

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

10:00	Tuesday, 23 July 2013	Committee Room 2, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex
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Quorum: 4

Membership

Councillor J Young
Councillor W Archibald
Councillor S Barker
Councillor M Buckley
Councillor G Butland
Councillor J Deakin
Councillor R Hirst
Councillor R Lord
Councillor M Mackrory
Councillor V Metcalfe
Councillor P Oxley
Councillor M Page
Councillor J Pike
Councillor C Seagers

Chairman

Vice Chairman

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Robert Fox, Governance Officer
Graham Hughes, Committee Officer
Telephone: 01245 430935
Email: graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk



Essex County Council

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Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

		Pages
1	Apologies and Substitution Notices The Committee Officer to report receipt (if any)	
2	Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members	
3	Appointment of Vice Chairman	
4	Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013 (attached).	5 - 10
5	Transformation 2 update To consider report CSC/06/13 (attached).	11 - 14
6	Engaging with Essex residents To consider report CSC/07/13 (attached).	15 - 18
7	Work Programme To consider report CSC/08/13 (attached).	19 - 24
8	Date of Next Meeting To note that the next meeting will be held at 10am on Tuesday 17 September 2013 in Committee Room 2.	
9	Urgent Business To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local

Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10 Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD AT 11AM ON 25 JUNE 2013

Present

J Young (Chairman)	
W Archibald	Mrs V Metcalfe
S Barker	P Oxley
M Buckley	M Page
R Hirst	J Pike
R Lord	C Seagers
M Mackrory	A Turrell (substitute)

Also in attendance were Councillor D Finch, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Christine Golding, Head of Financial Compliance, and Anna Casbolt, Senior Financial Analyst.

The following officers were also present in support of the meeting:

Robert Fox	Scrutiny Officer
Graham Hughes	Committee Officer

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

The Committee Officer reported apologies for absence from Councillor J Deakin, (for whom Councillor A Turrell substituted).

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Appointment of Vice Chairman

At the invite of the Chairman, the following nomination for Vice Chairman was received:

Councillor Mackrory (proposed by Councillor Turrell and seconded by Councillor Oxley):

By general consent, it was **agreed** that Councillor Mackrory be elected as a Vice Chairman of the Committee.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the special meeting held on 10 June 2013, and the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee (as the Committee was then called) held on 23 April 2013 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Vision for Essex

The Committee considered a report (CSS/03/13) on the County Council's Vision Statement 2013-17. Councillor Finch, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, was present to introduce the item and to answer questions.

Councillor Finch advised that the new County Council term gave an opportunity to reflect on the unprecedented challenges facing the County Council. Councillor Finch stressed the need for innovation as the means for securing the future and ensuring that the County Council used its resources in the most efficient manner.

In terms of innovation Councillor Finch highlighted the significant investments being made by the County Council including the roll-out of broadband coverage in the county so that 95% of the Essex population should be covered by at least a 2mb download speed by 2015 (with urban areas having an even faster speed), use of wi-fi in libraries, the use of Radio frequency I.D. for logging books in and out in Essex libraries and the roll-out of new laptops to employees to facilitate mobile and flexible working. The tender process for the award of the broadband contract would start in July 2013 and the Chairman suggested that the development of comprehensive broadband coverage throughout Essex may be a future area for scrutiny.

Councillor Finch highlighted that the County Council had already seen a successful transformation saving of £365 million but with new financial pressures, a further £215 million of savings were now required.

During subsequent discussion the following issues were highlighted, raised and/or discussed:

- (i) Some members suggested that there would be staffing and other resource implications arising directly from the Vision Statement and asked that the Leader reconsider the wording in Paragraph 7.1 of the covering paper prior to submission to Full Council;
- (ii) Some members suggested that the reference to social, economic and cultural success depending on individuals, families, businesses and local communities in the Foreword should also include reference to the contribution made by employees;
- (iii) Councillor Finch expected the impact on the County Council of announcements in the Comprehensive Spending review the following day to be consistent with the County Council's expectation that it needed to find a further £215 million of savings;
- (iv) Some members suggested that the Vision should be clearer in encouraging community resilience irrespective of financial austerity. It was suggested that a culture of dependency had been fostered in the past.
- (v) In encouraging greater community resilience some members questioned whether the County Council had been consulting with those communities that already displayed such resilience. Some members cautioned that not all local communities would be able to respond to the call to increase their resilience;
- (vi) Voluntary sector organisations needed some degree of certainty for hiring of staffing and the award of short term contracts did not facilitate that.

- Whilst acknowledging this, Councillor Finch also stressed that voluntary organisations should have diversified funding sources, not being solely dependent on County Council funding, and that the County Council's commissioning would be on the basis of achieving specified outcomes;
- (vii) During the development of Community Budgets, multi-agency working processes were being established. Members highlighted some areas of duplication of services that could be eradicated during the development of Community Budgets. Councillor Finch would be addressing the Local Government Association the following week on the development of Community Budgets in Essex;
 - (viii) Councillor Finch was unaware of any further announcements on the central government funding of Complex families other than that already announced;
 - (ix) The County Council was responding to the preference expressed by many people for supported living at home by increasing the provision of assistive technology.

6. 2012/13 Provisional Outturn Report

The Committee considered the Provisional Outturn Report (CSS/04/13). Councillor Finch, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Christine Golding, Head of Financial Compliance and Anna Casbolt, Senior Financial Analyst, were present to introduce the item and answer questions.

Thereafter, the following were highlighted and/or discussed:

- (i) Members were reassured by Councillor Finch that the financial revenue projections for the Building Schools for the Future PFI reserve, and the Clacton Secondary Schools PFI reserve were robust despite the need to withdraw £896,000 and £55,000 from the respective reserves for each to partly mitigate the revenue costs of these schemes;
- (ii) The capital underspend for Local Authority Controlled schemes in Education and Lifelong Learning was partially a result of adverse weather conditions and was also dependent on the successful tenderers own lead-in timelines to commence the contracts. Capital underspends were continually monitored;
- (iii) No new loans were secured from the Public Works Loans Board during the year as the County Council were using its cash balances to defer further external borrowing and this action had been calculated as saving the County Council approximately £11m. As a result, the pool rate of interest on long term loans had remained static at 4.26%.
- (iv) A significant part of the overspend in Care and Support was due to a higher than expected number of clients with physical or sensory impairment receiving personal budgets, as part of a policy to empower clients to source their own care. Constant adjustments would be made to forecasts to reflect changes in population demographics. Certain audit and control aspects of personal budgets had already been reviewed by the Community and Older People Policy and Scrutiny Committee as a result of an Internal Audit report. It was agreed that the Chairman would

- raise the issue at Scrutiny Board to determine if a further scrutiny was necessary;
- (v) There were proposals to move to just one Coroner's service across the county (currently two). Whilst there was a £247,000 overspend related to higher contract payments, more rigorous processes were being implemented to reduce the time for completion of most inquests in future. The Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee would be conducting a scrutiny of the service in the near future;
 - (vi) There had been recent media reporting of significant outstanding and uncollected library fines and Councillor Finch agreed to investigate further and to report back to the Committee;
 - (vii) Some Highways Panels had significant capital underspends. Councillor Finch also acknowledged that, due to the time taken to establish some of the local Panels, a backlog had also developed for projects that had been subsequently approved due to a large number being submitted at the same time and there being limited design capacity within the Highways directorate;
 - (viii) The Chairman would consult the Scrutiny Board on a possible future scrutiny of Local Highways Panels;
 - (ix) An additional £11m had been allocated in the Highways budget for pot hole repairs with a further sum also set aside for the next year. Councillor Finch stressed that the situation was exacerbated by rural roads which did not have an effective sub-structure. The Cabinet Member would be reviewing the repair process to identify faster and better ways to undertake the work;
 - (x) The Big Society Fund was dependent on acceptable business cases being submitted. The current underspend of £705,000 would be carried forward into the 2013/14 budget;
 - (xi) Some Members suggested that the amounts left unspent from budget underspends could be targeted for use to invigorate the local economy.

Councillor Finch and the supporting officers were thanked for their attendance and they then left the meeting.

7. Work Programme

The Committee considered and **Agreed** the Forward Look/Work Programme 2013/14 (CSS/05/13) subject to the following:

- (i) Public Engagement Programme to be added as an item for the July 2013 meeting;
- (ii) Customer Satisfaction, Complaints and Public Relations would be considered in September 2013;

A Task and Finish Group would be established for the scrutiny of Procurement Strategy and members were asked to notify the Scrutiny Officer if they wished to serve on the Group.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at 10am on Tuesday 23 July 2013 in Committee Room 2.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 12.16 pm.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		CSS/06/13
Committee:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	23 July June 2013	
Enquiries to:	Paul Abraham, Director for Transformation Ednet: 21249	

Transformation Programme Phase II Update

A copy of the report Transformation Programme – to approve the implementation of the next phase of the Council’s transformation programme agreed by Cabinet on 18 June 2013 can be found on the ECC website.

Background

In December 2012 Cabinet identified the need to save at least a further £200M per annum by 2016/17 due to the continuing financial challenge from reductions in central government funding, increased demand for services and inflation pressures; and approved detailed design work to support Transformation Mark II (TMK II) with five key objectives:

1. Become a truly agile and flexible council
2. Deliver major improvements in key customer services at a lower cost
3. Deliver operational performance and efficiency across all areas of the Council
4. Long term sustainability of key services
5. Pro-actively manage demand for council services by targeting a reduction in avoidable spend

Cabinet reaffirmed the intention for the council to move towards a commissioning organisation with a focus on outcomes and agreed proposals to separate the commissioning of services from their delivery within the council. It also approved a restructured CLT to help drive through the programme.

Update since April 2013 Scrutiny Meeting

Following detailed design work over a six month period, PLT/CLT approved the business case for Transformation Mk II on 17 May 2013. Cabinet endorsement on 18th June 2013 agreed to an investment of between £5M - £6.7M for the period June 2013 to

31 March 2014 and an approach to delivering proposed benefits of £215m over the next three years.

How the new organisation will help to deliver savings

The next phase of transformation will enable the County Council to operate within a very different and constrained financial envelope.

The new operating model for the council will transform the organisation into an outcomes-led, commissioning organisation and enable it to operate within a very different and constrained financial envelope.

- It will **separate commissioning and delivery** so we can continuously open up the way we deliver services to challenge. This means the council will be objective in seeking the best provider to deliver outcomes and be agnostic as to whether the provider is in-house or external.
- It will enable **accountability for outcomes** so we prioritise where we invest and understand how our investment makes a difference against key measures of success.
- It will give us the confidence to **relinquish control and work collaboratively** in support of the outcomes we seek to achieve.
- The organisation will enable **flexibility and agility** including working across structural and organisational boundaries to bring the right capability together.
- We will increasingly **join up customer access** to support a single view of the customer including across partner organisations and digital as default will be achieved.

All of this requires significant changes to the organisational structure and the way we work. The new organisational structure is based on:

- **People and Place Commissioning functions** – these will be small functional areas of subject matter experts that develop commissioning strategies to deliver the corporate priorities set by elected members. Commissioners will be accountable for investing ECC resources
- **Strategy, Transformation and Commissioning Support function** will support Commissioners in making and implementing decisions and support the whole organisation by providing HR, change and IT services
- **Corporate Services function** will provide support functions to whole organisation (including governance, finance, audit, business support and property)
- **Customer Services function** will be responsible for ensuring our customers receive a consistent and positive service, as cost efficiently as possible. It will also oversee the delivery of Place Operations services where these are delivered in-house or in partnership (for example, Essex Highways services)
- The **Deputy Chief Executive function** will develop a strategy for all traded activities
- **Adult Operations and Family Operations** will be responsible for in-house adult and family related services and will be accountable to the People Commissioner for delivery.

Progress on restructure:

We have completed the high level design of the new organisation structure (tiers 2, 3 and 4) and consultation and recruitment processes are now underway. We are now starting to look at the tier 5 design and this will be introduced in a phased approach over the next three years

It is intended that the new organisational structure will 'go live' by October 2013. Over the next 3 months the focus will be on:

- Consulting tier 4 (head of service level) employees and appointing to roles
- Carrying out a capability assessment and preparing a training programme to induct employees into new roles
- Transferring financial management responsibilities to the new roles, along with the appropriate delegation and control framework

Areas of focus	Target saving
Re-commission services over 3 years on an outcome basis	£35m
Reduce support costs	£27m
Drive out efficiencies in our directly delivered services	£36m
Manage demand – eg community resilience and early intervention	£40m
Drive out better value from supply chain (over £750m 'purchasing power')	£25m
Additional income through trading or full cost recovery	£5m
Reduce the cost of customer interactions – “channelling” to lower cost routes	£9m
Rationalise property and intensify use	£6m
Other central costs (eg insurance and better treasury returns)	£5m
Workforce savings – improve productivity, reduce management cost and layers	£17m

Role of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee:

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee has agreed to receive quarterly updates on the Transformation Programme. The first of these were considered by the committee on

29th January 2013 and 23 April 2013. Going forward, the Cabinet will continue to welcome comments and views from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

		AGENDA ITEM 6
		CSS/07/13
Committee:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	23 July 2013	

Engaging with Essex residents

1. Essex County Council (ECC) has a longstanding commitment to engaging residents and communities, and gathering their views on the issues that matter to them. In support of this commitment, this paper proposes a specific campaign – *Your Essex, let's talk* – to engage residents and communities.
2. This campaign is not intended to replace ECC's established engagement mechanisms. There will remain a need to engage residents on service-specific issues through Essex Insight; online consultation portals for Schools and Planning services; established service user/planning groups and through programmes of targeted local research (including surveys, focus groups and resident workshops). Nor is *Your Essex, let's talk* designed to fulfill ECC's legal duty to consult with residents and service users in specific service changes. Rather, *Your Essex, let's talk* will provide an umbrella campaign under which ECC can:
 - a. initiate a dialogue with Essex residents and communities on the need for service change;
 - b. engage with communities of place/interest on specific changes that affect them; and
 - c. publicise substantive consultation exercises.

Your Essex, let's talk campaign

3. The need and desire to engage with communities has been a key theme throughout the development of Transformation Phase 2. We know that residents will see significant change in ECC services/service levels, and the decommissioning of some services, and that they will be encouraged to play a greater role in securing positive outcomes for themselves, their families and their neighbourhoods.
4. The objectives of the *Your Essex, let's talk* campaign will therefore be to ensure that residents and communities:
 - a. understand and accept the need for change/decommissioning in ECC services;
 - b. recognise that ECC is fair, open and transparent in its decision-making; and
 - c. feel that ECC has listened to, and considered, their views in reaching decisions.

5. It is proposed that ECC's Members initiate and act as the public face of the campaign.. This means playing an ever-more visible role in delivering messages directly to Essex communities and in securing advocacy support from partners and local opinion formers. It is proposed that Members lead this engagement activity through:
- a series of 'experiential' public roadshows held in Essex's big four towns – through these roadshows, Members will engage the public on the key challenges facing ECC; encourage residents to discuss these challenges with their families, neighbours etc; and will sign-up residents to join the on-going debate through social media channels;
 - a series of community summits with partners and invited community representatives in each district – supported and shaped by Locality Boards, these summits would focus on explaining ECC's financial challenges and signalling the need for future decommissioning decisions;
 - engagement through print, broadcast and social media – this could include series of articles published online and in the local press, regular media briefings, participation on the BBC Essex hotseat, online webchats and the publication of case studies to demonstrate service pressures. This could all be supported by engagement with residents through social media (the Leaders' blog, facebook, Twitter, Your Essex app Your Essex magazine); and
 - meetings with MPs, prospective parliamentary candidates – using existing channels to explain ECC's financial challenges and new vision, and to signal the need for future decommissioning decisions.
6. This engagement activity will be supported by advertising to encourage attendance a roadshows and to promote ECC's desire to engage more widely. It will also be supported by the creation of feedback mechanisms, allowing residents and communities to feedback their views to ECC through dedicated email, telephone and postal facilities, social media channels and interactive forums on the ECC website.

Supporting activity

7. In addition to this specific campaign activity, it is proposed that ECC take steps to make public meetings more accessible and transparent to the public. Rather than following other councils and introducing public question sessions into formal meetings – a mechanism that would allow only a limited number of people to participate and could favour those with a pre-existing understanding council processes – it is proposed that ECC incorporates webcasting into key formal meetings. Webcasting allows for the broadcast of live video and audio content over the internet to computers or mobile phones. Webcasting will make formal meetings accessible to a wider range of residents and will establish a full record of these meetings. This record can be used to balance the risk of inaccurate interpretations being made and distributed by media and social media users.
8. To ensure the *Your Essex, let's talk* campaign can achieve its objectives, it is important that it be based on a firm understanding of local attitudes to service change. In order to develop an evidence-base on this issue, it is proposed that ECC establishes a new 'research panel' of some 1,500 residents and conducts surveys (online and telephone

based) and focus groups with this groups to inform service changes/decommissioning decisions, and shape ECC's work to encourage residents to take on a greater role in securing outcomes.

9. A campaign of the type proposed above would, need to be launched in advance of any major decisions/key decommissioning announcements. Developing the campaign, and a specific campaign timetable, would require a lead in time of 12 weeks.

[end]

		AGENDA ITEM 7
		CSS/08/13
Committee:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	23 July 2013	
<u>FORWARD LOOK/ WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14</u>		
Enquiries to:	Robert Fox, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430526 robert.fox@essex.gov.uk	

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to set out the Committee's work programme carried-forward from the former Executive Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

Meeting	Topic	Approach	Current status
September 2013	Year End Performance Report	Full Committee	Standing item (quarterly reports)
September 2013	Property Transformation Strategy	Full Committee	
September 2013	Customer Satisfaction, Complaints and Public Relations	Full Committee	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey report to be received as per request from the Executive Scrutiny Committee (ES/013/12)
September 2013	Capita Resourcing	Full Committee	Monitoring progress and improvement (minute 8, 24 July 2012)
November 2013	Absence Management	Full Committee	To receive data on staff absences throughout ECC
Ongoing	External & Internal Communications	Task and Finish Group	In hiatus due to Transformation II
Ongoing	Procurement Strategy	Task and Finish Group	Scrutiny Board referred item to Executive Scrutiny following the initial presentation late 2012. T &F to commence post-May 2013

**Executive Scrutiny Committee:
Schedule 2012/2013 (provisional)**

Meeting	Topic	Approach	Current status
2012/13			
January and February 2013 and ongoing.	Transformation Programme Scrutiny Review: Beyond 2012/13	Full Committee	<p>To understand the overall vision for the Transformation II Programme and the methodology for its delivery. Also to ensure the governance arrangements are appropriate for a project of this importance and that the maximum benefit to the Council and to public services in Essex is derived from the Programme.</p> <p>Commissioned Services are key in terms of checking the arrangements and scrutiny adding value to the commissioned services.</p> <p>Quarterly updates received by the Full Committee.</p>
TBA	Health and Safety at Work	Full Committee	<p>The Committee agreed at its 30 May 2012 meeting that as assessment of whether ECC fulfils its H&S legislative requirements in a scrutiny review which will look at the approach the Authority takes to H&S; and to ensure the Authority is fully compliant with relevant H&S legislation. A scoping document was agreed in January 2013. Presentation received in February 2013 – further update in due course.</p>
Ongoing via T&F Group	External Communications	Task and Finish Group	<p>The Committee considered a scoping document (ES-SCR-01/12) and agreed that a Task and Finish Group be convened. This Group has met twice to date, and it is anticipated there will be at least two further meetings. The Committee received an interim report in September 2012. This is currently in hiatus due to the</p>

			Transformation II programme.
From May 2013 via T&F Group	Procurement Strategy	Task and Finish Group	The Committee agreed at its 30 May 2012 meeting that the Deputy Leader be invited to attend the Committee to present on the strategy which is to be revised in September 2013 to ensure the strategy, as it exists and in future, ensures the procurement of cost-effective, high quality services for the residents of Essex. The report was received in November 2012. It was agreed to refer to the Scrutiny Board for further instruction. The Scrutiny Board in January 2013 referred back to Executive Scrutiny to conduct a review via Task and Finish Group with the caveat this commences post-May 2013.
Standing Items			
Ongoing	Quarterly Budget Reports	The Committee will receive quarterly financial reviews.	The quarterly 2011/12 Financial Reviews were presented throughout the year. The 2012/13 quarterly reviews will be presented to Committee throughout the year. The final one to be received in June 2013. The 2013/14 reports will continue to be reported to the Committee on an ongoing quarterly basis.
3 April 2012	Performance Management		The Executive Scrutiny Committee takes an overview of the performance scorecard and referrals to other Policy and Scrutiny Committees. At its 15 February (ES/005/11, minute 7) and 26 April (ES/022/11, minute 33) meetings the Committee considered the new arrangements for reporting performance. Quarter One Performance Report will be presented in July 2012; Quarter Two in October 2012; Quarter 3 in January 2013; and the Annual Report in the summer or

			early autumn 2013.
1 May 2012	Capita Resourcing		The final report prepared by a Task and Finish Group convened from the Central Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee was presented for consideration on 25 January 2011. Report ES/024/11 containing an update from the Task and Finish Group was presented on 26 April 2011 where it was subsequently agreed that the topic would be brought to the 1 May 2012 meeting for continued monitoring. This report was received in July 2012. Committee requested a further update to monitor improvement in 2013.
26 June 2012	Customer Satisfaction, Complaints and Public Relations		The Executive Scrutiny Committee considered report ES/029/11 at its meeting on 24 May meeting, with Duncan Wood, Head of Research and Intelligence in attendance to introduce the report, answer questions and provide an update. The Committee agreed that a report providing details of the current performance in this area was brought to the July 2012 meeting (minute 42, 2011). The Committee will receive annual customer satisfaction reports. The first of which will be July 2013 .
5 November 2012	Absence Management	Task and Finish Group	The Community Wellbeing and Older Persons Policy and Scrutiny Committee undertook a review into Absence Management for its' relevant Directorate. The Executive Scrutiny Committee awaited the outcome of this scrutiny before continuing with their review. The final scrutiny review report was agreed at the Community Wellbeing and Older Persons Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 9 December. A copy of this report was presented at the 25 January 2011

			<p>meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee, along with absence figures for all service areas. The Committee agreed (25 January, minute 6) that the topic would be referred to the Scrutiny Board, with a view to discussing each Policy and Scrutiny Committee reviewing their respective directorate absence statistics. The Scrutiny Board subsequently agreed that the Community and Older People P & SC undertakes this task on behalf of all P & SC's and established a Task and Finish Group which would report to Executive Scrutiny. The Committee agreed in September 2012 that this review was now complete given that absence rates within ECC are lower than comparable public sector organisations. A final report was presented to the 5 November 2012 Committee. The Committee will receive updated data in November 2013.</p>
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