

Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2013/14

Work commenced September 2013 - Welfare Reform: Welfare reform will result in pressure on many Council services as the government changes take effect. What will be the impact on Surrey residents? What could the Council be doing now to minimise the impact?

To be linked to consideration of Surrey's present Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

This work is being undertaken by a Member Task Group throughout autumn 2013. There will progress report back to Committee in January 2014

The Committee will be looking at how the various strands of Digital by Default join up across the Directorates.

Work commenced October 2013 – Digital by Default: Like many Councils, Surrey is exploring the benefits and limitations of bringing or delivering services online. How do Surrey residents want to engage with the Council? To what extent should this be reflected in the Council's Digital Strategy? What can we learn from other organisations approach to digital by default?

The Committee will be using their November meeting to discuss how the Council supports its staff with respect to wellbeing and morale. There will then be an opportunity to have a series of informal workshops with staff.

Work Commencing November 2013 - Staff: Given ongoing austerity, what do employees really feel about working for Surrey? Do employees have the appropriate tools and resources to do their job? What is the impact of employee satisfaction and morale on service delivery? How can Surrey best support and value their employees?

Items to be scheduled

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Work commencing December 2013 – Budget Savings: Surrey is having to think differently about how it delivers services in light of public sector spending cuts. What is the impact of these cuts and changes on the everyday life of people in Surrey?

It is intended that the work on welfare reform will help inform the Committee's scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals (due to be finalised in February 2014)

Communication (Internal & External): As a Council, are we communicating the right things, in the right way, to the right people?

The Cabinet agreed a Communications and Engagement Strategy at its meeting on 25 June 2013. The Committee will review its progress following a period of 6 months.

Adult Social Care Committee will be looking at this topic in autumn 2013. Following this, Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee will consider what wider opportunities there could be for the council.

Social Capital: When resources are scarce, will residents acting collectively to tackle issues within the community plug the gap?

Trading & Investment: What trading and investment models is Surrey currently utilising and what are the future options for the Council (looking at experiences outside of the County)? What will the governance arrangements be?

The Committee had an update regarding Trading and Investment at its meeting on 12 September 2013. Further updates will be presented as business cases are developed.