

## Children and Education Select Committee



6 March 2019

### **FAMILY RESILIENCE PHASE 1: CHILDREN'S CENTRES, INCLUDING CONSULTATION RESULTS**

**Purpose of report:** Scrutiny of Services and Budgets

1. To review the transformation business case, consultation feedback and impact on service change.
2. Understanding of the case for change, the expected benefits and how the Council has responded to consultation feedback. To hold decision makers to account for expected financial and non-financial benefits via future scrutiny.

<b>Introduction:</b>
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1. Surrey County Council believes that every child in Surrey should have the opportunity to reach their potential and that the best place for children to achieve this is within their own families. Whilst many children will do that without support, some will need help. That might be because of additional needs they have, their family circumstances or problems they are dealing with. We want to help these children, and their families, as soon as we can.
2. We know that we haven't been doing this well enough. Ofsted inspected the Outcomes for Children in Need of Help and Protection in Surrey in 2018 and 2014 and reported these services were 'inadequate'. That means we haven't been keeping some children and families safe and giving them the right help when they need it.
3. We are also 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.

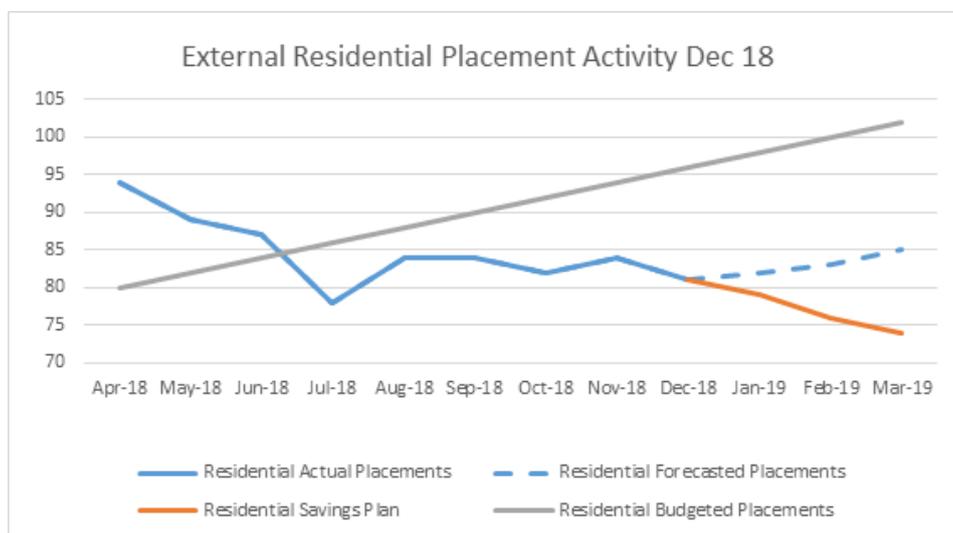
4. We think the best way to do this is by helping families to become more resilient. That means they will be able to cope with change and bounce back when difficult things happen. To support family resilience, we need to change the way we do things and our culture – our values and the way we behave.
5. This will mean changes to a range of services and activities that children, young people and families use at the moment.
6. The service has embarked upon a comprehensive transformation programme involving: restructure of the children's services department to remodel early help, the front door, how we deliver statutory interventions to families and to enable the department to operate within budget. This is largely an internal exercise at this point (with the exception of remodelling the MASH and the early help offer).
7. The critical external focus of the Family Resilience transformation has been the public consultation on the role that we propose Children's Centres will play in the delivery of early help as part new family resilience delivery model. This aspect will be covered in detail in this report.

#### **The transformation programme**

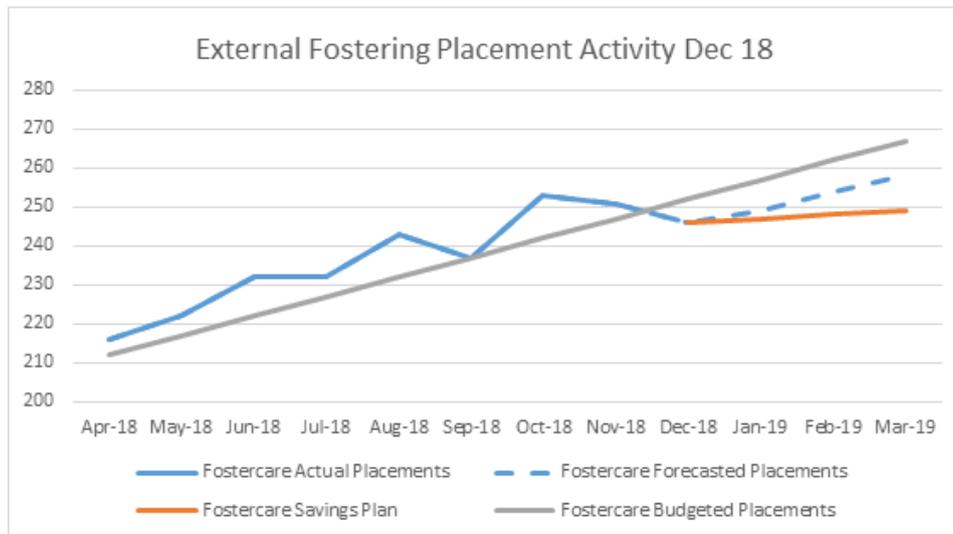
8. The **restructure of children's services** is progressing in line with the 'go live' date of 01/04/2019.
9. The restructure of the CFLC Directorate was planned to achieve savings of £8m in 2019/20. As a result of reviews of staffing structures to support the transformed service this has been reduced to £6.3m with alternative savings being identified on contract spend. (see para 14)
10. The first and second phases of the structure have been completed (Directors and Assistant Directors) with the third at Service Manager level currently underway. These phases have resulted in a reduction of 47 budgeted FTE reducing costs by approx. £2.6m in isolation.
11. The final phase of the restructure is currently subject to consultation and is due to close on 18th February.

12. In respect of Family Resilience we have proposed:
  1. A Family Safeguarding Hub and an Early Help Hub to replace the MASH: the Early Help Hub will be co-located with CAMHS, SEND and 0-19 Health.
  2. 22 Family Safeguarding Teams in line with the acclaimed Hertfordshire model.
  3. 15 Targeted Youth Support teams and 8 Safeguarding Adolescent teams to deliver youth justice programmes and contextual safeguarding.
  4. Co-location of disabled children's teams with quadrants
  5. Co-location of fostering teams with quadrants
  6. Locating leaving care teams with looked after children's services in the quadrants.
  7. Locating newly qualified social workers in the main teams with additional support.
  
13. Whilst there is an imperative to have the structure finalised and in place by 1<sup>st</sup> April, the real work to transform the culture and practice with the workforce will begin when the structure is finalised. In anticipation of this a number of readiness work streams have been established both internally and with partners, training in motivational interviewing (the cornerstone of family safeguarding) has begun. The DfE is supportive of Surrey County Council implementation of family safeguarding (it plans a national roll out) and ministers are currently considering what that support to Surrey CC may look like.
  
14. Savings to be achieved through scrutiny of contracts with external providers. To date £1m has been identified and achievable in 2019/20 - including £0.5m from the public health Community Providers contract and a 35% reduction in Early Help contracts.
  
15. Further work is being undertaken to review detailed spend and contract data identifying areas of lower priority or where value for money can be improved.
  
16. **Surrey Children's Academy** launched 17/01/2019. The Academy has 7 faculties and will develop staff at all levels throughout their careers – including those in partner agencies working with children and families.
  
17. **Savings in the Children's Placements.** The transformation recognised that spend on placements for looked after children did not reflect robust child focused commissioning. A project has been established to enable the service to achieve £10.4 million savings by the end of 2019/20: thus far the project is on track.

18. For external residential placements the plan assumes that there will be 74 placements by the start of April this will continue to reduce gradually during 19/20 to 31 by March 2020. The graph below shows the overall number has reduced since November, there are currently 81. The forecast line is still based on the demand during the last financial year which was a net increase of two placements per month. In recent months this has slowed and if this trend continues there will be lower. The financial impact in 2018/19 is minimal but the key is that the numbers are at 74 from April and continue to reduce during the year. The savings line is a gradual reduction of numbers to get the April 19 starting point.



19. For external fostering placements the plan assumes that there will be 249 open placements by the start of April and numbers will gradually continue to fall to 210 by March 20. The graph below shows the overall number have reduced since October 2018, there are currently 246; therefore we are ahead of the plan. As with the external residential the forecast line is still based on the demand during the last financial year and at points in this year which was a net increase of five placements per month. Again the savings line is on track for April 19 and allows some scope for new placements.



20. The new Access to Resources Team is now up and running which means a new level of challenge and review is being applied to placements, the benefits we are seeing over the last two months are without this team being fully in place, we should see further improvements.
21. A project manager was appointed two weeks ago to review all of the residential placements. We are reviewing children's needs against their placement and there are plans to end some placements in the next 2 months. All placement costs are also being reviewed in a drive to reduce the unit cost in 19/20. If new demand is contained and the reviews are successful we will be on track with the 74 placements for April 19.
22. There are currently 33 households being assessed to become fostering households; this is the greatest number ever at a single point in time in Surrey.
23. One of the critical factors to our future success is a **joined up early help** offer that focuses on those families where children and young people need quick responses to emerging problems. Our ambition, as part of family resilience, is to have a clearly articulated early help offer for ages 0-19. The first stage in this has been the consultation about Surrey Children's centres and the proposed transformation to 0-11 family centres with a hub and spoke model. The proposal, consultation and response is detailed below.

## The New Family Centre Model

24. The Children's Centre Cabinet paper proposed 3 recommendations, these were:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

All 3 recommendations were agreed by Cabinet on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

25. The Cabinet report is [available on the council's website](#).

26. The Cabinet paper summarised and responded to the consultation results and are detailed below. Full results from the consultation [are available on the council's website](#).

27. Full results from the consultation [are available on the council's website](#).

## Anticipated impact

28. The aim of the transformation is to enable families to receive robust evidenced based help before their difficulties reach statutory threshold, this will mean fewer families in the statutory system.

29. Our use of relationship based practice, our emphasis on working with consent and parental partnership and use of motivational interviewing will result in use enabling families to realise change in how they function.

30. We will know the transformation is having an impact on families when:

- The number of families subject of statutory assessment decreases. This will tell us that early help is making a difference and that the decisions made at the front door are in line with the Children Act 1989 and our 'Effective Family Resilience' levels of need.
  - The number of children who are subject of statutory assessment and who do not go on to receive a statutory service will reduce. This will be an indicator that decisions at the front door are robust.
  - Families will tell us they feel respected, helped and enabled to change: they will have benefited from effective intervention programmes to address risks to children arising from domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health.
  - Children will tell us they were heard and understand how their families will be helped to change.
  - Those children who are not able to continue living with their families will have stable placements close to their communities.
31. Hertfordshire has a similar population to Surrey. Evidence from Hertfordshire's implementation of Family Safeguarding has shown for families accessing the intervention:
- 38% increase in school attendance
  - 66% reduction in repeat domestic abuse call outs
  - 53% reduction in A&E attendance by adults
  - 50% reduction in use of care for children
  - 70% reduction in use of Public Law Outline (pre-proceedings)
  - 50% reduction in child protection plans
  - 12.7% repeat referrals
32. The current turnover of staff in some parts of the county presents a real challenge to making and embedding improvements in the experience families will have of Children's Social Care. We know that the reasons staff choose to remain in a service is about the system conditions in which they operate. We anticipate that:
- Caseloads will reduce as the number of families in the statutory system declines.
  - Staff will experience better quality supervision that enables them to reflect on and strengthen their impact on children's lives.

- The robust continued professional development through Surrey Children’s Academy will upskill our workforce thus enabling families to change.
  - The high turnover of both agency and permanent staff will reduce.
33. Senior Officers understand that this is a challenging programme of transformation. All officers who are subject of consultation and restructure are understandably anxious about what this means for them and we are in a very unsettled period. We have high expectations that our staff will be able to provide the high quality service children in Surrey deserve
34. Any organisation undergoing this level of change would expect to see a dip in performance. The recent Ofsted Monitoring letter commented on the emerging learning and quality assurance culture which enables senior managers to have a realistic view of front line practice. This is pivotal over the next 6 months as workers move to different teams and develop new ways of working.
35. Each of the Quadrant Assistant Directors has monthly performance meetings with all of their managers to maintain expectations about compliance. We have built in additional capacity for 12 months in the Front Door, in Assessment and in Family Safeguarding to lend resilience as new ways of working with families and with partners begin to embed.
36. Our expectation for 19/20 is that compliance with statutory processes will improve, our recruitment and retention will stabilise and improve. We will subject fewer families to care proceedings that end in Supervision or no order and the number of children subject of child protection plans will reduce. Managers will have a clear understanding of what good looks like and this will be evident through our auditing process. We will know that practitioners are receiving regular supervision and that this is having an impact on all of the above.

<b>Conclusions:</b>
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37. **Family Centres.** The suggestions and alternatives put forward in the consultation have been considered together with the Equality Impact Analysis. The 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.

38. Charging for services and encouraging volunteers are both aspects of the new delivery model that will be taken forward by individual centres in the future but we will need to ensure that charges are not a barrier for families who need the services and volunteers are used effectively. Neither of these proposals however would prevent the need to close the centres as proposed.
39. The 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.
40. Pooling resources, working in partnership with other agencies and improving access to information are features of the wider family services improvements and transformation. The new Family Centres will enable and develop local partnership working to meet the needs of the families in communities using the Family Centres and through outreach using community venues.
41. The new model is planned to start from September 2019 achieving a £1m saving in 2019/20 and £3.4m in a full year from 2020/21
42. In respect of the **service transformation**, the timetable is ambitious but it is imperative that the resource is in the right shape so that families can access the right help and support at the right time. The restructure of the CFLC Directorate was planned to achieve savings of £8m in 2019/20. As a result of reviews of staffing structures to support the transformed service this has been reduced to £6.3m with alternative savings being identified on contract spend (see below)
43. The first and second phases of the structure have been completed (Directors and Assistant Directors) with the third at Service Manager level currently underway. These phases have resulted in a reduction of 47 budgeted FTE reducing costs by approx. £2.6m in isolation
44. The final phase of the restructure is currently subject to consultation and is due to close on 4th February for most staff and two weeks later for business support staff.
45. The programmes that are actively seeking to reduce spend through placements are progressing according to plan. Their

success is predicated on greater management oversight leading to increased demand management in concert with enhanced placement commissioning and brokerage.

46. Saving to be achieved through scrutiny of contracts with external providers. To date £1m has been identified and achievable in 2019/20 - including £0.5m from the public health Community Providers contract and a 35% reduction in Early Help contracts. Further work is being undertaken to review detailed spend and contract data identifying areas of lower priority or where value for money can be improved.

#### Recommendations:

47. The select committee considers the information in this report and offers support and challenge to the service to drive forward improvements for children in Surrey.

#### Next steps:

48. The Family Centre implementation phase can begin in February following the Cabinet decision and call-in phase. Immediate next steps are:
- **February 2019:** the specification will be issued to providers to confirm which existing providers agree to become the new lead providers in the Districts & Boroughs.
  - **March – April 19:** once this is determined a tender process can begin in the District & Borough areas where there are no agreed proposals for a local solution, to identify a lead provider.
  - **Borough and District individual implementation plans are in development.** There will be different timescales for:
    - D&Bs where a local solution being proposed. It is expected that implementation will be complete in September – October 2019.
    - D&Bs where there are no agreed proposals for a local solution and therefore will go out to tender. It is expected that implementation will be January 2020.
49. In respect of the transformation of the culture and practice in Children's Social Care the immediate priorities are:
- Launch of 'Effective Family Resilience' across the partnership. This is our levels of need and partner

commitment to working together to meet children's needs.

- The safe transition to the new structure 1<sup>st</sup> April
- Relocation of the front door out of Guildford Police station
- Remodelling of the front door arrangements with a focus on consent and direct advice and support to Surrey Families and our partners.
- Training staff in motivational interviewing.
- Recruitment to partnership positions within the Family Safeguarding model (adult mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse).
- Continued focus on tight governance in respect of children's placements.
- Increasing our focus on the quality of practice and learning within the service so that we are constantly improving the offer for families in Surrey.

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**Sources/background papers:** [List of all documents used in compiling the report, for example previous reports/minutes, letters, legislation, etc.]

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