

Cabinet

**Date & time**

Tuesday, 22 April
2014 at 2.00 pm

Place

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

Contact

Anne Gowing or James
Stanton
Room 122, County Hall
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Chief Executive

David McNulty

anne.gowing@surreycc.gov.uk

Cabinet Members: Mr David Hodge (Chairman), Mr Peter Martin (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Mary Angell, Mrs Helyn Clack, Mr Mel Few, Mr John Furey, Mr Michael Gosling, Mrs Linda Kemeny, Ms Denise Le Gal and Mr Tony Samuels

Cabinet Associates: Mr Steve Cosser, Mrs Clare Curran, Mr Mike Goodman and Mrs Kay Hammond

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This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Anne Gowing or James Stanton on 020 8541 9938.

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1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 25 MARCH 2014

The minutes will be available in the meeting room half an hour before the start 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 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

4a Members' Questions

- (i) The deadline for Member's questions is 12pm four working days before the meeting (*14 April 2014*).

4b Public Questions

The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (*15 April 2014*).

4c Petitions

The deadline for petitions was 14 days before the meeting, and no petitions have been received.

4d Representations received on reports to be considered in private

To consider any representations received in relation why part of the meeting relating to a report circulated in Part 2 of the agenda should be open to the public.

- 5 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS, LOCAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL** (Pages 1 - 44)
- A: Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Welfare Reforms in Surrey – task group report
- B: Children and Education Select Committee**
Recommendations re. Home to School Transport Policy (Cabinet report - item 8)
- 6 SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN** (Pages 45 - 52)
- The Cabinet is asked to consider the Surrey School Organisation Plan 2013-14 -2022-23 and to make recommendations to Council.
- The Surrey School Organisation Plan (previously called 'School Organisation in Surrey, SOIS) for 2013-14 – 2022-23 is a contextual document which sets out the policies and principles underpinning school organisation in Surrey. It highlights the likely demand for school places as projected over a 10 year forecast period and sets out the potential changes to provision that may be required in order to meet the statutory duty to provide suitable and sufficient places.
- The report includes a summary of the key points in the plan.
- N.B. The Plan has been printed separately to the agenda, for Members of the Cabinet only.**
- It can be assessed on line:**
www.surreycc.gov.uk/yourcouncil/councillors-and-committees/Cabinet
or paper copies are available on request.
- 7 CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: RE-COMMISSIONING FOR 2015 - 2020** (Pages 53 - 66)
- Services for Young People (SYP) currently operates nine commissions which contribute towards the overall goal of full participation in education training or employment with training for young people to age 19 and to age 25 for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). These commissions are delivered through in-house services and external providers, where contracts were let generally for a 3 year period expiring in 2015.
- This paper seeks agreement to the strategic direction for re-commissioning for 2015 to 2020.
- [The decisions on this item can be called in by the Children and Education Select Committee]*

8 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY 2015

(Pages
67 - 124)

To consider the outcome of the consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy and to decide if any changes should be made for implementation from September 2015.

The motion standing in Mr Cooksey's name, which was referred to Cabinet from County Council on 10 December 2013 will be discussed under this item.

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Children and Education Select Committee]

9 AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

(Pages
125 -
132)

The Council has a requirement for transport services for eligible children with special educational needs. This requirement is covered by the current Sole Provider contracts that expire on 31/07/2014.

This report seeks approval to award four contracts for the provision of home-to-school transport services to AMK Chauffeurs Ltd and Supreme Freedom to Travel Ltd starting on 01/08/2014, for a three year period with the option to extend up to a further four years, for provision at four SEN Schools.

The proposed 'Sole Provider' contract arrangement will mean that one transport provider is responsible for delivering the entirety of a School's home-to-school transport for the duration of the contract.

Due to the commercial sensitivity involved in the contract award process, the details of the evaluation process and scores, as well as full financial details are included as confidential information in Part 2 (item 16).

[The decisions on this item can be called in by either the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Children and Education Select Committee]

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

(Pages
133 -
144)

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.

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee]

11 JOINT WORKING THROUGH GUILDFORD LOCAL COMMITTEE (Pages

145 -
158)

It is proposed to strengthen and extend the remit of the existing Local Committee arrangements between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) through the creation of an enhanced Local Committee, with a wider set of advisory functions in the areas of parking, transportation and infrastructure and a greater focus on community involvement through local divisional 'Cluster' meetings.

This will build on the strong track record of collaborative working to date between both Councils. The objectives of the change is to create a Local Committee that more closely reflects the nature of the decisions that need to be made locally, therefore improving outcomes and value for money for Surrey residents and businesses in Guildford through strengthened local democracy and improved partnership working.

Surrey County Council Cabinet approval is sought to agree minor amendments to the advisory functions of Guildford Local Committee.

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Communities Select Committee]

12 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPELTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASHFORD FROM A 2 FORM ENTRY PRIMARY (420 PLACES) TO A 3 FORM ENTRY (630 PLACES) FOR SEPTEMBER 2015 (Pages
159 -
162)

There is significant demand for new schools places within Spelthorne, resulting from increases in the birth rate and inward migration into the County. This demand is addressed through the County's five year 2014-19

Medium Term Financial Plan.

Spelthorne Primary School has recently amalgamated into an all through primary school from separate infant and junior schools. As part of the amalgamation the school is expanding from two forms of entry (420 places) to three forms of entry (630 places) from September 2015 providing an additional 210 places.

Spelthorne Primary School has been identified as requiring expansion to meet the demand in the Spelthorne area and this project is being carried out in 3 phases. Phase 1 was an enabling works package and delivered a new staffroom in September 2012. Phase 2 delivered the refurbishment of the Foundation unit providing 60 new places and completed in September 2013.

Cabinet is asked to agree the business case for the final phase of the overall expansion project. This will encompass the whole school and provide a further 150 places, taking the total new primary places to 210 by September 2015. The work is planned to take place over the summer 2014 and 2015 in order to minimise disruption to the school.

N.B. An annex containing exempt information is contained in part 2 of the agenda (item 15)

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Children and Education Select Committee]

13 LEADER / DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING (Pages 163 - 166)

To note any delegated decisions taken by the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

14 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

PART TWO - IN PRIVATE

15 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPELTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASHFORD FROM A 2 FORM ENTRY PRIMARY (420 PLACES) TO A 3 FORM ENTRY (630 PLACES) FOR SEPTEMBER 2015 (Pages 167 - 172)

This is a part 2 annex relating to item 12.

16 AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT (Pages 173 - 178)

This is the part 2 annex relating to item 9.

17	PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS	(Pages 179 - 188)
	A: Disposal of Land as part of the Horley North West Sector Development	

Exempt: Not for publication under paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee]

B: Disposal of Land at Portesbery Road, Camberley

Exempt: Not for publication under paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

[The decisions on this item can be called in by the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee]

18 PUBLICITY FOR PART 2 ITEMS

To consider whether the item considered under Part 2 of the agenda should be made available to the Press and public.

David McNulty
Chief Executive
Thursday, 10 April 2014

QUESTIONS, PETITIONS AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The Cabinet will consider questions submitted by Members of the Council, members of the public who are electors of the Surrey County Council area and petitions containing 100 or more signatures relating to a matter within its terms of reference, in line with the procedures set out in Surrey County Council's Constitution.

Please note:

1. Members of the public can submit one written question to the meeting. Questions should relate to general policy and not to detail. Questions are asked and answered in public and so cannot relate to "confidential" or "exempt" matters (for example, personal or financial details of an individual – for further advice please contact the committee manager listed on the front page of this agenda).
2. The number of public questions which can be asked at a meeting may not exceed six. Questions which are received after the first six will be held over to the following meeting or dealt with in writing at the Chairman's discretion.
3. Questions will be taken in the order in which they are received.
4. Questions will be asked and answered without discussion. The Chairman or Cabinet Members may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another Member to answer the question.
5. Following the initial reply, one supplementary question may be asked by the questioner. The Chairman or Cabinet Members may decline to answer a supplementary question.

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Those attending for the purpose of reporting on the meeting may use social media or mobile devices in silent mode to send electronic messages about the progress of the public parts of the meeting. To support this, County Hall has wifi available for visitors – please ask at reception for details.

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It is requested that if you are not using your mobile device for any of the activities outlined above, it be switched off or placed in silent mode during the meeting to prevent interruptions and interference with PA and Induction Loop systems.

Thank you for your co-operation

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:

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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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)
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Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2 April 2014

**Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group:
The impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey**

Purpose of the report: Policy Development and Review

This report contains the findings and final recommendations of the Welfare Reform Task Group, which was commissioned by the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) to investigate the impacts of welfare reform and key issues for Surrey County Council and its partners.

COSC is asked to endorse the recommendations of the Task Group, which seek to monitor and mitigate the impact of the reforms on Surrey residents, the County Council, and its partners.

Introduction:

1. The Welfare Reform Task Group was established in September 2013 to investigate and gather evidence from a range of stakeholders on the local impacts of welfare reform and key issues for Surrey County Council and its partners. The Task Group was chaired by David Harmer and its Members are Fiona White, Stephen Cooksey and Bob Gardener.
2. The Task Group circulated its scoping document to COSC on 10 October 2013. The objectives of the Task Group as detailed in the scope were to:
 - (i) Understand from partners:
 - a. what the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey have been so far;
 - b. what future impacts do they expect; and
 - c. what more would they like Surrey County Council to do, to help mitigate the impacts.
 - (ii) Understand from Surrey County Council services:
 - a. what the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey have been so far;
 - b. what future impacts do they expect;
 - c. what more would they like partners to do, to help mitigate the impacts; and
 - d. their response to partner suggestions for mitigation.
3. The Task Group began its work by receiving evidence from key partners, followed by relevant County Council services. A list of the witnesses the Task Group has met with is attached at **Annex 1**.
4. The Task Group has also requested and reviewed documentary evidence from witnesses, and considered relevant reports including: data overview of the impacts of welfare reform in Surrey compiled by Surrey's Policy and

Performance team, and the Universal Credit Local Support Services Update and Trialling Plan.

5. A verbal update on the Task Group's findings was informally presented to COSC by the Chairman of the Task Group on 4 December 2013.
6. An interim report was presented to COSC on 30 January 2014, to update and inform COSC of the work of the Task Group, highlight key issues emerging from witness sessions with Council services and partners, and identify areas requiring further investigation to inform final recommendations. The following interim recommendation was accepted by COSC at this meeting and submitted to the Cabinet: *Any Local Assistance Scheme funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 is rolled over into 2014/15 and continues to be committed to supporting severely affected residents to manage the impact of welfare reform changes. The Task Group will present proposals for allocating this funding in their final report in April 2014, but would recommend that a proportion of it is targeted towards early intervention support, particularly aimed at improving money management skills and general financial awareness.* COSC has been informed by the Leader of the Council that any decisions regarding the rolling over of unallocated funds will be made by the Cabinet at the end of this financial year.
7. The Task Group then proceeded to gather further evidence by re-visiting some witnesses and meeting with a number of new ones, including claimants affected by the reforms, to clarify their understanding of some of the key issues identified in the interim report.
8. By way of background, a reminder of the key changes under welfare reform is attached at **Annex 2**.

Groups of residents being or likely to be significantly affected by the reforms

9. The Policy and Performance report to COSC in September 2013 highlighted that the following three groups were likely to be significantly affected by the reforms. The testimony from witnesses continues to supports this.
 - 9.1 Some **low-income working families** have lost a significant proportion of their income from reductions in working and child tax credits, the removal of the Spare Room Subsidy and reductions in Council Tax Support among other changes. These families tend not to have regular/any contact with support services and are therefore a challenge to reach and support.
 - 9.2 Some **large families not in employment** will see similar reductions as above but are also at risk of losing a large proportion of their income under the benefits cap, and will face challenges to employment due to the high cost of childcare.
 - 9.3 Some **disabled people and those with mental health issues** are a vulnerable group who are having to understand and respond to a major shake-up of their support system. This includes the introduction of a work capability assessment as part of the Employment Support and Allowance (ESA) which results in the loss of all or some benefits if the ESA decision is reconsidered or appealed.
10. The Task Group have also heard from witnesses that **young single unemployed** people are being or likely to be significantly affected by changes to housing benefit, new stricter conditions of the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), and finding a job with lack of work experience. **People in their 50s** may be

affected by the pension credit age for women being increased and 'bedroom tax' if children have moved out of home. They are also struggling to re-enter employment if they have been out of work for a significant period of time.

11. **Care leavers** and **carers** have been highlighted by Council services and partners as two groups adversely impacted by the reforms. The Task Group have been informed of the widespread lack of one-bedroom flats in Surrey for care leavers and concerns from partners about their ability to manage money as required under Universal Credit. The Task Group has also seen evidence of carers taking on significant responsibility for supporting those they care for to cope with the reforms. Unfortunately, the Task Group has not had the time to explore these issues in detail but feels it is important to carefully monitor the impacts on these two groups. The Task Group would therefore like further exploration of the impacts on care leavers and carers to form part of an update report to COSC in September 2014 (see recommendation 1 below).

<p>Impact of the welfare reforms on Council services and partners, and action being taken to address the impact</p>
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Surrey County Council services

12. The Surrey County Council directorates and services of **Children Schools and Families (CSF), Adult Social Care (ASC) , Libraries and Public Health** are the council services most likely to be directly helping residents to deal with the effects of the reforms and be affected themselves. There is no current evidence of material and direct service or budgetary impact from the welfare reforms. However, any such impacts are expected to become more apparent over the next 12 months, as the initial major reforms have embedded. It is important to bear in mind that even then, the most significant change, Universal Credit, will not be implemented in Surrey until at least 2016.
13. Given the uncertainty about the form and extent of the impacts, the **collection of data** around all the key reforms remains vital to the County Council's efforts to help mitigate the impacts. The Task Group were pleased to note that an improvement in the Contact Centre's recording methods now enables officers to log calls as 'financial difficulty' for CSF. The Adults contact centre team can already log calls as 'Benefit Check/Advice'. From April 2014, there will also be a process in place enabling the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Early Help teams in the CSF Directorate to record where people's living circumstances change as a result of welfare reform. The Task Group feels that such monitoring practices are to be encouraged.
14. The **Surrey Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group (WRCG)** has been working to ensure a co-ordinated response to the reforms across the County. The group comprises officers from across the County, District and Borough councils, as well as representatives from Surrey Citizens Advice Bureaux, the Department of Work and Pensions and the voluntary sector amongst others. The WRCG has been collecting data on the impact of the changes on residents which is crucial to understanding the cumulative impacts of the reforms. This data is used throughout this report. The Task Group is pleased to note the proactive nature of the WRCG and the increase in information sharing as a result of bringing partners together. The Task Group considers it is important for the WRCG to continue its work with a particular focus on information and good practice sharing between partners in the group, identifying gaps in service provision, and preparing for the introduction of Universal Credit (UC).

Recommendation 1: ASC, CSF, 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. ASC to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and CSF 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.

15. County Council officers have been receiving **training on the reforms**. However, witnesses have highlighted the need for more comprehensive and joint training across County Council services and for external partners mentioned in this report, to improve joint working and ensure that information cascades down effectively within all these organisations. The Task Group feels that there is a need for a systematic analysis of training needs on welfare reform and how information is being disseminated within each service.

Recommendation 3: Surrey County Council's Organisational Development Team to 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.

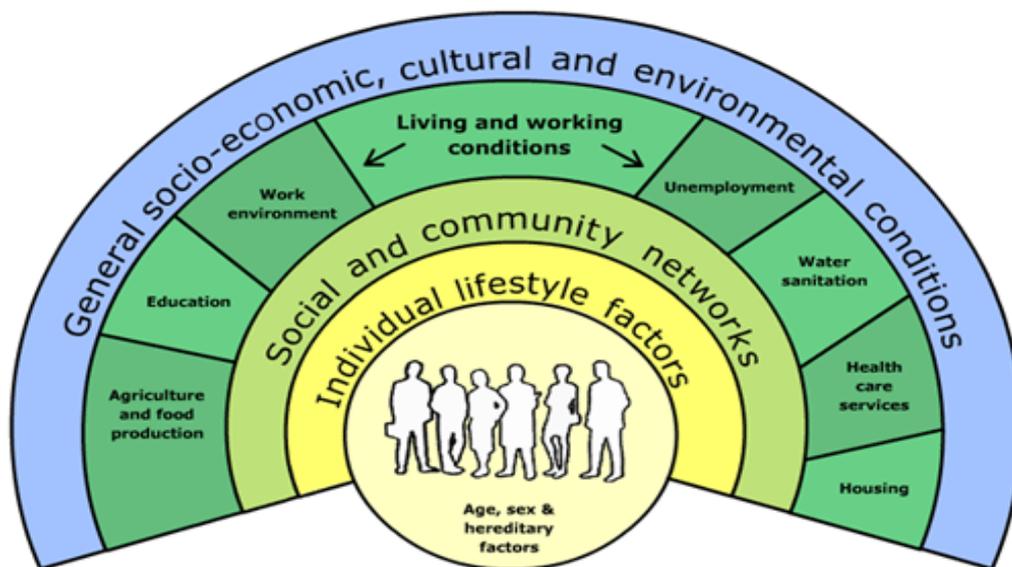
16. Witnesses have suggested that many families adversely affected by the welfare reforms need holistic support such as that provided by the successful **Surrey Family Support Programme (FSP)**, Surrey's approach to the Government's troubled families programme. The FSP sees all relevant agencies working as a 'Team Around the Family,' to make a change in the quality and volume of multi-agency working with vulnerable families and children, introducing a single family assessment and plan and a sustainable model of partnership working. However, the Task Group believes that the criteria for receiving help from the FSP is too restrictive for many of the families affected by the welfare reforms. The FSP is being extended through the Public Services Transformation Network and a number of witnesses have suggested exploring the potential of expanding the FSP criteria.

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.

17. **Surrey's Library service** has reported an increase in people coming to them for help with benefit queries. As library staff cannot provide benefits advice, their role has been one of sign-posting and offering information. It is therefore important that libraries staff have the relevant information and know where to refer residents to receive specialist advice and support. Library officers have suggested that a 'referral map' would be a useful tool for signposting. The WRCG have started mapping local services, as have DWP. WRCG should work with DWP and District and Borough Councils to produce these maps to ensure they are comprehensive and that there is consistent and accurate signposting by organisations across the County.

18. Libraries are developing a closer working relationship with partners like JCP and CAB, by making space and facilities available within some libraries for them to assist residents with benefit claims. For example, Sunbury library currently co-locates with a CAB office and there is a trial project underway with Weybridge JCP around Welfare to Work. Current demand on IT resources in libraries is high and is likely to increase as a result of the government's push towards digital by default. This should be taken into consideration when planning for the local roll-out of Universal Credit support services, considered at paragraphs 44 – 50 of this report.
19. The Task Group have received evidence from the County Council's **Public Health** team on the main determinants of health. General socio-economic conditions such as housing and unemployment are key determinants.

The Main Determinants of Health



20. Despite this correlation between health and socio-economic factors, it is difficult to trace any direct impact of the welfare reforms on the health of residents in Surrey, as a wide range of other factors impact on health. However, the Public Health team are in a good position to contribute to the Council's efforts to mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform in Surrey. The team already have a close working relationship with Surrey's Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and District and Borough Councils which can be used to share information on emerging impacts and methods of mitigation. Public Health can also influence Surrey GPs (via the CCGs), who may see people in crisis before anyone else, to refer these residents to appropriate advice and support services. This could include signposting to CAB for debt management advice, Healthy Start for those requiring 'healthy eating on a budget' advice, and getWiSE for benefit queries (see Recommendation 9 below).
21. The Public Health team are currently updating their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) data on homelessness and inequalities, together with CCGs and Districts and Boroughs, which may be of interest to the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group. This work is due to be completed by April 2014, following which action plans for implementation can be developed. Public Health is encouraged to continue sharing relevant information with the WRCG.

22. Council Tax Benefit has been replaced by the localised **Council Tax Support Schemes**. The schemes adopted vary considerably, so residents in some areas are having to pay a significant portion of their council tax for the first time. In evidence submitted to the Task Group in November 2013, the finance team highlighted the following financial implications:
- 22.1 There has been a net reduction in Surrey County Council's tax base of £2m, due to the cessation of the Central Government council tax subsidy. It is only partially compensated by the new government grant for council tax support and an increase in council tax yield from changes to discounts and exemptions. The future level of central government grant funding is uncertain.
- 22.2 The cost of local support schemes will be subject to council tax rises and changes in the number of claimants. A reduction in council tax collection rates would have an adverse impact on the County Council's budget. Witnesses have highlighted that Council Tax recovery rates are remaining higher than expected at present. However, little is known about the impact of the different schemes on newly affected groups, or at what other cost the recovery rates are remaining high.
- 22.3 For the financial year 2013/14, the County Council provided £500,000 to Districts and Boroughs to help minimise the amount of Council Tax they collect from their most financially vulnerable residents. The money also part-funded the establishment of new hardship schemes in every District and Borough to provide additional discretionary support to people struggling to pay their Council Tax. However, so far very little of this 'hardship' money has been distributed. It is unclear whether this is due to harsh eligibility criteria, lack of awareness or other factors. The intention of this funding was to allow District and Boroughs to adopt minimal change schemes in the first year and learn lessons on collection rates with a view to informing future years' schemes. This funding offer is not being repeated for 2014/15.
- 22.4 The Task Group have been informed that the finance team has been requesting data on the localised council tax support scheme from Districts and Boroughs in order to monitor for signs of adverse impacts on overall collection rates and the extent to which collection rates among the 'newly liable' give cause for concern. Response rates have been disappointing. For those councils who have reported, there has been a small net overall deficit of £0.4m and an average reduction in collection rate forecast to year end of - 0.4%. However, this data is only indicative given the absence of complete figures.
23. As part of reforming the welfare system, Central Government moved responsibility for administering the discretionary Social Fund (including crisis loans and community care grants) from DWP to top-tier unitary Councils from April 2013. Surrey County Council's policy for administering this new local provision is known as the **Local Assistance Scheme (LAS)**. The money is intended to provide support in cases of emergency by awarding small scale 'crisis' grants directly to individuals. The Task Group expressed concern in their interim report over evidence from a number of witnesses about the under spend of this fund, lack of publicity, and difficulties faced by residents in some areas of Surrey in accessing the scheme.
24. The Task Group has since met with the Council's Shared Services team, who administer LAS, to discuss these issues. From this conversation, the Task Group were pleased to note the following.

- 24.1 Many aspects of the LAS are an improvement on the Social Fund. This includes a quicker administrative process whereby a resident visits their nearest participating CAB office to make an application with the assistance of a CAB advisor. Staff in Shared Services can then immediately give a 'yes' or 'no' to the application over the phone, and the resident can walk away from the CAB office with a pre-paid VISA card containing the money awarded. This is compared to 3-4 days to receive money through the old Social Fund.
- 24.2 The LAS aims to minimise the potential for misuse of the scheme by placing restrictions on where the pre-paid card can be used. For example, it cannot be used in betting shops or off-licences. In addition, if residents were in need of household goods, they are provided these goods from the Surrey Re-use Network rather than being given money to make the purchase. Shared Services also carry out routine checks on pre-paid spend and have the ability to rescind grants where money isn't being used for the purpose it was granted for.
- 24.3 Shared Services are looking to improve access to the LAS by broadening the number of organisations that can help residents to apply (e.g. social care teams and District and Borough officers) through the introduction of an online application form.
- 24.4 According to Shared Services, the average time spent by CAB with LAS applicants was 90 minutes, much of which was spent providing applicants with money management advice and signposting to relevant support.
25. The Task Group were informed that the County Council received £1.2m from Central Government for the scheme, of which approximately £315,000 was spent setting up the scheme including Surrey staffing costs and awards to CAB and the Surrey Re-use Network to act as intermediaries. Of the remaining £900,000 available to issue grants to residents, the service estimated that £400,000 worth of grants would have been made by the end of the financial year 2013/14. This under spend has been mirrored in many other local authorities. As at the end of January 2014, approximately £180,778.40 had been awarded through the Re-Use Network and £97,462.28 had been awarded through pre-paid cards. A map of the geographical spread of applications to the scheme, provided by Shared Services, is attached at **Annex 3**. There has been a significant rise in demand since the New Year. The service informed the Task Group that as the new scheme was now fully embedded and was being developed further, they felt confident that LAS would be more fully utilised in 2014/15.
26. Having spoken with Shared Services, the Task Group can see the importance of this scheme in helping Surrey residents in crisis, not only as a result of the welfare reforms but also those fleeing domestic abuse or affected by the recent widespread flooding. The Task Group is supportive of Shared Services work to improve access to the scheme to ensure it is more fully utilised. The Task Group would therefore like to see any LAS funding left unallocated at the end of 2013/14 ring-fenced and rolled over into 2014/15, to be used for the LAS. However, the Task Group recommends that the future administration of LAS and take-up of the fund be carefully monitored to ensure it meets its potential.
27. The Task Group is pleased to note that the Leader of the Council is fully supportive of the LAS and has written to Central Government urging them to re-think their proposal to withdraw funding for this scheme from April 2015. The Task Group supports continued lobbying on this issue.

Recommendation 5: Any 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.

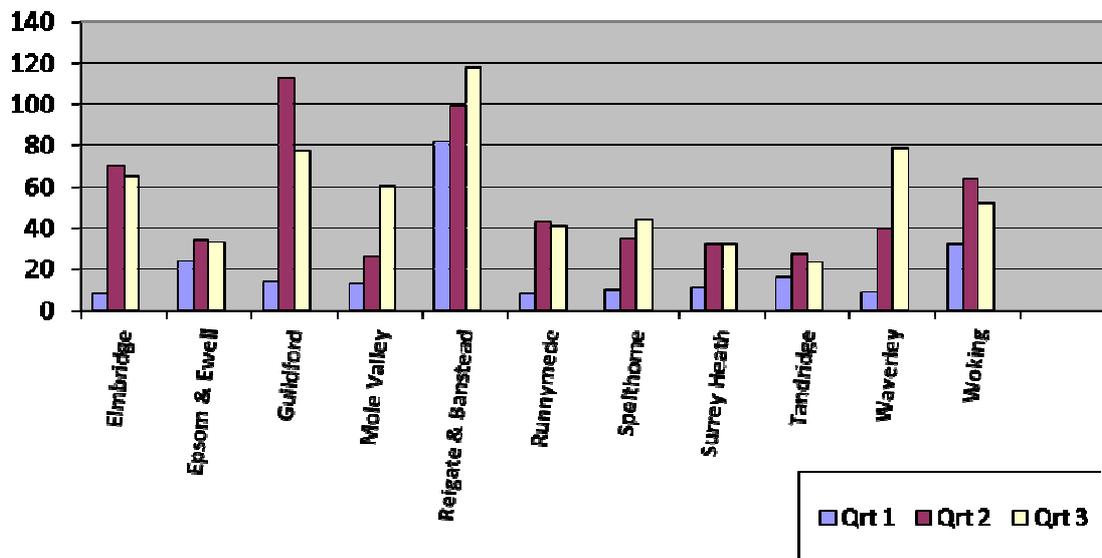
Recommendation 7: Surrey County Council to continue lobbying central government to provide funding for emergency crisis support for residents (known as the Local Assistance Scheme in Surrey) beyond 2015.

getWiSE - Welfare benefits information, advice and support service

28. The County Council commissioned a new service in April 2013 to provide welfare benefits advice, information and support to residents of Surrey affected by the government's welfare reform programme in order to help them adjust to and manage the changes. This new service was intended to provide full holistic advice and support on issues ranging from employment to housing, as well as advocacy. Co-design of this service was carried out by Council services, users and providers of existing welfare benefits advice, to inform what would be expected from this service. Expectations included: one point of referral, efficient timescales for referrals, well trained advisors, service to be delivered in venue of choice including the resident's home, and a free service not dependant on eligibility criteria. After a competitive bidding process, a one year grant agreement for the provision of this service was awarded to a consortium of partners called getWiSE. The consortium is led by Surrey Disabled People's Partnership (SDPP), who along with Age UK Surrey, The Youth Consortium (TYC), Surrey Association for Vision Impairment (SAVI) and Deaf Positives constitutes the consortium partnership. The agreement included the option of extending for a further two years, which the Cabinet recently approved in February 2014.
29. All referrals to getWiSE go to SDPP who complete a referral form and pass onto the most relevant partner. Applicants receive confirmation of the referral within one working day and are contacted by an advisor from the appropriate partner within three working days to arrange the start of the support process. ASC commissioners and getWiSE have informed the Task Group that the partnership is fully resourced, there is no one on waiting lists, and a contingency is in place for a surge in demand.
30. In its interim report, the Task Group expressed concern over the low level of awareness amongst residents and County Council Members of the getWiSE services. Also, given the Task Group had primarily heard evidence about getWiSE's work to support residents through appeals and tribunals related to disability benefit changes, they wished to find out how the service planned to extend its support to other groups affected by the reforms, such as low-income families. The Task Group have met with getWiSE again and are pleased to note that they have brought a new partner into the consortium – Guildford Action for Families (GAF), who are an experienced provider of support and advice to families with children, county wide. It is too early to tell what impact GAF will have on the reach of the service. It is also apparent that getWiSE are working to improve awareness of their service by promoting it to GP practices and community groups in areas where referral rates have been low. This together

with the establishment of new information hubs, which hold drop-in welfare benefits advice clinics¹, has improved the geographical spread of referral rates.

Referrals by Geographic Distribution to Quarter 3²



31. The service acknowledges that although geographical spread has improved, demand for the service has not dramatically increased. However, now being a more established service, getWiSE is confident in its resources and so able to carry out more promotional activity in order to reach more residents. The Council holds quarterly performance meetings with the consortium. According to recent data, from 1 April 2013 the providers have seen 1,448 people and helped them claim £940,416 of benefits they were entitled to. Although the Task Group recognises that progress is being made in improving the reach and promotion of the service, it is still an issue which requires close monitoring.

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.*

District and Borough Councils

32. The Task Group have heard from District and Borough Housing teams about an increase in homelessness and use of temporary accommodation due to the lack of appropriate housing (for those councils with and without their own housing stock). This is illustrated in the table below:

¹ <https://getwisesurrey.org.uk/events-drop-ins/> (7 March 2014)

² From Report to Surrey County Council's Cabinet of 25 February 2014 titled Extension of Grant Agreement for Welfare Benefits Advice Information and Support.

Households in Temporary Accommodation at the end of Quarter 1 2013

Local authority	Q1 2010	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Annual change 2012-13	Change from 2010-2013
Elmbridge	18	22	23	36	+57%	+100%
Epsom & Ewell	16	32	37	91	+146%	+469%
Guildford	7	9	27	29	+7%	+314%
Mole Valley	12	18	18	26	+44%	+117%
Reigate & Bans.	16	24	65	101	+55%	+531%
Runnymede	23	23	68	42	-38%	+83%
Spelthorne	2	7	24	33	+38%	+1550%
Surrey Heath	47	50	48	67	+40%	+43%
Tandridge	16	16	15	22	+47%	+38%
Waverley	7	2	2	-	-	-
Woking	23	28	30	32	+7%	+39%
Surrey total	187	231	357	479	+34%	+156%

Data provided by Surrey Chief Housing Officers Group

33. It is still too early to tell whether the recent increase is directly attributable to the impact of welfare reform. However, housing teams expect this trend to continue due to:
- 33.1 the opportunities for families to downsize to mitigate the impacts of the 'bedroom tax' diminishing because of the lack of availability of smaller accommodation. Where the shortfall is not covered by Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)³, this will lead to a loss in income;
 - 33.2 the lack of availability of appropriately sized and affordable social housing (e.g. one bedroom flats for care leavers). There is a growing disparity between average rental market rates⁴ and the average housing allowance which now has to also fall within the benefits cap. This is a particular problem in Surrey where rents are significantly higher than the national average, leaving many with no option but to apply for housing benefits;
 - 33.3 tougher conditions for receiving Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). If JSA is lost due to sanctions being applied, this will often also result in a loss of other benefits including housing benefit; and
 - 33.4 the accumulation of household debts over time due to loss of household income, affecting residents' ability to pay their rent and which could lead to summons and evictions⁵.
34. The Task Group wished to highlight that the District and Borough Councils are working proactively to help residents affected by the reforms find suitable and affordable accommodation. The Task Group have also heard about the proactive work of some Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in mitigating the impacts of the reforms through providing advice to their residents about dealing

³ DHP funding from central government to district and boroughs in Surrey has increased from £684,723 in 2012/13 to £1,671,873 in 2013/14 (Quarter 2 data from WRCG).

⁴ There has been a recent categorisation of "affordable rent" for new social housing as 80% of market rent. This is likely to increase social housing rents further.

⁵ The Task Group were informed that there had been an approximate 50% increase in summons in Spelthorne in comparison to this time last year

with the changes. The Task Group considers it important that the WRGC closely monitor the situation to assess the impact of the reforms on housing and homelessness.

35. The Task Group have also received evidence from a number of District & Borough Benefits teams on their change in focus from simply processing benefit claims to taking a far more proactive and holistic role in supporting residents through the reforms. This includes providing a 'triage service,' by signposting residents to appropriate services if they require additional support, as benefit teams in local authorities are often residents' first port of call.
36. It is clear that there will be an increase in demand on the services provided by both housing and benefit teams in District and Borough Councils. Officers highlighted the need for local strategies for mitigating the impacts of welfare reform in the years to come, with the possibility of districts and boroughs grouping together to deliver these strategies. The Task Group recognises that tailored local support will need to be developed, particularly to help people manage the introduction of Universal Credit (UC), which will require additional resources from central government (see UC section below at paragraph 44). For the time being, District and Borough Councils should be further encouraged to refer residents to the getWiSE service, for welfare and benefits advice.

Department for Work and Pensions and Job Centre Plus

37. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the ministerial department responsible for employment and welfare in the UK. Jobcentre Plus (JCP) is part of DWP, servicing those looking for employment or issuing benefits to those who cannot work. As a result of the reforms, the Task Group have been informed that regional DWP are now working more closely with the County Council and Districts and Boroughs to understand local need and to prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit. DWP have also stated that they are undergoing an organisational cultural change in how they deal with claimants, centred on the understanding that 'one size does not fit all'. However, some witnesses who have given evidence to the Task Group feel that although this culture change appears to be happening at the top of the organisation, it was yet to cascade down to front line delivery in JCPs.
38. All JCPs in Surrey have rolled out a new approach to working with claimants, with jobseekers now having to account more clearly for their efforts to find work in order to receive their benefit, which includes up to 35 hours a week of positive job-seeking activity (known as the Claimant Commitment). JCPs are working with partners such as the National Career Service to support this change and running job clubs in community locations.
39. DWP expect an increased demand on their services, with a growing new customer base from ESA and from UC when this takes effect. DWP confirmed to the Task Group that they were confident in their current resources to cope with demand, but will be continually assessing this. However, the Task Group notes with concern the findings of the Work and Pensions Committee report on the role of Jobcentre Plus in the reformed welfare system,⁶ which states that DWP is required under the 2013 Spending Round to further reduce its running costs, while at the same time JCPs are being required to implement changes that could substantially increase their workload.

⁶ 28 January 2014

Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB)

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40. CAB have seen an 11% rise in welfare related enquiries since the same period last year. Housing benefit enquiries rose by 8% and Jobseeker's Allowance by 13% since last year. Rent and council tax arrears queries rose by 28% and 16% respectively, while consumer debt queries have fallen. Employment Support Allowance cases also rose significantly since the same period last year. The Task Group recognises the holistic approach taken by CAB, in routinely checking that those accessing their service are receiving all the support and advice they are entitled to. CAB has reported an increasing demand on their service, particularly new clients, since the welfare reforms were introduced. The Task Group was informed that CAB is looking for new solutions to deal with the demand including a Surrey wide telephone helpline.

Change in number and type of enquires received by CAB

Type of Enquiry	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Total up to Q3 2013/14	Total up to Q3 2012/3	Annual change %
Total Benefit Enquiries	13,989	13,583	12,387	39,959	35,843	+11%
Employment Support Allowance	2,508	2,084	1,896	6,488	5,226	+24%
Housing Benefit	1,884	1,858	1,568	5,310	4,910	+8%
Working and Child Tax Benefits	1,186	1,276	1,072	3,534	3,676	-4%
Jobseekers Allowance	1,102	1,116	830	3,048	2,691	+13%
Localised Social Welfare (Local Assistance)	1,038	1,328	1,423	3,789	N/A	N/A
Localised support for Council Tax	799	713	609	2,121	N/A	N/A
Benefit Cap	27	35	22	84	N/A	N/A
PIP (Personal Independence Payments)	159	541	709	1,409	N/A	N/A
Total Debt Enquiries	7,030	6,173	6,664	19,867	21,398	-7%
Credit and Store Cards Debts	1,037	868	987	2,892	3,375	-14%
Rent Arrears by:				Total: 1,982	Total: 1,553	+28%
Local Authorities;	218;	174;	204;	596;	428;	+39%
Housing Association;	354;	307;	345;	1006;	818;	+23%
Private Landlords	125	158	97	380	307	+24%
Unsecured Personal Loan Debts	593	548	607	1,748	2,193	-20%
Council Tax Arrears	551	558	641	1,750	1,507	+16%

Total Housing Enquiries	4,122	4,272	3,707	12,101	11,876	+2%
Threatened Homelessness	643	651	551	1,845	1,695	+9%
Actual Homelessness	233	255	249	737	751	-2%

Data provided by Citizens Advice Surrey

41. Surrey CAB are keen to grow their financial capability advice offer (to help residents affected by the reforms with money management and budgeting) and focus their delivery in Surrey's Children's Centres for families affected by the reforms. CAB have already delivered financial capability workshops in Woking, Dorking and Waverley and developed a 'Managing Money' resource tool for families. The Task Group agrees that Children's Centres are a good location for providing outreach advice to vulnerable families. The Task Group therefore feels it is important to consider this capability within Surrey CAB when developing and resourcing the Universal Credit Local Support Framework (see paragraph 44 onwards below).

Foodbanks

42. Surrey's foodbanks are a valuable service to those in need. Care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers, and CAB and the police identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher. Foodbank clients will then bring this voucher to their local foodbank centre where it can be redeemed for emergency food. Data provided by the Trussell Trust Food Banks (the largest operator of food banks nationally and in Surrey) to the WRCG suggest a surge in demand for food banks from 2012 to 2013, which reflects the national trend. Increased demand is being created by a combination of welfare reform changes and a general rise in the cost of living. However, according to the Trussell Trust, a slightly higher proportion of demand in Surrey is being driven by the high cost of living rather than welfare changes. Surrey has thus far seen a slower growth of food banks than in other areas in the country. It should be noted that foodbanks are also being set up by other organisations in Surrey including voluntary groups, community groups and the faith sector. Therefore the data below is only part of the picture.

Number of people fed by Trussell Trust food banks in Surrey

	Quarter 2 2012	Quarter 1 2013	Quarter 2 2013	Change on quarter (Q1-Q2 2013)	Change on year (Q1 2012- Q1 2013)
Adults	184	784	724	-8%	+393%
Dependent children	109	508	566	+11%	+519%
Total	293	1292	1290	-1%	+440%

Data provided by the Trussell Trust

43. The County Council's Public Health team are currently carrying out a Food Access Needs Assessment in Surrey. The aim is to carry out an assessment of food aid initiatives, such as food banks, and their role in supporting people on low incomes in Surrey to obtain sufficient food and support their wider health and care needs. The project will map local existing initiatives across Surrey,

explore the reasons as to why individuals and families are accessing the various forms of food aid and how / who is referring them. The project will also explore the different operating systems of the food aid services and what information is given out by those working / volunteering there. The needs assessment will then consider what additional services may be of benefit to both those using the food aid services and those administering the food aid, and then make recommendations for supporting individuals and families on low incomes to eat well. The Task Group feels it would be beneficial for COSC to review the outcome of this assessment.

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.

Universal Credit

44. Surrey is unlikely to see the direct impacts of Universal Credit (UC) for a couple of years as the roll out of UC for new claimants has been delayed until at least April 2016. However, councils are being encouraged by the DWP to use the interim period to prepare for the introduction of UC in their local area by:
- 44.1 creating effective working partnerships with DWP and agencies who will be providing support and/or signposting claimants;
 - 44.2 establishing the type and level of support claimants may require and mapping existing support available; and
 - 44.3 piloting support to residents to help identify how these services can be delivered most efficiently and effectively.⁷
45. The Task Group is supportive of this early planning and encourages the application of lessons learned in responding to the reforms which have already taken effect, to the roll out of UC. The Task Group feels the closer partnership working that has developed between the County Council, District and Borough Councils, DWP, Housing Providers and the VCFS sector in responding to the recent changes will provide a strong foundation on which to build the local support services framework.
46. UC is being piloted in a number of locations across the UK, most recently in Bath and Harrogate. It is important for the WRCG, District & Borough Councils and the regional DWP office to closely monitor the outcomes from these pilots and apply good practice to developing the local framework for Surrey.

Financial inclusion

47. UC will bring about key changes to the administration of benefits. There will be a move from weekly benefit payments and direct payment of housing benefit to housing providers to one monthly payment made directly to the claimant which will include housing benefit. From this, claimants will be expected to manage their household budgets in order to pay rent and livings costs throughout a four week period. Witnesses have highlighted a number of issues around these changes:
- 47.1 Claimants are likely to require support in managing their finances, and those without bank accounts will need to set this up. There will be an

⁷ Pg 6 Universal Credit Local Support Services Update and Trialling Plan.

increased demand on organisations such as housing associations which currently provide such support. This demand will need to be resourced and managed in a more cohesive manner.

- 47.2 Outreach of advice services needs to be improved in order to support those residents who may not admit to needing financial management advice.
- 47.3 Many housing providers would prefer housing payments to continue being paid directly to them, but will only be able to apply for this in exceptional cases. Housing officers have also advised that the switch to direct payments may exacerbate the reluctance of private landlords to rent to benefit claimants.
48. The Task Group remains concerned about financial inclusion under UC. Appropriate advice and support on money management will need to be sourced under the local support framework. When developing this framework, work needs to be done to understand local needs, gaps in service provision, and identify the type and quantity of additional resource required.

Digital inclusion

49. UC will be digital by default. UC online forms must be completed in one sitting as they cannot be saved and it is estimated that the application would take on average over two hours to complete. This is considerably longer than the time restrictions placed on the use of public computers in libraries. Witnesses have raised serious concerns over the potential impacts of this digital arrangement on both claimants and services which will be providing support. Claimants will require access to computers and may require literacy training, IT training and/or advice on and support with completing the forms. Witnesses have highlighted numerous concerns:
- 49.1 The concern that Central Government funding under the UC local support services framework may not be enough to pay for the support required. A study carried out by three London Councils using DWP data found they would each need to spend £6m over a two-year period to support vulnerable claimants get online, help open bank accounts and manage monthly budgets⁸. Funding arrangements are unlikely to be outlined until October 2014.
- 49.2 Although the Task Group was pleased to note the installation of Wi-Fi in all Surrey libraries which would enable residents and advisors to access UC forms with their own devices, the Task Group remain concerned about the expected increase in demand on libraries' computers and staff time, and the impact this will have on other library users. To mitigate, libraries could potentially identify quieter periods when computers could be booked out specifically for benefit sessions.
- 49.3 There is an ongoing requirement for claimants to log into their account to keep their work and personal details up to date. This places considerable ongoing demands on claimants (e.g. those on zero hours contracts), the DWP IT systems and Surrey's support services.
- 49.4 Concern over the ability to and costs of protecting the confidentiality of personal information in UC forms which are submitted on public

⁸ The Guardian, Thursday 21 November 2013 14.40: 'Training people to use universal credit 'could cost hundreds of millions.'

5 computers. This could be a particular issue in community partnered (volunteer run) libraries where it may not be appropriate for volunteers to offer this level of support to members of their own community, both from the volunteer and the claimant point of view.

50. The Task Group acknowledges that JCPs will be increasing the number of computers available in their centres and block booking them specifically for UC sessions. However, given the expected increase in demand, the County Council, District and Borough Councils and DWP are encouraged to explore additional IT access options in council owned buildings such as children's centres and schools. The Task Group have been informed of various options to ensure confidentiality on public computers including special screens and individual soundproof pods, but costs of these solutions need to be considered and this mitigation may not be appropriate for all public access points.

Recommendation 11: Surrey County Council to work closely with the DWP, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the VCFS 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.

Employment and Support Allowance

51. For those who are ill or disabled, the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) from DWP offers financial support to those unable to work and personalised help to those who can do some form of work. As part of the welfare reforms, those people claiming Income Support or Incapacity Benefit are being transferred to ESA. In its interim report, the Task Group expressed concern over numerous aspects of the ESA assessment process described by witnesses and set out to better understand the process. Having now gathered detailed evidence from two Surrey ESA claimants, getWiSE who support claimants through the ESA process, and DWP (including a JCP Disability Employment Advisor), the Task Group remain concerned. There is a clear difference in perception of the process by claimants and DWP. A diagram of the ESA process provided by DWP to the Task Group is attached at **Annex 4**. A description of the process provided to the Task Group by the family member of an ESA claimant who had their decision successfully overturned at appeal is attached at **Annex 5**. The Task Group is particularly concerned about four aspects of the process described in further detail below.

Work capability assessments (WCA)

52. Those claiming ESA undergo a Work Capability Assessment (WCA) which looks at the claimant's capability for work. WCA assesses physical as well as mental, intellectual and cognitive functions. ATOS Healthcare was contracted by DWP to carry out the WCAs. DWP state that ATOS assessors are registered medical professionals (e.g. doctors, nurses and physiotherapists) who are fully

trained in disability assessment. In July 2013, DWP instructed ATOS to enact a quality improvement plan. In February 2014, ATOS confirmed that it was seeking an early end to its contract to carry out the WCAs, due to expire in August 2015.

53. For the WCA, unless a claimant is terminally ill, they are required to complete an ESA50 questionnaire. This is a 20 page booklet intended to get the claimants views on how their illness or disability affects their ability to work. Claimants spoken to explained they received little or no support with completing this form. ATOS review the claimant's paperwork and unless they clearly meet the criteria for the Support Group (i.e. not fit to work), they are invited to a face to face assessment with an ATOS healthcare professional. Claimants are assessed against prescribed criteria using a points-based system, and ATOS produce a report for DWP. ESA decision makers at DWP (who are not medically trained), use the ATOS report and other relevant evidence, for example information provided by the claimant's GP or medical professionals, to make its decision.
54. Both claimants giving evidence to the Task Group had a negative experience with their ATOS Healthcare assessor. They felt they were not treated with respect, that their assessor drew conclusions from circumstantial evidence such as appearance, and lacked the necessary expertise to make an assessment particularly where the claimant suffered from multiple and/or rare and complex conditions. GetWiSE confirmed that this was the common experience of individuals who approached their service but acknowledged that this was primarily based on the views of claimants appealing their ESA decision. In addition, GetWiSE have suggested that the ESA50 form and ATOS work capability assessments are not asking claimants the right questions in order to understand an individual's ability to work. For example, claimants are being asked a 'yes/'no/'it varies' question to whether they can pick and move a one pint carton of liquid. They are not being asked whether they can do such activities safely, repeatedly and in a timely manner.

Bureaucracy and delays

55. DWP were unable to provide the Task Group with specific timescales for different stages of the ESA claims process, stating that it varied depending on the claim. The claimants giving evidence described a slow and lengthy process, with appeals of the ESA decision taking approximately between 6 and 15 months to be heard⁹. During this period, the claimant would be entitled to the lower ESA rate if they could routinely provide medical certificates of their condition. Claimants reported unnecessary bureaucracy in this process, being repeatedly informed by DWP that their medical certificates had not been received and only accepting original certificates sent by post, resulting in multiple visits to the GP. GetWiSE confirmed that this issue was commonplace among the claimants they assisted.
56. Claimants were also frustrated that their post-assessment health was inadmissible evidence when appealing their ESA decision, particularly where their condition had deteriorated. The Task Group views this as a particular injustice given the delays in hearing appeals at tribunal. Claimants do have the option to withdraw their appeal and make a fresh claim for ESA which will take their change in condition into account. However, by doing so the claimant loses the opportunity to receive back-dated ESA at the higher rate if successful at appeal.

⁹ Both claimants went through the ESA claims process before the introduction of mandatory re-consideration in October 2013.

57. Mandatory re-consideration was introduced by DWP in October 2013 to improve the ESA process by DWP formally re-considering their decision in order to resolve the dispute, before an appeal can be lodged. However, claimants are faced with the withdrawal of ESA payments during the mandatory re-consideration period. Claimants may be able to claim other benefits during this period, such as JSA (but they will need to comply with the JSA criteria in order to receive this benefit). Witnesses have informed the Task Group that the mandatory re-consideration process, in their experience, usually takes between eight to ten weeks. The impact on residents of withdrawing payments during this re-consideration period is a particular concern to the Task Group.

Appeals of ESA decisions

58. The Task Group were also concerned to hear about the large number of ESA decisions in Surrey being overturned on appeal – those supported through the process by County Council commissioned getWiSE experienced an approximate 92% success rate. Regional DWP were unable to provide the Task Group with data on the number of ESA applicants appealing in Surrey or nationally and the outcome of these tribunals. National data from a DWP publication of December 2013¹⁰ states that for 2012/13, HMCTS received 507,131 appeals against DWP decisions. DWP estimates that around 38% of appeals result in DWP's decision being overturned. However, it is not clear whether this data relates to all DWP benefit decisions or just ESA decisions. Regardless of this, the high number of overturned DWP decisions indicates a number of issues, most notably the additional use of public money to review decisions, conduct tribunals and provide advice and support to claimants going through the process.

Early help for claimants

59. Early help and support for individuals going through the DWP claims process is crucial to ensure they get the best out of it. DWP informed the Task Group that decision makers at DWP telephone claimants to inform them of their ESA decision and to explain the next stage of the process, before their decision letter is sent by post. This contrasts with the experience of the claimants who spoke to the Task Group, who were informed of DWP's decision and right to appeal by a letter with limited explanation. This discrepancy may be down to the timing of the claimant's claims. Following Professor Harrington's review of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) to improve DWP standards of decision making, DWP states that it has changed its operating model to introduce more contact with customers so that Decision Makers can explain decisions, listen to any additional evidence and reach the right decision at the earliest opportunity.¹¹
60. Both claimants spoken to had their benefits stopped shortly after receiving their decision letter, resulting in rent arrears. Both claimants only found external support and representation after submitting their appeal form, through a referral from their GP and via their local authority. The Task Group believes that there needs to be early signposting to support residents from the outset of the benefit claims processes to ensure claimants are fully informed and supported when making their claim. This does not currently appear to be happening.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appeals-process-changes-for-dwp-benefits-and-child-maintenance> (3 March 2014), Appeals Reform Questions and Answers.

¹¹ Ibid

Applying lessons learnt from ESA in the roll out of the Personal Independence Payments

61. A recent report from the National Audit Office has suggested delays in processing the Government's new Personal Independence Payments (PIP) has led to claimants facing distress and financial difficulties¹². The Task Group is disappointed to note that the recently introduced PIP (which replaces the Disability Living Allowance) is experiencing similar issues to ESA. New claims for DLA were no longer being taken for the majority of residents in Surrey from June 2013, with new claimants being asked to claim for PIP instead. From October 2015 all remaining DLA claimants will be asked to make a claim for PIP and by October 2017 all claimants will have been asked to switch (except in a few limited cases). The Task Group considers it vital that lessons learnt from ESA are applied to PIP by DWP.

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 process and 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 organisations, 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.*

Conclusions:

62. In order to understand the impacts of the welfare reforms on services and residents in Surrey, the Welfare Reform Task Group has spoken to County Council services, partner organisations including District and Borough Councils, DWP, and CAB, as well as benefit claimants. The Task Group has also

¹² Personal Independence Payment: early progress HC 1070 SESSION 2013-14 27 FEBRUARY 2014

reviewed a range of documentary evidence including statistical data on the services and benefits affected.

63. The Task Group concludes that given the changes to welfare benefits introduced in Surrey from April 2013, are being rolled-out in stages there is still no evidence of significant budgetary impacts on the County Council. However, impacts on residents are becoming more apparent, and this will inevitably build pressure on demand for front line advice and support services (some of this increased demand is being seen already). As the impact on residents and consequent demand on services are likely to build over time, and are likely to significantly grow with the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) from 2016, it is important for the County Council and its partners (who in Surrey collectively form the Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group (WRCG)) to carefully monitor impacts on residents and services, learn lessons from existing service provision, and apply these to preparing for UC. The County Council (through the WRCG) has a crucial strategic role to play in understanding the impact of the reforms and working with partners to deliver an effective response. This includes ensuring adequate training and information for those dealing with residents affected by the reforms, ensuring advice and support is reaching those most in need, facilitating better information sharing between partners on resident need and resources, and identifying gaps in service provision and using this evidence to source support. Many aspects of the reforms, such as ESA, are outside the direct control of the Council. However, the Council still has a role to play here in lobbying central government for positive change. The Task Group therefore makes twelve recommendations, outlined below.

Recommendations:

64. The recommendations from the Task Group are included in context throughout this report and are listed below for ease of reference. The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations of the Task Group.

Recommendation 1: *ASC, CSF, 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. ASC to include a summary of the impact of the welfare reforms on carers and CSF 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 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 getWIS£ 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 DWP, District and Borough Councils, housing providers and the VCFS 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 process and 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.

Next steps:

- The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee to schedule the update report on Welfare Reform for its forward work plan for September 2014.
- The Task Group recommendations to be sent to the relevant services, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, and Select Committees for a response and action.

Report contact:

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- Thomas Pooley, Scrutiny Officer
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- Ben Robinson, Strategic Partnerships Manager
(020 8541 9955, ben.robinson@surreycc.gov.uk)

Sources/background papers:

Policy and Performance Report on the Impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey, 12 September 2013

Interim Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group: Impacts of Welfare Reform in Surrey, 30 January 2014

Universal Credit Local Support Services Update and Trialling Plan
Q2 Data Overview, Welfare Reform Co-ordination Group

Final Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group

Witnesses the Task Group have met with:

Part 1 – Partners

- Helen Drake – Development Manager for Citizens Advice Surrey and Tara Hastings - Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau Manager.
- Maria Zealey – CEO of Surrey Welfare Rights Unit.
- Department for Work and Pensions: Kim Goodall - Regional Office Contact for Surrey & Sussex and Julia Curties - Grant Funding Manager.
- District and Borough Council housing managers: Kim Rippet – Head of Housing for Guildford BC (with own housing stocking) and Deborah Ashman – Head of Housing for Spelthorne BC (without own housing stock).
- Clive Wood - CEO of Surrey Disabled Peoples Partnership (SDPP) (the lead provider of GetwiSE - commissioned by Surrey’s County Council’s Adult Social Care) and Vicki Atherton - SDPP’s Deputy Chief Executive and Manager of the GetwiSE welfare benefits advice service.
- District and Borough Council benefits managers: Simon Rosser – Revenues and Benefits Manager for Reigate and Banstead BC and Grant Langford – Benefits Manager for Elmbridge BC.

Part 2 – Surrey County Council

- Adult Social Care: Toni Carney - Benefits and Charging Consultancy Manager and Norah Lewis – Assistant Senior Manager, ASC Commissioning.
- Children, Schools and Families: Ginni Smedley – Strategy and Policy Development Manager.
- Finance: Daphne Fraser - Senior Principal Accountant, Funding.
- Surrey Libraries: Rose Wilson – Library Operations Manager and Janet Thomas – Libraries Programme Manager.

Part 3 – Partners and Surrey County Council

- GetWIS£ and Claimants: Clive Wood - CEO of Surrey Disabled Peoples Partnership (SDPP) (the lead provider of getWIS£), Femi Sorinwa (Senior Welfare Benefit Advisor, Surrey Disabled People’s Partnership), family member of claimant who has been successfully supported through the Employment Support Allowance appeals process by getWIS£, and claimant who was unsuccessful at ESA appeal.
- Department for Work and Pensions: Kim Goodall - Regional Office Contact for Surrey & Sussex, Mandy Hurst (Epsom JCP manager and ESA Lead), and Vasantha Mohan (Disability Employment Advisor at Epsom JCP). This meeting took place at Epsom Job Centre Plus.
- Public Health: Helen Atkinson (Director of Public Health) and Lisa Andrews (Senior Public Health Lead).
- Shared Services (who are responsible for the Local Assistance Scheme): Simon Pollock – Head of Shared Services and Stewart Taylor - Customer Interaction Lead.

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ANNEX 2 – Final Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group

Welfare Reform Overview and Timeline

<u>Reform</u>	<u>When?</u>	<u>What are the changes?</u>	<u>Who does this impact? Who is exempt?</u>	<u>How will this happen?</u>	<u>Legislation</u>
Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Income Support	October 2010	Assessment for Employment and Support Allowance.	Residents of working age who are claiming sickness benefits.	<p>Between now and March 2014 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will invite affected residents for a Work Capability Assessment.</p> <p>After this assessment the DWP will decide if they are to be paid Employment and Support Allowance, or Job Seekers Allowance.</p>	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Tax Credits	April 2011 - April 2012	The whole tax credit system is being reformed with a number of elements being abolished.	All tax credit recipients including families, low income workers including disabled workers and older people.	Various changes including changing income thresholds and removing a number of elements e.g. 50+ element	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Housing Benefit (1) Local Housing Allowance	April 2011	Local Housing Allowance: The introduction of a cap regulating the maximum amount of housing benefit available for private housing tenants depending on how many bedrooms the tenants qualify for.	<p>Tenants of private landlords.</p> <p>Exemptions - Where the landlord is a not for profit company/voluntary organisation/a Registered Social Landlord/Local Council that provides care support or supervision, They will be exempt from the Local Housing Allowance cap.</p>	<p>The maximum amount of housing benefit is capped depending on how many bedrooms the tenants qualify for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £250 a week for a 1 bedroom property • £290 a week for a 2 bedroom property • £340 a week for a 3 bedroom property • £400 a week for 4 or more bedroom property 	The Housing Benefit (Amendment) Regulations 2010

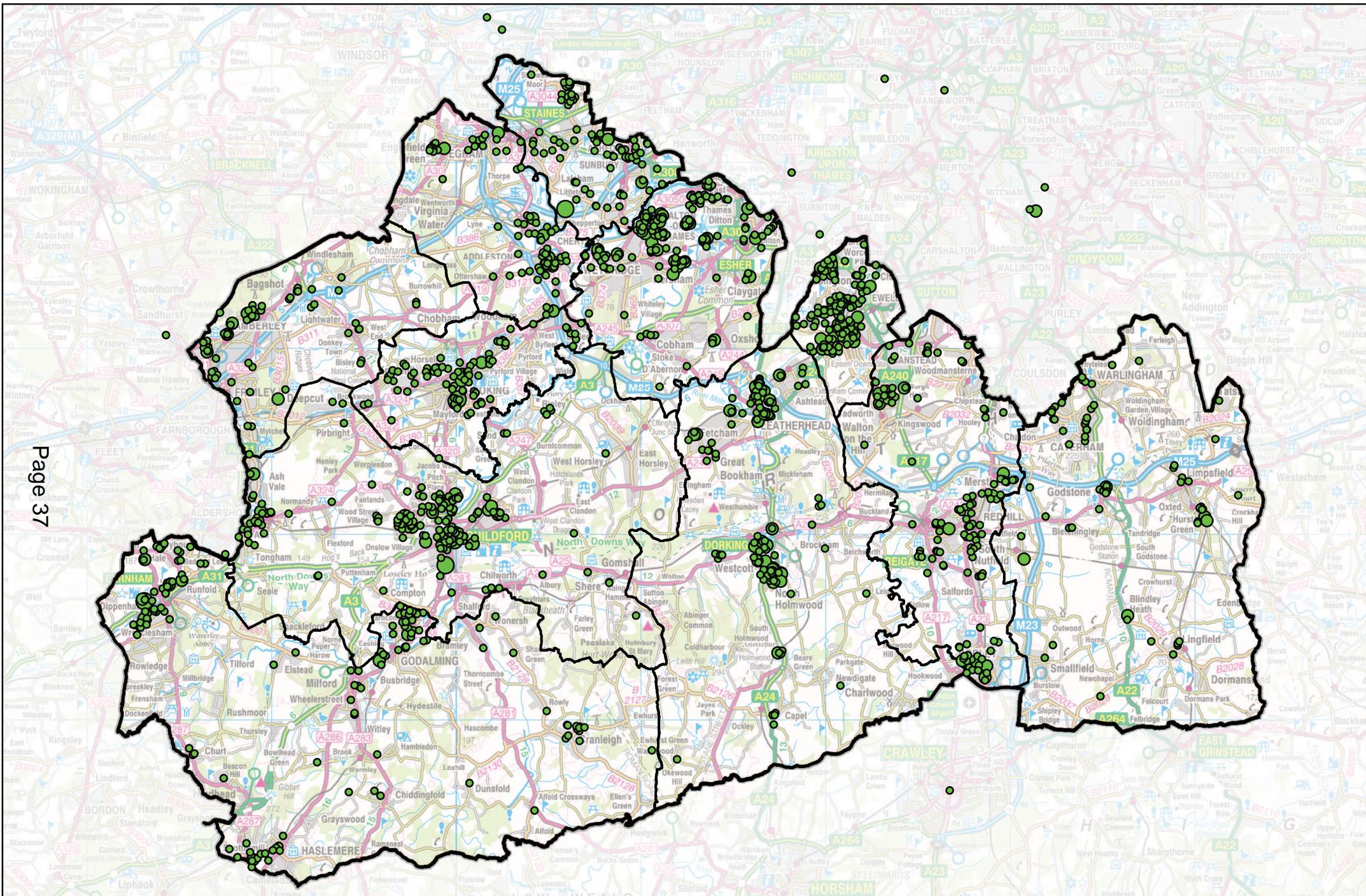
Housing Benefit (2) Single Room Rate	January 2012	Single room rate: For tenants who live alone in a one bedroom flat the age for when they are expected to live in shared accommodation has risen from 25 to 35.	<p>For tenants of private landlords who are under 35 and live alone.</p> <p>Exemptions - Care leavers aged up to 22</p> <p>People receiving the severe disability premium</p> <p>Former residents of homeless hostels will not be affected by this change.</p>	The government is capping housing benefit to the shared accommodation rate.	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Income Support	May 2012	Lone parents required to be available and looking for work when their youngest child reaches age 5 rather than age 7.	<p>Lone parents whose youngest child is aged five.</p> <p>Exemptions - Lone parents on Income Support who have a child for whom the middle or highest rate care component of DLA/PIP is payable will continue to be eligible to claim Income Support when their youngest child reaches five.</p>	Lone parents will be transferred to Job Seekers Allowance and expected to look for and be available to work.	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Child Benefit	Jan 2013	A reduction in CB for families where at least one person earns over £50,000.	For families where one parent earns more than £50,000 the benefit will be reduced. For families where a parent earns over £60,000, the benefit will be cut entirely.	People earning between £50,000 and £60,000 will have to pay the benefits back – on a sliding scale – by filling out self-assessment tax return forms. The Government is writing to all those high earners that it thinks are affected.	Finance Bill 2012
Total Household Benefit Cap	Summer 2013	A cap on the total household benefits of £350 a week for single people living alone and £500 a week for couples or families.	<p>People of working age on out of work benefits.</p> <p>The cap will not apply if they qualify for working tax credit, or receive any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability living allowance • Attendance allowance 	<p>The cap includes housing benefit, and remains the same regardless of how many children they have.</p> <p>If a household's total benefits do come to more than £350 or £500 a week, then any benefits received over the cap will be taken out of their housing benefit.</p>	Welfare Reform Act 2012

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support component of ESA • Industrial injuries benefit • War widows and war widowers pension <p>Exemptions - The cap will not include one-off payments; non-cash benefits e.g. free school meals; nor will it include Council Tax Reduction Schemes; and those clients living in supported accommodation.</p>		
Housing Benefit (3) Social Sector Size Criteria 'Bedroom Tax'	April 2013	A reduction in Housing Benefit for social housing tenants who are deemed to be under-occupying in their property e.g. spare bedrooms.	Social housing tenants of working-age with one or more 'spare' rooms. Exemptions - Foster carers if they have fostered a child or been approved to do so in the last 12 months; residents of state pension age; parents whose children are away with armed forces; clients living in supported accommodation; and parents with severely disabled children.	If they have one spare bedroom the reduction will be equal to 14% of the 'eligible rent' for their property. If they have two spare bedrooms or more, the reduction will be equal to 25% of the 'eligible rent' for the property.	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Local Assistance Scheme (Previously the Social Fund)	April 2013 – April 2015	Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants previously administered by JCP and DWP, have become the responsibility of local authorities (counties in two tier areas)	Anyone who has previously contacted DWP or Job Centre Plus to receive a Crisis Loan or Community Care Grant.	Parts of the Social Fund are being abolished; and the funding for Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants is being devolved to local authorities; where they can design and develop their own schemes. The funding is not ring-fenced. Surrey County Council has used the funding to develop a Local Assistance Scheme to provide emergency support. There will be no DWP funding for Local Assistance Schemes after 2014/15. From April 2015, Local Assistance	Welfare Reform Act 2012

				Schemes must be funded from local authority general funds.	
Local Council Tax Support Schemes (Previously Council Tax Benefit)	April 2013	It is being abolished and being replaced with localised Council Tax Support schemes	All working age council tax benefit claimants. Exemptions – Pensioners will not be affected by changes to council tax benefit.	District and Boroughs have designed and developed their own individual Council Tax Support Schemes. Surrey County Council has offered support funding for local council tax support schemes and hardship funds. For April 2014/15, some District and Borough Councils have decided not to change their Local Council Tax Scheme from the previous year, while other District and Borough Councils are proposing to introduce a number of new changes which are projected to have a significant impact on residents.	Local Government Finance Act 2012
Benefit Up-rating	April 2013 – April 2016	The imposition of a cap for working-age benefit claimants which limits annual rises to 1%	Existing and new claimants of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobseeker’s allowance • Employment and Support Allowance • Income Support • Elements of Housing Benefit • Maternity Allowance • Sick Pay, Maternity Pay, Paternity pay, Adoption Pay • Couple and lone parent elements of working tax credits • The child element of the child tax credit 	Most working-age benefits and tax credits would be up-rated by just 1% - which is a below inflation cap for three years from 2013-14. Benefits have historically risen in line with inflation, and in April 2013 would have risen by 2.2% without the cap.	The Welfare Benefits Up-rating Act 2013

			<p>Exemptions – Pensioners will not be affected and will see their basic state pension rise by 2.5% to £110.15 in April 2013.</p> <p>Additionally, clients in receipt of Disability Living Allowance also are exempt from the cap and will see their benefits rise in line with (CPI) inflation.</p>		
Disability Living Allowance	July/ October 2013	DLA is slowly being phased out and will be replaced by the Personal Independence Payment.	<p>DLA claimants aged 16 to 64</p> <p>Exemptions – Those under 16 can continue to claim DLA until their sixteenth birthday. Those already getting Attendance Allowance will not be affected by PIP. Other disability benefits will not be affected by PIP.</p>	<p>Claimants will be required to claim the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) through a reassessment process. The details for PIP are still to be finalised. Implemented in July 2013 for new DLA claimants. From October 2013-2016 existing DLA claimants will be assessed for PIP.</p>	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Universal Credit	October 2013 - 2017**	<p>A number of benefits for working-age claimants will be replaced with a single streamlined benefit called Universal Credit (UC) and will aim to be digital by default.</p> <p>UC is payable on a monthly basis, in arrears, directly to people both in and out of work.</p> <p>It will be paid to just</p>	<p>Existing and new claimants of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support • Income Related Jobseeker's Allowance • Income Related Employment Support Allowance • Housing Benefit • Working Tax Credit • Child Tax Credit <p>Exemptions – Pension credit will remain for those over the qualifying age, and those claimants will not transfer to Universal Credit.</p> <p>Universal Credit will not include Disability</p>	<p>All of these benefits will form the new Universal Credit payment. This benefit will be paid directly to claimants monthly in arrears.</p> <p>April 2013 – Pathfinder areas are used to test UC. These are Tameside, Oldham, Wigan and Warrington. Ashton under Lyne will be the first Jobcentre to accept claims for UC from 29 April.</p> <p>July 2013 – Wigan, Warrington, Oldham jobcentres will first trail the new claimant commitment and will take claims for UC beginning in July - informed by the early testing in Ashton-</p>	Welfare Reform Act 2012

		<p>one person in a household with HB now being paid directly to the recipients.</p>	<p>Living Allowance (DLA), Council Tax Reduction, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Carers Allowance</p>	<p>under-Lyne.</p> <p>Spring 2014 – UC will extend to Hammersmith, Rugby, Inverness, Harrogate, Bath and Shotton.</p> <p>April 2014 – Roll out of UC in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Summer 2014 – Claims for couples start to be taken.</p> <p>Autumn 2014 – Claims for families start to be taken.</p> <p>April 2015 – UC is fully implemented across the North West of England</p> <p>2016 – UC is implemented across the UK, including Surrey.</p> <p>**After 2017 – The last claimants to be transferred will be those in the Employment and Support Allowance support group (700,000 claimants)</p>	
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Local Assistance Scheme Clients: Number clients per postcode
Surrey, March 2014

- 1 - 3
- 4 - 12
- 13 - 34

- County Boundary
- Districts and Boroughs

NB. 4 postcodes are outside this extent



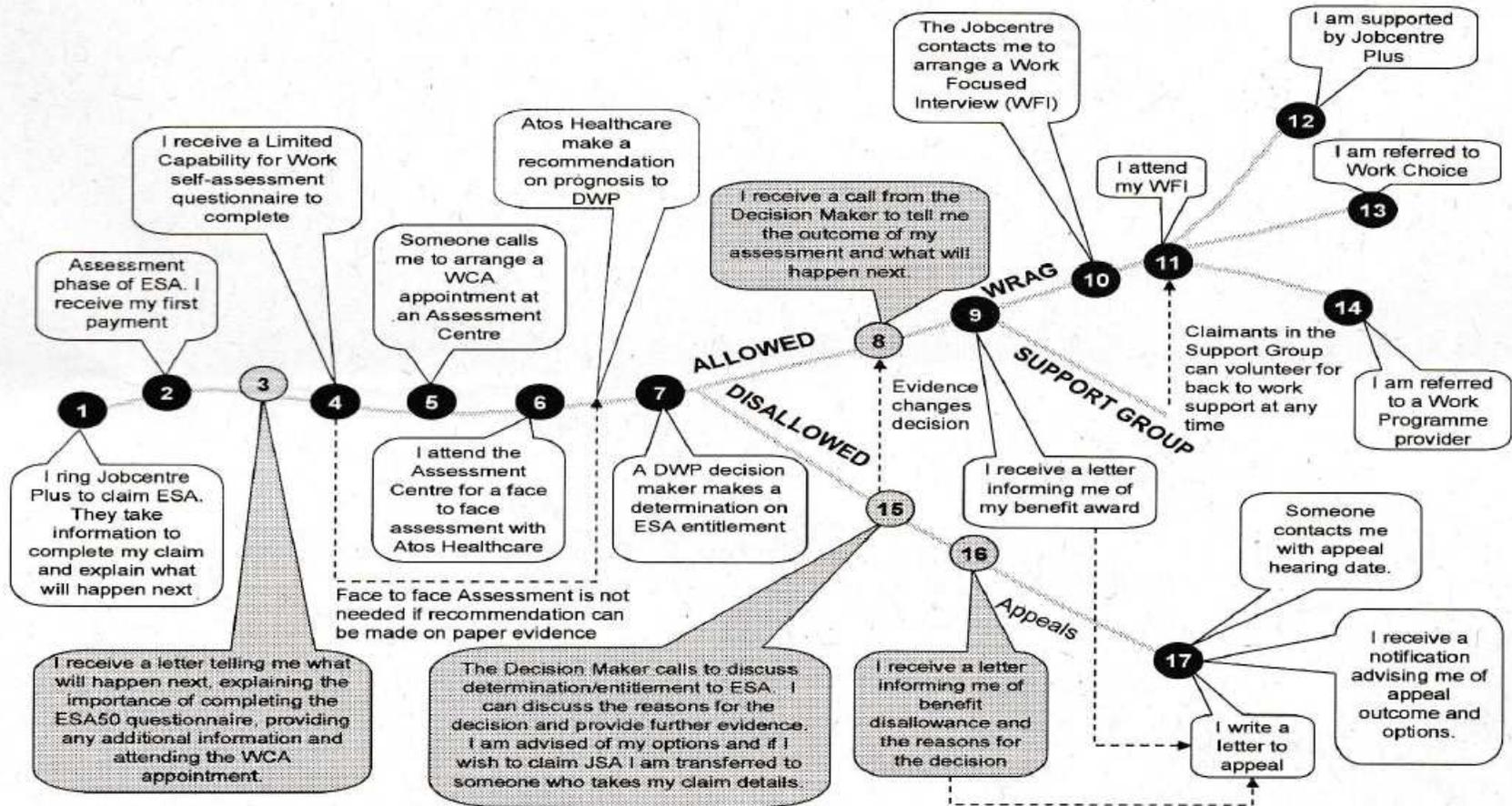
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Annex 4 – The ESA Decision making process (provided by DWP)



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Claimant description of the Employment and Support Allowance claims process

Mr K supported his mother Mrs K through the ESA appeals process from February 2013 to January 2014. Mrs K's request to appeal was submitted before the introduction of mandatory re-consideration by DWP.

- Mrs K had suffered from a shoulder condition for the past 11 years, and had been in receipt of incapacity benefit before she was moved onto the Employment and Support Allowance as a result of the welfare reforms.
- She was invited for a Work Capability Assessment with ATOS healthcare as part of the ESA claims process. Mr K accompanied Mrs K to the WCA, to translate as English is not her first language. The Assessment consisted of simple 'yes' and 'no' questions as well as some physical exercises. Mrs K was in a lot of pain so could not complete the exercises. Mr K explained that the assessor suggested Mrs K was refusing to complete the exercises.
- Following the WCA, Mrs K received a letter from DWP informing her that she was fit for work. As there was not much information in the letter about this decision, Mr K contacted DWP on behalf of his mother to request further information. A small form was included with the decision letter for individuals who wished to exercise their right of appeal, to explain their reasons for doing so. As there was limited space on this form, Mr K typed up a lengthy letter explaining his mother's decision to appeal.
- All of Mrs K's benefits stopped within approximately a week of receiving the decision letter. Mrs K found out when the landlord questioned her about her missing rent payment. Mr K telephoned his local borough council who informed him that housing benefits for Mrs K had been stopped as this was derived from being eligible for ESA. Mr K was therefore advised to contact DWP. DWP agreed to reinstate Mrs K's ESA, at the lower rate whilst she appealed her ESA decision, as long as she was able to provide a medical certificate each month in support of why she was unable to work. Mrs K was able to provide this evidence, and she was paid back-dated monies for her rent and lower rate ESA for the two weeks she had been without, and lower-rate ESA until her appeal was heard. This was a difficult period for Mr K and his mother. Whilst awaiting appeal, Mrs K's condition did not improve, and she developed depression for which she received counselling. Mr K had to balance his work, studies and supporting his mother both financially and emotionally. He also had to seek financial support from relatives.
- Mr K explained that the process to appeal was slow. DWP confirmed receipt and informed Mr K that they would respond with an appeal date in 6 to 12 months. In the meantime, Mrs K's benefits were stopped a number of times, because DWP claimed they did not receive some of the monthly medical certificates posted to them by Mr K. As they would not accept copies, Mrs K had to re-visit her GP for new ones.
- Eventually, Mrs K received a letter giving her one month's notice of her appeal hearing date.
- Mr K had noted from the appeal form that individuals appealing their decision would need representation. Mr K visited his local borough office who referred him to the local CAB. The CAB provided Mr K with the details for getWIS£, who provided advice and support to Mr and Mrs K before and during the appeal. Mrs K and her son were nervous about the tribunal and appreciated getWIS£'s support in getting things organised for it. The tribunal decision was given straight after hearing the appeal. Mrs K's appeal was successful.

- An explanation for the appeal decision was provided in a letter to Mrs K, however, it was too complicated for her or her son to understand.

CHILDREN & EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

At its meeting on Thursday 27 March 2014 the Children and Education Select Committee considered the outcome of the consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy.

The Committee paid particular attention to the following two areas:

- Whether Surrey's policy should be extended to provide for children to receive free home to school transport to attend the same school as a sibling where the sibling has already been assessed as entitled to free home to school transport.
- Whether Surrey's policy should be extended to provide free home to school transport for a Surrey child to attend their nearest geographical Surrey school if their nearest school is out of County and the distance or safety of route to that school would mean that transport would still need to be provided.

The Committee was informed that the additional cost to the Council of providing free home to school transport to siblings was difficult to determine mainly for two reasons, the cost of transport being variable according to need and circumstance and the impact a change in policy could have on the initial decisions made by families when applying for schools.

With regards to providing transport so that a child could attend a Surrey school rather than an out of County school, it is again the case that any change in policy could influence decisions made by families when applying for school places, although the number of such families is expected to be relatively small.

The Committee queried whether there currently existed unclaimed eligibility for home to school transport. Officers clarified that eligibility was automatically assessed through the schools admissions process, although this was not possible when eligibility was linked to income. However, a trial scheme was being undertaken where information regarding students eligible for free school meals in junior and primary schools was used to identify those potentially eligible for transport when beginning secondary education.

The Committee recognises that there is a need to consider all the implications in any change of policy, including cost and the need to ensure change is fair and equitable. It was highlighted the consultation had drawn a limited number of respondents in spite of it being widely advertised, which would suggest many residents are satisfied with the present policy.

Having discussed the benefits and disadvantages of updating the Home to School Transport policy, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Cabinet:

That Surrey's Home to School Transport Policy be extended to:

- I. Provide for a child to receive concessionary home to school transport, or free home to school transport if from a low income family, to attend the same school as a sibling where the sibling has already been assessed as entitled to free home to school transport and where the child is eligible for a place at the same school.

- II. Provide free home to school transport for a child to attend their nearest geographical Surrey school if their nearest school is out of county and the distance or safety of route to that school would mean that transport would still need to be provided.

Dr Zully Grant-Duff
Chairman of the Children and Education Select Committee
27 March 2014

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 22 APRIL 2014

REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

LEAD OFFICER: NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

SUBJECT: SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN



SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Cabinet is asked to consider the Surrey School Organisation Plan 2013-14 - 2022-23.

The Surrey School Organisation Plan for 2013-14 – 2022-23 is a contextual document that sets out the policies and principles underpinning school organisation in Surrey. It highlights the likely demand for school places as projected over a 10 year forecast period and sets out the potential changes to provision that may be required in order to meet the statutory duty to provide suitable and sufficient places.

The report includes a summary of the key points in the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the School Organisation Plan 2013-14 – 2022-23 is approved for recommendation to Council.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The School Organisation Plan is a key contextual document used by Schools and Education Stakeholders when making long term plans. Its annual review is necessary to ensure that the best information is used in this planning process. Any comments received can both inform the existing plan and shape future iterations.

DETAILS:

1. The County Council has a statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the residents of the area. The Council must monitor future demand and make appropriate changes to provision where necessary in order to meet its statutory responsibilities.
2. The Surrey School Organisation Plan for 2013-14 – 2022-23 is a contextual document which sets out the policies and principles underpinning school organisation in Surrey, highlights the likely demand for school places as projected over a 10 year forecast period and sets out the likely changes to

provision that may be required in order to meet the statutory duty to provide suitable and sufficient places.

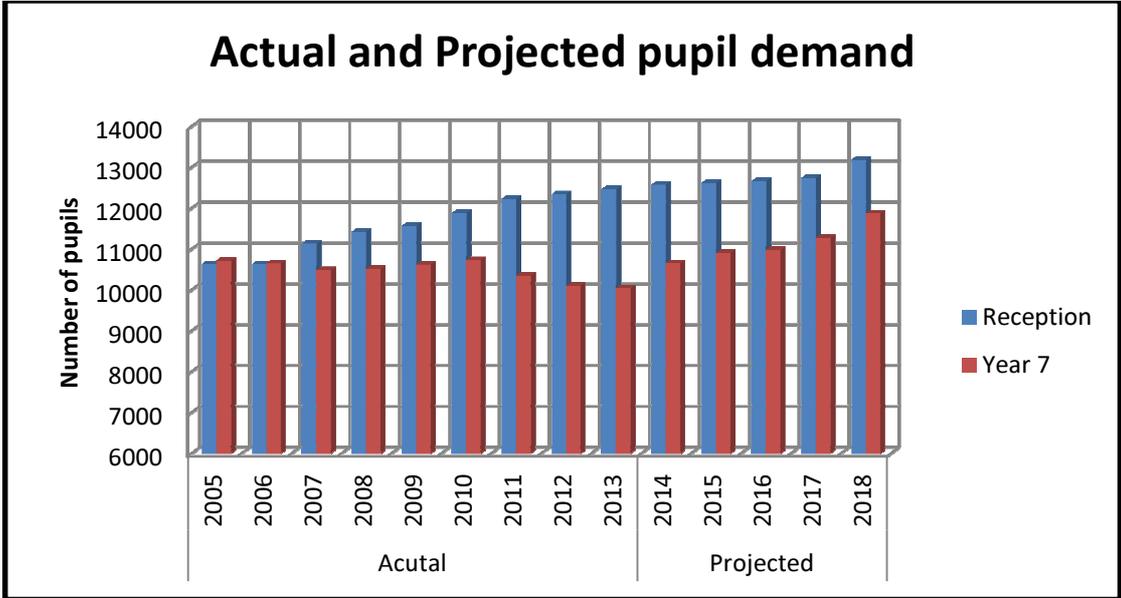
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3. The current context is one of a rising primary school population across Surrey that will feed into the secondary school sector in due course. The County Council has established a capital programme to expand school places across the County. The current 5 year programme, 2013-18, will provide around 11,000 primary places, equivalent to almost 27 two form entry primary schools and 4,500 secondary places, equivalent to 6 five form entry secondary schools. Early viability work is underway to assess the requirement for these secondary schools which currently have a sixth form. Further school places are being planned to be provided up to 2023.
4. A 15-year outline strategy plan is being identified in the context of supporting District and Borough Infrastructure plans and this should provide more clarity to support infrastructure contributions from developers as well as informing longer-term financial planning. Clearly any strategy beyond five–six years will be subject to significant change. However, the perspective afforded by longer-term projections is informing current decision-making.

School Organisation Plan Summary

5. Chapters 1 to 5 of the Plan discuss principles for planning future provision in Surrey before going on to discuss the current context and projections of future need in individual boroughs and districts in chapters 6 to 16.
6. Chapter 1, The Introduction, sets the document within the context of the Surrey Children and Young People's Plan. It also sets out the Council's core function to ensure that: "sufficient high quality, maintained school provision is available to meet the needs of all Surrey children and young people" and "that all maintained schools are able to function as high quality, viable and financially efficient institutions." The Surrey Context, chapter 2, gives an overview of the County in respect of local demographics and the current pattern of education provision and the value Surrey places on its diverse provision. It is emphasised that the County Council has no wish to disrupt what is working well but that, where new or changed provision is required, it is sensible to plan to a consistent set of guidelines. Chapter 3 sets out the Council's statutory duties with regard to the provision of school places to pupils up 19 years of age.
7. Surrey has agreed a set of principles to which it adheres when making changes to school organisation. These principles are set out in detail in chapter 3 by sector. They include:
 - giving priority to organisational change that promotes inclusion;
 - a preference for primary schools rather than separate infant and junior schools (having regard however to existing links and relationships);
 - promoting federations of small infant schools, particularly in rural areas, feeding into junior provision;
 - planning within a range of planned admission numbers (PANS)- for primary provision between 1 form of entry (30 places per year) and five forms of entry (150 places per year) and for secondary provision between five forms of entry (150 places per year) and 12 forms of entry (360 places per year);

- co-educational primary provision rather than single sex;
 - new secondary provision being on an 11-16 model unless the new provision arises out of existing successful and thriving 6th form provision or the college sector is unable to offer appropriate provision or the local schools and FE providers in the area agree that the new provision should include post16.
8. Chapter 3 of the Plan also outlines the context within which changes in school organisation are made with particular respect to changes in demographics and the school age population and in relation to securing excellence within Surrey Schools. It further describes the legislative framework through which changes in school organisation are achieved, including a description of recent relevant changes relating to Free Schools and Academies. The County Council has built and maintains a strong professional relationship with all its current Academies and Free Schools and they are included in the strategic planning to ensure sufficiency of school places.
 9. In chapter 4 the Plan describes the process by which school age population forecasts are produced including the Council’s use of planning areas. The key variables impacting upon these are also further described with specific reference to new housing and changes in the wider economy.
 10. Chapter 5 sets out the current demographic trends affecting the Surrey School population and the forecast demand for school places in Surrey. Surrey is experiencing a significant increase in demand in school places following a 20% rise in birth rates over the last 12 years. In addition there have been changes in the demand patterns between the state maintained and private school sector, increased migration into Surrey and increases in demand as a result of new house building. The following table illustrates this by indicating historic and forecast primary and secondary intake numbers.



11. For each Borough and District within the Plan, primary and secondary provision is separately discussed. Recent births and projected birth trends are set out. The implications of the projections and their relative accuracy are discussed and where additional provision is likely to be required or removed,

it is identified in broad terms rather than in detail, since in most instances formal proposals have not been made. The issues in brief for each area are set out in the following paragraphs.

12. **Elmbridge:** The birth rate has increased by more than 24% since 2001. In the primary sector four additional permanent forms of entry have been provided since 2009 and the numbers of pupils entering reception are expected to continue to rise throughout this planning period. Although the need will not be distributed evenly across the borough, all areas in Elmbridge are projected to experience a shortfall in places over the next ten years. Forecasts suggest that a further six forms of entry may be required by the end of the forecast period.

In the secondary sector numbers are forecast to rise steadily from 2013 leading to a likely need for an additional form of entry by 2015. If the numbers continue to increase as projected, a further 5 forms of entry will be required to accommodate extra pupils by 2021.

13. **Epsom and Ewell:** The birth rate has increased by more than 27% since 2001 and the numbers of primary pupils had been forecast to rise from 2009. In reality the Council did not experience an increase in demand for places in the Borough until 2012 when two additional classes were provided. The Council has consulted on the provision of 3 forms of permanent entry, two of which, West Ewell Infant School and St Martin's CE Infant School are currently recruiting. Forecasts indicate that we will need to provide 2 to 3 additional permanent forms of entry by 2017 with potentially a further form in the plan period. The increase in demand is not uniform throughout the Borough and there is considerable variance caused by cross border movement. However, the areas of greatest demand have centred on Central and North Epsom.

In the secondary sector the numbers of pupils entering Year 7 were projected to decline to 2011 in Epsom and Ewell, but then recover from 2014. Additional provision may be needed from 2019, with potentially 3 forms of entry by 2021.

14. **Guildford:** Birth rates have risen in excess of 22% since 2001 and are predicted to continue to rise. Within Guildford Town there is a shortage of places now. An additional form of entry has been provided each year in the Town since 2009. In total four forms of entry are forecast to be required by 2015, for which plans have been developed in detail with schools and will be in place for September 2015 entry. There is the potential, if current trends continue, for a further additional 2 forms in the town in the 2015 – 2022 period. In the villages and rural areas outside the town there are some pockets of high demand. At present we are not challenged in providing the appropriate number of places but this will need to continue to be monitored closely. Options have been developed to enable changes to a primary organisation where this meets with a school planning aim.

In the secondary sector, the current surplus of places was forecast to increase until 2013 to around 150 places, and then reduce. It is now forecast that there will be a shortage of Year 7 places by 2019. Action will be required after this period to meet the demands of the additional pupils currently within the primary phase and discussions will be ongoing with schools and stakeholders to ensure this is managed effectively.

15. **Mole Valley:** Since 2001, the birth rate has remained relatively stable until 2006 when there was a marked increase (up 5% on the previous year, 8% over 2001 figure.) This increase has been sustained and births are now almost 12% above the 2001 figures. Births are projected to increase gradually over the next few years and reception cohorts to do likewise. Throughout the planning period whilst the overall capacity within the District is greater than the forecast demand this masks considerable differences between areas. In the south of the District there are a large number of surplus places. To the north of the District in Ashted in 2012 two additional classes were provided to meet an increase in demand in 2013 this reduced to 1. The continued demand in area has indicated a need to provide 2 forms of entry as a permanent increase in school capacity.

In the secondary sector we would not expect to increase provision for the foreseeable future. The District as a whole is projected to maintain a small surplus of secondary places over the next 10 years.

16. **Reigate and Banstead:** Birth rates reached a low point in 2001 but since then they have risen by 28% to 2012. Rolls are expected to increase beyond current capacity. The Reigate and Redhill areas have seen the most pressure on places. The council approved the provision of a new two-form entry school in the Reigate/Redhill area from 2013 and the expansion of existing schools will be required to provide a further additional 4 forms over the next 3 years. In 2012 5.5 forms of entry were provided to meet a larger than forecast demand. In 2013, 4.5 forms of entry were agreed as permanent additional provision. The Council is working with schools to identify 3 further permanent forms of entry up to 2017. Two new schools are being planned to meet the needs arising out of the anticipated major housing developments in Horley. The first of these is being established for 30 reception places in September 2014. Also, additional junior places have been approved in Horley at Langshott Infant School that will enable the school to become a primary school from September 2014.

No shortfall had been projected for the secondary sector in Reigate and Banstead until 2018. However, pressure on secondary places is now expected to increase to reflect increases in the primary sector and challenge forecasts in the short term. This will lead to shortfalls in provision in the Reigate / Redhill conurbation by 2015, which will increase by 2017, when 3-4 additional forms will be required. Further additional Secondary places will be required potentially reaching 7 forms of entry by 2022.

17. **Runnymede:** Between 2001 and 2012, birth rates increased by more than 20%. Whilst, at present, there are a small number of spare places in the primary sector, the demand for reception places is forecast to exceed the schools' capacity by about a form of entry (equivalent to 30 pupils) in 2014 rising to about 3.5 forms of entry by 2020. A programme of school expansions is being developed that has included temporary increases in 2013 and 14. Demand for junior places, that is Year 3 places, is forecast to exceed the number of places available by nearly two forms of entry in 2014 and over 5 forms of entry by 2018. In addition there are plans to develop 1,500 houses on the DERA site at Longcross in the west of the Borough. This is sufficient to require the provision of a new primary school at this site.

In the secondary sector additional forms of entry will be required by about 2017. At this point two additional forms of entry are likely to be required, rising to 4 forms of entry in 2019 and 5 forms of entry by 2020.

18. **Spelthorne:** The birth rate in 2012 was more than 24% higher than in 2001 and is expected to remain relatively steady for the foreseeable future. Based on the forecasts, we expect to provide an additional form of entry in the borough in the short-term and up to three additional forms of entry over the forecast period.

In the secondary sector there is an oversupply of Year 7 places (particularly in Ashford), which has increased over the last two academic years. This surplus will fall sharply and a deficit is anticipated by 2017, which is predicted to rise sharply again thereafter, suggesting that an additional 4 plus forms of entry may be needed over the rest of the forecast period.

19. **Surrey Heath:** The birth rate has increased by 4% since 2001. There are currently a small number of spare reception places in Surrey Heath primary schools. Surplus places are likely to reduce with potentially a shortage of places will be evident from 2016 and this will increase to 2020 when over three additional forms of entry will be required.

In the secondary sector, there are a significant number of surplus places that have challenged the efficient running of schools in the area. It is possible additional provision may be required in the longer term after 2018 but the position needs to be monitored and projections validated before taking a decision.

20. **Tandridge:** The birth rate has risen by 23% since 2001. Whilst capacity in the area is greater than previous the forecast demand there is some local variance. Caterham has experienced two years of increased demand that has resulted in the provision of temporary class spaces. As a result of this additional permanent provision is being provided in this area.

In the near term the numbers of applicants for a Year 7 place in Tandridge secondary schools exceed the number of places available. This is caused in part by significant subscription from adjoining authorities resulting in spare capacity in those adjoining authorities. Overall it is expected that current provision will be sufficient to meet demand from the Surrey population in the medium term. It will be necessary to monitor this position and if necessary alter plans in light of changing patterns of admission.

21. **Waverley:** Birth rates have increased in excess of 14% since 2001. This masks some areas where there has been little growth and the urban area of Farnham where increases have been more pronounced. Two additional forms of entry have been provided in Farnham since 2009. It is likely that another form will be required in the Farnham and West Waverley area during this planning period. The application numbers in Godalming for 2014 are significantly above trend (as was also the case in 2012) and temporary classes are being provided. This area will need to be monitored with regard the potential provision of permanent places and to reflect significant new housing in the area. Additional places have also been provided in the Haslemere area to meet parental demand.

In the secondary sector, it is recommended that provision in Farnham should be increased to meet the anticipated increase in demand. We do not anticipate proposing changes in other areas in the short and medium term, however as with the primary sector this area will need to be monitored with regard to new housing developments.

22. **Woking:** The birth rate has increased in excess of 37% since 2001. Applications for school places significantly increased for the 2012 and 2013 admission years requiring the provision of 6.5 additional classes. Three permanent forms of entry have been approved and, given the increase in demand against the projection, Officers will be working on options for further permanent provision in the Woking area. The increased demand has impacted on most schools within Woking and the Authority has been working closely with other stakeholders to determine schemes that promote an effective and sustainable pattern of provision going forward.

Additional secondary places will be required in 2014 and an additional form of entry will be provided for September. Officers are working with secondary schools and wider stakeholders in the area to identify how additional permanent places can be provided.

CONSULTATION:

23. The School Organisation Plan, is not subject to statutory consultation. The plan will be widely distributed to stakeholder groups and organisations to include schools and local Planning Authorities. It is viewed as a helpful tool to aid future planning at a school level. The Plan will also be displayed on the Surrey County Council public website.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

24. Ensuring that there are school places for all applicants within Surrey is a statutory duty held by the County Council. An understanding of the school estate and how it relates to potential changes in demographics is vital to performing this duty.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

25. The document is key to ensuring that appropriate decisions around capital investment in the school estate are made and that Surrey Schools operate efficiently without carrying too many surplus places. The plan underpins the County Councils capital programme as part of business planning and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The current capital budget in the 2014/19 MTFP is £327m.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

26. The Section 151 Officer acknowledges that the Plan is itself a contextual document and outlines the business requirement for additional school places over the next 10 years.

The DfE currently provides some capital grant funding for additional school places and the County Council has been successful in bidding for further additional funding. However, there is still a requirement for the County

Council to supplement the additional required places through prudential borrowing.

27. Individual proposals for expanding schools will be considered as part of the capital business planning process. The revenue cost of the additional places will be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant allocated by DfE for the additional pupils.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

28. This document is key to ensuring that the Council is able to comply with its duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available in the area.

Equalities and Diversity

29. There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the paper. However the provision of the appropriate number of school places open to all applicants will support the Councils commitment to equality and diversity.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

30. The document is key to ensuring that the appropriate numbers of school places are provided to meet the demand of our residents. All places provided have the highest priority given to Children in the care of the local authority.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

31. The Council has a duty to promote and improve educational outcomes for all children, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The School Organisation Plan is an important piece of evidence used to plan the appropriate number of school places and aid this obligation.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- If approved the School Organisation Plan will be widely distributed to stakeholders to include: all Surrey Schools, all Districts and Boroughs, local Diocesan Boards and will be displayed on our public website.
- The School Organisation Plan is reviewed annually following the incorporation of new and updated information. The process for determining the next iteration of the plan will begin in the Autumn term.

Contact Officer:

Nicholas Smith, School Commissioning Officer, 020 8541 8902

Sources/background papers:

- School Organisation Plan 2013-14 – 2022-23
-

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014**

7

REPORT OF: LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET ASSOCIATE FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****LEAD OFFICER: GARATH SYMONDS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE****SUBJECT: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: RECOMMISSIONING FOR 2015 – 2020****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Services for Young People (SYP) currently operates nine commissions which contribute towards the overall goal of full participation in education training or employment with training for young people to age 19 and to age 25 for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). These commissions are delivered through in-house services and external providers, where contracts were let generally for a 3 year period expiring in 2015.

This paper seeks agreement to the strategic direction for re-commissioning for 2015 to 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the strategic goal and the revised Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework for 2015-2020 (Annexe 1).
2. Approves the refresh of the Surrey Young People's Employability Plan for 2015-2020 to align with the re-commissioning for 2015-2020.
3. Approves the development of options to deliver the three revised commissioning priorities set out in the report for a further report with full business cases in September 2014.
4. Approves the exploration with Local Committees of increased delegation of decision-making in relation to young people, such as the current Centre Based Youth Work.
5. Approves the exploration of potential for more integrated commissioning with Districts/Boroughs, Surrey Police, Public Health, CCGs and Active Surrey.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report sets the strategy and outcomes for young people in Surrey for 2015 – 2020 to meet statutory duties outlined at paragraph 11 and to build on the success of the achievements since the transformation in 2012.

DETAILS:

Introduction and structure of report

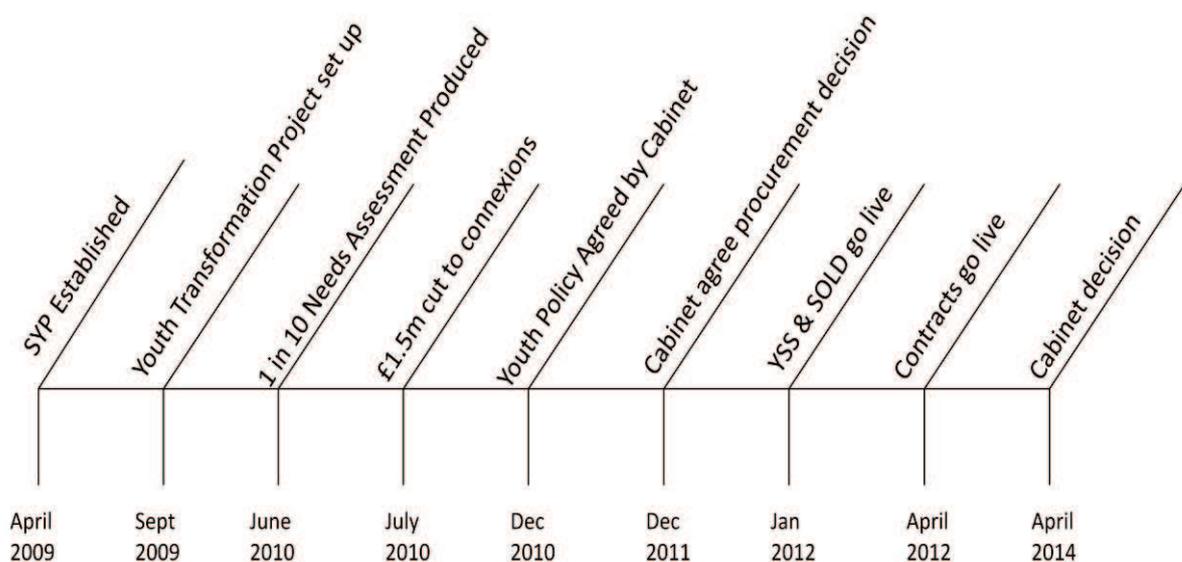
1. This report is in three sections: headline achievements of Services for Young People; changes proposed for the next commissioning cycle; and the strategy and commissioning intentions and refreshed outcomes framework for 2015 to 2020.

Commissioning approach in Services for Young People

2. Services for Young People transformed the offer to young people and the outcomes achieved through a commissioning approach, designed in the Public Value Review in 2010-11 and launched in 2012. This enables a clear logical approach to the overall strategy, outcomes, outputs and the commissioning of services, either managed internally or delivered through external organisations, to deliver the outcomes which will secure that goal. Services for Young People has worked closely with partners, particularly the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in securing the achievements highlighted in section one below.

Time line to date

3. The time line below shows the progress of the Youth Transformation Project and the implementation of the new Services for Young People model from 2012.



SECTION ONE: ACHIEVEMENTS 2012—2014

Services for Young People has secured significant achievements since the launch of the new commissioning model:

- 59% reduction in young people who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) between January 2009 and January 2014.
- Interim data shows Surrey had the joint lowest numbers in England of young people who were NEET between November 2013 and January 2014, when last year Surrey ranked joint-25th.
- 90% reduction in first time entrants of young people to the criminal justice system from 2009 to 2013, when we had the lowest rate of first time entrants in England.
- Seventh out of 152 local authorities for rate of youth custody per 1000 population in England.
- 4% increase in young people aged 16-18 starting apprenticeships since 2011 – in contrast to a decrease of 14% in England during the same period. 622 apprenticeships generated for 16-19 year olds from April 2013 to end February 2014.
- 124 fewer NEET young people in 2012-13 compared to 2011-12, resulting in a £7 million saving to public purse based on research analysis by York University.
- Demonstrable positive impact on school attendance and fixed term exclusions for young people taking part in Centre Based Youth Work and Local Prevention Framework activity – and in particular for those with SEND.
- High proportion of young people engaged in youth centre activities are in higher need groups – of the 7,017 in 2012/13, 37% had SEND, 20% were NEET or re-engaging, 17% were identified at risk of NEET, 16% were Children in Need, and 200 were young people who had offended.
- 89.8% successful progression to education, training or employment from young people at risk of becoming NEET who received support from the Year 11/12 Transition commission.
- Twenty six youth centres have achieved the NYA (National Youth Agency) Quality Mark Level 1, demonstrating a standard equivalent to Ofsted rating of good.
- Reduction in out-county placements in Independent Specialist Colleges from 126 to 90 in 3 years with reduced costs, equivalent to a £2million saving, and improved outcomes.
- Over £250K of additional provision generated from the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector in Surrey.
- 290 young people who presented as homeless have been placed in safe accommodation since November 2012.

SECTION TWO: CHANGES PROPOSED FOR NEXT COMMISSIONING CYCLE

5. The Transformation of Services for Young People achieved significant success through the outcomes-focused approach to commissioning as demonstrated above. Therefore, the changes proposed at this stage are not for a radical re-shaping of a model that has achieved much in two years, but rather recommendations for adaptations to the model to respond to changes in need, policy context, young people's perspectives and learning from the evaluation of performance.
6. Whilst the evaluation of the current model highlighted significant successes of the current model and current high levels of performance compared to other local authorities, it also set out areas for potential further improvement. There are also drivers for change arising from the more challenging financial context for Surrey County Council and a need for a more clearly targeted approach to managing down levels of demand on statutory services through more targeted prevention, integrated with the Council's approach to Early Help.

Changing needs

7. A comprehensive needs assessment has been conducted, linked to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This assessment, One in Ten 2014, builds on the first needs assessment, One in Ten 2010, which shaped the commissioning priorities. This has, in turn, highlighted the following key issues in relation to the needs of young people that will inform future commissioning for 2015 to 2020.
 - Growth in demand from increase in the population of young people by 5% over the commissioning period.
 - Need for young people to have the skills and experience sought by employers so they are ready for work.
 - Need for young people to be able to make informed choices on education, training and employment options.
 - Increasing need and changing patterns of need, such as increasing Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), for young people with SEND.
 - Growth in emotional and mental health needs of young people.
 - Barriers to participation, in particular transport, lack of income and homelessness.
 - Young people are experiencing discrimination, alienation and bullying, often leading to their needs being less evident.
 - Many young people have negative experiences during teenage years, which then have a significant impact on their later lives.
 - Many young people experience multiple and complex barriers to participation, often involving family relationship breakdown and other challenges in the neighbourhoods in which they live.

Young people's involvement

8. Young people have been closely involved in the review of current commissions and developing the proposed new outcomes. They have both highlighted the value they place on current services and identified gaps which directly relate to the outputs and outcomes that Services for Young People are seeking to achieve. In particular, young people highlighted: a need for more information, advice and guidance on opportunities in education, training and employment; a broader range of courses; challenges in relation to mental health and emotional well-being; challenges in relation to peer pressure and bullying; family difficulties and breakdown of relationships; money and transport; and a need to have someone to talk to who understands.

Financial context

9. The re-commissioning for 2015-2020 also needs to address the challenging financial context for Surrey County Council and the wider public sector. Although the economy has started to improve, with increasing employment opportunities, further budget reductions are forecast for the County Council and partners, including providers of education and training. The Transformation of Services for Young People achieved a reduction in gross expenditure of £4.6m in 2011-12 whilst achieving significantly improved outcomes. The scope for significant further savings is therefore limited.

Key themes

10. Some key themes emerging from the evaluation, the more challenging financial context and changes in national and local policy context are:
 - Wider integrated commissioning with key partners such as Districts, Boroughs, Public Health, Surrey Police and Active Surrey.
 - Increased local delegation, enabling local decision making and local involvement of young people.
 - More targeted early help to reduce demand on statutory services.
 - Improved quality, co-production and focus on outcomes.
 - Increased value for money and evidence of impact achieved.
11. Based on these drivers for change, the paper now sets out proposed changes to the commissioning model for a further five year period, from 2015 to 2020, Additionally, the paper proposes the Young People's Employability Plan 2012-17 is simultaneously revised, to reflect these changes and particularly to strengthen its breadth across Surrey County Council and with partners.

National and local policy context

12. Services for Young People deliver key outcomes to improve young people's quality of life and fulfil a range of statutory duties for Surrey County Council: the duty to commission education and training provision for young people aged 16 to 19 and then up to age 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); the duty to prevent young people's involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour; the duty to ensure adequate opportunities for young people through youth work; and to promote effective participation of young

people in education, training or employment up to age 18 by 2015 as required by Raising the Participation Age.

13. The Surrey Young People's Employability Plan 2012-17 sets out the local policy, strategy and action plan to achieve full participation by 2015 and to sustain participation through demographic growth and other changes in needs. There are also clear policy drivers locally for more integrated approaches with partners, as demonstrated in the recent work on the Public Service Transformation Network (PSTN) Skills for the Future and a policy drive for localism.

SECTION THREE: STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS 2015-20

Strategy

14. In December 2010, Cabinet agreed the strategic goal for Services for Young People as employability to secure full participation for young people to age 19 in education, training or employment. On 24 July 2012, Cabinet agreed the Young People's Employability Plan 2012-17, which set out the vision for young people's employability. It is proposed to retain that vision, with the addition of a definition of employability, for greater clarity and to reflect the breadth of integrated approaches need to achieve a holistic approach to improving outcomes for young people.

Goal

15. Our goal is for all Surrey young people to be employable.

Definition of employability

16. Employability is the development of skills, abilities, and personal attributes that enhance young people's capability to secure rewarding and satisfying outcomes in their economic, social and community lives. Our key measure of success will be full youth participation in education, training or employment with training to age 19 by 2018.

Commissioning intentions

17. Service for Young People's success has been achieved through using an outcome based commissioning approach. This first sets a clear overall goal then identifies outcomes which would result in the achievement of that goal. Thereafter, outputs are developed which would achieve those outcomes. Commissioning intentions are developed which then in turn shape future commissioning. By following this approach services are commissioned in line with the commissioning intentions, which deliver the required outcomes and therefore together achieve the overall goal.
18. The commissioning intentions for the re-commissioning of Services for Young People for 2015-2020 are –
 - Pathways to employment for all.
 - Early help for young people in need.
 - Integrated specialist youth support.

Re-commissioning for 2015-2020

19. Re-commissioning for 2015-2020 is being developed closely with linked Strategies such as the Early Help Strategy, the Local Enterprise Partnerships' Skills Strategy, the Youth Justice plan and the Public Service Transformation Network programmes on Skills for the Future and Families.
20. The outcomes framework to enable employability of young people has been refreshed, drawing on the needs analysis, evaluation of the service, young people's perspectives and work with staff and partners. The revised framework is attached at Annexe 1 for agreement by Cabinet.
21. Services were previously typically commissioned for a three year period, from 2012 to 2015. However, providers have fed back that a longer period of commissioning would encourage greater innovation and achieve better outcomes and improved value for money. The Voluntary Community and Faith Sector line also sought simpler procurement processes. It is therefore proposed that the next commissioning cycle is for a five year period, from 2015 to 2020 and that procurement process will be further simplified.
22. The achievements to date have highlighted a significant return on investment on resources invested in Service for Young People. The benefits have been demonstrated to accrue for not just Surrey County Council, but also significantly for national government such as in reduced benefits payments, increased taxation receipts once young people are in employment and reduced costs to other services such as Health, Police and even the Prison Service.
23. Feedback was also received that there would be benefits in moving to fewer models with clearer links between them and with other services and partner organisations. It is proposed therefore, whilst building on the success of the current models, to integrate some models and reduce the overall number. Engagement with other Surrey County Council services and with partners, staff and young people will be completed to inform an options appraisal on the alternative means of delivery and to develop business cases. These options appraisals and business cases will be brought to Cabinet in September 2014.
24. An external evaluation has been conducted by the Institute of Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham. The evaluation report will go to Children & Education Select Committee in July and inform the development of the new operating models.
25. Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD) is exploring alternative options for its future operations. This work is included within 'Pathways to Employment for All'. A further update will be brought to Cabinet in September 2014.

Project Board

26. The re-commissioning is being overseen by a Project Board, chaired by the Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families and with representation from the Children & Education Select Committee, Local Committees and young people. This Board will oversee the future work programme and advise on recommendations for Cabinet in September 2014. The Project Board is being expanded to include other public agencies with an interest in jointly commissioning better outcomes for young people.

27. Pathways to employment for all

Model description

This model proposes to strengthen the range of opportunities for young people in education, training and employment opportunities in Surrey. These opportunities will be informed by the needs of employers, linked to the aspirations of young people and supported by high quality impartial careers information, advice and guidance. The model brings together opportunities offered by schools, colleges and training providers with alternative provision. The model proposes the Your Next Move Guarantee which guarantees all young people in Surrey the opportunity to participate in education, training or employment up to age 18. This would be complemented by support for key transition points for targeted groups, building on the Year 11/12 Transition, but extending that to Years 9/10 and Years 12/13.

The model includes development of local provision for young people with SEND, with integrated support across education, health and social care, as part of integrated arrangements from birth to age 25.

Key changes from previous model and benefits

- More integrated education, training and employment pathways.
- Surrey Your Next Move Guarantee of the offer to all young people in education, training or employment up to age 18.
- More external funding for provision and engagement.

28. Local Early Help for Young People

Model description

This model proposes an integrated approach with partners to commission outcomes for young people which are identified as local priorities. Agreements will be sought with key partners to align commissioning resources.

Priorities would be drawn from the Young People's Outcomes Framework (Annexe 1) and shaped by expanded local Youth Task Groups, working with partners. This would include at least the current Local Prevention Framework, and potentially Centre Based Youth Work. This process could vary the allocation of resources between communities, within a fixed overall allocation (currently, for example, centre based youth work is a fixed 2 FTE per centre). Options would be explored for resources to be deployed from centres to other locations, through a 'hub and spoke' approach. The model includes Youth Engagement which aims to equip all young people to make informed decisions, to be advocates and agents for change.

Four approaches will be explored, particularly in relation to Centre Based Youth Work: staff secondment (current model); staff transfer; direct management in Surrey County Council; new organisation developed with staff – e.g. Trust, Mutual, Community Interest Company or a combination of these.

Key benefits

- Greater local ownership with flexibility to respond to local need and priorities.
- Joint commissioning with partners to reduce demand.
- Voluntary sector involvement, use of community assets and income generation.

29. Integrated Youth Support

Model description

This model delivers a range of key outcomes and develops employability skills for some of the most vulnerable young people in Surrey. It is delivered in-house by the successful Surrey Youth Support Service, which provides integrated support for young people who are NEET, children in need and those who have offended or are at risk of homelessness. The model employs a casework approach to supporting young people, developing positive relationships and addressing young people's barriers to participation. This often involves working closely with other partners to provide holistic support.

There will be increased joint working with other services, e.g. with Job Centre Plus in relation to support for young people who are NEET aged 18 to 19.

There will be an increased focus on quality of practice, partially for Ready for Work to improve outcomes for young people and greater flexibility as needs change.

Options for income generation would be explored, with a key focus on European Social Fund, Education Funding Agency and Social Enterprises.

Alternative delivery models would also be explored, alongside exploration of alternative models for SOLD and Centre Based Youth Work.

Key benefits

- Strengthen integration with the local early help offer and external partners.
- Opportunities for greater income generation.
- Opportunity to explore options for the development of an alternative vehicle.

Resources

Review and evaluation

30. The re-commissioned model will be subject to robust monitoring, review and evaluation through reports on each commission, linked through to reporting of key outcomes and other performance measures to Cabinet, Corporate Leadership Team, Children, Schools and Families Leadership Team, Children & Education Select Committee and the 14-19 Partnership. Quality will be assured through the extension of the National Youth Agency Quality Framework and links to Ofsted inspection frameworks.

CONSULTATION:

31. The development of the outcomes recommended in this report have involved wide engagement with young people, partners including the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector, schools, colleges, training providers, Health and Police and Employers.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

32. The project has a risk register which has identified key risks. Mitigation factors have been regularly agreed. This will be reviewed by the Project Board.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

33. The recommissioning of service will provide an opportunity to address the savings included in the MTFP 2014-2019, embed flexibility in order to meet further changes in the financial outlook of the council and improve value for

money through partnership working, income generation and an emphasis on more local provision.

34. Options appraisals and business cases for the delivery of the four service areas outlined will be brought to Cabinet in September 2014 and include detailed financial appraisals. The financial and value for money implications will be considered in these business cases.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

35. This is an initial report seeking endorsement of the approach to re-commissioning many services delivered by Services for Young People from 2015. This follows the major commissioning exercise following the Public Value review through 2011 and 2012. There are no detailed financial implications to consider at this stage. The Re-commissioning exercise will provide an opportunity to deliver the £0.8m savings included in the MTFP 2014-19 for Services for Young People, as well as manage future demand.
36. There is a requirement for the commissioning models to be flexible in order to fit future resourcing levels. The business cases in September will consider the financial implications, both current and future.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

37. There are no legal implementations arising from this report.

Equalities and Diversity

38. An initial assessment of equalities implications has been conducted. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed for the options and recommendations in the report to Cabinet in September 2014.

Other Implications:

39. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and tackling climate change. The proposals emphasise local provision, which reduce travel and support policies on cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

40. Looked After Children are identified as a priority target group in the proposed outcomes framework. The current arrangements have seen free registration onto the Duke of Edinburgh's award for looked after children, and no 'in-county' children entering the criminal justice system for the last two years. There are also record low numbers of 16-19 care leavers that are NEET.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

41. The proposals comply with the County Council's priority for safeguarding vulnerable children and young people.

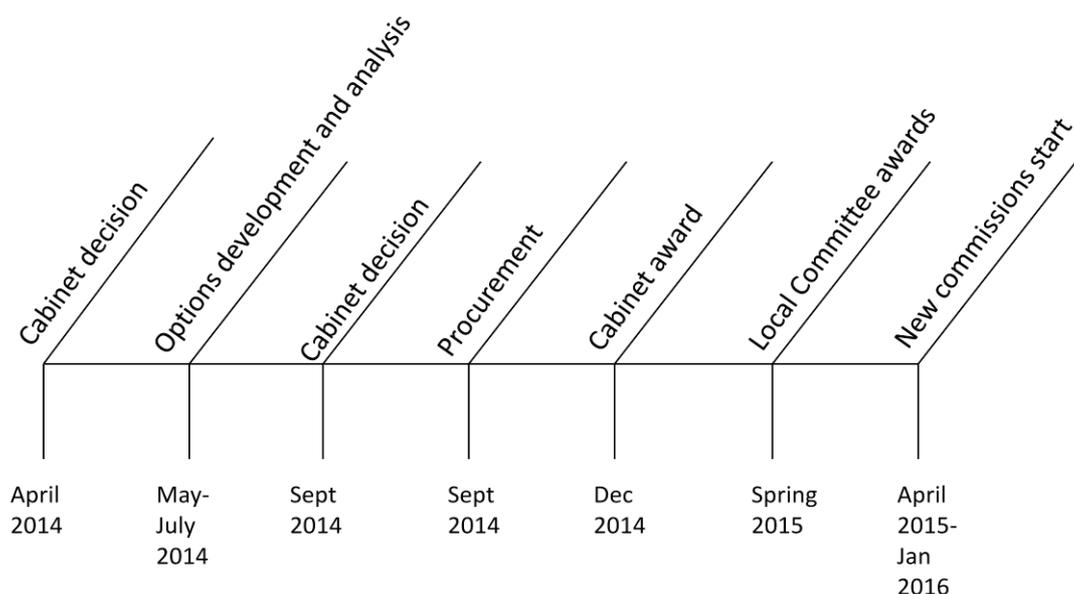
Public Health implications

42. The outcomes framework has been developed with the involvement of Public Health and reflects joint priorities in young people's health and well-being.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 43. Further engagement from May to the end of July with partners, Local Committees and Youth Task Groups, other services in Surrey County Council, staff and young people will inform the development of business cases, subject to Cabinet agreement to the models and associated proposals set out in this paper. In particular agreement will be sought from Boroughs/Districts, Active Surrey, Public Health, Surrey Police and representative organisations of the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector for more integrated approaches to commissioning. Views will be sought from Local Committees on the proposals to increase delegation at Borough/District level in relation to early help for young people.
- 44. The Project Board will oversee the development of options and agree the final model with Children Schools and Families Directorate Leadership Team before returning to Cabinet in September 2014 with proposed options and business case. Thereafter, proposals will be sought from the market through procurement for the new models and additionally any service changes implemented.
- 45. Local commissioning would commence in September 2014, so that procurement processes are completed through Local Committee award of contracts by June 2015 giving three months lead in before new services are required from September 2015.
- 46. Further awards will be sought in December 2014 for county-wide contracts starting in April 2015. This timeframe will be reviewed and confirmed after the final selection of options.
- 47. Within the Pathways to Employability model, the commission which supports young people's progression from Year 11 to Year 12 concludes each December, with a new cohort of young people identified for a start in January. Therefore this commission will run through to December 2015, with new provider(s) taking on delivery from January 2016.

Next Steps:



Contact Officer:

Frank Offer, Head of Commissioning & Development for Young People
Tel no: 020 8541 9507

Consulted:

The development of this report has involved wide engagement of young people, partners including the voluntary, community and faith sector, schools, colleges, training providers, health organisations and employers.

Annexes:**Annexe 1: Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework****Sources/background papers:**

- Reports to Cabinet on Services for Young People Transformation on 20 December 2011 and 18 December 2012.
- Select Committee 27 March 2014.

Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework

Goal	Ref	Outcomes	Ref	Outputs
Employability for young people	1	Young people are equipped with the skills and attitudes to join the workforce	1.1	Sufficient, quality education and training post-16 provided
			1.2	Successful transition made to post-16 education, training and employment
			1.3	Employability skills, attitudes and behaviours developed
			1.4	Numeracy and literacy improved
			1.5	Increased experience of the workplace
	2	Young people are resilient	2.1	Physical wellbeing improved
			2.2	Emotional wellbeing improved
			2.3	Mental wellbeing improved
			2.4	Social wellbeing improved
	3	Young people are safe	3.1	Offending and anti-social behaviour prevented
			3.2	Reduced impact of offending
			3.3	Young people's safety in communities is improved
	4	Young people overcome barriers to employability	4.1	Young people prevented from becoming NEET
			4.2	Reduced number of young people who are NEET
			4.3	Homelessness prevented
4.4			Entry to the care system prevented	
4.5			Transport for young people is improved	
5	Young people make informed decisions	5.1	Informed decisions made about education, training and careers	
		5.2	Informed decisions made about leading a healthy lifestyle	
		5.3	Informed decisions made about use of free time	
		5.4	Informed decisions made about accessing services and support	
6	Young people are active members of their communities	6.1	Young people have positive role models	
		6.2	Participation in social action increased	
		6.3	Decision-making influenced by young people	
		6.4	Involvement in local democracy increased	

Target groups

Informed by our needs assessment, there are groups of young people for whom we particularly want to improve these outcomes and reduce inequalities.

These include:

- Young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Young people who are looked after or care leavers
- Young people who are on child protection plans and children in need
- Young people who are identified as at risk of becoming NEET
- Young people who are parents
- Young people who have caring responsibilities
- Young people from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Young people who have offended
- Other young people who have protected characteristics (sexual orientation, age, gender, gender reassignment, race, and religion or belief) where this leads to them facing barriers to participation

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014****REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****LEAD OFFICER: CLAIRE POTIER, PRINCIPAL MANAGER ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT****SUBJECT: HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY 2015****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To consider the outcome of the consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy and to decide if any changes should be made for implementation from September 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that with effect from September 2015, subject to the distance thresholds appropriate to the age of the child being met, Cabinet extends eligibility to free home to school transport for Surrey children to attend their nearest geographical Surrey school (measured by the shortest walking route) if their nearest school is out of County and the distance or safety of route to that school would mean that transport would still need to be provided.

Reason for recommendation

- It would enable parents who would otherwise receive transport to their nearest out of County school, to send their children to their nearest Surrey school and still receive transport, thus potentially increasing their 'choice' of schools
- It would ensure that the cost of transport would not be a barrier for children to attend their nearest Surrey school
- It is a policy change that could be applied consistently across the County
- It would demonstrate support to Surrey schools by offering families an incentive to apply for their nearest Surrey school, even if they have an out of County school which is nearer
- It would help to support the financial viability of undersubscribed Surrey schools and in turn may reduce the likelihood of County Council funding being needed to support the recovery of an undersubscribed school
- In some cases it may cost less to transport a child to a Surrey school than to an out of County school
- It would mean that families living in Dormansland and Lingfield would not have their transport to Oxted withdrawn if their nearest school is outside of Surrey
- It would only apply if a parent applied for and was offered a place at the child's nearest geographical Surrey school
- It was supported by Children and Education Select Committee

DETAILS:

Introduction

1. The legal responsibility for ensuring a child's attendance at school rests with the child's parent. Generally, parents are expected to make their own arrangements for ensuring that their child travels to and from school.
2. However, the local authority has:
 - a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport to eligible children (Section 508B of the Education Act 1996)
 - discretion to provide transport (free or otherwise) to any other children (Section 508C of the Education Act 1996)
3. The statutory duty covers the following children:

Children under the age of 8 years old	Children aged 8 to 11 years old	Children aged 11 to 16 years old
If they attend a school which is their nearest suitable school and which is more than 2 miles from their home	If they attend a school which is their nearest suitable school and which is more than 3 miles from their home	If they attend a school which is their nearest suitable school and which is more than 3 miles from their home
	If they: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are in receipt of free school meals or their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit; and• attend a school which is their nearest suitable school which is more than 2 miles from their home	If they: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are in receipt of free school meals or their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit; and• attend one of their three nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home
		If they: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are in receipt of free school meals or their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit; and• attend a school on the grounds of their religion or belief which is between 2 and 15 miles from their home

4. All other aspects of home to school transport are discretionary.
5. Surrey's home to school transport policy for mainstream children generally only provides for children who meet the statutory eligibility criteria to receive free home to school transport. Surrey's home to school transport policy for 2014 is set out in Annex 1.

6. The only discretionary elements remaining within the policy are as follows:
 - Although the maximum walking distance increases from two miles to three miles when a child turns eight years old, Surrey's policy allows transport to continue until the end of the academic year in which the child turns eight i.e. transport is not withdrawn mid year
 - Although the statutory duty to provide transport only applies to children once they reach statutory school age, Surrey's policy provides for transport entitlement to be assessed for children once they start in Reception at four years old
 - Where a different school is nearest by straight line distance then transport will normally be provided to either school as long as the other conditions of eligibility are met. This is because many of Surrey's schools prioritise applicants based on whether the school is their nearest by straight line distance and it would be perverse for a child to be refused a place at a school on the basis that it was not their nearest by straight line distance, but then be refused home to school transport to another school on the basis that the preferred school was the nearest by shortest walking distance
7. Whilst a parent has the right to apply for a school of their preference, the local authority has no duty to provide transport to that school if there is another school which is nearer which could have offered a place had the parent applied, whether or not that school is inside or outside the County boundary.
8. Families whose children do not meet the statutory eligibility criteria may ask for their specific circumstances to be taken in to account at a Transport Case Review or, subsequently, a Members Review. Any such cases are considered on an individual basis and do not alter overall policy.
9. The overall expenditure on home to school transport for statutory school age pupils who are travelling to school (including children who start school at four years old) is approximately £9m per annum.
10. However this includes approximately £1.2m per annum for discretionary transport to denominational schools on faith grounds. Whilst, on 24 May 2011, Cabinet made the decision to withdraw such discretionary free home to school transport to denominational schools, it was agreed that this withdrawal should be phased in for new pupils from September 2012.
11. Current expenditure also includes approximately £113,000 per annum for approximately 160 children across all year groups to travel from Lingfield and Dormansland in Tandridge to Oxted School, even though they may have a nearer school outside of Surrey which could offer a place. The fact that these children were receiving transport in error came to light in 2012 but at that time it was agreed for free transport to continue exceptionally for the 2013 and 2014 intakes. However it was made clear that there would be a review of Surrey's Home to School Transport policy for 2015 and that from that date, applications would be considered in accordance with the policy.
12. Currently, approximately 6,450 pupils of statutory school age receive free home to school transport.

13. Entitled pupils are generally expected to travel by the cheapest mode of transport and this is assessed by Surrey's Transport Coordination Centre. Currently, based on January projections, the number of mainstream statutory school age children (including children who start school at four years old) travelling by each mode of transport is as follows:

Mode of travel	Number of entitled children travelling	Percentage
Contract coach	3,242	50.3%
Rail Pass	267	4.1%
Bus Pass	1,623	25.2%
School's own coach (2 faith schools)	216	3.3%
Reimbursement	198	3.1%
Taxi/Minibus	904	14%
Total	6,450	

14. Regulations require that the local authority's Home to School Transport policy is published at least six weeks before the deadlines for parents to apply for a school place in the following academic year. The local authority's composite prospectus on admissions must also include information on home to school transport. This means that any policy changes on home to school transport for 2015 must be determined and published by the end of the Summer term 2014.
15. Children who have a statement of special educational needs are not included in the figures above as they are assessed for home to school transport under the SEN Home to School Transport policy which has not been included as part of this review.

Background to review

16. Other than the withdrawal of discretionary transport on faith grounds to denominational schools, Surrey's Home to School Transport policy has not been reviewed since the policy was considered by Surrey's Executive in June 2006.
17. At that time the Executive reviewed 44 exceptional transport routes which it had withdrawn since 2002 and considered whether any should be reinstated. However the Executive agreed to maintain its current Home to School Transport policy, which did not allow for any known exceptional arrangements, so that all residents would be treated fairly and objectively and there would be a consistent application of the policy across the County.
18. It is therefore clear that the intent at that time was to have a policy that could be applied equally to all families, regardless of where they live in Surrey.
19. However, notwithstanding that policy intent, as Surrey's Home to School Transport policy had not been reviewed since 2006 and as a number of queries had been raised by parents and Members in recent years, it seemed timely to assess whether it still delivered a fair and equitable policy or whether any changes needed to be made.

Consultation

20. It was agreed to carry out a public consultation that would enable respondents to contribute their views to the policy review. This would enable Members to better

understand the concerns of parents and schools when they considered whether any changes needed to be made to Surrey’s Home to School Transport policy.

21. As a result, Surrey’s Admissions and Transport team issued a consultation document to stakeholders on 11 November 2013 (Annex 2). The consultation ran for 6 weeks until 20 December 2013.
22. The consultation document was sent directly to all Surrey schools, Diocesan Boards of Education, Surrey County Councillors, Borough and District Councillors, Parish and Town Councillors, members of Surrey’s Admission Forum, Early Years establishments and Surrey MPs.
23. Surrey County Council Members and Borough and District Councillors were asked to draw the consultation to the attention of any local community or resident groups in their area who may have an interest in responding.
24. All schools were sent a suggested form of wording for parents, which they were encouraged to put on websites, notice boards and in newsletters, as appropriate.
25. Notice of the consultation was also published on Surrey County Council’s website from three areas – School Admissions, School Transport and the generic Consultations page.
26. The consultation document made clear that, whilst Surrey County Council was not proposing any changes to its policy, it was interested to hear:
 - the views of Surrey residents and schools on the equity of the existing policy;
 - details of any home to school transport difficulties that Surrey parents might currently face; and
 - details of any suggestions for change (recognising that any additional expenditure on home to school transport would mean that Surrey would need to make savings elsewhere).
27. Whilst the consultation invited comments on some specific matters it also invited respondents to comment freely on any difficulties they may have faced as a result of Surrey’s home to school transport policy and on how the policy might be changed.
28. By the closing date, 170 responses had been submitted online and seven responses had been received by email/letter.
29. A summary of the 170 online responses is set out below in Table A.

Table A - Summary of responses to transport consultation for September 2015			
Question No.	Question	Yes	No
1	Have you read the consultation document on Surrey’s Home to School Transport policy?	164 (96%)	6 (4%)
2	Are you familiar with Surrey’s current policy on home to school transport?	165 (97%)	5 (3%)
3	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?	107 (63%)	63 (37%)
4	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy enables parents to	125 (73.5%)	45 (26.5%)

Question No.	Question	Yes	No
	clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?		
5	Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey's current home to school transport policy?	68 (40%)	102 (60%)
6	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?	97 (57%)	73 (43%)
7	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?	88 (52%)	82 (48%)
8	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?	148 (87%)	22 (13%)
9	Do you wish to make any suggestions for change to Surrey's current home to school transport policy? (Any suggestions should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area.)	94 (55%)	76 (45%)

30. The seven respondents who submitted emails/letters wrote about very specific issues. Further analysis of these responses and those that were submitted online are set out in Annex 3.

31. The outcomes of the consultation were shared with Surrey's Children and Education Select Committee on 27 March 2014.

Consideration of the issues

32. The response rate to the consultation was low with only 177 responses being submitted. Given the fact that there are approximately 124,000 Surrey children of school age and approximately 28,000 applications for school admission from Surrey residents each year, this might demonstrate that, generally, families and schools are satisfied with Surrey's Home to School Transport policy.

33. This conclusion may be further evidenced by the low rate of requests for Transport Case Review and Members Review each year. During the 2013 calendar year 171 requests were considered by officers at Transport Case Review, with 73 cases being agreed exceptionally. Of those which were not agreed, 13 were passed to a Members Review and of those, eight were upheld.

34. The vast majority of comments were received from parents, with representatives from only two mainstream schools contributing their concerns. This seems to demonstrate that in most areas, transport was not an issue or that any issues were managed locally by each school.

- 35. Overall, 107 respondents (63%) felt that Surrey’s Home to School Transport policy was equitable and 125 respondents (73.5%) felt that the policy enabled parents to clearly understand how decisions are made.
- 36. In addition, 102 respondents (60%) indicated that they had faced no difficulties as a result of the policy.
- 37. Given the low response rate and the fact that the nature of this consultation would be more likely to encourage a response from those who were unhappy with the policy, these figures are generally positive.
- 38. Geographically, respondents appeared to be scattered around the County demonstrating that there were few specific issues affecting a number of parents.
- 39. However there was a pocket of 55 respondents with an RH7 postcode who lived around the Lingfield and Dormansland area in Tandridge. Their responses are set out in Table B below:

Table B - Summary of responses to transport consultation from RH7 postcode

Question No.	Question	Yes	No
3	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?	30 (55%)	25 (45%)
4	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy enables parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?	36 (65%)	19 (35%)
5	Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey’s current home to school transport policy?	16 (29%)	39 (71%)
6	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child’s home address which the child could be offered?	54 (98%)	1 (2%)
7	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child’s home address which the child could be offered?	52 (95%)	3 (5%)
8	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?	54 (98%)	1 (2%)

- 40. Many of these respondents raised a particular concern regarding transport to Oxted School, even though their nearest school was out of County. Whilst children in this area are currently receiving free transport to Oxted School on an exceptional basis, they will not continue to be eligible from September 2015 unless a change of policy is agreed. This concern was supported by the senior leadership team and Chair of Governors at Oxted School, a governor at Lingfield School and by the Parish Councils for Lingfield and Dormansland.

41. The consultation posed a series of questions to respondents and, in addition to the specific concern set out above regarding transport to Oxted School, there were a number of recurring themes which shall be covered in this report:
- Surrey's transport policy should be consistent with the admissions policies for Surrey schools
 - Distance should be measured according to the walking or road route
 - Surrey should provide more than the minimum required under the legislation
 - Schools over the County boundary should not be considered in the assessment of nearest school
 - Decisions should take account of existing transport links or cost of transport
 - The policy should take account of individual circumstances
 - There should be support to siblings when an older child receives free transport

Surrey's transport policy should be consistent with the admissions policies for Surrey schools

42. Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school. Whilst some schools give priority to children who are attending a feeder school or to those who live within a catchment, attending a feeder school or living within catchment does not confer an automatic right to transport.
43. Any such extension of the policy is not part of Surrey's statutory duty and as such would be discretionary. The County Council would need to consider how it would fund such a, potentially, open ended increase in eligibility.
44. Notwithstanding the increase in expenditure, linking transport eligibility to admission criteria would introduce a level of complexity to the policy and there would be a number of challenging factors to consider.
45. In Surrey there are now over 170 schools which act as their own admission authority and as such are responsible for determining their own admission arrangements. These include academies and free schools. As long as the admission arrangements are lawful and comply with the School Admissions Code, these schools have no obligation to be guided by the local authority on what admission arrangements to set.
46. In this way the local authority is slowly starting to see more cases of diverse admission arrangements which no longer follow the local authority's 'standard' criteria. As these criteria are outside the local authority's control, it follows that any policy which links home to school transport to the admission criteria of a school would remove the local authority's control on its home to school transport expenditure.
47. The local authority acknowledges that academies and free schools are still seeking to serve their local communities. However if, in time, they alter their admission arrangements to serve communities further away from the school, any local children who fail to secure a place might become entitled to transport to a school which is further away, thus increasing Surrey's expenditure on home to school transport.
48. In total, 88 respondents (52%) felt that home to school transport should be provided for children who attend a named feeder school, even if there is a nearer school to the child's home address which the child could be offered.

49. Already in Surrey there are 26 junior schools and 11 secondary schools which admit children according to feeder school priority. Across these schools a total of 1,275 junior places and 663 secondary places were offered according to feeder school priority in 2013. These figures discount faith schools which prioritise children who meet faith based criteria attending a feeder school ahead of other children. There are at least three more schools which have introduced feeder links for 2014 entry and others may be considering such proposals for 2015.
50. Whilst some of these children may already qualify for free transport it is likely that a number will not, but much will depend on the location of the feeder school and where that school draws its intake from. An extension of policy to provide transport to children attending a feeder school would therefore be likely to increase significantly the number of children who would be eligible to receive free transport.
51. In addition there are a number of other admission criteria available to schools such as siblings, nearest school, catchment, distance and faith. If home to school transport entitlement was to be linked to admission criteria for a school, in order to be equitable it would stand to reason that any child qualifying for a school place according to the school's admission criteria should qualify for home to school transport.
52. Notwithstanding the equity issue, unless transport was also agreed for pupils who obtain a place under other criteria for a school, committing transport to children who attend a named feeder school would put more schools under pressure to introduce feeder links, which may not always be fair to local children or the appropriate criteria for a school.
53. In the current economic climate Surrey cannot commit to linking transport eligibility to the admission criteria of each school as it would result in open ended eligibility to free home to school transport.

Distance should be measured according to the walking or road route

54. When assessing entitlement to home to school transport, generally the shortest available walking distance is considered between the home and the school. A route will be available if it is a route that a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school.
55. Where a different school is nearest by straight line distance then transport will normally be provided to either school as long as the other conditions of eligibility are met.
56. The only other exceptions apply for the following categories, where the furthest distance is measured by the shortest road route:
- Children who are aged 11 to 16 who are in receipt of free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home
 - Children who are aged 11 to 16 who are in receipt of free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and who attend a school on the grounds of their religion or belief which is between 2 and 15 miles from their home

57. The Home to School Transport policy also makes provision for walking routes to be assessed for their safety by a Community Travel Advisor.
58. As the Home to School Transport policy currently provides for the shortest available walking and road routes to be assessed in this way, there is no requirement to make any change to the policy in this respect.

Surrey should provide more than the minimum required under the legislation

59. A number of comments made throughout the consultation indicated a belief that Surrey should provide more than the minimum required under the legislation. Some respondents went so far as to say that all children should receive free home to school transport regardless of the school being attended.
60. With approximately 124,000 Surrey children of school age and only 6,500 children currently in receipt of free home to school transport, a commitment to provide free home to school transport to all pupils would be financially untenable.
61. The County Council is not adverse to extending the policy to provide support beyond its statutory duty where there is a compelling case for doing so, but only where additional resource can be identified and where such an extension of policy is equitable to all families.

Schools over the County boundary should not be considered in the assessment of nearest school

62. Generally, any out of County schools which would have been able to offer a place had a family applied are taken in to account when assessing entitlement to home to school transport, regardless of whether they are inside or outside the County boundary.
63. Overall, 97 respondents (57%) felt that Surrey should provide transport for a child to attend a Surrey school even if there was another nearer school outside of Surrey which could offer a place. However 43% of respondents felt that transport should not be provided in these circumstances.
64. Respondents in support generally felt that Surrey residents were not provided for in the admission arrangements for schools outside of Surrey and as such they were uncertain of their chances of success.
65. Respondents also felt that communities in Surrey would be more likely to have links with Surrey schools and thereby transition for the children would be easier if Surrey children attended a Surrey school.
66. Families in Lingfield and Dormansland raised this as a specific concern as, in future, they may not be eligible for home to school transport to Oxted School if nearer schools in West Sussex (Sackville and Imberhorne) were able to offer them a place. One of the concerns of parents was that they were not provided for in the admission arrangements for Sackville and Imberhorne and as such there was a reluctance to commit to those schools if younger siblings might not be given a place in future years. However the table below demonstrates that since 2011 a number of parents have applied and been offered a place at Sackville and Imberhorne as a preferred school, despite transport being made available to Oxted:

Number of Surrey children offered places at Sackville and Imberhorne schools		
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	Sackville	Imberhorne
2014	23 (16 as 1 st Preference)	33 (33 as 1 st Preference)
2013	17 (16 as 1 st Preference)	44 (40 as 1 st Preference)
2012	23 (15 as 1 st Preference)	24 (24 as 1 st Preference)
2011	16 (16 as 1 st Preference)	33 (33 as 1 st Preference)

67. The case for Lingfield and Dormansland was supported by Lingfield and Dormansland Parish Councils as well as the senior leadership team and Chair of Governors at Oxted School, who were concerned at the potential for application numbers to decline for Oxted in favour of Sackville and Imberhorne.

68. A similar concern was raised by Tatsfield Parish Council on behalf of residents in Tatsfield who may be refused home to school transport to Oxted School if their nearer Bromley school, Charles Darwin, is able to offer them a place. However in this case, Charles Darwin has recently named Tatsfield Primary School as a feeder school for admissions, thereby ensuring that children attending Tatsfield Primary might be provided with a school place.

69. In some areas, out of County schools are popular and are seen as a natural destination for Surrey children. The table below sets out, by primary and secondary phase, how many Surrey children have been offered a place at an out of County school as a preference since 2012:

Number of Surrey children offered places at out of County schools		
	Primary	Secondary
2014	-	595 (464 as 1 st Preference)
2013	225 (202 as 1 st Preference)	630 (506 as 1 st Preference)
2012	252 (222 as 1 st Preference)	494 (383 as 1 st Preference)

70. Of course it is possible that in some of these cases the out of County school may have been chosen due to Surrey's home to school transport policy. However other parents are likely to choose a Surrey school in preference to a nearer out of County school despite Surrey's policy and in the knowledge that they will have to pay for home to school transport themselves.

71. Extension of the policy to provide home to school transport to a Surrey school where there was a nearer school outside of Surrey would be likely to commit the local authority to discretionary expenditure in the following areas:

- Tatsfield where the nearest secondary school is in Bromley
- Epsom & Ewell where families living on the north and west border with Kingston may have Kingston secondary schools that are nearer
- Elmbridge and Spelthorne where families living on the border with Richmond may have Hampton Academy as nearer

- Several rural areas along the south stretch of Waverley where families may have primary and secondary schools in either Hampshire or West Sussex as nearer
 - In the north of Reigate & Banstead some families may have Oasis Academy in Croydon as nearer
 - In Mole Valley families living to the south of the district may have nearer schools in West Sussex
72. These examples are unlikely to be exhaustive. It is not possible to come up with a definitive list because each transport assessment must be considered individually and subtle differences can apply between different addresses and according to whether or not a child would have got in to another school, which can be different from year to year.
73. However, from the 2013 admission round, 4 primary aged children and 42 secondary aged children from these areas were refused transport to a Surrey school on the basis that they had an out of County school which was nearer. If these numbers were similar each year, there could be at least 24 primary aged children and 210 secondary aged children who might be entitled to transport to a Surrey school each year if Surrey's Home to School Transport policy was extended to make these children eligible.
74. It is therefore estimated that a change of policy could mean that an additional 234 children would be entitled to home to school transport to a Surrey school.
75. As a further indicator, there are currently approximately 138 pupils receiving transport (bus, rail or taxi) to an out of County school (discounting faith schools). Of these, 86 are travelling to either Sackville or Imberhorne schools in West Sussex. These are the children who might choose a Surrey school in preference to an out of County school if the policy was extended. However, the County Council is already committed to the transport costs for these children. Whilst there may be a difference in transport cost if the mode changed, it is likely that on balance the overall difference in cost would be negligible.
76. If the policy was extended to provide transport to the nearest Surrey school, Surrey would commit to paying transport for children where otherwise it would not have done so and may also lose the fare that it charges for concessionary seats where a parent could take advantage of a school coach route.
77. Whilst it would be possible to place conditions on eligibility to the nearest Surrey school, such as if an out of County school was nearest but home to school transport would still need to be paid to that school (because the route was unsafe or because the distance threshold was exceeded), the local authority would still be likely to see an increase in its expenditure. This is because in many of the areas where an out of County school is nearer, these conditions would apply.
78. The local authority has no statutory duty to provide transport where a school is not the child's nearest school and, as well as committing it to additional expenditure and adding a level of complexity to the policy, any extension of policy might pave the way for other elements of discretionary expenditure to be requested.
79. However, such an extension of policy would ensure that the cost of transport would not be a barrier for children to attend their nearest Surrey school and would help to support Surrey schools by removing the disincentive for parents to apply.

80. With that in mind, an extension of policy also has the potential to generate an increase in demand for Surrey schools which would need to be taken in to account in school place planning.

Decisions should take account of existing transport links or cost of transport

81. Eligibility according to Surrey's statutory duty is based on the shortest walking distance to the school from the home address.
82. If a parent prefers a school which is further away but which is easier or cheaper to get to by public transport, the child will not be eligible for free home to school transport if the parent chooses that school over another nearer school.
83. The consideration of transport links and cost in establishing eligibility for home to school transport would not provide for an equitable, consistent or transparent policy across the County as it would provide for different outcomes for different pupils in different areas.
84. The availability and cost of public transport is also a factor outside the local authority's control and can be subject to change, thus introducing a constant element of uncertainty regarding home to school transport eligibility.
85. In addition, the assessment of transport links and costs for each individual child to a number of different schools would take a far greater resource commitment than is currently available within the Admissions and Transport team.
86. One respondent commented that families in Oakwood Hill, Ockley, Walliswood and Forest Green do not receive free transport to attend Dorking schools because Cranleigh schools were closer, despite there being no good transport links from these villages. However this is a policy which is applied consistently across the local authority and it would not be equitable for some families to benefit from free home to school transport just because no transport links currently existed.
87. As public transport is generally demand led, if there was a proven need for a route to serve a particular area then, in time, transport links might improve to other areas of the County if patterns of school preference change.

The policy should take account of individual circumstances

88. As agreed by Surrey's Executive in 2006, Surrey's Home to School Transport policy provides for officers to consider the individual circumstances of a case at Transport Case Review, where a parent either believes that a transport decision is incorrect or where they wish exceptional circumstances to be taken in to account.
89. For cases that are unsuccessful at Transport Case Review, parents are given the opportunity to have their case heard at a Members review Panel.
90. As the Home to School Transport policy currently provides for individual circumstances to be taken in to account, there is no requirement to make any change to the policy in this respect.

There should be support to siblings when an older child receives free transport

91. Overall, 148 respondents (87%) believed that Surrey should provide free transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling had already qualified for free transport to that school.
92. Respondents felt that such a policy would make it easier for families to keep siblings at the same school and would help reduce unnecessary home to school journeys.
93. Generally, where an older sibling has already qualified for home to school transport a younger child would also be eligible. However different decisions may be made if the older sibling had been offered a school further away due to oversubscription at nearer schools and, by the time the younger child applied, there were places available at nearer schools. In this scenario, if the parent wanted to keep the children together they would have to either pay for their younger child to travel to the school which was further away or transport them themselves whilst the older sibling travelled on the free transport. Alternatively, if money or time did not allow this, the parent would have to accept that their children would have to attend different schools.
94. From the concessionary seat requests for school coaches it is estimated that there are approximately 150 children who are not eligible for free transport but who attend the same school as a sibling who is eligible for free transport. Of these, 135 are currently paying for a concessionary seat at a subsidy to Surrey County Council, providing Surrey with an approximate income of £65,664 per annum.
95. If transport needed to be provided for the remaining 15 children on the waiting lists, this would incur additional vehicle costs which would be subject to the routes, the size of the existing vehicle and the increase required and the quotes to be provided by the transport supplier.
96. No data is available on how many children who travel to school by bus, train or taxi are not eligible for free transport but attend the same school as a sibling who is eligible. However, if the same percentage is applied to that which applies to those travelling by school coach (4.63%) there may be 75 children who might have siblings travelling by bus, 12 children who might have siblings travelling by train and 42 children who might have siblings travelling by taxi.
97. In total therefore there may be approximately 279 siblings who are not eligible for free transport to the same school as a sibling.
98. However any change in policy may influence a parent's school preferences and so if children automatically qualified for transport to attend the same school as a sibling this could increase this number.
99. On 27 March 2014, Children and Education Select Committee put forward a recommendation for Cabinet to provide for a child to receive concessionary home to school transport, or free home to school transport if from a low income, to attend the same school as a sibling where the sibling had already been assessed as entitled to free home to school transport and where the child was eligible for a place at the same school. However on consideration of the issues, it is considered that this would be too complex and resource heavy to implement.

100. As set out in paragraph 3, the statutory eligibility criteria for home to school transport is based on the age of the child, the income of the parent and in the final criterion, the type of school being applied for.
101. Any extension of policy to make children entitled to transport to the same school as a sibling, albeit on a concessionary basis, would potentially lead to some children receiving home to school transport even though they might live less than the statutory walking distance to the school, as appropriate to the age of the child.
102. Other children will have siblings who have been assessed as entitled to transport on exceptional grounds, which may not apply to a sibling, and others will have been offered home to school transport because of a statement of special educational needs. If transport was automatically extended to their sibling, transport might again be paid where the distance thresholds are not met.
103. Any extension of policy to children of siblings could also not apply to children whose older sibling was assessed as being entitled to transport on faith grounds to a denominational school, because this element of discretionary entitlement was withdrawn for new applicants from 2012.
104. The distance thresholds which apply according to age also mean that, if an all through school was established in Surrey, there would be an even greater likelihood of children receiving transport where their age appropriate distance threshold was not met. Whilst Surrey does not yet have any all through schools, there is the potential for Cobham Free School to add a senior department to their primary school from September 2014.
105. Whilst it would be possible to add caveats to any extension of policy to provide for children to only be so entitled if the age appropriate distance threshold was met, if the child was applying for the same phase of education and if the sibling had been assessed as entitled according to statutory criteria, this would add a further layer of complexity which would not be helpful and would be confusing and resource heavy to apply.
106. Such an extension of policy could also mean that, once one child had been admitted to a school and been assessed as entitled to transport, Surrey would be committed to paying transport for siblings to attend the same school, even once the older child had left.
107. Notwithstanding these entitlement complexities, if a concessionary charge was to be levied other than for applicants on a low income, this would require additional resource for assessing eligibility within the Admissions and Transport team and for recording, invoicing and collecting the revenue within the Transport Co-ordination Centre.
108. Children who are allocated a concessionary seat on a coach or taxi/minibus are currently required to pay £2.56 a day/£486 per annum (rising each year at the rate of inflation). This concessionary charge does not cover the true cost of a seat on a school coach.
109. The current cost of a bus pass to Surrey County Council is £816 per annum and the current cost of a train pass is £393 per annum. If the same concessionary rate was applied to children travelling on these modes of transport it would more than cover the cost of a train pass but would not cover the complete cost of a bus pass. It would not be equitable to charge different concessionary rates for

different modes of transport and as such, for children travelling by bus, Surrey would have to cover the shortfall of £330 per annum per child.

110. The cost of a taxi/minibus varies widely depending on the route, the number of pickups and the distance, but in most cases it would be likely that the cost of a taxi/minibus would exceed the concessionary fare to be charged to the parent, thus leaving Surrey to subsidise the cost.
111. There may also be contractual issues on levying a charge against bus and rail passes where Surrey has negotiated rates with passenger transport companies for statutory pupils only.
112. In addition, bus and rail passes are paid for by Surrey up front at the start of the year, meaning that Surrey would seek to recuperate full costs from parents at the start of the year. However concessionary seats on school coaches, which are commissioned by Surrey, are invoiced for termly. Refunds for these different modes of travel would also be dealt with differently if a child withdrew during a term. These have the potential for creating a two tier system.
113. The local authority has no statutory duty to provide transport for siblings and, as well as committing the authority to additional expenditure, any extension of eligibility would add complexity to the policy and might pave the way for other elements of discretionary expenditure to be requested. In addition, if a charge was levied for eligible children, this would result in additional administration and resource to process applications and to invoice parents.
114. There is already provision within the policy for exceptional circumstances to be considered and as such families already have the opportunity to have their case heard where transport to different schools would present a difficulty.

Other specific matters of concern

115. The Chair of Governors at Surrey Hills CofE Primary School (and district councillor for Mole Valley) also raised an issue whereby children were not eligible to receive transport to the Westcott site of Surrey Hills for the junior phase of education because they had another nearer school, despite the Abinger Common site being their nearest school site. He indicated that Surrey had committed that transport would be provided for pupils who lived more than the statutory distance, including children for whom Abinger Common was their nearest school who, as juniors, would attend the Westcott Site.
116. The policy has been applied at Surrey Hills as it has at other split site schools. If children had been entitled to transport to the infant site then children would continue to be entitled to transport to the junior site if the distance threshold was met.
117. However if children were not entitled to transport to the infant site because another infant or primary school had been nearer, than children would only be entitled to transport to the junior site if it was the nearest junior site to the home address and it exceeded the distance threshold. In assessing distance in this respect, only the site that provided the junior phase of education would be considered.
118. Other schools which have transport assessed in this way are North Downs Primary School, Riverbridge Primary School, South Camberley Primary School

and South Farnham School. Any change of policy for Surrey Hills would need to be applied consistently to these other schools and would therefore have cost implications to Surrey's Home to School Transport budget.

Risk management and implications:

119. If Surrey's Home to School Transport policy was extended to only provide exceptions for certain areas, there would be a risk that the local authority may open itself up to challenge on the basis that the policy was not equitable.

Financial and value for money implications

120. Surrey's current Home to School Transport policy provides for children who have a statutory entitlement to free home to school transport to receive it.
121. Other than the provision of transport on faith grounds to denominational schools, which since September 2012 is being phased out, there is no element of discretionary expenditure which in Surrey's view, could be argued to be unreasonable.
122. The current policy therefore ensures that Surrey is not committed to provide transport support beyond that which it has a statutory duty to provide.
123. If the current policy is to be extended as per the recommendation the costs will increase. There is a planning assumption that the increase in numbers of children being transported will be around 234.
124. The current cost of the different modes of transport and the estimated cost for transporting these 234 pupils, based on the percentage rate that applies to the total number of children currently travelling by each mode, is set out in the following table:

Mode of transport	Cost per annum	Estimated number of pupils who might travel by each mode	Estimated cost of transporting pupils with a nearest school to a Surrey school
Contract coach	£820 on average	117	£95,940
Rail pass	£393	10	£3,930
Bus pass	£816	59	£48,144
School's own coach	£719 on average	8	£5,752
Reimbursement	£153 on average	7	£1,071
Taxi/Minibus	£3,502 on average	33	£115,566
Total		234	£270,403

125. If numbers decreased or increased by 10%, the estimated range of expenditure could be between £240,000 to £300,000.

126. The decision to withdraw home to school transport on faith grounds to denominational schools is estimated to save over £1m by 2020 (£0.5m by 2015).
127. If the recommendation is accepted, the savings available from the withdrawal of the denominational transport could be used to off-set the expected increased costs. This would mean that part of these savings would not be available for any future savings required by the Directorate as part of business planning, or available to be used to off-set overspends on SEN transport (almost £2m in 2013/14).

Section 151 Officer Commentary

128. The service have considered the additional potential costs of this policy change and have identified how they could be funded including the financial implications of doing so.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer

129. Surrey's Home to School Transport Policy meets the local authority's statutory requirements under the Education Act 1996. The authority also has a power to provide additional support which goes beyond what is required by the Act and the policy provides a process for the exercise of this power in exceptional circumstances.
130. Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, the local authority has a 'public sector equality duty' to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between different groups sharing a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between different groups sharing a protected characteristic and those who do not

Members need to be satisfied that the proposals comply with this duty and should take into account the Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 4.

131. The policy promotes consistency across the County for all Surrey residents regardless of whether or not they share one of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010 and any changes would need to adhere to this principle.
132. The extension of the policy to provide transport to the nearest Surrey school where a child's nearest school was out of County but would still require transport support would support those families who feel their school preferences are restricted due to their inability to pay transport costs to their preferred Surrey school, and would enhance parental choice.

Equalities and Diversity

133. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached in Annex 4.
134. Surrey's current Home to School Transport policy is written so that it can be applied equally and objectively across Surrey and in this way it is fair and equitable to all families.

135. If the transport policy were to be extended in any way consideration would need to be given to whether such financial benefit would favour certain groups above any other and whether this would be fair and equitable.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

Surrey's Home to School Transport policy for 2015 will be published online by the end of the Summer term and summarised in Surrey's School Admissions booklet for parents applying for a school place for September 2015.

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Surrey County Councillors, Parish Councils, Local MPs,
Parents
Children and Education Select Committee

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Surrey's Home to School Transport policy for 2014
Annex 2 - Consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport Policy
Annex 3 – Outcome of consultation
Annex 4 - Equalities Impact Assessment

Sources/background papers:

- DfE Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance (2007)
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Home to School Transport Policy for 4-16 year olds 2014/15

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The legal responsibility for ensuring a child's attendance at school rests with the child's parent. Generally, parents are expected to make their own arrangements for ensuring that their child travels to and from school.
- 1.2 A local authority is only under a statutory duty to provide transport if the nearest qualifying school is not within statutory walking distance of the child's home by the nearest available route (section 444(5) of the Education Act) or to certain children whose families are on a low income (Schedule 35B to the 1996 Education Act). Otherwise the provision of transport is at the local authority's discretion.
- 1.3 Only where children meet the criteria in this policy will they be entitled to free transport between their home and school.
- 1.4 This policy does not apply to children with statements of special educational needs or to children who are over compulsory school age and who are in sixth form or college. Separate policies apply in these cases.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 Children must be resident in Surrey County Council in order to qualify for free transport.
- 2.2 Children who are between the ages of 8 and 11 years (Year 4 to Year 6) and who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, will qualify for assistance with travel to their nearest qualifying school (see paragraph 2.5 for more details on nearest qualifying school), if the walking distance between their home and the school is more than two miles. Assistance under this criterion will be reviewed annually.
- 2.3 Children who are of compulsory school age who are aged 11 or over (Year 7 to Year 11) and who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, will qualify for assistance with travel to one of their three nearest qualifying schools (see paragraph 2.5 for more details on nearest qualifying school), where they live between two miles (measured by the shortest walking distance) and six miles (measured by the shortest road route) from the school (*with exception to schools attended based on religion or belief, please see Section 3*). Assistance under this criterion will be reviewed annually.
- 2.4 Assistance with travel can also be granted, if:
 - A child is aged between 4 and 16 and attending reception up to Year 11; **and**

- the school they attend/are due to attend is their nearest qualifying school (see paragraph 2.5 for more details on nearest qualifying school), with exception to schools attended based on religion or belief (see Section 3); **and**
 - the shortest walking distance between their home and the school is more than two miles for a child under 8 years of age, or more than three miles for a child aged 8 years and over.
- 2.5 The nearest qualifying school will be one that has a vacancy and that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, regardless of whether or not it is within the County of Surrey. In the case of the junior stage of education the nearest qualifying school will either be a junior school or an all through primary school with a separate published admissions number at 7+. The point at which a school will be determined as having a vacancy will be the point at which places are allocated. Qualifying schools under this policy are:
- Community, Foundation, Trust, Voluntary-Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools
 - City Technology Colleges, City Colleges for the Technology of the Arts and Academies
- 2.6 If on the date places were allocated, a place would have been available at a nearer school, then free transport will not be given to a school which is further away. This is the case whether or not the nearer school was named as a preference on the application form.
- 2.7 The walking distance between the home and the school is measured as the shortest available walking route. A route will be available if it is a route that a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school (see Section 4 for more details on safety of route).
- 2.8 Distances will be measured using the Admissions & Transport Team's Geographical Information System from the address point of the pupil's house, as set by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest school gate available for pupils to use. In some instances there may be a school closer to the home address if measured by a straight line (as used in the admission criteria for Surrey Community and Voluntary Controlled). In this situation the authority will provide transport assistance to either school so long as the other criteria are met.
- 2.9 Assistance with travel will not normally be agreed if a house-move results in the prescribed distance being breached and if the school being attended is still the nearest school or if there are other nearer schools with an available place (but see enforced council moves in paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11). However, assistance may be agreed if the school being attended is not the nearest school and if the child is in years 6, 10 or 11 at the time of the move, if there are exceptional reasons for a move at that time. Where parents wish their case to be considered as an exceptional case they should provide details along with independent evidence of their case.
- 2.10 Assistance with travel may be agreed if the prescribed distance is breached as a result of an enforced permanent council move and if the school being attended is still the nearest school. Evidence of an enforced permanent council move must be provided.

- 2.11 Assistance with travel may also be agreed if the prescribed distance is breached as a result of an enforced temporary council move that is anticipated to last less than 6 months. Evidence of an enforced temporary council move must be provided.
- 2.12 Assistance with travel will not be agreed if a parent takes a child out of a local school and voluntarily places them at a school over the prescribed distance.
- 2.13 If a child has been offered travel assistance and they have a sibling, that child must also meet the terms of this policy in order to qualify for travel assistance in their own right.
- 2.14 Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school. Some schools give priority to children who are attending a feeder school, but attending a feeder school does not confer an automatic right to transport to a linked school.
- 2.15 Patterns of admission change and as such parents should not presume that their child will be eligible to home to school transport on the basis that other children have been entitled in the past. Applications are considered on a case by case basis according to the home address of each applicant and the availability of other schools for that cohort.
- 2.16 Surrey County Council makes no provision for assistance with travel to children attending independent schools.

3. Children attending schools on grounds of religion or belief

- 3.1 Children who are of compulsory school age who are 11 or over (Year 7 to Year 11) and who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, will qualify for assistance with travel to their nearest faith school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, where they live more than two miles (measured by the shortest walking distance), but not more than 15 miles (measured by the shortest road route) from that school.
- 3.2 When considering whether a faith school is preferred on the grounds of religion or belief, the County Council will take into account the nature of other schools that may have been named as higher preferences on the application form. For an application for travel assistance to be agreed under this section, the expectation will be that the school that is preferred on the grounds of religion or belief will be named above any non-faith schools that have been named on the application form.
- 3.3 Parents must provide supporting evidence regarding their genuine adherence to their religion or belief and this will normally be confirmed by asking their minister of religion to sign the application form.

4. Safety of route

- 4.1 Any queries regarding the safety of a route are assessed by a Community Travel Advisor from the Safer Travel Team in line with Surrey County Council's Risk Assessment Procedure at Highway Sites.

- 4.2 Factors to be taken into consideration include the age of the child, the width of the roads, the existence of pavements, visibility, the speed and volume of traffic, the existence or otherwise of lighting and the condition of the route at different times of the year. Each case will be considered on its own merits on consideration of all the risks and the existence on any one negative factor will not automatically deem the route to be unsafe.
- 4.3 If a walking route under the statutory walking distance is deemed to be unsafe then transport will be agreed only if the school was the nearest qualifying school.
- 4.4 If measures are subsequently introduced which make a route safe, which was previously assessed as unsafe, then transport may be withdrawn.

5. Children and parents with medical conditions and/or disabilities

- 5.1 If, due to a medical condition or disability, a child has to attend a particular school that is not the nearest qualifying school but is over the statutory walking distance, then transport will be agreed to the allocated school. Medical evidence must be provided that demonstrates why the child needs to attend that school. In these cases the Admissions and Transport team reserve the right to seek the view of Surrey County Council's designated medical officer.
- 5.2 If, due to a medical condition or disability, a child is unable to walk to a qualifying school which is within the statutory walking distance and no arrangements can be made for them to attend a school nearer to their home, then transport will be agreed for them to attend their existing school. Medical evidence must be provided that demonstrates why the child is unable to walk to school. In these cases the Admissions and Transport team reserve the right to seek the view of Surrey County Council's designated medical officer.
- 5.3 If a route is only deemed to be safe when accompanied by a parent and if a single parent has a disability or both parents have a disability which would prevent them from accompanying the child, then the child would be eligible for home to school travel assistance even if the prescribed distance was not breached. In such cases medical evidence must be provided to confirm the nature of the parent's disability and how it would impact them in accompanying their child to school. In such cases assistance might take the form of a walking escort. Travel assistance agreed under this provision will be subject to periodic review.

6. Children in Public Care

- 6.1 When a child/young person is accommodated in a social services residential unit or in foster care on a long term basis and requires full-time education for longer than twelve months it will be expected that the child will transfer to a local school within one term. During the period that attendance at their existing school is maintained, any transport costs will be shared equally between social services and the education department.
- 6.2 If a local school placement is not achieved within one term because nearer schools are full and the child/young person continues to attend their previous school, then

the education department will provide travel assistance to the school until an appropriate vacancy occurs at a nearer school.

- 6.3 If the child/young person has less than twelve months to attend school then they will, if appropriate, continue with their existing school placement and the cost of the any transport will be met by education and social services equally.
- 6.4 In all cases travel assistance will only be agreed if the distance to the existing school breaches the maximum statutory walking distance appropriate to the age of the child.
- 6.5 Other travel assistance may be available to children in public care directly from social services.

7. Assistance Available

- 7.1 Parents cannot choose the type of transport they will receive for their child. Wherever possible, children will be expected to travel by the cheapest form of public transport so the County Council can provide the most cost-effective service.
- 7.2 A journey to school will be considered as suitable if it allows the child to reach the school without undue stress, strain or difficulty that they would then be prevented from benefiting from the education. To this end the following maximum journey times are considered to be reasonable for a journey to school:
 - 45 minutes for primary aged pupils
 - 75 minutes for secondary aged pupils
- 7.3 Subject to meeting the eligibility criteria of this policy, the following assistance will be considered:
 - A free bus or train pass
 - A seat on a school coach
 - Where a Surrey pass is not appropriate, such as where a child is travelling to an out of County school, parents can claim for reimbursement of the cost for their child to travel to school. Parents will be asked to submit a claim form at the end of each term and evidence of the cost of the tickets purchased must be submitted. The refund will be for the lowest equivalent public transport rate between the pupil's home and the school.
 - Where no public transport service is available and parents take their child to school by car they may claim a petrol allowance for the journeys undertaken with the child on board. The mileage rate to be used will be Surrey County Council's approved mileage rate. The mileage to be used will be the shortest road route from the home address to the school. For car users taking more than one child, only a single application will be considered per family.
- 7.4 Taxis will not be provided unless there is no alternative mode of transport available that will get the child to school within the Government's guidelines of 45 minutes for a primary aged child and 75 minutes for a secondary aged child or if a child's medical condition and/or disability means that he/she is unable to travel using the alternative modes of transport that are available.

- 7.5 No tickets will be issued for part journeys of one mile or less unless that route has been deemed to be an unsafe walking route.
- 7.6 Provision will be reviewed periodically and if a more economical mode of transport becomes available then the parent will be given notice of a change to the mode of transport.
- 7.7 Assistance agreed under paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1 of this policy will be reviewed annually.
- 7.8 Travel assistance is only available towards travel from home to school at the start and end of the day. Costs towards day release or school events will not be considered under this policy. In these circumstances parents should contact the school directly.
- 7.9 When children are given tickets on buses or trains it is the parent's responsibility to find out about the relevant timetables.
- 7.10 Parents will be issued with a policy on how their children are expected to behave on any transport provided, along with advice on procedural and safety issues. Failure of a child to conform to this policy might lead to a child being removed from the transport.
- 7.11 Assistance will be withdrawn if at any time it is discovered that a child lives within the prescribed distance.
- 7.12 Transport that has been agreed in error or as a result of incorrect, misleading or fraudulent information will be withdrawn. Surrey County Council will seek reimbursement of any costs that have been obtained fraudulently and reserve the right to take legal action against any person who has made a fraudulent application for free home to school transport.

8. How to apply

Starting school and transfer to junior and secondary school

- 8.1 Surrey children who are due to start primary school in reception or to transfer to year 3 at junior school or year 7 at secondary school in September will be automatically assessed for school transport eligibility. As such parents need not make an application. The Admissions and Transport team will tell parents if their child meets the criteria for free transport, usually by the end of June. (However, see paragraphs 8.3 for details of transport applications according to paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1 of this policy).
- 8.2 If they are eligible, parents will be sent a slip to return to the Transport Coordination Centre (TCC) to confirm that they wish to take up the offer of transport. On receipt of that confirmation the TCC will make the arrangements for transport and they will write to the parent to confirm once those are in place.
- 8.3 Parents who are entitled to free school meals or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit and who believe they will qualify for

free transport under the provisions in paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1 of this policy should obtain an application form from Surrey Schools and Childcare Services on 0300 200 1004 or download a form from Surrey County Council's website at www.surreycc.gov.uk. Evidence of free school meals or Working tax Credit eligibility must be provided with the application form.

- 8.4 The Admissions and Transport team will share details of all eligible pupils with the Transport Coordination centre (TCC), which is based at County Hall in Kingston. The TCC are responsible for arranging the most appropriate transport for each child. They will advise parents of the transport arrangements that have been made, as appropriate, and will arrange for any bus or rail passes to be sent.

Late applications for starting school and transfer to junior and secondary school, in year admissions and changes in address

- 8.5 Parents who apply late for starting school and transfer to junior and secondary school, children who change school in year and those that have moved will need to make an application for school transport. Application forms are available from the Surrey Schools and Childcare Service - Telephone: 0300 200 1004 or to download on Surrey County Council's website at www.surreycc.gov.uk.

9. Special consideration and appeals

- 9.1 Parents of children who do not satisfy the conditions of this policy but who wish their case to be given exceptional consideration and those who believe that a decision to refuse transport is incorrect may apply for their case to be considered at transport case review.
- 9.2 Parents must complete a transport case review form on which they must indicate whether they believe the original decision to be wrong or whether they wish their case to be considered as an exception to the policy. The form must be returned with a personal letter giving details of their case within 20 working days from receipt of the decision.
- 9.3 Applications for special consideration must be accompanied by independent supporting evidence such as from a GP or consultant, a social worker, the police, other local authority officers, copies of relevant court orders etc.
- 9.4 With the exception of paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1, qualification for travel assistance is not means-tested, and family income will not be given special consideration under the terms of this policy.
- 9.5 Transport case reviews will be carried out by a panel of at least three senior officers within 20 working days of receipt of the transport case review form.
- 9.6 If the parent remains unhappy with the decision at transport case review, they can request, within 20 working days, to have their application reviewed by a panel of three County Council Members.
- 9.7 The County Member review panel will aim to review the application within 40 working days of receipt of the parent's request.

10. Changes in circumstances

- 10.1 Any change in circumstances, at any time, that might affect eligibility for assistance with the cost of travel, such as a change of address/school or the child leaving school, must be notified immediately in writing to the Admissions and Transport team who will need to reassess the child's eligibility to free transport.
- 10.2 If a child moves out of the administrative area of Surrey County Council the parent must surrender any travel pass with immediate effect. Responsibility for travel will rest with the local authority in whose area the child has moved to.
- 10.3 If the child is no longer eligible for free travel, the travelcard/train pass must be returned immediately to the Transport Co-ordination Centre at County Hall, so that they can obtain a refund from the operator. Failure to do so will result in the parent/guardian being financially liable for the proportionate cost of the unused card.

11. Concessionary seats

- 11.1 If the child is not eligible for free transport and the school that they go to is served by a contract vehicle, they may be offered spare seats at a concessionary rate. More details of the scheme and the current concessionary rates are available from TCC at Transport Co-ordination Centre, Room 311, County Hall, Kingston on Thames, KT1 2DY.
- 11.2 Parents must make an application for a concessionary seat and are recommended to do so before the end of July in order to be considered in the initial allocation of concessionary seats. Pupils who had a concessionary seat in the previous academic year will not need to reapply but their application will be considered afresh each year, alongside any new applications that have been received. In this way there is no guarantee that a child will receive a concessionary seat for two consecutive years.
- 11.3 Where possible, spare seats on coaches will be offered in August. There may also be some spare seats available on taxis and minibuses. However these will not be offered until October half term in order to make sure that all entitled pupils have been allocated seats. As such if you are not offered a spare seat on a coach you should make your own arrangements for travel for the start of term.
- 11.4 Concessionary seats on contract vehicles are limited, so if an entitled child needs that seat in the future, a child may have their seat withdrawn at short notice.
- 11.5 If more families want concessionary seats than there are seats available, priority will be given to Surrey applicants before out of County applicants and within each category, statutory school age children will be considered ahead of post 16 students. Applicants will then be prioritised according to the following criteria, in order:
- 1) Children with a brother or sister who already travel on the vehicle
 - 2) Children for whom there is no other public transport available to travel to school

3) Children based on straight line distance from their home address to the school, with priority being given to those who live furthest from the school

11.6 When it is not possible to offer a seat on the coach, parents will be notified that their child's name is on a waiting list.

11.7 Where there is no waiting list, late applications will be considered on a first come first serve basis.

12. Attendance at alternative provision

12.1 Responsibility for transport to alternative provision rests with the Area Lead for Pupil Support. Full details of the policy is set out in the document 'Transport for children attending alternative provision'.

12.2 Pupils who meet the eligibility criteria below will have a statutory entitlement to transport to their alternative provision.

a. Pupils who are dual registered at a mainstream school and alternative provision will qualify for transport if:

- They qualified for home to school transport to their on roll mainstream school; and
- The shortest walking distance between their home and the alternative provision is more than two miles for a child under 8 years of age or more than three miles for a child aged 8 years and over; and
- They only attend the alternative provision e.g. they do not split their attendance between the alternative provision and the mainstream school

b. Pupils who are registered at an alternative provision as sole provider will qualify for transport if:

- The shortest walking distance between their home and the alternative provision is more than two miles for a child under 8 years of age or more than three miles for a child aged 8 years and over

12.3 Children who are between the ages of 8 and 11 years (Year 4 to Year 6) and who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit, will qualify for assistance with travel under the above criteria, if the walking distance between their home and the alternative provision is more than two miles.

12.4 For other pupils who do not meet the criteria above, the school will generally be responsible for paying transport costs. However discretionary transport support may be agreed for pupils who continue to be on roll of a mainstream school where alternative provision has been implemented to prevent exclusion from a Surrey school or where it links to a placement made under Surrey's Fair Access Protocol.

12.5 Children on the roll of a Surrey school will be considered for transport to alternative provision regardless of residency, however if the pupil is not resident in Surrey transport will only be considered from the on roll school to the alternative provision.

- 12.6 The Area Lead for Pupil Support will make arrangements to assess and determine eligibility for transport in line with this policy and in consultation with appropriate professionals at the time of agreeing the placement/provision. This will include liaison with the Head of the alternative provision, where appropriate.
- 12.7 Where alternative provision is made for children who are entitled to home to school transport, it is the responsibility of the school to notify the Admissions and Transport team that the child's provision has changed so that the child's eligibility might be reassessed according to the child's new provision and, where appropriate, amend the arrangements for transport.

13. Children with statements of special educational needs

- 13.1 Children do not automatically qualify for free travel because they have a statement of special educational needs. There is a separate transport statement for children with statements of special educational needs.

14. Further Education

- 14.1 Please see Surrey County Council's separate policy for students of sixth form age.

15. Further advice on home to school transport

- 15.1 Parents can get more help or advice from the Surrey Schools and Childcare Service on 0300 200 1004 (calls are charged at the local rate) or visit Surrey's website at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/learning/schools/school-transport/free-home-to-school-transport.

Surrey County Council

Consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport Policy - 2015

8

1. Is Surrey County Council proposing any changes to its home to school transport policy for 2015?

In the current economic climate, Surrey County Council is not currently proposing any change to its home to school transport policy for 2015. With the cost of transport increasing, Surrey is working hard to ensure that its expenditure under existing policy remains within budget.

Any proposal to extend or vary policy would lead to an increase in expenditure on home to school transport. Any increase in expenditure would be likely to impact on other services that the Council offers as Surrey would need to consider making savings elsewhere to fund an increase in home to school transport expenditure.

2. Why is Surrey County Council carrying out a consultation?

In 2006 there was a clear commitment from Surrey's Executive and Full Council that there should be no exceptional arrangements applied to Surrey's transport policy and that all pupils should be considered against a policy that should be applied equally and transparently across the County. As a result it was agreed at that time that any area or school based exceptional arrangements should cease and that all pupils across the County should be assessed according to common eligibility criteria.

A number of years have passed since that review and Surrey County Council now wishes to ensure that its home to school transport policy remains fair and equitable to all its residents and that the policy contributes to its commitment for all children to have fair access to education.

Whilst the County Council has not proposed any changes to its policy, it is interested to hear:

- the views of Surrey residents and schools on the equity of the existing policy
- details of any home to school transport difficulties that Surrey parents might currently face; and
- details of any suggestions for change (recognising that any additional expenditure on home to school transport would mean that Surrey would need to make savings elsewhere).

In submitting comments, respondents are asked to consider that Surrey remains committed to a County wide policy that can be applied equally and transparently in all areas. As such, if any changes are to be suggested they should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area.

3. Legislative framework of Surrey's home to school transport policy

The legal responsibility for ensuring a child's attendance at school rests with the child's parent. Generally, parents are expected to make their own arrangements for ensuring that their child travels to and from school.

A local authority is only under a statutory duty to provide transport if the nearest qualifying school is not within statutory walking distance of the child's home by the nearest available route (section 444(5) of the 1996 Education Act) or to certain children whose families are on a low income (Schedule 35B to the 1996 Education Act). The provision of transport beyond these requirements is at the local authority's discretion.

A local authority must publish its home to school transport policy in time for parents to take account of it when applying for a school place. As the policy for 2014 has already been published in Surrey's school admissions booklets for 2014, this consultation relates to the policy for 2015.

4. Surrey's current home to school transport policy

Surrey's home to school transport policy provides only for those Surrey children who are eligible by law to receive free home to school transport, as follows:

- Children who are under the age of 8 who attend a school which is their nearest suitable school which is more than 2 miles from their home
- Children who are aged 8 years and over who attend a school which is their nearest suitable school which is more than 3 miles from their home
- Children who are aged 8 years and over but under the age of 11 who are in receipt of free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and who attend a school which is their nearest suitable school which is more than 2 miles from their home
- Children who are of compulsory school age who are aged 11 years and over who are in receipt of free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home
- Children who are aged 11 to 16 who are in receipt of free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and who attend a school on the grounds of their religion or belief which is between 2 and 15 miles from their home

Generally, whilst a parent has the right to apply for a school of their preference, the local authority has no duty to provide transport to that school if there is another school which is nearer which could have offered a place had the parent applied.

Whilst there is no longer any provision within Surrey's policy for children to receive discretionary support for transport to faith schools on denominational grounds (this was withdrawn for new applicants from September 2012), there are still some children in receipt of this discretionary support because they were assessed as entitled before September 2012. **It is not intended for this review to consider the reinstatement of transport to faith schools on denominational grounds.**

Currently, under this policy, Surrey County Council is providing free home to school transport for approximately 6,300 compulsory aged mainstream pupils at a cost of approximately £9.3m per annum.

5. Common queries on home to school transport

- **Why does Surrey County Council take account of schools outside Surrey when assessing entitlement to free home to school transport?**

The local authority has a duty to ensure that a school place is available for each child in its area, but does not have a duty to provide a place at a Surrey school for each child. Many parents choose to apply for schools across the County boundary and some are successful. Where parents live close to the County boundary and have a nearer school which is in the area of another local authority, Surrey will usually consider this school in the assessment of home to school transport. This is because it would not be a good use of public funds to pay for a child to travel to a school which is further away when there is a school which is nearer which they could travel to.

- **Are the admission arrangements of a school taken in to account when assessing eligibility for free home to school transport?**

No, in order to ensure that a consistent policy is applied across the County, admission arrangements are not taken in to account when assessing eligibility to free home to school transport. In this way feeder links or a catchment within a school's admission criteria do not confer an automatic right to free transport to that school for eligible pupils.

- **Will my child be eligible to receive free transport if other children or siblings have received it in the past?**

Not necessarily. The assessment of free home to school transport is considered for each child individually rather than on an area by area basis and so parents should not presume that because other children from an area or siblings have received free transport to a particular school in the past, that their child will be entitled to free transport to that school in the future. Each year the pattern of admissions and availability of places can change and this can influence the outcome of home to school transport applications if a parent has not applied to their nearest schools.

- **Will I receive free home to school transport if I don't apply to my nearest schools?**

Your child will normally only be eligible for free home to school transport if they are attending the nearest available school that could have offered them a place. If your child would have secured a place at a nearer school had it been named as a preference, then they will not be eligible for free transport to a school that is further away (although some exceptions may apply for secondary aged children whose families are on Working Tax Credit or who are entitled to free school meals).

- **Does the County Council have regard to transport links or costs when considering eligibility for home to school transport?**

No, eligibility is generally based on the shortest walking or straight line distance to the school from the home address. If the parent prefers a school which is further away but

which is easier or cheaper to get to by public transport, the child will not generally be eligible to free home to school transport if the parent chooses that school over another nearer school.

The consideration of transport links and cost in establishing eligibility for home to school transport would not provide for an equitable, consistent or transparent policy across the County as it would provide for different outcomes for different pupils. The availability and cost of public transport is also a factor outside the local authority's control and can be subject to change.

6. Who is being consulted as part of this consultation?

Surrey County Council is consulting with parents, schools, the Diocesan Bodies that represent the church schools in Surrey, Early Years establishments, Members of Surrey's Admissions Forum, County Councillors, Borough & District Councillors and Parish Councils.

7. How can I respond to the consultation?

Respondents should complete the online response form which is available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/schooltransportconsultation or send the paper response form to: Principal Manager Admissions and Transport (Strategy), Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking GU22 7QQ.

8. What is the timetable for the consultation?

The closing date for responses is Friday 20 December 2013. An analysis of the responses will then be prepared and recommendations put forward for consideration by Surrey County Council's Cabinet for a decision on 22 April 2014. The transport policy for 2015 will then be published on Surrey's website and in the school admissions booklets for 2015 which will be available from the beginning of September 2014.

Surrey County Council

Consultation on Surrey's Home to School Transport Policy - 2015

Response form

In submitting comments, respondents are asked to consider that Surrey remains committed to a County wide policy that can be applied equally and transparently in all areas.

1. Have you read the consultation document on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy?

 Yes No

(tick box as appropriate)

2. Are you familiar with Surrey's current policy on home to school transport?

 Yes No

(tick box as appropriate)

3. Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?

 Yes No

(tick box as appropriate)

If No, please provide details:

4. Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy enables parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?

 Yes No

(tick box as appropriate)

If No, please provide details:

5. Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey's current home to school transport policy?

Yes	No
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(tick box as appropriate)

If Yes, please provide details including the name of the school involved:

6. Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?

Yes	No
-----	----

(tick box as appropriate)

If Yes, please provide reasons:

7. Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?

Yes	No
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(tick box as appropriate)

If Yes, please provide reasons:

8. Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?

Yes	No
-----	----

(tick box as appropriate)

If Yes, please provide reasons:

9. Do you wish to make any suggestions for change to Surrey's current home to school transport policy? **(Any suggestions should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area)**

Yes	No
-----	----

(tick box as appropriate)

If Yes, please provide details (recognising that any additional expenditure on home to school transport would mean that Surrey would need to make savings elsewhere)

10. Other comments – please attach additional information as required:

Your details:

Please provide your name and address below. Individuals should only make one response to the consultation. Checks will be carried out to ensure there are no multiple responses. Only response forms which are fully completed with the respondent's name and address will be accepted.

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Name of your school/organisation (if applicable): _____

Please tick the category that most applies to you:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Chair of Governors | <input type="checkbox"/> | Headteacher | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| School Governor | <input type="checkbox"/> | School staff member | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Early years establishment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Representative from the Diocese | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> | Family member (other than parent) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Member of Admissions Forum | <input type="checkbox"/> | Surrey County Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Borough/District Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parish Council member | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local community group | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Other (please specify):

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please respond by **Friday 20 December 2013** by completing the online form at www.surreycc.gov.uk or by returning this form to:

By Post: Principal Manager Admissions and Transport (Strategy), Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, GU22 7QQ

Email: schoolsconsultation@surreycc.gov.uk

For queries regarding this consultation please telephone the Surrey Schools and Childcare Service on 0300 200 1004. Please note that we are unable to give individual responses.

Consultation on Surrey’s home to school transport policy 2015

Outcome of consultation

Response to consultation

1. By the closing date, 170 responses had been submitted online and 7 responses had been received by email/letter.

2. These 177 responses were from:

Borough/District Councillor	1
Chair of Governors	1
Family member (other than parent)	1
Headteacher	1
Member of public	1
Parent	162
Parish/Town Council	7
School Governor	2
School senior leadership team	1

3. A summary of the 170 online responses is set out below in Table A. A further breakdown of these responses according to the category of respondent is included in paragraph 5.

Table A - Summary of responses to transport consultation for September 2015

Number	Question	Yes	No
1	Have you read the consultation document on Surrey’s Home to School Transport policy?	164 (96%)	6 (4%)
2	Are you familiar with Surrey’s current policy on home to school transport?	165 (97%)	5 (3%)
3	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?	107 (63%)	63 (37%)
4	Do you think that Surrey’s current home to school transport policy enables parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?	125 (73.5%)	45 (26.5%)
5	Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey’s current home to school transport policy?	68 (40%)	102 (60%)
6	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child’s home address which the child could be offered?	97 (57%)	73 (43%)
7	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child’s home address which the child could be offered?	88 (52%)	82 (48%)
8	Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?	148 (87%)	22 (13%)
9	Do you wish to make any suggestions for change to Surrey’s current home to school transport policy? (Any suggestions should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area.)	94 (55%)	76 (45%)

4. The seven respondents who submitted emails/letters wrote about very specific issues which will be covered below in the analysis of the any other comments section from paragraph 36.
5. A breakdown of online responses according to the category of respondent is as follows:

Question 1:		Yes	No
Have you read the consultation document on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy?	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher	1	
	Member of public	1	
	Parent	154	6
	Parish Council member	3	
	School governor	2	
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	164 (96%)	6 (4%)

Question 2:		Yes	No
Are you familiar with Surrey's current policy on home to school transport?	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher	1	
	Member of public	1	
	Parent	155	5
	Parish Council member	3	
	School governor	2	
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	165 (97%)	5 (3%)

Question 3:		Yes	No
Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)		1
	Headteacher		1
	Member of public		1
	Parent	102	58
	Parish Council member	3	
	School governor	1	1
	School senior leadership team		1
	Total	107 (63%)	63 (37%)

Question 4:		Yes	No
Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy enables parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?	Borough / district councillor		1
	Family member (other than parent)		1
	Headteacher		1
	Member of public	1	
	Parent	120	40
	Parish Council member	3	
	School governor	1	1
	School senior leadership team		1
	Total	125 (73.5%)	45 (26.5%)

Question 5:		Yes	No
Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey's current home to school transport policy?	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)		1
	Headteacher	1	
	Member of public	1	
	Parent	64	96
	Parish Council member		3
	School governor		2
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	68 (40%)	102 (60%)

Question 6:		Yes	No
Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?	Borough / district councillor		1
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher	1	
	Member of public		1
	Parent	90	70
	Parish Council member	2	1
	School governor	2	
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	97 (57%)	73 (43%)

Question 7:		Yes	No
Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?	Borough / district councillor		1
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher		1
	Member of public		1
	Parent	85	75
	Parish Council member		3
	School governor	1	1
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	88 (52%)	82 (48%)

Question 8:		Yes	No
Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher	1	
	Member of public		1
	Parent	140	20
	Parish Council member	2	1
	School governor	2	
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	148 (87%)	22 (13%)

Question 9:		Yes	No
Do you wish to make any suggestions for change to Surrey's current home to school transport policy? (Any suggestions should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area.)	Borough / district councillor	1	
	Family member (other than parent)	1	
	Headteacher		1
	Member of public	1	
	Parent	88	72
	Parish Council member	1	2
	School governor	1	1
	School senior leadership team	1	
	Total	94 (55%)	76 (45%)

6. A breakdown of the online responses by post code is as follows:

Postcode	Number of respondents	Postcode	Number of respondents
CR3	1	KT10	2
CR TOTAL	1	KT11	5
GU10	5	KT12	3
GU12	1	KT13	4
GU15	3	KT17	4
GU16	4	KT18	1
GU18	2	KT19	2
GU2	2	KT20	3
GU21	2	KT21	1
GU22	4	KT22	3
GU24	2	KT23	2
GU25	1	KT8	5
GU26	2	KT TOTAL	35
GU27	1	SM5	1
GU4	2	SM7	1
GU5	3	SM TOTAL	2
GU7	3	TW16	3
GU8	1	TW20	1
GU9	2	TW TOTAL	4
GU TOTAL	40		
RH1	5		
RH19	1		
RH2	2		
RH4	1		
RH5	16		
RH6	3		
RH7	55		
RH8	3		
RH9	2		
RH TOTAL	88		

Analysis of online responses to questions within the home to school transport consultation

7. **Question 1 - Have you read the consultation document on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy?** Overall, all but six of the 170 online respondents indicated that they had read the consultation document on Surrey's Home to School Transport policy.
8. All six of the respondents who indicated that they had not read the consultation document were parents.
9. **Question 2 - Are you familiar with Surrey's current policy on home to school transport?** Overall, all but five of the 170 online respondents indicated that they were familiar with Surrey's current policy on home to school transport.
10. All five of the respondents who indicated that they were not familiar with Surrey's policy on home to school transport were parents.
11. **Question 3 - Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide?** Overall, 107 respondents (63%) felt that Surrey's current home to school transport policy delivers an equitable policy that can be applied County wide. Only 63 respondents (37%) felt that the policy was not equitable.
12. Of the 107 respondents who felt that Surrey's current policy was equitable, 102 were parents, three were Parish Council members, one was a borough/district councillor and one was a school governor.
13. Of the 63 respondents who felt that Surrey's policy was not equitable, 58 were parents, one was a school governor, one was a member of public, one was a school senior leadership team, one was a headteacher and one was a family member (other than a parent).
14. Reasons given for believing that the policy was not equitable were as follows:
 - Providing minimum required under legislation is unfair in many cases and increases traffic congestion and pollution as parents use their cars
 - Too generic and does not allow for specific needs
 - It penalises families living close to County boundaries and inequitable to only fund transport to nearest school rather than nearest Surrey school
 - There is a disjointed approach to the way admissions and transport is assessed and transport entitlement does not take into account feeder links
 - Children living in Lingfield and Dormansland are disadvantaged because of their location
 - Transport commitment was made to Lingfield and Dormansland when the secondary school in Lingfield closed
 - There is more transport given to affluent areas of the County than less affluent
 - It limits a parent's choice of school, especially those on low income
 - Distance is measured as the crow flies but should be according to road route
 - Catholic schools should not be counted as local schools as they do not admit non-Catholic children
 - Transport policy shouldn't take account of schools outside of Surrey
 - Children with a disability receive transport whilst more able children have to travel up to an hour from the same road to the same school
 - Transport decisions do not take account of the cost of transport
 - Policy does not allow for schools that feed from a church infant school to a church junior school such as Puttenham to Waverley Abbey
 - Difference between distance to nearest and next nearest school can be negligible
 - Private coach is more expensive than taking the train
 - Transport policy forces parents to choose a school based on which is nearest

- Policy needs to take in to account geographical obstacles, existing transport links and community cohesion
- People want their children to go to the best school
- If a decision is made to go to a school that is further away and they have to pay this is unfair and will mean that only people who can afford to pay for travel will attend that school
- No provision for families where both parents are working
- Doesn't enable siblings to travel safely together
- A sliding scale of fees would be fairer
- The policy is just followed as written with no opportunity to improve or review on case by case basis
- Disproportionate number of taxis to Surrey Hills but poor parking in village should not be a reason for excessive transport at the cost of the taxpayer
- A school place should automatically come with transport if the child requires it, above a certain distance
- Unfair that children entitled to free school meals have free transport to their nearest three schools between 2 and six miles whilst others do not

15. **Question 4 - Do you think that Surrey's current home to school transport policy enables parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases?** Overall, 125 respondents (73.5%) felt that Surrey's current home to school transport policy enabled parents to clearly understand how decisions are made in individual cases. Only 45 respondents (26.5%) felt that the policy did not enable parents to clearly understand how decisions are made.

16. Of the 125 respondents who felt that Surrey's current policy enabled parents to clearly understand how decisions are made, 120 were parents, three were Parish Council members, one was a school governor and one was a member of public.

17. Of the 45 respondents who felt that Surrey's policy did not enable parents to clearly understand how decisions are made, 40 were parents, one was a borough/district councillor, one was a school governor, one was a school senior leadership team, one was a headteacher and one was a family member (other than a parent).

18. Reasons given for believing that the policy did not enable parents to clearly understand how decisions are made were as follows:

- The fact cases are dealt with on an individual basis means that the policy can't explain how individual decisions are made
- It is not transparent enough
- Ambiguity to way policy is worded – not clear if you have to apply for schools in the same order as they are distance from home address or if you just have to apply for nearest
- Policy not aligned to admissions and so difficult for parents to make informed decisions
- Too complicated and obtuse – try simple english
- One child might get transport and the next might not
- Some schools may appear closer but don't take account of rivers, traffic problems or how long a journey will take by road
- Little clarity about decisions for schools which change status
- Fails to take account of individual circumstances

19. **Question 5 - Have you ever faced any difficulties as a result of Surrey's current home to school transport policy?** Overall, 68 respondents indicated that they had faced difficulty as a result of Surrey's current home to school transport policy whilst 102 indicated that they had not.

20. Of the 68 respondents who indicated that they had faced a difficulty, 64 were parents, one was a borough/district councillor, one was a member of public, one was a school senior leadership team and one was a headteacher.

21. Examples of difficulties which had been faced as a result of the transport policy which were within the remit of this consultation were as follows:
- The Chair of Governors at Surrey Hills (and district councilor for Mole Valley) raised an issue whereby children are not eligible to receive transport to the Westcott site for the junior phase of their education because they have another nearer school, despite the Abinger Common site being their nearest school.
 - The senior leadership team of Oxted School indicated that they had seen a significant drop in numbers as a result of the policy
 - A number of parents commented on the uncertainty of receiving transport from Dormansland, Lingfield and Tatsfield to Oxted because they have an out of County school that is nearer
 - A parent who lived in Lingfield commented that they were not eligible to free transport to Oxted School because Oakwood in Horley was closer, despite there being no direct transport links to that school
 - A parent expressed concern that the bus to St Bede's in Send and the bus to George Abbot School ceased, creating difficulties and increased cost in getting to school
 - A parent indicated that they had difficulty getting a concessionary seat on the bus to Waverley Abbey, which stopped outside their house
 - A parent indicated that they were not eligible for free transport to Rydens Enterprise School because it was not the closest school but the schools that were closer were a much longer drive than when measured as the crow flies
 - A parent in Capel was advised that a busy road with no pavement or street lighting was a safe walking route
 - Several parents indicated that their eldest child receives free transport but that the younger one does not
 - A parent indicated that they were not eligible to receive free transport from Oakwood Hill to The Priory because another school was nearer, despite children from the village traditionally going to Dorking schools.
22. **Question 6 - Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there is a school outside Surrey which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?** Overall, 97 respondents (57%) thought that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a Surrey school, even if there was a nearer school outside of Surrey which could offer a place. However, 73 respondents (43%) thought that Surrey should not offer free home to school transport in that scenario.
23. Of the 97 respondents who felt that home to school transport should be offered if there was a nearer school outside of Surrey which could offer a place, 90 were parents, two were Parish Council members, two were school governors, one was a headteacher, one was a school senior leadership team and one was a family member (other than a parent).
24. Reasons given for believing that home to school transport should be offered in such a scenario were as follows:
- The child may have better links with the Surrey school
 - Should keep Surrey pupils in Surrey schools
 - Links exist between Surrey primary and secondary schools
 - Transition will be affected to the detriment of students
 - Children in the same families may be split
 - Yes, if SCC would have to pay for them to attend their nearest school anyway
 - Surrey parents pay council tax to Surrey
 - Applying for schools across the County boundary generally means that the child will be out of catchment
 - Anyone who sends their child to a distant school does so for good reason
 - There is no safe route to other schools from a rural village
 - May be inconsistent with designating schools as feeder schools

- Free transport should be provided to the catchment school
 - Yes, if the school is more suitable on medical, educational, social or family grounds
 - Obligation to provide school places falls on Surrey
 - Important to go to school of choice
 - Ease of transport should be considered
 - Transport to all schools should be free for all children
 - Policy should take account of peer groups, social cohesion and existing transport links
25. Of the 73 respondents who felt that home to school transport should not be offered if there was a nearer school outside of Surrey which could offer a place, 70 were parents, one was a borough/district councillor, one was a parish council member and one was a member of public.
26. **Question 7 - Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there is another school which is nearer to the child's home address which the child could be offered?** Overall, 88 respondents (52%) thought that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend a feeder school, even if there was a nearer school which could offer a place. However, 82 respondents (48%) thought that Surrey should not offer free home to school transport in that scenario.
27. Of the 88 respondents who felt that home to school transport should be offered to a feeder school even if there was a nearer school which could offer a place, 85 were parents, one was a school governor, one was a school senior leadership team and one was a family member (other than a parent).
28. Reasons given for believing that home to school transport should be offered in such a scenario were as follows:
- No point in designating a school as a feeder and not paying transport
 - Transport policy should be brought in to line with admissions policy and support effective transport between schools
 - Should be considered on case by case basis
 - Feeder schools develop good working relationships with the secondary school and makes the transition less daunting as children remain with their peers
 - School choice should not come down to whether you can afford transport
 - Supports minimal disruption to the child
 - Social cohesion
 - Yes, if transport would still need to be paid to nearest school
 - It is fair and equitable
29. Of the 82 respondents who felt that home to school transport should not be offered to a feeder school if there was a nearer school which could offer a place, 75 were parents, one was a borough/district councillor, one was a headteacher, three were parish council members, one was a school governor and one was a member of public.
30. **Question 8 - Do you think that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling has already qualified for free home to school transport to that school?** Overall, 148 respondents (87%) thought that Surrey should provide free home to school transport for a child to attend the same school as a sibling if the sibling had already qualified for home to school transport to that school. Only 22 respondents (13%) thought that Surrey should not offer free home to school transport in that scenario.
31. Of the 148 respondents who felt that home to school transport should be offered to a sibling, 140 were parents, two were parish councillors, two were school governors, one was a borough/district councillor, one was a headteacher, one was a school senior leadership team and one was a family member (other than a parent).

32. Reasons given for believing that home to school transport should be offered in such a scenario were as follows:
- Represents family equity
 - Helps keep siblings together
 - Avoids more school journeys than are necessary and keeps traffic down
 - Parents would want to keep children at the same school as this makes it easier for parent to engage with school, manage holidays and inset days, collecting them from extracurricular activities, parents evenings etc
 - Difficult for parents to understand that different decisions might be made
 - Difficult for parents if children travelling by different modes to the same school
 - Helps keep children safe if siblings travel together
 - Could charge a fee for the second child
 - If one sibling not eligible it could create difficulties between siblings
 - Prevent financial burden on families
 - Parents wouldn't have to change work arrangements to get children to school
 - Little incremental cost if transport already organised
 - More environmentally friendly
 - Forced separation of siblings due to financial costs would be unfair on the children
 - May encourage school changes
33. Of the 22 respondents who felt that home to school transport should not be offered to a sibling, 20 were parents, one was a parish council member and one was a member of public.
34. **Question 9 - Do you wish to make any suggestions for change to Surrey's current home to school transport policy? (Any suggestions should relate to a policy change and not one that would apply to just one school or in one area.)** Overall, 94 respondents indicated that they wished to make suggestions for change to Surrey's home to school transport policy.
35. A summary of the suggestions that were within the remit of this consultation are as follows:
- Allow junior pupils who attend the Westcott site of Surrey Hills to receive free transport if the Abinger site is their nearest school
 - The policy should contain flexibility and a way for dealing with schools close to the County border
 - Transport should be paid for a child who attends a feeder school, lives within catchment and has no safe walking route to any school and/or lives more than three miles from any school
 - Provide transport to pupils who attend their feeder secondary school even if there is a nearer out of county school
 - Allow children to choose whether to use buses or trains
 - Do not provide anything for secondary pupils
 - Take account of changes in circumstances of schools if parking facilities are removed and there are no suitable alternatives and no safe footpath to the school
 - There should be no exception to families on working tax credit
 - Treat all children equally and stop counting Catholic schools as nearest schools if they won't let other children in
 - Have free transport to nearest or catchment school
 - Make the policy village specific for rural areas
 - If two schools are a similar distance away allow free transport to either
 - Make sure there is suitable transport available before advising parents which school they should choose to receive free transport
 - Children should only be eligible to attend their nearest school, even if that is out of county. People choose to live where they live and should account for having to pay for transport of they live rurally
 - Make more transport available to help reduce congestion on roads
 - Discount out of county schools in the assessment of nearest school

- Align school admission and transport policies so they work together
- Provide transport to all pupils to travel to any school regardless if there is a closer school
- Policy should allow children to go to the same school as their friends
- Transport should be agreed if transport costs would be cheaper than to a nearer school
- Policy should take account of child's and family's best interests
- Consider a nominal charge for all home to school transport with some exceptions
- Siblings should be given a higher priority. Even if they pay they should travel together
- Only consider out of county schools if transport cheaper
- Take in to account transport links
- Only those with disabilities and on low income should receive free transport
- The policy needs to be extended to cover 16 to 18 year olds
- Transport should only be provided to children in significant difficulty rather than tax credits
- Transport should be funded for every pupil in the form of vouchers which parents could 'top up' if they wished to travel to a school further away

36. **Other comments** – A number of respondents chose to submit other comments to supplement their response.

37. Matters which have not already been covered elsewhere in this report are as follows:

- With busy roads buses should be encouraged
- Children should be able to attend the school that best meets their educational needs not the school that is closest
- Need support to encourage diversity in rural communities
- Imberhorne School on two separate sites and the upper building may not be the closest school
- It's the local authority's responsibility to ensure that a child can get to school and cannot discharge that responsibility on to parents because of financial constraints
- Boundaries for free transport to George Abbot should include the whole of Send not just part of the village
- Oakwood Hill, Ockley, Walliswood and Forest Green historically send children to Dorking schools but Cranleigh schools are assessed as nearest
- If a child has a school that is closer and has a place, then that child should forfeit free transport
- SCC should only provide transport to schools as a last resort for people that can't manage themselves with testing according to means, physical ability and public transport availability
- School transport arrangements for Waverley Abbey are good and high valued by many
- Whilst there may be school/area specific improvements that could be made they are outside the policy context and are for schools/parents/communities to act upon
- Replace bus passes with train passes where services allow it
- All children should be provided with a free bus to Waverley Abbey

38. The senior leadership team and Chair of Governors at Oxted school expressed specific concern at the impact that considering out of County schools in transport assessments would have on their school community and that they were committed to ensuring a seamless transition from their feeder primary schools.

39. Letters were received from Dormansland and Lingfield Parish Councils in support of families living in their parishes continuing to receive free home to school transport to attend Oxted School.

40. An email was received from Tatsfield Parish Council expressing their concern that families living in Tasfield no longer received free transport to Oxted because there was an out of County school which was nearer to most families.

41. **Comments out of scope of consultation** – during the consultation a number of comments were made which were out of scope of the consultation and will not be considered as part of the resulting report. These were as follows:

- Transport for the youngest children (4-7) needs to be much more considered
- Named drivers need to be known to the children
- Providing different modes of transport to children from the same area can isolate children
- Poor communication once transport had been approved
- Introduce a new route from Lower Kingswood to Therfield School via Headley (Therfield School)
- School transport is continually late
- No questions on safety or level of service
- If bus needs to be paid for it should be per journey and not per term
- Children should be able to pay for a termly ticket at a discounted rate
- Spaces on buses needs to be managed better to allow spaces to be filled and payments to start earlier (The Weald CofE Primary)
- Parents should contribute to long journeys
- More buses should be provided where there is no public transport close by
- Cutting school buses will force parents out on the road causing more congestion and the chance of more accidents
- Unable to find Surrey's sustainable transport policy
- Would welcome support to improve capacity and services from private operators at peak school times to accommodate children (Banstead)
- Subsidised fees and the addition of further routes/service would encourage uptake and alleviate pressure on local roads
- Improvements would be a late bus protocol to contact parents in the event of buses running late and contact numbers for the bus companies
- Please invest in road crossings, road signs and safety training to make it easier for children to walk and cycle to school
- There are some private hires that flout the law with speed and usage of handheld devices and parents should be able to choose mode of transport
- Consider modifying pavements/lighting and to make routes to school safer to allow more children to cycle/walk instead of using the bus
- Lack of communication between transport department with different answers being given by different staff
- Issues with transport providers or escorts responsible for taking children with statements of special educational needs to school
- A parent expressed concern that the bus driver was the only adult on the bus to St Paul's Catholic Primary School
- Surrey Transport did not deal with failings of a transport provider quickly enough
- Issue with safety of routes in Horley with not enough zebra crossings and cars driving too fast
- Paid for seats not notified to parents until very shortly before term starts
- School buses turning up late or failing to turn up
- The County Council should increase incentives for schools to encourage parents to use cars less
- There should be encouragement for people to group together to help each other do school runs
- Surrey should negotiate reduced/subsidised rates on the trains with local operators
- Concessionary places should be prioritised according to those who live closest not furthest away
- Transport arrangements should be finalised two weeks from the start of the new school year, no later
- Provide greater subsidy on school transport to reduce congestion
- Parents should have a say in which company wins the tender contract for their child's transport

- All schools should be of equal quality so there is no need to commute
- Provide more school buses to ensure the safety of children travelling to school
- Consider reintroducing the Pegasus bus service
- Why do all children in London get free bus travel on public transport yet in Surrey there is no subsidy for council tax payers to send children to the school of their choice
- More walking and cycling to school should be encouraged and speed restrictions should be reduced and effectively enforced

Addressing Inequalities

Equalities Impact Assessment

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment Template

Stage one – initial screening

8

What is being assessed?	Home to School Transport policy
Service	Admissions and Transport
Name of assessor/s	Claire Potier
Head of service	Peter-John Wilkinson
Date	12 March 2014
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing policy under review

Write a brief description of your service, policy or function. It is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

The policy being considered under this EIA is Surrey's Home to School transport policy which sets out the circumstances when children will be entitled to receive free home to school transport. Surrey's policy is currently written so that it can be applied consistently, objectively and fairly across Surrey and in this way is equitable to all families.

No changes are currently proposed although there are options to:

- Extend policy to provide free home to school transport for children whose sibling has already been assessed as entitled to transport to attend the same school (other than on faith grounds to denominational schools)
- Extend policy to provide free home to school transport for any child to attend their nearest Surrey school if their nearest school is out of County and the distance or safety of route to that school would mean that transport would still need to be provided

Both options would ensure that the policy could continue to be applied County wide.

Indicate for each equality group whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact.

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Equality Group	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age			X	
Gender Reassignment			X	
Disability			X	
Sex			X	
Religion and belief			X	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Race			X	
Sexual orientation			X	
Carers			X	
Other equality issues – please state				
Looked After Children and care leavers			X	.
Low income families	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy provides for children who are eligible for free school meals and those whose families receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit to receive free transport in accordance with statutory requirements • Extension of policy to provide transport to nearest Surrey school where a child’s nearest school was out of County but would still require transport support would support

				those families who feel their school preferences are restricted due to their inability to pay transport costs to their preferred Surrey school.
HR and workforce issues			X	
Human Rights implications if relevant			X	
<p>If you find a negative impact on any equality group you will need to complete stage one and move on to stage two and carry out a full EIA.</p> <p>A full EIA will also need to be carried out if this is a high profile or major policy that will either effect many people or have a severe effect on some people.</p>				

Is a full EIA required?	Yes (go to stage two)	No X
If no briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.		
Briefly describe any positive impacts identified that have resulted in improved access or services		

For screenings only:

Review date	
Person responsible for review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to Equality and Diversity Manager for publishing

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment - please refer to [equality impact assessment](#) guidance available on Snet

Introduction and background

Using the information from your screening please describe your service or function. This should include:

- The aims and scope of the EIA
- The main beneficiaries or users
- The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the equality groups they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)

Now describe how this fits into 'the bigger picture' including other council or local plans and priorities.

-

Evidence gathering and fact-finding

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include a summary of the available evidence including identifying where there are gaps to be included in the action plan.

Remember to consider accessibility alongside the equality groups

Sources of evidence may include:

- Service monitoring reports including equality monitoring data
- User feedback
- Population data – census, Mosaic
- Complaints data
- Published research, local or national.
- Feedback from consultations and focus groups
- Feedback from individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups
- Evidence from partner organisations, other council departments, district or borough councils and other local authorities

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

Analysis and assessment

Given the available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups? Is this impact positive or negative or a mixture of both? (Refer to the EIA guidance for full list of issues to consider when making your analysis)

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What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

•

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made, who are the beneficiaries and how have they benefited?

•

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

•

Action Plan – actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action

- Actions should have SMART Targets
- Actions should be reported to the Directorate Equality Group (DEG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

Date taken to Directorate Equality Group for challenge and feedback	
Review date	
Person responsible for review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	
Date forwarded to EIA coordinator for publishing	

- **Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review**
- **Electronic copy to be forwarded to your service EIA coordinator to forward for publishing on the external website**

EIA publishing checklist

- Plain English – will your EIA make sense to the public?
- Acronyms – check that you have explained any specialist names or terminology
- Evidence – will your evidence stand up to scrutiny; can you justify your conclusions?
- Stakeholders and verification – have you included a range of views and perspectives to back up your analysis?
- Gaps and information – have you identified any gaps in services or information that need to be addressed in the action plan?
- Legal framework – have you identified any potential discrimination and included actions to address it?
- Success stories – have you included any positive impacts that have resulted in change for the better?
- Action plan – is your action plan SMART? Have you informed the relevant people to ensure the action plan is carried out?
- Review – have you included a review date and a named person to carry it out?
- Challenge – has your EIA been taken to your DEG for challenge
- Signing off – has your Head of Service signed off your EIA?
- Basics – have you signed and dated your EIA and named it for publishing?

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014****REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****MR JOHN FUREY, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT****MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: MR NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****MR TREVOR PUGH, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE****MRS JULIE FISHER, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR BUSINESS SERVICES****SUBJECT: AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Council has a requirement for transport services for eligible children with special educational needs. This requirement is covered by the current Sole Provider contracts that expire on 31/07/2014.

This report seeks approval to award four contracts for the provision of home-to-school transport services to AMK Chauffeurs Ltd and Supreme Freedom to Travel Ltd starting on 01/08/2014, for a three year period with the option to extend up to a further four years, for provision at four SEN Schools.

The proposed 'Sole Provider' contract arrangement will mean that one transport provider is responsible for delivering the entirety of a School's home-to-school transport for the duration of the contract.

Due to the commercial sensitivity involved in the contract award process, the details of the evaluation process and scores, as well as full financial details are included as confidential information in Part 2. (item 16)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

- i) 'Sole Provider' contracts for home-to-school transport, commencing on 1/08/2014, be awarded for provision at the following Schools by the named suppliers:
 - Pond Meadow School – AMK Chauffeur Drive Ltd

-
- The Ridgeway Community School – AMK Chauffeur Drive Ltd
 - Woodlands School – Supreme Freedom to Travel Ltd
 - Walton Leigh School – Supreme Freedom to Travel Ltd

The proposed contracts will be for a three year period with the option to extend for up to a further four years.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Pupils with special educational needs often want consistency from the operator – the same driver, same escort and same vehicle, on time, each day. Parents want to know the driver will show compassion, patience and caring towards their child, and know how to deal with their child's specific needs (anything from autism to severe learning or behavioural difficulties, to physical disabilities). All four Schools have reported these benefits from the current Sole Provider contracts.

To summarise our objectives:

- Consistency of service delivery, as one provider is accountable
- Strong relationship between the School and its transport provider
- Quality of service provision, as performance monitoring will be made easier

DETAILS:

Background and options considered

1. The contracts in place at the four Schools have no provision to further extend them.
2. A joint review between Procurement and Travel and Transport Group commenced in October 2013, looking at how to procure these services going forward in order to achieve operational and financial benefits.
3. A full tender process, compliant with the European Public Procurement Regulations and Procurement Standing Orders, has been carried out following the receipt of authority from Procurement Review Group (PRG) on 16/10/2013. This included advertising the contract opportunity in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) on 8/11/2013.
4. Within Surrey, around 2,700 children are transported daily from home to 23 Surrey County Council (SCC) Special Needs Schools by up to 90 suppliers.
5. 'Sole Provider' contracts were first introduced in 2007 to SCC Schools, where previously they would have used multiple operators to transport eligible children into a School. It was adopted only in Schools where a saving was to be gained by moving to one provider.
6. The four Schools in this tender take very high end, special educational need students with complex disabilities. Almost all routes require escort accompaniment, there are many routes that have to be run as solo passenger

routes for various reasons, many of the pupils are in wheelchairs and sometimes have specific medical equipment with them.

7. The concept has been well received by both the Schools and the supply market and there is further potential for the 'Sole Provider' way of working to be rolled out to other Schools within the County in 2014 and beyond.
8. They have been very successful contracts as the operators who run them tend to employ their own staff and specialise specifically in this type of service. They have strong relationships with the Schools, parents and children, and take extra care to understand their customers' needs. They offer one point of contact for Schools in case of closures, severe weather or delays and cause less congestion around the School entrance than if multiple vehicles were arriving each morning. They tend to only operate home-to-school transport so they do not have other, conflicting priorities.
9. Excluding the four Schools where Sole Provider contracts have been introduced, each home-to-school route is tendered and contracted separately, which does not always allow the most efficient utilisation of vehicles, drivers and escorts to be chosen. As a result we sometimes use a large number of providers for each School, which makes it harder to manage each provider to ensure they meet service levels. In addition, when pupils and routes change, this requires each contract affected to be re-negotiated as each route is awarded on a fixed price depending on the nature of the route at that time. This process takes time and makes it difficult to forecast costs accurately.

Summary of Transport as of November 2013

School	Children with wheel chairs	Children without wheel chairs	Escorts	Total No. Passengers	Solo Routes	Group Routes	Total No. routes
Pond Meadow	17	84	30	131	7	23	30
Ridgeway	25	55	27	107	8	19	27
Walton Leigh	21	49	13	83	1	12	13
Woodlands	18	49	16	83	1	15	16
Total	81	237	86	404	17	69	86

Procurement Strategy

10. Several options were considered when completing the Strategic Sourcing Plan (SSP) outlining the best route to market, before starting the procurement activity. These were i) do not deliver any service ii) disaggregate the contracts and put out to tender through the Taxi Framework or iii) re-tender as Sole Provider contracts.
11. After an options analysis it was decided to invite tenders for Sole Provider contracts as this demonstrated best value for money, considering the level of quality provided by the incumbent operators and the economies of scale offered by them being able to co-ordinate all the travel into one School.
12. The review undertaken aimed to achieve the following objectives:
 - Maintain the current high levels of service delivery that had been achieved by using one provider per SEN School
 - Retain economies of scale
 - Encourage a closer relationship between the SEN Schools and their providers
 - Where possible, facilitate increased cost certainty and control of route/pupil cost changes
13. Since these Sole Provider contracts were originally implemented at the four Schools in 2008, there has been no increase in the mileage rate we are paying to each operator, since the Council fixed prices during that time. Operators have contained cost pressures for almost 5 years, despite fuel increasing by 30% since 2008 (source: www.petrolprices.com).
14. Feedback from Members, Schools, parents and suppliers has been very positive with the original project aims of improving the service quality, communication between Schools, parents and transport suppliers successfully achieved. The Transport Co-ordination Centre have had no complaints lodged by Schools or parents about these contracts, and no penalty points for operational failures have been issued in the last five years.
15. A joint Procurement and project team was set up, including representatives from the Transport Co-ordination Centre. The four Schools were informed and consulted with at key stages of the project, and they provided input into the tender questionnaire.
16. Steps were taken to stimulate interest from the market, by holding two supplier engagement events.
17. An invitation to tender was issued through the online SE Shared Services portal. The tender pack included a pre-qualification questionnaire and a full quality assessment questionnaire. The tender submissions were evaluated against the criteria and weightings in the Part 2 report. Submissions were evaluated by three members of the Transport Co-ordination Centre and head teachers from the Schools.
18. A price comparison was done between the rates on the Taxi Framework and the new Sole Provider quotes. The outcome was that Taxi Framework prices were at least 8% higher compared to the new Sole Provider quotes. It was more expensive through the Taxi Framework because of the complexity of the Schools'

disabilities and low mileage on some routes. By splitting routes up, many of them become financially unviable for operators.

CONSULTATION:

19. Stakeholders consulted at all stages of the commissioning and procurement process included the Transport Co-ordination Centre, Finance, Procurement and Commissioning and Legal Services, and the four SEN Schools.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

20. The contract terms have been drafted by the Legal Department and made specific to this type of service. The Council or the operator can terminate the contract with three months notice period. Contract prices are based on mileage rates per vehicle type.
21. All operators successfully completed satisfactory financial checks as well as checks on competency in delivery of similar contracts at the pre-qualification stage.
22. Site audits were carried out on the two operators to check driver and vehicle documents and validate company policies in line with what was asked for in the tender.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

23. Full details of the contract values and financial implications are set out in the Part 2 report. The estimated costs have been based on routes in place at each School during November 2013. In reality, pupils will leave and new ones will start at the School in September 2014, and the routes will change.
24. Whilst there has been an increase on prices compared to five years ago, they have risen almost in line with inflation.
25. It is not possible to make a direct comparison between the cost of the future contract and the current operating mileage because during the life of the contract, the number, type and length of routes have changed. Since the start of the contracts, total mileage for the Schools has increased from 1,843.97 to 2,154.90 per day. However the unit price per mile will come down from £5.90 per mile under existing contract prices, to £5.82 under the proposed contract prices.
26. Recognising the limited competition currently in the market for this specialised service, it is our intention to further develop the market place in future including holding workshops with the Community Transport sector and all incumbent and potential taxi operators to stimulate competition.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

27. Section 151 commentary is provided in the Part 2 Annex (item 16).

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

28. Surrey County Council currently provides for children with special educational needs in accordance with the Education Act 1996 (as amended) and associated

regulations. In accordance with that legislation the Council has a duty to maintain statements of special needs and to provide the special educational provision set out in those statements. That provision can include transport to and from School where there is a need for this. The proposed contractual arrangements will allow the Council to improve services to meet those duties.

Equalities and Diversity

29. The procurement process was undertaken through a transparent EU procedure, which was advertised to allow suppliers across the EU to express their interest. The contract document stipulates that the supplier will comply with the relevant Equality and Diversity legislation.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

30. The superior quality of service offered by the incumbent suppliers reduces the risk to vulnerable children through well-trained drivers and escorts, safely maintained equipment and vehicles to an exceptionally high standard and robust internal processes and policies.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

31. SCC attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change. The SEN School Sole Provider concept promotes fewer vehicle routes leading to a reduction in fuel usage and subsequent carbon emissions.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

32. The timetable for implementation is as follows:

Action	Date
Cabinet decision to award (including 'call-in' period)	02 May 2014
Standstill Period (10 days)	23 April 2014
Contract Signature	05 May 2014
Contract Commencement Date	1 August 2014

33. The Council has an obligation to allow unsuccessful suppliers the opportunity to receive a debrief and have the opportunity to challenge the proposed contract award before the contract is entered into. This period is referred to as the standstill period.

Contact Officer:

Shona Snow, Category Specialist, 020 8213 2743

Consulted:

Surrey Passenger Transport Group
 Surrey Procurement and Commissioning
 Surrey Legal Services
 Surrey Finance
 SEN Schools

Annexes:

Part 2 Annex – Commercial details, Section 151 commentary and contract award.

Sources/background papers:

- Strategy/Market analysis and all tender documentation are available from Procurement.
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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



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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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014****REPORT OF: MRS HELYN CLACK, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: YVONNE REES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES****SUBJECT: JOINT WORKING THROUGH GUILDFORD LOCAL COMMITTEE****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

It is proposed to strengthen and extend the remit of the existing Local Committee arrangements between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) through the creation of an enhanced Local Committee, with a wider set of advisory functions in the areas of parking, transportation and infrastructure and a greater focus on community involvement through local divisional 'Cluster' meetings.

These proposals will build on the strong track record of collaborative working to date between both Councils and are put forward as a result of the joint work between SCC and GBC which has been a shared process. The objective of the change is to create a Local Committee that more closely reflects the nature of the decisions that need to be made locally, therefore improving outcomes and value for money for Surrey residents and businesses in Guildford through strengthened local democracy and improved partnership working.

Surrey County Council Cabinet approval is sought to agree minor amendments to the advisory functions of Guildford Local Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Support the proposals to enhance joint working arrangements between the Councils through the Guildford Local Committee from the new municipal year.
2. Agree the proposed updated terms of reference for the Guildford Local Committee (Annex A).
3. Agree to setting up 'cluster' budgets for grouped divisions jointly funded by SCC and GBC, with the rules and criteria to be agreed by Guildford Local Committee.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

These recommendations seek to increase and develop joined up working between the two Councils to produce better value and coordinated services for residents. Working in partnership can provide added value in terms of cost and time savings and produce more effective, coordinated responses to service delivery.

Cabinet's endorsement of closer working between SCC and GBC is sought, along with the approval of the recommended amendments to the advisory functions of the Guildford Local Committee.

DETAILS:

Business Case

1. The Community Partnership Public Value Review (PVR) presented to Cabinet in November 2012 took its direction from David Hodge, Leader of Surrey County Councils aim "to improve outcomes for residents by strengthening local democracy and placing much greater emphasis on partnership working."
2. One of the PVR recommendations, agreed by Cabinet and Full Council on 26 February and 19 March 2013 respectively, was to 'review the governance model of the Local Committees and the practice of substitutes to make voting on Local Committees equal.' For consideration was the option to enhance the remit of the County Council's Local Committee with a wider list of functions and a greater focus on engagement.
3. The Guildford Local Committee convened a member Joint Working Steering Group to look at this option. Membership comprised County Councillor Mark Brett-Warburton, County (& Borough) Councillor David Goodwin, Borough Councillor Stephen Mansbridge (GBC Leader) and Borough Councillor James Palmer (GBC Deputy Leader). There was a shared process of review and the outcomes of the joint working between SCC and GBC were presented to the Local Committee members informally 11 December 2013.
4. In this financial year GBC will make a contribution to the members Local Allocation for Guildford of £35,000. This will match the capital element of the Allocation. It is proposed that there will be a local budget for the 'Cluster' meetings of £70,000 to address local issues and support local initiatives raised through the meetings.
5. Guildford Local Committee formally reviewed the existing functions and on 12 March 2014 agreed that it would like to strengthen and extend its remit. Through an expanded remit, the Guildford Local Committee will further drive forward the aims of the PVR to:
 - i. Increase the involvement of residents, local communities, businesses and partners
 - ii. Improve decision making and speed-up processes
 - iii. Support Members in their role as community leaders and champions
 - iv. Promote greater accountability and local scrutiny.
6. SCC Cabinet is requested to consider the proposals and agree the necessary changes to the SCC Constitution to enable the new arrangements for the Guildford Local Committee to run from the first meeting of the new municipal year.

Remit of the Guildford Local Committee

RECOMMENDATION 1: Support the proposals to enhance joint working arrangements between the Councils through the Guildford Local Committee from the new municipal year.

7. Guildford has a vibrant and developing economy with a significant programme of change for the town centre and an evolving requirement for economic growth and housing which will be defined by the Borough Council's Core Strategy. As Guildford Borough Council's vision is developed and implemented, Guildford will benefit from GBC and SCC working more closely together to deliver infrastructure improvements. The Local Committee will have a key part to play in this process.
8. The new arrangements for Guildford Local Committee will provide the opportunity to identify local solutions and seek to jointly deliver local government service improvements for the residents, businesses and visitors to Guildford. The following functions are proposed for closer joint working:

Parking

9. It is intended to develop closer and more integrated management of parking and Park & Ride services within the Borough, building on the existing close working relationship between SCC and GBC on parking matters, as set out in the existing On-street Agency Arrangements.
10. Currently, Off-street parking (car parks), fall under the Executive remit of GBC. Park & Ride and On-street parking services fall under the remit of SCC.
11. In order to arrive at a balanced and coordinated approach to traffic management, especially in the town centre, all aspects of parking should be considered together in partnership. It is proposed that:
 - (i) The Parking Business Plan produced by GBC, the On-street Parking Review and Park & Ride pricing review will be considered together at the Local Committee to create an integrated Joint Parking Strategy for the Borough.
 - (ii) As a legal mechanism, the Local Committee will be responsible for recommending the Joint Parking Strategy but the decision making power will continue to rest with GBC for Off-street parking and SCC for On-street parking and Park & Ride pricing.
 - (iii) The Joint Parking Strategy will work within the framework of existing agreements between GBC and SCC regarding Park & Ride funding.
 - (iv) In order for this integrated approach to be considered by the Local Committee Transportation Task Group, its terms of reference will be revised.

Planning, Infrastructure requirements, Developer Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

12. The Local Committee would act as an advisory body in this area, working to integrate infrastructure improvements proposed by both authorities. These infrastructure initiatives include:

- (i) Guildford Town and Approaches Movement Study (GTAMS): Strategic recommendations for transport and movement within the town centre and wider context of the Borough.
- (ii) Local Cycling Strategy: A plan that will consider issues related to cycling within the Borough.
- (iii) Local Speed Plan and 20mph Zones: A plan to consider the provision of speed limits within the Borough, within the context of the County Speed Limit Policy.

13. The Local Committee would utilise the strategies produced by both GBC and SCC into a local committee framework and create a unified approach to ensure the strategic vision for the Borough is successfully implemented by both Councils.
14. The proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List creates a hierarchy of infrastructure projects ranging from large scale schemes to small projects. By linking the 123 List to this unified and consistent approach there would be co-ordination in progressing the strategic objectives of the local GBC vision and wider County infrastructure needs.
15. A unified approach to local infrastructure would be pursued by translating the strategies into a series of local projects which would be supported by the CIL123 List.
16. It is therefore proposed that the Local Committee act in a consultative capacity on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and infrastructure matters.

Operation of Guildford Local Committee

17. Local Committee Transportation Task Group: This Task Group will take on an enhanced advisory role, considering strategic highways and transportation issues within the borough. The terms of reference and membership of the Task Group will be reviewed to reflect the expanded role.
18. Guildford Surrey Board: The Guildford Surrey Board is an ongoing arrangement between Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council to liaise on key strategic issues affecting Guildford. The Local Committee will continue to form a close two- way relationship with the Guildford Surrey Board incorporating recommendations from the Guildford Surrey Board in its work and referring matters to Guildford Surrey Board for consideration.

Governance of Guildford Local Committee

RECOMMENDATION 2: To agree the proposed updated terms of reference for the Guildford Local Committee

19. Guildford Local Committee will continue to operate as a Surrey County Council constituted committee and as such will only make decisions on SCC delegated functions.
20. In order to address the issues of parking and strategic infrastructure as proposed in this report, Cabinet approval is sought for an additional advisory function solely for Guildford Local Committee at the current time, as set out in **Annex A**.

21. The Committee will continue to be chaired by a County Councillor. The Vice-Chairmanship of the Guildford Local Committee will be offered to either the Leader or Deputy Leader of Guildford Borough Council for the next municipal year. Should they not wish to take up the role, it will be offered to a County Councillor.

Engagement

22. Meetings of the formal Committee will continue to be held in public, enabling local people to have their say and contribute directly to the decision making process.
23. To increase public access to the Local Committee the four quarterly formal meetings will be held in the GBC Council Chamber and will be webcast so that the meetings can be broadcast online, with associated equipment costs met by Guildford Borough Council.

Cluster meetings

24. A series of informal local meetings in public will be convened as Cluster meetings. These meetings will divide the Borough into four areas by divisional boundary to allow a more local engagement with residents.
25. The objective of these meetings is to allow the Guildford Local Committee to provide a greater focus on public engagement and transparency through a member led dialogue with communities on local issues of importance
26. It is proposed that the informal Cluster meetings take place annually, providing a forum for members of both Councils to engage with residents within a locality. Parish Council and Residents Associations will be invited to participate, publicise and assist in the organisation of the meetings. It is proposed that the cluster meetings take place during the Autumn of each year.
27. The proposed clusters are:
 - (i) Western Parishes Cluster (Ash, Shalford and Worpleson)
 - (ii) Guildford Neighbourhoods Cluster (Guildford East, North and West)
 - (iii) Eastern Parishes Cluster (Shere and Horsleys)
 - (iv) Town Centre Cluster (Guildford South East and South West)

Please see **Annex B** for a geographical representation

28. It is envisaged that the Cluster meetings will provide greater engagement with residents as an informal means to discuss local issues and priorities. Guildford Local Committee will continue to receive formal questions and petitions from residents and local stakeholders.
29. Each Cluster will comprise the County Councillors for the area and an equivalent number of Borough Councillors nominated by GBC.

Finance

RECOMMENDATION 3: Agree to setting up 'cluster' budgets for grouped divisions jointly funded by SCC and GBC, with the rules and criteria to be agreed by Guildford Local Committee.

30. In 2014/15 it is proposed that there will be a jointly supported budget for the Clusters of £70,000 to address local issues and support local initiatives raised through the meetings. The fund will be administered by SCC with equal funding contributions from SCC and GBC. The SCC portion will come from the Guildford Local Committee Capital Allocation budget. The criteria and procedures for management of these funds will be subject to the confirmation of finance and audit within both authorities. Rules and criteria governing the expenditure will be agreed by Guildford Local Committee in June 2014.

CONSULTATION:

31. The Community Partnership PVR, which ran from January 2012 to November 2012, involved a range of stakeholders as set out in the Cabinet report taken on 26 February 2013.
32. Guildford Local Committee have been fully involved in the development of the proposals through a member steering group, informal meetings and a formal meeting on 12 March 2014.
33. The Leader, the Cabinet Member for Community Services and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment have also been consulted in the development of the proposals.
34. The Guildford Borough Parish Councils via the GBC Parish Clerks Liaison meeting with regard to the 'Cluster' meetings proposal.
35. Discussions have been held with officers from Legal and Democratic Services from both authorities. Officers from the following relevant SCC and GBC service functions have also been fully involved in the development:
- Executive Head, GBC
 - Head of Planning Services, GBC
 - Parking Services Manager, GBC
 - Parking & Strategic Implementation Manager, SCC
 - Transport Projects Team Manager, SCC
 - Infrastructure Agreements Manager, SCC

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

33. There are no significant risk management implications arising from this report.

34. A more unified approach through the work of Guildford Local Committee could reduce the risks of fragmented service delivery and duplication or omission.
35. The additional functions for Guildford Local Committee are of an advisory nature, and therefore should positively support and enhance the decision making process of both authorities.
36. The Guildford Local Committee Capital Allocation will continue to be administered by Surrey County Council.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

37. There are no direct financial implications for SCC. Recommendations for use of SCC funds through a cluster arrangement, as detailed in paragraph 28, will be put to the June Local Committee. This fund will be administered by Surrey County Council Officers.
38. The SCC half of the cluster funding will come from the Guildford Local Committee Capital allocation budget, so can only be used for capital expenditure. The GBC half of the cluster funding is from a revenue budget so could be used for either revenue or capital expenditure.
39. Working in partnership can provide added value in terms of cost and time savings and produce more effective, coordinated responses to service delivery.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

40. There are no direct financial implications of the proposed joint working. However, due to the increased remit of the committee and the administration of a larger jointly funded budget, there may be an increase in administrative time required by the Community Partnerships Team in servicing the needs of the committee. This will be managed within existing staff resources. It is anticipated that this may be offset in part by improved partnership working between the two authorities and reduced duplication in governance arrangements, with this in turn leading to increased value for money
41. Due to the different sources of the cluster funding, when determining the rules governing its use, the local committee will need to consider whether to operate each cluster fund as one large capital fund or two separate revenue and capital funds.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

42. The Guildford Local Committee is an SCC Committee established in accordance with the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000. It comprises all the Guildford County Councillors together with an equal number of Borough Councillors who are co-opted to the Committee. The Committee deals with a mixture of County Council executive and non-executive functions which include providing advice and recommendations on a number of issues. The proposals in this report are to enhance the range of advisory functions to enable the Committee to be consulted on Borough Council matters relating to parking and infrastructure. Any decisions arising from these consultations will still need to be made by GBC where they relate to Borough Council functions. As this consultative role is an executive function it can be delegated to the Local Committee by the Cabinet and does not need to be approved by the full Council.

43. The report also proposes the future appointment of the Committee's vice-chairman from amongst the co-opted Borough Council members. This is permitted by the County Council's constitution.

Equalities and Diversity

44. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed covering the options for change regarding Local Committees as part of the November 2012 Cabinet Report on the Public Value Review of the Community Partnership Team. A summary of the key impacts and actions was provided at this time and has been reviewed.
45. By delivering against the recommendations of the original Cabinet Report, the formation of the Guildford Local Committee will effectively deliver some of the positive impacts identified through the Equality Impact Assessment, such as enabling better partnership working with improved shared outcomes for local residents and communities. There are no negative equalities implications identified.
46. Equalities issues, particularly in relation to any disabilities, will be given consideration in the arrangements for public participation the Guildford Local Committee to ensure that anyone with a protected characteristic is not disadvantaged.
47. There are no further impacts arising from this report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

48. Following Cabinet agreement, the first meeting of the Guildford Local Committee with its enhanced remit will take place on 25 June 2014.
49. There will be a report to the GBC Executive to endorse the proposals
50. The SCC Constitution will be updated to reflect the decision of the Cabinet.
51. Cabinet will receive a progress report back in due course.

Contact Officer:

James Painter
Community Partnerships Manager, 07968 833907
E mail james.painter@surreycc.gov.uk

Consulted:

All members of the Guildford Local Committee
Executive Head, GBC
Head of Planning Services, GBC
Parking Services Manager, GBC
Parking & Strategic Implementation Manager, SCC
Transport Projects Team Manager, SCC
Infrastructure Agreements Manager, SCC
Legal teams SCC and GBC

Annexes:

- A. Changes to SCC Constitution
- B. Cluster arrangements

Sources/background papers:

- Implementation of the Public Value Review of Community Partnership – Constitutional Changes 26 February 2013
 - The Public Value Review of Community Partnership 27 November 2012
 - Community Partnerships Team Cabinet Report November 2012
 - Public Value Reviews – Year Two Report, Cabinet 27 September 2011
-

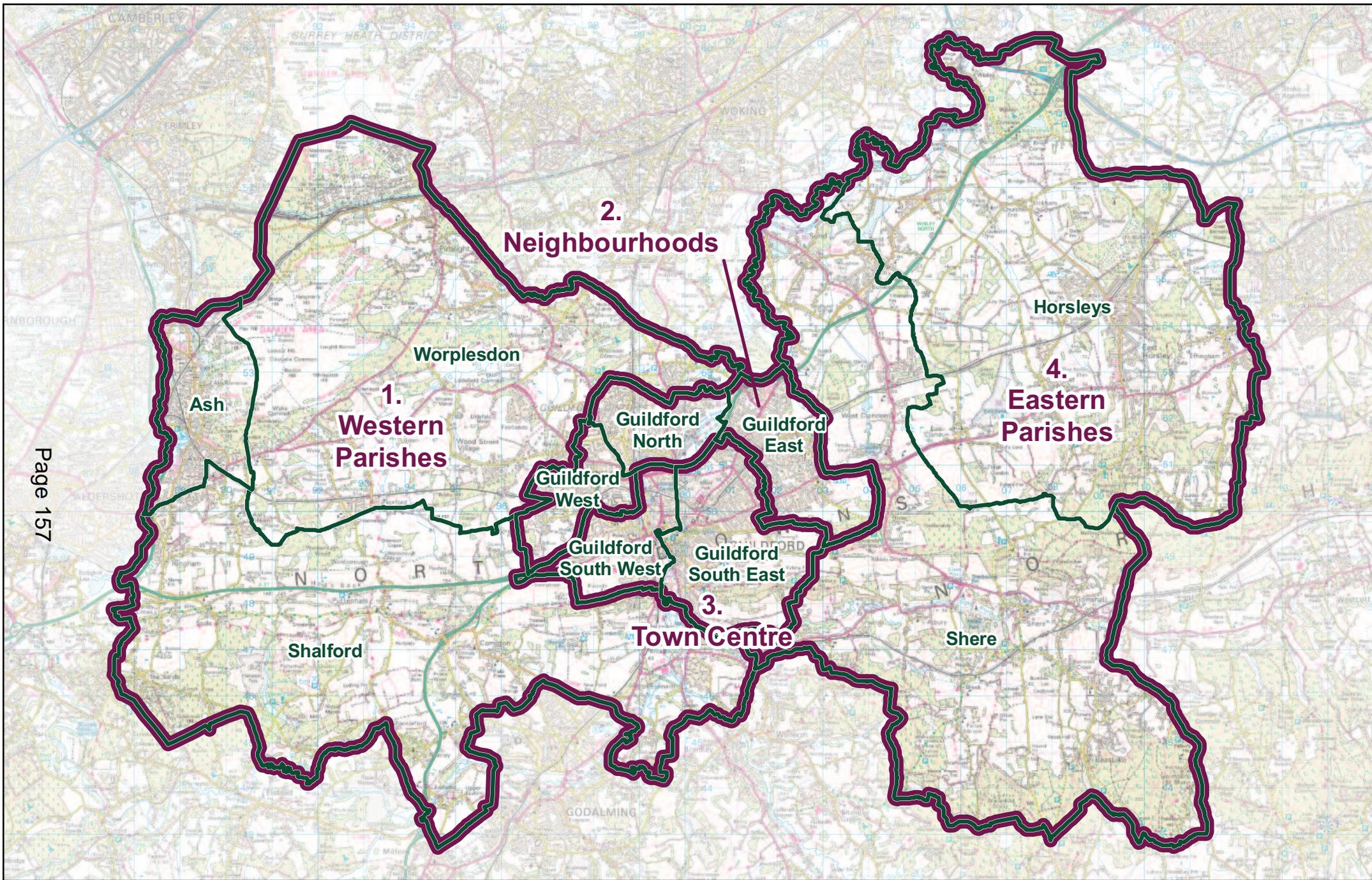
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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL, PART 3, SECTION 1, RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS**SECTION 7 LOCAL COMMITTEES****7.3 Service Monitoring, Scrutiny & Issues of Local Concern**

The Local Committees may:

- i) In relation to the exercise of executive functions relating to Members allocations, the Local Committee will receive a report on all projects approved under delegated authority of the Community Partnership Manager or Team Leader.
- ii) In relation to Community Highway Enhancement allocations, receive a report on all projects approved by Individual Members of the authority under delegated authority, or by the Area Team Manager where Members have requested that their allocations be combined to be spent in one or more divisions.
- iii) Monitor the formal decisions taken by officers under delegated powers and provide feedback to improve service standards.
- iv) Engage in issues of concern to local people and seek to influence the County Council, the Leader and Cabinet in relation to countywide services and plans in the light of local needs.
- v) Consider priorities for collaborative work undertaken within the committee's area by county services and partners.
- vi) Monitor the quality of services provided locally, and recommend.
- vii) Be informed of the borough/district based community strategies and related local plans within their area.
- viii) Be informed in relation to the prioritisation of proposed and planned infrastructure schemes, or developer funded highway improvements within their area.
- ix) Be informed of and receive appropriate reports on highway initiatives and/or improvements either wholly or partly in their area.
- x) Monitor local initiatives agreed and funded by Local Committees.
- xi) Oversee and monitor on street parking enforcement including financials in its area subject to terms of reference, agreed by the committee, which best suit its particular local Page 97 circumstances.
- xii) Scrutinise the impact of the Local Prevention Framework in accordance with prevention priorities for Young People not in education, employment or training (NEET), in the local area.
- xiii) Guildford Local Committee may be consulted by the borough council in relation to proposed borough plans and make recommendations to the borough council on those proposals which will include parking and infrastructure matters.

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Guildford Division Clusters



Electoral Divisions



Division Clusters

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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 22 APRIL 2014



REPORT OF: MR TONY SAMUELS, CABINET MEMBER FOR ASSETS AND REGENERATION PROGRAMMES

MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

LEAD OFFICER: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER

PETER JOHN WILKINSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

SUBJECT: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPELTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM A 2 FORM OF ENTRY PRIMARY 420 PLACES TO A 3 FORM OF ENTRY PRIMARY 630 PLACES CREATING AN ADDITIONAL 210 PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

There is significant demand for new schools places within Spelthorne, resulting from increases in the birth rate and inward migration into the County. This demand is addressed through the County's five year 2014-19 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Spelthorne Primary School has recently amalgamated into an all through primary school from separate infant and junior schools. As part of the amalgamation the school is expanding from two forms of entry (420 places) to three forms of entry (630 places) from September 2015 providing an additional 210 places.

Spelthorne Primary School has been identified as requiring expansion to meet the demand in the Spelthorne area and this project is being carried out in 3 phases. Phase 1 was an enabling works package and delivered a new staffroom in September 2012. Phase 2 delivered the refurbishment of the Foundation unit providing 60 new places and completed in September 2013.

Cabinet is asked to agree the business case for the final phase of the overall expansion project. This will encompass the whole school and provide a further 150 places, taking the total new primary places to 210 by September 2015. The work is planned to take place over the summer 2014 and 2015 in order to minimise disruption to the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the school as set out in agenda item 16 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for phase 3 of the project to expand Spelthorne Primary School be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposal supports the Authority's statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the population in the Spelthorne area.

DETAILS:

Background

1. There is an increasing demand for primary places in Spelthorne. This demand will result in a shortage of primary places in September 2015. Spelthorne Primary School has been identified for expansion to meet the need for places in the local area.
2. It is proposed that the school will expand from a 2 form entry (2 FE) primary school with 420 places to become a 3 form of entry (3 FE) primary school with 630 places providing an additional 210 new primary places.
3. Whilst the expansion is not required until September 2015, the nature of the project involves considerable internal alteration work. In order to minimise disruption to the school, the expansion is being delivered in 3 phases utilising the summer holiday periods wherever possible.
 - a. Phase 1 delivered in Summer 2012 undertook enabling works, which prepared the site for future phases and created a new staffroom;
 - b. Phase 2 delivered in Summer 2013 created a foundation unit and provided an additional 60 places; and
 - c. Phase 3 will provide additional junior classrooms by relocating the library and a community space, rationalisation and refurbishment of existing classrooms, improved storage and the provision of toilets to the first floor. The works also include some minor improvements at the main entrance to the school and remodelling of the pedestrian access to improve security and safeguarding of pupils. Phase 3 will deliver the balance of 150 places to provide the total of the 210 places required.
4. The Cabinet is asked to approve the business case for Phase 3. Financial details have been circulated as agenda item 16 in Part 2 of the agenda for Members. Subject to approval, the works will be tendered and a contract awarded. The balance of 150 places will be delivered by September 2015 to provide a total of 210 new primary school places to meet the demand within Spelthorne.

CONSULTATION:

5. The recommendation to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 60 - 90 in September 2014 was approved by Cabinet on 26 February 2013.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

6. There are risks associated with the projects and project risk registers have been compiled and are regularly updated. A contingency allowance

appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate for potential identified risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

7. The scheme will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated as item 16 in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to Members to ensure commercial sensitivity in the interests of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

8. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the funding for this scheme is in the current medium term financial plan and the estimated costs are expected to reduce following the tender.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

9. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Local Authorities (with responsibility for education) to ensure sufficient primary and secondary education provision is available to meet the needs of the population in its area.

Equalities and Diversity

10. The expansion of this school will not create any issues, which would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.
11. The new school building will comply with Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations. The expanded school will provide employment opportunities in the area.
12. The school will be for children in the community served by the school. If there is sufficient provision available, then it would be beneficial for all children, including vulnerable children.
13. The school will be expected to contribute towards community cohesion and will be expected to provide the normal range of before and after schools clubs as are provided in a typical Surrey County Council school.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

14. This proposal would provide increased provision in the area, which would be of benefit to all in the community served by the school. This means it would therefore also be of benefit to any looked after children who will attend the school.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

15. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. The school will be built to the local planning authorities adopted core planning strategy.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

If approved, to proceed to tender and subsequent contract award through delegated decision.

Contact Officer:

Bill Christie, Senior Project Manager (Schools), Property, Tel: 020 8541 9509
Melanie Harris, Schools Commissioning Officer, Schools and Learning, Tel: 020 8541 9556

Consulted:

Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services
Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager, Business Services
Ian Beardsmore, Local Member for Sunbury Common and Ashford

Annexes:

None - Part 2 report with financial details attached to agenda as item 15

Sources/background papers:

- The Education Act 1996
 - The School Standards Framework Act 1998
 - The Education Act 2002
 - The Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Report to Cabinet: Schools Capital Budget Allocations 2010-2014 – 30 March 2010
 - Investment Panel: Report 28 September 2010
 - Consultation on Surrey's Admission Arrangements for September 2014 for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and Co-ordinated Schemes – 26 February 2013
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SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014****REPORT OF: N/A****LEAD OFFICER: ANN CHARLTON, HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES****SUBJECT: LEADER/DEPUTY LEADER/CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To note the delegated decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet note the decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the last meeting as set out in Annex 1.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To inform the Cabinet of decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated authority.

DETAILS:

1. The Leader has delegated responsibility for certain executive functions to the Deputy Leader and individual Cabinet Members, and reserved some functions to himself. These are set out in Table 2 in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
2. Delegated decisions are scheduled to be taken on a monthly basis and will be reported to the next available Cabinet meeting for information.
3. **Annex 1** lists the details of decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the last Cabinet meeting.

Contact Officer:

Anne Gowing, Cabinet Committee Manager, 020 8541 9938

Annexes:

Annex 1 – List of Cabinet Member Decisions

Sources/background papers:

- Agenda and decision sheets from the Cabinet Member meetings (available on the Council's website)

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CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**APRIL 2014****(i) Opening Hours at Surrey's Performing Arts Library****Details of decision**

That the opening hours of the Performing Arts Library be extended from 27.5 hours per week to 33.5 hours per week as set out in paragraph 13 of the submitted report.

Reasons for decision

These proposals form part of a longer-term change programme within the Performing Arts Library, to increase efficiency and capitalise on income-generation opportunities.

The revised opening hours will offer improved value for money for Surrey residents, as they will provide greater access to the library at no additional cost to the county council.

The proposals will improve the library's efficiency, as staff will spend a greater proportion of their working week being available to serve customers, and able to offer a programme of events and activities.

(Decision of Cabinet Member for Community Services – 9 April 2014)

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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