

CABINET – 27 February 2018

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Members Questions

Question (1) Jonathan Essex (Redhill East):

Cabinet Item 6, "Early Help Strategy", includes £2.2m savings in commissioning children's centres. The Equality Impact Assessment considers impacts due to relocation of services but not a reduction in the number of locations that services will operate from. The County Council previously proposed to close 8 Sure Start Centres in 2015:

- Dittons Sure Start Children's Centre
- Claygate and Oxshott Sure Start Children's Centre
- Mytchett Sure Start Children's Centre
- Elstead and Villages Sure Start Children's Centre
- Hurst Green and Holland Sure Start Children's Centre
- Meadow Sure Start Children's Centre in Stoneleigh
- Stepping Stones Sure Start Children's Centre in Earlswood
- Ashtead Sure Start Children's Centre

Please confirm whether any of these children's centres, or others are planned to close or no longer operate as children's centres as a result of the Cabinet's "Early Help Strategy"? Please also confirm who will be responsible for the inspection and regulation of the proposed Family Places including the children services they are proposed to provide?

Reply:

Rather than focussing on individual children's centres, the way we are working is to look at how the whole children's centre offer in a borough and district could be delivered in the future, within the context of a transformed offer of early help for children and families. As such there is no proposal to close specific children centres. Officers have undertaken engagement events open to all of the centres and are currently meeting with providers at a district and borough level to develop proposals for how reduced resources can be best used at a local level to deliver services to children and families. The County Council proposes to draw up a new specification for Family Places, which includes clear quality standards and performance measures, against which the SCC Children's Centre Advisory Team will formally monitor performance and quality of provision.

Mrs Clare Curran
Cabinet Member for Children
27 February 2018

Question (2) Jonathan Essex (Redhill East):

The Cabinet's "Early Help Strategy" includes a proposed a range of savings. Please can you confirm the following:

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- i. In 2018/19 and 19/20 £2.46m is proposed to be saved through 'staffing restructure'. Please provide a full breakdown of this number, including deletion of any vacant posts, by job role and title.
 - ii. In 2019/20 and 20/21 a £2m saving is proposed under the heading of 'managing children services reduction in demand'. Please set out the criteria as to how this proposed reduction in demand will be managed, and how it will impact on the geographic spread of service users across the county.

Reply:

- i. The full detail of the proposals for the staff restructure are set out in a staff consultation document. This can be provided on request. The initial period of consultation with affected staff finished on 23 February 2018, so the proposals set out in this document may well be subject to changes following this. Details of current roles and how they are affected by the restructure are set out on pages 6-9, whilst the new structure that is proposed is set-out on pages 9-23. Surrey Family Service has been holding vacancies since 2017, so we are forecasting an overall net reduction of between 20 and 30 roles to realise the required savings. In addition, we have had a number of expressions of interest in voluntary severance and would therefore be looking to keep any compulsory redundancies to a minimum.
- ii. "Managing demand for Children's Services" refers to the impact of our Early Help services in preventing the needs of children and families increasing to the point that they require support from specialist social work services. The projected savings included in the Medium Term Financial Plan assume that each year 20 children will no longer require to be Looked After and 200 will be prevented from becoming Children in Need by 2020/21, as a result of the implementation of the Early Help strategy. In terms of geography, resources will be targeted in response to local need, but it is not possible to set out the specific impact at this time.

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Question (3) Jonathan Essex (Redhill East):
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The Cabinet's Early Help Strategy is subject to a current stakeholder consultation and future public consultation this autumn. Please confirm that if these consultations do not support the cabinet's proposals as set out in the Early Help Strategy, the Cabinet will withhold its approval.

Reply:

The Early Help Strategy has been developed in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders who have an interest in supporting Surrey's Children and Families. The period of public consultation that is planned for the summer will be focussed not on the Early Help Strategy, but on the aspects of Surrey's early help offer that are directly funded by the County Council. It is not possible or appropriate to pre-judge the outcome of this planned public consultation and what action will be necessary in response. Cabinet will give full

consideration to the feedback received through the public consultation, alongside all other relevant factors, when making its final decisions about the future model for the Council's Early Help services.

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