

Cabinet Member of the Month: Kevin Deanus, Cabinet Member - Fire & Rescue and Resilience

Surrey Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS): Investment in SFRS continues, with redevelopment works at Chobham, Lingfield, and Reigate Fire Stations due to start in Summer 2024. Wray Park Training Centre (Reigate) will see works begin in 2025 to construct a new, greener, fire house and new training facilities. The site requires significant investment to enable SFRS to carry out statutory training for its firefighters, which includes working at height, live fire behaviour training, use of breathing apparatus and training to work in confined spaces.



Chobham artistic impression



Lingfield artistic impression

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) revisited SFRS in February to review the actions carried out in response to the Cause of Concern related to our protection work. The Inspectorate said that the service needs to do more to assure itself that its risk-based Inspection programme prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk. The results of the review will be published on 12 April 2024.

SFRS have invested in five new state-of-art drones to help in life-threatening incidents to keep communities and crews safe. The drones are equipped with the latest technology including thermal and high-resolution imaging and the ability to live stream footage directly to the control centre. They are also readily available 24/7 and can fly for longer in more extreme weather.

SFRS will soon be formally signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Salvation Army for catering support. This will provide hot meals for operational crews at larger incidents, typically where six or more fire engines/specialist vehicles are deployed. The vehicle will be based at Woking Fire Station and will be deployed by volunteers from the Woking Salvation Army team. SFRS have recently refreshed our MOU with the Rapid Relief Team (RRT), who provide a similar capability as the Salvation Army and add further resilience to our welfare arrangements, which will be particularly useful as we approach a potential busy summer period.

SFRS have repurposed an existing Incident Response Unit into a new Welfare Support Unit, the vehicle will store extra marquees and covered spaces to keep staff warm, more shielded from the elements and to maintain privacy.

Emergency Planning: It has been a busy start to the year for the team with several weather-related incidents, business continuity issues and an unprecedented closure of the M25.

Flooding - In January Storm Henk hit Surrey leading to widespread flooding across the county, particularly along the River Thames. As part of our emergency planning, we work year-round to help inform and prepare residents for such extreme weather events, as-well-as with partners to respond and help properties and communities recover from flooding.

The team were involved with daily calls with our Local Resilience Forum partners to ensure we were able to respond to the issues affecting residents, which included the overnight evacuation of residents whose properties were at risk of flooding and working with Spelthorne Borough Council to move them to a place of safety.

As the river levels dropped the team led the partnerships recovery work, which included ensuring residents affected by the flooding were able to receive grants, and helping with the clean up as some of them returned home.



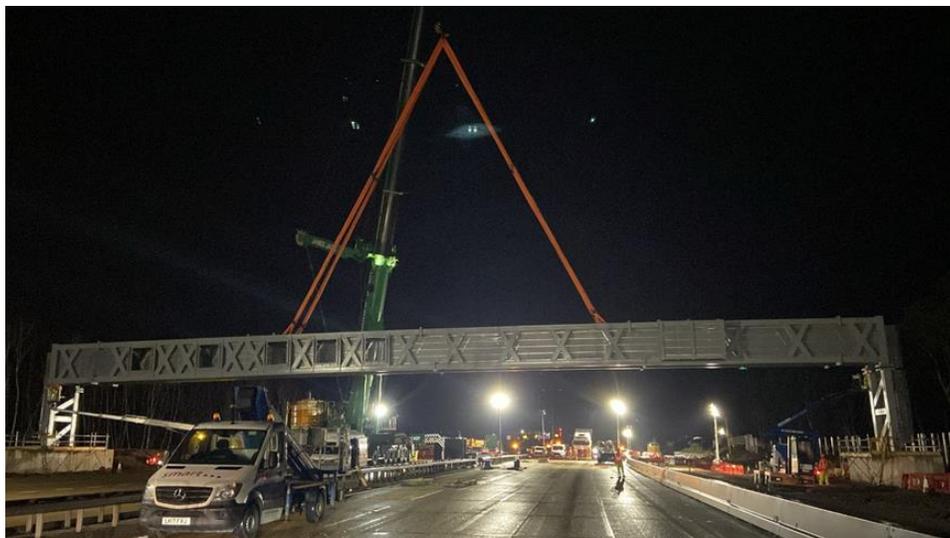
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Coroner's Court Relocation - As the flood waters were receding, a separate issue affected Woking Coroner's Court and the team supported the Coroner's Service in relocating so they could continue business as usual and prepare for an Inquest.

M25 Closures - As part of National Highways work to upgrade the M25 / A3 Wisley Interchange, National Highways needed to implement a full junction weekend closure of part of the M25. Prior to the closure, the EMRT led the C4 planning group and authored the operational plan detailing the command-and-control procedures for how LRF partners would work together over the weekend. A call was held to help SCC services understand the impact and ensure their services could continue. We also worked closely with SCC comms to ensure readiness.

Over the weekend the EMRT led the co-ordination of the operational plan, attending National Highways tactical calls and ensured timely information sharing between partners and Members.

This closure was the first of five planned for the coming months. The closure went well as the public heeded the communications to avoid the area and the diversion route held up well. Communications were the most important contingency ahead of closure and worked well to reduce traffic volumes and impacts. The communication strategy will be key again, messaging will need to be clear that we only experienced minimal impacts due to people following the guidance not to travel.



Current work the team are focusing on include:

- Working with partners to plan for the next M25 closure in May.
- Working with SCC services to plan for potential industrial action following the pay dispute with unions.
- Working with partners to ensure we are ready for risks that occur during the summer.

Coroner's Service: Surrey's Coroner's Service receives approx. 3,600 referrals each year to investigate unexplained deaths, providing a vital service for both the deceased and bereaved families. The service has been working hard over the past few months to streamline processes, increase visibility around performance and has worked jointly with colleagues in Health to improve both capacity in mortuaries and the post-mortem process to reduce unnecessary delays. This has led to significant improvements in performance, for example; cases are now being allocated to a dedicated Coroner's Officer within an average of one day, the average time from a decision being taken that a post-mortem is needed to the post-mortem being carried out is now under five days and, following post-mortem, deceased persons are being released into the care of the appointed funeral director within one day. This is leading to a much-improved experience for loved ones at what is an extremely difficult and emotive time for them.

Community Safety: The **Serious Violence Duty** (SVD) was enacted in January 2023, with the aim to identify where violence occurs, what causes it, and prepare and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce violence in Surrey. The SVD now has a strategy in place with a partnership structure and governance. The priority areas identified are:

Priority 1 – Leadership: To create change through investing in a dynamic governance structure that enables the culture necessary to bring about the long-term reduction of violence.

Priority 2 – Evidence: To maximise our impact with smarter use of data and intelligence to create targeted solutions.

Priority 3 – Connections: To develop a placed based, community led response to serious violence.

Priority 4 – Focus: To prevent serious violence by developing responses that address the causes, reducing the risk factors and increasing the protective factors.

Year 1 – 2023/24: Funding was allocated to develop analytical support and D&B/CSP strategy development under labour cost allocation. Projects including engaging youths whilst in custody, nighttime economy work, cuckooing engagement services and training and communications were funded via the non-labour allocation.

Year 2 (2024/25) – currently being delivered: Labour funding has been allocated to the serious violence programme manager, a dedicated public health analyst and police coordinator. Current focus is on the allocation of the non-labour funding of £334k for 2024/2025. Funding currently allocated:

- £49,299 awarded to Op Shield for second year to target unhealthy behaviours in the nighttime economy and training for the licensed venues.
- £50,000 ringfenced for development of a project seeking to work with children in custody and/or the acute trusts.
- £100,000 ringfenced to focus on knife crime prevention work, with a focus on children and young people.

A commissioning workshop took place focussing on the key areas – knife crime / youth violence / place-based concerns / Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse to see what services are currently in place to support these areas. The aim was to identify where there are gaps so funding can be considered to bolster these services. The information from the workshop is currently being collated before looking at where the funds should be allocated.

The SV action plan 2024/25 is currently being written and agreed under the priority areas.

Hate crime and community cohesion: This has long been identified as a police issue, but it is recognised that a partnership approach is required to focus on community cohesion and preventative measures.

We are currently reviewing a new partnership structure and governance with the aim of completing a strategic needs assessment and strategy for hate crime and community cohesion.

RMM/RVM: There has been a full review of the adolescent safeguarding pathway and how this is currently structured. Children experiencing exploitation are identifying place-based hotspot areas where there is a vulnerability to exploitation. These are not currently being referred into a problem-solving approach to consider the contextual safeguarding and risk. We are now involved in formalising a process to refer these areas into the D&B Joint Action Groups with consideration for group membership, data sharing systems and oversight.

7

Prevent (Counter Terrorism): The UK threat level remains SUBSTANTIAL, meaning an attack is likely. The Counter Terrorism Policing network are working on more than 800 investigations nationally, and since March 2017 Counter Terrorism Policing and UK Intelligence Services have disrupted 39 late-stage attacks.

Prevent is especially crucial during times of heightened tensions and international conflict which can have a knock-on effect on interfaith relations, hate crime, community cohesion, and proliferation of extremist ideas which could lead people susceptible to radicalisation to engage in criminal or violent actions.

Surrey Prevent are committed to working in partnership to protect the public from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. We continue to coordinate monthly Channel Panel meetings to identify, safeguard, and provide early intervention and diversion for individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, as well as working with statutory partners to oversee county-wide Prevent delivery, evaluate our impact, agree and update risk assessments and progress partnership plans.

The Government has recently [published a new definition of extremism](#), updating the one in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, to reflect the evolution of extremist ideologies and the social harms they create. It will not affect the ideologies considered by Prevent, but under the new definition, certain groups will be blocked from government funding and meeting officials. It will apply to groups that promote an ideology based on “violence, hatred or intolerance”.

Counter-Terrorism Local Profiles (CTLP) are central to the effective delivery of preventative work. The CTLP is a document produced annually that articulates the threat and risk profile for Surrey and aims to provide a common understanding of the core terrorism and radicalisation issues we face. It is an important document that drives coordinated and proportionate activity across all organisations in Surrey with a statutory responsibility for delivery of Prevent. The document was presented to Surrey Prevent partners in March, and the Surrey Prevent Executive Group will agree a new Partnership Action Plan and Local Risk Assessment in their next meeting which will acknowledge and seek to mitigate the identified risks.