

The Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board, held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford on 24th January 2024.

A YouTube recording of the meeting is to be found [online](#).

The following members were present:

Cllr John Spence	Chairman
Ian Davidson	Vice-Chair and Chair of Essex Partnership Strategic Coordination Group
Peter Davey	Essex Association of Local Councils
Dan Doherty	Mid Essex Alliance
Susannah Howard	ICP Director, NHS Suffolk and North East Essex
Councillor Beverly Egan	Essex County Council
Peter Fairley (substituting for Nick Presmeg)	Director for Integration and Partnerships, ECC
Sam Glover	Chief Executive, Healthwatch
Chris Martin (substituting for Helen Lincoln)	Director of Strategic Commissioning and Policy and Children and Families, ECC
Paul Burstow	ICS chair / ICB chair, NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex
Michael Thorne	ICS chair / ICB chair, NHS Mid and South Essex,
Tracy Dowling	ICS lead and ICB CEO, NHS Mid and South Essex
William Pope	ICS chair, NHS Suffolk and North East Essex
Laura Taylor-Green	North East Essex Alliance - Officer
Cllr Gina Placey	North East Essex Alliance – Political Representative
Jane Gardner (substituting for Roger Hirst)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Dr Jane Halpin	ICS lead and ICB CEO, NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex
Ian Tompkins (substituting for Toni Coles)	Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB
Elizabeth Wells (substituting for Paul Scott)	EPUT
Stuart Hooper substituting for BJ Harrington)	Chief Superintendent, Essex Police
Caroline McCarron	Deputy Alliance Director for South East Essex Alliance
Anastasia Simpson	Assistant Director of Partnerships, Tendring District Council
Amanda Cherry	Chair of Healthwatch Essex
Jessica Gallagher	Senior Engagement Manager, ESNEFT
Rachel Jennings	Community lead, SNEE ICB
Andy Vales	Cambridge Health
Lynn Stimson	Associate Director of Integration and Operations - North East Essex Alliance

ECC Officers:

Will Hooper	Senior Strategy Advisor, ECC
Moira McGrath	Director: Commissioning (ASC)
Clare Burrell	Head of Strategic Commissioning

Rod Cullen	ECC Housing Growth
Rebecca Gipp	Head of Levelling Up Co-ordination, ECC
Will Herbert	Head of Integration Partnerships, ECC
Kate Crofts	Senior Equality and Partnerships Adviser, ECC
Freddey Ayres	Democratic Services Officer
Jasmine Langley	Democratic Services Officer

Apologies were received from the following members:

Toni Coles	Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB
Dr Anna Davey	Primary Care Partner Member on MSE (Mid and South Essex) ICB
BJ Harrington	Essex Police Chief Constable
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Gavin Jones	Chief Executive, Essex County Council
Helen Lincoln	Executive Director of Children's Services, ECC
Nick Presmeg	Executive Director of Adult Social Care, ECC
Ed Garratt	ICS lead and ICB CEO, NHS Suffolk and North East Essex
Cllr Graham Butland	Mid Essex Alliance - Political Representative (Leader of Braintree District Council)
Ruth Hallett	South East Essex Alliance - Officer
Simon Williams	South West (Basildon and Brentwood) Alliance - Officer
Alison Wilson	Mind in West Essex (Voluntary Sector)
Lorraine Jarvis	Chelmsford CVS (Community and Voluntary Sector) (Voluntary Sector)
Lance McCarthy	Acute Hospital Representative
Paul Scott	Chief Executive, EPUT
Jacqui Van-Rossum	Community Provider Representative
Richard Comerford	HCRG group (Childrens Mental Health)
Sanjiv Ahluwalia	Head of School of Medicine, Anglia Ruskin University
Nicola Mallett	Data Analytics practitioner
Pam Green	Basildon and Brentwood Alliance

The following Board members attended online:

Lucy Wightman	Director, Wellbeing, Public Health, and Communities, ECC
Deborah Stuart-Angus	Independent Chair of the Essex Safeguarding Adults Board

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and it was noted that:

- The Membership of Board remained unchanged from the last meeting.
- Apologies had been received as noted above.
- No declarations of interests were made.

2. Minutes of the meeting held November 2023

The minutes were to be updated to reflect that Tracy Dowling attended at the last Board meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the above amendment, the Board agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

The Board noted the updated progress report on the outstanding actions.

Lucy Wightman updated the Board regarding some positive improvements which had been recorded in suicide rates, with key points being highlighted below:

- In 2020/22 female suicide rates in Essex were 3.8 per 100,000, which was a reduction from the previous year, which was 4.7. The figures were under the national rate of 5.2.
- In 2020/22 male suicide rates were 14.1 per 100,000, which was a reduction from the previous year, which was 17.1. These figures were above the nation rate of 16 per 100,000.
- The Board would be receiving a report on suicide which would explore these figures in more detail at the meeting in March.

Lucy thanked the Board for their involvement in the Healthy Weight workshop held after the last Board meeting in November, and advised that a high level healthy weight strategy was being created. Lucy advised that several workshops would be taking place during February to discuss the visions and priorities for the strategy, and Board members were encouraged to attend. Lucy advised that information regarding the workshops and other ways of engaging with the strategy would be sent to Board members directly.

Lucy gave a brief update on the measles outbreak, stating that Essex had not experienced extremely high rates of the measles infection like some other areas. However, as a serious infectious disease, rates could change rapidly. It was confirmed that communications had been sent to schools and early years settings regarding the outbreak and vaccinations. Vaccination coverage in Essex was said to be above 90% in all Alliance areas, which was higher than the national rate of 89.2%, but still lower than the ideal of 95% coverage.

4. Questions from the public

There were no public questions.

5. Southend, Essex and Thurrock Mental Health Strategy 2023-28 (HWB/02/24) – Moira McGrath, Director: Commissioning (ASC) and Chris Martin, Director: Strategic Commissioning & Policy (C&F)

Moira McGrath gave a verbal update on progress in implementing the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Mental Health Strategy 2023-2028, which the Board endorsed in July 2023. Andy Vales was also in attendance at the meeting, who had been commissioned by Health and Local Authority partners to support the implementation of the Strategy. Key points are highlighted below:

- The Strategy detailed the 'all age' vision and principles and the outcomes to be achieved over the next five years, guided by a set of 'I-Statements'. The Strategy, which included priorities for both adults and children and young people, was structured around three main areas:
 - Prevention and early intervention
 - Acute and crisis services
 - Supporting recovery
- Work had been ongoing to design an implementation plan and to ensure that it complimented existing work happening in local systems to enable synergy and coordination across systems.
- A strategy implementation group had been established and met bi-monthly, with workshop sessions taking place alongside.
- Mandates were created for each workstream, and colleagues were asked to lead on these across the county with the support of others. There had been good engagement from all organisations, including the Police regarding work on the Right Care, Right Person initiative.
- The strategy had made significant progress over the last few years, evolving the developing community model for adults, including alternatives to crisis admission to A&E.

Childrens Mental Health

Chris Martin spoke on children's mental health, with key points being highlighted below:

- Dr Bird recently presented at the Children and Young People's partnership Board on children's wellbeing, particularly focussing on how children can have improved wellbeing from having greater opportunities to play, spending time outdoors and enjoying and achieving things from a range of activities.
- Dr Bird also spoke about young children whose wellbeing may have been impacted due to covid lockdowns, as they missed out on outdoor recreational experiences. He did, however, state that there were reparations for those young people if they could experience more outdoor recreational activities.
- Chris stated that whilst some of the principles, actions and workstreams within the strategy were adult-focussed, there were some elements that could be

- applicable to Children too.
- CAMHS arrangements for children across Essex had been well-established, and a collaborative commissioning forum had been in place for many years, but it had embarked on a new 10-year contract with NALFT which commenced in April 2022. There had been no change to the established arrangements for children and young people, but the strategy and strategy implementation group (SIG) would be integrated to ensure a greater focus on children was maintained.
- One area the SIG had been focussing on was equity, diversity and inclusion. Work was ongoing with Public Health colleagues to gather data and identify one or two key equality objectives to underpin the strategy, given the known significant inequalities in mental health.

Cllr Beverley Egan raised concerns regarding the 'Right Care, Right Person' initiative and confirmed that she would be sharing examples directly with the Police. Cllr Egan also stated that Children's Services had developed an anti-racist practice and the SIG should consider using this to improve practice and remove barriers.

The Board discussed Recovery Colleges and how integrated the approach is within the system.

Action: Stuart (EP) and Jane (PFCC) to follow up with Cllr Egan (ECC) around concerns on Right Care Right Person.

Action: The Strategy Implementation Group, via Moira McGrath, is to provide the Board with a briefing note regarding details of the recovery college offering in Essex. This is also to include whether partners are sufficiently joined up and whether there is sufficient geographic coverage.

Action: Sam Glover to review data from the "Great Bentley Schools" model and see if this can be turned into an empirical evidence base for partners.

Action: Cllr Spence to feedback concerns raised about cuts to children's holiday activity and food clubs funding and impacts on mental health outcomes for CYP.

It was **resolved** that:

- The Board noted the update and endorsed the strategy implementation approach.
- The Board recognised opportunities for parity of the scheme, so it had a more prominent role in the overall system.
- The Board recognised the importance of children and young people and the avoidance and prevention agenda, and specifically asked for any evidence emerging from Great Bentley school on impact.
- The Board recognised the concern regarding Children's Services issues which would be taken up with the Police directly.

6. Domestic Abuse Whole System Design (HWB/03/24) – Clare Burrell, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Jane Gardner, Chair of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Domestic Abuse Board

Jane Gardner and Clare Burrell gave an overview of the outcome of the systemwide programme of work to redesign the domestic abuse offer of support across Essex, Southend, and Thurrock, with key points being highlighted below:

- 18 months ago, Commissioners across SET undertook a Domestic Abuse Discovery programme of work, which included research, data analysis, focus groups with people with lived experience and numerous collaboration workshops with stakeholders. This helped facilitate a deeper understanding of the experiences of people who had been affected by domestic abuse and identified opportunities to work together and codesign a systemwide offer.
- As a result of the Discovery programme of work, an emerging SET Domestic Abuse Operational Model had been designed to support anyone experiencing or affected by domestic abuse, namely victims, survivors (including children and young people) and perpetrators.
- A pan-Essex Domestic Abuse Commissioning Collaborative was overseeing the design, procurement, and delivery of the Operational Model. This would involve both the pooling and alignment of funding across Essex, Southend and Thurrock Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner to jointly commission an all-age integrated service from 2025 onwards.
- The SET Central Point of Contact would be available to anyone with concerns of domestic abuse, including professionals, victims, survivors, and perpetrators. It would offer triage, information, advice, guidance and where needed onwards referral for support.
- The success of the project would be in the outcomes and success of people recovering from domestic abuse and seeing good outcomes for children and young people's emotional and psychological wellbeing.
- There were 4000 less victims of domestic abuse reported to the police in the past year.
- School stay at home, we have number of targets aiming to reach self-referrals have proven to increase over few years since recent model as enabled that to be more effective, increasing numbers of victims coming forward earlier. Numbers reached good indication people able to identify be a victim and focus on recovery staying in own home and being safe.
- The Board discussed the work Police were doing with long-term offenders of domestic abuse called Operation Puffin. The operation aimed to understand who was likely to become a perpetrator and the data was used to influence how the Police worked with perpetrators.

Action: Board members were invited to request, through Clare Burrell, representation at their meetings to discuss the Domestic Abuse Whole System Design. Given the discussion during the item regarding geographic focus, the Alliances were particularly encouraged to consider the opportunity.

It was **resolved** that the Board discussed and acknowledged the proposed emerging domestic abuse model and noted the challenges in addressing the range of things that cause domestic abuse, as well as the outcomes benefits.

7. Temporary Accommodation Update and London Bilateral Agreement (HWB/04/24) – Ian Davidson, Chief Executive –Tendring District Council and Rod Cullen, Housing Growth Lead (Homelessness & Rough Sleeping) ECC

Ian Davidson and Rod Cullen gave an update on the recent successful conclusion of discussions with London on the development of a Bilateral Agreement, aimed at reducing both the number and vulnerability of homeless households placed into Essex and where moves did happen, that these moves worked better for both the households and the wider Essex communities. Key points are highlighted below:

- Members and Officers from Basildon, ECC, Epping Forest, Harlow and Tendring councils represented Essex in discussions with London on the development of a Bilateral Agreement.
- Whilst it was not a legal requirement for London Boroughs to notify Essex when they moved people into Essex, for Councils to best support them as well as serving Essex residents, an early warning was vital.
- Essex developed “5 Areas of Ask” of London and formally put them to London Members. These Areas of ask focused on “reducing both the number and vulnerability of the homeless families London placed into Essex and that any moves that did happen should work better both for these households and the wider Essex communities.
- 2074 Essex homeless households were in temporary accommodation in June 2023, which was 14.5% higher than 2022.
- Essex children in Temporary Accommodation increased in each of the last 9 quarters and in June 2023 was 2,922 children, a rise of 15.5% higher than a year previous.
- The total number of Essex homeless households placed into Temporary Accommodation ‘Out of Area’ increased by 9.6% in 2023/24 to 251, which was 40.6% higher than a year previous.
- The average annual net cost of Temporary Accommodation per household for 2022/23 was approximately £9,000.
- 58% of homeless families said their health or their family’s health had suffered because of living in Temporary Accommodation.
- 45% of the families reported visiting their doctor or hospital more frequently since becoming homeless.
- 90% of the parents said their children had suffered as a result of living in Temporary Accommodation. More than a tenth reported that their children found it difficult to make friends and more than a fifth (21 percent) reported that their children were often unhappy and depressed.
- Homelessness significant impacts on children and young people’s mental health, emotional wellbeing & educational attainment.
- Rough Sleepers were more likely to die young, with an average age of death of 47 years old and even lower for women at 43, compared to 77 for the general population, 74 for men and 80 for women.
- There were two areas that were yet to be agreed which were: HHSRS Qualified inspections and Resettlement Levy. It was believed that an agreement would be made on both areas during wider governance discussions, but there was agreement that the agreement should be signed off with no further delays.

Action: It was agreed that a further item on Temporary Accommodation and London Bilateral Agreement would be added to the forward plan to return to the Board with an impact update in January / February 2025.

It was **resolved** that the Board noted the London/Essex Bilateral Agreement and its governance as a tool to reducing both the number of homeless households that London places into Essex and in reducing the wider impact that any move could cause on the household.

8. The Importance of Valuing Lived Experience (HWB/05/24) - Sam Glover, CEO, Healthwatch Essex

Sam Glover gave a presentation on the value of the Lived Experience and the importance of seeking out and listening to User Voice, with key points being highlighted below:

- In November 2023, Healthwatch wrote an open letter to their community and stakeholders, stressing the importance of seeking and listening to User Voice and Lived Experience. The letter was subsequently shared across Essex and Neighbouring areas and provoked a strong and positive approach.
- Healthwatch Suffolk wrote a supporting article to the letter and shared it across their networks and on their website. Subsequently there had been lots of interactions with other organisations who were asking for more support on how to access lived experience and to ensure user voice is reached and embedded in all the work they do.
- Healthwatch England shared the letter with local Healthwatch's to encourage them to start conversations with their key partners about the importance of user voice and how Healthwatch could support them.
- Sam directed Board members to watch a video clip of 'Ben's Story'.
- Sam informed the Board of the different ways and connections they could use to engage with those who have lived experience.
- Sam detailed the ways in which Board members could put adjustments in place for when they engaged with people who have lived experience, and how to ensure they felt valued. Giving feedback to somebody who shared their experience was described as very important to ensure they felt valued.

Action: Board members were asked to watch the 'Ben's Story' video, which was embedded in the report and can also be found here: <https://youtu.be/ZyXoTkBSGOU>

It was **resolved** that the Board noted the letter, presentation and would consider how they, as members of the Board and partner organisations, could widen our Lived Experience.

9. Update on Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Commissioning (HWB/06/24) - Charlotte Britton, Head of Strengthening Communities

Cllr Spence informed the Board that procurement for the evaluation had been completed and that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Commissioning was at a stage in the process whereby no debate could take place. Will Hooper read the following statement:

'The evaluation has been completed for the VCS infrastructure commission from Essex County Council from the 1st April 2024 and we have a preferred bidder, however, we are still within the official procurement standstill period and therefore we are unable to provide an update on the outcome at this time, due to procurement being ongoing.'

Therefore, the ask is that this item is to return at a later date to the Board.'

Action: It was **resolved** that an update on the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Commissioning was to be added to the forward plan to be discussed at a future Board meeting.

10. SNEE Voluntary Community Faith Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Charter (HWB/07/24) - Susannah Howard, Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Director – SNEE ICS and Rachel Jennings, Community lead, SNEE ICB.

Susannah Howard and Rachel Jennings gave an overview of the work undertaken in Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System (SNEE ICS) to build the resilience of the VCFSE sector, through developing greater understanding and collaborations between the VCFSE and statutory sectors to ensure that the VCFSE sector was an equal system partner. Key points are highlighted below:

- The development of the VCFSE resilience charter ran from February to June 2023 and included an online survey, whole system workshops and 5 task and finish groups with joint senior responsible owners from VCFSE and statutory organisations to consider:
 - Sustainable funding
 - Quality and monitoring
 - Resilience and capacity
 - Trust and culture
 - Co-production
- In addition to developing the principles for the charter, each group agreed a number of recommendations for the ICS to progress, to help embed the work.
- Following recommendations from the charter, members launched work to co-design a good practice guide to grant funding and procurement with ICS partners.
- An assurance process was developed which followed a process of:
 - Self-assessment using a maturity matrix.
 - VCFSE survey of funding experience.
 - Second self-assessment.
 - Peer review.
 - Adoption of the principles and practices checklist.

It was **resolved** that the Board supported collaborative working between the three ICSs in Essex, to share learning and adopt similar approaches and ways of working with the VCFSE sector.

11. Forward Plan

It was **resolved** that Board members noted the forward plan.

12. Any Other Business

Lucy Wightman spoke briefly on the Health Determinants Research Collaboration letter which was circulated to Board members. The letter detailed the outcome of the Health Determinants research bid which led to a £5million research grant for Essex over a 5 year period.

The grant will help Essex to better understand what drives poor health outcomes in the most deprived areas of the county from a wider determinants perspective. Focus is on applying insight into policy change, resource of allocation and levelling up county in respect to access and outcomes.

13. Date of the next meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 20th March 2024, in Committee Room 1, County Hall.

14. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

15. Urgent Exempt Business

There was no urgent exempt business.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:07am.

**Chairman
2024**