

Annual Governance Statement - 2024/25 Action Plan progress update

Issue identified during 2023/24	Action to be taken during 2024/25	Update as at October 2024
<p><b>Childrens Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue the DfE-sponsored Family Justice ‘Trailblazer’ programme, to reduce time taken in family court proceedings.</li> <li>• Deliver a new Adolescent Service, providing wrap around and ‘Edge of Care’ services to support children to live at home wherever safe and appropriate.</li> <li>• Embed a new Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS), providing intensive support for families in Surrey where there are interconnecting needs affecting the whole family.</li> <li>• Implement Foster Carers’ Charter and launch a new foster care portal to enable communication between the council and its Foster Carers. Engage in the DfE-sponsored, South East Regional Foster Care Recruitment Programme.</li> <li>• Continue work to expand the in-house children’s residential estate.</li> <li>• Continue work to strengthen our partnership front-door, to improve coordination and information sharing between agencies.</li> <li>• Develop an Early Help service specifically for Children with Disabilities.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of letters before proceedings and the quality and consistency of direct work with children.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family Justice Trailblazer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCC were successful in our bid for grant funding to deliver a 12-month project focused on tackling the root cause of delays in court proceedings.</li> <li>• This project is well underway and progressing well with a dedicated team in place, a network of other local authorities involved in the Trailblazer programme and good support from the DfE.</li> <li>• Priorities have been on improving data and the monitoring of children’s progress through the Public Law Outline (PLO), delivering training for practitioners, improving internal and partnership processes and collaboration, tackling recording issues and amending the case management system as needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adolescent Service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A project has been underway since January 2024 and expected to close in December 2024 which is taking a phased approach to delivering a new Adolescence Service.</li> <li>• The new service was formally launched in June 2024 and focused recruitment activity to the new roles taken place. There have been some challenges but staffing for the service is now in a much improved position.</li> <li>• This has now entered the partnerships and pathways development phase with work leading towards a large partnership launch for the service in November 2024.</li> <li>• Development of the new edge-of-care part of the service is ongoing with a need to confirm budget for these teams. The edge-of-care provision already in place has continued so far within the new service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Families First project to develop the new IFSS has been underway since December 2023 and will conclude in December 2024.</li> <li>• The IFSS had a ‘soft launch’ in Spring 2024 with the new structure in place and recruitment commencing. The Families First model was formally launched in July 2024 through a series of events and comms initiatives.</li> <li>• Training, new process development, team members taking on casework and liaison with</li> </ul>



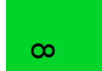


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		<p>partner organisations has all been progressing this year.</p> <p><b>Foster Carer Initiatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A draft of the new Foster Carer's Charter was prepared for launch in Foster Care Fortnight in May 2024. Subsequent discussions about the detailed commitments in the charter have been ongoing with the Foster Carers' Association in order to ensure there are appropriate monitoring arrangements for all the commitments in the charter. We expect both the charter and monitoring arrangements to be in place by the year end.</li> <li>• We have joined forces with other councils from across the South East to form the Fostering South East Hub. Funded by the Department for Education (DfE), Fostering South East brings together the collective expertise and resources of councils from across the region and ensures that prospective foster carers have access to a centralised platform for enquiries, training and support, making it easier to get involved in fostering.</li> <li>• A Foster Carer Portal is being developed to integrate with our existing Children's Case Management system enabling carers to access part of the system and their records to improve communication and information sharing. Following some delays, the testing phase is commencing in October 2024 with the Portal expected to go live in January 2025.</li> </ul> <p><b>Children's Residential Homes Estate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Capital programme was developed in response to the number of children looked after in Surrey and the strategic goal 'Surrey Homes for Surrey Children'. In November 2022 Cabinet approved £18m of capital spend for seven to nine new homes, creating up to an additional 30 beds.</li> <li>• Three new children's homes are all up and running with five children placed and further work underway to place children in the remaining five vacant beds. Refurbishment work at another children's home has been completed, with the launch taking place in October 2024.</li> <li>• In addition, a DfE capital funded programme to open a further two children's homes providing six further beds in Dorking remain on track with the homes anticipated to be operational by April 2025.</li> <li>• SCC is well underway with the delivery of a replacement for an existing 5-bed children's home in Cobham, following the blueprint of the Dorking provision to create six-beds across two</li> </ul>

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		<p>homes. It has been through planning and work is underway, with delivery expected in Autumn 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capital programme has slipped from the original timelines in the business case due to the availability of suitable properties, extended timelines for planning applications relating to change of use, agreeing the scope of adaptations and delays from internal approvals. The financial and operational implications of the delays are currently being explored.</li> </ul> <p><b>Children’s Services Front Door:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Children’s Single Point of Access (CSPA) project aims to strengthen a sustainable and effective front-door service that ensures children and families always receive the right support at the right time. The project began in August 2023 and is due to finish in October 2025.</li> <li>• Social worker oversight at all critical junctions within CSPA is now in place which should ensure that children and families are always directed to the right place first time.</li> <li>• Open events have been hosted with key stakeholders to strengthen partnership working and improve understanding of the model to ensure that appropriate referrals are being made.</li> <li>• Back-office system improvements have been implemented to improve the timeliness of processing contacts and referrals.</li> <li>• Further work is under way investigating a potential portal or other technology solution to improve the referrals process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Early Help for Children with Disabilities (CWD):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An improved early help offer is being developed in the CWD service aiming to decrease social worker caseloads and transfer families that are being over-serviced to level 2 Family Support Teams. This project has progressed well with children being stepped down to the Family Support Team.</li> <li>• This is now moving into the closing stages, with procedures being finalised, systems development work being finalised and benefits being tracked.</li> <li>• More children remaining with the Family Safeguarding service that are due to be stepped down to the CWD Family Support Team when ready.</li> </ul>





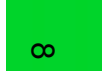
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<p><b>Special Educational Needs</b></p> <p>To improve SEND service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the implementation of findings from the End-to-End review.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver the accelerated EHCP recovery plan.</li> <li>• Deliver planned capital projects and a refreshed capital programme scope and financial proposals to Cabinet in June.</li> <li>• With sponsors, review and implement an updated All Age Autism Strategy.</li> <li>• Deliver an impact and outcomes evaluation framework, to be agreed with families and children and young people.</li> <li>• Embed a new Executive Leadership Group to provide assurance to the AND Partnership Board.</li> <li>• Launch a Continuum Of Provision (COP) Programme to provide a focus for a more inclusive system in Surrey.</li> </ul>	<p><b>End to End Review implementation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The End-to-End review consisted of stakeholder and staff engagement, involving over 720 interactions with participants, to explore the issues relating to the statutory EHCP process and design improvements.</li> <li>• The review found the statutory EHCP process needed streamlining; SEND team structure was fragmented across different teams and quadrants and needed to be reorganised to support consistent practice; the capacity in the SEND service is not sufficient to offer a person-centred approach; and staff induction and supervision needed strengthening.</li> <li>• Changes implemented since the review began in May 2023 include updated decision-making process and recording; revised standard operating procedures, strengthened quality assurance processes for EHCPs; county-wide leadership for SEND; increased SEND staffing from 81 to 126 full time equivalent.</li> <li>• Next steps include further streamlining the statutory EHCP process using digital technology; further develop annual review and transition processes; focus on early dispute resolution; workforce development; improved working with families through relational working.</li> </ul> <p><b>EHCP recovery plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EHCP recovery plan led to an improvement from 16% of EHCPs issued on time in September 2023 to 72% timeliness in July 2024. Over 900 out of date Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) were completed through additional capacity from external educational psychologists (EPs) and enhanced staffing in the SEND service.</li> <li>• Health and social care colleagues delivered improvements to the timeliness of their statutory advice.</li> <li>• Early intervention measures led to reduced EHCNA requests making demand more manageable. Projections indicate that this good progress will be maintained for the remainder of the Autumn 2024 Term.</li> <li>• Additional SEND staff have improved the completion of annual reviews resulting in a rise from 25% in July 2023 to 60% in August 2024, with over 4,420 overdue reviews finalised through this work. Work is on track to reach 75% completion by the end of December 2024.</li> </ul>

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		<p><b>SEND and AP Capital programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On 25 June 2024, Cabinet approved proposed changes to the planned use of the remaining £189m combined SEND capital funding and AP capital funding for 2024/25 to 2027/28. This means we can conclude delivery of 33 remaining committed SEND and AP construction projects by August 2028.</li> <li>Overall investment of £260m enables the creation of more than 2,400 permanent additional specialist places in mainstream and specialist schools across Surrey, increasing capacity locally by 74% from 2019/20 when the capital programmes started, to a total of just over 5,760 places by 2031/32.</li> </ul> <p><b>Updated All Age Autism Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 'You Said We Did' document is being developed to capture achievements from years 1-3 of the AAA Strategy, to include planned activity for years 4&amp;5.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes framework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Partnership Board received an outcomes framework for measuring the impact of the improvement plan in September 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b>AND Partnership Executive Leadership Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Executive Leadership Group has been introduced to the governance structure, which ensures the Improvement Plan and IAN (Inclusion and Additional Needs) Strategy are being delivered with the desired impact and outcomes.</li> <li>This group provides assurance to the Partnership Board, ensures work is delivered at pace and challenges off-track delivery.</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuum of Provision programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A COP programme project initiation document has been developed setting out the programme's objectives and timeline.</li> <li>Key activities include the launch of a new Early Intervention and Support Service in Autumn 2024, strengthening capacity in resourced specialist provision in mainstream schools by</li> </ul>





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		March 2025, and improved pathways for Alternative Provision with simplified communication to parents and young people by December 2024.
<b>Home to School Travel Assistance</b>	Implement an oversight board to provide members with assurance and oversight of the continuing delivery of efficiencies.	<b>Home to School Travel Oversight Board:</b> A member-led Oversight Group has been established to specifically give assurances at member level about the ongoing efficiency work. In addition, a new CFL Finance and Opportunities Board has been established with Director of Commissioning for Transformation as SRO. This will specifically look at the budget for HTSTA and how costs can be reduced.
<b>Adult Social Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that within available resource continuing to improve the delivery of our Care Act Duties and outcomes for Surrey people.</li> <li>• Refocusing our workforce strategy and implementation plans to include our responsibilities for the wider sector adult social care workforce.</li> <li>• Responding to areas that might arise following completion of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance process.</li> <li>• Continuing to work with our health partners, and people who use services, and informal carers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A diagnostic has been carried out which reviewed activity in adult social care. Methodology and plan developed to deliver the opportunities identified which includes enhancing reablement services; significant progress made on the Right Homes Right Support programme; work is underway to develop a Technology Enabled Care and Homes strategy; continued focus on prevention.</li> <li>• Early work has started to review the AWHP workforce operating model and workforce strategy; phase 1 of culture programme has been delivered and phase 2 is planned.</li> <li>• AWHP is continuing to focus on the areas for development identified in our CQC self-assessment ie safeguarding, assurance, technology enabled care, co-production etc.</li> <li>• The Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care and the Adults &amp; Health Select Committee are provided with updates on CQC.</li> <li>• Continued focus at front door in all teams to reduce demand and waiting times for allocation; partnership working with health in the Care Transfer Hubs is improving the flow from hospitals; ongoing work to improve services to informal carers including use of online tools.</li> </ul>
<b>MySurrey</b>	Ensure effective transition of activities to all functional areas and close down of Transition to BAU Steering Group by end of May 2024.	<b>Stabilisation Phase</b> Following a review of transition arrangements, outstanding stabilisation issues and emerging audit findings, a decision was taken to establish a MySurrey Stabilisation Board (the Board) in early September 2024. The Board has a formally agreed Terms of Reference, includes cross organisation representation to provide support and challenge to delivery and is chaired by the

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	<p>Complete procurement and implementation of a Managed Services support model to deal with technical fixes.</p>	<p>Strategic Director for Customer Service Transformation and meets fortnightly. The new Deputy Chief Executive has recently joined the Board as the S151 officer and other members include the Director of People and Change, Chief Digital Officer (Senior Responsible Officer for the system), Chief Internal Auditor, Director for Procurement, Programme Manager and other corporate team members. The Lead Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources receives the full Board pack and meets fortnightly with the Chair and Programme Manager to ensure delivery is on track.</p> <p>The programme will undertake the work needed to create a stable system environment and will complete its work by 31 March 2024. It will establish a resourcing model and governance structure to continue into the developmental phase of the implementation and ensure business as usual is maintained proactively.</p> <p>Contract Management arrangements are being reviewed and strengthened with support from the Director of Procurement. A review of the existing contract against delivery and the original specification against outstanding issues will provide a clear framework for management. Unit 4 have been identified as a key contract and will have enhanced contract management.</p> <p><b>Scope</b> The scope of the programme has been well defined and prioritised based on four criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Internal audit risks</li> <li>2) Operation risks</li> <li>3) Organisational and Regulatory risks</li> <li>4) Staff impact</li> </ol> <p>The workstreams and scope includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fixes and system development required including payroll, pensions, forms and workflow issues, statutory reporting, finance accounts payable and wider finance process.</li> <li>2) IT faults and outstanding support including the management of Vision ERP our external technical provider delivering expert capacity.</li> </ol>





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		<p>3) System Upgrades and technical improvements – two upgrades are required before the end of March 2025, and will help to resolve outstanding issues. This workstream will also resolve outstanding system access and security issues.</p> <p>4) Governance and Contract Management.</p> <p>5) Processes and data including data structures, clear data and process owners, standard operating procedures, data cleansing and data retention.</p> <p>6) Communication and engagement.</p> <p>All outstanding internal audit recommendations are included within these workstreams and internal audit will be engaged to review the progress as each action on the audit action plan is completed to ensure progress can be marked over time. Internal Audit will commence reviews post go live of the next upgrade week commencing 25 November 2024.</p> <p><b>Procurement and Managed Services</b>  Vision ERP have been contracted to facilitate technical fixes and expert advice and support to Surrey County Council. This contract is working well, and Vision ERP have expanded the staffing capacity available to them to support the Stabilisation Phase. Outstanding technical fixes have reduced from 87 to 56 over the last 3 months.</p> <p>In addition to this, the council have put to market commissions targeted at specific technical fixes required. The providers will be coordinated and work in concert with Vision ERP and SCC to deliver the change required at pace.</p> <p>The contract with Vision ERP will move beyond this stabilisation phase and continue into the developmental phase from 1 April 2025 onwards.</p> <p>Internal capacity is being developed and Unit 4 expertise built over time into the IT &amp; Digital team to provide resilience and expertise without relying exclusively on external providers.</p>