

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DATE: 29 JANUARY 2019**



**REPORT OF: MR TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**LEAD OFFICER: JOANNA KILLIAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT: PART A) TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – DELIVERING BETTER SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE**

**Delivering better services for residents**

1. The council has embarked upon an organisation wide programme of change and improvement to address a number of performance, financial and cultural shortcomings in order that we can help secure the very best outcomes for the people of Surrey. Along with many other councils, we face a significant financial challenge and are working to ensure that every pound we spend is aimed at delivering the priorities for Surrey, which are set out in the [Community Vision for Surrey in 2030](#) (the Vision). The Vision describes the kind of place we all want Surrey to be:

- A uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.
- [The] economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on its location and natural assets, and where communities feel supported and people are able to support each other.

2. It includes ten outcome-focused ambition statements:

The ambitions for people are:

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.

The ambitions for place are:

- Residents live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities

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- Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer
  - Everyone has a place they can call home, with appropriate housing for all
  - Businesses in Surrey thrive
  - Well connected communities, with effective infrastructure, that grow sustainably.
3. On 13 November 2018, Council [endorsed a suite of documents](#) which set out a clear strategic and financial direction of travel for the council in response to the Vision<sup>1</sup>. Delivering these and responding to the challenges we're facing means changing what we do, the way we do things and how we spend the money entrusted to us. We have consulted and are listening carefully to what people are saying. We are taking views into account as we plan the changes, improvements and re-focusing of our resources that is needed.
  4. People have said that the council should preserve services that help vulnerable adults and children, even if that means making reductions in spending elsewhere (MEL Research Report - Future of services: results from resident survey, January 2019). Doing so will mean we are less able to provide or support universal services – those available to all - as we focus on providing for those whose need is greatest and/or are least able to look after themselves. We believe this approach should help us to contribute the most we can to the Vision aspiration of Surrey being 'a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.
  5. We understand that close partnership working between the council, district and borough councils, public sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector and businesses holds the key to delivering on the shared ambitions set out in the Vision. Organisations have told us that partnership is the essential way of working to secure better outcomes, and with this in mind we are reaching out to partners to work with us on our transformation journey.
  6. However, organisations cannot deliver the Vision alone, we will need the support and involvement of residents. We want to design services so that the right people, including residents, come together to first understand the issues and then work together to decide what we can do collectively to improve outcomes.
  7. On 13 November 2018, as part of the suite of new strategic and financial documents, Council agreed a [transformation programme](#). Seven thematic areas were identified to achieve the required transformation:
    - Service transformation
    - Partnerships and integration
    - New ways of working
    - Commissioning and procurement
    - Investment and income
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<sup>1</sup> (1)The Organisation Strategy 2019-2023, (2) 'Our People' 2021 – Workforce Strategy, (3) Preliminary Financial Strategy 2019 – 2024, (4) Transformation Programme (Full Business Case)

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- Technology and digital innovation
8. Communications, engagement, management behaviour and culture were also identified as cross-cutting elements which sit around the thematic areas. Within each theme projects were identified (these are set out in more detail by following the hyperlink in paragraph 7).
  9. This report focuses on five initial areas that fall under the service transformation theme. The council is seeking to reform these areas in order to be able to deliver improved outcomes for residents with a focus on the most vulnerable and ensure we are doing the very best we can for residents within a sustainable budget. The report sets out proposals for the future in the following areas, taking account of public consultation and engagement and Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs):
    - Children's Centres
    - Special educational needs and disability (SEND)
    - Libraries and culture
    - Community Recycling Centres (CRCs)
    - Concessionary bus travel.
  10. Cabinet are asked to consider these proposals now so that plans can be implemented in the 2019/20 financial year. As the council's transformation programme progresses, reports on other thematic areas or projects, with accompanying public consultation and EIAs, will be brought to Cabinet as required.

### **How this report is structured**

11. This report is one part (Part A) of a two part report being considered by Cabinet under the item Revenue and Capital Budget 2019/20 to 2023/24. The remainder of this report sets out each of the five service areas subject to public consultation in turn, covering the following:
  - Transformation proposals
  - Recommendations
  - Reasons for recommendations
  - Consultation and engagement
  - Risk management and implications
  - Financial and value for money implications
  - Legal implications
  - Equality Implications
12. These are followed by a number of sections that relate to the whole report:
  - Statement of the Executive Director for Finance (S151 officer)
  - Legal implications – Monitoring officer
  - Equality implications
  - What happens next

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## Consultation and engagement informing this report

13. Before we started our public consultations on the five service areas, we carried out a range of engagement activity to inform the council's strategic and financial direction, and the transformation programme.
  14. An extensive engagement exercise with residents and partners took place over the summer of 2018 to inform the Vision. We reached out to a wide range of people and communities, including groups such as homeless people and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). People joined in the conversation on social media and submitted written comments. In total, 3,125 people provided their views, including responses from online surveys, paper surveys completed in libraries or using an easyread format, video interviews and engagement sessions for partners, voluntary, community and faith (VCF) groups and charities, elected representatives and other stakeholders. Everyone's views were captured and summarised in a report Our Surrey - feedback on the Vision for Surrey in 2030.
  15. We held two participatory budgeting workshops with 98 residents on 26 and 29 October 2018 to gain initial insight into where they would invest the council's budget and manage difficult competing demands within constrained resources.
  16. A meeting of the Surrey Equality Group (which includes representatives from a range of VCF organisations in Surrey, chaired by Councillor Denise Turner-Stewart, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire and Resilience) took place on 24 October 2018 to talk to them about the council's budget challenges and consultation activity.
  17. Members were involved and updated on the Vision engagement activity through a briefing for all Members on 15 October 2018 and the Corporate Overview Select Committee on 25 October 2018.
  18. The council has undertaken further extensive consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders including residents, partners and staff on the re-design of the five service areas outlined in this report that support delivery of improvements and savings in 2019/20 including:
    - Public consultations on proposals for five different service areas run simultaneously under the Have Your Say campaign. This ran from 30 October 2018 to 4 January 2019, and over 28,000 responses across all the consultations were received from stakeholders. The response rates were:
      - Children's centres (3,814 responses)
      - Community recycling centres (12,132 responses)
      - Concessionary bus travel (3,082 responses)
      - Libraries and culture (7,901 responses)
      - Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) (1,133 responses).
    - Stakeholders had the option to complete an online survey on the council's website, hard copies or alternative formats, such as easyread. There were also 15 consultation drop-in sessions attended by 150 residents to assist them to complete the consultations they wanted to respond to.
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- Letters were received from a range of stakeholders making formal representations to the council on these consultations. Responses were received from organisations including district and borough councils (Mole Valley, Runnymede, Surrey Health, Tandridge, Waverley and Woking), VCFS organisations such as Sight for Surrey and Surrey Coalition for Disabled People, and partnerships, such as Spelthorne Health and Wellbeing Group. Written correspondence was also received from two Surrey MPs.
  - A survey on council spending priorities with a statistically representative sample of 1,100 Surrey residents (carried out by research company MEL).
  - Face-to-face discussions with a range of stakeholder groups including district and borough members and chief executives.
  - An estimated 5,700 VCFS organisations were invited to share their views electronically on the council's budget and service consultations. Early discussions are being held with the sector to explore ideas such as the role these organisations could have in taking over the running of specific services.
19. Further information about the consultation and engagement activity for each service transformation proposal is included within their respective sections in this report. Full analysis for each public consultation has taken place (listed in the background papers at the end of this report) and have been placed in the Members' and Cabinet Rooms and are available on the council's website.
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#### **TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – Children's Centres**

20. We know that we must improve the way we support and safeguard those children that are most at risk of harm and neglect. It is a major priority for the council and is driven by our desire to see the Vision outcome *Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident* a reality. To make a real difference we need to change how we work with vulnerable children and their families. Evidence shows that it is parents that need help – for example to address drug, alcohol or mental health issues – to enable them to support their children.
21. At the heart of this is building our Family Resilience programme. It has many components, but a core element is supporting families at a much earlier point, in their homes and communities, preventing problems escalating into a crisis that might require a child being taken into care. Our Early Help offer therefore has to improve. We must target our scarce social care resources on those families that most need our help.
22. The report sets out how we propose to make improvements, including extending the age of those children we help, from 0-5 year olds to 0-11 year olds. This means we can reach more vulnerable children and their parents. Our most vulnerable families don't always use our Children's Centres so we will also take our services to them – working with them, in their homes.
23. We are also proposing a number of new model Family Centres around the county to provide a base from which staff will go out into homes and
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communities, as well as provide a core offer (21 centres to be larger and dedicated to family services' use and nine to be smaller and accommodate other services and uses).

24. We know that many councils with good or outstanding Ofsted rated children's services have already made these changes, including reducing children's centres, so should Cabinet agree the proposals in this report, we are confident that in time we will be offering a much better service for those that need it most.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS - Children's Centres**

25. It is recommended the Cabinet, having regard to the results of the public engagement and consultation activity in **Annex 1** and the Equality Impact Assessment in **Annex 1a**:

#### **Recommendation 1**

Endorse the remodelling of the remaining Children's Centres to create Family Centres as part of a wider Family Service to support families with children aged 0-11 that are the most vulnerable.

#### **Recommendation 2**

Agree to the reduction in number of Children's Centres in Surrey from 58 centres to 21 centres and satellite sites, to be located in areas where children are most likely to experience poor outcomes. At least one main centre in each district and borough supported by the use of satellites, outreach workers and community venues.

#### **Recommendation 3**

Agree to reduce the number of mobile Family Centres in Surrey from two to one in order to reach areas where there are small numbers of vulnerable children and families.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS – Children's Centres**

26. Moving to a new model of Family Centre services will help develop a more effective way of supporting families that need help earlier to improve their outcomes. By reorganising Children's Centres into more targeted models of provision, we believe this will support more children and young people to avoid becoming subject to child protection or public care.
27. The Family Centre model will enable us to help more families and children to become more resilient who would otherwise be more likely to experience poor outcomes without support.
28. Retention of a mobile Family Centre means we can maintain outreach support to children and families across the county who may struggle to access a main centre or community venue.
29. By prioritising the location of Family Centres in areas of high deprivation, or where children are likely to be living in households that have low incomes or unemployment, this will enable us to prioritise resources for children who need services most. Deprived areas have been identified using the 2015 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, which shows the proportion of children

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under the age of 16 living in low-income households in different neighbourhoods.

30. Recognising that some needs cross the boundaries of deprivation, such as domestic abuse and parental mental health, funding allocations are also being based on the total population of children within communities.
31. The composition of the families the Centres support have children across a range of different ages, which fall outside the current service offer for 0-5 year olds. Centres are already supporting families with children who fall outside of this age bracket. We therefore propose to expand the age range of children supported to 0-11 years as part of the service offer going forward.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT – Children’s Centres**

32. The Children’s Centres consultation focused on the role they will play in the new Family Resilience delivery model. Proposals consulted on were:
- Reducing the number of Children’s Centres in Surrey from 58 centres to 21 main centres and satellite sites (satellite sites being centres offering fewer services, and acting as meeting places for families and their support workers)
  - Children’s Centres to expand services offered from families with children aged 0-5 to families with children aged 0-11
  - Focus Children’s Centre resource on the most vulnerable children and families, primarily by locating main centres close to areas where outcomes are more adversely affected by levels of deprivation, while finding alternative solutions to maintain support from universal services, such as midwifery support. Deprivation is calculated based on the 2015 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, which shows the proportion of children under the age of 16 living in low income households in different neighbourhoods. Low income households are defined as:
    - Children in Income Support households
    - Children in Income Based Job Seekers Allowance households
    - Children in Working Families Tax Credit households whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) is below 60% of median before housing costs
    - Children in Disabled Person’s Tax Credit households whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) is below 60% of median before housing costs
    - National Asylum Support Service (NASS) supported asylum seekers in England in receipt of subsistence only and accommodation support.
  - Withdrawal of two mobile Children’s Centres from service.
33. The key points from the consultation feedback were:
- There was overwhelming support for the principle of investing more in services that help families earlier



- The majority of respondents thought reductions in other council services ought to be prioritised over Children's Centres
- Respondents wanted to retain the current method of allocating funding to Children's Centres, and the majority agreed there should be a fixed charge for certain activities where people had the ability to pay
- Only a small minority of respondents agreed with the proposal to remove the mobile Children's Centres from service
- There was strong support for more people to volunteer to run activities and help in Children's Centres, with most respondents agreeing they could support local communities to play a role in volunteering to help children and families.

34. Qualitative feedback picked up on matters such as:

- The value of Children's Centres in supporting all new parents through the first years of parenting, regardless of their income
- A feeling that removal of some centres meant "taking part of the community away" and leaving some areas struggling to cope
- Closing centres could undermine the principle of early intervention; vulnerable families in semi-rural areas with poor public transport links could be further isolated without the local centre
- Closing centres would exacerbate oversubscribed basic services at the remaining centres.

35. There were also suggestions for mitigating negative impact of closures, such as:

- Increasing outreach and mobile services to isolated families
- Charging those who can afford to pay for services
- Encouraging more volunteering
- Pooling resources from different sectors e.g. health and council services
- Making better use of other services and buildings
- Supplying more information about other services
- Keeping more centres open, but reducing opening hours.

36. To take full account of the feedback from the consultation, Cabinet must read the detail presented in **Annex 1**. In addition, an EIA, which takes this feedback into account, must also be read and is contained within **Annex 1a**.

37. Having taken into account the consultation feedback and equality analysis, it is proposed main Family Centres are located in the following places where children and families are most likely to experience poor outcomes:

- Caterham Sure Start Children's Centre
- Clarendon School and Sure Start Children's Centre
- Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children's Centre (North Holmwood Goodwyns Road site)
- Epsom Downs Sure Start Children's Centre
- Epsom Primary Sure Start Children's Centre
- Guildford Nursery School and Sure Start Children's Centre
- Hale Sure Start Children's Centre
- Horley - Proposed offer within Horley Youth Centre
- Loseley Fields Sure Start Children's Centre



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- Orchard Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Pine Ridge Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Riverview Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Stanwell Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Sythwood Sure Start Children's Centre
  - The Haven Sure Start Children's Centre
  - The Red Oak Merstham
  - The Spinney Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Three Rivers Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Walton Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Welcare in East Surrey Sure Start Children's Centre
  - Woking Sure Start Children's Centre

38. We also propose that the following Centres cease to provide Children's Centre services and are repurposed for alternative (non-County Council) provision:

- Bagshot Sure Start Children's Centre
- Boxgrove Sure Start Children's Centre
- Brookwood Sure Start Children's Centre
- Burhill Sure Start Children's Centre
- Chobham and West End Sure Start Children's Centre
- Christopher Robin Sure Start Children's Centre
- Claygate and Oxshott Sure Start Children's Centre
- Dovers Green Sure Start Children's Centre
- Elstead and Villages Sure Start Children's Centre
- Hamsey Green Sure Start Children's Centre
- Horley Community Sure Start Children's Centre
- Horsell Sure Start Children's Centre
- Hurst Green and Holland Sure Start Children's Centre
- Kenyngton Manor Sure Start Children's Centre
- Leatherhead Trinity School and Children's Centre
- Meadow Sure Start Children's Centre
- Mytchett Sure Start Children's Centre
- Pyrford and Byfleet Sure Start Children's Centre
- Sayers Court Sure Start Children's Centre
- Spelthorne Sure Start Children's Centre
- St Johns Sure Start Children's Centre
- St Martin's Sure Start Children's Centre
- St Pauls C of E Infant School & Sure Start Children's Centre
- St Piers Sure Start Children's Centre
- Steppingstones Sure Start Children's Centre
- Tennyson's Sure Start Children's Centre
- The Dittons Children's Centre
- The Poplars Sure Start Children's Centre
- The Windmill Sure Start Children's Centre
- Weybridge Children's Centre
- YMCA Sure Start Children's Centre in Banstead.

39. We can see that effective use of a mobile unit could help families in need of support in community settings. We will therefore retain the use of one mobile Family Centre.

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40. Many of the activities taking place in Children's Centres are not delivered by Children's Centre staff. The existing Children's Centres already use volunteers to support the work they do. Voluntary sector, private organisations and partner agencies also regularly use the centres to support families. We expect this to continue in the new model and centres will work in partnership to make best use of Children's Centre buildings and community venues.
  41. The consultation proposed locating a satellite centre at the Addlestone Youth Centre. Whilst we are still proposing to have a satellite centre in Addlestone, we are re-looking at where the centre is best located and are in discussions with the existing provider of Sayers Court Children's Centre.
  42. The consultation set out our intention to rename our Children's Centres to reflect the new model. They will be re-named 'Family Centres' in line with supportive feedback from the consultation.
  43. Stakeholders have made suggestions to either keep Children's Centres open as they are now or with reduced hours. If these suggestions were followed, this would increase how much we would spend on buildings and leadership rather than supporting vulnerable families and have therefore not been carried forward.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS – Children's Centres**

44. If we continue to deliver Children's Centres as we do now, we will not be as effective as we can be in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children in the county.
45. The new Family Centre model will focus resources on families who need it the most, therefore the amount of universal support currently delivered by Children's Centres will be reduced.
46. A detailed implementation plan will be set out with key milestones and resources required to minimise the impact on families currently being supported by Children's Centres during the transition to the new Family Centre model.
47. In addition, expanding the age range of children that Children's Centres will support from 0-5 to 0-11, while simultaneously reducing the budget and number of them, means there is a risk there will be fewer services available for children aged 0-5. This will be balanced out by the offer of more targeted support for some of the most vulnerable families with children aged 0-11.

#### **FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS – Children's Centres**

48. In the event that Cabinet make the decisions recommended to them, the overall financial implications for the council's budget are as follows.
49. The council's Final Financial Strategy (**Annex 6**) confirms the new model for Family Centres will achieve a £1 million saving in 2019/20 with a full year saving of £3.4 million anticipated from April 2020. The model is expected to be introduced between April and September 2019.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – Children’s Centres

50. The Childcare Act 2006 defines a children’s centre as a place or a group of places:
- Which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that the early childhood services in the local authority’s area are made available in an integrated way;
  - Through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
  - At which activities for young children are provided.
51. Section 5A of the Act places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements so that there are sufficient Children’s Centres, so far as reasonably practicable to meet local need. A Children’s Centre must provide more than one activity at the centre (the legislation cites ‘activities’ in the plural) in order to meet the statutory definition. The legislation does not specify how many or how few activities must be provided.
52. The council has discretion, therefore, in determining how to deliver early childhood services after considering its specific local circumstances. In doing so the council must consider its duty at Section 5A, in relation to Children’s Centres, as one element of a wider duty in Section 3(2) of the Act to make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in its area are provided in an integrated manner calculated to facilitate access and maximise the benefit of those services.
53. In addition the consideration as to how to provide early childhood services is part of the council’s general duty to improve the wellbeing of young children in their area and reduce inequalities (in accordance with section 1 of the Act). Section 1 of the Childcare Act requires the council to
- Improve the wellbeing of young children in the following areas:
    - Physical and mental health and emotional well-being
    - protection from harm and neglect
    - education, training and recreation
    - the contribution made by them to society; and
    - social and economic wellbeing
  - Reduce inequalities between young children in those areas; and
  - make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner which is calculated to:
    - facilitate access to those services and

- maximise the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children

54. In considering whether these duties have been met Cabinet will note the proposal to include at least one centre in every district and borough in Surrey alongside the retention of one mobile Children's (Family) Centre to allow for service provision in areas where there are small numbers of vulnerable children and families. This is part of a wider transformation programme as set out in paragraphs 21-24 above. Cabinet will note that the provision of Children's Centres is as much about making appropriate and integrated services available as it is about provision of premises in particular geographic areas. Over and above the general duty to consult (see paragraph 178), Section 5D of the Childcare Act 2006 places a statutory duty on local authorities to consult before making significant changes to Children's Centre provision in their area. Paragraphs 32 – 43 of this report set out the details of the comprehensive consultation that has been carried out.
55. In addition Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places upon the Council (and its partners) a responsibility to discharge its functions in such a way that it safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. The proposal to reform the way in which we deliver children's social care services through the new model of Family Resilience is proven in other areas to have been successful in protecting and supporting the wellbeing of children.
56. In determining the recommendations to Cabinet, full account has been taken of the consultation responses and the conclusion of the Equality Impact Assessments. Prioritising the location of Family Centres in deprived areas, retaining a mobile Family Centre and expanding the age range for children who can receive a service to 0-11 will enable us to better meet our duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Surrey.
57. Cabinet will need to be satisfied that the proposals put forward meet the local authority duties as set out above.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS – Children's Centres**

58. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Children's Centres proposals (in **Annex 1a**) suggest there are both positive and negative impacts on the children and families that use them, the staff that deliver services and partner organisations that support operations.
59. Expanding the offer of Children's Centres to support families with children aged 0-11 will enable them to have access to targeted activities and services that will better help them progress. Changes to the funding and service delivery models are also expected to benefit children with disabilities, children and families from lower income households and more pregnant mothers and single parents due to greater investment of funding in areas with higher levels of deprivation.
60. In terms of adverse impact, children aged 0-5 and their families are likely to see reductions in provision as the age range of children supported by Children's Centres is expanded to 0-11. Children and families who are considered to have lower levels of need are likely to see services in their area reduced or even stopped. Reductions in the number of Centres could also affect where and when parents can access support for pregnancy or for single

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parents, and changes to the times and locations of sessions could affect families who may be less able to balance accessing these with religious commitments.

61. Mitigations include working with partners to find alternative sites to minimise disruption, work with voluntary, community and faith sector organisations with groups who may have greater need of services, such as Gypsy, Romany and Traveller groups in Surrey, and retaining one mobile Children’s Centre to maintain outreach work
62. Negative impacts have also been identified on Children’s Centre staff. As women make up the majority of the workforce, they are more likely to be affected by possible redundancies or resignations. In addition, disabled staff and those with caring responsibilities would be affected should they need to re-locate to work in a new Centre and require alternative transport methods to get to work. These impacts are unable to be mitigated, given restructures will be required as part of the changes to Children’s Centres, and changing locations of Centres form a crucial part of the proposals.
63. In considering the equality implications of these recommendations Cabinet is referred to the specific requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in paragraphs 181 and 183.
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#### **TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – SEND**

64. This report outlines how we are working to improve and strengthen education for children and young people with SEND, providing improved support to help them reach their potential and lead independent lives. As the Vision states, we want to see everyone benefit from *education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life*. We are also very aware that our improvement work is taking place against a backdrop of a change in national policy, rising demand in Surrey and severe cost pressures in the service.
65. The strategic approach we have consulted on will see us investing more into earlier identification of need and support, creating additional specialist places in Surrey and upskilling the workforce to support children and young people with SEND to progress in their education.
66. We proposed five principles to underpin our work, which were broadly supported, and these will assist us to work with our partners and shape our future strategy ensuring our SEND services provide the right support and better outcomes for residents.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS - SEND**

67. It is recommended the Cabinet, having regard to the results of the public engagement and consultation activity in **Annex 2** and the Equality Impact Assessment in **Annex 2a** agree:

##### **Recommendation 4**

To note the broad support from consultation respondents for the proposed principles for transformation of SEND services, namely:

- Children with special educational needs are identified earlier and supported in a timely and effective way in order to improve their outcomes and wellbeing.
- There is an increased focus on earlier intervention and prevention to offer help and meet needs at the earliest opportunity, reducing the demand on high cost, high need interventions.
- Children and young people are helped to become resilient and independent so that they can lead independent and fulfilling lives in their own communities.
- The voices of our children, young people and families are heard so they can shape and inform how we work together to get the best results.
- Surrey's early years settings, schools, colleges and other providers are able to support children to live and grown up locally and achieve their full potential.

#### **Recommendation 5**

To note the broad support from consultation respondents for the areas of transformation for SEND services, namely:

- Early identification and support
- Developing local services and managing the market
- Partnership working
- Improving policy and practice.

#### **Recommendation 6**

To note that further engagement and co-design activity will be undertaken with families, health partners, education and other partners to explore the feedback, ideas and concerns shared through the consultation and develop the council's draft SEND strategy into a jointly owned Surrey special educational needs and disabilities strategy and long term action plan.

#### **Recommendation 7**

To delegate to the Executive Director for Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for All Age Learning, to approve the final joint strategy and the long-term action plan, once completed subject to paragraph 77 below and further Cabinet decision as necessary.

#### **Recommendation 8**

In the event that any of the co-design activity work, strategy identification and/or action plan gives rise to a change in the delivery of services that necessitates consultation and public engagement that will be undertaken alongside consideration to our Public Sector Equality and Section 11 Children Act 2004 duties.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS - SEND**

68. Agreeing the recommendations for the draft SEND strategy will enable us to carry out further co-design of those services for some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the county so they are able to access the high quality services they need.

## CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - SEND

69. The aim of the SEND consultation was to understand the views of members of the public on the council's draft strategy which aims to strengthen education for children and young people with SEND. It was an opportunity for members of the public to have their say on five proposed principles:

- Children with special educational needs are identified earlier and supported in a timely and effective way in order to improve their outcomes and wellbeing
- There is an increased focus on earlier intervention and prevention to offer help and meet needs at the earliest opportunity, reducing the demand on high cost, high need interventions
- Children and young people are helped to become resilient and independent so that they can lead independent and fulfilling lives in their own communities
- The voices of our children, young people and families are heard so they can shape and inform how we work together to get the best results
- Surrey's early years settings, schools, colleges and other providers are able to support children to live and grown up locally and achieve their full potential.

70. The consultation was also an opportunity for members of the public to have their say about four proposed areas of transformation outlined in the draft SEND strategy:

- Early identification and support
- Developing local services and managing the market
- Partnership working
- Improving policy and practice

71. The key points arising from the consultation were:

- The majority of respondents agreed with what young people and their families have told us about services for children and young people with SEND so far, including:
- The importance of securing earlier intervention and help in schools and colleges for children and young people with SEND, especially those with issues such as emotional health and wellbeing and developing their independence;
- Waiting times to access to services are too long and can make things worse; and
- A lack of knowledge among some providers about their needs, and the desire of families to be involved in design and management of services their children need.

72. This confirms the need for a SEND strategy to improve the experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families.

73. Question 2 in the consultation asked for respondents views on the five principles that the strategy would be based on. Analysis of the qualitative



comments from respondents suggests a majority of respondents broadly agree with the five principles proposed. There was more of a split view in the quantitative feedback, with a slight majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of the principles. However, comments from a number of respondents suggest they were unsure whether they were being asked if the principles were currently followed, or if these were principles we would wish to follow in the future. The draft strategy document set out that these were proposed principles. It is clear from the consultation analysis that this perceived lack of clarity from consultees may have impacted their responses. Any future consultation on detailed proposals will be designed to ensure that the matters being consulted on are clear and unambiguous.

74. The majority of respondents strongly agree or tend to agree that the four proposed areas of transformation will better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families and will better support professionals.
75. There is some level of disappointment with current services based on previous experiences. Some respondents showed distrust in the council following through with the plan or wanted more information about what would actually happen so they could influence any change. Respondents also shared ideas and concerns about the practical implications of possible changes to services. To address this, there will be further work completed to co-design services with stakeholders and secure support for plans and activities as they are developed. More detail on these will be published in February 2019.
76. To take full account of the feedback from the consultation, Cabinet must read the detail presented in **Annex 2**.
77. The responses will be used to inform engagement and co-design activities that will take place from February 2019 onwards, to develop a joint SEND strategy and a joint long-term action plan with families and partners.
78. In the event that any of the co-design activity work, strategy identification and/or action plan gives rise to a change in the delivery of services that necessitates consultation and public engagement that will be undertaken alongside consideration to our Public Sector Equality and Section 11 Children Act 2004 duties.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS - SEND**

79. There is a risk that the proposed strategy, which is underpinned by four key areas of transformation, might not achieve optimum financial sustainability and service improvements. This risk is being mitigated by having robust programme governance and performance monitoring in place to review the impact of the strategy throughout the course of the programme.

#### **FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS - SEND**

80. The strategy supports achieving financial sustainability within a three year period, whereby services provided are appropriate and within the government funding provided.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - SEND

81. At this point the Cabinet is only being asked to note the principles for transformation of SEND services and the areas for transformation. There are currently no proposed changes to service delivery.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS – SEND

82. An EIA on the draft strategic proposals consulted on is in **Annex 2a**. As the strategic direction informs any firm proposals for changes to service delivery the equality implications will be assessed and any legal requirements to consult complied with.

## TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – Libraries and Culture

83. This report sets out how we are reshaping and modernising our libraries service so that it is up-to-date with needs and trends and provides and enables opportunities for everyone to learn, access information, acquire new skills, increase literacy and be involved in their communities. Our aspirations for our libraries and culture services connect to a number of outcomes within the Vision, including *Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life*.
84. People are increasingly recognising that modern technology and people's increasing use of it enables a different and more effective way of accessing information, obtaining books, learning and engaging with the world. We wish to make the best of the emerging and new opportunities this creates in our libraries and cultural services.
85. In line with the broad support expressed in the public consultation feedback we will explore opportunities to provide library services in multi-purpose community hubs, where feasible shared with other agencies and services.
86. The response to the public consultation demonstrated significant support for five guiding principles that will guide our work with partners to prepare more detailed proposals for a libraries and cultural service that best meets the needs of the people of Surrey.
87. Responses to the consultation have provided us with many thoughtful and innovative suggestions that will help inform a future service model for libraries. These are all being considered and further consultation will take place in 2019.

## RECOMMENDATIONS – Libraries and culture

88. It is recommended the Cabinet, having regard to the results of the public engagement and consultation activity in **Annex 3** and the Equality Impact Assessment in **Annex 3a** agree:

### Recommendation 9

To note refinements, in italics, to the five strategic principles of the proposed Libraries and Cultural Services Strategy, reflecting consultation feedback. These are:

- Libraries and cultural services provide and enable opportunities for everyone to learn, access information, acquire new skills, literacy and be involved in their communities.
- There *will be* a focus on the wellbeing and strengthening of communities, particularly the most vulnerable, to enable them to be resilient, *providing touch points and safe spaces*.
- Libraries and cultural services are most effective and efficient when they work in partnership with the public, voluntary, community and private sectors, including through the creation of shared spaces *creating a model of financial sustainability*.
- New technologies, including digital, enable libraries and cultural services to reach new audiences, and existing audiences in new ways, and offer 24/7 access.
- Volunteers are crucial community advocates and assets in libraries and cultural services, who also gain valuable skills and relationships through the work they do.

#### **Recommendation 10**

To note the Executive Director for Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture will prepare detailed proposals with partners, including district and borough councils, for a proposed future model for library and cultural services in Surrey based on the five newly adopted strategic principles.

#### **Recommendation 11**

That a second public consultation is carried out setting out the detailed proposals referred to in Recommendation 9 above.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS – Libraries and culture**

89. Agreeing to these recommendations means the council can proceed to develop a financially sustainable future model of libraries and cultural services in Surrey, subject to consultation and the EIA, that reflects modern expectations, is fit for purpose and provides and enables opportunities for everyone to learn, access information, acquire new skills, increase literacy and be involved in their communities.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT – Libraries and culture**

90. The libraries and cultural services consultation was based on seeking views and comments on five strategic principles:
- Libraries and cultural services provide and enable opportunities for everyone to learn, access information, acquire new skills, improve literacy and be involved in their communities.
  - There is a focus on the wellbeing and strengthening of communities, particularly the most vulnerable, to enable them to be resilient.
  - Libraries and cultural services are most effective and efficient when they work in partnership with the public, voluntary, community and private sectors, including through the creation of shared spaces.
  - New technologies, including digital, enable libraries and cultural services to reach new audiences, and existing audiences in new ways, and offer 24/7 access.

- Volunteers are crucial community advocates and assets in Libraries and Cultural services, who also gain valuable skills and relationships through the work they do.

91. Residents and service users were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the principles and whether they were likely to be affected positively or negatively by each principle. They were also asked for ideas and comments relating to each of the five principles to provide a qualitative response to the consultation.

92. The headlines from the feedback were:

- A majority of respondents agreed with each of the five strategic principles
- Respondents were positive about the relevance and role of libraries and culture in the community
- Respondents liked the idea of co-located services and shared spaces, e.g. cafes and libraries located together
- Libraries and cultural services should have both universal and targeted service offers. Those targeted could include children, older people and vulnerable groups, such as those who are socially isolated
- There were concerns about the future of the libraries network, particularly regarding the number of libraries. They also commented that while it was valuable to have volunteers in place, they were not a substitute for the expertise of paid staff
- While there was support for using new technologies to more effectively deliver services, this should not lose sight of the core offer provided by libraries and cultural services, e.g. access to books.

93. A small number of changes to the five strategic principles, reflecting the consultation feedback, are highlighted in **Recommendation 9**.

94. To take full account of the feedback from the consultation, Cabinet must read the detail presented in **Annex 3**. In addition, an EIA on the proposed changes has been prepared, and must be read (**Annex 3a**).

95. Once noted by Cabinet, detailed proposals for a future model for library and cultural services based on the five strategic principles will be prepared for public consultation.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS - Libraries and culture**

96. There are risks that will need to be managed through the programme governance arrangements, which include a need to ensure that the feedback from the consultation is used to inform any detailed proposals that are developed for further consultation with partners, stakeholders, the public and council staff. Also that the findings and actions from the EIA similarly need to be taken forward to inform any detailed proposals that are developed for further consultation.

97. It is clear from consultation analysis and the EIA that children and young people were less engaged in the process. Any future consultation on detailed proposals must be designed to ensure that the views of this demographic are captured.

## FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS - Libraries and culture

98. Part of the desired outcome of the proposed new strategic principles for Libraries and Cultural Services is to reduce the net spend on these services to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) County Council average within the council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
99. The Final Financial Strategy (**Annex 6**) has been modelled on achieving this over a phased period although it is recognised that detailed plans on how to do this are still to be developed and will be subject to further public consultation. If following the second public consultation the savings proposed are not achievable in full or within the originally proposed timescales, then the council would need to identify alternative savings proposals.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Libraries and culture

100. Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons' in the area that want to make use of it (section 7). At present there are no specific proposals for changes to the provision. Any change to the provision of this service will need to be the subject of full consultation and EIA in accordance with the council's duties to do so.
101. At this point the Cabinet is only being asked to note refinements to the strategic principles for transformation of libraries and cultural services. Plans for any changes to service delivery are in the process of being formulated and will be referred back to Cabinet at a future date.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS - Libraries and culture

102. The EIA in **Annex 3a** has identified that there are potentially positive impacts for all groups from a potential future service model, based on the five strategic principles, that provides libraries and cultural services through a new digital platform and community/cultural hubs.
103. The most significant negative impact on all groups is potential reductions of libraries and cultural services in stand-alone buildings in a future service model. There may also be impacts on service users who may struggle to get access, or have the skills to use, an enhanced digital platform proposed as part of a future libraries and cultural services offer.
104. Should we proceed with this potential model in the future, to mitigate these we plan to ensure there is geographical spread across the county through enhanced digital services and libraries and cultural services in community settings. We also plan to undertake targeted consultation with those groups who may experience physical barriers to participation such as older people, people with physical mobility challenges and rural communities.
105. It is recognised that if the future service model involved any closures of stand-alone buildings, this could not be fully mitigated by the digital platform and library/cultural services link points that may be developed. However, a future service model could include greater propensity to develop hubs with co-

located services, which we know people with disabilities have indicated they would value from the MEL survey research.

106. In addition, as there were low numbers of responses from children and young people to the consultation when compared to the proportion of them who are users of libraries and cultural services, we plan to carry out further targeted engagement with this group to build a stronger evidence base on the impact the principles may have on them.
107. There may also be potential impacts on staff arising from a future service model. We plan to fully include them in the design of the new service model and will consult formally if this means any changes in staffing structures.
108. In considering the equality implications of the recommendation to note the strategic principles, in particular the digital platform, Cabinet is referred to the specific requirements of the Public Sector Equality duty set out in paragraphs 181 and 183 of this report.

#### **TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – Community Recycling Centres**

109. The Community Vision for Surrey in 2030 sets out an ambition for residents to live in *clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities*. Our contribution to this, set out in the Organisation Strategy, includes working with partners and residents to continue to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill.
110. The amount of material being brought to CRCs by the public has reduced in recent years. Surrey has more CRCs than national guidance suggests necessary.
111. The Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham CRCs are the four least used CRCs, and are smaller, older and less well designed and laid out than other CRCs within the network. Closing them and extending the hours of the nearest alternatives (Camberley, Caterham and Leatherhead) will result in much needed cost savings, which in turn will help us better support our most vulnerable residents and those least able to help themselves.
112. We have listened carefully and following the public consultation feedback, rather than closing six CRCs, we are now proposing to close only the four least used sites.
113. Even after their closure, the greater majority of residents will be less than 20 minutes drive away from a CRC in good traffic conditions, and 30 minutes in very rural areas; in line with nationally defined standards.
114. The package of proposals being considered following consultation (including introducing some charges for certain construction-related materials and annual fees for vans dropping materials off) will save over £1 million per year.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS – Community Recycling Centres**

115. It is recommended the Cabinet, having regard to the results of the public engagement and consultation activity in **Annex 4** and the Equality Impact Assessment in **Annex 4a** agree to:



**Recommendation 12**

Retain the community recycling centres (CRCs) located at Farnham and Lyne (Chertsey), based on the current and projected use of these sites.

**Recommendation 13**

Extend the opening hours of Camberley, Caterham and Leatherhead CRCs from six days a week to seven days a week from 1 April 2019.

**Recommendation 14**

Maintain the current prices for materials in the charging waste scheme.

**Recommendation 15**

Proceed with the permanent closure of the CRCs located at Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham from 1 April 2019 or as soon as practically possible after this.

**Recommendation 16**

Introduce a charge for construction wood and roofing felt from 1 April 2019 or as soon as practically possible after this.

**Recommendation 17**

Introduce an annual application fee for van, trailer and pick-up permits from Wednesday 1 January 2020, when all permits are due for renewal.

<b>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS - Community Recycling Centres</b>
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116. Recognising both the value many residents place on Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and the need to make savings, we propose to limit closure of CRCs to the minimum number possible to achieve savings. Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham are recommended for closure as they handle the least waste and have the lowest number of visitors. Further CRC usage information can be found in **Annex 4b** to this report.
117. As the nearest alternative CRCs within the network, extending the opening hours of Camberley, Caterham and Leatherhead CRCs should help to mitigate the impact of the CRC closures.
118. In addition, introducing charges for construction wood and roofing felt and launching permits for vans, trailers and pickups will assist in delivery of the savings target for 2019/20. While the option to increase charges on the existing charging scheme waste has been explored, it would have a negligible impact on savings delivery and charges are currently towards the upper end of charges relative to similar councils.

<b>CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - Community Recycling Centres</b>
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119. Consultation respondents were asked for their views on the following four proposals:
- Proposal one: Permanently closing a number of smaller, less effective Community Recycling Centres (CRCs), whilst increasing the opening hours at some CRCs. The sites under consideration for closure are: Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking, Farnham, Lyne (Chertsey) and Warlingham.



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- Proposal two: Introducing a charge to dispose of construction wood and roofing felt.
  - Proposal three: Increasing the cost of disposing of items we already charge for.
  - Proposal four: Charging an annual application fee for van, pickup and trailer permits.

120. The consultation received a total of 12,132 responses. This included responses from residents and organisations and groups such as district, borough, parish and town councils.

121. Seven petitions were received concerning the proposed closures of Cranleigh, Dorking, Farnham, Lyne (Chertsey) and Warlingham CRCs.

122. The headline results from the consultation were:

- The majority of respondents did not support the proposal to close the CRCs. Of the three options for closure outlined, the proposal which attracted the least opposition was the closure of four CRCs in Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham, with opening hours to be increased at Camberley, Caterham and Leatherhead.
- The majority of respondents disagreed with proposals to charge for disposal of wood used in construction, and more than two-fifths of respondents disagreed with proposals to charge for disposal of roofing felt.
- More than half of respondents disagreed with the proposal to increase charges for items we currently dispose of. The level of disagreement increased when just looking at responses from people who currently use, or plan to use, the scheme.
- There was an even split between all respondents who agreed or disagreed with the proposal to introduce an annual chargeable permit for vans, pickups and/or trailers. The majority of people who were planning to make use of the scheme disagreed with the proposal.
- Other comments included concerns that CRC closures would increase journey times and have adverse impacts on the environment, do not account for projected growth in demand as the population increases, increased difficulties for residents to dispose of waste, particularly those with limited access to transport or mobility difficulties, and van users felt they were being unfairly penalised

123. To take full account of the feedback from the consultation, Cabinet must read the detail presented in **Annex 4**. In addition, an EIA on the proposed changes has been prepared, and must be read (**Annex 4a**).

124. Having considered the consultation feedback, the recommendation is to close four sites – Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham. The sites proposed for closure handle only one-tenth of all waste dropped off in Surrey. In addition, we are considering how to recover more recyclable materials from black bag waste, which could lead to further savings.

125. To respond to concerns on increased fly-tipping, experience from introducing similar changes in the past suggests it is unlikely that this will increase as a result of the closures. However, we will continue to monitor fly-tipping levels

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following the closures, and will work with partners to tackle the issue. We will also continue working with private landowners to help prevent fly-tipping on their land and associated costs of removal.

126. Farnham and Chertsey CRCs will remain open. In addition, to mitigate closure of some of the CRCs, we also propose to increase the opening hours at the sites in Leatherhead, Camberley and Caterham from six to seven days a week.
127. It is accepted that some people's journey times will be affected by needing to travel further to reach their nearest CRC – we estimate that approximately 54,000 households will be affected. We plan to launch a communications programme to raise awareness of alternatives to CRCs, such as kerbside collections by district and borough councils or commercial waste companies.
128. Responding to stakeholders' concerns about increased vehicle emissions, previous experience suggests that CRC users will not necessarily result in them attending an alternative CRC. Our communications programme will also encourage residents to try not to make a specific journey to a CRC, and, where possible, to make this part of an everyday car journey, such as while out shopping or travelling to work. The anticipated fall in car journeys should also result in decreased vehicle emissions.
129. Regarding access issues for residents with mobility issues, financial difficulties and no transport, we accept that some residents may need to travel further, which could impact on them. There is an opportunity for residents to consider how often they need to visit a CRC, or whether kerbside collection could be a viable alternative. For those with mobility issues that need to use the sites, a plan for mitigation has been set out in paragraph 137.
130. We still recommend the introduction of charges for disposal of wood relating to construction and roofing felt, but existing charges will not be increased. We also still recommend to Cabinet that an annual permit is introduced for van users costing between £5 and £10 per year from Wednesday 1 January 2020.
131. Vans and trailers are more likely to be used by traders disposing of waste in greater volumes than other vehicles. There is a need to bring in a control system for this, and the council's view is it is right that those who use a van or trailer fund this system.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS - Community Recycling Centres**

132. A common concern raised by respondents is that the closure of CRCs and the introduction of charges for certain types of waste will lead to more fly tipping, which will lead to increased clearance costs for private landowners and district and borough councils. Whilst increased fly tipping cannot be ruled out as a consequence of these changes, the council's experience to date with the changes introduced over the past two years is that fly tipping has not increased. In addition, there are existing enforcement mechanisms in place to address any issues.

### **FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS - Community Recycling Centres**

133. The Section 151 Officer notes that the savings presented in the Final Financial Strategy (**Annex 6**) are estimates. The actual saving may change depending on a number of factors such as the actual volume of waste or, in the case of site closures, depending on formal agreement with the council's waste contractor Suez. The estimated saving of £1 million assumes measures are implemented on Monday 1 April 2019, and any delay will potentially reduce the saving available in 2019/20.
134. The saving includes £650,000 for closure of the CRCs, £300,000 to introduce charges for construction wood and roofing felt, £50,000 from further changes to the reuse scheme, £10,000 from the introduction of permits for vans, trailers and pick-ups, and £5,000 from selling advertising space at CRCs.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Community Recycling Centres**

135. The council has a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act to ensure residents in its area have a place to dispose of their waste. There is no specified minimum requirement in relation to the number of CRCs, other than sufficient CRCs should be provided to be reasonably accessible to residents. Cabinet will need to be satisfied that the recommendations for closure of the four CRCs, and the alternative provision identified to mitigate the impact of those closures enables the council to meet those duties.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS - Community Recycling Centres**

136. The main impact identified (**Annex 4a**) is the effect of increased demand on existing CRC sites within the wider network if the recommendation for closure of the sites in Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham is accepted. For example, the site nearest Warlingham is in Caterham, where service users will need to use steps to access waste containers. While staff are on hand to support people with more limited mobility to use stairs, increased demand on the site may make it more difficult for staff to provide this support.
137. To mitigate against this, staff at CRC sites will be instructed to prioritise support to those service users who have limited mobility.
138. In considering the equalities implications of this recommendation Cabinet is referred to the specific requirements of the Public Sector Equality duty set out in paragraphs 181 and 183 of this report.

### **TRANSFORMATION PROPOSALS – Concessionary bus travel**

139. This report is proposing bringing our concessionary bus travel scheme for disabled people into line with the statutory offer as funded by government, and in common with most other councils. We are proposing to enable free bus travel for disabled people between 9.30am and 11:00pm, during which 98% of journeys by disabled people are currently undertaken.
140. Surrey is one of a few areas of the country that also provides additional funding for free bus travel for companions of disabled people. We are proposing to retain companion passes so entitled pass holders and a

companion can travel for free between 9:30am and 11:00pm on weekdays, all day at weekends and bank holidays.

141. We will work with bus operators to explore and encourage their willingness to continue to support concessionary travel.
142. If agreed by Cabinet, savings of £400,000 per year will be generated by making these changes from 1 April 2019.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

143. It is recommended the Cabinet, having regard to the results of the public engagement and consultation activity in **Annex 5** and the Equality Impact Assessment in **Annex 5a** agree:

##### **Recommendation 18**

To withdraw the non-statutory additional travel concession for disabled pass holders and offer the national statutory English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) in Surrey from 1 April 2019. Disabled pass holders will be able to travel for free between 09.30 and 23.00 on weekdays, all day at weekends and on bank holidays

##### **Recommendation 19**

To retain companion passes so from 1 April 2019 entitled pass holders and a companion can travel for free between 9:30am and 11:00pm on weekdays, all day at weekends and bank holidays.

##### **Recommendation 20**

To note officers will continue discussions with bus operators on a commercial offer of a reduced fare or flat fare scheme in the county.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

144. By agreeing these recommendations, this will help the council to achieve savings of £400,000 to contribute towards its overall savings requirement in 2019/20.
145. In addition, impact on travel is likely to be minimal. Analysis shows that only 2% of all journeys made using the disabled pass take place before 9:30am and after 11:00pm on weekdays.
146. Having considered the consultation feedback, and the impact removal of the companion pass will have on disabled pass holders and their companions, we are proposing to retain companion passes, but bring the terms of companion pass usage in line with those of disabled passes. This means companion pass holders will be able to travel on the bus network for free from 9:30am to 11:00pm on weekdays, and free all day for weekends and bank holidays.

#### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - Concessionary bus travel**

147. The council consulted with the public and stakeholders on proposals to:

- Remove free concessionary travel for disabled pass holders before 9:30am and after 11:00pm Monday to Friday, which is currently paid for by the council. Pass holders would still be able to travel for free after 9:30am and

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- before 11:00pm Monday to Friday, which is paid for by the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS). Free travel at any time on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays would be unaffected.
- Remove companion passes. Pass holders would continue to travel for free, however, their companions would no longer receive free travel. This is currently funded by the council.
148. Over 3,000 people responded using the consultation survey, of which 690 were received as hard copy. Letters were received from 27 stakeholders. 19 emails and one letter were received from the public.
149. It was notable that the majority of respondents were neither disabled nor companion pass holders, yet the most significant level of concern was still for vulnerable service users who could feel more disadvantaged should the changes be agreed. Nearly four in five respondents said they were responding for themselves, but only around two in five stated they have a disabled or companion bus pass.
150. There were specific concerns on higher impacts for people with sensory disabilities, particularly people who are blind or deafblind, and people with learning disabilities.
151. Most respondents did not believe savings should be made in this service area. Over half of people said they believe savings should be made from other areas of council spend ahead of concessionary travel reductions. A very small minority stated they supported the proposals.
152. Respondents commented the proposals seemed at odds with the Government's Inclusive Transport Strategy 2018 – a strategy that focuses on improving transport options for disabled people, and highlighted challenges with existing pass holders attempting to use their passes when they were no longer valid.
153. In addition, a number of stakeholders suggested the proposals were at odds with the ambition in the Vision namely *Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer*.
154. The majority of responses highlighted the potential to negatively impact on:
- Vulnerable people and their ability to live independently
  - People's wellbeing, social inclusion and rural isolation
  - People's personal finances and those of family, friends or professionals who care for them.
155. To take full account of the feedback from the consultation, Cabinet must read the detail presented in **Annex 5**.
156. There may be approximately 600 disabled children and young people using their free concessionary bus pass to travel to school or college who may be entitled to free home to school transport.
157. If any child / young person can no longer use their concessionary bus pass to get to school and following an application and assessment are found to be entitled to free home to school transport, in these instances the council

purchasing a bus season ticket to enable them to travel to school will be the most cost effective option.

158. Any change or removal of discretionary elements paid by the council will not impact on our statutory duty to administer the ENCTS in the county or our duties in relation to free home to school transport.

159. The feedback has also informed the EIA presented in **Annex 5a**. Cabinet are required to read this and take the findings into account in their final decision.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

160. Responses to the consultation and the face to face meetings with key stakeholders highlighted objection to the proposals and the potential impact on people's ability to access work, education and essential services such as medical or caring appointments.
161. These implications are recognised and work will continue on potential mitigation including discussions with bus operators on whether they could offer a reduced or flat fare to disabled and companion pass holders outside the statutory free travel requirements.
162. Based on feedback to the consultation from the public and stakeholders, there was a clear sense of the impact being most heavily felt by companion pass holders. In particular, the impact on carers, but also on family, friends or others who help disabled pass holders with travel. These individuals may be unregistered carers, and so are not entitled to receive any Carer's Allowance from the Government.
163. Based on the feedback it has been agreed that the use of companion passes should be reviewed over the next 12 months to get more information on the use of passes and the cost to the county council. After which a report will be taken to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste covering the ENCTS operation in Surrey. Usage will be aligned to the terms of use for disabled pass holders for free travel between 9:30am and 11:00pm on weekdays, all day at weekends and bank holidays.
164. There may also be a small number of disabled children and young people using their free concessionary bus pass to travel to school or college who may be entitled to free home to school transport. If they find they are no longer able to use their concessionary pass, but qualify for free home to school transport through an application and assessment process, then the council purchasing a bus season ticket for these children and young people would be the most cost effective option.

#### **FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

165. The current saving proposed in the council's Final Financial Strategy (**Annex 6**) is £400,000 for 2019/20. This can be broken down as £250,000 for the removal of non-statutory disabled concessions and £100,000 relating to increased automation. £50,000, originally to be realised from savings on companion passes, will now be saved from elsewhere in the concessionary



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travel budget. If Cabinet agrees the recommendations in this report, this will support achievement of this saving.

166. There are 603 under 18s with a disabled person's pass and 339 under 18s with a companion pass. Some of these residents may require the purchasing of a season ticket to use on the bus to access school or college if, following application and assessment, they are entitled to free home to school transport.
167. The average cost to the council of providing a season ticket for eligible children is around £800 per pupil. We do not anticipate many young pass holders applying for and being eligible for free home to school transport.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

168. The two additional travel concessions consulted upon are non-statutory, offered as additions to the ENCTS. These two additional travel concessions are not universally offered across England or neighbouring authorities.
169. Any change or removal of discretionary elements paid by Surrey County Council will not impact on our statutory duty to administer the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme in the county.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS - Concessionary bus travel**

170. If Cabinet agree the recommendations, the council will still be providing the level of service required under statute. However, as mentioned in paragraph 161, we are holding discussions with bus operators to consider introduction of a reduced or flat fare scheme across the routes they operate for both disabled and companion pass holders to mitigate negative impacts arising from these proposals.
171. There are some impacts identified in the EIA (**Annex 5a**) that are unable to be mitigated against including affecting service users' ability to access education, healthcare, work and other services; increase social isolation, particularly within more rural communities; stretch capacity of community and voluntary transport providers from increased demand; and there would be further pressures on people's personal finances and those of carers. This would potentially affect a number of older and disabled people, their families and carers.
172. In considering the equalities implications of this recommendation Cabinet is referred to the specific requirements of the Public Sector Equality duty set out in paragraphs 181 and 183 of this report.

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#### **STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR FINANCE (S151 officer)**

173. The council continues to face a significant financial challenge due to the twin pressures of rising need for its services and continuing reductions in central government funding. The council has a statutory requirement to set and deliver a balanced and sustainable budget.
174. In the context of these pressures, the financial challenge it faces and the requirement for a balanced budget, the council needs to make reductions in its



service budgets, and where appropriate consult upon how it makes these changes to service delivery. This report sets out how this has been achieved.

175. These budget reductions are critical to the financial resilience and stability of the council, and there continue to be risks on their delivery. The Section 151 Officer therefore requires the progress on achieving budget reductions to be tracked and monitored closely.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER – Overall**

176. The specific legal implications of the service transformation proposals requiring noting or decision are dealt with in the body of this report.
177. There are in addition overriding principles that apply to the decisions being recommended to Cabinet that must be adhered to when reaching a decision. These apply equally to each of the proposals contained in this report and are set out in paragraphs 178- 182 below.
178. Save for where there is a specific statutory requirement such as with Children's Centres, there is a clear expectation in public law that a council should carry out a public consultation process whenever it is considering making any significant changes to service provision especially where it is proposed that a particular service is withdrawn. The proposals contained within this report were the subject of a consultation which was open from 30 October 2018 until 4 January 2019. Care was taken to ensure that the relevant material was presented in a way that could be understood by all consultees. Written material was supplemented by engagement events and surveys.
179. The outcome of those consultations has been summarised in this report and its annexes. Cabinet must give due regard to the feedback obtained from the consultation exercises and conscientiously take it into account when making their final decision.
180. In coming to a decision on these issues the Cabinet needs to take account of all relevant matters. Relevant matters in this context will include the statutory requirements, and policy considerations, the impacts of the options on service provision, impacts on the budget, any relevant risks, the responses to any consultation and the public sector equality duty. The weight to be given to each of the relevant matters is for the Cabinet to decide.
181. The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 Equality Act 2010) equally applies to these decisions. There is a need to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups and eliminate any unlawful discrimination. These matters are dealt with in the equality paragraphs of the report and the Budget EIA (**Annex 7**), supplemented by the individual EIAs which are available to be read and considered. Members will see that negative impacts have been identified and they will need to take account of these and the mitigating actions that have been identified.
182. In addition Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on the council to ensure its functions, and any services that it contracts out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is relevant to any service that could be applicable to children and

the Cabinet should give active consideration to this possibility in reaching any decisions.

#### EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS – Overall

183. When taking decisions on the proposals outlined in this report, Cabinet must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which requires them to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
184. Having due regard means considering the need to: remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic; take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
185. EIAs are carried out to identify any adverse impacts that may arise as a result of the proposals for those with protected characteristics and to identify appropriate mitigations. Cabinet must read the full version of the EIAs and take their findings into consideration when determining these proposals.
186. **Annex 7** is the 2019/20 Budget Equality Impact Assessment which draws from the Equality Impact Assessments on the service areas consulted on in this report, namely Children’s Centres (**Annex 1a**), SEND (**Annex 2a**), Libraries and Culture (**Annex 3a**), Community Recycling Centres (**Annex 4a**) and Concessionary bus travel (**Annex 5a**).

#### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

187. If Cabinet approve the recommendations in this report, the Corporate Leadership Team will make preparations to start implementing these changes from the new financial year (1 April 2019) onwards.
188. Where it has been indicated that further public or staff consultation is required, planning for this will commence, with a view to carrying out these consultations in 2019.
189. We are at the start of our transformation journey. It will take more change, more improvement, greater efficiency and more shifting of our resources to ensure that the council is able to make the best contribution possible to the lives of Surrey people. This report has focused on five service areas but we are also making improvements to other service areas, and where necessary service transformation decisions will be brought to Cabinet at a future date.

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### Annexes referred to

Annex 1	Children's Centre Consultation Report
Annex 1a	Children's Centres Equality Impact Assessment
Annex 2	Special educational needs and disability (SEND) Consultation Report
Annex 2a	Special educational needs and disability (SEND) Equality Impact Assessment
Annex 3	Libraries and Culture Consultation Report
Annex 3a	Libraries Equality Impact Assessment
Annex 4	Shaping Surrey's MembersCommunity Recycling Centres (CRCs) Consultation Report
Annex 4a	Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) Equality Impact Assessment
Annex 4b	Waste Service Information
Annex 4c	Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) Environmental Consideration Summary
Annex 5	Concessionary Bus Travel Consultation Report
Annex 5a	Concessionary Bus Travel Equality Impact Assessment
Annex 6	2019/20 Budget and Financial Strategy 2019-24
Annex 7	2019/20 Budget Equality Impact Assessment

### Sources/background papers:

A Community Vision for Surrey in 2030, Report to Council 9 October 2018

Our Surrey - report on engagement feedback on the Vision for Surrey in 2030, Annex B to Report to Council 9 October 2018

Organisation Strategy, Preliminary Financial Strategy, Transformation Programme and 'Our People' Strategy, Report to Cabinet 30 October 2018

MEL Research Report - Future of services: results from resident survey, January 2019

Children's Centres Consultation Summary Analysis January 2019

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Consultation Summary Analysis January 2019

Libraries and Cultural Services Consultation Summary Analysis January 2019

Community Recycling Centres Consultation Summary Analysis January 2019

Concessionary Bus Travel Consultation Summary Analysis January 2019

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