



People, Performance and Development Committee
22 March 2017

Surrey County Council Smokefree Policy

Purpose of the report:

To gain endorsement and support from the People, Performance and Development Committee regarding proposed changes to Surrey County Council's existing smokefree workplace policy to reflect recent Public Health England guidance. The changes would result in smokefree grounds and the removal of designated smoking areas on Surrey County Council premises unless specific exceptions apply.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the People, Performance and Development Committee considers and approves the proposed changes to Surrey County Council's Smokefree policy.

Introduction:

1. Smoking is currently prohibited on any Surrey County Council (SCC) premises or sites, except in designated external smoking areas. This also applies to the use of e-cigarettes.
2. The aim of the changes to the Smokefree workplace policy is to implement smoke free grounds and remove designated smoking areas on all SCC sites. The policy change would differentiate between the use of e-cigarettes and tobacco use, permitting the use of e-cigarettes externally on SCC sites.
3. Smoke free grounds would reflect the current arrangement in all school settings, apart from schools having no differentiated e-cigarette use.

4. Why do we need a change in policy?

- 4.1 SCC has a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of its community and wants to take a proactive approach to the biggest cause of preventable death in the County. Many SCC sites are already completely smoke free.
- 4.2 The Council is committed to the health and wellbeing of all its employees and supports the development of a healthy environment for all employees, contractors and visitors, showing its commitment to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.
- 4.3 As an employer, the Council wants to create outside spaces that are conducive to nurturing wellbeing as part of adopting the Wheel of Wellbeing. If employees are seen smoking on or outside Council premises, it suggests that the Council condones smoking.
- 4.4 The 2016-2021 Surrey Tobacco Control Strategy includes a priority on establishing smoke free places and an action to explore ways of supporting smokers who are using nicotine containing devices.
- 4.5 Partner organisations in the NHS have taken steps to become smoke free and the Council would like to support these partners and set a positive example. The change in policy will support boroughs and districts councils and commercial businesses to undertake the same steps.
- 4.6 Applying smoking restrictions is one of the most effective ways of reducing the general visibility of smoking, de-normalising tobacco use and protecting non-smokers from the harms of environmental tobacco smoke.
- 4.7 In July 2016, Public Health England (PHE) produced guidance to support workplaces to consider use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplace. In 2015, PHE found that based on international peer-reviewed evidence, vaping is around 95% safer for users than smoking. Based on these recent publications, it is an appropriate time to review the policy on e-cigarette use.
- 4.8 Cigarette butts are the single most littered items in England. 20 tonnes of cigarette waste is discarded as street litter in Surrey (ASH Ready Reckoner). Removing smoking from Surrey County Council sites will reduce smoking related litter on site.

5. Proposed revisions to Smoke Free Policy and Practice

- 5.1 As stated above, the aim of this policy revision is to implement smokefree grounds (outside) and remove designated smoking areas on all SCC sites (See Annex 1 for changes to policy) to encourage and support a healthier workforce.

- 5.2 Following initial discussions and consultation it is recognised that there may be certain circumstances where this may not be fully achievable and, as such, the following exceptions are proposed within the policy which will be kept under regular review:
- a) Every Council site will comply with the policy unless a risk assessment has been undertaken to prove the need of exceptions to the policy due to safeguarding or safety issues within the service. An example of this could be a residential home where staff or residents physically leaving the site would present a real safeguarding or safety issue.
 - b) As is currently the case, and in line with legislation, residential homes may have designated rooms in care homes (for permanent residents, but not staff) and designated external smoking areas.
 - c) Vaping (use of e-cigarettes) will not be permitted anywhere inside Council owned or leased buildings. Vaping will be permitted in outdoor areas of Council owned or leased land (with specific signage) except for where there are children or young people using the site such as schools, youth centres and sites where children regularly visit.
- 5.3 This policy does not seek to alter the arrangements which apply to the time management of smoking at work (i.e. employees can take breaks, including cigarette breaks, and they may be asked to make up any time lost to such breaks).

Consultation and implementation

6. Feedback from initial consultation

- 6.1 Following support for the SCC smoke free Grounds proposal at the Central Joint Health and Safety Committee, during December 2016, the smoke free grounds proposal was circulated and discussed with the Directorate Health and Safety Committees and additional residential home staff within ASC and CYP specifically.
- 6.2 The main themes from the feedback received from committees that included service managers from each area included litter, staff visibility whilst smoking, additional time taken to smoke, enforcement, smoking in vehicles and vaping on site. Another key issue highlighted was the ability to implement the policy at residential homes, shared sites and implementation issues for Surrey Fire and Rescue sites. See FAQs in appendix 1.
- 6.3 The issues above have already been addressed initially through the exceptions proposed and will be further addressed on this basis throughout the one year count down.

7. Proposed implementation

7.1 Table 1

October 2016 – March 2017:	Planning, discussion and approval with relevant stakeholders and committees
April 2017:	Internal Comms launch: One year countdown to smoke free grounds begins
April 2017 onwards:	<p>Raising the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues and FAQs • Internal comms • Promote local stop smoking support • Reminder and countdown throughout the year <p>Individual site reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each site responsible for implementing smokefree grounds – removal of designated smoking areas and installation on new signage • Risk assessments undertaken at sites where exceptions are required
April 2018:	Smokefree grounds implemented at SCC sites

Conclusions:

8. This report outlines the justification for making changes to the smokefree policy and how this would be implemented across all SCC sites. Changes to the policy will result in the removal of designated smoking areas, creating totally smoke free grounds (subject to exceptions) and allowing vaping externally on SCC sites.

9. Financial and value for money implications

- 9.1 According to research, smokers take almost eight days more sick leave every year than non-smokers causing financial implications for employers (ASH, 2007).
- 9.2 Every year in Surrey, tobacco use costs the local economy £252 million. This includes £31 million every year to the NHS and £19.2 million every year to adult social care (ASH Ready Reckoner, 2016). Reducing smoking prevalence and helping smokers to quit has short, medium and long term health and financial benefits to the individual, communities and contribute to local Sustainability & Transformation Plans for the NHS. The economic and health costs of smoking are so great, that even modest reductions produce substantial gains.
- 9.3 Funding may be required for:
- a) removal of designated smoking areas; and
 - b) installation of new signage

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the County Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

10.2 Smoking rates vary across Surrey and are higher in certain socio-economic groups. Smoking is the single biggest cause of health inequalities, resulting in people who are the worst off experiencing poorer health and shorter lives.

10.3 Electronic cigarettes are used by all socio-economic groups, but disproportionality by higher socio-economic groups. Increasing their use generally in more disadvantaged groups will have a positive impact on health inequalities and benefit those who are unable or unwilling to quit smoking using other methods. Heavier and more addicted smokers, including smokers with mental health problems and long-term conditions, will benefit from these policy changes

11. Risk Management Implications

11.1 Regarding financial implications, discussions are planned to identify the ability to manage within existing budgets.

11.2 Following consultation with directorate Health and Safety Committees, potential implementation issues have been addressed within the FAQs section of appendix 1.

11.3 E-cigarettes: The very small risks associated with electronic Cigarettes is acknowledged. The one year count down period will ensure that partners, key stakeholders, health care professionals, vapers and the public are aware of these risks while emphasising that:

- a) the benefits overwhelmingly outweigh the risks;
- b) advances in technology are reducing those risks; and
- c) electronic cigarettes are less harmful than tobacco smoking.

12. Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy

12.1 SCC Corporate Strategy 2015-20: strategic goals:

a) **Wellbeing:**

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death and main reason for the gap in healthy life expectancy between the rich and poor.

b) **Economic prosperity:**

As discussed in section 8, smoking has a negative impact on the local economy, costing an estimate £252 million. There are also costs due to smoking related litter and smoking related fires.

c) **Resident Experience:**

As discussed in section 3, SCC has a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of its community and wants to take a proactive approach to the biggest cause of preventable death in the County. Partner organisations in the NHS have taken steps to become smoke free and the Council would like to support these partners and set a positive example. Applying smoking restrictions is one of the most effective ways of reducing the general visibility of smoking, de-normalising tobacco use and protecting non-smokers from the harms of environmental tobacco smoke.

Next steps:

- Take forward steps as outlined in implementation plan referred to in 7.1.
- Conversations are being planned with Directorate Portfolio Members in Adult Social Care and Children, Schools and Families to discuss the approach towards smoke free workplaces which are also residential home settings.

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Sources/background papers:

ASH (Action on Smoking & Health), 2007. *Press Release: Smokers take more sick leave: more evidence of the benefits of going smokefree early.* Available from: <http://ash.org.uk/media-and-news/press-releases-media-and-news/smokers-take-more-sick-leave-more-evidence-of-the-benefits-of-going-smokefree-early/>

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