

Notice of Meeting

Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee



Date & time
Wednesday, 30
April 2014
at 10.30 am

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

Contact
Bryan Searle, Jisa Prasannan
or Andrew Spragg
Room 122, County Hall
Tel 020 8541 9019 or 020
8213 2673

Chief Executive
David McNulty

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or
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If you would like a copy of this agenda or the attached papers in another format, eg large print or braille, or another language please either call 020 8541 9068, write to Democratic Services, Room 122, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN, Minicom 020 8541 8914, fax 020 8541 9009, or email bryans@surreycc.gov.uk or jisa.prasannan@surreycc.gov.uk or andrew.spragg@surreycc.gov.uk.

This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Bryan Searle, Jisa Prasannan or Andrew Spragg on 020 8541 9019 or 020 8213 2673.

Members

Mr Nick Skellett CBE (Chairman), Mr Eber A Kington (Vice-Chairman), Mr Mark Brett-Warburton, Mr Bill Chapman, Mr Stephen Cooksey, Mr Bob Gardner, Dr Zully Grant-Duff, Mr David Harmer, Mr David Ivison, Mr Adrian Page, Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos, Mr Chris Townsend, Mrs Hazel Watson, Mr Keith Witham and Mrs Victoria Young

Ex Officio Members:

Mr David Munro (Chairman of the County Council) and Mrs Sally Ann B Marks (Vice Chairman of the County Council)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is responsible for the following areas:

Performance, finance and risk monitoring for all Council services	HR and Organisational Development
Budget strategy/Financial Management	IMT
Improvement Programme, Productivity and Efficiency	Procurement
Equalities and Diversity	Other support functions
Corporate Performance Management	Risk Management
Corporate and Community Planning	Europe
Property	Communications
Contingency Planning	Public Value Review programme and process

PART 1 IN PUBLIC

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 2 APRIL 2014

(Pages 1
- 14)

To agree the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

Notes:

- In line with the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, declarations may relate to the interest of the member, or the member's spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom the member is living as husband or wife, or a person with whom the member is living as if they were civil partners and the member is aware they have the interest.
- Members need only disclose interests not currently listed on the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
- Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of any interests disclosed at the meeting so they may be added to the Register.
- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

4 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

To receive any questions or petitions.

Notes:

1. The deadline for Member's questions is 12.00pm four working days before the meeting (24 March 2014).
2. The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (23 March 2014).
3. The deadline for petitions was 14 days before the meeting, and no petitions have been received.

5 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE

(Pages
15 - 28)

On 2 April 2014 the Committee made a number of recommendations following consideration of a report from the Impacts of Welfare Reform Task Group. These were considered at the Cabinet meeting on 22 April 2014, and a response is attached.

Please note that **annex A** referred to in the enclosed report to Cabinet has not been included, as this was published in the agenda papers for the previous Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2 April 2014.

- 6 INTERNAL AUDIT: REVIEW OF APPRAISALS 2013/14** (Pages 29 - 46)
- Purpose of the report:** Performance Management
- To outline the forward plan for recording and reporting on appraisals at Surrey County Council.
- This is in response to the attached audit report and, in particular, the actions planned to address the recommendation for 'significant improvement' to monitoring appraisal completion.
- 7 FLASH OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2013/14 AND PROPOSED CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS TO 2014/15** (Pages 47 - 60)
- Purpose of the report:**
- This report presents the revenue and capital budget outturn for 2013/14 and proposed carry forward requests to 2014/15
- 8 REVIEW OF CENTRAL AND DIRECTORATE COMMUNICATIONS FUNCTIONS** (Pages 61 - 82)
- Purpose of the report:** Scrutiny of Services and Budgets
- To provide the committee with an outline of how the communications service supports the organisation through the communications and engagement strategy, and to demonstrate how the reduction in spending will be achieved in 2014/15.
- 9 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 83 - 110)
- The Committee is asked to monitor progress on the implementation of recommendations from previous meetings, and to review its Forward Work Programme. The Committee is also asked to review the scoping document for the Flooding Task Group (Environment & Transport Select Committee).
- 10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 10.30am on 4 June 2014.

David McNulty
Chief Executive
Published: Tuesday, 22 April 2014

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND FILMING – ACCEPTABLE USE

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Thank you for your co-operation

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at 10.30 am on 2 April 2014 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday, 30 April 2014.

Members:

- * Mr Nick Skellett CBE (Chairman)
- * Mr Eber A Kington (Vice-Chairman)
- A Mr Mark Brett-Warburton
- * Mr Bill Chapman
- * Mr Stephen Cooksey
- * Mr Bob Gardner
- * Dr Zully Grant-Duff
- * Mr David Harmer
- A Mr David Ivison
- A Mr Adrian Page
- * Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos
- A Mr Chris Townsend
- * Mrs Hazel Watson
- A Mr Keith Witham
- A Mrs Victoria Young

Ex-officio Members:

- * Mr David Munro, Chairman of the County Council
Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Vice Chairman of the County Council

Substitutes:

Colin Kemp
Nick Harrison
Margaret Hicks
Richard Wilson

Present:

Mr David Hodge, Leader of the Council

* = present

21/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Mark Brett-Warburton, David Ivison, Chris Townsend, Keith Witham and Victoria Young. Colin Kemp, Nick Harrison, Margaret Hicks and Richard Wilson acted as substitutes.

22/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 5 MARCH 2014 [Item 2]

These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

23/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest. However, Eber Kington asked for it to be noted that he volunteered as Chairman for Fundraising for the Epsom & Ewell Citizen's Advice Bureau.

24/14 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

Declarations of interest: None.

Witnesses: None.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Committee had received a number of questions from Hazel Watson. These questions and responses were tabled at the meeting and are included as an appendix to these minutes.
2. Hazel Watson asked a supplementary question about when and by whom the decision on the future use of the Runnymede site was made. It was agreed that a written response would be provided following the meeting.

Recommendations:

None.

Actions/further information to be provided:

A response to Hazel Watson's supplementary question will be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.

Committee Next Steps:

None.

25/14 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

Declarations of interest: None.

Witnesses: None.

Key points of the discussion:

1. The Committee noted the responses given at the Cabinet meeting on 25 March 2014. The Chairman proposed that the matters related to this response were discussed alongside the budget monitoring item.

Recommendations:

None.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

Committee Next Steps:

None.

26/14 REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [Item 6]

Declarations of interest: None.

Witnesses:

Mary Burguieres, Policy and Strategy Partnership Lead Manager
 Jisa Prasannan, Scrutiny Officer
 Ben Robinson, Strategic Partnership Manager

David Harmer, Chairman of the Task Group
 David Hodge, Leader of the Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman of the Welfare Reform Task Group presented the report to the Committee, outlining the key findings of the group's work. It was explained that there were a number of concerns regarding the assessment of those eligible for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). It had been identified that a high number of assessments were being challenged through the appeals process, and a significant number of these appeals had been successful. It was commented by the Chairman of the Task Group that this represented a significant waste of public money, and also suggested that the assessment process was not robust. The Chairman of the Task Group also highlighted the injustice to claimants caused by the time it takes to get from assessment to appeal.
2. It was highlighted that ATOS Healthcare had indicated that its contract to undertake the face to face assessments for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) would be coming to an end. The Committee discussed concerns regarding the future commissioning of this work, given the reputational and operational risk attached to this high profile area.
3. The Leader of the Council gave an early oral response to the recommendations of the Welfare Reform Task Group. This included a commitment to:
 - (i) protect the Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding under spend from 2013/14 in a separate reserve;
 - (ii) lobby central government through the Local Government Association and the County Council's Network on improving the delivery and roll out of Universal Credit, in particular simplifying the application process; and

(iii) work with the members of the Welfare Reform Task Group and officers to take forward recommendation 12, writing to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the County Council's concerns over the Employment and Support Allowance and work capability assessments for claimants.

4. The Committee discussed the role of the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) in supporting those affected by welfare reform. It was noted that there was evidence of an increase in the number of enquiries since the introduction of the reforms. However, some Members expressed the view that these were showing signs of stabilising. It was recognised that an increase would be anticipated during any significant period of change in welfare reform. The Committee praised the work of the CAB, and a number of Members commented that the Council should continue to develop strong partnership working with the organisation. The Leader of the Council stressed the importance of local support such as the Local Assistance Scheme which utilises the Surrey Re-Use Network and CABs, in helping mitigate the impact of welfare reform.
5. The Committee raised a number of questions regarding the commissioning of getWIS£, in particular whether the contract had a set of identified success criteria for the amount invested. Further details were also requested regarding the geographical availability of the service across the county, and whether there was a break clause in the contract. It was agreed that these details would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting. The Leader of the Council informed the Committee that he had sought a number of assurances from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, prior to the cabinet decision in February 2014 to extend the agreement with getWIS£ for a further two years.
6. Members of the Task Group commented that they had experienced shock at some of the things they had been informed about regarding the impact of welfare reform in Surrey. In particular, it was highlighted that there had been significant delays in the appeals process for decisions regarding ESA, and that this had impacted on people's health and wellbeing. It was also highlighted that the complexity of forms and assessments was judged to present a significant barrier for those reliant on some form of welfare support.
7. Members of the Committee highlighted the role of libraries in providing IT access to complete online benefit claim forms, and asked that consideration be given to extending internet access time in libraries to those applying for Universal Credit online, as the forms typically took up to two hours to complete.
8. The Committee discussed the potential to develop a simpler assessment process for welfare support, and raised a number of questions about how the Council and partners could work together to ensure people could access support services to apply for Universal Credit and other welfare support. It was highlighted that there were a wide number of care and benefit assessments, and the Committee commented that there was a strong case to be made for developing a

common assessment for these multiple claims. The Committee agreed to add an additional recommendation to those proposed by the Task Group, asking that the Leader of the Council lobby central government on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and explore options for a common assessment for claimants across welfare benefits and support.

9. The Leader of the Council commented that the central Government decision to discontinue the Local Assistance Scheme grant funding after 2015 concerned him, and expressed the view that it could potentially lead to a number of families developing longer term support needs unnecessarily. It was highlighted that this could lead to more families needing to access the Supporting Families programme in order to have those needs met.
10. The Committee thanked the Task Group as well as the officers that had supported it, and praised the report that had been produced. The Committee agreed to the Task Group recommendations. The Committee agreed that the Welfare Reform Task Group should remain in place to use its expertise in a monitoring capacity.

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Adult Social Care, Children Schools and Families, Libraries, Public Health and Finance teams to continue to monitor impacts of the welfare reforms on service users and services, and provide a joint update through the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2014. Adult Social Care to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and Children Schools and Families to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on care leavers in their updates.

Recommendation 2: The Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group be encouraged to continue to collate data on the impact of the reforms on residents and the cumulative impact of the reforms, and to share information and good practice within the group, and to report on progress to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the update report in September 2014.

Recommendation 3: Surrey County Council's Organisational Development Team analyse training needs on welfare reform in the Council and explore how such training can be disseminated throughout affected council services and ensure consistency with training being delivered by partner organisations.

Recommendation 4: Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to work with the Head of Family Services to explore the potential for the Supporting Families Programme (which is being extended through the Public Services Transformation Network) to provide early help/intervention to some of those families who are most severely impacted by the welfare reforms.

Recommendation 5: Any Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 is ring-fenced and rolled over into 2014/15 and continues to be committed to supporting residents in crisis through the LAS.

Recommendation 6: Shared services to provide an update on improvements to the LAS scheme and take up of the fund, as part of the update report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.

Recommendation 7: Surrey County Council to continue lobbying central government to provide funding for emergency crisis support for residents (known as the Local Assistance Scheme in Surrey) beyond 2015.

Recommendation 8: The Adult Social Care Committee to closely monitor the delivery of this service by getWIS£ and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Recommendation 9: Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Commissioners, to work with Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, Public Health and getWIE to:

(a) promote the getWIS£ advice and support service to all Surrey GPs through Surrey's 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups; and

(b) continue to raise awareness of this service among key partners including District and Borough Housing and Benefits Officers and social housing providers;

to ensure Surrey residents receive early help in dealing with the welfare reforms.

Recommendation 10: The Public Health team to report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee with findings from their food access needs assessment, to inform the Committee's work around reviewing the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey.

Recommendation 11: Surrey County Council to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the Voluntary, community and faith sector to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit, taking into consideration the concerns and recommendations highlighted in this report, and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress. This preparation should include:

(a) researching and understanding the need for digital access and support across Surrey;

(b) the County Council better understanding the potential demand on IT resources as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit to enable Surrey to properly prepare for this, including reviewing budget provision;

(c) reviewing the demand for money management advice and assessing existing service provision, in order to make evidence-based recommendations for sourcing the necessary support; and

(d) lobbying central government to ensure that support to access Universal Credit is adequately funded.

Recommendation 12: The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the Task Group's concerns over the

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) process including the following recommendations:

(a) That firms carrying out the medical work capability assessments (WCA) for benefit claimants, on behalf of DWP:

- (i) treat benefit claimants like customers; and
- (ii) ensure appropriately qualified persons carry out these medical assessments.

(b) Bureaucracy within the ESA claims and appeals process be reduced. In particular:

- (i) DWP to provide information on the number of medical certificates posted by claimants but not received by DWP and the reasons for this,
- (ii) DWP to accept claimant medical certificates for longer periods while claimants await mandatory re-consideration and tribunal decisions. This will save GP and claimant time and expense in having these certificates frequently renewed or re-requested where certificates have been sent by post but not received by DWP.

(c) DWP's benefit claim forms and decision letters to signpost claimants to advice and support services to enable claimants to seek early help, preferably locally based organisation, such as local authorities, housing providers and Citizens Advice Bureaus.

(d) DWP to build a closer working relation with partners in the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, to bring about pro-active information sharing and signposting particularly where claimants have been sanctioned by DWP decisions and therefore lost their passported benefits, such as housing benefit.

(e) DWP to use lessons learned from the ESA process and apply this to the roll-out of the Personal Independence Payments.

Recommendation 13: The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and exploring options for a common assessment for claimants across welfare benefits and support.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

Committee Next Steps:

Task Group report and recommendations approved by COSC to be presented to Cabinet on 22 April 2014.

27/14 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT [Item 7]

Declarations of interest: None.

Witnesses: Kevin Kilburn, Deputy Chief Finance Officer

David Hodge, Leader of the Council

John Furey, Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways & Environment

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman of COSC informed the Committee that the Sub-Group had considered COSC's recommendations and the Leader's response on the budget, and discussed their concerns about the response not addressing specific concerns around savings identified as part of the Family, Friends and Community Support project, with the Deputy Leader. The Sub-Group had felt that the way COSC's scrutiny recommendations were responded to by Cabinet had not been satisfactory. However, further to the discussion with the Deputy Leader at the Sub-Group meeting, there was some acceptance that things could have been handled differently.
2. The Committee reviewed the Cabinet response in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2014-19 and noted the projected outturn for 2013/14. Members queried what management action savings had been identified in Adult Social Care for 2013/14 and whether these had been achieved. Officers agreed to provide a written response outlining the nature of the savings, as well as confirmation of whether they had been achieved once the financial outturn report for the year had been produced.
3. The Committee expressed concern about the ability of Family, Friends and Community Support to deliver savings for 2014/15. It was queried whether there had been progress on an Invest to Save bid to increase capacity within the directorate. Officers commented that they invited bids to the Invest to Save panel from the directorate, but that it would require the development of a robust business case. The Committee commented that there was a need to ensure action was taken in a timely fashion in order to meet the savings targets in year.
4. There was a discussion around the MTFP and the role of Select Committees in making recommendations in the budget setting process. The Leader of the Council acknowledged that there had been changes to the MTFP and that reserves had been allocated to reduce the savings requirements for Adult Social Care in 2014/15. This was to enable the directorate to develop and implement the work of the Family, Friends and Community Support project.

[David Hodge left at 12.15pm]

5. The Committee was informed that the flooding report to Cabinet in July 2014 would outline the final costs, as well as proposal around how these costs were met. It was highlighted that a number of announcements were still being made by central Government, and that the final cost to the council would be clearer following negotiations. The Committee was informed that the uncertainties around cost would not delay responses or road repairs, as it was important to ensure that work was undertaken and completed before next winter. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways & the

Environment gave assurances that work would commence in mid-May 2014 and complete in October of the same year. It was further highlighted that £10 million of capital spending had been allocated to flooding recovery at the Cabinet meeting on 25 March 2014. It was commented that there was a list of key areas impacted by the flooding that would be circulated to the Committee members.

6. The Committee was informed that the flooding recovery would not impact in the delivery of Project Horizon. It was commented that it would run alongside the flooding recovery work.
7. The Committee was told that information regarding the flooding had been requested from the Environmental Agency and Thames Water under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). This information would outline what had occurred and why, as well as give indication of measures required to mitigate the impact of future events. It was agreed that the response to this request would be shared at the next Committee meeting for consideration, and then circulated to the Environment & Transport Committee.
8. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways & the Environment commented that he intended to allocate £3 million to address gully and ditches maintenance, and that this work would be undertaken as part of the flooding recovery. It was highlighted that some of the damage to bridges could not be assessed fully until the flood waters had reduced.

Recommendations:

- a) That the information provided in response to the Section 19 request be brought to the Committee for discussion at the earliest opportunity: following discussion, the Committee to refer detailed issues to the Environment & Transport Select Committee for further consideration if necessary.

Action by: Deputy Chief Finance Officer

- b) That the report to Cabinet in July 2014 on the flooding response and cost is considered at a future Committee meeting.

Action by: Chairman/Democratic Services

Actions/further information to be provided:

Flooding information related to affected highways and infrastructure resources be circulated to the Committee.

Action by: Deputy Chief Finance Officer

**28/14 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
[Item 8]**

Declarations of interest: None.

Witnesses: None.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Committee noted its recommendation tracker and forward work programme. There were no further comments.

Recommendations:

None.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

Committee Next Steps:

None.

29/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

The Committee noted that its next meeting would be on 30 April 2014 at 10.30am.

Meeting ended at: 12.35 pm

Chairman

Questions to Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 2 April 2014

**Hazel Watson
Dorking Hills**

- I. Members were informed on 14 February that the Runnymede Centre had been handed to the Army to help with the response to flooding. Has the situation changed?**

This did occur and the site was fully vacated of SCC staff (except facilities staff). The Army took overall responsibility and management of the site. The Army fully vacated at the end of February.

- II. If the Army have departed from the Runnymede Centre, why has it remained closed, when and how were members informed, and who made the decision to do so?**

The Runnymede Centre reopened on Monday 10 March to staff for hotdesking, training and meeting space. Tenants, some of whom may have been displaced, were also encouraged to return from 10 March. It is not closed.

During the period from 28 February to 10 March the site was closed to SCC staff (except facilities staff). This was to enable a clean-up and repair programme to happen.

- III. When will the Runnymede Centre reopen and what are the preconditions required for it to do so?**

Please see above

- IV. Is it accurate that 150 members of staff have been relocated from their normal place of work at the Runnymede Centre to other County Council locations? If so, which other locations?**

From mid-February a number of staff who had Runnymede as their primary-base was moved to work from other sites. The bulk of staff were from Children's services and their roles (in the main) includes peripatetic working. The majority of these staff were moved to Quadrant Court to work with colleagues in that office building. A team of Adults Social Care staff were also relocated to Quadrant Court. Other staff continued to hotdesk from other sites including District and Borough locations.

- V. Is it accurate that staff formerly based at the Runnymede Centre have been refused access and that in some cases locks have been changed on their office doors, preventing them from accessing files and collecting personal**

belongings? If this is accurate, what is the legal position of denying staff access to their personal belongings?

Staff were refused access by the Army to the building for the period that the Army commissioned the site. In addition from end of February to 10 March, whilst clear-up was undertaken they were not able to access the buildings. During these periods, essential filing, equipment and personal belongings were moved upon request.

We are not aware of any code or lock changes on office doors. Two main side doors accessing the centre have been closed to staff entry meaning that staff now have to walk through the main front doors, through the reception area to get onto site. Staff have not been prevented from getting their personal belongings since 10 March.

VI. Which services previously based at the Runnymede Centre are being based elsewhere and what is the impact on service users?

Runnymede is part of the corporate office portfolio not an “operational” service-user site. In terms of staff and the impact of general service provision on customers; An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been produced as part of the Making A Difference Programme which includes Runnymede. Furthermore, this is being re-evaluated as part of a new staff consultation period specific to Runnymede which commences 2 April – 30 April.

VII. What are the medium to long term plans for the use of the Runnymede Centre, such as a decision to permanently close it?

The medium term plans are for the site to continue as a corporate building for hotdesking, training and meeting space. There will be no teams permanently based there in the future which was recommended as part of the original Making a Difference Programme.

The longer term plan for the site is to become part of SCC secondary school provision, meeting a need for additional school places in the area. The new school would open in 2017 and as such the site will be required to be developed from 2015.

VIII. How much money is being saved by Surrey County Council while the Runnymede Centre is closed, noting the following extracts from the Budget Monitoring Report to Cabinet 25 March 2014:

45. Business Services (BUS) projects a -£6.2m full year underspend. BUS has delivered this year's efficiency savings, brought forward some of next year's and is also achieving one-off revenue savings. The underspend is an increase of -£0.6m compared to last month. The increased underspend reflects utility costs savings and the impact of rescheduling training courses due to take place at the Runnymede Centre.

51. *HR and Organisational Development forecasts -£0.5m year end underspend, a change of -£0.2m compared to last month. This is caused by several factors including delays to delivering training courses as a result of not being able to use the Runnymede Centre*

The Runnymede Centre was only closed for a two week period from when the Army vacated the site to it reopening following clear-up and repairs on 10 March. There are no buildings savings associated with this period as the site was still staffed, and all utilities continued; heat, light, security etc.

The extracts above relate to cancellation of a number of training courses for which a new venue could not be found at short notice to host the event. This amounts to approximately £30K over a period of up to 4 weeks (February-10 March). Training commenced again at Runnymede on 10th March. The other underspends due to staffing, occupational health and other training give rise to the additional £0.2m within HR.

Nick Skellett, CBE
Chairman of Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 22 APRIL 2014

REPORT OF: COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

LEAD MEMBERS: NICK SKELLETT, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DAVID HARMER, TASK GROUP CHAIRMAN

SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY



SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

- 1 At its meeting on 2 April 2013, the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the report of the Welfare Reform Task Group on the impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey. The Leader of the Council was present at this meeting to provide an early oral response to the findings and recommendations proposed by the Task Group. A report of the Task Group is attached at **Annex A**.
- 2 The Committee noted and discussed the findings of the Task Group and welcomed their proposed recommendations.
- 3 The Committee decided to add to these recommendations with a proposal that the Leader of the Council lobby central government on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and explore options for a common assessment for claimants across welfare benefits and support.
- 4 The Committee agreed that the Welfare Reform Task Group should remain in place to use its expertise in a monitoring capacity.
- 5 The Committee were pleased to note that the Leader of the Council welcomed the work of the Welfare Reform Task Group as their recommendations would help ensure County Council services and partners worked better together to respond to the impacts of the reforms.
- 6 The Committee welcomed the Leader's comments, and his agreement to:
 - (i) protect the Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding under spend from 2013/14 in a separate reserve;
 - (ii) lobby central government through the Local Government Association and the County Council's Network on improving the delivery and roll out of Universal Credit, in particular simplifying the application process; and
 - (iii) work with the members of the Welfare Reform Task Group and officers to take forward recommendation 12, writing to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the County Council's concerns over the Employment and Support Allowance and work capability assessments for claimants.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

5

On the basis of the discussions at the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2 April, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 1: Adult Social Care, Children Schools and Families, Libraries, Public Health and Finance teams to continue to monitor impacts of the welfare reforms on service users and services, and provide a joint update through the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2014. Adult Social Care to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and Children Schools and Families to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on care leavers in their updates.

Recommendation 2: The Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group be encouraged to continue to collate data on the impact of the reforms on residents and the cumulative impact of the reforms, and to share information and good practice within the group, and to report on progress to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the update report in September 2014.

Recommendation 3: Surrey County Council's Organisational Development Team analyse training needs on welfare reform in the Council and explore how such training can be disseminated throughout affected council services and ensure consistency with training being delivered by partner organisations.

Recommendation 4: Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to work with the Head of Family Services to explore the potential for the Supporting Families Programme (which is being extended through the Public Services Transformation Network) to provide early help/intervention to some of those families who are most severely impacted by the welfare reforms.

Recommendation 5: Any Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 is ring-fenced and rolled over into 2014/15 and continues to be committed to supporting residents in crisis through the LAS.

Recommendation 6: Shared services to provide an update on improvements to the LAS scheme and take up of the fund, as part of the update report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.

Recommendation 7: Surrey County Council to continue lobbying central government to provide funding for emergency crisis support for residents (known as the Local Assistance Scheme in Surrey) beyond 2015.

Recommendation 8: The Adult Social Care Committee to closely monitor the delivery of this service by getWiSE and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Recommendation 9: Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Commissioners, to work with Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, Public Health and getWiSE to:

(a) promote the getWiSE advice and support service to all Surrey GPs through Surrey's 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups; and

(b) continue to raise awareness of this service among key partners including District and Borough Housing and Benefits Officers and social housing providers;

to ensure Surrey residents receive early help in dealing with the welfare reforms.

Recommendation 10: The Public Health team to report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee with findings from their food access needs assessment, to inform the Committee's work around reviewing the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey.

Recommendation 11: Surrey County Council to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the voluntary, community and faith sector to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit, taking into consideration the concerns and recommendations highlighted in this report, and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress. This preparation should include:

(a) researching and understanding the need for digital access and support across Surrey;

(b) the County Council better understanding the potential demand on IT resources as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit to enable Surrey to properly prepare for this, including reviewing budget provision;

(c) reviewing the demand for money management advice and assessing existing service provision, in order to make evidence-based recommendations for sourcing the necessary support; and

(d) lobbying central government to ensure that support to access Universal Credit is adequately funded.

Recommendation 12: The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the Task Group's concerns over the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) process including the following recommendations:

(a) That firms carrying out the medical work capability assessments (WCA) for benefit claimants, on behalf of DWP:

- (i) treat benefit claimants like customers; and
- (ii) ensure appropriately qualified persons carry out these medical assessments.

(b) Bureaucracy within the ESA claims and appeals process be reduced. In particular:

- (i) DWP to provide information on the number of medical certificates posted by claimants but not received by DWP and the reasons for this,
- (ii) DWP to accept claimant medical certificates for longer periods while claimants await mandatory re-consideration and tribunal decisions. This will save GP and claimant time and expense in having these certificates frequently renewed or re-requested where certificates have been sent by post but not received by DWP.

(c) DWP's benefit claim forms and decision letters to signpost claimants to advice and support services to enable claimants to seek early help, preferably locally based organisation, such as local authorities, housing providers and Citizens Advice Bureaus.

(d) DWP to build a closer working relationship with partners in the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, to bring about pro-active information sharing and signposting particularly where claimants have been sanctioned by DWP decisions and therefore lost their passported benefits, such as housing benefit.

(e) DWP to use lessons learned from the ESA process and apply this to the roll-out of the Personal Independence Payments.

Recommendation 13: The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and exploring options for a common assessment for claimants across welfare benefits and support.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendations in this report will assist the County Council in monitoring and mitigating the impacts of the welfare reforms on Surrey residents, the County Council, and its partners.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

Even with an effective and coordinated response to the welfare reforms, it is likely that growing financial pressures will 'tip' some families into needing County Council services, particularly in the Children, Schools and Families and Adult Social Care Directorate services, increasing the demands on our resources. Continued close monitoring of the impacts of the reforms on our services will enable the County Council to identify early on, service areas being affected, and respond appropriately in future planning.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

The recommendations put forward in this report will assist the Council in achieving value for money by:

- Ensuring that emergency crisis funding is used to support some of the County's most vulnerable residents who are in crisis.
- Lobbying central government on continued funding for emergency crisis support, and simplifying the process for universal credit; employment support allowance and other welfare benefit claims requiring assessment.
- Recommending that the Adult Social Care Committee closely monitor the delivery of the County Council funded welfare advice service getWIS£,
- Ensuring the impacts of the reforms are carefully monitored to allow for evidence-based decisions on providing advice and support to residents affected by the reforms which are effective and value for money.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

The report explains the relevant financial issues, direct and indirect, following on from the local impacts of welfare reform. The most direct is the operation of the Local Assistance Scheme. The report sets out:

- the spending pattern to date, leading to an expected underspend (now assessed at £0.5m against the £1.2m budget transferred from the Government for the operation of the Scheme);
- the evidence that the Scheme is providing valuable community support; and

- the medium term expectation that the Government will withdraw the Scheme from April 2015.

In that context, it makes sense to:

- lobby for the continuation of the Scheme; and
- carry forward the underspend into 2014/15 and potentially beyond in order to maximise its use for the intended purposes at a time when the future financial support is in doubt. That is being done by treating it as unapplied grant, so achieving Recommendation 5 in this report.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

There is a summary of the relevant welfare changes set out in Annex 2 which indicates the statutory basis for these. Most of these welfare arrangements are administered by the DWP but since April 2013 the Council has had a responsibility for managing the Local Assistance Scheme which replaced the Social Fund previously dealt with by the DWP. There are particular requirements for the County Council to provide advice and assistance in some situations to individuals in need of its children and adults services, and it is also important for the Council to consider the impact of the welfare reforms as a whole on the community it serves as well as on the delivery of its own functions. The Council will need to be mindful of its public sector equality duties in any support it provides in relation to the welfare changes, and will need to consider equality impact assessments at any point where it is intending to provide or withdraw any advice service.

Equalities and Diversity

The welfare reforms will impact upon some of Surrey's most vulnerable residents, including care leavers, carers, residents with disabilities, and families in poverty. In many cases, advice and support is already in place for these groups, but the approach proposed by the Task Group aims to ensure that this support remains effective and co-ordinated, and new needs arising from the impact of the reforms are identified, monitored and addressed. Any equalities implications that arise as a result of relevant service changes will be addressed in specific Equalities Impact Assessments as appropriate.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- The approved recommendations in this report to be taken forward by the Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet Members and Select Committees.
- The Welfare Reform Task Group will use its expertise in a monitoring capacity, to review progress against monitoring and mitigating the impacts of the reforms on Surrey residents, the County Council and its partners, reporting back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee where appropriate.
- The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive an update report in September 2014 in response to the specific recommendations made in this report.

Contact Officers:

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Thomas Pooley, Scrutiny Officer
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Ben Robinson, Strategic Partnerships Manager
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Consulted:

Please see Annex 1 of the Task Group Report

Annexes:

Annex A – Task Group report

Annex 1 – List of witnesses

Annex 2 – Welfare Reform Overview and Timeline

Annex 3 – Geographical spread of Local Assistance Scheme applications

Annex 4 – The ESA decision making process (provided by DWP)

Annex 5 – Claimant description of ESA process

Sources/background papers:

- Report to COSC: Policy and Performance Report on the Impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey, 12 September 2013
 - Report to COSC: Interim Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group: Impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey, 30 January 2014 (includes Q2 Data Overview, Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group)
 - Universal Credit Local Support Services Update and Trialling Plan (published by DWP, December 2013)
-

CABINET RESPONSE TO COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE

Welfare Reform Task Group Report

I welcome this report of the Welfare Reform Task Group. Welfare Reform cuts across a number of different council services and partners. For that reason, responding to the impact of Welfare Reform could all too easily fall through the cracks. That is why I am glad that the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) commissioned this important task group. I strongly believe that it is cross-cutting areas such as this where scrutiny task groups can add most value.

I will now outline my response to the specific recommendations:

Recommendation 1: *Adult Social Care, Children Schools and Families, Libraries, Public Health and Finance teams to continue to monitor impacts of the welfare reforms on service users and services, and provide a joint update through the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2014. Adult Social Care to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and Children Schools and Families to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on care leavers in their updates.*

Recommendation 2: *The Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group be encouraged to continue to collate data on the impact of the reforms on residents and the cumulative impact of the reforms, and to share information and good practice within the group, and to report on progress to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the update report in September 2014.*

Although it is obviously for the COSC to determine its own work programme, I endorse these recommendations. As the report acknowledges, the impacts of welfare reform are expected to become more apparent over the next 12 months, as the initial reforms have embedded. Therefore it is sensible that the COSC continue to scrutinise this area, highlighting any issues or concerns with myself and the Cabinet as appropriate.

Recommendation 3: *Surrey County Council's Organisational Development Team analyse training needs on welfare reform in the Council and explore how such training can be disseminated throughout affected council services and ensure consistency with training being delivered by partner organisations.*

Human Resources & Organisational Development officers have been analysing the training requirements of the welfare reform changes for SCC staff, particularly related to the forthcoming Care Bill, and have already put in place the following learning and development offer:

- e-learning package on Welfare and Benefits
- Introduction to Welfare Benefits and Reform
- Personal Independent Payments
- Adult Social Care Eligibility Training (which includes some aspects of the welfare reform and the benefits system)

I fully support the Task Group's recommendation that the Organisational Development Team take this opportunity to work with wider SCC officers and external partners, particularly

through the Welfare Reform Coordination Group, to ensure that this training offer is sufficiently comprehensive and reaching all staff that would benefit.

Recommendation 4: *Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to work with the Head of Family Services to explore the potential for the Supporting Families Programme (which is being extended through the Public Services Transformation Network) to provide early help/intervention to some of those families who are most severely impacted by the welfare reforms.*

I welcome this recommendation. I believe that it is both sensible and proper that the Family Support Programme, which seeks to target the most vulnerable families, works with the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group - particularly as we enter phase 2 of the programme.

Recommendation 5: *Any Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 is ring-fenced and rolled over into 2014/15 and continues to be committed to supporting residents in crisis through the LAS.*

Recommendation 6: *Shared services to provide an update on improvements to the LAS scheme and take up of the fund, as part of the update report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.*

Recommendation 7: *Surrey County Council to continue lobbying central government to provide funding for emergency crisis support for residents (known as the Local Assistance Scheme in Surrey) beyond 2015.*

I welcome the task group's support of the Local Assistance Scheme. When the Government disbanded the social fund, they stated that they felt the money could be better administered at a local level. We have proved that in Surrey. Rather than merely replicating the social fund we have developed a truly local scheme where applicants receive advice and support through the CAB, or furniture through a re-use scheme, rather than just a one-off payment.

I recognise the Government's concerns about councils not yet using their full welfare assistance allocation, but I know that here in Surrey this is because we are making better use of the funding by adopting this early intervention approach. By seeking to tackle the root of the problem and signposting to other more appropriate forms of support, we have demonstrated that we can reduce demand on our own services and other agencies.

That is why I have recently written to Brandon Lewis to invite him to a roundtable discussion looking at how to build an effective and sustainable welfare assistance support service from 2015 onwards (attached to this response as appendix 1). I hope this assures the committee that I will continue to lobby government to fund emergency crisis support as per **recommendation 7**.

In order to be in a strong position to lobby government, I believe that it is important that we ensure our scheme is operating as effectively as possible and that we can clearly demonstrate how it is helping residents in crisis. As the task group recognises, there is scope to improve access to and awareness of the scheme. Therefore, I endorse **recommendation 6** as a way of scrutinising the effectiveness of the scheme and ensuring it meets its full potential.

Rather than carryover the unspent LAS funding from 2013/14 to 2014/15 (**recommendation**

5), I would like to place this money in an earmarked reserve. This would mean that should the government choose not to fund the scheme from 2015/16 onwards, there is still a provision for providing emergency support to residents within the council's budget for 2016/17.

Recommendation 8: *The Adult Social Care Committee to closely monitor the delivery of this service by getWiSE and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.*

Recommendation 9: *Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Commissioners, to work with Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, Public Health and getWiSE to:*

(a) *promote the getWiSE advice and support service to all Surrey GPs through Surrey's 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups; and*

(b) *continue to raise awareness of this service among key partners including District and Borough Housing and Benefits Officers and social housing providers; to ensure Surrey residents receive early help in dealing with the welfare reforms.*

As the report acknowledges, getWiSE are working to improve awareness of their service - particularly in areas where referral rates have been low. However, it is important to continue this good work to ensure that all the residents who would benefit from this support know how to access it. I have discussed these recommendations with the Cabinet Member and Associate for Adult Social Care who are of the same view - therefore I support these recommendations.

Recommendation 10: *The Public Health team to report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee with findings from their food access needs assessment, to inform the Committee's work around reviewing the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey.*

The report highlights data which indicates that there has been a sharp rise in the number of people who are using food banks in Surrey. It is therefore timely that the Public Health team are carrying out a Food Access Needs Assessment to understand more about why people are accessing various forms of food aid. It seems sensible that COSC should review the outcomes of this work as part of their wider review into welfare reform.

Recommendation 11: *Surrey County Council to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the voluntary, community and faith sector to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit, taking into consideration the concerns and recommendations highlighted in this report, and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress. This preparation should include:*

(a) *researching and understanding the need for digital access and support across Surrey;*

(b) *the County Council better understanding the potential demand on IT resources as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit to enable Surrey to properly prepare for this, including reviewing budget provision;*

(c) *reviewing the demand for money management advice and assessing existing service provision, in order to make evidence-based recommendations for sourcing the necessary*

support; and

(d) lobbying central government to ensure that support to access Universal Credit is adequately funded.

I firmly support the key aims underpinning Universal Credit of simplifying the benefits system and making work pay. I also welcome the recognition from the Department of Work and Pensions that local authorities should be an equal and lead partner with DWP in developing the support for people that will struggle to adapt to the new system. Universal Credit will not be introduced in Surrey until at least 2016, but I fully endorse the Task Group's recommendation that officers work closely with local partners to use the intervening period to understand the nature and demand for this support in Surrey, and plan how best to deliver it in order for all residents to be able to make the transition. I will ensure Surrey County Council continues to make the case for sufficient central government funding to be able to provide this locally tailored support.

Recommendation 12: *The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the Task Group's concerns over the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) process including the following recommendations:*

(a) *That firms carrying out the medical work capability assessments (WCA) for benefit claimants, on behalf of DWP:*

(i) treat benefit claimants like customers; and

(ii) ensure appropriately qualified persons carry out these medical assessments.

(b) *Bureaucracy within the ESA claims and appeals process be reduced. In particular:*

(i) DWP to provide information on the number of medical certificates posted by claimants but not received by DWP and the reasons for this,

(ii) DWP to accept claimant medical certificates for longer periods while claimants await mandatory re-consideration and tribunal decisions. This will save GP and claimant time and expense in having these certificates frequently renewed or re-requested where certificates have been sent by post but not received by DWP.

(c) *DWP's benefit claim forms and decision letters to signpost claimants to advice and support services to enable claimants to seek early help, preferably locally based organisation, such as local authorities, housing providers and Citizens Advice Bureaus.*

(d) *DWP to build a closer working relationship with partners in the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, to bring about pro-active information sharing and signposting particularly where claimants have been sanctioned by DWP decisions and therefore lost their passported benefits, such as housing benefit.*

(e) *DWP to use lessons learned from the ESA process and apply this to the roll-out of the Personal Independence Payments.*

I would like to thank the task group for their detailed and thorough investigation into this area. They have clearly uncovered some concerning issues with the way that the Employment and Support Allowance is being administered. I have already had a helpful discussion with the task group Chairman regarding these issues and will be writing to the

Secretary of State of Work and Pensions to follow them up.

Recommendation 13: *The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and exploring options for a common assessment for claimants across welfare benefits and support.*

As above, I have already discussed these concerns with the task group Chairman and will be writing to the Secretary of State as recommended.

To conclude:

On behalf of the Cabinet, I would like to thank the Welfare Reform Task Group again for their detailed work in this area. As detailed above, I am supportive of the recommendations. As the report acknowledges, the impacts of welfare reform are expected to become more apparent over the next 12 months, as the initial reforms have embedded. Therefore, I welcome the continued scrutiny of this area by COSC and look forward to receiving updates from the committee as and when appropriate.

David Hodge
Leader of the Council
22 April 2014

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08 April 2014

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Brandon Lewis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Communities and Local
Government
Eland House, Bressenden Place,
London SW1E 5DU

Dear

Re: Roundtable to discuss building a sustainable welfare assistance system beyond 2015

I have already written to your department expressing my concern and disappointment at the withdrawal of funding for Local Welfare Assistance schemes from April 2015 (see exchange of letters attached). I welcome the confirmation that DWP will be conducting a review into the scheme this year, but I would like to propose a roundtable discussion in Surrey or London with Ministers and officers from DWP, DCLG and the LGA about how to build an effective and sustainable welfare assistance support service from 2015 onwards.

The previous DWP scheme operated as a 'cashbox' due to its ineffective targeting of support and did almost nothing to address the underlying causes of demand. Surrey County Council has avoided replicating the faults of the previous system by developing a scheme based on strong local partnerships and diverting applicants to other forms of support where possible. Applicants receive an initial assessment and a range of advice through the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) that seeks to address any underlying issues that may be causing the demand for support.

I recognise the Government's concerns about councils not yet using their full welfare assistance allocation, but I know that here in Surrey this is because we are making better use of the funding by adopting this early intervention approach. By seeking to tackle the root of the problem and signposting to other more appropriate forms of support, we have demonstrated that we can reduce demand on our own services and other agencies. This is possible because of close local partnership working and information sharing that produces better outcomes for residents and ensures real value for money.

However, I am deeply concerned that the sudden withdrawal of funding in 2015 will jeopardise this effective support network and deny partners the time to establish a sustainable alternative solution. If this support abruptly ends, it is inevitable many of these vulnerable people will go on to require much more intense and expensive support in the future from programmes such as Troubled Families. I welcome the Government's ongoing support for credit unions mentioned in the correspondence below. We share your belief that they will play a crucial role in helping people get back on their feet after emergencies, such as the recent extensive flooding in Surrey, and have ourselves invested substantially in helping to establish our local credit union, SurreySave. However, building the viability, awareness and accessibility of such services takes time. This is why ensuring there is not a sudden withdrawal of emergency assistance funding will give the council time to work with partners in order to adequately plan and design a long-term solution to take on the role of helping residents in short-term difficulties.

We would like to work with you and relevant partners to develop a framework for sustainable emergency assistance schemes in the future, that not only support vulnerable people, but do so at a reduced cost to the Exchequer. Therefore, I am offering to host and organise a roundtable with Ministers and officers from DWP and DCLG, the LGA and ourselves. I would also be happy in my role as CCN chairman to enlist the insight and support of wider County Councillors on a new proposition for the future.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

David Hodge
Leader of the Council



Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee 30 April 2014

Appraisal completion reporting for 2013/14

Purpose of the report: Performance Management

To outline the forward plan for recording and reporting on appraisals at Surrey County Council.

This is in response to the attached audit report and, in particular, the actions planned to address the recommendation for 'significant improvement' to monitoring appraisal completion.

Introduction:

1. A manual process was used to collate appraisal data for 2012/13. This process was an interim measure in response to a request from the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee to know the number of appraisals completed at SCC, in advance of the Staff Survey due in autumn 2014.
2. This report aims to:
 - a) Outline the improvements made since the manual data collection process took place between February and May 2013.
 - b) Discuss the communication plan with officers and members.
 - c) Highlight HR & OD commitment to reporting on appraisal completion.
3. For appraisal recording background and findings, please see the attached Audit Report (Appendix A of this item) and Management Action Plan (MAP - Appendix B of this item).
4. This report details the actions taken to improve how we will be monitoring appraisal completion for the 2013/14 financial year.

Audit recommendations and HR & OD actions

5. The attached Audit Report (Appendix A) gives recommendations for HR & OD to action in response to the findings from the 2012/13 manual process.

a) HR & OD should ensure that future performance management calculations of appraisal completion are subject to thorough and rigorous quality checks (Appendix A – Para 5.8)

Action: A quality assurance process for reporting is being agreed between HR & OD, Shared Services and IMT.

b) HR & OD should implement a process for recording appraisals which allows consistent reporting of completion rates. (Appendix A – Para 5.11)

Action: The up-graded system of SAP reporting has just been introduced - March 2014. This is simpler, quicker and easier to use and does not require any manual intervention. Reporting on completion rates will be automatic. Also, future HR & OD reporting for 2013/14 completion figures will be consistent, due to implementing pre-set financial year dates.

c) HR & OD should implement a process for reporting appraisals which is designed in such a manner as to allow reproducible results. (Appendix A – Para 5.12)

Action: As above, the up-graded system of SAP reporting introduced in March 2014, will enable reports on appraisal figures to be accurately referenced and kept with descriptions of selection criteria used.

d) HR & OD should clearly define which staff are included in appraisal completion performance management. (Appendix A – Para 5.13)

Action: It is defined in project documentation that all “core” employed staff at Surrey County Council should have an appraisal. Bank staff, starters and leavers, long-term sick, and maternity leave will not be included in the figures.

Further planned actions

6. As a result of a manager survey on the 2012/13 manual process, HR & OD had already planned improvements to the appraisal recording and reporting process for 2013/14.

7. These improvements have been combined with the actions agreed in response to the audit recommendations, and are as follows:

- 7.1 Regarding the simpler recording process for managers on our IT system (SAP) which went live in March 2014, to continue with communications and engagement to get all managers using this new system to record appraisal completion.
- 7.2 HR & OD will provide Strategic Directors with live reports on appraisal completion between May and July 2014. These will be cascaded to Heads of Service in order to promote recording.
- 7.3 HR & OD intend to report on final completion figures for the 2013/14 financial year to COSC and PPDC in October 2014.
- 7.4 We will continue to follow these timescales annually.
- 8. Please note that ASC work to a staggered timescale with targets throughout the year due to an existing arrangement with the leadership team. This will be kept under review.

Conclusions:

- 9. HR & OD are committed to accurate reporting on appraisal completion. This is demonstrated by the improvements made to the recording process and the commitment to providing regular reports on completion figures.
- 10. Please see the MAP (Appendix B) for the audit recommendations and details of the actions which will be undertaken in response to this.

Recommendations:

- 11. HR & OD requests that COSC provide scrutiny of appraisals figures on an annual basis.

Report contact: Carmel Millar, Head of HR & OD

Contact details: carmel.millar@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:
Appendix A – Audit report
Appendix B – Management Action Plan

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT REPORT

**Review of
Appraisals 2013/14**

Prepared for: Carmel Millar – Head of HR and Organisational Development
Andrea Harrison – Organisational Development & Skills Lead
Holly Hood – Organisational Development & Skills Advisor

Prepared by: Pascal Barras - Compliance Auditor

Sue Lewry-Jones
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April 2014

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Strategic Director	Julie Fisher
Risk and Governance Manager	Cath Edwards
Audit and Governance Committee	All
Cabinet Member for Business Services	Denise Le Gal
Chairman of Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Nick Skellett

Glossary:

HR & OD	Human Resources and Organisational Development
SAP	The council's master data system
SCC	Surrey County Council

Audit opinions:

Effective	Controls evaluated are adequate, appropriate, and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Some Improvement Needed	A few specific control weaknesses were noted; generally however, controls evaluated are adequate, appropriate, and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Significant Improvement Needed	Numerous specific control weaknesses were noted. Controls evaluated are unlikely to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
Unsatisfactory	Controls evaluated are not adequate, appropriate, or effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) were responsible at Surrey County Council (SCC) for the delivery of the 2012/13 People Strategy promise that 'Everyone will have an annual appraisal.' While the 2013/14 version of the strategy has evolved, moving forward from specific promises, appraisals remain of great importance to the organisation. They offer an opportunity to discuss an individual's performance and development, and help to align the work of our staff with their teams, services and the organisation's objectives.
- 1.2 Historically, the collection of data on appraisals has been challenging at SCC. Significantly, the process for logging them electronically was reported as difficult to use, resulting in the information not being recorded and stored centrally in the Council's SAP Master Data system. From statistics collated in the Staff Feedback Survey, HR & OD are confident that a significant majority of managers across the organisation are completing appraisals, and that a key issue is one of recording this information on SAP. For 2012/13, the SAP process was not used to collect data, and this was instead done through line managers' responses to a template created by HR & OD. This data, and feedback on the template process, has been analysed with a view to improving the capture of accurate data on staff appraisals.
- 1.3 A review of Appraisals was included as part of the 2013/14 Annual Audit Plan and was undertaken following agreement of the Terms of Reference included at Annex A. This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the review. The completed Management Action Plan accompanies this report as Annex B.

2. WORK UNDERTAKEN

- 2.1 HR policy documents were reviewed in order to fully understand the context of the work. Appraisal completion data supplied by HR and Shared Services was used to inform testing, and analysed for quality.
- 2.2 Managers in Children, Schools & Families and Adult Social Care were interviewed in order to gather anecdotal evidence on appraisal completion, and views on the associated recording processes.

3. OVERALL AUDIT OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- 3.1 **Significant Improvement Needed:** Numerous specific control weaknesses were noted. Controls evaluated are unlikely to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives should be met.
- 3.2 **Recommendations analysis:**

Rating	Definition	No.	Para. Ref.
High	Major control weakness requiring immediate implementation of recommendation.	4	5.8; 5.11; 5.12, 5.13
Medium	Existing procedures have a negative impact on internal control or the efficient use of resources.	0	N/A
Low	Recommendation represents good practice but its implementation is not fundamental to internal control.	0	N/A
Total number of Audit recommendations		4	

4. MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- 4.1 The historic practice of reporting appraisal completion based on staff survey results was changed for 2012/13, and a more 'user-friendly' process trialled. Line managers returned templated spreadsheets to HR with dates of appraisal completion, which were then entered into SAP by Shared Services staff. This data was then exported and analysed, resulting in a reported appraisal completion rate of 83.5%.
- 4.2 Two errors were noted in calculating the appraisal completion rate: an incorrect formula was used to average directorate level results; and, staff exempted from receiving an appraisal were wrongly included in the nominator and denominator of an equation. Once corrected, the completion rate fell to 61.9%.
- 4.3 Internal Audit is aware that HR & OD places significant importance on expanding formal appraisals and improving the quality of appraisal conversations, and is actively supporting Services to achieve this. The auditor has seen examples of work done with Adult Social Care in this regard. HR & OD further report that this work is running hand-in-hand with a programme of communications and investment in training. For HR & OD, the end goal is a change to an organisational culture where it is the norm for all staff to have a high-quality annual appraisal. Efforts to increase appraisal completion rates and improve the quality of appraisal conversations, however, are outside of this audit's Terms of Reference and not considered in this report.
- 4.4 Data provided to the auditor by HR & OD indicated that 4886 staff received an appraisal for the 2012/13 financial year. The auditor was unable to ascertain, however, the identity of these staff. Attempts to re-export the data from SAP were unsuccessful in producing a list of 4886 individuals who had received an appraisal.
- 4.5 Conversations with HR & OD and Shared Services staff revealed uncertainty as to which staff had been classified as eligible to receive an appraisal. As the data category did not have a clear definition, questions remained unanswered as to where, for example, teachers and firefighters were included in the cohort.
- 4.6 The responses received from managers in Children, Schools and Families and Adult Social Care on recording appraisal outcomes were consistent in that none challenged HR & OD's understanding that SAP is not user-friendly for this purpose. However, due a small sample size resulting from unforeseen challenges to engaging with managers, the auditor could not draw absolute positive assurance that HR & OD have an accurate appreciation of the key issues in the matter.
- 4.7 The auditor has significant concerns regarding the correct calculation of performance data, appraisal outcome results not being reproducible, and the lack of clarity in defining categories of staff. However, no evidence was found which indicates that HR & OD are incorrect in viewing technical challenges in SAP as being critical to the accurate capture of appraisal outcome data, resulting in an Audit Opinion of **Significant Improvement Needed**.

5. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Data Collection & Reporting Process

Findings

- 5.1 Historically, the monitoring and reporting of staff appraisal completion at SCC was based on responses to questions in an employee survey. This method was used because the process for logging appraisal outcomes on SAP was reported by managers as being

overly complicated, with the resulting data not being of sufficient quality for use in performance management.

- 5.2 For appraisals completed during the 2012/13 financial year, a project was initiated to trial a more user-friendly process. Managers across the organisation were asked to return completed spreadsheets to HR & OD, with details on the dates which appraisals were (or were due to be) done. After the data was entered into SAP by officers in Shared Services, it was exported for analysis. Results given to the auditor state that 83.5% of staff had received an appraisal in 2012/13.
- 5.3 In order to assess the new process and validate the reported completion percentage, the auditor reviewed the directorate statistics from which conclusions had been drawn. These statistics show that staff had been divided into two categories: either being eligible for an appraisal or exempt from receiving one. Exempt staff were further categorised as being on maternity leave, long-term sick, a starter/leaver, or bank/temporary workers. Added to these figures were the numbers of appraisals recorded on SAP as completed. The results are summarised in the table below.

A	B	C	D	E	F
<i>Directorate</i>	<i>Total Staff</i>	<i>Eligible Staff</i>	<i>Exempt Staff</i>	<i>Appraisals on SAP</i>	<i>% of Appraisal Completed</i>
Adult Social Care	2800	1897	902.7	817	62.6%
Business Services	923	711	212.3	567	84.4%
Chief Executives Office	208	170	38.5	159	99.2%
Children, Schools and Families	4670	3004	1665.8	1449	66.7%
Customers and Communities	2158	1649	509.1	1451	90.8%
Environment and Infrastructure	604	460	144.1	443	97.2%
Total	11,358	7891	3472.5	4886	83.5%

- 5.4 In the calculations needed to arrive at the headline figure of 83.5% appraisal completion, two errors were noted. First, the completion percentage was calculated by averaging the directorate percentages in column F. This has the effect of giving the directorates equal weighting, and does not reflect the varying number of staff in each. Secondly, exempt staff were included in the nominator and denominator when calculating directorate percentages, rather than being excluded from the equation altogether. This incorrectly treats exempt staff as being eligible for, and receiving, an appraisal in 2012/13.

5.5 After correcting these two errors, the results for directorate and SCC appraisal completion are:

• Adult Social Care	43.1%
• Business Services	79.8%
• Chief Executive's Office	93.8%
• Children Schools and Families	48.2%
• Customers and Communities	88.0%
• Environment and Infrastructure	96.3%
• SCC	61.9%

5.6 These results indicate that while the majority of staff did receive an appraisal, the evidence does not support the view of HR & OD management that it is a 'significant majority'. Although the auditor did not identify that the 83.5% completion rate had been reported to a Committee, the 2013/14 Quarter One Business Report for Cabinet scores the People Strategy Delivery Promise for Annual Appraisals as 'green'. The lower actual result may call that performance score into question. It is also worthy of note, in terms of areas for improvement, that the results point to less than half of eligible staff in the two social care directorates receiving an appraisal.

Risk

5.7 Mistakes in the use of raw performance data risks both HR & OD managers not having an accurate understanding of successes and required improvements in relation to how many staff have received an appraisal, and Members not receiving accurate reports.

Recommendation

5.8 HR & OD should ensure that future performance management calculations of appraisal completion are subject to thorough and rigorous quality checks.

Findings

5.9 In addition to calculation errors, the auditor was not able to identify the names of the 4886 employees listed in the HR & OD data as having an appraisal recorded on SAP. As HR records did not contain this information, staff in Shared Services helpfully offered to re-export the data from SAP. An exact match numbering 4886 employees could not, however, be generated, with only 4420 individuals identified (a 9.5% variance). Further discussions with HR & OD and Shared Services officers also highlighted uncertainty in respect of which staff were classed as being eligible for an appraisal. Unresolved questions included whether or not these included teachers and firefighters. Without both an exact understanding of which employees had received an appraisal, and what employees were classed as 'eligible', it will not be possible for HR & OD to extract matching performance data from SAP in future years.

Risk

5.10 Performance data lacking in precision and not being reproducible deprives HR & OD of the ability to efficiently target areas for improvement in appraisal completion, or make like-for-like comparisons between the results of different years/measuring periods.

Recommendations

5.11 HR & OD should implement a process for recording appraisals which allows consistent reporting of completion rates.

5.12 HR & OD should implement a process for reporting appraisals which is designed in such a manner as to allow reproducible results (i.e. the same report from SAP for the same time period should always generate the same results).

5.13 HR & OD should clearly define which staff are included in appraisal completion performance management.

Testing of data

Findings

- 5.14 The original intention, as reflected in the audit Terms of Reference, was for testing primarily to validate reported appraisal completion rates. However, as the auditor was not able to establish a testing cohort which matched the staff and appraisal data held by HR & OD, this exercise was not possible. Instead, the auditor agreed with HR & OD officers that testing should focus on the opinions of SCC managers on the process of recording appraisal outcomes. Due to their low completion rates, emphasis was placed on the social care directorates for this work.
- 5.15 Engaging with line managers proved challenging, with less than a 10% success rate in phone calls made by the auditor. Consequently, responses from only 10 individuals were gathered through testing (nine from Children, Schools & Families, and one from Adult Social Care). The auditor considers this sample size too small to be used as a source of positive assurance on HR & OD having an accurate understanding of the views of line managers in relation to appraisals.
- 5.16 At the same time, the consistency of responses is worthy of note in that none were at odds with the view held by HR & OD. In all instances, appraisals were reported as having been completed for 2012/13. While half of the managers spoken to said that appraisal recording was done by the business support function, those who did data entry themselves characterised the SAP process as not being easy to work with. Of particular concern to managers was the recording of the appraisal date when this fell outside of the year to which the appraisal related (i.e. recording an appraisal in June 2013 for the 2012/13 financial year).
- 5.17 Interestingly, significant comments were made by Children, Schools & Families' managers about the importance of completing appraisals on time due to social worker pay progression deadlines. Though not worthy of a recommendation in itself, the auditor feels it important to draw attention to the positive responses to appraisal completion when these were linked to pay increases.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- 6.1 The assistance and co-operation of all the staff involved was greatly appreciated.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Appraisals 2013/2014

BACKGROUND

Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) were responsible at Surrey County Council (SCC) for the delivery of the 2012/13 People Strategy promise that 'Everyone will have an annual appraisal.' While the 2013/14 version of the strategy has evolved, moving forward from specific promises, appraisals remain of great importance to the organisation. They offer an opportunity to discuss an individual's performance and development, and help to align the work of our staff with their teams, services and the organisation's objectives.

Historically, the collection of data on appraisals has been challenging at SCC. Significantly, the process for logging them electronically was reported as difficult to use, resulting in the information not being recorded and stored centrally in the Council's SAP Master Data system. From statistics collated in the Staff Feedback Survey, HR & OD are confident that a significant majority of managers across the organisation are completing appraisals, and that a key issue is one of recording this information on SAP. For 2012/13, the SAP process was not used to collect data, and this was instead done through line managers' responses to a template created by HR & OD. This data, and feedback on the template process, has been analysed with a view to improving the capture of accurate data on staff appraisals.

PURPOSE OF THE AUDIT

To seek assurance that appropriate risk management arrangements are in place to ensure delivery of key objectives. This audit will specifically consider whether there are effective management controls in place to mitigate the following potential risks:

- appraisals are not being completed despite being reported as so
- the data being reported is inaccurate

The audit will also offer useful information to HR & OD in terms of how the appraisal process is viewed by staff and managers. This will inform future communications. By undertaking an audit on appraisals, it is hoped that their importance will be highlighted to staff and managers.

Where staff and managers have not undertaken appraisals, HR & OD will be able to identify and support these areas in ensuring that appraisals take place in future.

WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN

Line managers across the organisation will be contacted in order to validate reported appraisals and, as time allows, obtain opinions on the process of recording appraisal outcomes. The approach is expected to include face-to-face conversations with managers and staff in order to engage them in the process, as well as telephone conversations and email correspondence.

The data gathered will be cross-referenced with HR & OD data in order to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the appraisal data collection process. Qualitative data will support HR & OD's ongoing efforts to communicate the benefits and importance of appraisal.

OUTCOMES

The findings of this review will form a report to Surrey County Council management, with an overall audit opinion on the effectiveness of systems in place and recommendations for improvement if required. Subject to the availability of resources, and the agreement of the auditee, the audit will also seek to obtain an overview of arrangements in place for:

- Data quality and security;
- Equality and diversity;
- Value for Money;
- Business continuity, and
- Risk management.

The outcome of any work undertaken will be used to inform our future audit planning processes and also contribute to an overall opinion on the adequacy of arrangements across the Council in these areas.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Auditor:	Pascal Barras, Compliance Auditor
Supervisor:	David John, Audit Performance Manager
Reporting to:	Carmel Millar; Andrea Harrison; Holly Hood
Audit Ref:	A00695 / 2013/14

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DRAFT MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Directorate:	Business Services
Audit report:	A00695 / 2013/14 – Appraisals
Dated:	5 March 2014

PRIORITY RATINGS

Priority High (H) - major control weakness requiring immediate implementation of recommendation

Priority Medium (M) - existing procedures have a negative impact on internal control or the efficient use of resources

Priority Low (L) - recommendation represents good practice but its implementation is not fundamental to internal control

I agree to the actions below and accept overall accountability for their timely completion. I will inform Internal Audit if timescales are likely to be missed.

The auditor agrees that the actions set out below are satisfactory.

Lead Responsible Officer: Carmel Millar

Auditor: Pascal Barras

Date: 04/04/14

Date: 04/04/14

Page 43

Para Ref	Recommendation	Priority Rating	Management Action Proposed	Timescale for Action	Officer Responsible	Audit Agree?
5.8	HR & OD should ensure that future performance management calculations of appraisal completion are subject to thorough and rigorous quality checks.	H	<p>HROD are aware of the importance of having a consistent and rigorous reporting process. Quality checks will be built into the work we are continuing to do on the portal reporting process.</p> <p>End of April – End of June – HR & OD to report on a monthly basis how many appraisal documents have</p>	<p>From April 2014 – IMT to rebuild downloadable reports on the portal. Appraisal data collection board meetings to continue in order to monitor progress. Quality checking process to be agreed.</p> <p>September 2014</p>	Neil Bradley	Y

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Para Ref	Recommendation	Priority Rating	Management Action Proposed	Timescale for Action	Officer Responsible	Audit Agree?
			<p>been completed in the portal. Information to be sent to Strategic Directors and Heads of Service in order to encourage completion.</p> <p>We will continue to work with our colleagues in Audit to ensure that appraisal completion reporting is to the standards required from this perspective.</p>			
5.11	HR & OD should implement a process for recording appraisals which allows consistent reporting of completion rates.	H	<p>HROD & Shared Services have worked with IMT to improve the way that appraisals are recorded in SAP. This makes it easier for managers and senior managers to know when they have completed their documents.</p> <p>We have now clearly defined the expected completion deadline for</p>	<p>25 March – updated recording process is now live for managers.</p> <p>From April – appraisal board meetings continue to take place to discuss reporting and agree a quality checking process.</p>	Neil Bradley	Y

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Para Ref	Recommendation	Priority Rating	Management Action Proposed	Timescale for Action	Officer Responsible	Audit Agree?
			<p>managers to do so, and have allowed a three month window until 30 June.</p> <p>Furthermore, the validity period of the appraisals (period of time the conversation concerns) is now automatically set by financial year. This will allow a more accurate set of reporting data.</p> <p>We now continue to work with our IMT colleagues to build a robust report so that we can accurately report on a monthly basis (April to June) to strategic directors on completion rates in their areas.</p>			
5.12	HR & OD should implement a process for reporting appraisals which is designed in such a manner as to allow	H	Whilst SAP will not be able to replicate the same report twice as it is a live system (data is constantly changing), all reports	From April – any reports taken on appraisal figures will be accurately referenced and kept with the descriptions of	Neil Bradley	Y

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Para Ref	Recommendation	Priority Rating	Management Action Proposed	Timescale for Action	Officer Responsible	Audit Agree?
	reproducible results (i.e. the same report from SAP for the same time period should always generate the same results).		downloaded will be properly referenced and stored in a master document with accurate descriptions of selection criteria used.	selection criteria used.		
5.13	HR & OD should clearly define which staff are included in appraisal completion performance management.	H	<p>This is documented in the scope of the 2013/14 project documents and replicates that of 2012/13.</p> <p>Scope: 'All centrally employed staff within the organisation including Fire & Rescue and Commercial Services'</p> <p>Out of scope: 'Teachers and any newly TUPE'd employees'</p> <p>Bank staff, Long Term Sick & Maternity do not have appraisal documents created and therefore will be excluded from the final results.</p>	<p>March 2014 – In scope colleagues have been clearly defined in the project documents. This replicates the information in the project brief from 2012/13.</p> <p>From April – Bank staff, long term sick and maternity will not be present in the reporting of appraisal data.</p>	Andrea Harrison	Y



Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
30 April 2014

FLASH OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2013/14 AND PROPOSED CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS TO 2014/15

Purpose of the report:

This report presents the revenue and capital budget outturn for 2013/14 and proposed carry forward requests to 2014/15

Introduction:

1. The Flash Outturn Report for 2013/14 and Proposed Carry Forward Requests to 2014/15 was presented to the cabinet meeting on Tuesday 22 April 2014. This is attached as **annex 1**.

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 22 APRIL 2014

REPORT OF: MR DAVID HODGE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

LEAD OFFICER: SHEILA LITTLE, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

SUBJECT: FLASH OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2013/14 AND PROPOSED CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS TO 2014/15



7

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

As part of improving financial management and service delivery, this flash outturn report presents an early indication of financial outturn for Cabinet to consider at its April meeting. The figures presented are provisional and the final outturn report Cabinet will receive on 27 May 2014 could include some changes.

In line with the Council's multi-year approach to financial management, enabling budget equalisation and avoiding arbitrary cut offs to budgets, services have made requests to carry forward underspent funds for use in 2014/15. Carry forward amounts approved by Cabinet enable services to continue and complete projects that are not finished by 31 March. In total, services have asked to transfer £4.9m of revenue funding to the new financial year.

In 2013/14, services have succeeded in containing expenditure and provisionally forecast underspending by -£6.1m on a total revenue budget of about £1,670m. The Council has spending under control and is applying prudent financial management while continuing to provide services to Surrey's residents and businesses.

Based on these forecasts and Cabinet's approval to carry forward funding for the identified revenue projects and services in 2014/15, the Council's available general balances will be £21.6m at year end. This compares to £20.4m brought forward at 1 April 2013.

The provisional overall capital budget outturn position is +£0.5m overspent on a total capital budget of about £225m. This has changed from February's forecast position by -£1.2m, mainly due to reduced spending in Environment & Infrastructure because of flooding issues. Cabinet will receive the final overall capital budget outturn for 2013/14 on 27 May 2014.

Some capital projects' 2013/14 expenditure is lower than anticipated, in many cases due to the severe weather experienced in December and February. Services request Cabinet's approval to carry forward £39.4m funding to 2014/15 and future years to complete these projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1 notes the provisional year end revenue budget outturn of -£6.1m underspend (Table 1 and paragraphs 2 to 15);
- 2 approves services' revenue budget carry forward requests totalling £4.9m (Table 2);

- 3 notes the provisional year end capital budget outturn +£0.5m overspend, including -£39.9m underspend on services (Table 3 and paragraphs 18 to 23); and
- 4 approves services' capital budget carry forward requests for £39.4m (Table 4).

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To continue to provide monthly budget monitoring information to Cabinet and to enable Cabinet to consider services' requests to carry forward funding for approval.

DETAILS:

Revenue

1. Table 1 shows the provisional year end net revenue position for services and the council overall compared to the position forecast at the end of February 2014.

Table 1: Provisional year end net revenue position

February position £m		MTFP budget £m	Updated budget £m	Estimated outturn £m	Variance £m	Proposed carry forward £m
5.2	Adult Social Care	337.9	336.3	341.5	5.2	0.1
-1.6	Children, Schools & Families	174.5	181.1	179.6	-1.5	0.7
0.0	Schools	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
-0.7	Customer & Communities	59.4	60.0	59.3	-0.7	0.8
3.1	Environment & Infrastructure	125.4	131.6	134.8	3.2	0.5
-6.2	Business Services	82.2	82.8	76.6	-6.2	1.8
	Collated by Business Services					0.2
-0.5	Chief Executive's Office including Public Health	15.4	16.4	16.1	-0.3	0.0
-5.6	Central Income & Expenditure	-771.8	-796.3	-802.1	-5.8	0.9
-6.4	Total	23.0	11.9	5.8	-6.1	4.9

* some figures may not cast due to roundings.

Adult Social Care

2. There has been no change since the February 2014 budget monitoring report for this directorate.

Children, Schools & Families

3. The variance reported for Children Schools & Families has remained virtually unchanged compared at the end of February 2014: a slight reduction in the reported underspend by +£0.1m. This is mainly due to recognition of lower school meals income due to school closures when teachers took industrial action and recognition of approved severance payments under the voluntary redundancy scheme.

Customer & Communities

4. There are no material changes from the position reported at the end of February 2014. However, indications are that the cost of responding and assistance to the recent flooding within the Fire Service (assistance provided by other crews, vehicles, vessels

and equipment from other Fire authorities) will exceed the £0.6m currently included. The service has been unable to ascertain the final costs of the flooding at this early stage due to delays being experienced in obtaining costs from other fire authorities. These costs are being pursued and will be updated for final outturn reporting.

Environment & Infrastructure

5. There are no significant movements between the position reported at the end of February 2014 and the provisional outturn. Significant costs have been incurred in response to flooding and water damage, and flooding has also impacted on the delivery of other works planned for the final quarter of the year. For this reason there remains some uncertainty and it is possible that final costs may vary from the position estimated at the end of February 2014.

Business Services

6. There is no change to the provisional full year underspend of -£6.2m reported at the end of February 2014. The service requests carry forwards of: £1.0m for planned maintenance, £0.5m for the project to achieve a modern copying environment and £0.3m for HR to devolve to services to meet the council's target of employing 100 apprentices.
7. There have been delays to planned maintenance as a result of difficulties in letting contracts and the recent flooding, causing a likely underspend of £1.4m. The service requests to carry forward £1.0m for planned maintenance, as the works not delivered in 2013/14 will form part of 2014/15's programme. £1m of this is already commissioned.
8. The Making a Difference programme is on track to deliver savings of £6.6m each year from the office portfolio and has supported staff to work more flexibly with the benefits of new technology and a change in the way we work. The programme included implementing Electronic Data & Record Management (EDRM) across the council. EDRM solutions have been implemented for social care activity and will be implemented for the rest of the organisation by IMT alongside a Lotus Notes upgrade, the consequent saving this year is £1.1m. The service requests to carry forward £0.5m of this to ensure the successful implementation of the project to achieve a modern copying environment which is underway.

Chief Executive's Office

9. There are no material changes from the position reported at the end of February 2014. Some increased costs of responding to flooding have been offset by reduced expenditure elsewhere across the directorate, including the Chairman's Budget.

Public Health

10. The income (£3.3m) relating to the Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) services has not been received from the Clinical Commissioning Groups, so the final income is lower than originally budgeted.

11. Public Health forecasts an overspend of £0.2m, relating to the GUM services, as the provision of these services is mandatory. Public Health managed to absorb the majority of the spend (£3.1m) leaving only the £0.2m overspend.

Central Income & Expenditure

12. The projected variance at the end of February 2014 was -£5.6m underspent, this has moved to -£5.8m at provisional outturn for the following two reasons.
- The final quarter receipt of Education Support Grant was less than anticipated. This reduces during the year to reflect the number of schools that have transferred to academy status and will receive their proportion of funding directly. This reduced the underspend by £0.6m.
 - During March 2014, the council approved a number of redundancies. This enabled the redundancy budget outturn to be adjusted and it will now underspend by -£0.8m.
13. The outturn position for Central Income & Expenditure is still uncertain in relation to interest receivable as schedules and information in relation to our investments in our Money Market Funds have not been received to date; these are due during the first week of April 2014.
14. In addition, the Dedicated Schools Grant makes a contribution towards corporate costs at the end of each year. This figure is currently estimated to be £3.5m, although this will be finalised once the allocation of corporate costs to front line services calculation is completed during April.
15. The carry forward request of £0.15m for the Fire Service defibrillator project was approved at a Leader decision meeting.

Revenue carry forward requests

16. Table 2 shows services' requests for Cabinet approval to carry forward revenue budgets to 2014/15.

Table 2: Revenue carry forward requests

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Adult Social Care	First Point	0.035	Unused Transitional grant received 2011/12 for set up of 'Social Work Pilot', (Firstpoint Community Interest Company) required to support the next phase of planning to achieve a sustainable business model, reducing both future financial risks and improving value for money from commissioned services.

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Adult Social Care	Employability	0.039	Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) programme aims have not been fully achieved due to recruitment delays. Carry forward will reduce future reliance on Council funded services. Travel Smart programme - funding was received in Feb 2014 to roll out in West Redhill. The project is due to be completed in March 2015. The carry forward will enable development of the scheme reducing the level of Council funded services.
Adult Social Care		0.074	
Children, Schools & Families	Family Support	0.200	Implementation of Family Support programme
	Safeguarding Board	0.050	Underspend on Safeguarding Board pooled budget – external funding.
	Social Worker Academy	0.150	Social Worker Academy to reduce cost of locums
	LAC bursaries and savings match funding	0.120	Looked After Children bursaries and savings match funding.
	North West Area lead for pupil support	0.054	Pilot project relating to early intervention in Access 2 Education.
	Commercial Services	0.100	10 kitchen projects for primaries to meet free school meals legislative requirement.
Children, Schools & Families		0.674	
Customer & Communities	Community Improvement Fund	0.677	Underspend due to awaiting applicants meeting grant conditions before releasing funds. Approving this carry forward will enable committed payments to be made in the new financial year without impacting on the 2014/15 budgets.
	Member allocations (revenue)	0.160	Underspend is due to delays in receiving signed funding agreements to enable committed funds to be released. Approving this carry forward will enable these committed payments to be made within the new financial year without impacting on the 2014/15 budgets.
Customer & Communities		0.837	
Environment & Infrastructure	Road safety/Drivesmart	0.137	This budget includes a contingency for the Police to call on which was not required this year. A carry forward is requested so the Drivesmart board can allocate this funding in 2014/15.
	Flood enforcement	0.055	Enforcement action is required at a private nursery on the A22 Godstone Road. Due to legal timescales works did not start until 21 March 2014 and will be in 2014/15.

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Environment & Infrastructure	Strategy/major schemes	0.265	Carry forwards are requested for modelling and development of: Kiln Lane (£36,000), Runnymede roundabout (£90,000), Egham sustainable package modelling (£37,000), and A30/31 Camberley (£102,000). Work has been delayed this year due to various issues including resourcing but is necessary in order to be ready to deliver major transport schemes
	Strategy/SGF	0.030	Carry forward requested for Surrey car club marketing and promotion.
Environment & Infrastructure		0.487	
Business Services	Planned maintenance	1.000	There have been significant delays to the planned maintenance programme due to the recent adverse weather. The service has already commissioned £1.0m of the outstanding 2013/14 schemes. If the carry forward is not approved then the 2014/15 planned maintenance programme will be reduced by £1.0m.
	My work project expenditure	0.500	Savings as result of EDRM implementation, £0.5m of this is needed in 2014/15 to ensure the successful implementation of the project to achieve a modern copying environment.
	HR Apprentices	0.300	In order to meet the internal target of 100 apprentices, HR would need a further £0.3m to devolve to services to employ apprentices.
Business Services		1.800	
Chief Executive's Office	Chairman's Budget	0.020	The Chairman continues a strong commitment to the voluntary sector and wider community in line with the Corporate Strategy. He is supporting this through a two year plan of activities. This carry forward will enable him to complete his programme.
Chief Executive's Office		0.020	
Various (collated by Business Services)	Apprentices	0.185	In August HR transferred a carry forward budget of £275,000 to services to help fund apprentices for one year. Services did not fully recruit these staff until late in 2013/14, as a result services are requesting a total carry forward of £185,000 to fund the ongoing commitment in 2014/15.
Various		0.185	
Central Income & Expenditure	New Homes Bonus	0.720	There is an underspend of £1.6m against the New Homes Bonus budget, £0.72m is requested as a carry forward as it related to identified schemes which are yet to be carried out and are due to complete during 2013/14

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Central Income & Expenditure	Fire Service defibrillator project	0.150	Purchase of defibrillators and associated training
Central Income & Expenditure		0.870	
Total revenue carry forward requests		4.917	

Capital

17. Table 3 shows the provisional year end net capital programme position for services and the council overall compared to the position forecast at the end of February 2014.

Table 3: Provisional year end net capital position

February position £m		MTFP budget £m	Updated budget £m	Estimated outturn £m	Variance £m	Proposed carry forward £m
-0.4	Adult Social Care	1.3	1.9	1.6	-0.3	0.1
-0.3	Children, Schools & Families	2.8	8.9	8.2	-0.7	0.5
-2.7	Customer & Communities	2.0	4.8	2.3	-2.5	2.5
-4.9	Environment & Infrastructure	50.1	69.3	63.3	-6.0	6.0
-28.4	Business Services (including School Basic Need)	119.6	128.4	99.9	-28.5	28.5
-1.9	Chief Executive's office	11.4	11.4	9.6	-1.8	1.8
-38.6	Service programme total	187.2	224.7	184.9	-39.8	39.4
40.3	Central investment assets	0.0	0.0	40.3	40.3	0.0
1.7	Total capital programme	187.2	224.7	225.2	0.5	39.4

* some figures may not cast due to roundings.

Adult Social Care

18. There has been no change since the February 2014 budget monitoring report for this directorate.

Children, Schools & Families

19. The underspend for Children Schools & Families has increased by £0.4m since February 2014 as resources set aside to meet capital costs for schools broadband will not be incurred in 2013/14. The service requests a carry forward to support the implementation of the Unicorn project in schools in 2014/15.

Customer & Communities

20. There are no material changes from the position reported at the end of February 2014.

Environment & Infrastructure

21. The only significant change to the position reported at the end of February 2014 at this stage is Walton Bridge, where a number of factors, including flooding, have led to works planned for the final quarter of the year being delayed until the new financial year.

Allowance has been made for the impact of flooding on delivery of other planned works. However some uncertainty remains and it is possible that final costs will be different to the position estimated at the end of February 2014.

Business Services

22. There is no change to the capital full year forecast underspend of -£28.5m reported at the end of February 2014. There have been delays to schemes for various reasons including planning, changes to service requirements and the recent bad weather. All of the schemes will be delivered in future years.

Chief Executive's Office

23. There are no material changes from the position reported at the end of February 2014.

Capital carry forward requests

24. Table 4 shows services' requests to carry forward capital budgets to 2014/15.

Table 4: Capital carry forward requests

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Adult Social Care	District and Borough (D&B) developments	0.055	Wellbeing centres are intended to be a universal service in each D&B. Eight centres are open providing preventative services for older people, particularly those with dementia. The carry forward is needed to fund one wellbeing centre due to implementation delays. These centres are increasingly important under the Care Bill and support the Family Friends & Community agenda which has MTFP savings in 2014/15 of £10m.
	In-house capital improvement scheme	0.075	Severe flooding resulted in delays to some schemes which will now be implemented in 2014/15. The carry forward is needed to fund these improvements.
Adult Social Care		0.130	
Children, Schools & Families	Harnessing ICT	0.440	To implementation the delayed Unicorn programme in schools into 2014/15.
	Services for Young People, IMT transformation	0.060	To complete IT projects in 2014/15.
	Extended Schools	0.018	To complete the Holly Lodge Primary School scheme
Children, Schools & Families		0.518	

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Customer & Communities	Fire Vehicles & Equipment	1.500	This funding is from the Fire Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Reserve. There was a significant programme of purchases for 2013/14 and experienced delays due to the procurement lead time. If this carry forward is not approved, the service will not be able to complete the planned vehicle and equipment replacement programme.
	Fire Resilience	0.972	This grant funding was provided to support the service to increase resilience and efficiency of systems and facilitate joint working. Delays in the acquisition and refit of the primary and secondary control rooms has delayed other associated projects. The service has confirmation that it can use the unspent grant in 2014/15, therefore this carry forward would enable the budget to be reprofiled to facilitate project completion.
	Member Allocations (Capital)	0.046	The underspend is due to delays receiving signed funding agreements to enable release of committed funds. Approving this carry forward will enable these committed payments to be made within the new financial year without impacting on the 2014/15 budgets.
Customer & Communities		2.518	
Environment & Infrastructure	Environment	1.855	Completion of schemes and programmes including: cycling schemes delayed due to higher than expected costs and the need for extensive consultation with consequent revision to designs; rights of way maintenance; food waste initiatives.
	Highways	0.602	Completion of schemes and programmes including: Walton Bridge where spend has been delayed by various factors including: flooding; safety barrier maintenance which has been delayed due to Highway Agency requirements and ground conditions; local transport schemes and local structural repairs. These are offset by overspends following additional highway maintenance and bridge strengthening works.
	Economy, Transport and Planning	3.520	Completion of schemes and programmes including: Local Sustainable Transport Fund grant funded works which have been delayed due to: land acquisition issues, design changes and flooding; economic regeneration which is being held as a potential contribution to future major transport schemes; Redhill balanced network due to cost issues and grant profile, and developer funded works.
Environment & Infrastructure		5.977	

Directorate	Carry forward	£m	Reason
Business Services	Schools Basic Need	9.300	Delays due to planning £2.3m, weather £2.4m, site and contractor issues £4.6m. The service is increasing resources to deliver 2014/15 programme.
	Recurring maintenance	3.700	Significant delays due to recent adverse weather and difficulties in letting contracts. The service is targeting resources to deliver these schemes in 2014/15 alongside next year's programme.
	Projects	16.100	There have been to delays for various reasons, including changes to other service's requirements £8.1m, weather, planning and site issues £4.5m. The projects will be re-profiled into future years.
	IMT	-0.600	Future year's funding to be brought forward to match 2013/14 increased spend.
Business Services		28.500	
Chief Executive's Office	Superfast broadband	1.800	The speed of the rollout was initially delayed and the actual expenditure incurred is less than the original budget profile. The carry forward is required to complete this project which is in partnership with British Telecom.
Chief Executive's Office		1.800	
Total capital carry forward requests		39.443	

Consultation:

25. All Cabinet Members will have consulted their relevant Strategic Director on the financial positions of their portfolios.

Risk management and implications:

26. Risk implications are stated throughout the report and each Strategic Director has updated their strategic and or service risk registers accordingly. In addition, the Leadership Risk Register continues to reflect the increasing uncertainty of the Council's future funding.

Financial and value for money implications

27. The financial and value for money implications are considered throughout this report and will be further scrutinised in future budget monitoring reports. The council continues to have a strong focus on its key objective of providing excellent value for money.

Section 151 Officer commentary

28. Cabinet has received reports throughout the year on the forecast year-end financial position. This report provides an early provisional revenue and capital budget outturn for

the 2013/14 financial year. The final year end position will be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 27 May 2014.

29. The reported year end outturn is based upon the revenue and capital transactions recorded in the council's financial ledger at 31 March 2014 and early estimates of any further necessary accruals and allocations.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer

30. There are no legal issues or risks.

Equalities and Diversity

31. Any impacts of the budget outturn and carry forward requests will be evaluated by the individual services and reported as necessary.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

32. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
33. Any impacts on climate change and carbon emissions to achieve the Council's aim will be considered by the relevant service affected as they implement any actions agreed.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

34. The relevant adjustments agreed by Cabinet will be made to the Council's accounts.

Contact Officer:

Sheila Little, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Director for Business Services
020 8541 7012

Consulted:

Cabinet / Corporate Leadership Team

Annexes:

Sources/background papers:

Monthly budget monitoring reports to Cabinet during the 2013/14 financial year.

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Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
30 April 2014

Review of central and directorate communications functions

Purpose of the report:

To provide the committee with an outline of how the communications service supports the organisation through the communications and engagement strategy, and to demonstrate how the reduction in spending will be achieved in 2014/15.

1. Introduction

2. This report outlines how the communications service supports the organisation and how it is structured to provide that support in the most effective way. It also demonstrates how communications is reducing spend and delivering value for money.
3. The council's communications and engagement strategy sets the framework for all communications activity.
4. The strategy's aim is to be clear and focused and to involve residents and communities in our communications and engagement. We have a commitment to providing the best communications and engagement while delivering value for money for Surrey residents. There is an emphasis on innovative approaches and being proactive.
5. All communications activity fits into three broad areas:
 - **Providing information** – increasing awareness of services and issues through a variety of channels, explaining decisions and policies using spokespeople as appropriate, providing details of how and where to access services and information about events and activities.
 - **Supporting changes in behaviour** – examples: encouraging people to become foster parents, increasing recycling, advice on living independently for older and vulnerable adults, improving health.
 - **Engaging people in changes** – examples, seeking views on changes to services, new policies and ways of delivering services and activity.
6. To reflect the focus on residents and communities our communications and engagement activity is focused on supporting residents, directly or indirectly, in these three broad areas of activity.

7. Communications across the council

8. The centre of expertise for communications is the council's communications service. The service leads on setting guidelines and standards, working with communications professionals across the organisation. As a result of collaboration, from the start of the financial year 2014/15 there will be a single forward plan based on the organisation's priorities, outlined in the corporate strategy, and a pooled budget for the council, managed by communications representatives from the service and directorates.
9. In total there are the equivalent of 42.5 full time roles (plus two apprentices) providing communications and engagement for the organisation. Of these roles 20.5 are in the communications service and 22.5 are based in directorates.
10. This includes a mixture of full time communications professionals and individuals who have elements of communications as part of their roles.

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Directorate	Headcount (full time equivalents)
Communications Service	20.5 + apprentice
Adult Social Care	5 + apprentice (not yet appointed)
Children Schools & Families	5.3 + apprentice (includes 0.5 post for CAMHs based in central comms)
Children, Schools & Families – Early Years	3.4
Customers & Communities	4.2
Environment & Infrastructure	4.1 (*estimate across different posts includes 2 posts based in central comms)
Business Services	0 - fully supported by comms service
Chief Executive's Office	0 - fully supported by comms service

Central communications service

11. The structure of the central communications service reflects the emphasis on resident communications and the approach outlined in the communications and engagement strategy. The service has four discipline teams who work to provide information, support changes in behaviour and engage people in change. The 20.5 posts are made up as follows:
12. Campaign communications – 6.5 posts

Oversee and deliver activity to provide information and help promote and engage people in changes to behaviour. Examples include campaigns to recruit more foster carers and adoptive parents, increase recycling and reuse, improve behaviour and safety of road users, promote health and wellbeing, promote independent living for vulnerable adults, raise awareness of key services as well as production of residents' magazine, Surrey Matters.

13. Brand and design – 4 posts

Design and produce all materials for the council, including posters, adverts and all campaign materials. Examples include designing and producing new branding for libraries, design of new website homepage, partnership design and brand work, for example Surrey Hubs, Drive Smart. They also generate income by selling design work to other councils, such as the Eat Out Eat Well healthy eating campaign.

14. Internal communications – 3 posts

All organisation-wide staff communications, which includes HR and OD activity - for example: pay, my benefits, staff performance and appraisals. Work with directorate communications teams to co-ordinate and target messages.

15. Media and public affairs – 5 posts

All media activity for the organisation – national, trade and local. Managing the virtual press office and social media activity for journalists.

Directorate communications

16. Directorate communications activity (22.5 posts) also primarily focuses on residents, service users, stakeholders and staff and provide information, support changes in behaviour and engage people in change.

17. Directorates have taken different approaches to delivering communications – these include: dedicated communications roles within directorates; roles that have communications as one part of a role's activities; and dedicated communications roles funded by directorates but based in the central communications service.

18. Directorate communications activity again varies but in general tends to focus on service user engagement, stakeholder and partner engagement and internal directorate communications.

19. The Communications Review has brought the central and directorate communications teams together to work more effectively for residents.

One team working

From		To
Separate teams across the council	➔	Co-ordinated joint approach
Separate comms plans and priorities	➔	Single forward plan for all activity based on priorities, developed and agreed by all : <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Comms & engagement strategy- Corporate strategy and directorate priorities
Resource works separately across organisation unco-ordinated approach	➔	Pooled budget Resources and budget allocated jointly Joined-up campaigns – resource from appropriate teams working together
Roles focused on directorate/corporate need	➔	Common understanding and buy in for maximum effectiveness around organisation's priorities

Improving communications & engagement

From		To
Unco-ordinated activity and quality	➔	One comms and engagement strategy Framework and guidelines to provide consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none">- brand guidelines- self serve tools and templates
Patchy objective setting and evaluation of Effectiveness	➔	Shared data, audience / insight
Website unrelated to communications and engagement activity for residents	➔	Clearer website, reinforcing main campaigns and activity
Separate data and limited knowledge sharing	➔	Evaluation of all activity – around clear Objectives. Outcome focused

Budget

20. To support the strategy's commitment to greater clarity, focus and value for money there will be a single budget and forward plan for communications and engagement for the new financial year.
21. The pooled budget for 2014/15 for spend on materials (non-staffing) across the organisation is £723k compared to £1,185k in the baseline year 2012/13. A reduction of around a third. The reduction will be achieved by a greater focus of activity around priorities, a reduction in duplication and increase in productivity, less spend on advertising, printing and other paid-for activity and an increased use of digital activity.

22. Over the coming year communications will continue to work with services across the organisation to realise further savings, including supporting Business Services to achieve £500k of savings on office printing..

23. **Communications spending centrally and by directorate for 2014/15, with additional external funding based on the latest figures (2012/13)**

Directorate	Spend for 2014/15	External funding (2012/13)	Potential total
Adult Social Care	£68k	£30k	£98k
Business Services	£47.5k	n/a	£47.5k
Chief Executive's	£9k	n/a	£9k
Children's, Schools Families	£161k	£28k	£189k
Customers & Communities	£45.5k	£170k	£215.5k
Env & Infrastructure	£124k	£229k	£353k
TOTAL	£455k	£457k	£912k
Central communications	£268k	n/a	£268k
TOTAL	£723	£457	£1,180k

8

Communications Review Maximise resource

From

To

Individual budgets, no common understanding of resource or spend



Single pooled and reduced budget, jointly agreed and allocated

Heavy use of printed material not evaluated



New agreed approaches, less paid-for activity
Optimise digital, other formats to meet needs, evaluated effectiveness

No common organisation-wide view of spend



Clear picture of spend, enabling savings

300+ vendors used ad hoc not maximising value



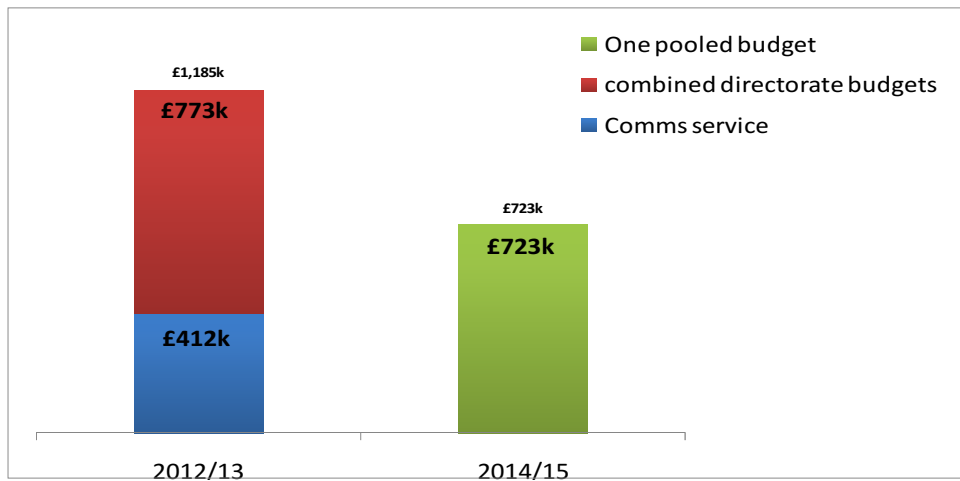
100 vendors, better deals, clear view of spend, vendors shared

Disparate use of channels across organisation



Effective pool of channels

Communications Review Maximise resource



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24. In addition to the identified budgets, historically approximately £400k per year has been spent by directorates on communications from externally sourced grant funding. Communications is introducing a consistent approach for use of such funding that ensures consistency of quality and value for money. The recommended approach models Environment & Infrastructure's current best practice - ie resource and/or funding for materials are identified when bidding for external funds. If a post is required it is based in the communications service. A ring-fenced budget for activity is established from the grant funding. Working with the communications service offers support and access to resources and expertise to provide high quality and effective communications.
25. There will also be a change to the level of financial support for income generating services from the communications budgets. To ensure communications activity is cost neutral to the council, services with established income generation streams will be expected to cover their communications and marketing activity from their income.
26. The communications and engagement strategy supports delivery of the corporate strategy – the council's commitment to its residents. Communications is integral to its success and to support and raise awareness of the priorities outlined in the strategy.

Delivery of communications and engagement

27. The focus of communications activity is ensuring residents are informed and engaged about the services and activity that the organisation defines as its priorities. An important part of this is supporting Members and officers with effective and good value communications and engagement.
28. An evaluation of performance against the priorities in the communications and engagement strategy is attached.

29. The approach to delivering savings outlined should be achievable and should not reduce the effectiveness of communications and engagement – nor limit its ability to support the organisation in delivering changes to services.

30. Conclusions:

31. The Select Committee is being asked to endorse the new approach and activity to embed a common management, planning and budgetary framework for communications across the organisation.

32. Recommendations:

33. Budgets

34. A £493k reduction in communications and related spending is achieved in 2014/15 as follows:

- £389k cashable savings
- £92k in cost avoidance through outsourced services (ie income generating services are now cost neutral to the organisation)
- £12k in cost avoidance on statutory notices advertising.

The communications service is supporting business services through a behaviour change campaign to realise a further £500k savings to reach the £1m target. There will be savings around office printing (£100,000 in 2014/15, rising to £500,000 in 2015/16) and council postage (savings to be quantified when financial analysis complete).

35. There is a consistent approach for use of grant funding for communications that ensures consistency of quality and value for money. The recommended approach models Environment & Infrastructure's current best practice

36. Income-generating services ensure that the cost of marketing or communications activity is reflected in their pricing so they do not add to the council's communications costs.

37. Ways of working

38. The Communications Service continues to bring together the communications service and directorate teams to work as one team to maximise productivity and resource.

39. That no further communications posts (whole or part) or budgets are created in the council without the agreement of the Head of Communications.

40. The pooled communications budget is jointly managed on a one team basis by the Communications Service and managers representing the communications functions council-wide.

41. Next steps:

Continue to embed the actions of the communications review and implement the above recommendations.

Report contact: Louise Footner, Head of Communications or Tim Edwards, Corporate Communications Manager

Contact details: Louise Footner – 0208 541 9624

louise.footner@surreycc.gov.uk

Tim Edwards – 0208 541 8979

t.edwards@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Communications and engagement strategy

Breakdown of spend and roles

Evaluation of communications activity

Benchmarking data (to follow)

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013- 2018

Confident in our future

The council is committed to delivering great value for Surrey residents in all it does. The effectiveness of any team in delivering this is determined to a significant extent by the quality of its communications and engagement. This strategy outlines the approach we will take to ensure our communications and engagement activity is the best possible and helps to achieve our vision of delivering great value for Surrey residents.

The council is recognised as having good services, strong partnership working and empowered and motivated employees. We have built a strong platform and we are committed to do more for residents.

We look to the future with confidence and are ready to meet the financial challenges we face, along with the rest of the public sector, requiring potentially far-reaching changes to public services.

The plans for how we will achieve our vision of delivering great value are in our corporate strategy. Communications and engagement are integral to the success of this vision and our activity will focus on supporting the priorities in the strategy.

We will be consistently pro-active in our communications and engagement to raise awareness and understanding of Surrey, recruit and retain good staff and engage residents and communities in our services and how they are changing. To help us achieve this, we are putting an emphasis on innovative approaches and more effective ways of doing things in our communications and engagement.

Our aim is to be clear and focused and involve residents and communities in our communications and engagement.

Doing the right thing

Doing the right thing for our residents now and in the longer term – and demonstrating this - is the driver for all communications and engagement activity. It supports the six tasks outlined in the corporate strategy that the county council has to focus on and get right:

Residents	Enable individuals, families and communities to have more influence, control and responsibility
Value	Create public value by improving outcomes for residents
Partnerships	Work with our partners in the interests of Surrey
Quality	Ensure the highest quality and encourage innovation
People	Develop and equip our officers and members to provide excellent service
Stewardship	Look after Surrey's resources responsibly

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Challenges

There are four communications and engagement challenges that we must meet to achieve these tasks.

1. **Be clear about the context** – The scale of financial savings required is unprecedented and sets the context for all our activity. This will mean that we will need to take decisions that could change what services we provide and how we provide them now and in the longer term. We will ensure that we are clear about options and explain the circumstances surrounding these options, the reasons for decisions and why we are responding in the way we are. We will provide opportunities for residents to offer their views and opinions.
2. **Responding to changing life choices** – The way people live their lives is changing, and many people have an expectation about how involved they are in the delivery of the services they use. Where they expect to be able to play a role in how services are designed and delivered, we will recognise and appreciate their involvement and will support and respond to these changing needs as our services change. Communications and engagement will be integral to this.
3. **Earn trust** – In the current context it is even more important than ever that all communications and engagement is honest and trustworthy.
4. **Enable involvement** – We will tailor our communications and engagement to the needs of different groups – residents, officers, members, businesses, communities and other partners - to enable deeper engagement.

Who

We will continue to work hard to improve our communications and engagement with all the people we work with. As part of this, we will place a particular emphasis on getting things right for three audiences.

Residents

Through new and more effective ways of communicating and engaging we will offer residents ways in which they can play a role in shaping services. This will build on the work currently carried out in many services, particularly adults' and children's services. We will strengthen our approach by improving how we feed back to residents.

We will use a variety of ways to reach people suited to their needs – for example, through digital and social media as well as paper-based communications. We will ensure that we reach as many people as possible by tailoring approaches for residents whom we have found it harder to engage with in the past or have particular needs.

As the ways in which services are provided change, we will make sure it is easy for residents to know who is providing their services and we will encourage people to help others understand services.

Businesses

To support the council's priority of supporting strong economic growth for Surrey we will improve our communications and engagement with businesses.

To do this we will develop tailored communications and engagement activity by working with businesses and make it as easy as possible for them to engage with us.

Officers and members

We will assist colleagues in services to improve the ways in which members are provided with up-to-date, local information.

Communications and engagement will work with members to improve ways in which they bring feedback and information into the organisation to help improve services. We will develop opportunities that make this easier. Two primary ways we will do this are through communications and engagement to support Shift in Surrey and the organisation-wide activity to build stronger teams.

We will also review and develop the channels we have, so that they better meet the needs of officers and members, better serve our corporate priorities and support a dialogue across the council.

We will also offer all members training in how to make the most of social media.

How

Improving our digital communications ability

- Improve our website homepage so it is more interactive, people can find information quickly and it is easy to engage with us.
- Being proactive in our use of social and digital media, supporting people to use these channels through clear guidelines and policies.
- Continue to look for new ways of engaging people using digital and social media to make it as easy as possible for them to share their views.
- Increase the take up of electronic version of Surrey Matters.

8

Target communications and engagement to maximise impact

- Use data to reach people more effectively, including people who have been harder to engage in the past and who will benefit from tailored approaches to communications and engagement.

Maintaining a strategic approach

- We will focus relentlessly on communications and engagement related to the difference we will make for Surrey residents in 2018 defined by the priorities in the corporate strategy. Clear action plans, measurement and evaluation will underpin all activity. For 2013/14 these include:
 - Improving our roads
 - Providing children with additional school places
 - Support young people and the local economy, highlighting apprenticeships and skills development
 - Strengthening support for vulnerable children and adults
 - Supporting more vulnerable people to live independent lives
 - Demonstrating how we are delivering savings
 - Campaign to reduce litter in our county

Ensuring Surrey has an influential voice regionally and nationally

- We will support the organisation's work to represent Surrey's views nationally and regionally on our priorities.

Providing the best communications and engagement by working as one team

- Maintain our work to build effective, co-ordinated communications and engagement that is consistently high quality and provides value for money.

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Measuring our success

We have clear measures to define our success, especially for residents, officers, members and businesses. These are a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures that will demonstrate the difference effective communications and engagement make year on year and cumulatively by 2018. We will regularly review our progress in implementing this strategy and will share updates with residents from September 2013.

What difference will this make by 2018?

Communications and engagement will:

- Increase numbers of residents, officers, members and partners who feel engaged and know how they can, and do, play a role in public services in Surrey.
- Increase the number of businesses who are aware of our support for growing Surrey's economy and have a productive relationship with us.
- Improve the digital channels for communications and engagement.
- Ensure Surrey's residents and communities have a voice through improved engagement locally, regionally and nationally
- Increase understanding of our priorities and what we have done about them.

Our priorities for 2013/14

- Provide opportunities for residents and communities to be more involved and offer views and opinions on services and issues. These will be tailored to the needs of different groups – residents, officers, members, businesses and other partners.
- Carry out communications and engagement to support and promote the priorities outlined in the corporate strategy:
 - Improving our roads
 - Providing children with additional school places
 - Support young people and the local economy, highlighting apprenticeships and skills development
 - Strengthening support for vulnerable children and adults
 - Supporting more vulnerable people to live independent lives
 - Demonstrating how we are delivering savings
 - Campaign to reduce litter in our county
- To address the communications and engagement challenges associated with the tasks identified in the corporate strategy.
- Increase our digital ability, this includes improving our web site and supporting officers and members to communicate with people via social and digital media.

The detailed measures and targets for the priorities will be tracked in our quarterly communications and engagement updates which will start in September 2013.

This document outlines our approach to communications and engagement. If you have any comments please contact Louise Footner, Head of Communications, at louise.footner@surreycc.gov.uk

This strategy is supported by individual strategies and plans that give more detail of our approach for digital communications and engagement, media relations, internal communications and campaigns.

Communications Roles & Resource

Chief Executives Office	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Change
Communications						
Establishment Budget Communications Team	£1,446,000	£1,470,000	£1,278,000	£1,141,000	£1,135,000	£335,000
Central Publicity	£681k	£581k	£491k	£510k	£512k	£169k
Surrey Matters	£312K	£232k	£226	£222k	£227k	£85k
Comms Staffing Numbers	28	24.41	22	24	21.6	6.4
Customer & Communities						
Communications & Marketing						
Staffing budget	£49,744	£105,140	£106,482	£109,343	£117,769	£68,025
Training				£45k	£275k	£230k
Staffing Numbers	2.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	1
Children, Schools & Families						
Communications & Marketing						
Staffing budget	£106,006	£96,615	£153,265	£141,720	£230,821	£124,815
Staffing Numbers	3	3	5	6	8	5
Adults						
Communications & Marketing						
Staffing budget				£139,488	£293,454	£153,966
Staffing Numbers	no data	1	3	6	5	5
Early Years						
Communications & Marketing	0	0	£73,292	£130,075	£129,100	£55,808
Staffing budget					£129,300	£129,300
Staffing Numbers	3	3	3	3	3	0



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Communications and Engagement Strategy 2013 - 2018

Evaluation and examples of good practice to support priorities 2013/14

Providing opportunities for residents and communities to be more involved

Widespread communications activity to promote opportunities to give views led to over 3,700 people feeding their views into the cycling strategy consultation, including 200 who attended a debate that was broadcast live on BBC Surrey. Tactics included promoting through social media – during the live debate there were almost 400 tweets; including 115 retweets.

As part of the Travel SMART programme, targeted communications with communities in seven areas around Woking, Guildford and Redhill to apply for funding to support local schemes. This resulted in 125 applications for community funding and 86 grants being awarded. Over 300 people attended local events to vote for the schemes to be funded.

Carry out communications and engagement to support and promote the priorities outlined in the corporate strategy

Proactive media work and activity outlined below is focused on the corporate priority themes:

Improving roads	Support for economic growth
Investing in schools	Supporting vulnerable children and adults
Providing value for money	Launch a campaign to reduce litter
Supporting vulnerable people to live independent lives	

Coverage on these themes resulted in **318 pieces of media coverage**. Much of this was in the national media including: BBC National News, BBC PM Programme, BBC Online, BBC Sunday Politics, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio 2, The Sun, The Times, Daily Telegraph, ITN, Daily Mail, Guardian, Evening Standard, The Independent, Daily Express, LGC, MJ, The Press Association and Daily Mirror.

Improving roads – The ‘report a pothole campaign’ resulted in 11% increase in satisfaction with the condition of the roads in residents who were aware of the campaign.

Communications also worked alongside highways to raise awareness of and engagement in the additional investment opportunities to invest in roads through Operation Horizon.

Investing in schools – Communications activity to support online school applications has helped to result in 96% of applications being made on time online.

Supporting young people/economic growth – Active promotion of the Surrey Opportunities Fair by introducing radio advertising and increased use of social media to support evening sessions helped achieve a three-fold increase in attendees over the previous year – 336 in 2013 versus 120 in 2012.

There was also significant media coverage for the activity the council has undertaken to support apprenticeships, helping the council and Surrey to take a leading role and achieve impressive targets in employment for people on apprenticeship schemes.

Support for vulnerable children and adults – The fostering campaign in October resulted in 47 enquiries from potential foster carers, a 68% increase over the monthly average of 28 enquiries.

The Dementia Friendly Surrey campaign has resulted in 78% of people saying it had increased their understanding of the condition. 63% said it had made them more supportive and over 100 individuals and organisations have signed up as champions.

Supporting vulnerable people to live independent lives - a campaign to promote telecare doubled the enquiries to the service which offers a range of products that enable people to stay living in their homes for longer. The November campaign and new promotional materials which have been widely distributed have had a positive impact over time. In terms of web hits, the November campaign made the number of unique visitors peak to the highest for that financial year, but continued promotion is needed to sustain hits to the site.

Delivering savings – Open and clear council performance and financial information published in an annual report and was welcomed by the Surrey Tax Action Group (STAG).

We also published and promoted a booklet outlining 50 ways the council has delivered value. This included an article in Surrey Matters magazine highlighting our budget pressures and the 50 ways we've delivered value. Research has shown that people who say they read Surrey Matters are more likely to feel the council communicates honestly and accurately with them.

All waste reduction, recycling and reuse activity is designed to make savings by either reducing the amount of waste we produce or recycling and reusing waste – hence savings on landfill, collection and disposal costs.

95% saying the furniture re-use campaign encouraged them to buy reusable furniture from the Surrey Re-use Network (which had a 25% increase in footfall and sales during the campaign).

76% of residents said they had reduced food waste as a result of the Love Food Surrey campaign.

Litter – Research was undertaken primarily online and through Surrey Matters to get residents views on what type of litter is a problem, where it's found and who causes it. This has informed a campaign about the penalties for dropping litter, which launched on 31 March. This approach is designed to supplement activity carried out by districts and boroughs and others across Surrey.

Improving health and well being - 76% increase in people using the Active Surrey activity-finder (with nearly 2,800 Surrey families signing up to the Change4life programme).

45% of respondents saying that the Explore Surrey campaign had influenced them to visit the countryside and 51% of residents said the Travel SMART campaign had increased their frequency of walking or cycling

Surrey had the fifth highest amount of residents signing up to Stoptober from all local authority areas in England and Wales - 4,498 people. During September and October 1,918 people contacted the Surrey Stop Smoking Service for support in quitting with 407 people mentioning Stoptober. This represents a 362% increase on last year in the amount of people contacting the service as a result of Stoptober.

Supporting economic growth – Fifty-five proactive pieces of media work were produced between April 2013 and March 2014, securing coverage in local, regional and national media –including the Evening Standard, Press Association, BBC Online, BBC Sunday Politics. Communications around the roll-out of superfast broadband, the promotion of the survey of Surrey businesses in association with Surrey Connects, and the Build Surrey website were highlights, addressing important business concerns.

Communications produced briefing material for MPs and other key opinion-formers around Surrey Future's programme of investment in infrastructure, focusing mainly on transport links. Communications also designed the public exhibition materials for consultation on the Guildford gyratory consultation which aims to tackle congestion - a major constraint on economic growth.

Priorities campaign – in addition to the above we've also started a campaign to inform and engage people on the wider council and directorate priorities.

Benchmarking research has just been carried out to establish current awareness of these priorities and will be repeated in six months time to measure effectiveness of activities.

Resident's awareness of council priorities

- 28% - Reducing litter in Surrey
- 27% - Caring for Surrey's environment
- 21% - Improving Surrey's roads
- 21% - Keeping Surrey families healthy
- 17% - Protecting Surrey's vulnerable children
- 17% - Supporting Surrey's vulnerable adults
- 13% - Creating opportunities for Surrey's young people
- 11% - Helping Surrey's families to thrive
- 6% - Strengthening Surrey's economy

At the same time we also measured residents' awareness:

That the council is looking at new ways to improve services – 59%

That the council needs to make changes due to national financial pressures – 58%

Of what the council is doing to deliver value for money – 50%

Of the ways in which residents can shape services – 38%

We also looked at whether residents believe the council communicates honestly and accurately with them – 49% agree while 15% disagree.

Increase our digital ability, this includes improving our web site and supporting officers and members to communicate with people via social and digital media.

Website

Communications played a lead role in redesigning the council's website. Visits to the new site have increased by 9% from 1.7million to almost 2 million.

Online transactions have also increased dramatically:

- Reporting faults such as potholes and streetlight faults are up by 84% from approximately 32,500 to almost 60,000
- Payments online are up by 175% from just over 4,000 to almost 12,000.
- Online applications for services such as school transport, blue badges, music lessons and dropped kerbs were also up - by 101% from approx 14,700 to 29,700

The website has also been awarded SOCITM's top 4 stars in their Better Connected Annual Report. It is also one of only five sites that made it into the reviewers' favourite sites for excellent information and being easy to follow with a very good mobile version.

We've also driven traffic to the new Healthy Surrey website through communications campaigns which include Health Checks, resulting in 69,725 hits since its launch in October.

Digital channels

We have established a **digital communications group** so that all work across the organisation to coordinate activity and share learning.

The number of Surrey Matters Twitter followers has doubled (from 6,952 to 13,314) over the past year, including an extra 2,000 during flooding. Facebook likes have tripled from 615 to 2,283.

The Digital Press Office has attracted more than 225,600 visits over the last year, while SurreyNews is the most followed council Twitter account with more than 17,200 followers. Followers increased by approximately 4,000 during flooding.

The number of SurreyNews YouTube hits from April 2013 to March 13 2014 was 17,783. The number of videos produced during same time period was 44.

Social media is also increasingly being used as part of campaigns activity. For example on the Sneaky Drinks campaign to encourage cutting down on alcohol, social media posts reached 129,127 people and 1,291 shared, liked or commented on them.

We held social media workshops which were open to all members and 26 members attended. Some were already actively using social media, others didn't want to use it proactively but wanted to monitor it and get a feel for what people are talking about.

We have are also increasing the benefit we can gain from YouTube, which as well as being a social media channel is also the second largest search engine after Google. Optimisation of six videos to date has led to an 124% increase in views over four months.

Communications also further developed use of other digital channels including Google Adwords. Over the 18 months we've been using it there have been almost 46,000 click throughs to campaign web pages with highlights including 7,616 for Health Checks and 5,457 for Buy with Confidence.

Electronic version of Surrey Matters - there are currently 3,286 people on the distribution list, a 43% increase over last year. The monthly open rate is between 50-60% versus the average of 20% for local government e-newsletters. People can sign up on the Surrey Matters pages of the website, from links on other pages and are offered the option on the website feedback survey.

A social media policy was developed and is online for staff and members to refer to if they have social media accounts or are thinking about starting one.

In addition....

All of the above supports our aim to address the communications and engagement challenges associated with the tasks identified in the corporate strategy.

In addition, the Communications Service has won independent recognition of the quality of its work through the Pride Awards from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) – for example, Surrey Matters magazine (Gold Award); digital work on the Olympics (Gold Award); and the food waste reduction campaign, Love Food Surrey (Silver Award)

We also won Best Communications Campaign award for furniture reuse at the LARAC (waste industry) awards.

The quality of our design work has also been highlighted as other public authorities have started to buy our awareness-raising and behaviour change campaign materials. For example, the Eat Out Eat Well Campaign has been bought by Buckinghamshire County Council, Sussex Food Liaison Group and Wiltshire County Council.

**COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SELECT COMMITTEE
ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER – UPDATED April 2014**

The recommendations tracker allows Committee Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each Select Committee. Once an action has been completed, it will be shaded out to indicate that it will be removed from the tracker at the next meeting. The next progress check will highlight to members where actions have not been dealt with.

Recommendations made to Cabinet

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
3 October 2013 COSC 003	DIGITAL BY DEFAULT [Item 6]	That the Cabinet considers developing a high-level strategy document to help guide its approach to the digital delivery of both back-office and front-line services.	Cabinet	This was considered at the Cabinet meeting on 22 October 2013. A response was included in the Committee papers on 7 November 2013. It was agreed on 4 December 2013 that this matter would be reviewed 6 months after the appointment of a Chief Digital Design Officer.	June 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
3 October 2013 COSC 004	DIGITAL BY DEFAULT [Item 6]	That consideration be given to identifying a Cabinet Member to take lead responsibility for the Council's overall approach to the digital delivery of services.	Cabinet	This was considered at the Cabinet meeting on 22 October 2013. A response was included in the Committee papers on 7 November 2013. It was agreed on 4 December 2013 that this matter would be reviewed 6 months after the appointment of a Chief Digital Design Officer.	June 2014
7 November 2013 COSC 008	RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [ITEM 5]	The Cabinet Member for Business Services is requested to consider the Committee's recommendation, from its October meeting, regarding the development of a high-level strategy document to help guide its approach to the digital delivery of both back-office and front-line services.	Cabinet Member for Business Services	A Digital Update report was prepared for the Committee. It was agreed on 4 December 2013 that this matter would be reviewed 6 months after the appointment of a	June 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
				Chief Digital Design Officer.	
5 March 2014 COSC 016	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT & QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT [ITEM 6]	<p>a) That, as a matter of urgency, the Cabinet considers how the Council will fund the cost of repairs required as a result of the recent flooding in the County, including the option to approve additional capital borrowing in 2014/2015, with the interest payments arising from the loan in 2014/2015 and future years to be met from within the Directorate's revenue budget.</p> <p>b) That the Cabinet accelerate the Family, Friends and Community Support programme from April 2014 to increase capacity using an Invest to Save bid to review open cases.</p> <p>c) That the effectiveness of voluntary sector grants be reviewed to ensure, where appropriate, these align with and support the objectives of the Family, Friends and Community Support programme.</p>	Cabinet	These recommendations were considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 25 March 2014. A response was reported to COSC at its meeting on 2 April 2014 and discussed as part of the budget monitoring item.	Complete

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		<p>d) That initiatives which have the potential to increase value for money be discussed with providers.</p> <p>e) That efforts to recruit and retain qualified staff to unfilled social worker posts be redoubled.</p>			
<p>2 April 2014</p> <p>COSC 18</p>	<p>REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]</p>	<p>Adult Social Care, Children Schools and Families, Libraries, Public Health and Finance teams to continue to monitor impacts of the welfare reforms on service users and services, and provide a joint update through the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2014. Adult Social Care to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and Children Schools and Families to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on care leavers in their updates.</p>	<p>Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group</p>	<p>This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
2 April 2014 COSC 19	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	The Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group be encouraged to continue to collate data on the impact of the reforms on residents and the cumulative impact of the reforms, and to share information and good practice within the group, and to report on progress to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the update report in September 2014.	Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 20	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	Surrey County Council's Organisational Development Team analyse training needs on welfare reform in the Council and explore how such training can be disseminated throughout affected council services and ensure consistency with training being delivered by partner organisations.	Organisational Development Team	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 21	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group to work with the Head of Family Services to explore the potential for the Supporting Families Programme (which is being extended through the Public Services Transformation Network) to provide early help/intervention to some of those families who are	Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group/ Head of Family Services	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in	September 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		most severely impacted by the welfare reforms.		September 2014.	
2 April 2014 COSC 22	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	Any Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 is ring-fenced and rolled over into 2014/15 and continues to be committed to supporting residents in crisis through the LAS.	Cabinet	This recommendation was considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 22 April 2014. A response is included in the meeting papers.	30 April 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 23	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	Shared services to provide an update on improvements to the LAS scheme and take up of the fund, as part of the update report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	Shared Services	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 24	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	Surrey County Council to continue lobbying central government to provide funding for emergency crisis support for residents (known as the Local Assistance Scheme in Surrey) beyond 2015.	Leader of the Council	This recommendation was considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 22 April 2014. A response is included in the	30 April 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
				meeting papers.	
2 April 2014 COSC 25	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	The Adult Social Care Committee to closely monitor the delivery of this service by getWIS£ and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.	Adult Social Care Select Committee	The Adult Social Care Select Committee will be receiving a report on getWIS£ on 26 June 2014.	September 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 26	REPORT OF THE WELFARE REFORM TASK GROUP: THE IMPACTS OF WELFARE REFORM IN SURREY [ITEM 6]	<p>Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care Commissioners, to work with Surrey's Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, Public Health and getWIS£ to:</p> <p>(a) promote the getWIS£ advice and support service to all Surrey GPs through Surrey's 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups; and</p> <p>(b) continue to raise awareness of this service among key partners including District and Borough Housing and Benefits Officers and social housing providers;</p> <p>to ensure Surrey residents receive early help in dealing with the welfare reforms.</p>	Adult Social Care Commissioners/ Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group/Public Health	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
2 April 2014 COSC 27		The Public Health team to report to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee with findings from their food access needs assessment, to inform the Committee's work around reviewing the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey.	Public Health	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014
2 April 2014 COSC 28		Surrey County Council to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the Voluntary, community and faith sector to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit, taking into consideration the concerns and recommendations highlighted in this report, and report back to the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress. This preparation should include: (a) researching and understanding the need for digital access and support across Surrey; (b) the County Council better	Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group	This recommendation will be addressed through the update report to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2014.	September 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		<p>understanding the potential demand on IT resources as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit to enable Surrey to properly prepare for this, including reviewing budget provision;</p> <p>(c) reviewing the demand for money management advice and assessing existing service provision, in order to make evidence-based recommendations for sourcing the necessary support; and</p> <p>(d) lobbying central government to ensure that support to access Universal Credit is adequately funded.</p>			
<p>2 April 2014</p> <p>COSC 29</p>		<p>The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining the Task Group's concerns over the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) process including the following recommendations:</p> <p>(a) That firms carrying out the medical work capability</p>	<p>Leader of the Council</p>	<p>This recommendation was considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 22 April 2014. A response is included in the meeting papers.</p>	<p>30 April 2014</p>

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		<p>assessments (WCA) for benefit claimants, on behalf of DWP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) treat benefit claimants like customers; and (ii) ensure appropriately qualified persons carry out these medical assessments. <p>(b) Bureaucracy within the ESA claims and appeals process be reduced. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) DWP to provide information on the number of medical certificates posted by claimants but not received by DWP and the reasons for this, (ii) DWP to accept claimant medical certificates for longer periods while claimants await mandatory re-consideration and tribunal decisions. This will save GP and claimant time and expense in having these certificates frequently renewed or re-requested where certificates have been sent by post but not received by DWP. <p>(c) DWP's benefit claim forms and</p>			

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		<p>decision letters to signpost claimants to advice and support services to enable claimants to seek early help, preferably locally based organisation, such as local authorities, housing providers and Citizens Advice Bureaus.</p> <p>(d) DWP to build a closer working relation with partners in the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group, to bring about pro-active information sharing and signposting particularly where claimants have been sanctioned by DWP decisions and therefore lost their passported benefits, such as housing benefit.</p> <p>(e) DWP to use lessons learned from the ESA process and apply this to the roll-out of the Personal Independence Payments.</p>			
2 April 2014 COSC 30		The Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on simplifying the Universal Credit application process and exploring options for a common assessment for claimants	Leader of the Council	This recommendation was considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 22 April 2014. A response is	30 April 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations	To	Response	Progress Check On
		across welfare benefits and support.		included in the meeting papers.	

Select Committee and Officer Actions

Page 94

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
7 November 2013 COSC 012	IMPROVING STAFF MORALE AND WELLBEING [Item 8]	The Committee receives a report on Surrey's People Strategy at a future meeting.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	The Committee considered the next steps as part of its scrutiny of this topic on 4 December 2013. It was agreed that further scrutiny options would be explored. There is a further staff workshop planned for June 2014.	July 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
4 December 2013 COSC 014	FAMILY, FRIENDS & COMMUNITY SUPPORT - SOCIAL CAPITAL IN SURREY [Item 7]	That the Committee receives an update report regarding the implementation of Family, Friends & Community Support.	Strategic Director for Adult Social Care	The Committee will receive this report in July 2014.	July 2014
5 March 2014 COSC 017	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT & QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT [ITEM 6]	That the Committee receive a further report outlining the options explored in relation to meeting the financial pressures created by flood-recovery. This report will be brought to the meeting on 2 April 2014.	Deputy Chief Finance Officer	The costs of the response and recovery phase of the flooding are still being assessed, so although estimates of the cost will form a part of the February budget monitoring, they are could be more or less than this. In addition, the government are announcing a range of different funding streams to help households, businesses and local authorities. These	July 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				<p>were outlined in the information pack distributed for the full Council meeting on Tuesday 18 March 2014. The level of this funding has not yet been confirmed. The combination of these these two unknowns make the net cost to the council difficult to predict with any accuracy.</p> <p>One of the recommendations of the MTFP is that the Cabinet receive a report in July on the impact of the severe weather on service work programmes and revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>In the light of this officers have</p>	

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				proposed that the COSC consider the report closer to the time of the cabinet meeting, when greater information will be available.	
2 April 2014 COSC 31	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT & QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT [ITEM 7]	That the information provided in response to the Section 19 request be brought to the Committee for discussion at the earliest opportunity: following discussion, the Committee to refer detailed issues to the Environment & Transport Select Committee for further consideration if necessary.	Assistant Director, Highways, Environment & Infrastructure	Officers have confirmed that the Environment Agency will publish a report in May 2014, this will inform the report to Cabinet in July 2014. Officers in Democratic Services will continue to monitor the timescales for the flooding information, and will ensure that it is brought to the relevant scrutiny committee as soon as it is available.	June 2014

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
2 April 2014 COSC 32	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT & QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT [ITEM 7]	That the report to Cabinet in July 2014 on the flooding response and cost is considered at a future Committee meeting.	Chairman/Democratic Services	The flooding response report has been added to the Forward Work Programme for September 2014.	Complete
2 April 2014 COSC 33	BUDGET MONITORING REPORT & QUARTERLY BUSINESS REPORT [ITEM 7]	Flooding information related to affected highways and infrastructure resources be circulated to the Committee.	Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways & Environment	This information will be circulated prior to the meeting.	30 April 2014

Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2013/14

4 June 2014

- Digital Strategy Update
- Staff Pay & Reward
- Budget Out-turn/Monitoring
- Staff Morale and Wellbeing – informal workshop discussions with staff

2 July 2014

- Family, Friends & Community Support
- Budget Monitoring

11 September 2014

- New Models of Delivery Programme
- Financial Impact of the Flooding.
- Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group - Update Report

9

Scrutiny Topics

Work commenced September 2013: Welfare Reform: Welfare reform will result in pressure on many Council services as the government changes take effect. What will be the impact on Surrey residents? What could the Council be doing now to minimise the impact?

This work is being undertaken by a Member Task Group throughout autumn 2013. There was an interim report back to Committee in January 2014, a final report was considered at the Committee meeting on 2 April 2014. A number of recommendations were made to Cabinet and a response is included in today's agenda papers.

9

The Committee is due to receive a further update, following appointment of the Chief Digital Design Officer, in June 2014.

Work commenced October 2013: Digital by Default: Like many Councils, Surrey is exploring the benefits and limitations of bringing or delivering services online. How do Surrey residents want to engage with the Council? To what extent should this be reflected in the Council's Digital Strategy? What can we learn from other organisations approach to digital by default?

The Committee used their November meeting to discuss how the Council supports its staff with respect to wellbeing and morale. There is a further informal workshop in June 2014.

Work Commenced November 2013 - Staff: Given ongoing austerity, what do employees really feel about working for Surrey? Do employees have the appropriate tools and resources to do their job? What is the impact of employee satisfaction and morale on service delivery? How can Surrey best support and value their employees?

Work commencing December 2013: Budget Savings: Surrey is having to think differently about how it delivers services in light of public sector spending cuts. What is the impact of these cuts and changes on the everyday life of people in Surrey?

The Committee reviewed the changes proposed to the Medium Term Financial Plan 2014-19, prior to agreement by Cabinet. Matters arising from recent select committee budget workshops were collated and reviewed by the Performance and Finance Sub Group, and a series of recommendations made to Cabinet. The response to these recommendations is included in today's agenda papers.

Adult Social Care Committee looked at this topic in autumn 2013. Following this, Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the topic in December 2013 and agreed to review progress in July 2014.

Work Commenced December 2013: Social Capital: When resources are scarce, will residents acting collectively to tackle issues within the community plug the gap?

Communication (Internal & External): As a Council, are we communicating the right things, in the right way, to the right people?

The Cabinet agreed a Communications and Engagement Strategy at its meeting on 25 June 2013. The Committee will receive a report regarding Communications on 30 April 2014.

Trading & Investment: What trading and investment models is Surrey currently utilising and what are the future options for the Council (looking at experiences outside of the County)? What will the governance arrangements be?

The Committee had an update regarding Trading and Investment at its meeting on 12 September 2013. An update on the New Models of Delivery Programme and Local Authority Trading Company was given at the meeting on 5 March 2014. A further update will be received later in the year, and a future item concerning the Council's approach to investment is being explored.

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Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee
30 April 2014

TASK GROUP SCOPING REPORT

- 1 Select Committees wishing to establish task groups are required to complete a scoping report, which sets out details of the task group's objectives, proposed timescales, the resources required, and sources of information. Prior to work commencing on reviews, the scoping reports are submitted to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration, so that any links with other areas of work or potential duplication can be identified. This also enables the Committee to gain an awareness of the issues being investigated across all services of the Council.
- 2 The scoping document for the Flooding Task Group (Environment & Transport Select Committee) is attached for the Committee's consideration (**Annexe 1**).

Recommendation:

That the Committee reviews the attached task group scoping report and suggests any amendments or additions for consideration by the Environment & Transport Select Committee.

Next Steps:

The Committee will be kept informed of progress and outcomes as appropriate.

Report contact: Thomas Pooley, Scrutiny Officer, Democratic Services

Contact details: 020 8541 9902, thomas.pooley@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers: None

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Select Committee Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

The process for establishing a task and finish group is:

1. The Select Committee identifies a potential topic for a task and finish group
2. The Select Committee Chairman and the Scrutiny Officer complete the scoping template.
3. The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the scoping document
4. The Select Committee agrees membership of the task and finish group.

<p>Review Topic: Flooding Task Group</p>
<p>Select Committee(s)</p> <p>Environment & Transport Select Committee</p> <p>(with representation from severely affected divisions and Council Overview and Scrutiny and Communities Select Committees)</p>
<p>Relevant background</p> <p>In December 2013 the County of Surrey was hit by extreme weather conditions resulting in a prolonged spell of flooding affecting several district and boroughs. Major incidents were declared on 24 December 2013 and 8 February 2014 to coordinate the response to flooding across the County.</p> <p>A coordinated multi agency response was implemented involving officers from the Environment Agency (EA), District and Borough Councils, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), Her Majesty's Armed Forces, Surrey County Council (SCC), various utility companies including Thames Water and Public Health England (PHE).</p> <p>As a Lead Local Flood Authority, Surrey County Council has a number of responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA). This includes investigating significant local flooding incidents and playing a lead role in emergency planning and recovery after an event.</p>
<p>Why this is a scrutiny item</p> <p>Although it is widely regarded that the Council's Emergency Management Team and Emergency Services responded well in response to recent flooding given the severity of the event and limited resources, Members feel that now would be an appropriate time to reflect on the impact of flooding and learn lessons as to how the Council can be better prepared should a similar event take place in the future.</p> <p>Approximately 2130 homes in Surrey were affected by the flooding, with widespread damage to County infrastructure. It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that sufficient plans, strategies and resources are in place so that residents are</p>

adequately protected in such events. In many cases County Councillors were at the centre of helping communities respond to the recent flooding and so are well placed to work with partners to draw conclusions and make recommendations as to how we can deal with future events as effectively as possible.

Flooding is a topic of both national and local significance and a scrutiny review of the Council's contingency and emergency response arrangements is timely and would benefit residents, partner organisations and the County Council itself.

What questions are the task group aiming to answer?

- What are the key lessons to be learnt from the County Council's response to recent flood events?
- With the benefit of hindsight, what could the County Council do better should future flood events take place?
- How were local communities affected by flooding and what did they see as the key issues on the ground?
- What 'business as usual' activities can be carried out more effectively to help prevent flooding?
- What schemes for Surrey are being included as part of the River Thames Scheme, how are they being funded and do they represent the best possible protection for the County?

Aim

To consider the key lessons learnt from recent flood events and establish how the Council can respond as effectively as possible to future incidences of flooding, to ensure the safety of residents, businesses and infrastructure in the County.

Scope (within / out of)

The Task Group will chiefly consider lessons learned from the planning, crisis and recovery stages of recent flooding events.

Issues surrounding Central Government sources of funding for flood alleviation/prevention will be out of scope.

Initial lines of Enquiry

Planning:

- Who are/were the Council's key partners and what aspects of the flooding were they planning/prepared for?
- Did other significant events (e.g. high winds) impact upon planning for the flood events?
- With the benefit of hindsight, what would you do differently in terms of planning?

Crisis:

- What elements of the flood event were you unable to prepare for?
- With the benefit of hindsight, what would you have done differently in your response to the crisis?

Recovery:

- To what extent had the recovery process been planned for both before and during the flood events?
- How do we prioritise recovery plans?

Outcomes for Surrey / Benefits

The recommendations of this Task Group will enable the Council to respond as effectively as possible to future incidences of flooding.

The following corporate objectives will benefit in particular from the work of the Task Group:

Value – 'we will create public value by improving outcomes for residents'

The Task Group will make recommendations that enable the Council to strengthen its planning for flooding events and therefore strengthen its protection of key pieces of infrastructure including highways, homes and businesses.

Partnerships – 'we will work with our partners in the interests of Surrey'

The Task Group will consider how well the Council worked with partners such as the emergency services, Central Government Departments and Districts and Boroughs, and will make recommendations as to how we can strengthen these relationships to improve how we can work together in future cases of flooding.

People – 'we will equip our officers and Members to provide excellent service'

The Task Group will review the current resource and arrangements in place for emergency planning in terms of flooding, and will make recommendations that help to equip officers to provide as effective a service as possible in future flood events.

Proposed work plan

It is important to clearly allocate who is responsible for the work, to ensure that Members and officers can plan the resources needed to support the task group.

Timescale	Task	Responsible
TBC	Initial witness sessions/evidence gathering from internal officers and Councillors	Task Group
TBC	Witness sessions/evidence gathering from external partners	Task Group
TBC	Report writing and submission of recommendations to Select Committee/Cabinet	Task Group

Draft list of Witnesses

- Assistant Chief Executive (Silver Commander)
- Assistant Director, Highways
- County Council's Emergency Management Team
- Department for Communities and Local Government
- Environment Agency
- Emergency Services – Fire Service, Police, Ambulance
- Her Majesty's Armed Forces
- Members representing the most affected Divisions, together with relevant Borough & District members or officers and/or leaders of affected Community groups
- Public Health England
- Thames Water

Useful/Source Documents

- Report to Environment & Transport Select Committee: Flooding update (24.04.14).
- Task Group report to Environment & Economy and Transportation Select Committees: Review of Flooding in Surrey (10.01.2008).

Potential barriers to success (Risks / Dependencies)

- Progress of the Task Group is dependent on officer availability. Given that the flood events have only very recently taken place, a number of teams are still involved in debriefs and the recovery process. Therefore, timescales at this stage are indicative.
- Following announcement of the Task Group at Full Council on 18 March 2014, there has been significant public and media interest in the work of the Group. As such public expectations will have to be carefully managed.

Equalities implications

No discernible impacts have been identified; however the Task Group will want to consider the impact of recent flood events on disabled/elderly individuals and how the Council can be better prepared in future.

Task Group Members	David Harmer Mark Brett-Warburton Stephen Cooksey Peter Hickman	Chris Norman Denise Saliagopoulos Nick Skellett
Co-opted Members		
Spokesman for the Group	David Harmer	
Scrutiny Officer/s	Thomas Pooley	

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