

CLLR DAVID HODGE
LEADER



24 July 2015

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter dated 6 July providing an update on the work of the Welfare Reform Task Group and its latest recommendations. I am pleased that the Task Group is satisfied that the Council is prepared for the welfare reforms and I am happy to endorse the Task Group's recommendations.

Some of the recommendations and issues raised by the Task Group relate to national policy - in particular, the ongoing issue of delays in benefit appeals reaching tribunals. I endorse the continued work of the Task Group in monitoring this issue and should you (as Chairman of the Board) wish to write to the Secretary of State to raise your concerns, I would be very happy to endorse your letter.

A number of the Task Group's other recommendations refer to Universal Credit. Officers are working very closely with Elmbridge Borough Council to support the introduction of Universal Credit and how this affects our residents and services. As part of this, the Council will be organising an information sharing session in the autumn and I have asked that Officers ensure the Task Group is kept informed.

The Task Group also makes recommendations regarding the future of the getWIS£ and Local Assistance Scheme. Officers are currently evaluating the existing arrangements before developing a business case to see how best to deliver these schemes in the future. Again, I have asked Officers to ensure that the Task Group is kept up to date with this work.

Finally, I would like to thank the Task Group for its continued hard work in scrutinising the impact of welfare reform on Surrey residents. This is a complex and ever changing issue, which makes the careful and considered scrutiny that the Task Group offers even more important.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Hodge', written over a horizontal line.

David Hodge
Leader of the Council

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