

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

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PORTFOLIO: All-Age Learning

Special Education Needs and Disabilities Capital Investment to delivers specialist places closer to home

The SEND Capital Programme is progressing well and in line with planning and procurement timescales. The remaining Phase 1 projects for the expansion of maintained special schools from September 2021, approved by Cabinet on 24 September 2019, are in the final stages of planning or have contractors appointed. These Capital projects will deliver the remaining 108 places of the total approved for the first phase of the programme. The second phase of the programme was approved by Cabinet on 29 September 2020. These six projects will create 213 additional places across Surrey's SEND estate to bring more children and young people with complex needs closer to home, as well as reducing the reliance on out of county and non-maintained independent schools. Site visits are well underway and Headteachers at all these schools have confirmed that they are happy to continue with on-site engagement to progress feasibility, despite the new national lockdown. Surrey County Council's operational services, schools and appointed contractors continue to adhere to stringent social distancing protocols, so we are not anticipating delays resulting from Covid-19 at this point.

Return to School

Since September most schools and settings in Surrey have been fully open, however in the lead up to half term there were increased numbers of confirmed Coronavirus cases. Most of the schools affected remained open, with a small number closing for between one and three days. School leaders are being assisted by the Department for Education, Health Protection teams and Surrey County Council Officers in Education and Public Health. The School Relationship Service has continued to assist school leaders with weekly emails containing updated local advice and guidance. Schools, education teams and social workers have worked in partnership to engage in conversations with parents in order to allay any anxiety and promote school attendance where safe to do so. Schools have put in place protective measures including additional cleaning, increased ventilation, creation of bubbles, social distancing where practicable and the use of face coverings, where appropriate. Her Majesty's Inspectorate's Health and Safety Executive is continuing to conduct spot-checks with schools nationally and in Surrey to ensure protective measures are in place to protect school communities.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Capital Investment

Pupil Referral Units deliver alternative provision (AP), which is education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or for other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education. Alternative provision education can also be arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion or as off-site provision to improve their behaviour. Work to complete the urgent remedial work across the twelve Surrey PRU sites started in October 2020 and is due for completion by the end of November 2020. Site visits have been completed with all the PRU Headteachers. Appointed contractors are now in the process of carrying out the planned maintenance work to ensure the settings are brought up to standard and are fully functional for learners and staff. A PRU and Alternative Provision User survey went live on the consultation hub, 'Surrey Says' in mid-October 2020 and the results of this and other stakeholder engagement will help to determine the next planning stage for the PRU Capital Programme and wider Alternative Provision Strategy. Both consultations have been extended with a revised close date of Tuesday 17 November 2020.

Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy

Wherever possible, all children should be able to attend school within their home communities, alongside their peers. If Alternative Provision is required, the standard of education provided must be comparable to that of regular schooling and must enable children to achieve

everything they would have accessed at school, i.e. there must be absolutely no disadvantage for a child in attending Alternative Provision. In Surrey, a range of Alternative Provision is used, stretching from Outreach activity through to full-time Pupil Referral Units. The per pupil cost in Surrey exceeds £20,000 which is above the Department for Education estimates and the cost per pupil can be reduced by bringing together a revised delivery model underpinned by the capital investment in the PRU estate. Following a full review of Alternative Provision, a Strategy and Operating Model is now being developed and a first draft will be available by the end of December 2020. This is being co-produced with school leaders and wider system-partners to ensure the step-change necessary to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people who access Alternative Provision. All the leads of the primary, secondary and special school phase councils and headteachers of Pupil Referral Units have provided input as well as Headteachers across the county. Importantly, the views of children and young people are being gathered through a direct survey and targeted interviews with young people through the Surrey User Voice Participation Networks. The principle underpinning the Strategy is to provide, wherever possible, local in-school solutions so that learners can remain in their mainstream settings, closer to home, with minimal disruption to their education.

Launch of the Learners' Single Point of Access (L-SPA)

The Learners' Single Point of Access (L-SPA) was launched in July 2020, with the establishment of a joint team of SCC Contact Centre staff, a new Triage Team and a Multi-Disciplinary Team; The L-SPA team works together to ensure a more personal and timely approach to support families and professionals, where there is a concern about the development or learning needs of a child. Since the service was established, the L-SPA has received 2782 calls (to 30 October). While many calls were direct enquiries to case officers, the L-SPA also dealt with calls related to SEND transport, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) enquiries, the SEND admissions process and moving to/from the area. In a typical week, 65% of calls are from parents/carers and 32% from education providers and professionals. Most calls are resolved at the first point of contact by the Contact Centre. For more complex queries, for instance, children with multiple and complex needs, these are followed up quickly by the Multi-disciplinary team to provide support and guidance to either professionals or families to find solutions for the child or young person.

Update on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Provision and the L-SPA

From 5 October, all requests for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment are being reviewed through the L-SPA. We have also developed a 'Request for Support' pathway, where professionals can request support for a child or young person without the need for a statutory plan. With all requests coming through the L-SPA, we are working on tracking and monitoring these comprehensively which will enable better analysis: identifying trends and themes by age group, by primary need, by geographical area, or by school. We are working closely with partners including Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in schools, to listen to their feedback on the new service, amending to ensure this is as smooth a process as possible. We are also developing a clearer pathway for parents, to support them to access services earlier and in a more supportive and coordinated way. We already have a number of compliments from professionals and parents who have used the L-SPA contact that it provides quick and quality information and support.

Update on Adult Learning

Surrey Adult Learning (SAL) delivers a wide range of high-quality learning opportunities for residents aimed at supporting people to feel more connected as well as more confident and resilient. Since the start of lockdown in the Spring, SAL delivered targeted provisions for Family and Supported Learning alongside outreach to disadvantaged residents and those with mild/moderate mental health disabilities. Learners were engaged through bulletins containing learning activities and pre-recorded videos. SAL developed virtual learning pilots for Maths, English and ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) in response to the learners' feedback. A blended learning programme comprising a mix of online and face to face learning,

for all courses has been launched for the autumn term to ensure continuity of provision in the current pandemic situation ensuring delivery within covid safety guidelines.

Apprenticeships

Currently there are 42 apprentices on the Council's programme, of which 18 are Operational Firefighter Apprenticeships. The team supports and monitors the Fire and Rescue Service with this programme. Most of the activity is remote, except for exams which have resumed in centres with social distancing in place to enable apprentices to catch up on exams which could not be held when centres were closed, subject to restrictions. End Point Assessments are going ahead remotely. We have gained approval from the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) for the Level 5 Diploma for Managers, commencing on 10 November with four learners. We are also collaborating with the Surrey County Council Leadership and Management team to commence the Level 5 Coaching Professional Apprenticeship in the Spring term of 2021. We continue to deliver Customer Service and Business Administration apprenticeships.

The council's adult and community education provision will continue to develop the availability of apprenticeships and training courses working with the economic recovery group to look at provision which will address the skills gap and enable those who have recently lost their jobs to study for qualifications which will increase their employability.

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