

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S PROGRESS REPORT JULY - DECEMBER 2013

Introduction

1. This is the ninth of my half yearly progress reports to Members but the first to the current Council. I am again using it to provide an overview of progress over the last six months and the challenges that lie ahead.
2. The **overview section** (p1-11) gives readers a summary of what we have achieved and the key challenges ahead. For those who would like more detail there are facts, figures and case study examples for each of the priority areas the council is focussing on attached to this report (p12-21).
3. The **case studies** are again described directly by the staff from across the council who made them happen. Sharing examples in this report is one of the ways for us to **celebrate our achievements and learn from each other**. The inspiring stories featured in this report will be added to those already on our online **Improvement Toolkit** and I encourage staff and Members to add further examples. There is also further information on the council's priority goals, including some **excellent short films**, on the website.
4. Also attached to the report is a list of the latest **awards and recognition** the council has recently received (p22-23). I'm proud that the hard work of Members and staff is increasingly recognised on the national stage.
5. I was particularly struck by **two examples of recognition**. Mary Hendrick was shortlisted for the Guardian's Public Servant of the Year award for her work with people with learning disabilities over 25 years. Meanwhile, Russell Minns, a former young carer and apprentice with Adult Social Care, was invited to chair a major national conference on young carers following his outstanding work in this area.
6. Whether we are at the start of our careers or have years of experience, and whatever our roles and areas of expertise, we all have a crucial contribution to make. **Day in and day out the combined efforts of our colleagues and partners makes a significant impact on the lives of residents.**
7. I believe we have a **strong team in Surrey**; comprising our staff, Members and partners. I want to put on the record again **my appreciation of the colleagues I am fortunate to work alongside**. This report reminds me yet again just how important and lasting the work we do together is for Surrey and its residents.

Overview

The last six months

8. In my last report I described the smooth transition into a new Council after the election in May. Following this there were two crucial moments in July which **set the strategic direction and foundation for the council for the next four years**.
9. On 16 July 2013 the County Council approved ***Confident in our Future, the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2013-18***. It sets out the national context and challenges we face, the priority areas the council will focus on, and how residents will benefit. Thanks to colleagues in our design team, the Strategy is now illustrated through a clear and engaging two minute **video**.
10. One week later on 23 July 2013, the Cabinet approved a **suite of reports** which brought together the **key components for achieving the goals and ambitions** set by the council. They included a refreshed Medium Term Financial Plan, an Investment Strategy, an approach to innovation, and plans for public service transformation with partners following the Government's decision to select Surrey as one of nine areas to lead transformational work.
11. We completed a similar exercise in July 2009 at the start of the previous Council term. The overall strategy and approach agreed then was successfully delivered over the following four years. I believe the **refreshed strategy and approach agreed in July 2013 will be similarly successful**.
12. The challenges we face are ever more complex and significant in scale. I remain confident about tackling them for three main reasons. First, **we have the right strategy in place**. The work completed in July sets out how the council will stay strong over the coming years so it can ensure all Surrey's residents remain healthy, safe and confident about their future. Our long term strategic plans are rightly focussed on continuing to strengthen our relationships with residents, businesses and all partners, developing innovative solutions, and planning and managing our finances carefully and responsibly.
13. The second reason for my confidence is the **evidence of our continued progress**. We have put the key components of our strategy into practice and made good progress on key goals over the last six months. This progress is recognised by our residents (e.g. **latest resident survey results**) and peers (see p12-21). The third reason for my confidence is **the quality of our colleagues which is first class**.
14. There are more details and **case study examples** of recent achievements attached to the report, but I will draw attention to some of them later in this cover report too.
15. **Effective learning** remains a key part of our approach. The learning process is crucial if we are to meet our responsibilities to residents now and in the future. As part of this we have a duty to understand and address any mistakes we make.

16. The **Serious Case Review process** plays an integral part in response to any serious incidents related to care for vulnerable people. It involves a review of multi agency working and results in recommendations for improvements in working practices. On 16 September 2013 the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board published its Serious Case Review into the death of Gloria Foster. The council apologised for failing to organise alternative care for Mrs Foster, accepted the report's findings, and is taking action on the recommendations.
17. Effective learning requires listening. The council often has to make decisions where there are strong competing views on an issue. The current debate about **cycling** in the county is one example. The consultation and public debate we have arranged are very important and are ensuring that all views are heard and considered throughout the decision making process. The Cabinet will consider the cycling strategy in December.
18. Looking back over the last six months there are a number of key events and milestones. In September the county's schools opened for the new academic year and thanks to an excellent team effort every one of the **additional 2,852 primary school places** needed was ready. This was a major achievement, equivalent to providing seven new large primary schools and was over six times the number of additional places needed just five years ago.
19. Demand for places will continue to increase over the coming years making our **investment in schools** critical. Plans for further places have since been **announced** and more will follow as part of the biggest school investment programme in the county's history. Meanwhile the number of Surrey schools classified as "good" or "outstanding" has increased and we continue to focus relentlessly on improving standards.
20. Our work with partners to **strengthen the economy** has gained pace in recent months. In October **Invest in Surrey** was launched by Surrey Connects the county's economic development company. This new initiative provides a single point of contact and a wealth of information for investors looking to move to the county from other parts of the UK or overseas.
21. We have continued to support the Enterprise M3 and Coast to Capital LEPs (Local Enterprise Partnerships) to develop **draft strategic economic plans** which can benefit the region and maximise the level of investment in Surrey. The emerging plans will be finalised and submitted to the Government for approval in March 2014.
22. Investment in **transport infrastructure** is critical and through the Surrey Future partnership group we have agreed the county's **top transport infrastructure priorities** for future decades. Progress on these strategic infrastructure priorities - such as the A3 corridor and Crossrail 2 - will help to maintain Surrey as a globally competitive county, able to attract and retain businesses.
23. We have also continued to work closely with our district and borough colleagues on **local transport schemes and development projects**. For example, in September work began on the Redhill Balanced Network project in partnership

with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. This will enable the development of new homes, supermarkets, shopping and leisure facilities in the town centre, reduce congestion by turning the one-way system back into two-way traffic, complete the town centre's pedestrianisation, and improve walking and cycle routes.

24. Our additional **investment in road maintenance** continues to have a positive impact. The council's five-year £100m Operation Horizon programme is overhauling more than 300 miles of road. From April to September highways teams reconstructed 107 roads. Laid end-to-end these major repairs would run 40 miles – the distance from London to Reading. At the time of writing we have not yet suffered from snow and ice. Plans are in place with our partners to keep the roads moving should **severe winter conditions** strike.
25. The county did suffer from the **storms and floods** in late October and we responded to over 80 incidents. Yet again I was impressed by how well colleagues coped with difficult conditions, going the extra mile in many cases to keep critical services going.
26. One infrastructure investment well underway is **Superfast Broadband**. Our partnership with BT is making Surrey the best connected county in England and an important goal was met when the first 15,000 homes and businesses were confirmed as successfully connected in September. Another 15,000 premises should have high-quality access by the end of December. We have also continued to direct more of our spending on goods and services to **local firms**, using initiatives such as **Build Surrey** to support the local economy.
27. In September a senior executive from BP took on the role of chairing the county's new **Employment and Skills Board**. Bringing together the county's major businesses, further education colleges, schools, training providers and councils means there is now a strong single voice and group working to develop the skills the county needs.
28. Elsewhere we have continued to expand our successful apprenticeships programme as part of our wider drive to **create opportunities for young people**. For example, in October we launched the **CoTrain** initiative which makes it easier for small and medium sized businesses to hire an apprentice. Our programme of work has helped to halve the number of young people not in education, training or employment (NEET) in Surrey over the last four years so there are now around 500 NEETs aged 16-19 in the county. There is still much more work to do, but the drop in numbers is heartening.
29. We have continued to work with partners to support residents during what are challenging economic times. Over the last six months we have focussed closely on the **impact of welfare reforms on residents**. All local authorities in the county are working closely with the voluntary community and faith sector to ensure residents get the advice, information and support they need to prepare for and manage the benefit changes. There are now a range of resources in place including **Surrey Save Credit Union** and the **Surrey Local Assistance Scheme**. These and other initiatives supplement the excellent work done by the county's 14 Citizen Advice Bureaux

30. One of the most important things the council does is act as the corporate parent to **children in the council's care**. The Corporate Parenting Board has continued to oversee and support progress. It was national adoption week in November and as part of our campaign to recruit adopters we drew attention to some fantastic **adoption success stories**. It is positive that 80 children and young people were able to leave care over the last year, whether through adoption or a Special Guardianship Order, the highest number we have recorded. We will continue to do everything we can so the children and young people we look after grow up having the same opportunities as their peers.
31. A key way to support children in the county is to **help families thrive**. The **Family Support Programme** - which sees all Surrey's public services provide co-ordinated help to vulnerable families - has made huge strides over the last six months with local teams now serving each borough and district council area.
32. So far this year these new teams have helped over 200 families through joint agency support along with extra support provided in the family home - a further 150 families will be offered this help in the New Year. This is in addition to the 412 families that have been supported over the last year with finding work, attending school and reducing crime and anti social behaviour. As part of our agreed work on public service transformation with the Government we are now **planning to scale up the approach** to cover between 4,000 and 7,000 families over three years. This gives us a fantastic opportunity to re-design services coherently and more efficiently around the needs of families.
33. As I described in my last report, more and more of our essential work to **support and safeguard Surrey families and individuals** focuses on effective early intervention, promoting people's independence, and developing the resources – or social capital – that exist among residents and communities. **Shared Lives week** in October was another illustration of this. The Shared Lives service recruits and matches carers with adults who might otherwise be living in a residential home, giving them the opportunity to be more independent, participating in family and community life.
34. Another excellent example is the **Employability team** who continue to help hundreds of people with learning disabilities to secure paid employment, voluntary work or work experience. In September they received a well deserved national award for their achievements.
35. **Public health** services have been effectively embedded into the council over the last six months. A number of successful health campaigns and initiatives have been completed in recent months including for example the **Stoptober** initiative to reduce smoking rates. Public Health colleagues have also started implementing **health checks** for residents aged 40-74 to help identify and prevent health problems.
36. Surrey's **Health and Wellbeing Board** has continued to develop. Work has begun to translate the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy into specific actions and progress can be charted via the new **Healthy Surrey website**. An update

report was also presented to Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 November 2013.

37. The strong relationships between Board members provide a sound foundation for ongoing work around **adult social care and health care integration** – this is another critical area we are tackling through the public service transformation work agreed with the Government. With major changes stemming from the Care Bill being worked through too, it is a particularly complex time of change for adult social care.
38. In October the Cabinet approved a variation to the county's waste contract so that the development of Surrey's **Eco Park** could begin. The development at Charlton Lane in Shepperton, will help minimise the use of costly landfill by dealing with waste in a more environmentally friendly way, as well as generating electricity.
39. Meanwhile residents' efforts to **produce less waste and recycle more** have continued to pay off. Over half of Surrey's household waste is now recycled and Surrey Heath is one of the country's top performing areas on recycling. There is more to do with our district and borough colleagues on waste and we will continue to strengthen our partnership work in this area. Waste is also a priority for the **South East 7 (SE7)** partnership and strong progress is being made in this area and the other SE7 workstreams such as highways.
40. We have continued to do a huge range of work with residents and partners to **care for Surrey's countryside** so it can be enjoyed today and is conserved for future generations. One example is our excellent work to restore mineral sites. This is now widely recognised and in September we launched a new EU funded international project with partners to promote and recommend best practice (see case study p17). I'd also like to highlight again the significant contribution that volunteers make to conserving, maintaining and improving Surrey's spaces.
41. In October the Cabinet reviewed progress on the **Community Partnered Libraries (CPL) Programme**. Six of the 10 planned CPLs are now up and running. Resident and volunteer feedback in these libraries is positive and visitor numbers are up compared to the same period last year.
42. Reflecting on our progress over the last six months reminds me of the significant contribution all colleagues make to the lives of residents. Some people make a distinction between the so-called "front office" and "back office". I do not. **We are one team working for the residents of Surrey.**
43. There are many different **contributions from teams across the council** that I could use to emphasise this point. An example I would like to highlight in this report is that of **legal services**. They are an incredibly professional and dedicated team who make a critical contribution across all areas of the council's work – this includes big infrastructure projects, care proceedings, the development of new models of delivery and much more.

Looking ahead

44. The good progress made over the last six months gives us strong momentum for tackling the challenges ahead. **It does not mean we can be complacent.** In fact we will need to accelerate our work over the coming months.
45. **Demand for services will continue to rise.** Approximately 11,500 deaths and 22,000 births are registered in Surrey each year. The winter months will as always increase risks to vulnerable people and cause damage to the road network triggering further demands. The net impact of various Government funding changes will mean a real terms reduction in available resources. And we will have to continue to work through the impact of national policy reforms which can sometimes have contradictory and conflicting impacts.
46. Demographics, Government decisions, and the weather; **it is the factors that we cannot control directly that cause me most concern.** Our strategic approach is to ensure that we have developed a strong and resilient organisation that can respond effectively to whatever lies ahead of us.
47. So far we have managed to **balance the delivery of our day to day responsibilities with efforts to transform the way we work** with partners and residents. This will get harder because **we now need to accelerate the pace of transformation.** If we do not our efforts will be overtaken by the rapidly rising demands.
48. In order to meet this challenge over the next six months it is crucial we continue to retain a sharp focus on the three key areas I set out in my last report: **relationships, finances, and innovation.** Our success in these areas will determine our ability to stay strong and achieve the ambitions we have for Surrey and its residents.

Relationships

49. Strong relationships have been the bedrock of the council's improvement over recent years and will be ever more essential over the coming months and years. We are working in the toughest environment for public services in living memory. **The situation will continue to challenge and test us all** as individuals and as part of our wider teams and organisations. This makes the support we provide for each other all the more crucial.
50. The Leader and I remain personally committed to making sure the council improves in any areas where concerns are raised. There will be further **opportunities for engagement, discussion and listening** across the council and we will continue to invest in the training and equipment that officers and Members need to work productively.
51. It is vital that we deal with the frustrations and things that get in the way of what we are here to do. This includes **thinking about how we work together.** As we become a leaner organisation we must ensure we don't ask each other to spend time on tasks that don't add value to residents. As senior officers and Members we need to support our staff by **freeing them from any unnecessary**

distractions and enabling them to focus on the important and critical work they do with and for residents.

52. **The council's strongest asset is the people who work for it.** Our work to support and develop staff will continue to be guided over the coming months by our **values** - listen, responsible, trust, and respect - and the commitments and activities set out in the **People Strategy** and **Workforce plans**.
53. Over the coming months our **relationship with our partners and residents will remain crucial** and will determine our ability to deal with the financial challenges we face and successfully transform services.

Finances

54. **The financial outlook has got tougher yet again.** We have already reduced our unit costs over the last three years and have delivered more than £200m savings and efficiencies. In October our external auditors gave our arrangements for financial resilience and value for money a positive rating. We are currently set to achieve over £63m savings in this financial year and will continue striving to deliver a further £5m.
55. In spite of this the combined impacts of Government policy announcements, funding changes, and - most significantly – **rising demand for our services** mean we will need to find further significant savings between 2014-18. Having anticipated this scenario Cabinet reviewed the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in quarter one and on 23 July 2013 agreed some **further saving provisions** and adjustments to budget planning assumptions.
56. The seriousness of the situation makes our **engagement with residents and stakeholders** during this budget round incredibly important. In October we ran an early round of budget consultation meetings with representatives from business, the voluntary community and faith sector, and trade unions. They provided not just an opportunity to raise awareness about the council's budget, but also a chance to strengthen the way we work together to tackle the challenges the county faces.
57. These important conversations with partners will continue over the coming months, including discussions with district and borough councils on plans for local council tax support schemes. We will also continue to engage with residents. **It is important people understand the choices the council is faced with** and can help to influence and shape our options.
58. The ongoing programme of Member seminars and Select Committee workshops will support Members to **weigh up different options** on spending, savings, income and council tax in the lead up to the Council's budget meeting in February 2014. None of the options before us are easy but we know our goals for Surrey can only be achieved if we can maintain a robust, balanced and sustainable budget.
59. Meanwhile we will continue to **manage our finances carefully and responsibly** using monthly budget monitoring to track our progress. The rollout

of the Finance Dashboard means this is now a simpler task. We will also continue to identify **investment opportunities** in line with the strategy agreed by Cabinet on 23 July.

Innovation

60. Over the last six months we have successfully established the **key components of our approach to innovation**. It is imperative that we now focus on realising the opportunities identified by this work.
61. On 23 July 2013 the Cabinet reviewed the pilot of **Shift: our approach to innovation** and agreed to continue developing and implementing it over the medium term as a catalyst and accelerator for the innovations required. Shift provides a method (the 5Ds innovation process - discover, design, develop, decide, deliver), set of tools, and skill-sets that will ensure our work to re-design services is **rooted firmly in the experiences of residents** and is not skewed by organisational boundaries or factors that are irrelevant to residents.
62. In July our ambitious plans to accelerate joint work with partners were given a significant boost when the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) selected Surrey as one of only nine areas to be part of the new **Public Service Transformation Network** (a successor to the Community Budget pilots). This was a real vote of confidence in the quality of partnership working in Surrey and in October the Government also awarded Surrey £750,000 to support work on developing a shared back office and emergency services collaboration.
63. Building on the **outline business cases** presented to Cabinet on 22 October, work over the coming months will focus on the development of more detailed propositions and business cases for each of the six strands:
 - Emergency Services Collaboration
 - Extending the Family Support Programme
 - Adult social care and health integration (incorporating Dementia Friendly Communities)
 - Young People's Participation and Skills for Employment
 - Transforming Justice
 - Better Use of Public Sector Assets
64. The proposed changes across these six strands will shift the emphasis from multiple high cost responses by different organisations towards **co-ordinated prevention and earlier intervention**. We are working to a tight timetable. Detailed business cases will be considered by Cabinet in February 2014 with the intention that savings are taken into account in the MTFP 2014-19. It is crucial we continue to pursue this collaborative work with real urgency and focus.
65. We must also continue to accelerate progress on other strategic partnerships including the **South East 7** work on waste, highways, IT and special educational

needs. Here we have also identified some very promising future opportunities with our partners - opportunities we must now exploit in practice.

66. Similarly our work exploring different **delivery model options** is starting to generate specific proposals for Members to consider. On 17 December 2013 Cabinet is due to consider the business case and plan for a Local Authority Trading Company for community support for people with disabilities.
67. Our approaches to innovation will only be successful if we can **fully exploit the many possibilities that technology affords us**. We have some good examples where we are using technology to improve the way we work, increase the efficiency of our processes and raise the quality of services for residents. One example is the **telehealth programme** which we are supporting Clinical Commissioning Groups to implement. This gives patients user-friendly electronic equipment to monitor their own long-term problems from home.
68. Another good example is **Patchwork**, a web based tool being implemented through Shift to support the Surrey Family Support Programme. It enables **practitioners from across different agencies to connect** up around the individuals and families they support. Patchwork is also being tested out in Mole Valley where the partnership tool will be used to bring people together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour as well as linking up professionals to support vulnerable adults. Elsewhere we have also re-designed the **council's web pages** to better meet resident needs.
69. There are though many more **opportunities opened up by latest technology** and digital developments which we have not yet seized. We will be accelerating our work in this area over the coming months. At the same time we must be ready to exploit the next wave of technological developments.
70. Our recent track record of improvement and innovation means we now have a strong voice and influence at a regional and national level. This is important as it **enables us to argue the case for Surrey and its residents** when, for example, the Government are making critical policy and funding decisions.
71. A number of Members and officers from the council now hold **influential positions with regional and national bodies** and the local government sector is increasingly looking to learn from us. For example, the Leader has taken on the role of Chairman of the County Councils Network (CCN) and is making strong arguments for funding changes and enhanced freedoms that would benefit Surrey.
72. Meanwhile a number of Members and officers have supported peer reviews in other councils. I led a review of Cambridgeshire County Council recently and found the process of **sharing our experiences and learning from theirs** hugely beneficial. I know others have had similarly positive and instructive experiences.
73. Over the next six months we will continue using our **strong networks** to share what we are doing and bring in **new ideas and thinking** that can help us. And we will continue to use our influence to protect Surrey's future interests.

Conclusion

74. Over the last six months the council has moved out of the transition period that followed the election and has **set the strategic direction for the next four years**. A strong momentum has already been established and good progress made on all our key goals for residents.
75. The next six months will **again be incredibly tough**. The critical delivery of our day to day responsibilities will as always be tested by the pressures that winter brings. Meanwhile the **overall pace of change and transformation needs to accelerate** in order to stay ahead of rapidly rising demands and the shifting policy landscape. There will be no let up.
76. **I remain confident that the council can meet these challenges**. We have the right strategy, a strong team, and a track record of responding effectively to new challenges. We have also identified a number of innovative opportunities to transform how we work with partners and residents. I look forward to working with Members, colleagues and our partners to make sure we now seize these opportunities. I will provide a further progress report to Council in June 2014.

Further information

77. There is further information attached to this report:

Page 12-21: Case studies
Page 22-23: Awards and recognition

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