

**CABINET**

Tuesday 29 January 2019

**RESPONSES TO PETITIONS**

**1. The petition concerning 'Children's Centre for Leatherhead/the North of Mole Valley'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to retain a Children's Centre for Leatherhead / the north of Mole Valley'

Submitted by John Moyer on behalf of Leatherhead Living Facebook page

Signatures: 566

**2. The petition concerning 'Boxgrove Children's Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to save Boxgrove Children's Centre from closure'

Submitted by George Potter

Signatures: 282

**3. The petition concerning 'Mytchett Children's Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to save Mytchett Children's Centre'

Submitted by Rebecca Calvert

Signatures: 123

**The Cabinet's combined response to petitions concerning Children's Centres**

Thank you for the petitions in support of the statements outlined above.

The decision to make the recommendations in today's Cabinet report has not been taken lightly. Ofsted inspected the Outcomes for Children in Need of Help and Protection in Surrey in 2014 and again in 2018 and told us we were 'inadequate'. That means we haven't been keeping some children and families safe and giving them the right help when they need it. Too many children are accelerated into high level child protection and public care services. The current model is not effective and will not meet the requirements set out in the Ofsted inspections. The model needs to change to achieve better outcomes for children and their families.

The recommendations include remodelling 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. It is proposed that there will be at least one Family Centre based in each district and borough in areas where children most likely experience poor outcomes (21 in total). These centres will be supported by the use of satellite centres (9), outreach workers, community venues, and retaining one mobile Family Centre.

There are currently 58 Children's Centres in Surrey providing a universal service to families with children aged 0-5. Whilst the centres prioritise families with identified need, there is little evidence to suggest that the most vulnerable families 'walk into' the current Children's Centres. Referrals into Children's Social Care largely come via schools, GPs and the police.

In 2011 central government ended the original ring fenced grant that funded Sure Start Children's Centres, in real terms this led to a 49.8% drop in the grant funding. The guidance for Children's Centres was also altered in 2013 to make provision for a more targeted service. Ofsted also ceased inspection of Children's Centres at this time. The proposed changes in Surrey are consistent with the funding and guidance changes from 2013 and in effect we are playing catch-up.

The majority of local authorities have re-organised their Children's Centres into a more targeted model. Large County Authorities including Hertfordshire, Essex and Nottinghamshire have reorganised along the lines of the proposed Surrey model and their services for children in need and protection are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

The reasons for the recommendations are:

1. The current model is not effective and will not meet the requirements set out in the Ofsted inspections. Too many children are accelerated into high level child protection and public care services. The aim of the new Family Centres is to catch these families early and to work alongside them to improve outcomes.
2. We are facing significant challenges to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and families, whilst managing very difficult financial decisions. We need to make sure that the money we have makes the biggest difference to the children and families who need support the most. This means we need to spend less on universal provision and focus our resources on children and families who are more likely to experience poor outcomes without support.
3. The proposed funding allocation for each district and borough has been designed to reflect the total population of children in communities. Proposed centres have been prioritised in areas with the highest number of children living in homes which have low incomes or where no-one works and therefore in areas that are most likely to have children affected by deprivation. However, we also recognise that some types of need, such as children affected by domestic violence and parental mental health cross the boundaries of deprivation, therefore this has also been taken into consideration.
4. Each of the 11 districts or boroughs in Surrey will have at least 1 main centre. There will also be smaller satellite centres offering fewer services and open less frequently, but they will be places where workers who are supporting families can meet with them. The main centres, however, will also provide outreach support to families in their own homes and will continue to use community venues where needed. This is a model already used to support families that do not live near a Children's Centre.

5. Whilst we propose to focus the county council Family Centre resource on the most vulnerable children and families, Family Centres could act as venues for families to access support from other universal services, such as health visiting, midwifery, citizen's advice and support with housing and employment, just as other community venues can and will in other locations where there is no Family Centre. We will/are working with partners to ensure that access is maintained for these services.

Suggestions to increase outreach support and maintain the use of the mobile children's centres are being taken forward by keeping the use of one bus and wherever possible increasing the number of outreach workers as the Family Centres are implemented. Suggestions to either keep centres open as they are now or with reduced hours have been considered. These suggestions however would increase how much is spent on buildings and leadership rather than supporting vulnerable families and have therefore not been proposed.

Should a decision be taken to close any Children's Centres, any future use of that building will be carefully assessed and used for the benefit of families, children and the community.

**Mr Tim Oliver**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**29 January 2019**

## **PETITIONS RECEIVED CONCERNING COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES**

### **4. The petition concerning 'Cranleigh Community Recycling Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to Keep Cranleigh Community Recycling Centre open'

Submitted by Hannah Nicholson

Signatures: 3250

### **5. The petition concerning 'Cranleigh Rubbish Dump'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to stop the closure of Cranleigh rubbish dump'

Submitted by Annie Green

Signatures: 102

### **6. The petition concerning 'Dorking Community Recycling Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to oppose the proposed closure of Dorking Community Recycling Centre and request Surrey County Council to retain the facility for at least three days, and preferably seven days, per week'

Submitted by Hazel Watson on behalf of the Liberal Democrats

Signatures: 1224

7. **The petition concerning 'Warlingham Community Recycling Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to keep open the Warlingham Community Recycling Centre'

Submitted by Charles Lister

Signatures: 1028

8. **The petition concerning 'Lyne Community Recycling Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to oppose the proposed closure of Lyne Community Recycling Centre'

Submitted by Sylvia Whyte

Signatures: 8207

9. **The petition concerning 'Farnham Community Recycling Centre'**

It states: 'We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to Don't Dump the Dump at Farnham Community Recycling Centre'

Submitted by Daniel Gee on behalf of the Farnham Herald

Signatures: 425

**The Cabinet's combined response to petitions concerning Community Recycling Centres**

The council is faced with some very tough decisions about the way it delivers services to ensure it can continue to support its most vulnerable residents. Therefore we have had to look again at the operation of Surrey's community recycling centres (CRCs), and launched a public consultation on proposed changes to the service. We have listened carefully to the views expressed in the public consultation, and have taken them into consideration when developing a final plan. However changes to the service are absolutely necessary to set a sustainable budget, which enables us to continue to deliver a valued service to our residents in Surrey.

We are recommending that the CRCs in Farnham and Lyne are retained noting that their closure would have effected a greater number of users. However to deliver the required level of savings, we are recommending the permanent closure of the CRCs located in Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham. We recognise this will be an unpopular choice with residents who use these sites, and for this reason we are recommending that the closure is deferred until 1 October 2019, to allow us time to determine if a different operational or funding model could achieve the same level of saving as closing them would do. This will include assessing the impact of limiting their use to recycling centres only.

In the event that it proves necessary to close these 4 CRCs, to reduce the impact of this, we are recommending that the opening hours at Camberley, Caterham and Leatherhead CRCs be extended to seven days a week. We are also looking at bolstering staffing numbers with the charging scheme, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology, to process users faster, and enforce against illegitimate site use by traders.

We acknowledge the concerns raised about fly-tipping. From our experience of recent changes to the service, and anecdotal evidence from other local authorities who have closed sites fly-tipping is not expected to increase. In recent years the service have introduced measures to enforce against illegitimate use of CRCs by traders and this is reflected in the lower amounts of waste and visitors that the service is now dealing with. However it's possible that some traders are still illegitimately using the CRCs that are proposed for closure, and therefore there is a risk that fly-tipping could increase. We will continue to monitor the position with fly-tipping, and will work with partners to tackle the issue.

We understand the concern about new dwellings and expected population growth in Surrey. However the sites we are recommending for closure are not equipped to handle more users, and we need to send new users to our facilities that are better equipped to handle more waste and visitors. That said, in the next 10-15 years the council would hope to see the positive effects of extended producer responsibility, and advancement in technology, which in theory should mean that businesses take more responsibility for dealing with items such as waste packaging, further reducing the need for recycling centres.

The recommended changes put forward to Cabinet represent a very tough decision, but necessary in the financial context of the council. We believe these recommendations will still deliver a valued service to our residents, and will continue to support the strategic aims of increasing recycling and reducing landfill, and meets our legal requirements as a Waste Disposal Authority.

**Mr Tim Oliver**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**29 January 2019**

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