a staff financial well-being hub has been set up which includes links to advice on managing money, ethical lending, and also promoting the council's My Benefits scheme which enables staff to save money on many purchases including in supermarkets and leisure activities. We are also developing online groups where staff can share good ideas and information.

The forthcoming staff roadshows with the Chief Executive and myself are also aimed at communicating this help. Officers are exploring what other options are available to support our staff whilst being mindful of the financial limitations that the Council itself faces.

KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

**24. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:
(3rd Question)**

Please provide average costs per mile, in 2021-2022, for surface treatments/reconstruction for:

- cycle paths;
- pavements;
- public rights of way; and
- roads in Surrey.

Please also provide the total length treated/reconstructed, for each type of asset, in 2021-2022.

RESPONSE:

The table below shows the total length and average cost per mile of the different pavement and road maintenance schemes that we delivered under capital planned maintenance in 2021/22, as commissioned by the Asset Planning Team in Highways & Transport, through the Prioritisation Process.

- **Resurfacing (Reconstruction)** - where we remove the top of the road and put a new road surface down. This is undertaken where there are problems in the underlying structure of the road.
- **Preventative maintenance (Surface Treatment and Surface Dressing)** - we carry out work to the top of the road to improve the skid resistance, increase the lifespan of roads and reduce the risk of potholes.
- Cycle paths on pavements and roads are treated as part of the reconstruction or surface treatment of those pavements and roads.

Please note the costs below include for the works, design, officer time and Overhead and Profit applied by the contractor.

Work Type	Total length treated mi (21/22)	Cost per mile (21/22)
Pavement Reconstruction	13.27	£268,961
Pavement Surface Treatment	23.45	£46,246
Roads Concrete Treatment	2.84	£512,778
Roads Reconstruction	19.47	£792,677
Roads Surface Dressing	39.15	£64,654

NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE

25. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK: (4th Question)

In July 2021 I asked the Cabinet Member for an update on the Council's legal proceedings with SUEZ, to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the Eco Park. I was advised that "The legal process will be resolved next year with an estimated time frame of around 12 months from now".

- a) As we are now 15 months down the line would the Cabinet Member please provide an update on those proceedings?
- b) Please also confirm to what extent the anaerobic digester and gasifier facilities are now in use.

RESPONSE:

- a) The legal process (Arbitration) is ongoing and is subject to legal privilege. You will understand the Council's position is subject to legal privilege and it would not be appropriate to comment further in public at this time.
- b) The gasifier was awarded its Acceptance Test Certificate on 9 March 2022 and is now fully operational. The Anaerobic Digester passed its Acceptance Tests on 23 September 2021 and has been fully operational since then. Both facilities are periodically shut down for maintenance which is part of their normal operations.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH

26. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK: (4th Question)

In a recent Member briefing it was noted that one of the biggest barriers to using public transport in Surrey is car ownership.

Please confirm how car ownership in Surrey benchmarks against other council areas in England and Wales. What is our strategy to reduce the car habit in Surrey, including through Surrey County Council's procurement contracts?

RESPONSE:

Car ownership in Surrey is around 86% compared to the national average of 73%, with the trend continuing to rise.

Based on 2021 census data for the number of households per local authority, the average number of cars (privately owned) per household is:

Surrey	1.34
England	1.06
Wales	1.12

Equivalent figures for other local authorities include:

Essex	1.23
Hampshire	1.31
Kent	1.20

The recently adopted Surrey Transport Plan (LTP4) is based on the principles of **Avoid, Shift, Improve** approach to reduce carbon and car dependency by:

- Developing our Liveable Neighbourhoods programme and improving digital connectivity through the Surrey Broadband project to provide full fibre broadband to help avoid making some local trips by car.
- Investing a recent award of over £13m in more walking and cycling schemes through our 'Active Travel work' and through our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). This will accelerate the 'shift' away from car dependency. It is being supported by an additional £3m to improve road safety outside schools to make travel by alternative modes more attractive and accessible for local journeys, whilst also improving air quality and the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- Investing £49m in more zero emission buses, electric community transport minibuses and supporting infrastructure that will reduce carbon emission, improve air quality and help grow bus patronage post-pandemic.

These principles and transport schemes are being supported with behaviour change programmes and communications to help residents and businesses make informed choices of how and when they travel more sustainably and to reduce car dependency.

The Council's vehicle procurement aligns with our stated objective within the Climate Delivery Plan to operate a Zero Emission Fleet by 2030, and any vehicle procurement will align with that objective.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Denise Turner-Stewart

PORTFOLIO: Deputy Leader and Communities and Community Safety lead

The current focus is on supporting our residents and our communities through the cost-of-living crisis:

Community Helpline: Over the summer months the helpline provided health and welfare support to over 1,000 residents. Enquiries included requests for advice on debt and benefits, emergency benefits, foodbanks, and mental wellbeing. Increases were seen in calls relating to the impending rise in energy costs, and from parents requiring support with purchasing school uniforms. Working with colleagues in Finance and Comms, pages were updated and restructured in the financial support section of the health and welfare support web pages making it easier for residents to access information digitally.

Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS): Work is ongoing with partners to mitigate the impacts of the cost of living on communities, where possible, informed by valuable insights from infrastructure organisations like Surrey Community Action. The Local Resilience Forum has stood up the Welfare Cell to co-produce proactive interventions and responses, making the best use of our collective resources and learning from our work during Covid. The VCFS is also working to drive forward our equality, diversity, and inclusion ambitions for the county. For example, Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum's Minoritised Stakeholder Group, will be working with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to deliver safety training with small and medium sized enterprises, landlords and households from minoritised communities, who historically have not been easy to engage with. An equality, diversity, and inclusion lead has been recruited for the VCFS to work with charities to help them improve their ways of operating and delivering services so the reach and offer in all communities is extended as fairly as possible.

Homes for Ukraine Bus Pass Scheme: Customer Service has processed over 1,000 applications for temporary bus passes for Ukrainian guests, under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. This will provide them with free travel on their chosen bus route whilst they settle into their new lives.

Community Engagement: Eleven Community Link Officers and an events team have been deployed across Surrey's Districts and Boroughs, bringing focus to key neighbourhoods within them. Over twenty-one events have been attended countywide with c. 2500 individual conversations held with residents. Feedback from residents has been resoundingly positive, with many happy to see the Council engaging with them in their neighbourhoods. We are providing a human face to what can seem like a very complex organisation. One resident wrote '*... my wife, children and I had some excellent conversations with your 'Make It Happen' team. They were open and receptive...It was very much appreciated*'. The team has supported County Councillors to hold conversations with residents in their local areas, undertaken community walkabouts, and started trialling different ways of reaching our residents and making local connections. An internal SharePoint site has been launched to share these approaches, events, resident insights, success stories, challenges, and learnings, and to build local internal networks around communities that improve our collaboration, shared knowledge and understanding and help us to empower our communities.

Your Fund Surrey (YFS): Two projects were awarded funding at Cabinet in September. Old Woking Community Centre received £982,389 towards creating a fully sustainable and accessible community centre by converting a large, inefficient 1960s building to a low carbon, low resources, low running cost community asset. Ripley Village Hall also received £586,396 funding towards rebuilding. YFS has now funded fourteen projects worth £3.91m with another eight projects expected to be taken for a decision by the end of the year. The process is continuing to be refined, especially for low value capital projects where a new fund for Members is to be launched. YFS are working with Community Link Officers in our more deprived areas to encourage and help applications.

Trading Standards: Work supporting victims of scams continues to be a priority and over the last few months almost £700,000 has been saved for the victims of scams by the Trading Standards service. Most recently the service has been returning money to residents, average age 81, which was being sent to scam "Clairvoyants" abroad. The scam, persuasively worded, targeted the most vulnerable, promised recipients huge sums of money, luck, love, and protection in exchange for sending cash. Risks from cheap, unsafe, illicit, or fake consumer products are also on the rise in the face of the cost-of-living crisis. In recent months, in externally funded work, the service inspected over 53,000 consumer products and stopped almost 3,000 unsafe products entering the market. It has also seized over 61,000 illicit cigarettes in joint operations with Buckinghamshire. Such products undermine legitimate business, have no tax paid on them, are a health risk to consumers, and create an increased fire safety risk due to their burning properties.

DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Rebecca Paul
PORTFOLIO: Levelling Up

Levelling Up Fund bid – East Woking Sustainable Transport Corridor: Surrey County Council has bid for funding of circa £12m to deliver targeted improvements to walking, cycling, and bus infrastructure in eastern Woking; providing better connections to Woking town centre and the surrounding area. The improvements will form part of a wider network of active travel and sustainable transport measures, building on the existing walking and cycling networks, and a network of quality bus corridors, through upgrading existing infrastructure in the East Woking/Sheerwater area. The bid was submitted in August 2022 and a decision on funding is expected by the end of 2022.

Insight profiles for 21 Key Neighbourhoods: Insight profiles for the twenty-one key neighbourhoods identified in the Health and Well Being Strategy have been developed which give clear, useful data and metrics for these specific areas. This data will help to ensure that the right interventions are made, and appropriate services are provided to these areas, whilst giving the opportunity to measure outcomes. This data will provide insight that is coherent and consistent across all the different issues being worked on such as cost of living, levelling up, reducing inequalities etc. The profiles can be found on Surrey-i and include a [one page infographic for each area](#) with key information, and a more detailed pack with detailed insights and comparison with other areas in Surrey. The packs have been shared with partners and received positively. Development on these packs is ongoing.

Local Area Coordinators and Community Link Officers: Local Area Coordination has now been introduced in Surrey. This offers a unique type of individual one-to-one support for residents at a very local level. LACs work within a small geographic area and are embedded within the local community. They help people of all ages become stronger, healthier, happier, and be more connected with their community. Our first three LACs, based in Sheerwater & Maybury, Horley, and Hurst Green, are now actively taking introductions and walking alongside residents with a wide range of different support needs to help them realise their vision of a good life. Positive stories are already emerging about how this approach is complementing existing support and services. A new LAC is due to start in Old Dean/St Michaels shortly.

Following recent recruitment there is now a full complement of Community Link Officers (CLOs), with one CLO allocated to each District and Borough across the county. They are working alongside County Councillors in all areas, but with a priority focus on the twenty-one Key Neighbourhoods.

EDI: Progress towards achieving the EDI action plan continues across the workstreams with activity being monitored by the Programme Board. Highlights include: securing three properties for self-contained refuges for people fleeing domestic abuse for whom existing provision is unsuitable; the completion of the review of the current recruitment process and development of the associated action plan that will enable the Council to recruit a workforce reflective of the communities served; the development of a digital platform to support disabled jobseekers; the Reasonable Adjustments service; and making significant progress towards achieving improvements identified in the Cabinet Office review of web accessibility. Our new Programme Manager and Head of EDI have started their roles and are working collaboratively with others across Surrey County Council and partner organisations to further develop the SCC approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The Staff Networks are continuing to thrive with the Women's, MEGA and DENIS networks holding successful and engaging events over the summer months. Inclusion Week (26 September- 2 October) saw the launch of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Hub on SharePoint. Coming up in October are activities for Black History Month and Dyslexia Awareness Month, as well as the re-launch of the Reverse Mentoring Scheme.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Ayesha Azad

PORTFOLIO: Finance and Resources

2022/23 Budget Update: At Month 4, the Council is forecasting a deficit of £30m against Directorate revenue budgets. It is recognised that the economic climate and rising inflation provide significant challenges to the delivery of our services within available budget and the impacts are being monitored closely. Contingencies contained within the budget provide comfort that the budget remains balanced should inflationary pressures not be containable. Cabinet Members will continue to work with Directorates and Finance to mitigate the budget position. The Capital Programme forecast at M4 is £220.8m, a variance of £3m against budget. This is the net effect of acceleration in some areas and slippage against other schemes.

2023/24 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28: Work on the 2023/24 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28 is well underway. There are a number of specific challenges faced by the Council in setting next year's budget, including high inflation, the impact of policy changes such as Social Care Reforms, continued demand for services, the cost-of-living crisis, and uncertainty on the Council's funding. We are therefore at a critical stage in our budget setting process and are looking to identify considerable efficiencies in order to balance the budget for next financial year. Informal briefings of Select Committees and engagement with opposition groups have taken place, with further briefings scheduled. A draft budget is due to be presented to Cabinet in November.

Internal Audit: Work completed to date shows the service is on target to deliver the annual plan against its Key Performance Indicator (90% completion by year-end), and that completed assignments are compliant with professional standards. A summary of work completed in the first quarter identifies 23 separate audit assignments, of which 5 received 'Substantial Assurance' (including 3 schools), 13 received 'Reasonable Assurance' (including 7 schools), 1 received 'Partial Assurance', and 4 were grant certification assignments. In addition, 7 irregularity investigations were completed in this quarter.

For the majority of this work Internal Audit has reported in their upper two categories of assurance, which suggests the Council's control environment remains stable and robust. The 1 Partial Assurance opinion given was in respect of Home to School Transport where remedial actions to improve controls and processes were agreed with management and for which a follow-up audit is forthcoming. Significant resource has been invested by Internal Audit in supporting the Council's ongoing Digital Business and Insights (DB&I) programme in the move from SAP to MySurrey processes. Internal Audit has advised the Programme Board on matters of risk and control within the proposed system processes over the course of this year and continues to support the programme as it moves towards the go-live stage.

Procurement: The team continues to lead delivery of c.250 projects across the Council, with due consideration given to Social Value and 'net zero carbon' ambitions, developing material to ensure the Council procures in an ethical and responsible way. The Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy was approved by Cabinet and SCC's Modern Slavery Statement; a requirement previously only for large private entities but recently extended to public sector bodies. This has been published on the SCC website and uploaded to the Government Platform. Procurement staff have received initial modern slavery training. Work will now focus on developing category specific approaches, further training and embedding the policies and processes, and on using Procurement's new programme management software to target areas where the greatest policy risks and opportunities exist. The new Contract Management Advisory Service within procurement is in development. A recent recruitment campaign filled all available posts, and the full scope of the pilot service is now being defined in readiness for launch in January 2023.

Digital: Further establishing our digital design capability continues to be a key focus. Designing in collaboration with officers, partners and residents enables us to utilise a blend of perspectives in the definition of target outcomes and a broader corporate review of design and change. Delivery continues to focus on transformation to improve service quality and resident experience whilst reducing cost. Examples of this work over the last three months include: a new Adult Social Care Online financial assessment chatbot to directly support the charging reform work, new Internet of Things initiatives for energy monitoring, the completion of the first development cycle for the replacement for Vulnerable People and Residents System (VPRS), which will be used by the Council and partners to keep our most vulnerable residents safe in an emergency.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Natalie Bramhall

PORTFOLIO: Property and Waste

Capital Projects:

- Fire & Rescue Service - Designs underway for new stations at Lingfield and Chobham. Feasibility commenced for a major development at Wray Park, including a new station and Training Centre.
- Children's Homes - Homes at Epsom, Walton and Shaw Family Contact Centre, Woking are under construction. In Dorking planning submitted for Children's Home and Care Leavers Accommodation.
- Hubs - Design for Sunbury is in progress and public engagement scheduled for October. Weybridge progressing as a standalone project with design process underway for major refurbishment. Staines library design is progressing with requirements being gathered for additional services.
- SEND - 273 new pupil places have been delivered in September 2022 from a range of projects.
- Caterham Downs - The project which transformed a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community (GRT) site back to Countryside will be awarded an International Green Apple Award on 21 November at the Houses of Parliament.
- Libraries Transformation - Design development underway for Epsom, Guildford, Redhill and Woking.
- Supported Independent Living - Planning applications have been submitted for Coveham Hostel, former Horley Library, and former Manor School.
- Extra Care Housing (DBFO) - Pond Meadow Ltd have submitted a full planning application. The competitive tender process is underway for Bentley, Brockhurst, Lakeside, Pinehurst, and Salisbury Road.

Facilities Management:

- Transformation Programme - The Programme reached a significant milestone in September with the publication of the Supplier Questionnaire (SQ) for the new Hard and Soft services contract.
- Energy prices - Increased energy prices over the last 6 months are putting additional pressure on forecast revenue expenditure 2022/23. Our forward purchasing strategy has helped mitigate the scale of cost increases for both current and next financial year. There is a significant risk that energy costs will increase steeply in 2024/25. To reduce the impact an Energy Management Task Force has been created to identify opportunities to reduce consumption within our buildings.
- Reactive Works - There has been a significant increase in reactive works requests up >40% on last year. This is largely attributable to staff returning to working post COVID. This, combined with inflationary pressure on materials and labour, has resulted in pressure on revenue budgets. To address these challenges there has been renewed focus to prioritise essential reactive works for H&S and business continuity, whilst identifying remedial works that should be incorporated into the wider Capital Forward Maintenance Programme.

Agile Office: Our Agile Office Estate programme continues to deliver efficiencies and improvements to retained office estate and remains on track to deliver financial benefit of £2.2m in efficiencies by 2025/26, and revenue savings of over £400k. Plans are progressing for a new family contact facility at Woodhatch Place as well as a mobile vaccination centre, continuing to drive optimised utilisation of our corporate office estate.

Assets and Disposals: Focus is on revenue savings and generation, and to progress disposals to deliver capital receipts. The capital receipts programme 2022/23 continues to forecast approx. £54m of sales this financial year with over £40m already either completed (£9.5m) or exchanged (£31.5m). Marketing has commenced on the disposal of Coxbridge Farm, Farnham, which has planning consent for 320 housing units. Marketing has commenced on Consort House, Redhill on both a freehold or leasehold basis with staff relocated to Woodhatch Place. Looking at options to renegotiate leases reducing rental costs and lease vacant space for rental income

Waste: The Anaerobic Digestion plant has been commissioned and is now processing all Surrey's food waste. The gasification facility was awarded an Acceptance Certificate by the Independent Certifier in March 2022 and is now processing residual waste. Negotiations are ongoing to try to avoid a formal legal dispute with Suez. The Council is working with Suez to identify ways in which the Eco Park can deliver wider social and environmental value to residents, and to ensure better community engagement on the facility.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Matt Furniss

PORTFOLIO: Transport, Infrastructure and Growth

LCWIP & Active Travel: We were recently rated as a level 2 authority by Active Travel England, the highest of South East authorities, with a grant funding of £863k to be spent on improving our capability and ambition to deliver the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and active travel schemes. We have also delivered 6 active travel schemes delivered by end of September from tranche 2 schemes, remaining 2 are on track to be delivered within the next year. We have been consulting on the 4 schemes from tranche 3 with a value of £5m as well as working on detail designs.

The first instalment of the 'Surrey's Active Journeys' marketing campaign launched in late September for six weeks coinciding with World Car Free Day. The campaign signposts residents to walking and cycling resources, encouraging greater participation in active travel using communication insights from market research conducted in early 2022.

Planning & Waste and Minerals Plan: The Minerals and Waste Policy Team continue, as a matter of priority, to collate, organise, and analyse stakeholder feedback/ representations/ site nominations received in respect of the Issues and Options public consultation. An Issues and Options Consultation summary report will be produced and will provide detailed outcomes of the Issues and Options public consultation and will be used to inform the preparation of the Preferred Options (Draft Plan) public consultation which is set to take place in June 2023.

Healthy Streets: A report is set to go to October Cabinet which, if agreed, will endorse the adoption of the Healthy Streets for Surrey guide as County Council policy for the design of all new streets and public realm schemes in the County, while encouraging the Districts and Boroughs to do the same, resulting in higher quality development.

SIP: The SIP Phase 3 update is due to Cabinet in November and will outline the next tranche of schemes subject to Cabinet approval and final business case being signed off by the Capital Programme Panel.

One Surrey Growth Board: The One Surrey Growth Board met in September. The meeting focused on the development of the Surrey Skills Plan but also discussed updates on the other key challenges agreed by the Board in June. This included consideration for housing affordability, infrastructure and spatial constraints, and cluster and innovation work.

Surrey Skills Plan: A Skills Plan is under development which focuses on the needs of businesses and how the skills system can be more responsive to employer needs. The priorities for action identified through the report include enhancing collaboration between Surrey businesses, schools, anchor institutions, and skills providers, and supporting more people to access sustainable employment through a lifetime of learning. Some of the actions will be progressed by SCC directly, whilst a majority will require partnership work and effort from across the whole skills system. A draft of the Skills Plan will be discussed at Cabinet on 25 October 2022.

Innovation Programme Update: Stakeholders from across SCC, the Business Leaders' Forum, Surrey Universities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Innovate UK, and District and Boroughs came together in September to form a cross-organisational working group to drive forward the Cluster and Innovation workstream and consider ways to raise Surrey's profile at a national and international level as a hub for innovation. Short term priorities for the group include the mapping of cluster activity and coordinating existing and future cluster development initiatives.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Kevin Deanus

PORTFOLIO: Highways and Community Resilience

River Thames Scheme: The River Thames Scheme (RTS) will be launching a public consultation in November. Since the previous consultation in 2016, the RTS has changed with the omission of Channel 1. It has evolved into more of an integrated scheme which responds to the challenges of flooding; creating more access to green open spaces and sustainable travel routes, in addition to encouraging inclusive economic growth, increasing biodiversity and responding to the dual challenges of climate change and nature recovery. During the forthcoming public consultation, the RTS will host a number of events across the route of the Scheme for residents, communities, and stakeholders to 'drop in', look at the proposals, talk with the team delivering the Scheme and ultimately leave their feedback. Pre-consultation, the RTS engagement team will be out meeting with communities and stakeholders to raise awareness of the Scheme and the coming consultation.

Flood Risk Management: In August and September, several thunderstorms brought heavy rainfall across much of Surrey causing widespread disruption due to surface water flooding. In total we received 68 reports of property flooding, of which 21 related to properties suffering internal flooding and 47 external. The Flood and Climate Resilience Team has contacted affected residents and completed a number of investigations as a result. We are continuing to work through the remaining cases. In addition to working with Surrey Highways, and District and Borough partners, we are working with the Environment Agency to understand the flooding of 10 properties in a particular incident in Haslemere.

The Flood and Climate Resilience Team are continuing to fit Property Flood Resilience measures to homes at risk of flooding in the Caterham on the Hill area. In 2016, 96 properties were flooded from surface water following an intense downpour. SCC is leading a project to survey and fit measures designed to make properties more resilient to flooding. This is being done in partnership with the London Borough of Croydon, the Environment Agency, Tandridge District Council, Thames Water, the local Flood Action Group, and delivery partner Whitehouse Construction. 205 properties have been included in the scheme of which 143 have expressed an interest. 128 of these have had surveys with 41 properties fitted with the measures so far.

Military Covenant and Community Resilience: On Wednesday 22 June, the Chair of Surrey County Council hosted a successful Reserves Day event at Woodhatch Place attended by the Deputy Commander (Reserves) for 11 Security Force Assistance Brigade Col Mark Siebenaller, along with reservists employed by Surrey County Council, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, Surrey Police, and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. The Council also welcomed soldiers from 4 Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment who set up a stand in Woodhatch Place reception to enable colleagues to learn more about what the reserves do.

The Surrey Team has been preparing for the Armed Forces Act 2021 which is due to come into force in late autumn; which will place a 'legal duty' on local authorities to have 'due regard' for the Armed Forces community in the provision of education, housing and homelessness and healthcare services. In preparation Surrey Officers have been providing training to frontline staff and Councillors across the county as part of the wider Forces Connect funded project.

The Forces Connect App, which is managed by SCC continues to go from strength to strength with twenty-seven regions in England on the app which now has over 18,500 downloads. This number is expected to continue to grow with NHS Scotland coming onboard as well as the app being promoted to all Royal Naval staff through their portal. Another area of focus for the team is to work with partners to encourage GP surgeries to become accredited as Veteran Friendly. To date, only eight Surrey surgeries have signed up and officers are working with staff at Surrey Heartlands and Ashford and St Peters Hospitals Trust to increase this.

Surrey Prepared: They have been promoting resilience messaging through attendance at Surrey Pride and the Surrey Fire Service Open Day. Engagement from members of the public was very positive, who welcomed messaging around what to do and who to contact in an emergency, the benefits of 'Message in a Bottle' and the importance of signing up to the Priority Services Register. During late summer Surrey Prepared organised three successful community first aid training sessions run by British Red Cross in Surrey Fire Stations attended by over 40 people and following further requests officers will look to schedule additional sessions.

DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Jordan Beech

PORTFOLIO: Highways

LED rollout: 77,986 (88%) of streetlights have now been converted to LED. Our supply chain continues to be affected by the global shortage of electronic components. We are monitoring the situation and updating our programmes accordingly. If we can maintain the supply, we are confident the project will be completed on schedule. Officers are also investigating opportunities to further reduce electricity consumption.

Road and Pavement Programme Update: We are now six months into our Term Maintenance Contract with Ringway and working our way through this year's programme delivery. We have already completed a number of planned maintenance schemes for roads and pavements, with some good successes with our concrete and footway programmes and are working hard with Ringway and their supply chain to programme and deliver the rest of our very large programmes for this financial year, with approximately 600 schemes in total for the year. In addition to this year's delivery, our Engineers will soon be starting the Walk Talk Build process to design next year's planned maintenance programmes, ready for programming from April onwards. Next year could potentially see double the size of programme, with the rest of the additional funding.

Parking Enforcement: We are in the middle of a procurement process for a Countywide parking enforcement and moving traffic violations contract, with Cabinet due to receive a recommendation at their December meeting. Officer discussions are ongoing between the County Council and District and Boroughs, as we collectively work to support staff directly impacted and understand any local conditions or arrangements our incoming contractor will need to be aware of. A clear objective of the project is to ensure a smooth transition from the current to the new arrangements, which results in our residents benefitting from high service levels and a new enforcement service that is provided in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

Environmental Maintenance: Preparations are ongoing to ensure continuity of service from April next year when the remaining eight agency agreements with the Districts and Boroughs (D&Bs) expire. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the D&Bs to ensure staff are supported, accurate schedules of cutting/spraying areas are provided and that any local conditions are understood. Contractors will be engaged, and it is intended that from April the whole county benefits from the standard number of cuts but also there is an increasing focus on biodiversity and the wider greener futures aspirations.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Marisa Heath

PORTFOLIO: Environment

Energy Projects: The Green Homes Grant LAD2 scheme was completed in the summer with 130 low income homes received free energy saving and renewable energy measures at the approximate value of £10k per home. The Sustainable Warmth programme, which is the next phase of Government funding, was launched on 3 October and will run until end of March 2023. Surrey County Council are the lead authority for the scheme on behalf of the Surrey consortium to which a total grant of £12m has been allocated.

The Solar Together scheme which offers subsidised solar PV to able to pay home owners has now been completed. Through the scheme a total of 5.6MW of solar was installed, which is equivalent to 50% of Surrey's installed solar capacity. The scheme leveraged around £8M private investment in low carbon technologies. The LoCASE programme, which offers grants to SME businesses for energy efficiency and decarbonisation measure is continuing to gain momentum. To date 67 SMEs have received funding of £477k which will result in annual energy savings of over £300,000 and annual carbon savings of 321tCO₂e.

Decarbonising our own estate and schools: The Council is preparing to deliver the scheme to install energy efficiency measures and solar in the 15 buildings to which Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding (PSDS) of £2.65m was awarded. The opportunity to bid for the next phase of PSDS funding is expected to open imminently and the Council has identified and developed a bid for a further 30 buildings. If successful the funding will be available from next year. The design of the solar canopy at Woodhatch has needed to be changed to allow for access requirements. This has caused a small delay as an amendment is required to the Planning application. It is expected that the installation will be completed before the end of the year. Officers are continuing to develop roof mounted solar and solar farm schemes.

Finance: Officers are continuing to develop the Greener Futures Finance Strategy, which will set out our approach to funding the Climate Change Delivery Plan by leveraging grant funding and private and community investment. This Strategy will be taken to Cabinet in the Spring. New finance mechanisms that we are seeking to develop include:

- An offer to decarbonise schools, focusing initial on solar PV "rent a roof" scheme.
- Exploring the development of a 'rent a roof' solar PV scheme for commercial, industrial, and agricultural buildings in order to generate income streams.
- Pilot finance platform to match carbon reduction projects to private sector investment opportunities.
- Options for loans or municipal bonds to overcome the high up-front capital costs of low carbon measures.

M25 J10 Wisley and Ockham: National Highways have begun improvement works to the junction including a large scale restoration of heathland and the UK's widest green bridge. A briefing was circulated to all members on 30 September.

Tice Meadow: On 29 September I attended the official handover of saw the official handover of Tice's Meadow Nature Reserve to Surrey County Council safeguarding this much-loved wildlife haven on the outskirts of Farnham. It was celebrated with all six Councils involved in the purchase and representatives from Hanson planting a commemorative tree. [Local authorities to protect much loved nature reserve | Surrey News \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

Public Rights of Way: The Council's Traffic Regulation Order policy has been reviewed and a paper will be presented to Cabinet in November with a recommendation for a new policy on how Byways open to all traffic are managed. A paper with proposed changes to decision making on changes to rights of way will be presented to the Council.

Climate Change Adaption: This summer we have seen the problems caused by heatwaves across the county. Heat Impacts are one of the range of climate impacts that will be addressed in the Surrey Climate Change Adaptation Strategy that is under development (due for completion in early 2023). As with all of the climate risks (floods, droughts, extreme temperatures, and indirect impacts) the council will need to assess the risks. As an organisation we can guide development in the region to ensure new builds, and new developments are designed fit for a future climate. Integration is emerging between short-term emergency response teams, and the longer-term resilience and adaptation responses required.

DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Paul Deach

PORTFOLIO: Environment

Norbury Park: The Vision for Norbury Park will be published this month. Last month the Norbury Park Forum considered issues around rights of way in advance of the consideration of a selection of promoted trails in February. Refurbishment works at the sawmill are now complete enabling the Council's Youth Teams to operate the workshop, providing training and vital links to woodland management on the site.

Ash Die Back works: Ash Die back has affected large parts of the Council's Countryside Estate. Following a comprehensive survey of the trees affected, contractors are being engaged to carry out initial works. Consultation with local residents has begun with a second presentation to the Norbury Park Forum last month and an on-site consultation event planned for November.

Basingstoke Canal: Consultants have been engaged to secure a leisure operator at Lock Cottage at Deepcut Lock. Water levels have been extremely low on the canal this summer as a result of the drought but are now slowly starting to increase. The Basingstoke Canal Authority are providing up to date information on how this impacts navigation.

The Canal Watch project on the Basingstoke Canal has been given an award by the Home Office. The team at the Basingstoke Canal Authority, especially Fiona Shipp, have been part of a multiagency approach to tackling indecent assaults on the canal through the use of CCTV and signage, removal of scrub and the purchase of 4 e-bikes for police and voluntary patrols. The project is now being put forward for an international award.

Newlands Corner: Helyn Clack, Chair of Surrey County Council, officially opened Newlands Corner's Discovery Centre last month at a lunch with local dignitaries and school children. The visitor improvements include a new natural play area, a new wildlife garden, additional seating, refurbished toilets, and water fountain. The main part of the car park has been resurfaced and reorientated to maximise the view and support wider access. [New facilities rejuvenate iconic countryside site | Surrey News \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

The Downs, Caterham: Refurbishment works carried out at the Downs in Caterham by SCC in partnership with contractors has been awarded an International Green Apple Award in recognition of its contribution to conservation of chalk downland habitats.

Tree Planting: The team have secured a second round of funding from the Forestry Commission's Treescaping Fund. This will provide just under £300,000 towards the Council's tree planting target this winter. This is alongside projects to support planting in urban areas by volunteers and schools. [Funding secured for more tree planting in Surrey giving much needed boost for nature | Surrey News \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

Flood Risk Management: Part of the work of updating the local flood risk management strategy is exploiting the collective benefits of our schemes. The Horsell Common project is part of the Surrey Flood Alleviation Programme. The primary focus is on reducing flood risk to 20 properties in the centre of Woking through the creation of three attenuation ponds. By using a nature-based approach these wetland areas will improve biodiversity through diverse habitat creation. The design also increases public accessibility to the area through the creation of footpaths and boardwalks.

Surrey's Farms: Surrey's Land and Property Department have asked the service to consider how the Council's farms could support corporate objectives, especially the Climate Change Delivery Plan and the One Surrey Growth Plan. An approach has been proposed and the two departments are now collaborating to establish condition surveys, baseline data and options to invest in the estate's assets.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Mark Nuti

PORTFOLIO: Adults and Health

Adult Social Care (ASC) Charging and Fair Cost of Care Reforms: Cabinet approved up to £2.9m of the Budget Equalisation Reserve in 22/23 to facilitate implementation of ASC reforms, above government funding. The first meeting of the programme board was held on 9 September. Recruitment to posts to support implementation is underway. We are analysing and validating cost of care returns from providers to enable fair rates to be calculated for return to DHSC by 14 October, with a report to Cabinet in November. We continue to work with similar local authorities to assess the financial impacts of the reforms, lobby government and explore opportunities to work together.

CQC Assurance: An initial meeting of the programme board (Care Quality Commission CQC Assurance) was held on 9 September. In addition to our own preparatory work, we continue to engage with the CQC, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the Local Government Association in readiness for the release of the assurance framework in the Autumn. Once the framework is released, we will undertake a departmental self-assessment to identify our strengths and areas for improvement and develop an action plan. A business case is being prepared should additional resources be needed to prepare for future assurance and inspection.

Delivering the Accommodation with Care and Support Strategy: The contract for delivering affordable Extra Care Housing (ECH) in Pond Meadow, Guildford has been awarded to Pond Meadow Ltd. The support and care contract will be tendered separately. Pond Meadow Ltd submitted their detailed planning application to the Guildford Borough Council Planning Authority in September 2022. There is a tender underway to identify a strategic partner to deliver affordable ECH at a further five sites. We continue to progress delivery plans for Supported Independent Living (SIL) and are evaluating the tender submissions to be included in the new Approved Provider List (APL) for SIL. Contracts through the APL will commence at the start of 2023.

Discharge to Assess: A model is in place across Surrey supporting pathway one, two and three discharges from the acute hospitals. We continue to evaluate the outcomes being achieved for residents within a sustainable financial arrangement. On 22 September, the government announced £500m funding to help hospitals discharge patients through the winter period Oct 2022 – Mar 2023. We are waiting for details on what this will mean and how the funding will be allocated across Integrated Care Systems.

Senior Management Team Functional review: The Joint Executive Director Adult Social Care and Integrated Commissioning, Liz Bruce is making changes to the senior management team in ASC to establish a more balanced line management structure.

Public Health: Strategic oversight of the Surrey Health and wellbeing strategy continues with the latest summary of delivery across different partners available via the quarterly highlight reports at <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/about/highlight-reports>.

Surrey Index metrics will be refreshed and published in November. Strategies that are in development which we are either leading on or are a key partner in include: Children and Young Peoples Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health, and an update on Suicide Prevention. Some further highlights of the Public Health team objectives include:

- Within our commissioned services the new contract for Sexual Health services will begin on 1 October.
- The substance misuse treatment plan was accepted by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities which secures additional funding for use over the next three years to deliver on the 10-year national drugs strategy: 'From harm to hope'.
- Whilst we maintain our oversight of COVID through our health protection function this is as part of the wider work and input on seasonal health and winter planning.
- The rolling process of updating the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has started with the publication of updated "Surrey context: People and Place" chapter now live and additional chapters, for example mental health will be online during the next few months.
- The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment that was delayed nationally during COVID has been updated and will be published on 1 October.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Clare Curran

PORTFOLIO: Education and Learning

New Education and Learning Portfolio: I would like to start this update by saying how pleased I am to be taking over the Education and Learning Cabinet portfolio. My priorities as Cabinet Member will be to drive a lifetime of learning strategy for Surrey, focussing on skills and education from the very early years through to adulthood. There is much we can do as a Council to ensure that every young person, including care leavers, or those with additional needs or a disability progresses well into employment with skills that match the needs of our local businesses and communities. My aim is to continue to build strong relationships with our early years' providers, our whole range of schools and our colleges in Surrey as they are all such important partners in preparing young people for their futures.

Improving communication with parents and stakeholders: In a large county such as Surrey, good communication with our many parents and stakeholders can be challenging. It is vital, though, in ensuring that we are able to co-create the outcomes we want for our children and young people. I am committed to renewing our communications, through direct meetings and engagement sessions, surveys and research and listening to feedback, compliments, and complaints. Only when we understand the lived experiences of all our children and their families are we able to agree what we need to focus on so that no child is left behind.

Update on 'SEND' improvement work and our Safety Valve agreement: As part of the refresh of our Additional Needs and Disabilities Strategy taking place this Autumn, over 1000 parents and carers responded to our survey, relating to the experiences of over 1,300 children and young people with additional needs and disabilities. 52% were satisfied or very satisfied with the support their children received for their additional needs, 32% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, and 16% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This indicates that our 'SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities)' improvement work is having an impact, however there is clearly more to do.

This academic year, we are prioritising improved information and guidance, strengthened statutory assessment and decision-making, development of schools' specialist support, the Team Around the School pilot, development of the Joint Commissioning Strategy, expansion of Alternative Provision and specialist places through the capital programme and enhanced pathways into adulthood. I receive regular updates on Surrey's Safety Valve agreement which is delivering a £100m contribution from the Department for Education to our SEND improvement plans. It is on track for delivering both financial sustainability by 2027 as well as the ambitious areas of service improvement being targeted.

Home to School Travel Assistance: On behalf of the Council, I would like to sincerely apologise to anyone experiencing delays with recent home to school travel assistance applications. I know many Members have been contacted by concerned parents in their division. We are experiencing a 20% increase in applications in comparison to 2021 and are working hard to process these as quickly as possible. As with many services nationally we are dealing with complex and significant challenges, particularly with driver shortages in some areas. We have taken urgent steps to address this by increasing internal staffing resources to process applications and offering temporary financial allowances to enable families to make alternative arrangements themselves, where possible. These measures are improving the situation for families, with 711 applications processed since 1st August 2022 and transport provided to 471 eligible children since 5th September

Future School Visits: Finally, in my new Cabinet role, I am looking forward to visiting our schools and I would be interested to hear from any members who are Governors and would like to invite me to visit.

CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Sinead Mooney

PORTFOLIO: Children and Families

New Children and Families Portfolio: I would like to say how pleased I am to have taken on my new role as Cabinet Member for Children and Families, as well as continuing my work on Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion, (in partnership with the Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up) and the development of a partnership led accommodation, housing, and homes strategy.

Achieving Excellence Programme: Our improvement work across Children's Services continues at pace following the inspection this year. It was good to have the acknowledgement from Ofsted of all the positive changes made already but we know we still have more to do. We are in a new phase of improvement - now known by a title that reflects our ambition - 'Achieving Excellence' for Surrey's children and families. We know it's likely to be 2-3 years until Ofsted return for a full inspection, but it's important that we keep improving practice for our residents and so we've setup an Achieving Excellence Improvement Board to support and oversee our ambitious improvement programme. There are a handful of key practice areas that were highlighted by Ofsted this year that we need to address as a priority but that's just a small part of the ambitious improvement plan. A few examples of the important projects within our Achieving Excellence programme include:

- Developing a reunification framework for children in care, supporting them to return home with extra help for them and their families.
- Reviewing our engagement with partners and residents at the front door to Children's Social Care, working towards earlier intervention and ensuring we are focused on meeting the needs of children and families.
- Improving the recruitment and retention of social work staff so that our residents are supported by skilled and experienced practitioners with the time available to meet their needs.
- Addressing placement sufficiency in the local area and improving our provision to ensure that Surrey children can live in Surrey homes.

Budget: At the end of July, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning were predicting a £22.5m overspend:

- £15m projected overspend on Home to School Travel Assistance because of the rapid increase in demand, with an expected 9% increase in pupil numbers from September, which only came to light after the 2022/23 budget setting process was complete. These demand pressures are compounded by volatility in fuel prices which remains a significant risk, and other inflationary pressures. In addition, providers can "hand back" routes leading to higher costs in the tender process. This projection includes the changes from the implementation of the Council's new transport policy. A Task & Finish Group has been set up to drive weekly progress, ensure clear action plans and be accountable in this area.
- £2.6m overspend on External Looked After Children (LAC) placements – due to increased numbers of LAC since last year and the full year effect of some high-cost placements which came in late March.
- £2.5m overspend on Children with Disabilities (CWD) Care - this is a residual pressure from 2021/22 due to high levels of demand for direct payments and personal support.
- £1.6m overspend relating to social work staffing – this relates to the double funding of the assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) social work cohort where agency staff are used for three months while ASYE's gradually build up their caseload. There are also additional staffing costs in fostering due to the level of agency staff.
- £0.8m overspend for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) – We hoped to make savings of £1.1m in this area by lobbying for additional funding, but it has not been possible to deliver the full amount anticipated.

I recognise the difficulties being faced by the service, because of increasing demand against a background of inflation and staffing pressures and will be working closely with them to try and identify savings and efficiencies to ensure that these increased costs can be mitigated before the end of the financial year.

Accommodation, Housing and Homes Strategy: Economic, health and community drivers have led to the County Council facilitating a partnership approach to the creation of an Accommodation, Housing and Homes Strategy for Surrey; work has progressed well and through thorough research and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders a baseline assessment has been undertaken. This will form the basis for further engagement through a series of deliberative workshops during the Autumn, as the strategic lobbying proposals and priorities are collectively determined. A further report will come to Cabinet early in the New Year.

DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING TO COUNTY COUNCIL

NAME: Maureen Attewell

PORTFOLIO: Children and Families

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Partnership: The VAWG Partnership Strategy has been developed over the past six months with consultation and input from a range of partners, including a consultation exercise conducted through the East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service (ESDAS) to gather the views and experiences of survivors of these crimes.

The strategy itself is based on four key pillars which build upon existing work being carried out by partners:

- **Prepare** - To develop a stronger system which can respond to VAWG in Surrey
- **Prevent** - To prioritise prevention through education and information campaigns
- **Protect** - To support victims and survivors through the criminal justice system and to provide safe accommodation for them
- **Pursue** - To improve the pursuit of perpetrators and hold them to account

A key principle of the strategy is to improve communication and coordination between partners. It is essential that residents in Surrey have trust and confidence in our partnership and its services. This requires a consistent approach from first contact or identification of these crimes, through the criminal justice and recovery process.

The VAWG Partnership has an Executive Group that is responsible for the strategic oversight of the partnership and will be responsible for coordinating funding, ensuring partners act in line with the objectives of the strategy, and advising and supporting partners. They met recently to ratify the group's terms of reference, agree membership of the group (with additional representation from District and Borough colleagues) and to approve the VAWG partnership strategy.

As part of this approach the County Council will continue to play a leading role in funding refuge and outreach providers, as well as supporting the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in submitting bids for the acquisition of further funding for specialist services. Following approval of the strategy by the partner organisations, the strategy will be launched on 25 November 2022 to coincide with the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls and the beginning of the 16 days of activism.

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