

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2016

**QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1**

MR PETER MARTIN, DEPUTY LEADER

(1) MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:

Wandsworth, Hillingdon, Richmond and Windsor & Maidenhead Councils have all threatened to sue HM government if plans for a third runway at Heathrow Airport are given approval.

Bearing in mind the close links between these Conservative controlled councils and Surrey CC, (three of which border the county) what dialogue has taken place with these colleagues and is Surrey supporting their action?

Reply:

Surrey County Council has not been in dialogue with these Councils over their threat to instigate a legal challenge should the Government decide on a third runway at Heathrow Airport. This Council's position on airport expansion remains that resolved by the full Council on 16 July 2013.

MRS HELYN CLACK, CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING AND HEALTH

(2) MRS HELENA WINDSOR (GODSTONE) TO ASK:

Will Surrey County Council adopt the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Charter to support people in Surrey with motor neurone disease and their carers?

Through its partnership with the NHS, social care and user representatives, Surrey's Health and Wellbeing Board is ideally placed to ensure integration across the agencies to deliver the five points of the MND Charter which are:

- The right to an early diagnosis and information.
- The right to access quality care and treatments
- The right to be treated as individuals and with dignity and respect
- The right to maximise their quality of life
- Carers of people with MND have the right to be valued, respected, listened to and well-supported.

Reply:

Motor Neurone Disease is a fatal and rapidly progressing neurological condition that has no cure. People suffering from this disease can be unable to move or talk and eventually unable to breathe. In 2013 it was estimated that approximately 3749 people in England were suffering from the condition; 81 of those in Surrey.

The County Council fully supports the aims of the Charter and recognises that it represents principles of care and support that would equally apply to people suffering from different complex conditions.

At the recent Conservative Councillors Conference, I met with a representative of the MND Association and expressed my own support.

There are some areas of the Charter which are more directly within the influence of our partner organisations, such as the health service and District and Borough Councils. However, all five areas of the Charter are consistent with the way that the Council seeks to work with its partners to support Surrey residents in a personalised, dignified way, that helps people to experience the best quality of life possible.

I would like to recommend to the Council that it signs up to the Charter in its own right and encourages Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board to do the same.

MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

(3) MR CHRIS TOWNSEND (ASHTHEAD) TO ASK:

The leadership roles have been reviewed to ensure clear lines of accountability and focus is brought to improving our practice for children, young people and families.

Apparently there will be three senior leadership posts driving strategic change with partners: Assistant Director for Children's Services, Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention and an Assistant Director with a focus on Schools and Learning.

However, at the last meeting of the Social Care Services Board we were told that the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention was now to include Early Help, becoming Assistant Director for Early Help and Commissioning and Prevention.

These do not sit easily together, therefore please could this change be explained and the justification for such a change?

Reply:

The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Prevention is a new role in the Children Schools and Families leadership team designed to increase our capacity to transform and create public value. The role will bring together those staff from across the Directorate that support the commissioning process and will lead on strengthening this area. It will also bring together and transform a range of services that provide support and early help to children, young people and their families that do not meet a social care threshold.

We will be working with partners to develop a cohesive and collaborative early help offer for children, young people and families which is in many cases already commissioned from other organisations and in doing so we will look to jointly commission services wherever that makes sense.

This role will focus on that partnership, working to ensure that our commissioning strategies deliver integrated services that wrap around children providing a continuum of help and support to respond to the different levels of need and risk.

MR MEL FEW, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE, WELLBEING AND INDEPENDENCE

(4) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:

The County Council has recently written to voluntary organisations across Surrey in connection with an Adult Social Care Grant and Contract Review with the aim of reducing funding to voluntary organisations in order to reduce costs.

- What is the total saving that is being sought from funding reductions to voluntary organisations?
- What are the criteria for reducing grants and contracts to individual voluntary organisations?
- What will the impact of the funding reductions to voluntary organisations have on savings to be achieved from the Family Friends and Community programme?

Reply:

What is the total saving that is being sought from funding reductions to voluntary organisations?

The Adult Social Care Directorate is seeking to deliver £55 million of savings in 2016/17. As part of this work the Directorate aims to save £5.8 million in 2016/17 (and £11.6 million by 2020/21) through maximising the value of its grants and contracts. The Directorate holds grants and contracts with a range of organisations across the private, voluntary and public sectors. The decision to reduce grant or contract funding to particular organisations, including voluntary organisations, will be made on a case by case basis, in consultation with CCG partners where appropriate.

What are the criteria for reducing grants and contracts to individual voluntary organisations?

The decision to reduce grant or contract funding to particular organisations, including voluntary organisations, will be made on a case by case basis against pre-defined criteria. The criteria include:

- The purpose of the grant or contract funding and whether it directly supports the delivery of statutory duties and/or directorate, corporate or national strategies
- Whether the scheme is meeting its intended purpose
- The existence and availability of other similar schemes or services
- The impact of changing grant or contract funding on Surrey residents, including carers and people with protected characteristics
- The impact of changing grant or contract funding on the provider organisation
- The impact of changing grant or contract funding on other services and projects, including the Family, Friends and Community programme, Surrey County Council's frontline services, and our partners' services.

The review process will comply with the Surrey Compact agreement, so that voluntary, community and faith sector organisations have the opportunity to be engaged in the process and have sufficient opportunity to respond to reductions in grant and contract funding. The Council will honour all current agreed contract notice periods.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan which included a consideration of the impacts for residents and service users with protected characteristics for the 'Maximise value of contracts and grants' saving.

What will the impact of the funding reductions to voluntary organisations have on savings to be achieved from the Family Friends and Community programme?

One of the criteria for reviewing the funding for a particular grant or contract is to assess the impact it would have on the Family Friends and Community programme. The review process will encourage voluntary, community and faith sector providers to look for more creative responses which meet local priorities, which could include family, friends and community support networks. Separate work is underway to make Surrey's business resources available to the voluntary, community and faith sector through corporate social responsibility, which will help to alleviate the impact of grant and contract funding reductions on voluntary organisations and the people they serve.

LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**(5) MR IAN BEARDSMORE (SUNBURY COMMON AND ASHFORD COMMON)
TO ASK:**

A recent announcement by Education Secretary, Nicky Morgan, makes it clear that the Government is pushing ahead with a consultation about centralised school funding cutting out Local Authority involvement entirely.

Will Surrey County Council be responding to this consultation and if so, what will be the general stance that will be taken?

Can you ensure that I receive a copy of the County Council's response as soon as it is sent?

Reply:

I can confirm that Surrey County Council will be responding to the consultation on the proposed national funding formula for schools.

There was a clear need to review the current system of funding local authorities for their schools. The system was outdated, needs based data had not been updated for over 10 years, and there were unacceptable differences in the level of funding provided to local authorities, based on historic decisions.

We are unable to assess the financial impact on Surrey schools of a centralised national formula which allocates funding to individual school level, as details of the formula and values will not be published until the summer. However, a new national formula, without additional pump-priming and at a time of rising costs for schools, will create significant winners and losers. Local authorities, with many years experience of managing local schools funding formulae are well placed to recognise local pressures and in conjunction with their Schools Forums are able to target funding appropriately to ensure the viability of their schools. The Council will work with its schools over the next two years to manage the transition and to seek to minimise disruption.

We will also continue to lobby DfE Ministers and Surrey MPs to ensure we have a fair funding outcome for our schools. There is likely to be a series of responses to the consultation which is being published in sections, but I will be happy to keep all Members updated with responses as they are submitted.

MR JOHN FUREY, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING

(6) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:

The Footway Network Survey in 2013 identified 1,650 kilometres of footway as functionally or structurally impaired and since that time very little work has been carried out on reconstruction or repair. Would the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways please indicate the amount of funding being made available for repair and reconstruction in the 2016-17 budget, the method by which this will be allocated and the criteria on which the final allocation will be based?

Reply:

I will provide a verbal response to the question on the day.

MR DAVID HODGE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(7) MR EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL AND CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:

I am sure Mr Hodge is aware of the decision taken by the Council Overview Board to review the process for the scrutiny of Directorate spending plans and efficiency savings in the lead up to the 2016/2017 Budget Meeting. In several ways that process was unsatisfactory and ineffective with the initial scrutiny work starting too late in the budgetary process and information being provided in a format that did not always support effective scrutiny.

Any such scrutiny review will require the full and unqualified support of Mr Hodge and the Cabinet if witnesses are to attend, relevant information provided and recommended changes are to be implemented. Will he give a commitment to supporting this work so that for 2017/2018 this Council has a budget scrutiny process that commands support and confidence across all Members of the Council?

Reply:

I am and remain committed to supporting the important role of the scrutiny process in this Council.

MR JOHN FUREY, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING

**(8) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:
2ND question**

A general cause for concern across the county is the lack of co-ordination between District and Borough Councils which are responsible for street cleaning and the County Council which is responsible for gully emptying and cleaning .This is particularly important when street cleaning does not follow gully cleaning and material left as a consequence of gully cleaning is swept back into gullies because it is not picked up quickly in a subsequent street cleaning exercise. Would the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways please indicate whether the County Council has any plans to improve co-ordination with Districts and Boroughs to prevent this happening in future?

Reply:

The County Council is always keen to work with District and Borough Councils to improve services to our residents.

Street cleansing is an important function and the more frequent the sweeping, the less opportunity for detritus to build up in the road channel and enter into a gulley. As a general rule, once a gulley has been cleaned all spoil is taken off site, there should not be anything left in the road channel from the cleansing process.

During the autumn, sudden leaf fall can result in numerous gullies being temporarily obstructed. It is accepted that the Districts and Boroughs target their cleansing regimes to minimise this but there will be occasions when the sheer number of leaves (such as after heavy winds) makes this very challenging.

In recent years, County Council officers have managed a successful collaboration forum known as a "Steetscene group". This considers operational matters such as coordination. Officer representatives are invited from all Districts and Boroughs and there has been some examples of good joint working. Should there be a specific local concern the County Council would be pleased to discuss with the relevant District Council to see what improvements can be made.