

Response to Surrey County Council's Consultations

Summary

To consider responses to the consultations being carried out by Surrey County Council on the following matters:

- Family Resilience and Children's Centres
- Concessionary bus travel
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Libraries and Cultural Services
- Community Recycling Centres

Portfolio: Leader

Date Portfolio Holder signed off report: 5 December 2018

Wards Affected: All

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to consider each of the proposed responses and comment accordingly.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1 Surrey County Council launched 5 consultations as part of its transformation plans and to tackle the financial pressures facing the authority.
- 1.2 The consultations opened on Tuesday 30 October 2018 and will close on Friday 4 January 2019. Further information can be found at www.surreycc.gov.uk/consultations
- 1.3 The key points and recommendations of each consultation are summarised below.

Family Resilience and Children's Centres

- 1.4 Surrey currently has 58 children's centres. The proposal is for 19 main centres to continue and another eight to become satellite centres. Thirty-one current centres would close.
- 1.5 In total there would be 21 main centres and nine satellite centres, because two new main centres would be opened, one in Horley and one in Dorking. In addition, another satellite would be established, in Addlestone.

- 1.6 At least one main centre in each district and borough, located in the areas where needed most. Centres would work with children right up to age 11 rather than five as now.

Concessionary bus travel

- 1.7 The County Council is considering removing the its extra funding for free bus travel for disabled people before 9.30am and after 11pm on weekdays and no longer providing a free pass for a companion.
- 1.8 Bus travel would still be free for those eligible between 9.30am and 11pm on weekdays and all day at weekends and on public holidays in line with the national scheme.
- 1.9 Only around 2% of journeys by disabled pass holders in Surrey are made outside the times for the national scheme. Surrey is one of a few areas of the country still providing both the extra benefits and the proposed changes would bring the county into line with most other areas. The proposed changes and other efficiencies would save around £400,000 a year.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- 1.10 The Five proposed principles for this transformation are:
- 1.10.1 That needs are identified earlier
 - 1.10.2 That support is provided at the earliest opportunity
 - 1.10.3 That children can lead fulfilling lives in their own communities
 - 1.10.4 That children's voices are heard
 - 1.10.5 That children can go to school locally.

Libraries and Cultural Services

- 1.11 SCC has set out the following five proposed principles to guide the reshaping of services to ensure they thrive in the future:
- 1.11.1 That libraries are most effective in partnership with other organisations in shared spaces or hubs
 - 1.11.2 That new technology could offer 24/7 access
 - 1.11.3 That libraries enable people to learn and access information
 - 1.11.4 That they strengthen communities – particularly for the most vulnerable

- 1.11.5 That volunteers are crucial to libraries and gain skills through their work with them.
- 1.12 These proposals are based upon fewer people visiting libraries despite increasing population - there has been a 25% drop in visits to Surrey libraries since 2010 – and a large increase in the use of online services. Surrey spends more on libraries than similar councils: £14 per person, compared with £9.89 for average county council.

Community Recycling Centres

- 1.13 Surrey currently has 15 Community Recycling Centres – three options are being considered in the consultation:
- 1.13.1 Closing four smaller, less-used centres in Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking and Warlingham and increasing the number of days a week that Leatherhead, Camberley and Caterham open from six to seven. The four centres only handle around a tenth of the total waste dropped off in Surrey.
- 1.13.2 Closing six smaller, less-used centres at Bagshot, Cranleigh, Dorking, Farnham, Lyne (Chertsey) and Warlingham and investing savings into opening the remaining nine centres seven days a week while also increasing the number of staff and looking at improving facilities and technology. Less than a fifth of waste dropped off in Surrey is handled by these six with the other nine dealing with all the rest.
- 1.13.3 Closing the same six centres and changing the opening times at the remaining nine. Between October and March they would open for five days a week, instead of six or seven at seven of the nine centres, but avoiding closing at the most popular times. Savings would be invested in opening the centres seven days a week from April to September when opening times would also be extended into the evening where possible. In addition the number of staff would be increased and improvements to facilities and technology also considered.
- 1.14 Closing four centres would save at least £500,000 a year. Closing six would save in the region of £800,000 a year.

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1 Resource implications for this Council arising from the proposals contained within the County Council's consultation documents have been addressed specifically in each of the responses, as relevant.

3. Options

3.1 The Executive can consider the draft responses and make any additions or amendments it considers appropriate.

4. Proposals

4.1 It is proposed that the Executive considers the draft responses and agrees the responses

Annexes	Annex A - Draft responses
Background Papers	Surrey County Council Consultations
Author/Contact Details	Louise Livingston - Executive Head Transformation louise.livingston@surreyheath.gov.uk
Head of Service	Louise Livingston - Executive Head Transformation