

Whole Council Transformation Strategy

“Essex County Council is ambitious and by 2030, it will be one of the most forward looking, effective and financially sustainable Councils in the country.”

October 2023

1. Our Vision for Whole Council Transformation

Following the Transformation Launch event in May 2023 an overarching vision was agreed to frame Whole Council Transformation (WCT):

“Essex County Council is ambitious and by 2030, it will be one of the most forward looking, effective and financially sustainable Councils in the country.”

In practice, this means that the outcomes of WCT must significantly:

1. Improve how services are delivered, including through innovative approaches.
2. Reduce the cost of delivering services, including for the longer term.
3. Improve or sustain defined outcomes for Essex residents.

2. Why Whole Council Transformation?

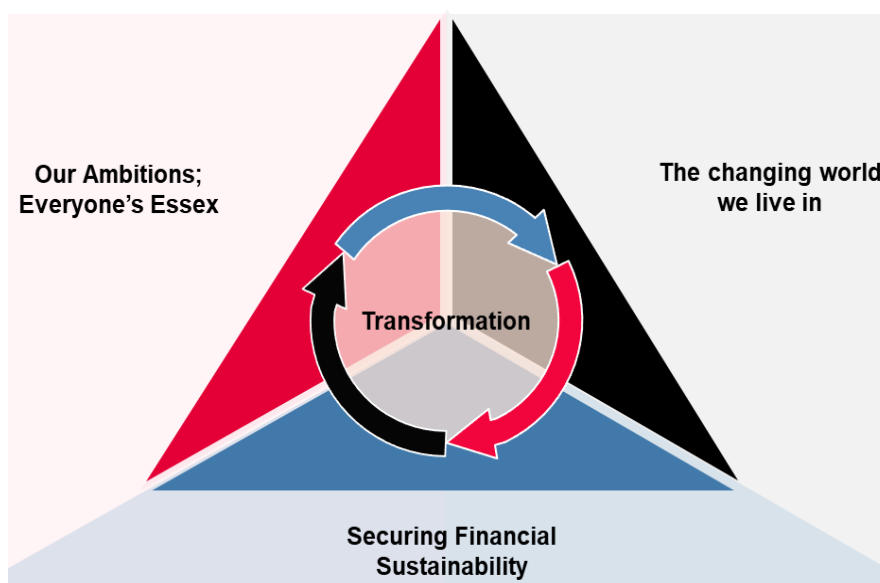
Transformation is not a new concept to Essex County Council (ECC), having previously undertaken two phases during the period 2008- 2017 which collectively realised more than £680m in savings. The driver for these phases was austerity and financial pressures, with less emphasis on non-financial benefits.

This is not the case for the current phase of Transformation with three, high priority strategic drivers in play; simultaneously and calling upon the same finite resource. It is for this reason that a *Whole Council Transformation* approach has been adopted.

WCT provides an exciting opportunity to re-energise our organisation to truly work together and to support everyone to be a positive force for change both for employees and the people of Essex.

The interaction of three Strategic Drivers for Change are shown in the diagram below which are expanded further underneath.

Figure 1: Factors driving the need for Whole Council Transformation



Everyone's Essex

Everyone's Essex was launched in 2021 and sets out 20 commitments up to 2025. It is focused on four areas where outcomes really matter for the quality of life for all people in Essex. They are:

- Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
- High quality environment
- Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
- A good place for children and families to grow

The Changing World We Live In

Below are but a few examples of the scale and pace of change that will be seen in Essex and beyond by 2030. ECC must address these challenges and opportunities as part of this WCT.

- **Demographic shifts:** Essex's population is growing by c.200 people per week. By 2030, 1 in 4 people will be aged 65+ and two-thirds of this group are expected to live with multiple health conditions.
- **Technology:** The evolution of technology is moving at a breakneck pace and it's only going to accelerate. For example, it took 12 years from the release of the first mobile phone to reach 50 million users. It took Facebook four years to reach the same number of users, WeChat only one year and Pokémon Go just 19 days.
- **Modern Workplace:** Most people who took up homeworking because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic plan to both work from home and in the workplace ("hybrid work") in the future, according to data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).
- **Devolution:** Whether formally through a 'deal' or informally through excellent working practise we will work on a Greater Essex footprint, particularly on the drivers of economic growth and productivity. We will pursue greater control of powers and resources to improve the lives of Essex residents.

Securing Financial Sustainability

Whilst this phase of Transformation is not *only* about the money, addressing the growing financial gap is an essential component to securing the future of Essex. We face real-terms reductions in funding, increasing demand for services, a difficult macro-economic environment, and increasingly frequent financial failures across the local government sector. It is for this reason that a minimum of £100m (8% of the revenue budget) of savings has been assigned to WCT.

3. Our Strategy for Whole Council Transformation

Below are the changes we expect to see in the way we deliver Whole Council Transformation, it should be read in conjunction with the companion document: ***Deploying the Whole Council Transformation Strategy***.

- We will establish a single Transformation Programme to ensure both strategic alignment and efficient use of finite resources. Change professionals and leaders will be provided with the skills and tools to make this happen.
- We will articulate the programme through Transition States (shown in figure 2) which guide and structure our Whole Council Transformation journey. They will be aligned to the electoral and business planning cycles.
- We will use Delivery Portfolios (shown in figure 3 below) to bring together the implementation of projects to create a force multiplying effect.
- We will increasingly align Change activity with partners across the public sector.
- We will base our decisions on evidence and data and expected benefits will be high impact, measurable and aligned to political priorities.
- We will ensure we place equal emphasis on long term prevention and on solving the here
- We will experiment with new ideas and take active decisions about slowing down, speeding up or ceasing projects to maximise delivery.
- We will actively seek ideas, innovation and best practice from within the whole organisation as well as further afield, including Universities and sectors similar and different to our own.
- We will embrace digital opportunities increasingly as we secure our technological foundations.
- We will support all employees to engage with the ambition of WCT and build the optimistic collaborative culture of ECC.

Figure 2: Transition State End Dates

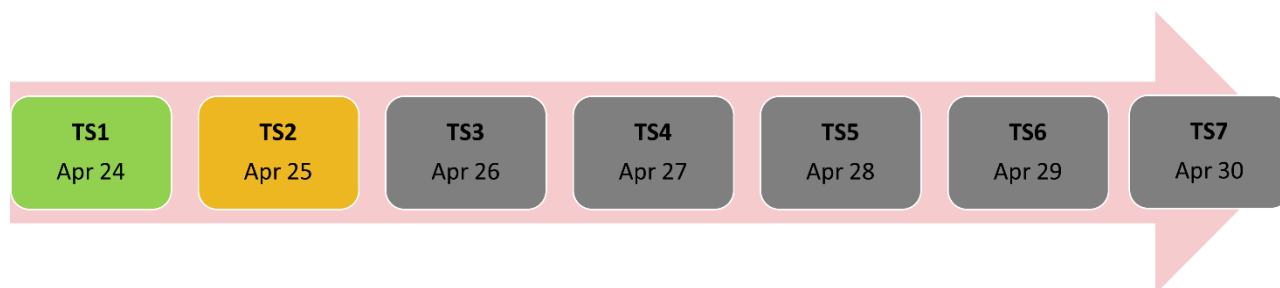


Figure 3: Delivery Portfolios for Transition State 1

| Strong Foundations | Independent Adults | Community Resilience | Modern Digital Council | Effective Organisation | High Quality Environment | Operating Model |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Strengthen family resilience and stability including vulnerable groups | Adults maintaining an independent and fulfilled life as possible | Education to support Essex residents to lead a healthy lifestyle | A leading-edge digital council that drives excellent customer service, on a greener smaller ECC estate | Foundation for a forward looking effective and resilient organisation | Net zero Essex, minimising waste, modernising transport and considering aesthetics of place | Devo plus Creating a way of working for ECC that addresses our future ambitions |