



Chief Executive's Progress Report

March 2016

Introduction

This is my thirteenth report – though I hope that doesn't make it an unlucky one. In order to align the reports with the civic year, we have used the last nine months as our reporting period.

The format of the report has changed over time in response to feedback from both Members and staff. The purpose of the report has also evolved. It has increasingly become a prompt for wider discussions with Members, staff and partners – one part of ongoing conversations at meetings and team visits, and online through chat-zone, my blog and regular emails.

Most importantly, it has also become a way of sharing experience and learning from each other. There are 19 inspiring stories in this report. These examples will be added to our website and will be focused on in turn throughout the next few months, so that we can be reminded of the great work that colleagues are doing across our council.

I believe that the case studies from staff, in addition to the good news stories we have received from service users are integral to this report, and they are all well worth reading. These examples are a great testament to the quality and significance of work done by our colleagues.

Whilst celebrating successes, this report also looks forward to the next six months. In the third section, I have included pieces on our networks, an FAQ-style piece on devolution and some information about how we will take action in response to our recent staff survey, which has given us the best data we've ever had about how colleagues feel about working for Surrey.

This report exists for us to share stories and give feedback on the work of our colleagues; and, I invite anyone who wishes to share thoughts on what I've written to get in touch with me directly. You can send me an email, set up a meeting to chat in person or reply to one of my blog posts on chat zone.

Last nine months

In this report, we have had to fit in stories and feedback from the last nine months, and it is clear that there has been no shortage of creative and exciting work going on.

As well as new and innovative projects, we have continued to fulfil a wide range of critical daily responsibilities, and made progress on re-designing services so that they are more resident-focused and achieve better value.

Rather than trying to cram in all the details of all of the successes that have been achieved by colleagues, I invite you to understand the scale and diversity of work done since July 2015 through the words of colleagues and service users. I am immensely proud of these examples and the many others that I have the privilege of regularly hearing about.

Our Continuous Improvement Board has continued to meet and oversee our systematic approach to improving services for children. Partner agencies are key members of the board and make a significant contribution to its work. Recently there was a stock take of this work by Department for Education informed by Ofsted monitoring. They have judged that we are making steady progress with clear signs of improvement in key areas. There is still much work to do and we have a good basis for continued progress.

The context we work in

The challenges we face have not changed significantly over recent years; however, their scale has increased. The demographic demand pressures we face continue to grow relentlessly and at the same time our resources particularly from central government decline in both actual and real terms. This pincer movement means that we face genuine dangers to our sustainability as an organisation.

We anticipated that our grant from government would be cut over four years and that we would be expected to do more for less. Just before Christmas, central government announced that £50m would be cut from Surrey's central government grant in a single year, nearly double the amount that we had been led to expect. This presented enormous challenges to balance the budget for 2016/17 not least because the key decisions regarding that budget needed to be made at the start of February.

The Council did agree a balanced budget for 2016/17. However this balance was achieved by assuming full delivery of a very significant level of savings, use of a significant level of reserves, use of capital receipts and provision of transitional relief from Government to compensate for the degree of 'shock' in the Provisional Settlement. Balancing the 2017/18 budget will require a similar challenging mix. At the same time, the Council agreed to establish a programme of unprecedented transformation provide the basis for longer term sustainability.

I want to acknowledge the remarkable work of colleagues, and in particular finance colleagues, whose work enabled us to pull together these budget proposals. The council Leader, David Hodge, led a strong lobbying campaign for transitional support. Ministers listened to our case and we secured some additional funding for the next two years – a grant of £11.9m this year and £12.2m in 2017-18. This support whilst welcome still leaves us with very serious challenges for the foreseeable future.

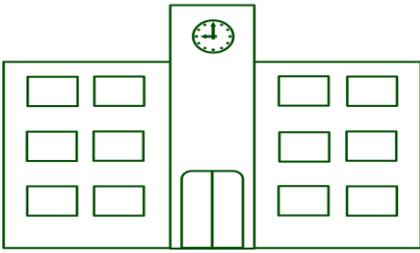
Surrey is one of the most strained councils in the country when it comes to increasing demand for services, especially given the extremely high cost of living in the South East of England. It is clear that current ways of allocating national funding do not take proper account of the genuine costs of delivering services in different parts of the country and this will be a strong focus of our work to influence national decision making over the next year. Our biggest spend comes from Adult Social Care. The number of elderly people in our county is set to increase by 20,000 by 2020, resulting in an increase of a massive twenty million pounds to be found every year.

At present our balanced budget is dependent upon a series of one-offs we will not be in a sustainable position until we have replaced them with continuing sources of funding. We have already made some very large efficiency gains over the past six years and therefore the scope for further efficiencies on the scale required is reduced. Given that context our current way of trying to achieve the outcomes we want to see for residents in Surrey is simply not sustainable. We will have to accelerate our partnership working particularly with health. We will have to accelerate our work to transform how systems work. The case studies later in the report demonstrate some of the examples of how we can do this.

It feels inevitable that we will be expected to become entirely self sustaining as grants from government will continue to shrink towards zero. For councils like Surrey that means a serious discussion about what the level of council tax needs to be to sustain services for the residents we serve.

The info-graphic images on the following pages attempt to capture the essence of our situation.

Increasing demand



- ❖ Surrey will provide over 2,000 new school places for 2016
- ❖ This is happening alongside increasing demand for other services for children

5 out of every 30 pupils have Special Educational Needs

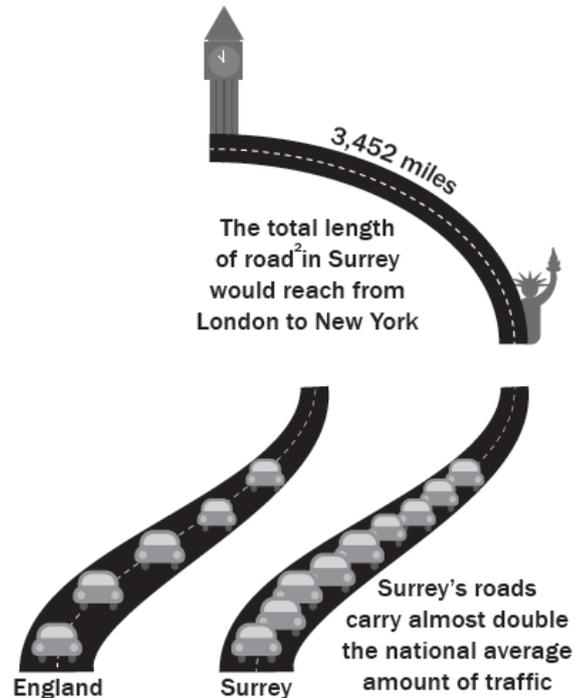


- ❖ Surrey is required to provide more than 11,000 extra school places over the next 5 years – despite funding for this falling short by around £30m



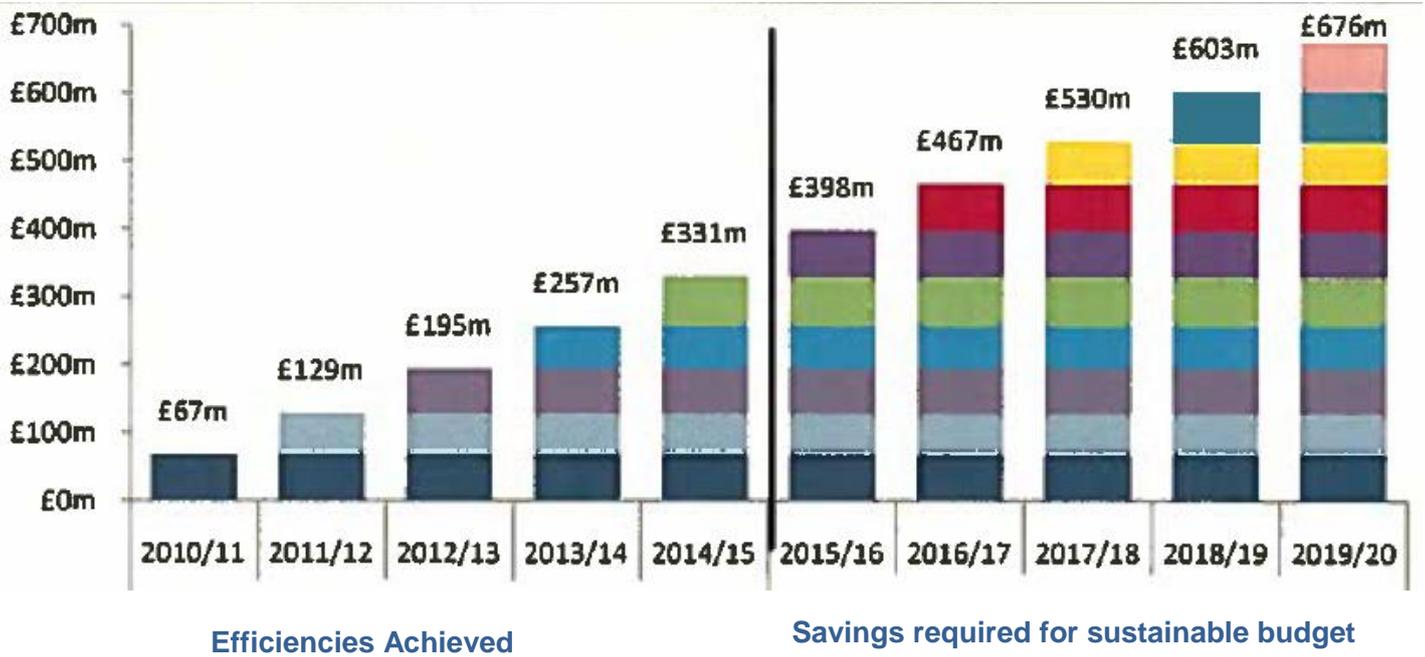
There are approximately **24,500** adults aged 65+ with depression or severe depression⁵

There is an increasing number of older residents suffering with mental health issues associated with ill physical health, loneliness and isolation



Reduced financial resources

Since 2010 we have found savings of nearly £330m – we need to make further savings of almost £300m between now and 2020



Local authorities across England face a number of challenges:



Of councils say they will use increased charging to fund their 2016/17 budget



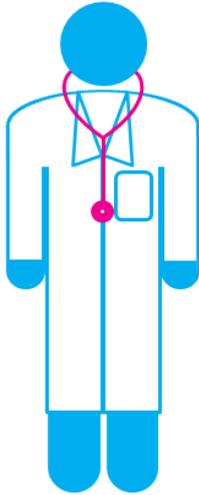
of councils say their 2016/17 budget will lead to cuts in frontline services that are evident to the public



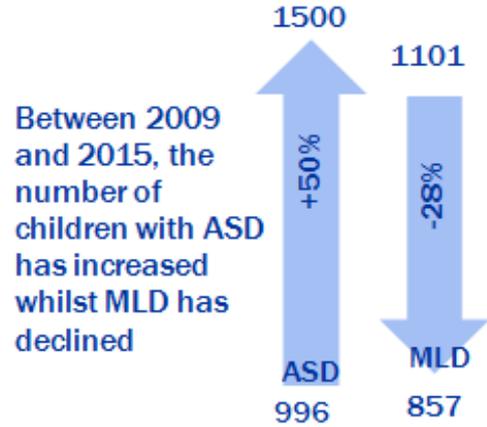
Our Central Government grant has been slashed by nearly £50m for this year

Changing needs and expectations

The additional responsibilities we now have as a result of the Care Act could increase over the next five years to

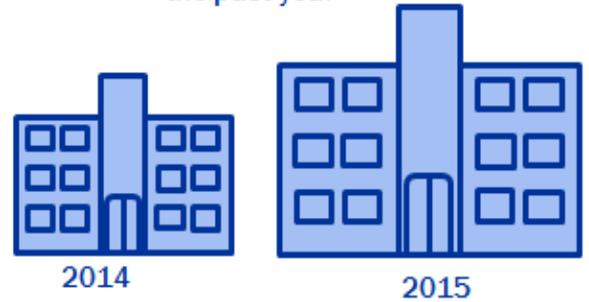


cost the Council between £75m and £147m each year. In 2015/16 we expect to receive only £10m funding towards these costs

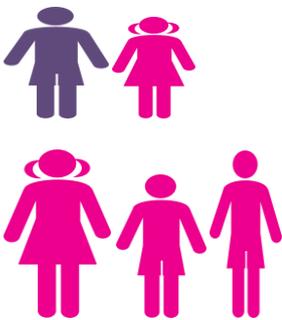


ASD stands for Autistic Spectrum Disorder and MLD stands for Mild Learning Disability

Independent Specialist College placements have increased by 33% in the past year



The number of elderly people in our county set to increase by 20,000 by 2020 - By 2021 it is estimated that older people will make up 20% of the population, increasing demand on both health and social care services



There are **21,450** children with SEN support in Surrey

Next six months

There is a huge amount to get done in the next six months. For me there are four key areas that I believe require a particularly strong focus, these are:

- Devolution
- Organisational Culture
- Budget sustainability
- Health and Social Care integration

We will need to make strong progress on each of these in order to fulfil our obligations to residents in 2016 and beyond. I will be paying careful attention to each of these and I welcome the important contributions Members will also make in these areas.

Devolution

Devolution wasn't high on the agenda when I wrote my last report, but it's very quickly risen up our list of priorities. As part of the Spending Review 2015, the Chancellor invited places wanting to agree a devolution deal to submit a proposal by the 4th September 2015 – since then, devolution has become a huge part of the work that I do and that an increasing number of colleagues here at Surrey are working on. I think that Devolution provides exciting opportunities for us as a local authority to have more choice and decision-making power over the services that are important to our residents.

The single most compelling argument for me is the scale of the infrastructure deficit we face. A Devolution deal is the only hope we have of securing the level of funding required to tackle that deficit.

Our work on devolution has shown just how important Sussex and Surrey are to supporting the growth not only of London and the South East, but the whole country. Together, we have a population of over 2.5 million. The economy of the 3SC has a combined GVA (gross value added, or the measure for how much the economy is worth) of £74 billion, bigger than Wales or Greater Manchester.

But this growth is also putting a strain on the area: we've all experienced our creaking road and rail infrastructure; we're one of the most expensive areas to live in (which makes it harder for people to stay in the area and makes it harder to recruit and retain the social workers, nurses and teachers our public services need); and many employers are finding it hard to recruit people with the right skills.

Devolution gives us an opportunity to move more of the decisions and funding that affect all these issues down from central Government, so that we can do things and use funding in a way that better meets our local need. And by working across Sussex and Surrey there will be more opportunities to do things differently as a result of working at the right scale. Orbis is a good example of the successful partnership working that already exists across Sussex and Surrey.

I have included a 'Devolution Demystified' section in Part 3 of the report, this provides some additional information and clarity on our progress so far. You can find some further information on Devolution [here](#)

Culture

We want to continue to develop a culture that upholds our four key values; listen, responsibility, trust and respect. To achieve this, we have made a huge effort to include these values in our day-to-day activities and fundamental practices.

Over the past five years we have invested in our training and development programme, by providing a large range of opportunities for colleagues to develop their skills and expertise so that they can support the organisation in a time of change. Despite increasing budget constraints, we have managed to ring fence this as a priority for Surrey. I believe that investment in other colleagues is the best way to support each other and secure a strong future for Surrey as an organisation.

Appraisals are a key part of the culture we create as a values - led organisation. I am pleased to confirm that the organisation has achieved a **90.69%** final appraisal completion rate for 2014 /15.

Environment and Infrastructure were the first and only directorate to achieve 100% and the other directorates achieved as follows:

Adults Social Care	99.46%
Business Services	91.85%
Chief Executives	90.97%
Children's, Schools and Families	75.54%
Customers & Communities	99.40%

Year on year we are looking to improve both our completion rates and our timescales. More importantly, we are working with those that need support in completing high quality appraisals. This focus on quality will underpin our work on organisational culture.

One of the strands of our work on culture focuses on leadership. Within this, coaching programmes, including the high performance development programme (HPDP), the My Benefits package and the 'my career' programme are offered. Another aspect of this work focuses on succession planning and ensuring that we have strong deputies across all of our departments, so that there are people that are able to step-up as required.

I believe that to develop a strong organisational culture, we need to understand how important our wellbeing is. On this topic, I would like to thank all of those who participated in the staff survey; nearly 3,500 colleagues completed it during October and November. The survey provides us with the best evidence we have of how colleagues feel about working here. I have included a section in Part Three of the report that gives some more detail on the findings of the survey and what we can do now as an organisation to build on our current position.

Budget

At the full Council meeting on the 9th February, we were able to set a balanced budget for the coming financial year. Whilst the full budget is available on our website, should you wish to read it, there are a few main points that I think are worth noting.

There are a number of combined factors that have led to our financial position being as difficult as it is. One of these is the steep rate of decline of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) that was set out in the Local Government Settlement. Surrey loses out disproportionately as a result of central government's deal more generally. County councils have fared badly through the settlement, but we have been hit particularly hard, with the average loss of RSG in other counties being 30%, but in Surrey being 41%.

In view of the demand challenges we faced this council proposed that there should be a specific precept to respond to pressures in Adult Social Care. This precept of 2% is ringfenced to that purpose. Council Tax for services as a whole will rise by 1.99%.

Council decided that an organisation wide Public Value Transformation (PVT) programme was required to develop a sustainable medium term financial plan. This builds on our successful Public Value Reviews that began in 2009. So far these reviews have identified savings of £267m by 2015/16. These reviews have also helped us to focus on the things that matter most to our residents and to change the culture of the organisation and develop the skills of colleagues across the Council.

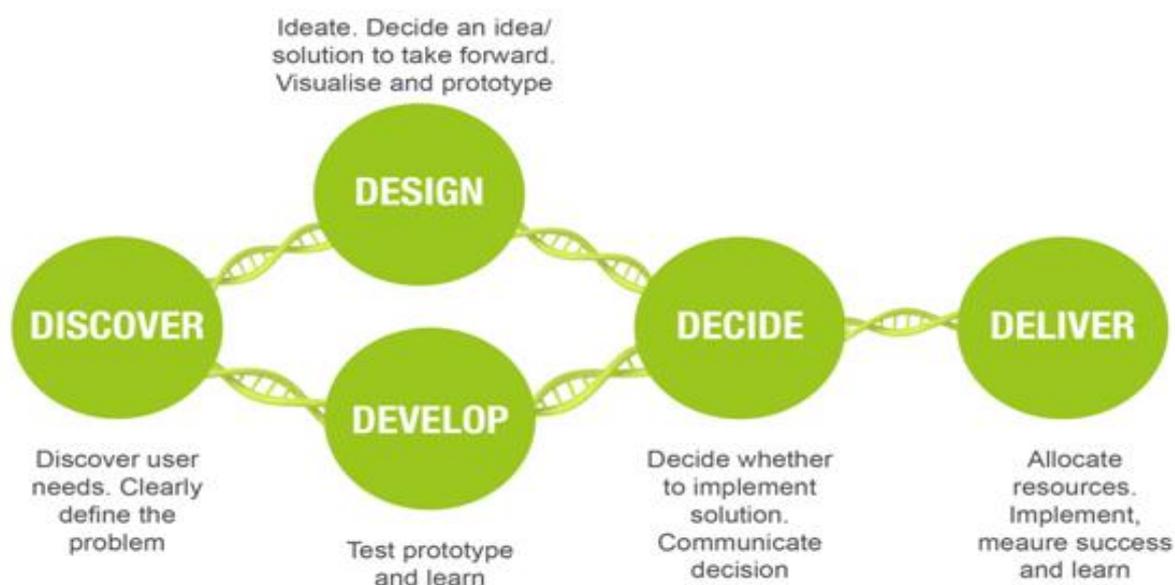
The work from those reviews and other efficiency work will continue, whilst the new PVT programme will focus on the innovation and transformation required for the next five years and beyond. We will work across the council and with partners with a clear focus on improving residents' experience. The scale of what we need to achieve with this programme goes beyond anything we have done previously. It will require a relentless focus and determination. We are in a good place to undertake this because of the skills we have developed within the council, our relationships with key partners, and our increasingly sophisticated use of the data that is available about how and why residents access services. We will start with a focus on health

and social care integration, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability), Early Help and Double Devolution.

Public Value is a specific methodology and tools designed to achieve better outcomes. It has three key principles namely that:

- there is evidence of a clear (measurable) benefit to those who are meant to benefit from our work;
- we have political and stakeholder support for what we propose; and
- we are able to deliver it.

We recognise that innovation happens in stages and based on best practice globally we have identified clear stages with supporting tools for each stage. Below is a simple schematic of the model that we are using to drive this systematic approach to innovation.



When it works Public Value clearly provides outcomes that residents want within the resources that are available to deliver them.

Health and Social Care

Fundamental changes are needed in the way that we commission and provide health and social care services across Surrey. We are experiencing an unprecedented level of demand on our health and social care services, with an increasing amount of residents with complex needs and an ageing population. Given the budget constraints we are facing, we have to do things differently. Our vision is to maintain people's independence and wellbeing through personalised care and support and by working collaboratively with our partners to deliver better outcomes at less cost.

Integration is a huge part of the work that is currently being done in Health and Social Care to provide better and more joined up services. To build a successful long-term partnership between social care and health, both partners need to be sustainable and understanding of each other. The integration of Health and Social Care has been accelerated by the introduction of the Better Care Fund (BCF); the aim of this Government programme is to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services.

Integration presents us with a great opportunity to provide better outcomes for Surrey residents and enables the Council to better influence and control the source of demand for social care services. Collaborating with health partners also helps us to deliver local integrated community-based health and social care. At the same time, it also presents us with a number of challenges, such as ensuring that residents have a seamless experience when moving from one part of the system to another.

Personal budgets are just one aspect of our work to personalise care and support to residents. The basic principle is that care and support should be individualised and tailored to fit around those in need, as experts in their own condition, giving them greater independence, choice and control over their lives.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) will be the overarching strategic plan for local health and care systems between October this year and March 2021. STPs represent a significant shift in NHS planning towards place-based planning. The geographic 'footprint' for STPs is determined locally and will be based upon natural communities, existing working relationships and patient flows – three STPs are being proposed covering Surrey. In addition to covering all areas of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England commissioned activity, STPs will also include plans around integration with local authorities. CCGs were created following the Health and Social Care Act in 2012 and replaced Primary Care Trusts. CCGs are clinically-led NHS bodies responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for their local area. There are now 209 CCGs in England.

These new circumstances are making us think differently about how we do health and social care and I believe that they provide an opportunity to re-think our current ways of working and innovate; we're moving towards using more technology to deliver our services, encouraging people to build networks of support amongst their family, friends and communities and growing a sustainable workforce. These new ways of working mean that we can maintain and even improve the quality of support we offer to residents.

Conclusion

It would be foolish to underestimate the challenges ahead. I remain confident that we are in the best position we could be to tackle them. I believe we have the right strategy in place and that the learning culture we have developed over the past seven years will stand us in good stead. Above all I'm encouraged by the talent and determination that colleagues across the council demonstrate every day. We have remarkable colleagues in every area of our work and working as One Team I'm sure we can achieve our goals.



Part 2

Celebrating Success

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Good News Stories

Wellbeing

Everyone in Surrey has a great start to life and can live and age well



EMT and IMT use digital services to respond to emergencies

Brianne Vally, Senior Emergency Management Officer, explains how her team worked with colleagues in IMT (all pictured left) to make our response to emergencies more effective

The challenge

The Emergency Management Team co-ordinates our response to small and large scale incidents by facilitating communication between all services within the organisation, outsourced providers of services and all other relevant external agencies. We've recently had to become more flexible to adapt to the changing demands of a multi-agency response to an emergency and could no longer rely on a paper system to deal with the high volume of incoming information.

Last year, we worked with the IMT team to incorporate the use of digital services to help enhance our response to an emergency. We developed a digital solution using Sharepoint and launched this in January of this year.

How did your work make a difference?

Sharepoint enables us to respond more quickly and in a more tailored way to each emergency.

What did you learn?

We learned how digital services could enhance our response to an emergency. We also realised that no matter how good this hi-tech solution is, it is not there to replace face-to-face communication.

What is the biggest myth about your work?

Emergencies can occur at any time with little or no warning but fortunately don't happen very often. Some people think we get bored in between emergencies. Rest

assured that there are plenty of things for us to do! Our days consist mainly of:

- building relationships, training and exercising with resilience partners
- assessing and reviewing hazards in Surrey to ensure we have the capability and capacity to respond accordingly
- planning for the safe delivery of exciting events
- developing business continuity arrangements to ensure we can carry out delivering critical services in an emergency.

How can people find out more?

Email Brianne Vally via Lotus Notes

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“While it has a lot of advantages, we had to keep reminding ourselves that no matter how good this high-tech solution is, it is not there to replace face-to-face communication.”

Brianne Vally, Senior
Emergency
Management Officer



Tailor-made education for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Gabrielle Close (pictured left), works in the Additional and Special Educational Needs Team; she tells us about how her service is responding to the increasing need from users with ASD



The challenge

The number of children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Surrey has increased by 50% since 2009. Currently 1,500 school students in Surrey have been identified, and the majority of them attend mainstream schools. High levels of stress and anxiety can make it difficult for these students to succeed in mainstream settings. Some of these students attend non-maintained schools and independent schools, sometimes outside of Surrey. These placements, which may be far from home, can mean that students lose touch with their communities.

The challenge is to respond effectively to this increasing need. Most students with ASD have good academic abilities and we must be ambitious on their behalf and ensure that they can reach their full potential.

How did your work make a difference?

The Council is developing four highly specialist, purpose build specialist centres, all hosted by outstanding local schools. Two centres have already opened and two more are set to open in the future.

We have successfully placed twelve students at these centres. We've heard that these students are settled in well and that with the additional personalised support offered by the specialist staff, they are included in mainstream classes.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the National Autistic Society, (NAS) who have partnered us in this work, and the Surrey-based Cullum Family Trust.

What did you learn?

Through my involvement in this project, I have learnt so much about collaborative working. In particular, this project has underlined the paramount importance of building relationships of mutual trust.

This work has involved working closely with various partners. By its nature, work of this kind is challenging, not least in the drawing up of complex legal contracts. Different partners can have different objectives and different priorities. By creating a shared vision and by communicating clearly, we have succeeded.

How can people find out more?

Email a question to: gabrielle.close@surreycc.gov.uk



“These centres will improve our capacity to provide students with ASD tailor-made education, meaning fewer students have to go out of the county to get the right education.”

Gaby Close, Strategy Manager, Children Schools & Families



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“This work will see vulnerable women diverted out of the criminal justice system to tackle the root cause of their offending behaviour.”

Luke Burton, Policy and Strategic Partnerships Manager

Transforming Justice

Luke Burton (pictured left), tells us about the Transforming Justice programme and how it looks to work with vulnerable people to achieve better outcomes.

The challenge

The Transforming Justice programme which is part of the public sector transformation work we are leading, is about to pilot an innovative project that will change the justice system in Surrey for vulnerable people. This has been done through various partnership co-design sessions to understand why the justice system fails many people and what can all the partners do to make it better and more successful, whilst working with reducing resources.

The criminal justice system is complex so understanding how it worked in Surrey and then partners agreeing the way forward was a challenge. Then simplifying that into coherent plans that partners could engage with was also a challenge.

The programme has recently been awarded £100,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner office and £50,000 from the Ministry of Justice to pilot this innovative work in Surrey. This work will see vulnerable women diverted out of the criminal justice system to tackle the root cause of their offending behaviour. Putting women in prison is costly, ineffective and has wider social costs.

Work is also going on with young people through Positive Youth Justice, to improve preventative and the already successful Youth Restorative Intervention. The partnership is also investigating how court can be done differently for women and young people.

How is this helping residents?

This work will reduce offending and reoffending, making

Surrey an even safer place to live. It will also improve the lives of many vulnerable people who come into contact with the criminal justice system and will save money for the public purse.

What have you learned from your experience?

The biggest thing that struck me was that the reasons people come into contact with the criminal justice system are the same reasons people came into contact with our services and our partners such as the NHS and our District and Borough's. The main reasons were mental health issues, drug and alcohol misuse, poor finances, learning disabilities, housing issues and poor emotional wellbeing. Things which pretty much apply to most vulnerable people. Which is why I'm glad through the 3SC devolution work the partners are looking at vulnerable and complex people as a whole and what we can do better to make sure we work together to prevent people getting into crisis or better helping those that need our help.

What's the best thing about your job?

The best thing about my job is being involved in a piece of work that will change the lives of thousands of vulnerable people in Surrey.

How can people find out more?

Email Luke Burton via Lotus Notes

Smokefree playgrounds

Rachael Davis, Public Health Lead (pictured left), tells us about the project she worked on to keep children's play areas smokefree.



The challenge

Protecting children from starting smoking and reducing the harm caused by tobacco is one of our key priorities.

We know that children are more likely to start smoking if they see adults smoking and so it is vital that we denormalise smoking to reduce the rates of young people taking it up. Family-friendly environments and playgrounds therefore, should be places where children can enjoy healthy physical activity without being exposed to smoking.

To address this, I have just led a project with colleagues in seven district & borough councils to make their children's play areas smoke free. On No Smoking Day (Wednesday 9 March) we are teaming up with local borough and district councils to launch a voluntary smoking ban, with the aim of making council-managed children's play areas smokefree across Surrey. We held a competition in our local schools for young people to design the signage for their local park and they have produced some fabulous designs!

How will this help residents?

Smokefree play areas mean:

- children can enjoy playing in a environment free from smoke,
- less smoking-related litter and fires,
- potential for increased usage of the play area.

What did you learn from the experience?

I learned about forming new working partnerships with professionals from other services we don't normally work with and who were instrumental in making this project happen. An example of this was getting engagement from local councils and schools and finding the key individuals in those organisations that could help give this project life.

Colleagues in Environmental Health have been wonderful, and forming new alliances with the park staff has really helped the project to succeed.

What's the best thing about your job?

Smoking is the biggest cause of health inequalities and affects the residents with the greatest need. I feel passionate about helping smokers quit which can have a massive effect on their health, their wealth and the well being of their family and friends.

I also enjoy working with different stakeholders and partners from within the Council and externally to reduce the harm caused by tobacco in Surrey.

How can people find out more?

Email Rachel David via Lotus Notes

Page 33
“Smoking is the biggest cause of health inequalities and affects the residents with the greatest need. I feel passionate about helping smokers quit”

Rachael Davis, Public Health Lead



Time to Change

Maya Twardzicki (pictured left), our Public Health lead for mental health, tells us about how she and her team rolled out a new programme to change people's attitudes towards mental health.

What was the challenge?

The successful roll out of the Time to Change – Surrey programme. This followed the piloting and evaluation of an innovative approach that combines powerful drama interventions; mental health awareness sessions; and an Ambassador Scheme for people with lived experience of mental health issues to help engage the public in conversations about mental health. (Each of which have been shown to be effective in raising awareness and reducing stigma).

We had to conduct a thorough evaluation in the pilot phase (using the same measures of knowledge and attitudes as the national Time to Change campaign). Persuading participants to complete questionnaires before and after each drama/training intervention paid off – as it gave us strong evidence that our innovative approach worked – which helped persuade commissioners to fund the roll out.

How did this help residents?

Time to Change Surrey helps raise awareness, promote more positive attitudes and reduce stigma and discrimination around mental health - among staff of various organisations and the general public. The Mental Health Ambassadors have gained skills (e.g. speaking in public), confidence and self esteem from the training and support they have received, and from their interactions and conversations with the public and with staff at Time to Change- Surrey presentations and events.

What was the biggest learning point for you?

How much can be achieved through local partnership working – Time to Change- Surrey is co-ordinated by the charity Let's Link and delivered by Acting Out, ESRA and First Steps. It is overseen by a multi-agency steering group and is currently commissioned by Public Health. Together Time to Change Surrey has reached public and private sector organisations, employers, colleges and the general public.

What's the best thing about your job?

The best thing about my job is the opportunity to innovate and pilot new approaches and add to the evidence base of what works. The opportunity to incorporate arts approaches into mainstream public health work is exciting, as the arts can have a powerful impact that can help open doors and encourage more openness and engagement about the sensitive topic of mental health, which people can find it hard to talk about. By using forum theatre, audiences can learn and practice new skills after seeing the powerful drama scenes and having the chance to stop the scene and suggest more positive ways the actors could offer support to people experiencing mental health problems. We found that organisations were much more receptive to mental health awareness training and further support after seeing the emotive dramas.

How can people find out more?

Contact me at maya.twardzicki@surreycc.gov.uk or megan.aspel@sky.com if you would like to get involved in the project.



SUPPORTING OUR
VULNERABLE
ADULTS



The arts can have a powerful impact that can help open doors and encourage more openness and engagement about a sensitive topic like mental health, which people can find it hard to talk about. ”

**Maya Twardzicki,
Public Health Lead**



Timebanking: creating community resources

Tom Davis, Project Assistant, tells us about combating social isolation with time banks.

The challenge

Social isolation has as much impact on our health and wellbeing as more well known factors, such as smoking, excess weight and inactivity. The quality and quantity of a person's social relationships affects not only their mental health but also their physical health and life expectancy.

The Family, Friends and Communities (FFC) programme encourages residents to get involved, and build networks in order to maximise their wellbeing and independence in their community.

One way in which the FFC programme is doing this is through timebanking. Since 2015 SCC and Timebanking UK (TBUK) have been working in partnership to establish a network of timebanks across Surrey.

Surrey's timebanks provide a place for local people to connect and support one another. This in turn helps communities to become more cohesive and responsive to the needs of local people.

How did you make a difference?

We started by looking for the key community groups or people to contact who would have an interest in helping to create a timebank.

After identifying these groups and people, SCC and TBUK approached them and asked them to form Timebanking working groups to manage the creation of the timebank.

The function of a working group covers a range of tasks including finding a host, recruiting volunteers, designing a logo and applying for funding.

There was great interest from all sections of the community to get involved. Across Surrey working groups have representation from Districts and Boroughs, Councils for Voluntary Service, local churches and our staff, to name a few. All parties involved in the working groups have found the experience particularly rewarding. Many people have made useful connections with others they previously had not worked with.

As a result of this work, on Friday 1 January 2016, the first three timebanks of the Surrey Timebanking Network welcomed their first members and began exchanging time credits. The three operating timebanks are currently located in Farnham, Staines and Woking.

What next?

Two more timebanks opened in March 2016 - East Surrey Timebank, based in Redhill - and Guildford Timebank.

There are local working groups in every Borough and District; the aim is for these remaining groups to launch their timebanks within the next few months.

SCC and TBUK are also continuing to look for other residents or staff who may be interested in expanding the timebanking concept into other areas of the county.

How can people find out more?

If you are interested in finding out more about timebanking or would like to create your own timebank please contact:

Tom Davis, Project Assistant, Adult Social Care Projects Team thomas.davis@surreycc.gov.uk

“Timebanking allows people to exchange their time and skills in return for 'time credits' to spend with others in the community.

Everyone's time is valued equally and one hour of help earns one credit. All sorts of things can be exchanged through a timebank including gardening, shopping, dog walking, learning or teaching an instrument, learning or teaching a language or cooking”.

Tom Davis, Project Assistant in the Adult Social Care Projects Team



Health Surrey: older residents being prepared for emergencies

Liz Fowler (pictured left) tells us about older people building community resilience.

The challenge

Following successful work to develop community resilience to flooding in Surrey by working directly with communities, we became the UK partner in an EU funded project led by the Red Cross, to inform this work with regard to older people.

Older people are often seen as being those most vulnerable to disasters, and are treated as victims without being consulted as to what they want and need in those situations. We need to tackle this in the agency responses and ways of engaging with this community.

The Red Cross chose Woking as a suitable place to hold an interactive conference with 80 over 65s from the local area, involving workshops to get feedback on what being resilient meant to them. The findings of this work will be used to inform policy makers across the UK and Europe.

What did you learn?

The older generation wanted to be proactive in managing their own risk, they want to be able to help and use their life experience and skills in an emergency, or to prepare for and prevent adversity. Most took part in volunteering, and were involved in making their communities more resilient. Many use the most up to date communications technology, but all wanted to have alternatives to communication via the internet and social media, making the point that if there is no power devices will not necessarily work, and all knew people who do not use electronic communication at all.

Everyone wanted simple aligned messaging and to be kept informed. The people involved in this study also emphasised the need for emotional support after an emergency.

This work is now linked with the preventative wellbeing work of ASC, Public Health, the Red Cross and SFRS, as well as Highways reporting - and Environment Agency messaging around prevention and minimisation of flood risk. Together these strands have potential to deliver a cross agency cost saving as well as benefits to resident well-being, experience and economic prosperity.

Follow up by developing and mapping the resilience and community capability of local areas will allow better targeted interaction and response by all agencies including Emergency Management and responders - and targeted community training. This allows communities including older residents to take more responsibility for maintaining and improving their own local environments as safe pleasant places to live with resulting health benefits.

What's the best thing about your job?

Getting to work across the diverse geography and demographics of Surrey, with a diverse range of partners, from the Red Cross to the Power Distribution Companies and Public Health - it is brilliant to be able to make a real difference through this work, and help to coordinate really useful resources with input from residents who are then empowered to make a difference themselves.

Mythbusting:

Community resilience is for all no matter age or ability - it is just about being prepared and informed, and being a good neighbour.

How can people find out more?

If you would like to find out more about this work or how to get involved please contact Liz Fowler at elizabeth.fowler@surreycc.gov.uk

“It has been recognised that mental and physical health and well-being are more closely linked to resilience than previously thought in both directions - for example those who suffer flooding are four times more likely to suffer mental health impacts than the background population, but this impact appears to be reduced in those communities who are empowered and resilient and therefore do not feel like victims”.

**Liz Fowler,
Community
Resilience Officer**



Adult Social Care supporting networks in local communities

Rebecca Brooker, a project manager in Adult Social Care, tells us about how her team have worked to build networks in their local communities to help others with care and support needs.

The challenge

In Surrey our aim is to improve the wellbeing of our residents and their experience as a customer. For people with care and support needs, this means encouraging people to build networks and enabling them to maximise their wellbeing and independence in their local community. We want to grow a range of community resources which support residents to build their independence and improve their health and wellbeing.

How we made a difference

Colleagues in Adult Social Care have made a big difference in supporting residents to improve their wellbeing. We have developed networks in a number of areas to help with this work.

We have built good relationship with our partners, including the Borough Council colleagues that work alongside us. They all know they can ask us for help and information particularly when they have an emergency situation. We produce an internal newsletter together that informs all our teams about things going on locally. This encourages joint working and means we know about a lot of local care and support options that could be of benefit to residents.

I have also run some best practice sessions for my team with a fun slant, such as a Halloween themed one which went down really well. I use these times to support my Adult Social Care team to think differently about how we could support local residents.

By doing this we have come up with different options that are more personalised to the individual we are supporting and provide them with choice in how they want to receive the care and support they need.

I helped create info booklets for social workers to give to the residents they visit. The booklets contain community group information relevant to their areas so they can find out about things going on in their community and how they can get involved.

By talking to a Councillor, I found out that a local school runs a carers group. Our Carer's Practitioner got in touch with the school and found out that they have 28 young carers that we previously knew nothing about. The Carer's Practitioner is going to do a session next month with the young carers to tell them what support is available.

I have also built up a great rapport with local providers. They now see us a trustworthy source of information and will even call us to let us know if they have vacancies. I've also encouraged the home care agencies to think laterally about additional services they could provide that will improve the quality of life for the people they support.

What did you learn?

I have learnt to consider different viewpoints and think differently in order to find a solution that fits everyone's needs. Working collaboratively can feel time consuming, but I know we will end up with something so much better if we've got all our heads around the problem.

What next?

Adult Social Care colleagues continue to think of new and improved ways we can support our residents. Local partnership networks mean we will work increasingly closely with others to find collaborative solutions to the needs of local people.

How can people find out more?

Rebecca Brooker rebecca.brooker@surreycc.gov.uk

"We have come up with different options that are more personalised to the individual we are supporting and provide them with choice in how they want to receive the care and support they need".

Rebecca Brooker, Project Manager in Adult Social Care

Economic Prosperity

Surrey's economy remains strong and sustainable





Eduprise

Mark Borland (pictured left) from Highways & Transport tells us about how his team worked to address a skills gap in their service

The challenge

Our challenge was to work with Kier, our highway term maintenance partner, to negotiate a contract extension agreement which continues to deliver best value and meet the needs of our users and residents but also provides wider social value to Surrey. We used this as an opportunity to help us address the skills gap within the contract, the community and the regional highways and street works industry.

How have you made a difference?

We obtained a formal commitment from Kier, which will be enshrined in the contract extension agreement, to work with us to deliver an Education and Skills Development Plan, which includes:

The creation of an *Apprentice First* culture with the aim of making Surrey Highways an attractive place to work through a formal engagement programme of visits to schools and other learning providers.

The development of a sustainable educational enterprise “Eduprise” to provide pre apprenticeship training opportunities for people, who for different reasons are not work- ready. This will result in a recognised qualification in a meaningful trade and generate work-ready people to help fill our apprenticeships.

The development of a joint business case to the Department of Education to open a new regional Construction Academy for highways and property services based in Surrey to offer regional training hub, while promoting construction and local economic growth.

What did you learn?

That working with our partners and other services in an open collaborative way we can use commercial opportunities to achieve wider social value to Surrey.

How can people find out more?

If you would like to find out more about this work, please contact Mark at:
mark.borland@surreycc.gov.uk

“Not only will it create jobs and opportunities for local people, it will also equip Surrey with the expertise to improve our highways and drive forward the county’s powerhouse economy for years to come.”

John Furey, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Highways

Trading Standards partnership with Toyota GB

Philip LeShirley (pictured left), a Senior Trading Standards Specialist, tells us about how we have provided Toyota GB's customer service teams with training. Our Trading Standards Team are in partnership with Buckinghamshire County Council, so are collectively known as Buckinghamshire&Surrey Trading Standards.

What was the challenge?

We have been in partnership with Toyota (GB) Ltd, (TGB), since 2012. The partnership has been very beneficial for both sides – TGB has received advice on a range of issues which has given them confidence and protection moving forward. At the same time, we have been able to recover all costs associated with working with TGB, as we do with all of its 78 Primary Authority Partners (Primary Authority allows businesses to be involved in their own regulation. It enables them to form a statutory partnership with one local authority, which then provides robust and reliable advice for other local regulators to take into account when carrying out inspections or addressing non-compliance).

Further to some earlier training we provided in 2014 for the TGB customer services team, in 2015 we were asked to give additional training courses on the new Consumer Rights Act 2015, and managing telephone aggression.

How did you make a difference?

The training was well received and prompted the business to request further training this year on social media and marketing claims. Residents of Surrey (and elsewhere) can be assured that when dealing with TGB they know that the customer services team is highly trained by Trading Standards and as such will be treated fairly!

How can people find out more?

To find out more about the work that the team did, contact Philip at:

Philip.leshireley@bucksandsurreytradingstandards.gov.uk or at Philip.leshireley@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk





Superfast Surrey

Barbara Wise, Public Relations Manager (pictured left), explains how social media played a key part in engaging with local communities and driving the take-up of fibre broadband.

The challenge

Driving up the take-up of fibre broadband by developing a successful communications strategy by using the combined skills of the BT and our team members. We placed social media at the heart of our plan. To reach those who could not or did not want to access social media, we used traditional types of communications activities.

Following a tendering process to deploy fibre broadband infrastructure to more than 84,000 premises where there were no rollout plans by other providers, the Superfast Surrey programme contract was signed with BT.

As the residents and businesses covered by the programme were scattered across the county and all demographics using a wide variety of off and online media, we had to deliberate carefully about how to reach the audience making the best of the limited budget.

What did you do to achieve your goal?

A key element of the strategy was the development of a unique and distinctive brand, which represented the key elements of the project. This took the form of an eye catching cartoon style illustration featuring a fictional semi-rural Surrey community. Using people and animals, the drawing highlighted the different benefits and ways in which fibre broadband could be used. With our social media campaigns, we wanted to encourage visitors to come to our pages and “follow” or “like” us and crucially to “retweet” our information to their own contacts. To develop repeated visits to the site, we introduced a broad range of interesting elements including an ‘On this Day’ tweet.

The programme branding was used to its full advantage in various social media campaigns (such as the “Superfast Family” and “Fibre Christmas” campaigns) using characters from the original illustration to convey particular messaging. These activities engaged the audience, and allowed us to quickly build followers. As the programme progressed we began to focus our messaging towards residents in specific places where we had recently upgraded a fibre service.

How did you make a difference?

Approximately 96% of all premises in Surrey can now access a Next Generation Access (NGA) fibre broadband.

Residents and businesses throughout the county have embraced this technology and the take-up of fibre services within our intervention area has exceeded our initial expectations and is already approaching 33%. This level of take-up is amongst the highest in the country. This funding may ultimately bring in additional millions of pounds resulting in the prospect of further broadband deployment.

What did you learn?

My biggest learning point from the experience of working on a partnership project is that it requires more than just professional expertise. Collaboration is key, but perhaps more important is a shared understanding and passion for success.

How can people find out more?

Contact the Superfast Surrey team at enquiries@superfastsurrey.org.uk or visit the [Superfast Surrey website](#)





Roadworks communications

Tina Thorburn, Works Team Leader, tells us about how her team responded to feedback to improve their communication with residents

The challenge

Feedback from customers and stakeholders showed that communication on planned road works has not been acceptable. Highways receive a high number of complaints about road works and lack of communication; it's been one of the highest complaint categories for some time.

How did you make a difference?

We listened to this feedback, and in response the Works Communication Team was created in October. We are responsible for informing residents, councillors and other stakeholders about all planned works taking place across the county.

Feedback so far has been very positive; we've even received 32 compliments to date! We quickly cleared a backlog of over 250 enquiries and then lowered our enquiry response time from 28 days to 5 days. We've also opened another communication channel by giving customers the option of submitting questions, comments or feedback via www.roadworks.org, our primary source of road works information.

The next challenge is to increase customer and stakeholder satisfaction further by enabling self service on all works programme information and by improving all of our published information. It's a huge task but we are passionate about making a difference and committed to delivering our team objectives.

What did you learn?

How crucial communication is – people just want to be kept informed. By working together with our colleagues in Surrey Highways we can make a real difference.

How can people find out more?

Contact me tina.thorburn@surreycc.gov.uk or works.communication@surreycc.gov.uk, Tel: 01483 517392 or alternatively come and visit us at the Merrow depot. We are a friendly group and welcome visitors.





Creating the Visit Surrey website

Nikki Nicholson from the Economy Team tells us about working with Visit Surrey to create their new website.

Visit Surrey is a Community Interest Company that works to promote and support Surrey's visitor economy.

The challenge

The Economic Growth Team has been working with Visit Surrey to develop a new website. Their website was 12 years old and did not operate with the functionality which is expected of a modern, commercially focussed website. The [new website](#) is now live. It is mobile responsive, has fully integrated social media and video capabilities. The design is more inspirational, providing ideas, itineraries and special hints and tips as well as being more pictorial – letting photos tell the story.

In developing the website there has been a need to work closely with partners particularly boroughs and districts. The new site has an enormous capability to showcase and promote how wonderful Surrey is as a destination. However, it's a double edged sword, because the site is only as good as its content. We have had to work hard with businesses, event organisers, town councils and district and borough councils to fully show what Surrey has to offer.

How did this help residents?

Tourism in Surrey is a hidden gem which suffers from the mis-conception of being a suburban outpost of London. By inspiring and promoting visitor experiences for tourists, residents and businesses, Visit Surrey is seeking to support the local economy and local employment, as well as deliver improved services for residents.

Our visitor economy has a £2 billion turnover and employs 35,000 people. The county is home to a number of world class attractions, including museums, stately homes, galleries, gardens and a theme park.

The creation of the new website will increase income streams that can be reinvested into further development of the website and used for other marketing and economic development projects to promote or benefit Surrey's visitor economy.

What did you learn?

The new website could not be developed in isolation. We have been working hard with Visit Surrey to develop a new business plan which shows the marketing activity that the new income streams should be used to fund. We had to think strategically to develop a new vision and objectives for Visit Surrey which the new website could help deliver.

What's the best thing about your job?

The best thing about working on this project has been the opportunity to develop a website which gives the Visitor Economy industry the voice that it has always deserved in our brilliant county.

We have also engaged and worked with the heritage, countryside, museums and libraries teams here and in Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and the School of Hospitality and Tourism at the University of Surrey. We have learnt a lot about how these teams and organisations operate and about visitor and tourism opportunities in Surrey.

How can people find out more?

For more information, please contact Nikki at:
nikki.nicholson@surreycc.gov.uk

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“The best thing about working on this project has been the opportunity to develop a website which gives the Visitor Economy industry the voice that it has always deserved in our brilliant county.”

Nikki Nicholson, Economy
Manager

Resident Experience

Residents in Surrey experience public services that are easy to use, responsive and value for money



Library Direct – bringing the library to you



Siobhan De Doncker (pictured left), explains how the Library Direct Home Service was expanded to include more residents

What is Library Direct and what does it do?

The Library Direct Home Service is part of Surrey Libraries and arranges for volunteers to visit individuals in their own homes who are unable to visit the library themselves. In recent years Library Direct has expanded to include support to housebound residents of any age, not just the elderly, as well as people who may be housebound due to caring responsibilities.

Some of our clients end up needing to leave their own homes and live in care homes, sheltered accommodation or nursing homes. This has led to our decision to expand Library Direct to include residents at these locations. We are currently developing a service whereby either a member of care home staff can select and collect library stock for their residents or we can provide volunteers to deliver the stock to residents in the home. The volunteer-delivered service mainly takes place in a group setting on a monthly basis and is often referred to as the 'library Morning'.

Last summer we were approached by a long stay inpatient respiratory ward about providing a service to some of their patients, many of whom are bed bound and can be there for up to 8 months. We managed to recruit two excellent volunteers who currently visit the ward on a monthly basis delivering audiobooks. As a result of this new addition and interest from other similar settings we have renamed this part of the service to Library Direct Community Settings.

How does it help residents?

The service brings the joy of reading to those unable to visit the library – Books are a universal communicator, and everyone has a favourite author or favourite book. It also combats social isolation – many of our readers are socially isolated due to their health issues, decreased mobility or caring responsibilities, so our volunteers provide a social and literary lifeline to their readers.

What challenges did you have to overcome?

Our current challenge is promoting the service to those who would benefit from being visited by one of our volunteers. As a result we have been building relationships with other SCC colleagues, community organisations and borough and district councils to help spread the word about the services we provide. However, managing this service is also an ongoing balancing act: in some areas we have too many volunteers and not enough clients and in other areas we have too many clients and not enough volunteers.

What was the biggest learning point for you?

We wanted our volunteers to feel part of the service when it was brought in-house; they have been instrumental in helping us to build and develop the service over the last few years. We also wanted them to have a closer connection to the library service and have since introduced a quarterly volunteer newsletter. Additionally, every 6 months we hold coffee mornings for our volunteers so that they have a chance to meet with us face to face and also to meet with other volunteers local to them.

What's the best thing about your job?

The best part of this job for me personally is talking to the clients after they have had a couple of visits from their volunteer to see how they are getting on. You can see how important books are to their lives and how this service is making a difference.

What is the biggest myth about the service?

That this is a service only for the elderly; residents of any age can join and do use this service. Our eligibility criteria are as follows: for people who cannot visit the library due to long term health problems, mobility problems and/or caring responsibilities (including Young Carers).

You can get in touch with us by email at:

libraries@surreycc.gov.uk or take a look at our website www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries for further information.

“The best part of my job is talking to clients after they have had a couple of visits. The clients are so appreciative and grateful to the volunteers. You can see how important books are to their lives and how this service is making a difference”.

**Siobhan de Doncker,
Senior Community
Connections Officer**

Emergency Services Collaboration Programme: co-responding



Linda Wood (pictured left) tells us about blue light services working together to provide residents with the best possible service

The Challenge

The co-responding project is one of many areas of work within the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme. This project involves Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB). Co-responding was introduced so that firefighters can respond to certain medical emergencies and deliver life-saving treatment.

How is this helping the community?

Under the Co-Responding project, more than 330 fire service staff are now trained to attend emergencies as a first response and are requested if they are the closest to the patient's location (but are always backed up by an ambulance resource). Since the trial was established there have been more than 300 requests to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to attend incidents such as cardiac arrests, choking and loss of consciousness. Analysis shows that firefighters are often getting there within minutes, potentially saving lives and improving the chances of recovery.

What difficulties have you faced?

The extent and scale of potential of the wider Programme is very ambitious and rightly so. We identified a number of areas to look at such as how 999 calls are managed, buying goods and services together, looking at whether we can bring the way all of the vehicles are purchased, maintained and repaired together and many more.

As we progressed, it became clear that there are very real differences in the way that services, (even of the same type such as Fire Services), operate to meet local needs. This can mean that a project can go ahead in one area, but not so easily in another.

It has also been a challenge to identify sufficient funding to support transformation.

What have you learned?

There is broad agreement on how partners might work together but the challenge is that the different operating models and financial constraints put each organisation at a different starting point in being able to engage in collaboration projects. This doesn't necessarily mean that a project doesn't go ahead though, because we find a way forward with those partners who can collaborate, provided the project is still worthwhile in terms of its costs and benefits.

What's the best thing about your job?

I have to keep up to date on everything that is happening across the programme and this brings me into contact with amazing people from all of the emergency services.

I've learnt a great deal about the culture, pressures, similarities and differences in the ways that they operate. Their sheer dedication to service delivery and public safety is paramount. I also need to keep up to date with collaboration taking place in other parts of the country so that we can learn from best practice and their experience.

How can people find out more?

To find out more, contact Linda at linda.wood@surreycc.gov.uk

"I take great pride in supporting others take the projects forward and deliver what is needed through to completion – in this case collaboration between the emergency services in Surrey and Sussex.."

Linda Wood, Programme Manager for Emergency Services Collaboration

Better connected four star rating



Our web and digital services manager, Louise, explains how her team were awarded the maximum “four star” rating from Socitm the body that conducts inspections of all local authority websites.

The Challenge

Socitm has carried out a review of three tasks on our website to evaluate how easy it is for residents to use.

The Web team worked with colleagues from the Travel and Transport team and the Waste team to ensure that the content is easy to find, answers customer queries and provides them with a good online experience.

The first task - applying for a bus pass - can be a complex process due to the eligibility criteria. The challenge was to make the content easy to understand. We had to ensure that when the information was put online, it was clear and intuitive.

The second task - finding tip opening hours - we needed to consider the various names that people use when referring to our community recycling centres such as: “tip”, “dump”. In doing this we aim to ensure that customers can always find the information that they are looking for whatever term they use.

The third task – renewing a library book online – we do not have full control over the system as it is provided by a third party and so we were limited in making as many changes as would like but we kept user testing as we made amendments and after various iterations have got a point where customers seem to find it easy to use! This is important as it is a very high volume transaction.

The Web team regularly conducts user testing of the website. One of the ways in which we do this is to visit libraries and ask residents to participate in a short scenario based exercise. We also carry out user testing using online tools so that residents can participate from the comfort of their own homes.

How have you made a difference?

The tasks that Socitm reviewed – “obtaining a bus pass” and “finding local tip opening hours” - received 81,252 visits over the last 3 months, so by getting this content right, we have helped all of those residents access our service online. 55,317 of these visits were made outside of office hours, which demonstrates that the website is providing true 24/7 access to our services.

What did you learn?

It is always really insightful and interesting to see how our residents use our website. After conducting user testing we always come back brimming with ideas on how to make further improvements to the website.

Residents are happy to help out and we use this as a way of promoting the services that Surrey delivers. They are often amazed at the breadth of information and services we cover.

How can people find out more?

Anyone interested in getting involved with our user testing can apply to join our user panel. See the following web page for information:

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/your-council/about-our-website/get-involved-in-website-user-testing>

“Residents are happy to help out and we use this as a way of promoting the services that Surrey delivers. They are often amazed at the breadth of information and services we cover”

Louise Hallaway, Web and Digital Services Manager

Surrey Countryside Partnerships Team



Debbie Hescott (pictured left) tells us about her team's recent work to develop corporate partnerships with local companies to help them deliver on their corporate social responsibilities, primarily through conservation volunteering.

What we do

The countryside management work of both the Downlands and Lower Mole Partnerships is essentially supported by practical conservation volunteers of all ages. We work in partnership with the local borough and district councils and private land owners to pro-actively manage the glorious grassland, woodland and ponds across NE/North Surrey and into neighbouring parts of south London. Our Surrey Heathland Partnership manages heathland sites in west Surrey, but does not run a regular volunteer task programme; however we are looking at potential seasonal corporate involvement for this partnership as well.

The challenge

We have been increasing our work with local companies to gain further voluntary support through employee volunteering schemes. This work includes looking to gain potential sponsorship/financial support of our work, once a close relationship has been established.

How did this work help the community?

During this period we have been pleased to welcome corporate volunteers from: Kantar Worldpanel (Epsom), Reed Business Information (Sutton), VMware (Staines) and Unilever (Leatherhead). All of these companies are planning to join us again during 2016.

In November we secured a formal corporate partnership with Kantar Worldpanel, with the Lower Mole Countryside Trust being the first locally based charity to become one of the beneficiaries of their 'Helping Hands' initiative from 2016.

Staff are joining us on task on 9 March and again on 20 May 2016 for their 'Business in the Community **Give & Gain Day**'; **this is a global day of employee volunteering.**

Health & well-being

Surrey is a county renowned for its beautiful landscapes and this is reported as one of the main reasons people choose to live here. These landscapes need to be continually managed for bio-diversity and people, so they can continue to be enjoyed by all. Countryside volunteers essentially support this management and connecting with nature has proven health and well-being benefits - for mind, for body and not forgetting the social aspect. The work we are doing to engage the business community to join forces with local residents to support us in looking after their local green spaces is great for health, happiness and habitat.

Collaboration

We continue to work closely with Surrey County Council's New Models of Delivery Team to support Surrey's Volunteering and Corporate Strategies 2015-20. Our established service offers great conservation volunteering opportunities for residents, Surrey County Council staff and school/community groups as well as for companies - more volunteers are always very welcome!

What's the best thing about your job?

Gaining new support and interest in our work and liaising with lots of different people.



Find out more...

Website: www.countryside-management.org.uk

Email: countrysidepartnershipsteam@surreycc.gov.uk

"The work we are doing to engage the business community to join forces with local residents to support us in looking after their local green spaces is great for health, happiness and habitat".

**Debbie Hescott,
Business Development
Officer**

Blindley Heath – meeting the needs of local residents

Members of the Tandridge Locality Team, tells us about how they've worked to bring residents together.

The challenge

Adult Social Care, First Community Health and Tandridge Voluntary Service Council (TVSC) worked together to see how they could better understand and meet the needs of local Tandridge residents.

Blindley Heath is a village split in two by a busy main road. It is poorly connected to neighbouring areas due to limited public transport links, so housing areas are isolated. The village does not have its own GP surgery or recognised community building and there are few, if any, opportunities for residents to come together and address local issues. Blindley Heath feels like a black spot for community support and there are no known regular local spaces, such as church or lunch groups, for people to meet. Apart from the annual country show, there is little evidence of any community resources or groups.

Many residents in the area commute to London, limiting their time and focus on their geographical community. A large housing development in the area suggests that community priorities may be changing.

How did you make a difference?

Once we recognised that the area would benefit from community capacity building, we began to search for contacts in the area.

We spoke to residents about their aspirations for the village and met someone from the Forman Institute and Social Club (FISC). The building looked like the ideal place, for the community to use, to access services and local groups. The steward was keen to revive the club's local membership and its reputation and was interested in exploring alternative uses for the building.

Another key contact was found in the village church. They knew that most residents leave the area for leisure and social activities due to a lack of resources in the village and wanted to develop some local community services.

What next?

The plan for the next stage of the project is to work with the groups that have been identified in the area to help start up community services which local residents would like.

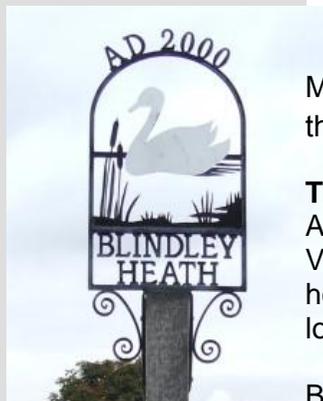
Colleagues are currently working with the Food Bank based in East Grinstead to see about setting up a satellite food bank that could operate in the village. The group also decided that the FISC building could be used as a venue for the Wellbeing Advisors in Tandridge when they begin their mobile service in the coming months. As Blindley Heath residents have to travel a fair distance to their nearest doctors, having Wellbeing Advisors visit their community could improve their access to services across the district.

The group is also seeking to explore whether the FISC building could be improved to ensure it can become an important community hub that could be used to create community resources such as a WI, community transport or lunch club. TVSC is exploring funding options and the group is working on a collaborative funding bid.

These are just a small number of ideas which residents and officers would like to work together to achieve in the area. They hope that as they work more in the local area, residents will approach the group with ideas of other services they would like to see to improve their community.

How can people find out more?

If you are interested in finding out more about the work being carried out in Blindley Heath please contact either: Marnie Cotterill, Social Care Development Co-ordinator, Tandridge Locality Team: marnie.cotterill@surreycc.gov.uk Thomas Davis, Project Assistant, Adult Social Care Projects Team: thomas.davis@surreycc.gov.uk



Most residents leave the area for leisure and social activities due to a lack of resources in the village and wanted to develop some local community services.”

Tom Davis, Project Assistant



Children's and Safeguarding Service

Jill Seeney, Senior Supervising Social Worker, shares how we're involving children more in our decision making.

The challenge

Following the Children's Services inspection, Ofsted said we needed to involve children, young people and their families more in our decision making. They said we needed to actively listen to their feedback about challenges they face and use it to improve our services. In the past, we have found it hard to engage this group in conversations and we have often been given feedback "second hand" through various agencies which may not have provided a true picture.

How we made a difference

We recently held group sessions to look at the standards and values we work to. Listening to the views and experiences of foster carers and young people really helped as it made for a much richer conversation hearing directly from them. Staff involved found it really refreshing to engage in conversation with those residents who are at the heart of what we do and why we're here.

Involving residents in our decision making has helped ensure our services are child-focused. Hearing directly from young people has opened our eyes to the small details that are often overlooked when acting as a corporate parent. Looked after children, understandably, often question where they came from as they may not know about their birth family and their past, and they can be greatly helped with this through Life Story Work.

In order to promote this work we have worked on an e-learning platform explaining about Life Story Work, and providing resources that social workers, foster carers and adopters will be able to access on our website. This has involved working on a project with the Care Council to create podcasts of young people talking about the benefits of Life Story Work. The e-platform is nearly completed and the podcasts, which are being jointly designed with young people, are due to be completed by the end of April.

What next?

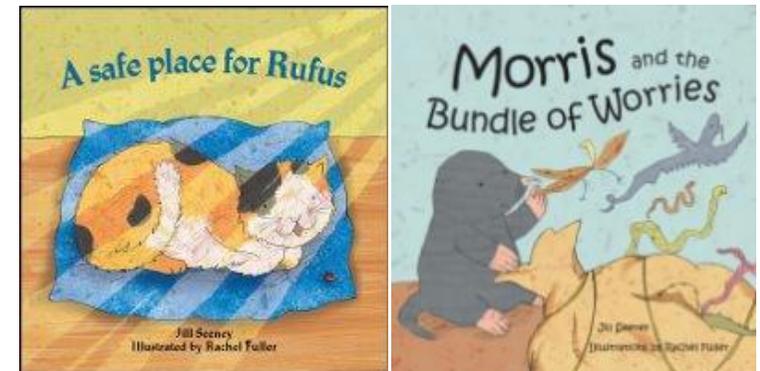
Following the workshops we've managed to set up more groups and forums to help keep our communication channels open and allow our priorities to take focus and be achievable. Hearing from young people in these forums is brilliant as it gives us crucial insight into what they feel they want and need.

How can I find out more?

Jill is so keen on the work she does with young people that she has used her experiences as a social worker to write a number of children's books. Two of these books have recently made it in to **The Guardian's top 10 books** for adopted children, voted for by children and young people, as part of Adoption Week in October 2015.

To get in touch with Jill directly please contact her at jill.seeney@surreycc.gov.uk

Here are the covers of the books that Jill wrote:



“Involving residents in our decision making has helped ensure our services are child-focused. Hearing directly from young people has opened our eyes to the small details that are often overlooked when acting as a corporate parent”

Jill Seeney, Senior Supervising Social Worker

Awards & Recognition

I receive a huge number of emails from proud colleagues letting me know that their team members have received awards for the great work that they do. Here are just a few of the many awardees that have been commended for their efforts over the last nine months:

- Two employees in the Commercial Services team won awards in the prestigious 'Educating Excellence Awards', that recognise the achievements of those working in the Education Catering Sector across the UK:
 - Samantha Ayling won the 'District Manager of the Year' award.
 - Mary Shipley won an award in the 'Specialist' category.
- The Contact Centre Adult Social Care team won a Silver Award in the 'Government Services and Not for Profit' category of the UK Customer Experience Awards.
- Sian Humphreys, an Information Officer at the Contact Centre, was nominated for a Tower Award by members of the public in each quarter in 2015.
- The UP! Orchestra of Unlimited Potential has been short-listed for the Best Musical Initiative Award at the 2016 Music Teacher Awards for Excellence.
- The Surrey Carer's Commissioning Partnership won the Commissioning for Carers Award at the Health Service Journal Awards in November.
- Mark Buckham, a Senior Family Support Worker, won a Tower Award for his dedicated work to help a distressed family.
- Angela Sargeant won the National Children and Young People's Award, under the Children and Young People's Champion category.
- Maya Twardzicki, from our Public Health team, has won a national award from the Royal Society for Public Health for a project that uses comedy as a way of getting soldiers to talk about mental health issues such as stress, depression and anxiety.
- Alison Wrigley, a Surrey Arts staff member, was awarded a British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Years Honours for her work with children and young people with Special Educational Needs.
- Chairman Martin deFreitas and secretary Jennifer Gaffney of our dedicated registered charity, the Downlands Trust, were both recognised for their incredible work at a recent volunteer reception hosted by SCC Chairman, Sally Marks.
- Colin Clyde Martin, who has worked for the Library Service for almost 40 years, received a Tower Award for outstanding customer service.

Good News Stories: Surrey staff going the extra mile!

In this section I want to share some good news stories with you. These are stories from individuals who have taken the time to get in touch with me and share their good experiences with Surrey County Council. Some of the stories are from colleagues and others are from members of the public. It is always heartening to read these stories, but I think they are especially enjoyable to read when we are concerned about how we're going to carry on providing the services we do. All of these stories have brought a smile to my face and make me even more determined to work hard for our residents.

Rachel Dinham, Social Worker based at Clarendon House, Dorking

Rachel replied to one of my all staff emails a few months ago to tell me about her induction programme:

"I've been given an opportunity to have a mini induction as this was developed after I was in post in 2012, so I missed it when I started. Our OPCMHT P1 posts in the Older People's CMHT are quite isolated roles across Surrey. After being off for a year having our first baby, it seemed like a good opportunity for me to spend time with the Social Care team when I returned and see how they work. And I wanted to say that I have been so impressed."

"I shadowed my colleague Pat Taylor last week when she and I spent about two hours with an elderly couple at their home. It was supposed to be a much shorter visit, but the couple seemed to value the input a great deal and talked to us a lot, so we ended up being there much longer than planned. The husband is caring for his wife and wants to continue in this role. He is saving us so much money by being her carer, but I was struck by how easy it is to see it like that rather than to think about how much he wants to be there for his wife and is pleased to care for her. She said, laughing, "I looked after him for more than fifty years, and now it is my turn!"

The husband talked about his twice yearly faith-based trips to Walsingham for a carer break. The care advocate in Mole Valley (Luke Stewart) had given the couple ideas about funding for the break. Pat taught me so many things in the few days that I have watched her work. She is so thorough and caring in her attitude and I really was impressed.

I also spent some time with Kevin Simmons - another assistance practitioner (AP) - who gladly let me shadow a review he was conducting in a care home. His skills with people are frankly remarkable. We visited a 99 year old lady who is doing very well, still mobile and dressing herself and has a wonderful sense of humour. Kevin navigated the review with ease and respect and got all the information he needed whilst also making the lady laugh several times. It felt as if she was very relaxed and could tell him anything. I was impressed that he had created an environment of trust and built a very good respectful rapport in a very short time."

"The team manager - Lorraine Branch, is really helpful too - she talked me through a case and gave me the confidence to understand recent changes so that I felt enabled to carry out a new assessment. When I raised a possible Safeguarding issue at 4.50pm on Friday, the senior social worker Maalika Perera, spent time thinking the issues through and ensured that a really robust plan was in place. Maalika consistently shows her genuine care for the service user and their needs and safety. I think she should be cloned in every team! She works very late nearly every day too - I just happen to know that."

"Surrey really is a good place to work, and I feel positive about returning to my post."

Good News Stories: Surrey staff going the extra mile!

One staff member, who wishes to remain anonymous, replied to one of my all staff emails and explained how SCC's support for vulnerable adults has helped his own family:

"I would like to say how much I appreciate Surrey County Council's help and support in enabling my 92 year old mother-in-law to remain independently in her own home, and still have a good quality of life."

"Renee suffers both with Vascular Dementia and Wet AMD (a severe form of macular degeneration). Her dearest wish is to remain in the home she has loved for almost 50 years. With the support of the Adult Social Care Team she has daily carer visits and attends Cobham Day Centre five days a week. She receives both care and respect from all services, who genuinely do care about her, and make her feel valued. I cannot praise the services enough."

"Before this support network was in place, as I was her main carer, I really thought I would have to give up my work for SCC to look after her, which would have been a huge blow for me. (I have worked for SCC for 28 years, and love my work), but with the support and understanding of the team, we can now both get on with our lives!"

Sarah Riddick, Surrey resident; Sarah got in touch with me following her great experience of our highways engineers:

"I would like to highlight what a fantastic job your workforce/contractors have done resurfacing the much needed School Road. The workforce was friendly and polite. They went out of their way to ensure we were caused the minimum inconvenience and had access to our property at all times. The road is pothole free and looks great!!! Please pass on our comments and thank them on our behalf".

Dipak and Anvita Rao, service users

Dipak got in contact with Eber Kington, Councillor for Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington, to let him know that they'd received a great service when Anvita accidentally put her beloved iPad into a recycling bin at Epsom and Ewell Recycling Site. A British Heart Foundation staff member found the iPad when he was emptying the book recycling bin and handed it back to staff that work at the recycling site – although they had no idea who it belonged to.

Dipak and Anvita's son, who lives in Toronto, put a note online that they had lost the iPad, with details of who to return it to, in a last ditch attempt to reunite Anvita with her other half.

The manager of the site found the message online and got in contact with Dipak – he went to collect the iPad and offered a small present to the manager, but he wouldn't accept anything and said that he was 'just doing his job'.

Good News Stories: Surrey staff going the extra mile!

Susan Adams, former Chair of the Ford Road Association (Woking), tells us how grateful she is for the support of our staff

I've chaired our local residents association for a few years and I'm now stepping down.

We were able to form our residents association on a road with 1/3 council owned properties because we secured funding from Liz Bowes. We spent that money collectively on installing 9 dropped kerbs, plus 2 put in by the council. From there, we had a large number of residents association meetings, a street party, Halloween party, several newsletters, residents association signs saying no parking on verges, people planting grass and plants in the verges to protect them, the council planting 7 new trees, with 7 more coming soon.

We have a neighbourhood watch. It's been a huge morale boost and I can say the dropped kerbs wouldn't be possible without that council funding. The prices for them are now out of reach of communities in this area.

Our residents association has resources and can continue easily. Andy Calfe (Woking Borough Council) has been right there as a central point of contact. He's brought out people from Highways, Serco, county councillors, and Woking Borough Council

Roderick Sheers, Shepperton resident

Mr Sheers wrote to me directly to celebrate the construction of the new Walton Bridge across the Thames. As he lives in the area, Mr Sheers witnessed the construction from beginning to end:

"The bridge is classically elegant whilst being contemporary to 2015. Furthermore the landscaping and reshaping of the adjacent areas represent pleasing and significant improvements to our environment. Construction of the bridge caused little disruption for what was clearly a demanding project."

The project was "skilfully undertaken in record time and in the face of adversity in the form of uncertain weather and major engineering undertakings below the surface of a flowing river and at high level".

Nancy El-Shatoury, Principal Planning and Highways Solicitor in Legal Services. Nancy responded to my weekly all-staff email back in December, which was about volunteering days:

"We were really pleased in Legal to see our lawyers highlighted for their work with schools. My team volunteered to help clear pretty but invasive Himalayan Balsam from the river bank at Horley with the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership. This was our team's 8th year of volunteering with GGS- we are delighted that volunteering days are made available so that we can help maintain our marvellous countryside.

I personally have made use of volunteering days to prepare to take my Brownie Pack on pack holiday and for fundraising with them, so we have made the most of this facility - I think everyone should"

Part 3

Looking Ahead

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- **Surrey's transformation and improvement networks**
- **Communities of Practice**
- **Staff Survey – next steps**

Devo Demystified

There's been a lot of talk recently about devolution and I wanted to take some time here to share my thoughts on what's going on and what devolution will mean for us in the future.

Before talking about some of the wider themes, I think it's important to get the basics straight, so I have given some answers based on the questions that colleagues tend to ask in relation to devolution.

Why devolution?

England has one of the most centralised governance systems in the world; this means that lots of decisions are taken in Westminster that affect communities far away from London. Through devolution we will have a greater ability to make local decisions about the key areas that affect us.

The purpose of the devolution agenda is to improve outcomes for local residents and businesses. We will do this through driving **economic growth, enhanced productivity** and **transforming the way that we deliver public services**.

Are we making the devolution bid on our own?

No, we have joined up to work with East Sussex and West Sussex – together we are the three southern counties, or 3SC. Entering into this partnership allows us to make collective decisions on matters affecting the whole area. Together, we have a population of over 2.5 million. The economy of the 3SC has a combined GVA (gross value added, or the measure for how much the economy is worth) of £74 billion, bigger than Wales or Greater Manchester.

The devolution proposition is made up of six areas of focus, these include: infrastructure; housing and planning; skills; public service transformation; fiscal devolution; and governance. This will mean that we can work together on doing things like building transport links between different communities or finding new ways to encourage business and jobs to the region.

This seems like a huge programme, is anyone else involved?

Yes. The devolution proposition is being developed by: 3 County Councils; 23 District and Borough Councils; 3 LEPs (Local Enterprise Partnerships); businesses; 12 CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups); 2 police forces and 2 PCCs (Police and Crime Commissioners); one Combined Fire Authority; South Downs National Park; and other wider public sector partners.

Is this partnership taking power away from existing councils like Surrey?

No. The aim of the 3SC is to bring decision-making closer to communities and businesses, so in fact giving us more powers and influence over the areas that matter to us. By working together, we will all have more influence on national policy and funding needed to tackle vital issues facing our communities. These are decisions that are best made by councils, not central government.

Working as a part of the 3SC doesn't mean that Surrey County Council will be replaced; it just means that the three councils have formally committed to working together.

Why aren't we being given more information on devolution and what is happening?

Since September last year, the devolution process has been moving very quickly and colleagues are working hard to get the 3SC deal done so that we can have an agreed deal and start implementing it.

If you do want to find out more or keep up-to-date on the latest progress of our discussions with central government and other partners, here's a link to the latest developments:

What does devolution mean for other partnerships we have?

We will need to work out how best to work with our partners as the landscape evolves. 3SC believes that the focus must be on the difference that can be made first, then ensuring the governance is appropriate rather than starting with structures. As we have partnered with an increasing number of other local authorities and other partners over the last few years, we have been able to build our skills working across these groups, so we have good foundations to work with our devolution partners.

I've also heard about 'Double Devolution', is this a different thing?

No, double devolution is part of the same group of reforms. Double Devolution refers to how powers will be distributed to districts and boroughs within each of the three counties – this is the part that focuses on bringing decision-making to a more local level. Double devolution will require us to work more closely with our District and Borough partners on areas such as infrastructure, housing and planning. Together, we will also be looking at public service transformation, meaning that we will work differently to achieve better outcomes for residents.

What has happened so far?

- As part of the 2015 Spending Review, the Chancellor asked for those areas wanting to agree a devolution deal to submit formal proposals to the Treasury by 4 September 2015.
- We put together this bid as the 3SC and it was well received by government.
- We then had a ministerial challenge session in mid-January where local politicians set out our case for devolution.
- 3SC representatives made the case to Baroness Williams, the Communities Minister, that devolving additional powers to the region would help unlock new growth and spearhead a transformation in how public services are delivered.
- I have been visiting districts and boroughs across Surrey to talk to Members there about devolution and what it would mean for their local area.

What next?

Civil servants believe it should be possible to work towards agreeing an initial devolution deal before the end of this calendar year; meaning that we will soon know in a lot more detail what our next steps will be.

What would devolution deliver long-term?

We are confident that, if we agree a devolution deal on the basis that we are proposing, in five years' time we will have delivered:

- At least 34,000 new homes;
- A firm programme for improving crucial transport corridors including the M23, rail capacity between London and the South Coast, our quadrant of the M25, the A27, the A21 and the A3 and M3;
- A reduction in hard to fill vacancies and skills gaps and an increase in the take-up of business-led training in our key sectors;
- A proven shift to preventative activity with a consequential reduction in costs.

Surrey's transformation and improvement networks

In my last report, I introduced our three strategic networks. These networks aim to engage colleagues in significant transformation and improvement projects. I thought that it would be a good idea to give an update on what the networks have been working. I hope that these examples show why having a networked organisation is important to our continued success. I also want to highlight that anyone who is interested can become involved in the networks.

What have the networks been doing over the last few months?

Each network is attended by senior colleagues and chaired by Strategic Directors:

- **The Continuous Improvement and Productivity Network (CIPN)** is chaired by Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive of Mole Valley District Council and Strategic Director for Customers and Communities.
- **The New Models of Delivery Network (NMOD)** is chaired by Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families.
- **Prosperous Places Network (PPN)** is chaired by Trevor Pugh, Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure.

Each network meets regularly and has the overall goal of finding new ways for the organisation to be more effective and efficient. These are interactive sessions, where participation is encouraged and ideas are welcomed.

Here are some achievements from 2015 and plans for the year ahead from each network:

Continuous Improvement and Productivity Network

This network is responsible for ensuring that we deliver services of the highest standard to our residents. We do this by identifying areas for improvement, developing and refining current policy and practice to bring about greater productivity within our day-to-day running.

The network played an important part in leading on the refresh of the council's 2015 - 2020 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), developing our new customer promise and implementing a new performance monitoring tool.

At the moment the network is looking to ensure that our support functions are best aligned to improve front-line outcomes.

New Models of Delivery Network

If you like new ideas and discovering new ways of doing things, then the NMoD Network may be of interest to you. The key drivers for the network are being able to manage demand, respond to changing expectations and manage the impact of reduced funding.

In recent months, network members have participated in some very interesting and challenging sessions around welfare reform, passenger transport, Orbis, community spaces, health and social care integration and digital.

As the network relaunches in 2016, it intends to look ahead and engage in the big change programmes impacting local government, focusing closely on Public Value Transformation, Devolution, Health and Social Care Integration and Complex Individuals.

Prosperous Places Network

Alternatively, if you find yourself concerned with place and economic regeneration, then the Prosperous Places Network (PPN) may be of particular interest. PPN is interested in ensuring Surrey's economy grows and its places support residents' wellbeing.

Over the course of 2015 PPN has embarked on a comprehensive stocktaking exercise with each of Surrey's 11 District and Borough councils, looking at potential economic regeneration plans. This is to ensure all growth plans are coordinated. The Surrey Infrastructure Plan was completed in February. This is an

important report, commissioned by the county council with the other Surrey authorities. It shows, for the first time, a snapshot of Surrey's main infrastructure requirements for example transport, education, flood defences, water and sewage, community and health facilities, up to 2030, based on the growth assumed in the District and Borough Local Plans. From 2015 to 2030 47,053 new homes are to be built, 59,000 new jobs will be created and there will be 60,991 new residents. The Study calculates the cost of providing the necessary infrastructure. The gap between how much funding has been secured and expected and that which is needed is over £3bn, some 60% of the total cost. The Study provides important evidence for discussions with Government about supporting growth in the county eg through the Devolution proposals. It also assists with discussions with infrastructure providers and the Districts and Boroughs to prioritise and plan the provision of key strategic infrastructure.

This year PPN work will be centred on devolution and how it can benefit Surrey's residents, environment and infrastructure and economy.

How can I get involved?

To get involved in any of the networks you can get in touch with the network leads. For more information on the respective networks, you can get in touch with:

Diko Blackings (diko.blackings@surreycc.gov.uk) to find out more about NMOD
Andy Spragg (andrew.spragg@surreycc.gov.uk) to find out more about CIPN
Lesley Harding (lesley.harding@surreycc.gov.uk) to find out more about PPN

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of people with shared interests that get together to share and discuss problems and opportunities, discuss best practices and talk over lessons learned. CoPs differ from networks and from collaborative ways of working, as CoPs are more organised and specific. In Surrey we are looking to enable the development of CoPs to help solve organisational problems and share knowledge. The reason why it's so important to have these groups is because we tend not to be good at sharing information within the organisation – so even though lots of people are doing good work, there may be duplication or you could be getting support from other colleagues.

Why is building a more networked organisation important?

We all need access to relevant information to get our jobs done in the most effective way possible. We have a wealth of knowledge and experience in our workforce - this is a great asset and helps employees provide an excellent service to residents. Our aim is to utilise this knowledge and experience more effectively, enabling people to work collaboratively as One Team, sharing their skills and experience to provide the best and most efficient services to residents.

How are we building networks?

To create a more networked organisation we are connecting individuals who work in the same professional field but in different teams throughout the organisation. These people have similar skill sets and areas of expertise. This is helping us to break down silo working and upskill our colleagues in these areas. We have called these groups/networks Communities of Practice (CoP). The Change CoP has been running the longest - membership is open to any employee who finds it useful. This CoP is also open to people who work on change/transformation in other organisations, which helps us build useful relationship and exchange learning with partner organisations.

Supporting networks with digital tools

Building networks is all about connecting people and, once established, this can be supported by digital tools that have functionality to allow people to search profiles, have discussions and share work spaces. We are trialling the use of an online collaboration space called Jive to see how this can support our employees to work more effectively together and with people in partner organisations.

What do you plan to achieve by the end of 2016/17?

1. Enable the launch of Communities of Practice in a number of key professional and subject matter areas.
2. Roll out the pilot of an online collaboration space and assess its functionality as a potential replacement for our intranet.
3. Reduce the time it takes people to access knowledge, upskilled staff in key areas and worked to create a more collaborative 'one team' culture.

How can I get involved?

You can join an existing CoP or think about whether it would be useful to set one up in your area of work.

For more information about the work we are doing please contact Samantha Cornick at: samantha.cornick@surreycc.gov.uk or Helen Hansell at helen.hansell@surreycc.gov.uk

Staff Survey – next steps

I would like to say thanks again for responding to the staff survey. From your responses we can see the areas where we are doing well in and can celebrate, and we can also see those areas that we need to work on.

I am encouraged to hear that people feel supported in their teams and believe they are making a real difference. In other areas we face the challenges of helping colleagues to cope better with stress at work and ensuring that everyone receives a 'fair deal'.

I thought it would be useful here to take a look at us as a whole organisation. Without having these conversations across the whole of the organisation we cannot get better.

What do the results say?

We have a number of things to celebrate:

- Colleagues believe that they can make a valuable contribution to the success of the organisation.
- Colleagues feel that people in their team go out of their way to help and care for each other.
- Colleagues generally feel they are supported by managers and that managers talk openly and honestly with them.

We also have some areas that we need to work on:

Compared to the public sector as a whole, our results are rated as 'good' – which is indeed good to know, but also means that there is room for improvement.

- Giving a "fair deal" to everyone, in particular around pay and benefits.
- Helping employees to cope better with pressures of work.
- Continuing to build our leadership culture, with a particular focus on listening.

What kinds of things can we do to address some of the challenges?

Fair deal – The Pay and Reward consultation provides a key opportunity to address this issue if you feel that you do not receive fair pay for the responsibilities you have in your job. By continuously reviewing and improving our pay and reward strategy we will also ensure value for money.

In addition to this, there is work in progress to motivate colleagues through career development and progression opportunities. We have also improved the range of salary sacrifice schemes that we offer to access benefits such as childcare vouchers and have launched 'Surrey Extra' to provide further discounts and offers.

Coping with work pressures – The survey told us that some colleagues are "going home feeling exhausted" and they feel they "spend too much time working." There is a good employee offer now, but there is clearly more to do, as evidence shows that improving employee health and wellbeing, improves the motivation and morale of our one team and helps to deliver great services.

Also, colleagues gave positive feedback about their teams and managers, a great sign that colleagues get on well with each other and feel supported. Building on this, we will encourage our teams to have more wellbeing conversations, using team wellbeing toolkits. Wellbeing is also now an important part of the appraisal conversation.

We are fortunate to have a great wellbeing offer here at Surrey, which everyone can benefit from in some way. I recently took part in the TravelSmart Pedometer Challenge, which was a real eye opener, on my daily activity, and motivating me on days where I could do more.

We are performing well on reducing ill health and absence and have identified further opportunities to support employees through this, with our new Health and Wellbeing Services and Employee Assistance Providers. We are also supporting the safety of our colleagues more, by improving our messages and commitment around ensuring positive behaviour and respect from our customers.

Our ongoing campaign, 'Stay Healthy – Stay Well' includes a whole host of employee health offers; with over 1,000 completed NHS health checks, quit smoking sessions and getting active campaigns. You can also sign up to MyBenefits, for discounts on gym memberships and other healthy lifestyle offers. We also have an online offer that includes Mindfulness, Resilience, Stress Reduction and Mental Health Awareness.

We are working towards the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, a Public Health England award, that demonstrates our commitment and looks to further improve the wellbeing of everyone who work for us and our reputation for looking after our workforce.

Leadership culture – I have been working with my leadership team on what can be done differently within our teams to strengthen our leadership culture. We want to ensure that leaders live our values: listen, responsibility, trust and respect. From the survey feedback, we know that we need to make sure that we do more listening.

We will also look at how well staff feel they are supported and how this impacts our absence levels. We can address any issues that colleagues have in this area through regular appraisals.

If you are looking to build on your management and leadership skills, there is a wide range of resources available on s-net, including training and development opportunities.

What's next?

By now your team conversations about what the staff survey results mean for you will have taken place, so it is now for managers in your teams to agree on action plans for how to address the challenges we face. By talking about the staff survey in your team meetings and check-ins you can influence what the action plan in your area will look like.

At the beginning of March, my direct reports shared their action plans with me and explained how they are looking to make improvements in their respective areas.

Between now and September this year we will make progress on implementing the changes that are needed to make colleagues feel more supported and happier in the workplace. Towards the end of this time period the impact of the improvements made will be shared across the organisation so that we can see what progress has been made.

We'll check progress next October - from this we can get new information and see how our efforts this time around have made a difference. This then becomes a cycle where we can get feedback, make the changes needed and then ensure that we are making progress in terms of colleague feedback.

Find out more

If you would like more information about the survey please get in contact with Amy Bailey at amy.bailey@surreycc.gov.uk

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