

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 9 DECEMBER 2014

MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

CABINET MEMBER UPDATES

NAME: MARY ANGELL

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

All Members will have recently received a detailed information pack outlining the key work undertaken in Children's Services. At the request of several Members, I will concentrate on the specific area of Early Help as the Early Help Governance Group met for the first time on 17 November 2014.

Early Help

The Surrey Children and Young People's Partnership Plan sets out the strategic direction and goals of all partners, covering all services for children and young people. The Partnership Plan, which sets out the priorities for the next three years, has also been agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The five key areas identified are:

- Early Help, which includes healthy behaviours
- Complex Needs, including paediatric therapies
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Safeguarding
- Shared understanding of need

Our early help work has been shaped by three key national drivers:-

- The Munro Review of Child Protection
- The Report Early Intervention: Next Steps by Graham Allen
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 - which is the guide to the legislative requirements and expectations of inter-agency working to ensure that all children are safeguarded.

The above guidance calls for greater local authority ownership of how needs are identified and how the assessment process is conducted. Munro also argues that where children and young people's needs do not meet social care thresholds, then practitioners must be able to identify need, and work with other partners who can provide appropriate support.

In response to this guidance Surrey County Council has collaborated with its partners to develop the Early Help Strategy 2013-2017. The strategy has been developed over the last 12 months by and with partners through working groups, workshops, conferences and training events during 2013. All the work has passed through the governance boards of all partners involved, and has been agreed as a working model. This has necessitated changes to Surrey's Social Care Model.

Children's Services revised its Area-Based Social Care Model in order that it could:

- Discharge its duties under the Children and Families Act 2014
- Respond to the new timescales set out in the Family Justice Review recommendations
- Implement the key recommendations of 'Working Together 2013'

- Support and promote the Early Help Strategy
- Support and promote partnership working.

Four area-based Referral Assessment and Intervention Services (RAIS) have been created. The Referral Hub has replaced the contact centre and acts as the 'front door' into each area. If a detailed Child and Family Assessment is required then this is undertaken by a social worker in the assessment and intervention hub. If the threshold for a Child and Family Assessment is not met, then Children's Services and the Early help Partnership Services will support partners with the early help approach. So if early help is deemed the appropriate way forward, then a holistic early help assessment is undertaken with the whole family, a family action plan is written, and a lead professional is identified as part of the team around the family.

Following the implementation of the RAIS, a Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was developed in which five agencies are co-located in Guilford Police Station. The MASH ensures a whole system approach to safeguarding whereby information is shared, risk is understood and decision making is quicker and more effective. If early help services are needed, the MASH assigns the contact to the relevant RAIS referral hub for follow up.

I know that some Local Committees have invited their Area Heads of Children's Services to their meetings to gain a greater understanding of the changes. These have been a success and enjoyed by Members and staff alike.

NAME: HELYN CLACK

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CABINET LEAD FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Website Award

Surrey County Council's website has been named the best in local government across the UK by the Society of Information Technology Management. This is the most prestigious web award there is to win and we were compared against 433 other local authorities. Surrey was particularly praised for embracing the growing public demand to access information on mobile devices. Having a good website helps to provide value for money to Surrey taxpayers and as the site handles a large volume of transactions annually this helps to save hundreds of thousands of pounds each year. Designing and implementing our new website has been a huge team effort and has included staff from Web authors, IMT, Communications and Customer Services Web and Digital Team.

While winning this award is a fantastic achievement, our aim is to make further improvements so residents continue to get the support and advice they need.

Trading Standards

I am pleased to advise the Council that the plans recently agreed by Surrey and Buckinghamshire to create a new joint Trading Standards Service are progressing well. I was delighted to attend a joint staff meeting with the teams from both counties on 21 November, and to see first-hand the progress to date. The various elements, including finance, legal, HR and IT are all on track to enable the new service to be operational from 1 April 2015. The new management team is already operating jointly and working very well together. The new service is an exciting step forward for both local authorities and will enable the service to provide an even better protection for residents, remain locally focused and give enhanced support for local businesses and all at a reduced cost for local taxpayers. It is a great example of innovation in action.

Surrey's Library Direct Team

Surrey's Library Direct Team along with four of our longest serving volunteers, have won the Living and Ageing Well award 2014 for the Help at Home Category. This award is to recognise individuals / projects / initiatives that help people to live the life they want at home, with the help they need, so they can remain as independent as possible. The team worked incredibly hard and have been recognised for developing the service, producing fantastic work and bringing huge benefit to service users.

NAME: MEL FEW

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Older people residential care homes consultation

In line with the Cabinet paper, a consultation process is currently underway to decide on the future of the remaining six Surrey County Council older people residential care homes.

The homes in question are:

- Brockhurst – Ottershaw
- Dormers- Tandridge
- Pinehurst- Camberley
- Cobgates – Farnham
- Park Hall - Reigate
- Longfield –Cranleigh

Three options were outlined in the consultation paper, the results of which are expected by December with a paper being presented to the Cabinet for decision at the February 2015 meeting.

Charging policy consultation

In light of the Care Act 2014 which comes into effect from April 2015, it is necessary for the charging policies currently in force to be updated to reflect the changes laid out in the act. The consultation will be available until December 2014 with the recommendations arising being presented to Cabinet for decision at the February 2015 meeting.

Realignment of senior roles

The 'Better Care Fund' has £25m allocated to Surrey for the year 2015/16. To achieve payout under this fund, Surrey Adults services need to work closer to achieve savings by reducing admissions to the Acute Hospitals. To achieve this objective it was felt the right time to realign our organisation to ensure maximum joined up working with the six CCGs in Surrey. It is too early to gauge the outcomes of this change which could result in some form of pooled budgets going forward.

NAME: JOHN FUREY

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING

Thames Regional Flooding and Coastal Committee

From September I have been attending this committee (TRFCC), in preparation for the funding programme allocations for the region.

The programme is for six years, and indicative sums are £283.8m through the gift in-aid (GIA) and £63m from the levy. The GIA is government allocated, and the levy is contributions from all Local Authorities throughout this local region.

Subject to agreement our contribution over the six years will be £5.9m, which will produce £72.7m for the work programme. Eighteen borough schemes have been tabled at a value of £1.69m, and over the six year programme £370m is allocated to capital works. This includes design and preparation work for the Lower Thames scheme.

The indicative programme is now confirmed and local details will be communicated as soon as possible.

Further to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 3 December, the Government have now indicated a further £60m to the Lower Thames scheme. The gap now remains at £40m, which following the Leader of the Council's intervention with the Local Authorities concerned is achievable.

This will also be taken to the EM3 LEP and Thames Water in order to assist in funding this gap.

Kier / SCC Winter Resilience

- Winter Maintenance (Gritting and Snow Clearance)

A team of winter gritter drivers have been fully trained and are ready to be deployed to the 36 gritting routes across the County. Additional resilience measures are in place for snow clearance with the wider Kier supply chain committed to assisting in snow conditions. During October dry runs were undertaken in order to acclimatise all of the drivers to their relevant routes. To date the fleet were successfully deployed three times in November.

- Flood Mitigation

We have ordered 12,000 filled sandbags to be held across the county in our depots to protect our infrastructure. We also have a stock of 19,000 unfilled bags in case of a declared emergency event similar to last year. A further order for 20,000 sandbags is currently being progressed for use by District and Boroughs in an emergency situation. 30 high risk flood sites are being surveyed to identify temporary flood defence measures, including temporary pumps should long term flooding occur at these sites. The cyclic gully cleansing programme is currently on target and the supply chain (FM Conway) has additional resources available if required.

NAME: MICHAEL GOSLING

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Prevention

I would like to address prevention. With the transfer of Public Health to the county in April 2013 we took the time to look at how we could use the new influence that would come with this move. One of the things of the health strategy is prevention, this has been taken up in the annual report of the Director of Public Health.

Prevention can not only reduce the incidence of ill-health but also lead to a better life style for all residents in Surrey. Addressed in the report are the social factors that lead to ill-health and quality of life style. The report covers smoking, alcohol, diet, physical activity and air quality, all of which have a bearing on our lives.

We as a council are taking account of the consequences by the implementation of our policies which influence every decision that we take. We should never hinder the public's health, we should at least be neutral but at best influence those factors that determine a better life-style, I recommend that Members keep the annual report of 2014 in their minds when determining such things for the future.

NAME: DENISE LE GAL

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES AND LEAD MEMBER FOR NEW MODELS OF DELIVERY

South East Business Services

On 15 September 2014 East Sussex and Surrey County Councils, in partnership, launched their ambition to create a shared business advisory and professional service. This service aims to combine the business service functions across both organisations to deliver economies of scale that will result in greater value for residents of both authorities. This partnership is called South East Business Services (SEBS).

A Member panel for SEBS has been established and will advise and support the development of the partnership. Members of the panel include Bob Gardner, John Orrick, Richard Wilson and me, along with Julie Fisher as the lead officer.

The business case will be reviewed by Cabinet in February 2015 and will outline the operating model for the partnership that will create a fully integrated service by 2018. With Member approval, South East Business Services will be created in April 2015.

NAME: MIKE GOODMAN

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

Waste update

- Eco Park

A local resident had recently applied to the High Court for permission to seek a judicial review of the decision taken by the Planning and Regulatory Committee on 24 September 2014. A further report will be presented to Cabinet in February 2015 which will include an update on affordability and value for money analysis.

- Community Recycling Centres

A number of performance improvement and efficiency savings activities have already commenced. In order to make further savings, more changes need to be considered, including charging for certain materials and rationalising opening times.

- Partnership working

Surrey authorities are currently revising their joint waste strategy and SCC is working with districts and boroughs to make a step change in performance and efficiency. This includes:

- Capturing more material for recycling.
- Improving the efficiency of kerbside collection systems.
- Recovering more value from the material collected.

Maximising the benefits from these initiatives will require a new approach that ensures all authorities are committed to making savings against the total costs of waste management in Surrey, thereby delivering best value to the Surrey tax payer.

Local Transport Review

A wide ranging consultation with residents and stakeholders on the proposed approach to make savings in local transport in Surrey commenced on 8 October 2014.

The online campaign for the consultation launched initially via our website and has been communicated via emails to stakeholders, e-newsletters, social media and online advertising. The printed campaign went live mid-November and this is now appearing in libraries, local council offices, community centres, village halls, GPs, sixth form colleges, supermarkets, at selected bus stations, on buses, at our busiest bus stops and at many other locations across the county.

An extensive stakeholder engagement campaign is currently underway, which includes engaging directly with local area committees, parish and town councils, empowerment boards, disability alliance networks and community transport groups (23 engagement sessions so far, out of a total of 43 planned). Further events planned for the next two months include thematic workshops for businesses, youth, disabled/older people and a roving bus event across Surrey

The consultation has so far received over 1800 (online) and 200 (written response) responses and will be open until 14 January 2015, but this will be possibly be extended to the end of January to maximise the response rate. Recommendations based on the consultation will be taken to a Cabinet meeting in May 2015.

NAME: LINDA KEMENY

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

School Place Planning

At the last County Council meeting, Members debated the county's forecasting and planning of school places and I am pleased that this important service received strong support. Since then, Cabinet approved the expansion of 3 more primary and secondary schools, with another 4 being considered at its meeting next week. By 31 October, a record number of over 11,000 applications for secondary school places in 2015 were received, 400 more than for this year and more than 1 in 10 from parents in bordering London boroughs, who have clearly heard that 92% of Surrey secondary schools are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. I held meetings last month with residents in Ashted, Woking, Reigate, and Milford, who all understood our pressing need for more school places although concerns always remain over traffic congestion and inconsiderate parking which we will continue to work hard to address. Schools in Maybury, Wonerish, Reigate and Hersham celebrated the opening of new permanent buildings and facilities which I attended with county officers and contractors, just a few of the 51 school expansions which were completed in time to open in September across 10 of the 11 Surrey boroughs and districts. Also the first brand new school commissioned in Surrey on behalf of the local authority for some years, Trinity Oaks C of E Primary School in North East Horley, held its official grand opening last month. Based on current projections, Surrey County Council needs to invest £84 million to deliver an additional 3,000 places next September, yet the Council is only scheduled to receive £30 million in government grant funding, so we are keeping up the pressure on Government for a fairer funding settlement to keep pace with this continuing unprecedented demand.

Surrey Educational Trust

The Surrey Educational Trust (SET) which I chair was established to distribute a proportion of earnings generated through the joint venture between the Council and Babcock 4S. Last month the SET agreed the next bidding round to fund projects focused on leadership development, extending educational opportunity, increasing young people's resilience and personal growth, modern foreign languages, English as an additional language (EAL), and promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. Flyers picturing a flashing light bulb, with the caption 'Do you have a bright idea?', have been distributed to Surrey schools and educational organisations. For the many Members who are school governors or close to your local schools, we need applications for projects from £500-£25,000 by the closing date of 15 January 2015. Some really worthwhile projects have been funded by the SET, including a creative arts programme for EAL students, the GASP motor project to deliver a qualification for young people at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET), and the excellent Chelsea's Choice production to educate children about the dangers of sexual exploitation. More information is on our website, so please encourage applications and the winning projects will be announced in February.

NAME: PETER MARTIN

PORTFOLIO: CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ECONOMY AND PROSPEROUS PLACES

Local Growth Fund

Work is underway at various levels with both Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to ensure that Surrey receives its fair share of funding through the Local Growth Fund (LGF).

Round 1

Local Growth Deals were announced in early July 2014. These deals set out LGF allocations to the LEPs and the schemes on which these allocations will be spent. Almost £50 million will be spent on projects in Surrey starting in 2015/16, with most of the funding allocated to transport schemes. Agreed projects include Epsom Plan E (sustainable transport improvements), improvements to Runnymede roundabout and investment at Brooklands College (Ashford).

We are working hard with both LEPs to ensure that the agreed transport and non-transport projects are delivered. This involves the rapid completion of business cases, working in close collaboration with districts and boroughs. Delivery is vital if the LEPs are to be successful in receiving further funding.

Additional LGF funding ('Round 2')

In summer 2014 the Government also announced an accelerated process for making further bids for the LGF. The LEPs had to submit by 6 October, a short list of priority schemes that could make use of further funding in 2015/16 or 2016/17. Detailed business cases for these schemes were submitted November 2014. In Surrey, this included bids for additional resilience schemes in the Coast to Capital area (along the A22) and initial works on the Lower Thames Flood Defence Scheme in the Enterprise M3 area, amongst other schemes. We understand that the amount of funding for round 2 projects is likely to be limited. The announcement of successful projects is expected in the New Year.

Pipeline projects

Both LEPs have also been asked to provide Government with a list of potential projects for delivery in 2017/18 and 2018/19 by early December. It is possible that the Government will announce support for these schemes before the election, although funding is unlikely to be committed. As in previous rounds we have been working at various levels to ensure that projects in Surrey are included in submissions. Projects submitted include Kiln Lane Link and Staines Bridge widening.

Further information is available in Cabinet Reports, most recently 'Supporting Economic Growth – implementing the Local Growth deals', 21 October 2014.

Fredericks Foundation

I have agreed a grant of £50,000 from the Surrey Growth Fund for the Fredericks Foundation (a Surrey based charity). The Foundation provides loans to new and established micro enterprises. The grant will fund a Surrey co-ordinator and the development of a Surrey hub - a lending panel of private sector representatives.