



Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
2 October 2014

**Welfare Reform Task Group – Update**

**Purpose of the report:** Policy Development and Review, Scrutiny of Services

This report provides an update on the progress against recommendations made by the Welfare Reform Task Group.

**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 membership included Fiona White, Stephen Cooksey and Bob Gardner. The Task Group reported its findings and recommendations in April 2014 and subsequently agreed to continue in a monitoring role.
2. David Harmer stepped down as Chairman of the Task Group in order to concentrate on the Flooding Task Group of the Environment & Transport Select Committee, which he chairs. Bob Gardner was appointed as the Welfare Reform Task Group Chairman and Margaret Hicks was added to the membership.
3. The Task Group met in July 2014 to review progress and actions against the recommendations. On 12 September 2014, the Task Group met and interviewed witnesses from the following Surrey County Council Services:
  - Finance
  - Adult Social Care
  - Children, Schools & Families
  - Libraries
  - Public Health
4. The Chairman will provide the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a verbal summary of the findings of the witness sessions referred to in Paragraph 3.
5. An update on progress against each of the Task Group's recommendations is attached at **Annex A**, with a corresponding RAG status. A timeline of proposed work for the Task Group is included at **Annex B**.

**Recommendations:**

6. The Committee are asked to note the progress reported by the Task Group and consider whether there are any further areas they recommend are reviewed.

**Next steps:**

- The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee to schedule a further update for March 2015.

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**Report contact:**

Helen Rankin, Scrutiny Manager  
0208 5419 126  
Helen.rankin@surreycc.gov.uk

**Sources/background papers:**

Report of the Welfare Reform Task Group, 2 April 2014.