

Information and Advice Strategy 2014-16

Surrey County Council – Adult Social Care

(Draft V13 28/05/2014)

Contents

Introduction	page 2
National context and policy background	page 3
Surrey context	page 4
Key demographic facts about Surrey	page 7
What information are residents seeking?	page 8
How information and advice is currently provided in Surrey	page 14
New strategic approach	page 19
Ensuring a quality information and advice service	page 25
How will we know the strategy is successful?	page 26
Engagement on the strategy development	page 27
Key achievements 2013 – 14	page 29
An example of good practice	page 30

Introduction

Adult Social Care within Surrey County Council has, since 2009, placed great emphasis on providing universal access to information and advice, supporting the specific requirements of the government's Putting People First¹ policy. People need good information and support to enable them to get the personalised care they need, to make genuine choices and exercise control over their lives and remain independent and well.

The forthcoming Care Act 2014 formalises many of these requirements and the new Information and Advice Strategy 2014-16 sets out how we will respond to the new regulations and enhance the existing service on offer to anyone who would benefit from it, across the county

For clarity, the definitions of information and advice we continue to use from the Putting People first guidance, are as follows:

Information is defined as:

- The open and accessible supply of material deemed to be of interest to a particular population. This can either be passively available or actively distributed

Advice is defined as:

¹ Putting People first is a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care. Key elements are:

- prevention
- early intervention and re-enablement
- personalisation
- information, advice and advocacy.

Councils will be required to move to a system of personal budgets for everyone who is eligible for publicly-funded adult social care support. They will also be required to provide universal information, advice and advocacy services for all who need services and their carers. This is irrespective of eligibility for public funding.

- Offering guidance and direction on a particular course of actions which need to be undertaken in order to realise a need, access a service or realise individual entitlements.

This strategy is applicable to the whole adult population in Surrey not just those residents already receiving support or people with immediate care and support needs; it covers all residents over 18, carers (in an informal caring role) including young carers, people with disabilities or impairment, people planning future care and their families, regardless of their ability to pay for care.

1. National Context and Policy Background

The Care Act 2014 places a statutory duty upon councils to provide information and advice that is both accessible and proportionate, to the whole population, from April 2015. This is to enable people to understand how the care and support system works, what services are available locally, and how to access those services. The Act provides for a universal information and advice service, which is available to all people who request it, and not just limited to those people with assessed care and support needs and their carers.

The changes that the new legislation introduces are wide ranging and at times complex. Clause 4 of the Act sets out the areas where we must provide information and advice, specifically:

- What types of care and support are available – eg specialised dementia care, befriending services, reablement, personal assistance, residential care, etc
- The range of care and support services available to local people, ie what local providers offer certain types of services
- What processes local people need to use to get the care and support that is available
- Where local people can find independent financial advice about care and support and help them to access it
- How people can raise concerns about the safety or wellbeing of someone who has care and support needs.

There is a growing wider emphasis to have a basic offer of good information and advice to help make informed choices, and to help

ensure residents know how to access family, friends or communities to help provide support. This is against a background of generally low awareness about the realities of paying for care, where the onus will remain on individuals to carefully plan for their care needs in the future, even with the forthcoming cap on care costs detailed in the legislation².

2. Surrey Context

The previous Information and Advice Strategy, which covered the period 2010-13, has now expired and all the key recommendations have been implemented. The refresh of this strategy, will reflect a number of related strategies which have an impact:

Adult Social Care has developed a **Strategic Policy Intention**, outlining the fundamental principles behind our response to the Care Act 2014:

We will meet our duties

Complying with the law in a way that is consistent with our vision for Adult Social Care in Surrey.

We will Support the ‘General’ responsibilities in the Act

Promoting individual wellbeing, prevention, providing information and advice, promoting quality and diversity of services, co-operating with partners.

We will promote a Whole Family Approach

Treating carers with the same esteem as the people that they care for and being aware of the needs of children in the household.

We will act fairly

Ensuring an equal value on access and outcomes for all regardless of reason for need or ability to pay.

² The cap on care costs contained in the Care Bill introduces:

- A lifetime cap on costs at £72,000. From 2016, local authorities will pay for any ongoing reasonable care costs incurred by individuals to meet their eligible needs (excluding general living costs)
- A new capital eligibility threshold of £118,000 for people who have eligible needs in residential care who own their own property.

We will be clear and transparent

Making it as easy as possible for people to have the information that they need, at the right time and in the best way for them

We will put Personalisation at the centre of what we do

Enabling people to be in control of their own care and support.

We will behave proportionately

Responding flexibly and appropriately to people’s needs.

We will work together with the ‘Surrey community’

Responding in a way that takes account of and uses our community and partner needs, expertise and resource.

The Care Act 2014 informed, to a large part, **the Adult Social Care Directorate Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18 (add link)**. A key strategic aim is to:

- offer universal information and advice services to all local people to promote their independence and wellbeing. To deliver this, we will:
 - implement a new approach for people who fund their own care and support, so people understand the care and support system, can access services and plan for their future by, for example, providing care accounts, self assessment
 - improve the range, quality and accessibility of information, advice and advocacy available for all in their communities, so people understand how care and support works, their entitlements and who to go to for advice
 - promote diversity and quality in care provision and community support so there is/are a range of high quality services available to meet people’s choices.

Other strategic priorities in the Adult Social Care Directorate Strategy are dependent on, to a greater or lesser degree, a greater understanding and awareness of support available delivered through an information and advice service, most notably:

- connect individuals with family, friends and community support networks so they can live independently and prevent or postpone the need for funded care and support services

- continue our commitment to personalisation, with all systems, processes, staff and services giving people choice and control over their lives.
- collaborative working with health and other partners to deliver integrated community health and primary care services to improve the health and social care for people
- provide leadership in the joint commissioning of health and social care services to ensure diversity, quality, cost effective and sustainable services.

There is also an increased focus on operational staff providing information and advice on a local basis.

The county council's **Communications and Engagement Strategy 2013- 2018** (see [link](#)), highlights how our communications activity fits into three broad areas:

- Providing information – increasing awareness of services and issues through a variety of channels, explaining decisions and policies using spokespeople as appropriate, providing details of how and where to access services and information about events and activities.
- Supporting changes in behaviours – such as advice on living independently for older and vulnerable adults, improving health
- Engaging people in changes – eg seeking views on changes to services, new policies and ways of delivering services and activity.

The corporate priority areas are identified below and this strategy supports them:

- Improving our digital communications ability – being proactive in our use of social and digital media, supporting people to use these channels through clear guidelines and policies; and to continue to look for new ways of engaging people using digital and social media.
- Target communications and engagement to maximise impact – use data to reach people more effectively, including people who have been harder to engage in the past and who will benefit from tailored approaches to communication and engagement

- Providing the best communications and engagement by working as one team – build effective, co-ordinated communications and engagement that is consistently high quality and provides value for money.

There are also a number of **developing policies and strategies** which will impact upon the Information and Advice strategy:

- The Assessment and Review strategy will address our response to the cap on care costs and the projected increase in demand, and the requirement for a common process irrespective of how care is funded.
- The ‘Family, Friends and Community Support’ initiative aims to create communities where people have support networks of their own. It will be delivered through four key workstreams, one of which is ‘Improving Access’ so when people want information and advice, this is available within their communities and is easily found. Information and advice is identified in this initiative as a key driver to prevent or postpone adult social care needs.
- The Department of Health, the Local Government Association and Public Health England are planning a two phase communications campaign, the outputs of which we will link to directly. We will be contributing directly to the development of this communications campaign with the Department of Health.

2a. Key Demographic Facts about Surrey

In planning our strategy we need to understand who are residents are, where they are and if they may have particular communication or information needs.

- The resident population of Surrey was recorded as 1,132,390 in the 2011 census. Compared to England, Surrey has slightly more people in the 35 year and over age group and has fewer people in the 10-35 year age group;
- Each of the local authorities in Surrey have over half their population of working age (20-64 yrs) – Waverley has the lowest percentage and Runnymede the highest;
- Surrey is the most urbanised shire in England;

- The proportion of the population aged 85 years and over in Surrey is projected to increase from 2.5% to 5.2% by 2033. The current proportion is slightly higher in Surrey than in England, reflecting the longer life expectancies in Surrey compared with England as a whole
- There are an estimated 304,900 (27%) people who are older people who are unable to manage at least one self care activity on their own, people with a learning and/or physical and sensory impairment and/or mental health need
- Adult Social Care provides care and support to around 29,000 people with the most substantial and critical need during the course of year, excluding carers (2010-11)
- There were 16,791 adults with a learning disability in Surrey in 2013, of which 3,300 meet our eligibility criteria
- There are 4,165 adults on the Surrey Disability Register who have a visual impairment. Of these:
 - 2,422 are registered with a severe sight impairment
 - 31 are also registered as deaf
- The estimated net annual migration into Surrey was 4,867 people, with just under half comprised international migration;
- White British make up the largest percentage of the resident population in Surrey (83%). Epsom and Ewell has the lowest percentage (79%) and Waverley the highest (87%). There are proportionately more Europeans living in Surrey compared with England overall. Asians are the largest minority from non-white ethnic groups in Surrey.
- The data from the 2011 census shows 4.5% of 16-24 yr olds living in households have day to day activities limited by long term illness or disability: this proportion increases with age, to 9% of 25-64 yr olds, 26.4% of 65-74 yr olds, 50.6% of 75-84 yr olds, and 78% of 85+ yr olds;
- 29.5% of the 65years population live alone;
- The 2011 Census tells us there are 108,433 carers in Surrey, an increase of 9% since 2001; and nearly one quarter (22%) of these carers are providing more than 50 hours caring per week. There are also thought to be 14,030 young carers in Surrey;

- People identifying themselves as Christian make up the largest religious grouping in Surrey (62.8%), with Muslim the next biggest group (2.2%). The proportion of people in Surrey reported to have no religion has increased to a quarter of the population.

(See Surrey-i for further details)

2b. What information are residents seeking?

We have a range of sources that help us understand what kind of information our local residents are seeking. Here are some highlights:

- The **Adult Social Care helpline** received some 31,500 enquiries relating to adult social care during 2013. Their top enquiries are:
 - 12,000 relating to mental health (although mainly professional referrals by the police)
 - 4,000 relating to eligibility/access to services
 - 4,000 relating to learning disabilities
- **Age UK Surrey's** most popular enquiries in a 12 month period:
 - 21% of enquiries related to benefits
 - 16% related to housing
 - 14% related to non-residential care
- The **Surrey Hubs** reported that the most common enquiries: concerned equipment, benefits, advocacy, health, transport, consumer services and support for carers
- **Surrey Care Association**, were able to report that the common enquiries they receive include how to get support, the procedures involved, entitlement, how to get help to pay for care and how to choose a care provider
- Member organisations represented on the **Information and Advice Forum** found that common enquires related to:
 - Information on paying for care – entitlement, funding, benefits available, help with paying for care, where self funders should start in arranging care
 - Where to go for help – for social care and help with daily tasks
 - Information and advice on processes – procedures involved, the different agencies involved, how entitlement and criteria

- are organised, timescales for assessment process. How to report a safeguarding concern
- How to choose a home, how to organise respite, what to do if paying privately but the money is running out.
- Enquiries about equipment – hire, loan and purchase (39% of enquiries to Surrey Information on Disability concerned equipment)
- Professionals sought information and advice on how to make a referral (and which forms to use), how to arrange care, timescales in arranging an assessment and the start of provision, how to report a safeguarding concern.
- The most popular Adult Social Care pages on the Surrey County Council website (1 Jan – 12 May 2014) were:
 - How to access adult social care services
 - Adult social care
 - Residential and nursing home care
 - Questions about your home when you pay for residential or nursing home care
 - Surrey Safeguarding Adults board
 - Helping you stay independent at home
 - Safeguarding adults – serious case reviews
 - Adult social care service
 - Surrey safeguarding adults multi agency procedures, information and guidance
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

However, while we have good insight into what information residents are seeking, a **survey** of 2,500 adults receiving a service this year from Adult Social Care found:

- 30% thought it fairly or very difficult to get information and advice *about community support*, while
- 16% thought it very or fairly difficult to get information and advice *about residential and nursing support*.

Understanding the needs of residents who pay for their own care

The Care Act 2014 will introduce many changes which impact on Surrey more than other areas of the country. The way that individuals fund the cost of social care is the biggest, and Surrey is estimated to have more 'self funders' (ie those not eligible for means tested care paid for by the Council) than most other places in the country. It is estimated that around four fifths of the population will be self funders.

The new cap on care costs will mean it will be in the interests of self-funders to approach Surrey County Council for an assessment of their needs, so they can start to accrue towards the cap. This provides a significant information and advice challenge, in that we need to raise awareness of the offer amongst this group, while at the same time managing expectations about what this means.

Recognising that up until now, Adult Social Care has had less involvement with self funders than many other groups, dedicated research was conducted in early 2014 to understand better their issues, expectations, preparedness and motivations. Focus group research carried out by IPSOS/Mori on behalf of the county council in January 2014 found the following:

Understanding social care

- Better information is needed:
 - about the range of services available– beyond simply care homes
 - about domiciliary and community care options for those with less acute needs
 - about how care is funded and what this means for self funders
 - about the role of private vs public sector social care provision
 - about general eligibility criteria and who qualifies for state support.

Preparing for social care

- Many self funders were reluctant to engage in planning for old age, requiring careful consideration of how Adult Social Care communicates this topic

- The subject should be approached delicately and appropriately, while underlying the importance of forward planning
- Consider the use of 'parents as proxies' when engaging with self funders
- There is an opportunity to underline the importance of planning for all eventualities – most assume their children will look after them in old age
- Underlining that, though different governments may make alterations to the system, this is not a reason not to save and plan.

Information needs and expectations

- There is little appetite for lots of information about social care - self funders are more likely to engage with the matter when they are ready, and on their own terms
- Information on legal advice and power of attorney was of particular interest
- It is important to provide personalised information that pertains to an individual's circumstances and needs, perhaps done in discussion with an advisor (people stories were considered valuable)
- Those who already provide informal care for relatives are interested to know more about the range of services available, particularly the ones that are provided free of charge
- Health providers seem to be the default information source, so critical in supporting information dissemination.

An online survey, conducted with 255 self funders found:

- Just over 50% were aware of plans to cap care costs, while 60% were unlikely to get an assessment of their care or financial needs
- Around 57% had given some thought about how they would manage care needs in the future
- 46% identified themselves as carers
- 80% had not sought any independent financial advice
- 24% cite their GP as a key source of information, a similar proportion (24%) cite the internet, while 20% cite the County Council

- 85% would prefer to remain in their own home, while 44% were confident in having someone to look after them should their health deteriorate
- Responses varied on knowledge of local services – 57% thought they knew how to get help with transport, which fell to 38% who thought they knew how to get help with shopping and/or daily tasks generally.

These findings will be reflected in the strategic approach and action plan.

Older People

Age UK has studied the information and communication needs of an ageing population (75+). Key findings include:

- Older people are as diverse as younger people, not one homogenised group
- The ageing population have different communication needs: hearing and sight loss, and dementia, are key factors to consider
- Some flexibility regarding the method of communication may be required – for some people email/letters could be enough, but others may need more
- Some older people may not have had much contact with people and may communicate for longer than expected, which may need to be built into service planning
- Complicated ways for older people to get in touch – for example, if they have to select lots of different options if calling by phone – can be an issue.

Carers

A **Carers Digital Inclusion Survey** (2,000 respondents) conducted at the end of 2013, which aimed to understand the level of digital skill held by carers in Surrey, and their attitudes and behaviours towards the internet. Key findings were:

- Over a quarter of carers do not use the internet, with over half of these aged 75 and over

- 57% of 'offline' carers say they do not know how to use the internet, while 32% say they do not need the internet. 24% say cost of owning a device is a barrier to getting online.
- The three quarters of carers who use the internet use it primarily for services such as e-mail, online shopping and banking, social networking and generic searching of information.
- Some 60% of 'online' carers say the internet has a positive impact on their wellbeing, while 41% use the internet to work from home and feel that not having it would have a significant impact on their ability to care for somebody.

A **Carers Forum** in 2013 included a discussion and workshop about information needs for carers, and highlighted:

- Carers are not always aware that they are carers, and so consideration should be given as to how to target them as a group
- There is a lack of information for carers who do not use the internet
- Information can be too centralised – it needs to be personalised and relevant, and illustrated using individual stories that people can relate to
- Avoid information overload – the right information is needed at the right time
- Target non-traditional places such as chiropodists, opticians, pharmacies, outpatients etc.

3. How people currently access information and advice in Surrey

There are a number of ways people can access information and advice on adult social care in Surrey.

When we refer to our information 'service' in Surrey it comprises several elements provided by different providers for example,

- the Adult Social Care helpline,
- the public information service provided by Adult Social Care communications team,
- the specialist advice services that have been set up,
- the Hubs,
- Age UK who run an information service,

- carers support schemes,
- Adult Social Care operational teams,
- independent care providers
- range of other support services that also offer information, that are funded by the county council,
- Surrey Information Point (website), the county council website and partner websites.

Understanding the range and contact levels of the 'service' has been critical in our development of the strategy particularly in our drive to reach more older people living in Surrey.

Online

Our web portfolio includes:

- Surrey Information Point, which is the primary digital information source in Surrey. It aims to provide the public with information on services, activities and organisations to support them, tips on benefit entitlement, help at home, health conditions, leisure information and much more. It also acts as a central information resource for health and social care professionals, partner organisations and the voluntary sector
- The Surrey County Council website includes the main Adult Social Care section, where people are able to access all key information relating to accessing and using social care; community equipment; wellbeing centres; etc
- Surrey Disability Register, with a growing membership of people with disabilities
- The Learning Disability Partnership Board website
- The Healthy Surrey website for information on health and wellbeing.
- Surreycommunityinfo.

Information provided through partner organisation's websites, including:

- Support for carers - Action for Carers, Carersnet
- The Surrey Hubs
- PA Finder
- Surrey Care Association

- SID – Social Information on Disability
- Healthwatch Surrey
- Mental health provider – Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (six in Surrey)
- Hospitals
- Community health
- Borough and district councils.

Information provided through national organisation's websites, including:

- NHS UK
- Carers UK
- Care Quality Commission

Print

- Provision of an extensive public information service – portfolio of leaflets, flyers and posters, through an increasingly broad distribution network
- Core or critical publications are available in a variety of accessible formats and font sizes (our default is size 14 Arial font)
- Other accessible formats are available upon request
- Range of newsletters available from Adult Social Care and partners
- Annual publication of the Care and Support Options directory, with 60% readership among self funders
- Surrey Matters residents magazine.

Face to face

- The Surrey Hubs, which is a network of drop-in shops on local high streets for information, advice, advocacy and other services relating to care and support. A local Hub will open in each of the eleven district and borough areas. (There are seven hubs open in Surrey at the time of writing).

Other face to face support for services provided through grants, contracts and partnerships, including:

- Carer Support Schemes

- Wellbeing Centres/Demonstration Sites
- Equipment Assessment Clinics
- Mental Health Community Connectors
- Benefits advisors
- Brokerage
- Advocacy
- Age UK
- Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC)
- Firstpoint
- Sight for Surrey
- User-led organisations eg Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, Action for Carers, Surrey Disabled People's Partnership)
- Community Connectors from the Guildford Diocese and borough and district councils

Staff are key in providing information and advice to the public and colleagues, including:

- Operational teams in Adult Social Care including day services and residential homes
- Hospital teams
- Commissioning managers
- Health staff
- Surrey Fire and Rescue
- GP carer recognition workers
- Borough and district council staff.

Local voluntary, community and faith groups; libraries and Citizens Advice Bureaux are also key providers of face to face information and advice including specialist advice such as money matters eg Citizens Advice Surrey.

By Phone

- Adult Social Care helpline
- Locality and hospital teams
- Specialist teams
- Local services
- User led organisations
- Voluntary community and faith organisations
- National helplines.

The top sources of information where residents find out about the council

In a recent survey (January 2014) on the council's communications undertaken in with 600 residents, the findings revealed the top sources as:

- The county council website – 41%
- Local newspaper or their websites – 41%
- Surrey Matters magazine or e-bulletin – 33%
- Material in public places – 28%
- Word of mouth/friend/family member – 28%
- Direct contact with the council – 20%

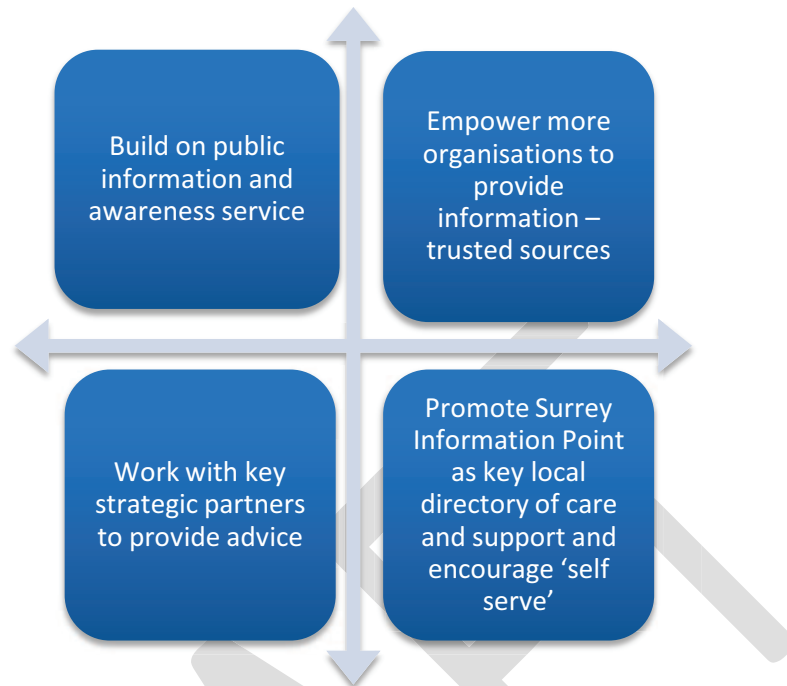
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4. New strategic approach

Our approach in developing the new strategy has been to follow the continuing process of understanding needs, provision, quality assurance, and connecting people to support:



There are four core components for the information and advice strategy. These are summarised in the model below:



The strategy identifies the outcomes for each of these strands, together with the current and planned approaches for delivery:

4a. Build on public information and awareness service, using multi-media channels to reach the maximum number of residents, and by raising further the awareness of care, support and costs of care.

Outcome: (using the Think Local Act Personal Making it Real ‘I’ statements for people who use services, and carers)

“I have access to easy-to-understand information about care and support which is consistent, accurate, accessible and up to date”

“I have the information and support I need in order to remain as independent as possible”

“Information that is easily available so I don’t have to fight for it”

“Information that is easy to understand”.

Our approach:

- Proactively communicate to residents about planning for care and care costs. To do this, we will:
 - Utilise central government information and advice resources, to explain the care reform changes (Phase 1 – Autumn)
 - Develop local communications plans
 - **Develop local tools such as care calculators, case studies on DVD, signposting maps to help understanding**
- Run ongoing public awareness campaigns on priority areas using a range of communication channels for maximum impact and evaluate effectiveness, 2014/15:
 - How to access information and advice,
 - Carers (identification and signposting to support, including young carers) with Childrens, Schools and Families
 - Dementia Friendly Surrey
 - safeguarding
- Develop new opportunities to engage with residents through Living and Ageing Well festivals/events with all strategic partners to showcase support available locally and help residents access support
- Continue to focus on achieving visibility and prominence of social care information in health settings particularly hospitals and GP surgeries and conduct audits
- **We will be proactive in engaging with self funders in their own social networks. To do this, we will:**
 - **Commission a new contract with targets to deliver briefings to improve understanding about care options, planning and where to get support. The will be delivered to key groups such as Women's Institute groups, parish and community groups and health club members.**
- Review the information local people are seeking (including self funders) and consider how we meet this need
- Review the Department of Health guidance on information that must be provided and agree how we manage those requirements
- **Place less emphasis on print-based activity, and divert resources towards local engagement activities with residents**

- Prepare staff and members with information resources and guidance for enquirers, in relation to the Care Act changes
- Build the Surrey Disability Register membership with more engagement opportunities for people with disabilities.

4b. Empower more organisations (trusted sources) to provide information, to identify and agree key information providers to work with over the short, medium and long term

Outcome:

“I can speak to people who know something about care and support and can make things happen”

“Face to face contact to sort our problems, not answer phones”

“Council and NHS staff who know the system 100 per cent”

“Emotional support and someone to share my concerns with, talking to another carer is really helpful, being able to share and know I am not alone”

Our approach:

- We will identify and agree critical information provider partners to work with over the short, medium and long term, and brief/train them on a consistent information service to offer to all residents. To do this, we will:
 - Work with the Hubs, Age UK, **Citizens Advice Surrey**, carers’ support schemes and Wellbeing Centres, to help ensure best ‘coverage’
 - Identify second and third tier providers, to help ensure ‘blanket’ coverage, and develop cascade and feedback mechanisms
 - **Identify and agree new funding (or re-portion existing funding)**
 - **Develop a signposting tool to help referrals to key support/services (electronic and manual)**
 - **Identify resource to train/skill share with providers**

- We will work with health colleagues to use health channels as a key means of residents obtaining information and advice. ***To do this, we will:***
 - ***Develop an information and referral toolkit for use in GP practices and by hospital staff***
 - ***Ensure sign up to plans at all levels within the health hierarchy***
 - ***Review how we use available resources to help achieve improved results***
- Extend One Stop Surrey initiative, an onward signposting and referral process with Surrey Fire and Rescue and partners
- Consider re-running Surrey Information Summit, to empower agencies to provide information and signpost effectively
- Develop county council retirees' 'community connector' initiative as another bank of local information sources connecting people to support.

4c. Work with key strategic partners to provide advice, including advice on benefits, the provision of independent financial advice, access to advocacy and brokerage services

Outcomes:

"I can speak to people who know something about care and support and can make things happen"

"I have help to make informed choices if I need and want it"

"People including and talking to me as a carer wherever possible"

Our approach:

- We already have in place advice services for benefits, brokerage and advocacy and they will continue to promote their services across the county
- Following the introduction of a specification from the Department of Health which independent financial advisers should follow, we will work towards identifying an organisation/s to provide an independent financial advice service in Surrey and signpost people to this service.

- We will encourage expert advisors to be available in key locations, such as hospitals, health centres, Citizen's Advice Bureaux, Hubs, etc
- We will review our current advocacy contracts against the Care Bill regulations covering advocacy due to be published in May 2014, to ensure they are compliant.

4d. Promote Surrey Information Point as the key local directory of care and support, and encourage 'self serve', working with partners to assist people to access information online, and to undertake assessments online

Outcome:

"I have the information and support I need in order to remain as independent as possible"

"I know where to get information about what is going on in my community"

"An information directory and catalogue of services and support and a list of contacts for help"

Our approach:

- We are engaged in an ongoing promotion of Surrey Information Point and will encourage partner organisations to make more use of the central resource
- Work through how Surrey Information Point will more effectively link to central directories eg NHS.uk and CQC websites
- ***We will work with partners to assist people to access information online and to undertake assessments online.***
- A universal online assessment tool is being developed, and will help any member of the public undertake a simple assessment of their needs (or those of a family member) which may link to key pages of Surrey Information Point and other resources, to provide them with targeted information, as well as an initial indication of eligibility and whether the service can pay for support.
- We will introduce an e-marketplace where residents will be able to look at care and support options and purchase their care through an online transaction

- We are redesigning the web pages on the Surrey County Council website which will provide clear and direct access to support, self serve and contact details
- We will develop a digital communications strategy to help us engage with more residents using digital channels and maximise the use of new technology and applications eg Jointly for carers, Simply Unite in residential homes, Streetlife, Timebank, online discussion forums.

5. Ensuring a quality information and advice service

We need to ensure that the experience residents have from accessing information and advice is a good one, which will help them make better choices about care and support, encourage them to use the service again or refer the service to other people.

There is a range of ways we assess quality:

- Contract monitoring with organisations who hold contracts for information and advice services – a whole range of measures are tracked as well as case studies regularly provided which is supporting evidence of a good service
- User experience surveys – conducted once a year with people who receive services
- We test new advertising messages in advance and evaluate our public awareness campaigns for effectiveness and impact
- Feedback from residents – we review any comments on our information and from our website and customer relations process and address
- Virtual readers panel – we use a panel of readers to check new information to ensure it's easy to understand, clear and accurate
- Audits – collate feedback from information audits in key locations in the community
- Ongoing engagement – through a range of networks, events and consultation we listen to the views of people who use services and other stakeholders on information and its physical accessibility and address issues

- We use expert or peer group organisations to help with providing information in accessible formats
- Annual residents' survey – communications measures included in survey assessing how well informed people are and key sources for information
- We have a county council communications toolkit and guidance and standards we adhere to
- Think Local Act Personal guidance, we have adopted the key principles for information and advice provision. (see [link](#))

We are considering looking at the new Information Standard being developed, although this is primarily aimed at NHS organisations.

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed on this strategy.

6. How we will know if the strategy has been successful?

A series of priority measures for the Adult Social Care Directorate Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18 has been developed, and includes measures which relate directly to the ongoing strategic commitment to offer universal information and advice services. These include targets for 2014/15. We will use this mechanism to provide key measures of the information and advice strategy, specifically:

- Increase the number of unique visitors to Surrey Information Point by 25%, by the end of March 2015
- Increase by 57% the number of people accessing information and advice services, expert advisors or signposting to advice (based on contracts with the Hubs, benefits advice, Age UK, brokerage and advocacy)
- Monitor progress against agreed milestones:

Finalise new Adult Social Care information and advice strategy and supporting Equalities Impact Assessment	July
Agree action plan for 2014-15 to include: - Develop local communications plan for Surrey residents to	July

complement national plans on changing care reforms - Agree which independent financial advice organisation/s to work with - Launch promotion of independent financial advice service	Tbc Tbc Tbc
Restructure and co-design Adult Social Care pages (400) on county council website and strengthen links to Surrey Information Point (SIP)	October
Launch new self assessment tool to residents	December (provisional)
Develop communications strategies and in-year plans for Adult Social Care priorities - carers support, safeguarding, Living and Ageing Well including Dementia Friendly Surrey	April to March
Ongoing promotion of how to access information and advice (primarily SIP and signposting)	April – March
Publish new Adult Social Care core service public information	December

This strategy has a two year timeline as it is recommended we review our approach and progress at the end of 2015/early 2016.

7. Engagement on the strategy development

This strategy has been developed over many months with discussion and engagement with the following key stakeholders, and in accordance with Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) guidance:

- Information request to local authorities
- ADASS workshops x three
- National Information Management Group involvement

- Information and Advice Forum
- Workshop at Surrey Information Summit
- Surrey Communications Officers group
- Health communications management workshop
- Department of Health Care Bill communications team
- Adults Leadership Team
- Care Bill Project Team
- Care Bill Implementation Board
- Adult Social Care Select Committee (scheduled for 26 June)
- Principles for the provision of information and advice (TLAP)
- Information needs for Adult Social Care (TLAP)

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Key achievements in 2013/14

At its peak during a promotional period Surrey Information Point attracted over 14,000 unique visitors in one month

92% of visitors who attended the Surrey Information Summit said as a result they felt more able to deliver up-to-date, accurate information to the public about care and support

The local Hubs handled over 5,000 enquiries

94% of residents who saw the Dementia Friendly Surrey public awareness campaign said it changed their personal perceptions or increased their understanding of dementia

100,000 copies of our key publication, 'Do you know where to go for care and support services in Surrey?' were distributed to the public in the last 12 months

Almost 2,300 people were helped access welfare benefits, securing a total of £1.66 million for residents

Adult Social Care helpline managed 31,500 enquiries

Telecare promotion generated three and a half times more sustained enquiries to the monitoring centre

Membership of the Surrey Disability Register increased by 500 through relaunch and promotion

An example of the impact of good information and advice – Local Hubs

Providing residents with the right information is critical in enabling them to make the right choices about the care and support options available. The following story gives an example of the impact of good information for a person's situation and wellbeing.

Mrs A's husband suffered a stroke and was recovering in hospital. She came into her local Hub to pick up a stroke leaflet after seeing it through the window.

Following a discussion, she revealed that no additional support had been offered to her and expressed concern about her husband's employment and fitting in a new role as his carer along with a full time job.

She was referred to:

- An occupational therapist to ensure their home was suitable for the husband's return, and equipment that may help
- The CAB to access legal advice
- The advocacy service for support in accessing the various services she is entitled.
- She also received an Action for Carers' leaflet if she needed someone else to talk to about caring.

Mrs A returned for a "getWIS£" benefits drop-in session the following week and thanked the Volunteer Development Worker. She said an advisor was coming out to see her and her husband when he was out of hospital and was meeting an Advocate to help her develop a plan of action.

She said she would give an update when her husband returned home, and would recommend he visit the Hub about volunteering if he wasn't going back to work.