



Essex County Council

## People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee

09:30	Thursday, 11 January 2024	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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**For information about the meeting please ask for:**

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<b>3</b>	<b>Questions from the Public</b> A period of up to 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make representations on any item on the agenda for this meeting. Please note that members of the public wishing to ask a question must email <a href="mailto:democratic.services@essex.gov.uk">democratic.services@essex.gov.uk</a> by noon on Wednesday 10 January and that questions must relate to an item on the agenda for the meeting.	
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7                    **Proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2024-25**                    33 - 33

8                    **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 February 2024, in Committee Room 1, County Hall.

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)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

**That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.**

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.

## **Agenda item 1**

**Committee:** People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee

**Enquiries to:** Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer

### **Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

#### **Recommendations:**

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Cllr Ray Gooding	Chairman
Cllr Marie Goldman	
Cllr Ian Grundy	
Cllr Carlo Guglielmi	Vice-Chairman
Cllr Eddie Johnson	
Cllr Daniel Land	
Cllr Sue Lissimore	
Cllr June Lumley	
Cllr Peter May	Vice-Chairman
Cllr Aidan McGurran	
Cllr Ross Playle	
Cllr Mick Skeels	
Cllr Wendy Stamp	
Cllr Mike Steel	

Co-opted educational representative members may advise and vote on all matters relating to children's services in schools. Two places are available for church Diocesan representatives. Two further places are available for parent governors at maintained schools in Essex (one primary and one secondary school). All places are vacant but a new nomination for a church Diocesan representative has now been received.

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**Minutes of the meeting of the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held at 9.30am on Thursday, 7 December 2023 in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford.**

**Present:**

*County Councillors:*

Cllr Ray Gooding (Chairman)

Cllr Marie Goldman

Cllr Carlo Guglielmi (Vice Chairman)

Cllr Eddie Johnson (left at the end of item 4)

Cllr Daniel Land

Cllr Sue Lissimore

Cllr Peter May (Vice Chairman)

Cllr Aidan McGurran (left the meeting at 10.40am during agenda item 4)

Cllr Ross Playle

Cllr Michael Skeels

Cllr Wendy Stamp

Cllr Mike Steel

Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer and Gemma Bint, Democratic Services Officer were also present throughout the meeting.

**1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

The report on Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations was received and noted.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Ian Grundy and Sharon Westfield de Cortez from Healthwatch Essex.

**2 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 9 October 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3 Questions from the public**

There were none.

**4 Adult Social Care Priority Area of Focus – People Waiting**

The Committee considered report PAF/24/23. The following attended the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questions:

- Cllr John Spence, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration
- Alison Ansell, Director of Adult Social Care
- Nick Presmeg, Executive Director, Adult Social Care.

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As part of introducing the update, the following was outlined/highlighted:

- (i) Apologies were given for the need to withdraw this agenda item from the previous meeting at short notice. This had been considered necessary as some inaccuracies with some of the data in the agenda report had been identified after publication of the agenda papers. The data had now been updated and verified.
- (ii) Five Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection pilots had taken place across the country including near neighbours Suffolk. Through its own preparatory work for a future CQC inspection, ECC considered that it benchmarked favourably against the inspection pilots undertaken and ECC would continue working with Suffolk and other relevant authorities who had gone through this process to identify any further learning.
- (iii) People Waiting had been a service aspect that had been highlighted for further improvement as a result of the LGA-led peer review and mock inspection of ECC's Adult Social Care earlier in the year.
- (iv) The approach was to understand who was on the waiting lists, to prioritise assessing against risk and need and to keep cases constantly keep under review. ASC had worked to reduce the waiting lists and had made substantive progress over the last 18 months.
- (v) The meaning of 'people waiting' for the purposes of this particular area of service improvement was outlined. It referred to people waiting for a Care Act Assessment, peer review or Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards assessment (DoLS) to be completed by Adult Social Care. It was confirmed that people waiting for a formal assessment had access to information and guidance and would still have a package of support in place as an interim measure.
- (vi) Recent history was outlined including the impact of Covid on Adult Social Care services nationally. The CQC State of Care Report in 2022/23 had recognised that waiting lists across the country were high. The pandemic had triggered new discharge guidance from the Government whereby a comprehensive needs assessment now would be undertaken after people had left the hospital rather than in a hospital setting. Nationally the rate of new requests for support had increased by 5% and waiting lists had been highlighted as a priority area nationally.
- (vii) In Essex there had been a significant demographic growth in both older people and adults with complex needs. The increase in the number of DoLS assessments being required had been higher than expected.
- (viii) The position in Essex and important key aspects were outlined and assurance given that no one would wait to receive care. Essex focused on keeping people living independently at home if possible.

- (ix) Local performance review meetings took place that fed into the Operations Board and weekly oversight meetings for Service Directors
- (x) 81% of outstanding Care Act assessments were people waiting for less than 100 days. Those waiting longer than 100 days had been dip sampled and for the vast majority of those cases it was an administrative task that had been required in order to complete the assessment. It was stressed that the number of the longest waits had been reduced.
- (xi) The current position on the Occupational Therapy services was outlined and the role of the Independent Workforce Team was highlighted.
- (xii) The current picture and work underway for DoLS assessments were outlined including that DoLS assessments could be prioritised in different ways and that there was currently a backlog of 15 months. However, oversight of the process remained high and there were plans in place to continue with some of the current approaches to reduce the backlog.

During subsequent discussion, the following was highlighted, raised and/or noted:

- (xiii) Staff recruitment was a challenge. Offering additional enhancements to some staff was being considered to keep newly trained and qualified staff for longer as there was a high turnover rate. There was a training programme available through the Essex Social Care Academy.
- (xiv) ECC ASC was broadly operating with the same size workforce as a few years ago over the last 5/6 years there had been a small reduction of people in long-term support but a big increase in people in short-term support which had contributed to some assessment review rates dropping as the Council managed a balance between conducting annual (re) assessments and conducting new assessments .
- (xv) Essex Adult Social Care worked closely alongside hospitals including the Discharge to Assess teams and the Integrated Discharge teams to ensure that people had the right short-term care and placements organised before they left hospital.
- (xvi) Members queried whether the new discharge process of assessing people outside of hospital was the best approach. Officers confirmed it was a good process when working well as could facilitate better long-term family decisions being made. ASC had invested heavily in the reablement market which had resulted in Essex having one of the lowest residential admission rates in the country.
- (xvii) Care Act assessments were undertaken separately to financial assessments. People could only be charged once the financial assessment had been completed. In the meantime, guidance was available to help people work out likely approximate future costs if they

were assessed as having to pay for their own care and the availability of payment plans. Financial assessments could take up to six weeks to complete and could be an ongoing process running alongside receiving some care support in the meantime. Care at home (including domiciliary care) after coming out of hospital was usually free for up to 6 weeks.

- (xviii) People who had very low levels of support and were a low priority were still on record and kept in contact with.
- (xix) 8% of people waiting were categorised as Priority 1 and waiting an average of 42 days, 84% were Priority 2 waiting an average of 56 days and 8% of people were Priority 3 and waited on average 120 days. These cases were reviewed regularly to ensure support was still provided whilst they were waiting.
- (xx) Unitary councils often appeared to be performing better than larger councils due to the geographical scale and structural differences.
- (xxi) District/borough councils had lead responsibility and administered Disabled Facilities Grants but ECC occupational therapists supported that process.
- (xxii) Supported accommodation for those with learning disabilities could provide that cohort with a much better quality of life. Discussions would continue with district/borough councils and other partners to encourage provision was built into Local Plans.

#### Conclusion:

It was **agreed** that the following should be further considered:

- (i) faith-based reviews to be included on the definitions page in the report;
- (ii) that the challenges ASC faced should be highlighted within the executive summary of future reports such as 1 in 5 adults in Essex were 65 and people with learning disabilities and autism cohorts was expected to grow significantly by 2025.
- (iii) It was highlighted that the 3 year overdue reference within the report related to Care Act reviews and not initial assessments. Members were concerned this could be misleading and suggested it was made clearer in future reports.
- (iv) Future performance reports to the Committee should focus more on a narrative in a traditional written report rather than over reliance on power point presentations.

The meeting adjourned at 11.00am and reconvened at 11.13am.

## **5 Adult Social Care Priority area of focus: Co-Production**

The Committee considered report PAF/25/23. The following attended the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questions:



- Cllr John Spence, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration
- Nick Presmeg, Executive Director, Adult Social Care
- Jon Dickinson, Director, Adult Social Care
- Chris Martin, Director for Strategic Commissioning & Policy (C&F)
- Emily Oliver, Head of Strategic Commissioning & Policy

During the discussion, the following was highlighted, raised and/or noted:

- (i) Co-production was working with others in an equal partnership and include people and communities who used care and health services to design future services. This recognised that people with 'lived experience' were often best placed to shape and advise what would make a positive difference in their lives.
- (ii) Work had taken place with Essex Cares Limited with over 300 people with learning disabilities and Autism, and their families, in a variety of workshops to look at how employment opportunities could be increased.
- (iii) The 'ladder of co-production' involved seven stages towards true co-production. ASC considered that there were some good examples of where it had engaged well and co-designed services with stakeholders.
- (iv) Getting a 'foot in the door' was sometimes a challenge when a person resisted the offer of support. Persistence and working patiently and diligently in partnership with communities and other services, for example Environmental Health or GPs, could help with getting that foot in the door.
- (v) Some co-production work did take place in the policymaking stage as well as in the later stages however this could always be further improved.
- (vi) The CQC would want to know how well ASC listened to other organisations who could better represent lived experience of service users. It was acknowledged that this could be a challenge as ASC were set up to some extent in a paternalistic way and constrained by its responsibilities within the legal, regulatory and budgetary framework.
- (vii) It was important to build accessibility and structures for people to communicate directly with ASC with their care needs and feedback, in an authentic and inclusive way to make a difference to future service delivery.
- (viii) The 'Great Expectations' initiative had taken place a few years ago where young people with learning disabilities were asked what they wanted in their lives. Their feedback was that they wanted to live as independently as possible, be visible in their community and make a contribution. As a result of this the 100-day Challenge was set up. The

subsequent contract with ECL turned into a vocational employment focused service which resulted in approximately 340 people with learning disabilities having more meaningful lives in employment.

- (ix) Work continued with getting employers to be more open to offering employment opportunities to people with learning disabilities.
- (x) A Member highlighted that local employment in the Dengie was a challenge and needed to be addressed. Cllr Spence suggested he would reach out to Essex Chambers of Commerce to see whether they could hold a similar employment session to the one they had recently held in Colchester.
- (xi) Members sought examples of where ECC had conducted co-production at policy making stage.
- (xii) ECC had a wider advocacy role as well and there still remained work to do to get the whole Council thinking about this as part of co-production.

### Conclusion

It was agreed that the 'Statement of Intent' referred to during discussion be brought to the Committee once developed for comment and review and to understand any actions that arose from it.

## **6 Performance Monitoring falling within Committee's remit, as reported to the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee considered and discussed report PAF/26/23 comprising the latest performance update for the Everyone's Essex – Our Plan for Levelling Up the County: 2021-2025 strategy which are considered quarterly by the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that a report would be brought to the Committee on the progress of Family Solutions.

## **7 Work Programme**

The Committee considered and discussed report PAF/27/23 comprising the work programme for the Committee. An appropriate mechanism and process to follow up on outstanding recommendations from the Mental Health Task and Finish Group would be raised at Scrutiny Board in the first instance.

## **8 Matters Arising**

The Committee considered and discussed report PAF/28/23 comprising outstanding matters arising from previous meetings.

## **9 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 11 January 2023.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.25pm.

**Chairman**

**Report to People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee: ASC priority area of focus: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

**Reference Number: PAF/01/24**

<b>Report title: Adult Social Care priority area of focus: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b>	
<b>Report to: People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee</b>	
<b>Report author: Nick Presmeg, Executive Director for Adult Social Care</b>	
<b>Date: 11 January 2024</b>	<b>For: Consideration and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions</b>
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Lead: Moira McGrath, Director of Commissioning <a href="mailto:Moira.McGrath@essex.gov.uk">Moira.McGrath@essex.gov.uk</a> Co-lead: Ruth Harrington, Director for Adults with Disabilities <a href="mailto:Ruth.Harrington@essex.gov.uk">Ruth.Harrington@essex.gov.uk</a>	
<b>County Divisions affected: Countywide</b>	

## **1. Introduction**

In June 2023 the committee reviewed the Council's work to prepare for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance of Local Authority adult social care functions. Adult Social Care (ASC) had undertaken an extensive period of reflection and learning including self-assessment, regional peer challenge activity and a Local Government Association peer challenge. Following the scrutiny meeting it was agreed that the committee would review each of the 5 priority areas of focus identified by ASC. This report (and appendices) is exploring the work being undertaken on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

## **2. Action required**

**The Committee is asked to consider:**

- (i) The work we are doing around continuously improving our ASC processes and decision making to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.**
- (ii) Identify any follow-up scrutiny actions.**

## **3. Background**

3.1 Adult Social Care has used the first part of 2023 to reflect and take stock on how the function had reset post pandemic. Essex County Council (ECC) wants to ensure that it is focused on quality, effectiveness, value for money and is enabling personalised outcomes for local people, which will put ECC in the best place possible for the CQC assurance.

3.2 Following this period of reflection ASC has identified 5 priority areas of focus:

3.2.1 Carers,

## **Report to People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee: ASC priority area of focus: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

- 3.2.2 Lived experience & coproduction,
  - 3.2.3 People waiting and operational service efficiency,
  - 3.2.4 Safeguarding
  - 3.2.5 Equality, diversity & inclusions
- 3.3 This report focuses on the work we are undertaking around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, it sets out our responsibilities and areas of focus. The report sets out our key metrics alongside the key risks and issues and the activity we are undertaking to make improvements to our processes and decision making.

### Expected attendees to support the discussion:

Nick Presmeg, Executive Director, Adult Social Care  
Moirá McGrath, Director of Commissioning  
Ruth Harrington, Director for Adults with Disabilities

## **5 Appendices**

- A. Report for People and Families Scrutiny Committee 11 January 2024  
Adult Social Care: Update on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Work
- B. Power Point: Adult Social Care Quests Overview...the journey so far – January 2024. – To be introduced and presented at the meeting by staff representatives. **[to follow]**.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Report for People and Families Scrutiny Committee 11 January 2024**  
**Adult Social Care: Update on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Work**

Lead: Moira McGrath, Director of Commissioning

Co-lead: Ruth Harrington, Director for Adults with Disabilities

**1. Introduction**

This paper and the accompanying slide pack outline the work in Adult Social Care (ASC) on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). This is a key priority to ensure that we improve outcomes for all people for whom we have responsibility under the Care Act 2014. As a public sector organisation, the council has specific duties under the Equality Act 2010.

**2. Background – why is Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Important?**

Evidence suggests that we will not achieve good outcomes for the whole population if we don't pay attention to and address barriers to access and different experience of support. Improving our understanding and our delivery is vital in showing we 'live' our anti-discrimination values and we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duties as set out below (from gov.uk website).

We also know from evidence that some communities are more impacted by some health conditions than others. For example

- People of South Asian origin are more likely to develop diabetes which can lead to sight impairment, heart problems and limb amputations if not diagnosed and treated early.
- Some religious communities do not recognise mental illness which can inhibit people disclosing that they are ill or seeking early treatment.
- For people with sensory impairment, awareness and understanding of their condition can support them to access buildings and participate fully in activities.
- People of African Caribbean origin are more likely to develop high blood pressure which can lead to strokes if it is undiagnosed and untreated.

The public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities... are now required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010,
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities to publish:

Equality objectives, at least every four years..

Information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment.

Marriage and civil partnership.

Pregnancy and maternity.

Race

Religion or belief.

Sex.

### **3. Approach in Adult Social Care**

In 2021 as a result of staff feedback, we started work to understand the diversity of our workforce and the experience of staff with different protected characteristics. We have been running a series of 'Quests' looking at staff experience linked to their protected characteristics under the Equality Act .

In 2022 we undertook a self assessment as part of the ongoing peer review process with the Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. As part of this process we also worked with Ray James our sector led improvement partner and undertook a peer review visit. Through this work, we identified the need to improve our knowledge, understanding and the impact of our work on how people in Essex are experiencing inequity in adult social care.

### **4. The challenge**

We identified that ASC needs to have a better understanding of both practice and performance through the 'protected characteristic' lens. In particular we identified a range of areas for improvement:

- The Quest work with our directly employed staff has highlighted the need for ASC staff to better consider issues relating to equality and diversity within the workforce and the impact on recruitment, retention and career progression.

- The performance of our services is not routinely reported for how representative they are of the population as a whole, nor for analysis of differential wellbeing outcomes. Collation and analysis for this area are currently manual, time consuming and ad-hoc, and has not been sufficiently part of mainstream thinking around our performance.
- In our case management system, we haven't mandated recording of protected characteristics. Therefore recording was not consistent and there are some significant data gaps. This is particularly pronounced in sexual orientation and religion, and our gender/sex recording needed updating.
- In our contracts with commissioned services such as home care, care homes and day services, we do not always mandate and receive information on the protected characteristics of people who access services.
- The variation in recording and reporting has meant we haven't been able to systematically analyse differences in access to services, outcomes for people and whether people have a different experience of care and support.

## **5. What action are we taking?**

### **Whole ASC function**

- Look at national and international evidence of where we would expect to see the impact of and ways to address inequity.
- Consider how we build understanding of multiple inequity, (ie where people have more than one protected characteristic) and the relationship with deprivation
- Work with NHS, district, borough and city councils and the voluntary sector to share information.
- Regularly analyse our key performance measures to understand differences in access and outcomes
- Consider differences in expected demand for directly delivered and commissioned services, access to assessments and services, utilisation of services and outcomes, charging and debt collection
- Implement the agreed recommendations from the Quest work to date
- Maintain and continue our work started with the Quests to identify and address equity, diversity, and inclusion issues for our employed workforce.
- Identify and support people with lived experience, including in our workforce, to co-produce our approach and actions.
- Ensure that co-production and lived experience insight is reflective of the diversity of the population we serve or need to serve and we are considering insight and action on reducing inequity as part of this.
- Set measurable equity objectives and targets as part of our key transformation programmes and including these in our new business plan.



## **Practice**

- Adult social care front line practitioners have a strong focus on the characteristics of the people we support, and this is routinely incorporated into a person-centred approach to meeting their needs.
- Data collection requirements are clear and data requirements reflect good practice in recording eg for gender and ethnicity
- Front line practitioners are supported to record accurately and the insight derived from this is used practically to improve services.
- Practice assurance includes how diversity has been considered and supported in all aspects of service delivery, and is included in strategic reporting within teams and to ALT.
- Ensure training and development addresses EDI – embedded into existing training to improve awareness and understanding.

## **Commissioned services**

- Improve collection and analysis of data based on the protected characteristics.
- Identify commissioned services data quality/completeness areas in relation to protected characteristics and agree action plans to improve recording
- Support people completing Equality & Community Impact Assessments (ECIAs) to improve quality and understanding in conjunction with the corporate EDI team.
- Work with care providers to promote and embed understanding of EDI issues for their workforce and for the adults they support. Ensure they are focussed on delivering for the diversity of our population in Essex.
- Consider what the training and development approach should be with providers.

## **6. How will we know things have improved?**

- Baseline and where possible benchmark information in key prioritised areas.
- Reports in place showing equity impact and trends
- Key improvement measures in place showing impact over an agreed period
- People with lived experience describe a difference
- Staff and care providers tell us they have improved understanding about what drives inequity and ways it can be addressed

## **7. Examples of why this work is important**

### **Waiting times**

We identified that people with learning disabilities were more likely to wait longer for a review of their care and support as part of our overall work on people waiting. We have targeted social work resource to reduce long waits in this cohort.

## **Advocacy**

We commission independent advocacy services for people who are detained in mental health hospitals, for their own safety, under mental health legislation. Analysis showed that children and young people were less likely to access the service. We introduced a specific service for children and young people. We are also working with services to ensure that children and young people are automatically offered advocacy rather than needing to ask for it.

## **Life expectancy for people with mental illness or learning disabilities**

National evidence shows that people with mental illness and people with learning disabilities die, on average, 20 years younger than the wider population. They generally do not die as a result of their condition, but of preventable or treatable diseases such as heart disease or cancer. Smoking prevalence for people with mental illness is much higher than in the general population. We are working with NHS partners to ensure that people with mental illness and people with learning disabilities access routine health checks and screening with appropriate adjustments.

## **Care staff wellbeing**

We have been made aware of incidents of racist abuse of care staff by adults and their families. We have put in place a 'zero tolerance' policy and changed our operational process on how we work with adults, carers and their families to address discrimination against care staff.

## **Workforce recruitment and retention**

Analysis of our workforce data showed that we have good representation from ethnic minority staff at lower grades of staff including our social workers. But we have low representation at senior levels. We have been testing 'reverse mentoring' where ethnic minority staff work with senior managers to reflect and discuss their mutual experience. We have also tested diverse interview panels for senior appointments where a member of staff will attend the panel with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. Both of these approaches have been well received in the function and we are seeking to roll them out. We are also working with the corporate workforce EDI lead on whether these approaches could be extended across the organisation. We have also developed a set of anti-discrimination practice standards in line with similar work the Children's Services.

## **8. Next steps**

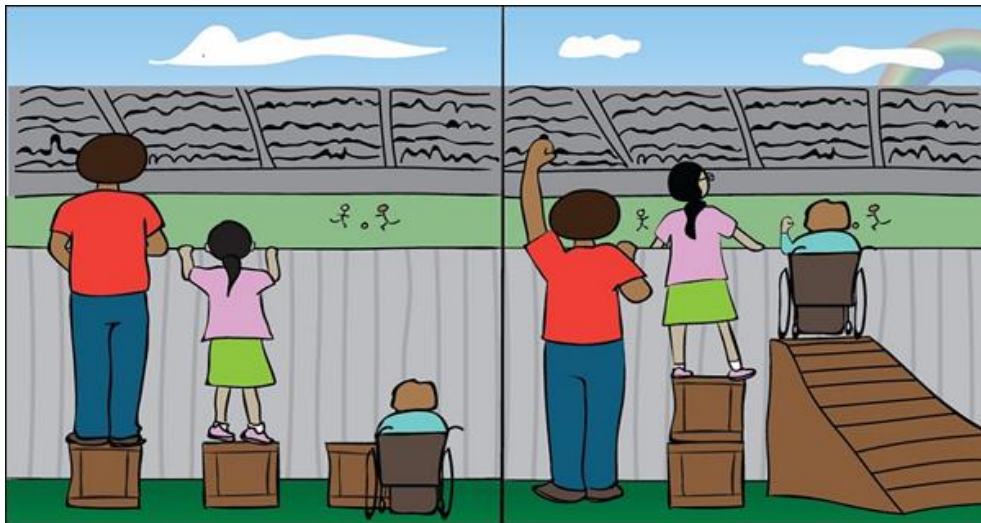
- We have set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group to oversee our improvement work and act as a point of escalation.
- We are in the process of updating our case management system to include mandating and improved recording of protected characteristics.
- We have recently under-taken a 'deep dive' of our recorded information with a focus on access and outcomes.
- We will work across the function to review this data and agree any associated improvements and actions we need to take as a result

## Glossary of terms

### **EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion):**

*For the purposes of this work, the term EDI also encompasses "Equity".*

- **Equality** means offering the same rights and opportunities to all people.
- **Diversity** is understanding that each person is unique. It means embracing people's differences, including their beliefs, abilities, preferences, backgrounds, values, and identities.
- **Inclusion** is an extension of equality and diversity. It means that all people, without exception, have the right to be included, respected, and appreciated as valuable members of the community.
- **Equity** means offering rights and opportunities fairly, catering to people's differences so they are given fair access to opportunities. It means providing various levels of support depending on specific needs or abilities.



*This illustration by Maryam Abdul-Kareem shows the difference between equality & equity.*

### **The Care Act 2014:**

UK act of the Parliament that received royal assent on 14 May 2014. The main purpose of the act was to overhaul the existing 60-year-old legislation regarding social care in England. The Care Act 2014 sets out in one place, local authorities' duties in relation to assessing people's needs and their eligibility for publicly funded care and support.

### **The Equality Act 2010:**

UK act of Parliament with the primary purpose of consolidating, updating and supplementing the numerous prior Acts and Regulations, that formed the basis of anti-discrimination law. These consisted, primarily, of the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation, and age. The Act offers protection against discrimination based on a person's nationality and citizenship, and also extending individuals' rights in areas of life beyond the workplace in religion or belief, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

### **Quests:**

ASC Quests have taken place over the past year and explore the challenges and opportunities to create positive change for our workforce. They are led by employees and each is sponsored by a Senior Leader. Quests which have taken place so far focused on Race, Disability, LGBTQIA+, Age: First 20 years, and Age: Last 20 years. There is a further Quest proposed for next year (2024) on the subject of Mental Health.

### **Practice:**

Practice Standards set out best practice which should be followed for a range of key functions. The main purpose of these Practice Standards is to enable consistency in practice across service areas and amongst social workers and practitioners.

### **Protected Characteristics:**

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.

### **Case Management System (Mosaic):**

The current Social Care Case Management System is called Mosaic. This system is used by multiple Local Authorities across the UK. The system enables social care professionals to undertake case recording; complying with statutory requirements and configure their workflows to support practice requirements.

### **Intersectionality:**

Protected Characteristics apply singular denominations; of course, many individuals who have a number of these characteristics. Having an 'intersectional identity' often generates a feeling that someone does not completely belong in one group or another. The Open university provides the following examples as part of its [Diversity and inclusion in the workplace course](#) to explain this further:

- "A gay man has to deal with homophobia. A black man has to deal with racism. But a black gay man will have to deal with homophobia and racism (often at the same time). It is often the case that he will face racism inside the LGBT community and homophobia in the black community."
- "Similarly, a disabled lesbian Muslim will have to deal with ableism, homophobia, Islamophobia, racism and sexism. She might find physical barriers to accessing LGBT venues, but even when she can get into the building she might still face racism and Islamophobia from the white LGBT community."

### **Assessment:**

In the context of Adult Social Care, an assessment is carried out by social services to find out what help and support a person needs - like healthcare, equipment, help in their home or residential care.

### **Lived Experience:**

'Lived experience' recognises the personal knowledge and impact of people who access health and care services such as those living with a long-term condition, disabled people or family carers. It might also be people who have specific experience of a health service such as Inpatient mental health services.

<b>Report title:</b> Work Programme	
<b>Report to:</b> People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Date:</b> 11 January 2024	<b>For:</b> Discussion and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer at <a href="mailto:graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk">graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk</a> .	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> Not applicable	

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The work programme for the Committee continues to be developed and the current position is outlined below and overleaf. A private session of the Committee was held on 11 May 2023 to discuss and reflect on the work and organisation of the Committee in the last two years and future approach.

### 2. Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider this report and issues under consideration in Appendix 1 and any further development or amendments.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Board has asked scrutiny committees to also give consideration as to which work programme items may benefit from communications activity in order to promote the work of the scrutiny function both internally and externally. Members are asked to consider this during discussion on this agenda item.

### 3. Background

The Terms of Reference for the Committee is defined in the County Council's Constitution and the relevant extract is reproduced below:

#### 9.5.2 People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee:

- Education (other than skills and apprenticeships)
- Childrens' Services
- Youth Services
- Services relating to support for the community safety and the reduction of offending
- Adult social care, including the support of and assistance of people with learning or physical disabilities or sensory impairment and older people and the homeless
- Sport and physical activity including Active Essex (the Health Overview, Policy and Scrutiny Committee to be included on healthy lifestyle matters)
- Transport services relating to any of the above services.

Work has continued to identify priorities and future agenda items. This has included discussions with Committee Members, Cabinet Members and Officers. This work has reflected the adoption of the Everyone's Essex – Our Plan for Levelling Up the County: 2021-2025 strategy at Council on 12 October 2021.

#### **4. Everyone's Essex**

The Committee should take account of the Everyone's Essex – Our Plan for Levelling Up the County: 2021-2025 strategy when considering the work programme and future items. Particular attention should be paid to the strategic ambitions (and associated commitments and performance measures) most relevant to the work of the Committee: 'Health Wellbeing and Independence for All Ages', and 'A Good Place for Children and Families to Grow'. A link to the Strategy is here - [Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025: Foreword from Kevin Bentley - Essex County Council](#)

#### **5. Update and Next Steps**

- 5.1 See Appendix 1 for current work programme

See Action Required (above) for next steps.

#### **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Current work programme.

## **APPENDIX**

### **People and Families Policy and Scrutiny - Work Programme as at 11 January 2024**

<b>Provisional Date</b>	<b>Topic Title</b>	<b>Lead Contact</b>	<b>Purpose and Target Outcomes</b>	<b>Everyone's Essex reference</b>	<b>Cross-Committee</b>
11 January 2024	Adult Social Care – Equality Diversity and Inclusion	Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Health/Executive Director Adult Social Care	To consider performance metrics and trends	All	TBC
14 February 2024	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – Part 1	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability/ Head of SEND Strategy and Innovation	To consider capacity, sustainability and finances	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety /Education Outcomes	Not applicable
14 February 2024	Youth Services	Cabinet Member - The Arts, Heritage and Culture	Requested follow-up to session in October 2023 and specific focus/'ask'	All	Not applicable
14 March 2024	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – Part 2	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability/ Head of SEND Strategy/Innovation	Next steps, improvement work and progress being made since OFSTED/CQC inspections	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety /Education Outcomes	Not applicable
Early 2024 TBC	Essex Children's Safeguarding Board – follow up	Independent Chairman, statutory partners and the Board Manager	To consider actions arising from last discussion and consider annual report	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable

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<b>Provisional Date</b>	<b>Topic Title</b>	<b>Lead contact</b>	<b>Purpose and Target Outcomes</b>	<b>Everyone's Essex reference</b>	<b>Cross-committee</b>
11 April 2024	Education Attainment and Exclusions	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability/ Director: Education	To consider an update on attainment, attendances, exclusions and children missing education.	Education Outcomes	Not applicable
9 May 2024	Education Capital Programme	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability/ Director: Education	To consider component parts, developer contributions, and school places planning	Education Outcomes	Not applicable
TBC 2024	Lifelong Learning and Belonging Plan	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability	Follow up on draft plan considered by the Committee on 9 March 2023	Education Outcomes/ Levelling Up the Economy/Jobs/ Infrastructure	TBC – PSEG Members

**Issues not currently scheduled:**

Everyone's Essex Theme: Family Resilience and Stability, Education	Childcare and Early Years' Strategy County Lines and Drug Gangs Children in care being placed outside Essex Backlog in Courts and Justice System Impact of the pandemic on Essex County Council Suicides in Essex
Everyone's Essex Theme Promoting Independence, Healthy Lifestyles	Houses for Life Disability Strategy

**Private briefings:** A schedule of briefings continues to give background to issues and subjects ahead of formal agenda items.



<b>Report title:</b> Matters Arising	
<b>Report to:</b> People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Date:</b> 11 January 2024	<b>For:</b> Consideration and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> Not applicable	

## **1. Introduction**

This separate item was requested by the Committee on 14 September 2023 (see Background below).

## **2. Action required**

**The Committee is asked to consider:**

- (i) The attached update; and**
- (ii) Reflect on the current process and approach and any steps to help facilitate closure on outstanding matters arising**

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Ordinarily the Committee receives, attached to the draft minutes from the previous meeting, the outstanding Matters Arising from previous meetings. Whilst some entries are closed quickly, other entries are more longstanding.
- 3.2 Matters Arising are communicated to witnesses soon after the date of the meeting as part of the process to draft the minutes.
- 3.3 In some cases, matters arising can be addressed when witnesses are returning to further present to the Committee. However, the nature of the committee's work, and its wide remit, does mean that there are not really any regular "standing" updates scheduled and there can be a significant gap before some witnesses return to provide subsequent updates.
- 3.4 Increased efforts are being made to close more of these items. As reported at the last meeting on 7 December 2023, updates had been received on many of the outstanding matters. As agreed at that meeting, those Matters Arising entries for which updates had been received have now been removed from this

## **Matters Arising**

latest version of this report. This will enable the focus of attention to be on those relatively few significantly outstanding matters.

### **4. Update and Next Steps**

The latest table listing Matters Arising is attached in the Appendix to this report.

Entries have now been categorised as follows to facilitate discussion and to help identify follow-ups:

- Updates requested and to be scheduled as future formal agenda items.
- Actions In progress.
- Actions from recent meetings – updates awaited.
- Significantly Overdue Matters Arising

### **5 Appendix**

Matters Arising as at 11 January 2024.

### MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

#### UPDATES REQUESTED AND TO BE SCHEDULED AS FUTURE FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

9 October 2023	Carers – performance metrics update	Some areas still needed further development (notably but not exclusively plans for respite care) and regular future updates needed to be scheduled.	Proposed to return to scrutiny late summer 2024 once the carers offer is fully mobilised.
9 March 2023	Adult Community Learning Strategy	There would be a scrutiny briefing and a consultation process to consider all options before a decision was taken on removing the nursery provision for ACL learners	To be scheduled in due course - TBC
9 March 2023	Life-Long Learning and Belonging Strategic Plan	A further update would be provided and that the Scrutiny Board be consulted on inviting colleagues from the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee to join the session	Date to be determined by Chairman and committee
14 December 2022	Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2022-2027: End of Year One Update	A further broad update would be arranged in due course	Date to be determined by Chairman and committee.

## ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

Date	Agenda item	Action	Status
9 October 2023	Essex Youth Service	<p>1. (a) Whilst noting the aim to build closer links between Councillors and young people, to be given more detail on how this is being done and specifically</p> <p>(b) the process to facilitate and re-institute in a similar form any local YSG forums that wished to reform in some way and how that would be anticipated to work in practice, and</p> <p>(c) to further update on any replacement bodies for YSGs more generally being considered and/or proposed?</p> <p>(d) to understand how projects previously supported by the YSGs can continue to be supported and delivered (for example, delivery of productions at school such as Crucial Crew) and where they are/not currently being delivered</p>	Currently working to provide information for follow-up session scheduled for 14 February 2024.
		2. Whilst noting the success of the youth support role at Basildon Hospital Accident and Emergency, to understand more how this scheme is being considered for expansion to other hospitals, the role of the Violence and Vulnerability Unit and other partners in the scheme and the structure of funding it, and the contributors.	As above
		3. What measures are in place or are to be put in place to reach hard-to-reach individuals including the home-schooled? What are the challenges and limitations in this?	As above
		4. More information on the equity spread of services across the county, identifying any unevenness of provision and what can be done to address it. This should include participation rates as well across the county to identify if that is also uniform and whether there are particular rural areas, for example, with travel and infrastructure challenges.	As above

## ACTIONS FROM RECENT MEETINGS - UPDATES AWAITED

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
7 December 2023	ASC Priority Area of Focus – People Waiting	Faith based reviews to be included on the definitions page in future reports.	TBC
		That the challenges ASC faced should be highlighted within the executive summary of future reports such as 1 in 5 adults in Essex were 65 and people with learning disabilities and autism cohorts was expected to grow significantly by 2025	TBC
		It was highlighted that the 3 year overdue reference within the report related to Care Act reviews and not initial assessments. Members were concerned this could be misleading and suggested it was made clearer in future reports	TBC
		Future performance reports to the Committee should focus more on a narrative in a traditional written report rather than over reliance on power point presentations	Completed – reflected in the report of EDI at January 2024 meeting
	ASC Priority area of focus – Co-production	The ‘Statement of Intent’ referred to during discussion be brought to the Committee once developed for comment and review and to understand any actions that arose from it.	TBC
14 September 2023	Essex Safeguarding Adults Board – Annual Report 2022-23	To include more prominent reference to the financial challenges being faced by the Board in the finalised annual report and the development of risk register work.	TBC
		The Essex Covid-19 Care Home Report which had been endorsed by ESAB to be presented to the Committee.	TBC

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
		More information on safeguarding referrals received from asylum and refugee holding centres.	TBC
		The passing reference to the recent Dispatches television programme in the draft annual report be expanded to include more background and context.	TBC
	Adult Social Care Priority area of focus: Safeguarding Adults	Whether fast-track health and care training being developed at Essex University could be extended and applied to safeguarding training.	TBC
		If some further narrative to explain the proportion of outcomes where safeguarding risk had been reduced or removed (bullet point VIII above) could be included for future reports.	TBC
		To provide further narrative in future reports on the statistics being presented more generally to give further context, refer to any relevant changes in process and/or recording that might be causing statistical change and indicate if trends were positive or negative.	TBC

## SIGNIFICANTLY OVERDUE MATTERS ARISING

Date	Agenda item	Action	Status
9 March 2023	Adult Community Learning Strategy	Further information would be provided on the efficacy of outcomes for apprenticeships and specifically what percentage successfully completed their end point assessment	TBC
15 February 2023	Disability Strategy	The final Disability Strategy should be clear that it supported the current Market Fields School project, and other similar schemes which provide work experience and job opportunities for local people with disabilities and further utilities the potential of local people.	TBC
		A further update would be given providing a Delivery Plan and identified actions after the formal launch of the Strategy.	To be scheduled
		District/borough councils should be encouraged to include provision for supported housing in their Local Plans; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appropriate specifications and provision for supported housing should also be reflected in the County Council's own Design Guide;</li> <li>- Representation be made on the increasing need for supported housing within the National Planning Policy Framework;</li> <li>- Request that Essex Housing consider if there is a role for it to further promote and influence the increase in supported housing provision.</li> </ul>	TBC
		Request the Scrutiny Board to consider further scrutiny arrangements for the planning for future housing provision particularly in relation to supported housing for disabled and other vulnerable people.	TBC
11 January 2023	Everyone's Library Service 2022-2026	To provide amended trend data and charts that compared to periods/years before the pandemic and not just 2021	TBC

# **SIGNIFICANTLY OVERDUE MATTERS ARISING continued...**

11 January 2023	Everyone's Library Service 2022-2026	That, as part of a future scrutiny session, and further to an upcoming public consultation, to include more information on what users and potential users want from their libraries and what matters to them	To be picked up at the next update on libraries.
		To invite the Chairman of the Education Task Force and appropriate Cabinet Members and officers to discuss concerns about current performance on literacy	To be included as part of scheduling broader education updates
	HCRG Contract for the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service	A table showing all 22 Outcomes and target outcomes with all KPIs would be produced	TBC
		More information on the Affinity Programme to be provided to Members	TBC
		Further information on the rate of the contract to be provided to Members	TBC
		Clarification on the availability of statistics measuring reach, and the number of hard-to-reach families missing out on the early years services who were then later identified needing additional support in later life	TBC
14 April 2022	Essex Safeguarding Children Board update	Information on accessing services in the Dengie area to be provided	TBC
		More knife bins should be placed in smaller towns, including placing them within Essex libraries to prevent vandalism	TBC



## Proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2024-25

Reference Number: PAF/04/24

<b>Report title:</b> Proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2024-25	
<b>Report to:</b> People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Date:</b> 11 January 2024	<b>For:</b> Consideration and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer at graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk.	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> Not applicable	

### 1. Introduction

The Committee is requested to consider the list of proposed meeting dates for the 2024-25 municipal year.

### 2. Action required

The Committee is asked to consider the list of proposed meeting dates for the 2024-25 municipal year.

### 3. Proposed dates

Thursday 9 May 2024  
Thursday 13 June 2024  
Thursday 11 July 2024  
Thursday 12 September 2024  
Thursday 10 October 2024  
Thursday 14 November 2024  
Thursday 12 December 2024  
Thursday 16 January 2025  
Tuesday 11 February 2025  
Thursday 13 March 2025  
Thursday 10 April 2025

Members should hold 9.30-3pm in their calendars for these dates although that time window often will be narrowed down nearer the time.

### 4. Next Steps

Once dates are confirmed they will be published on the County Council's website and calendar invites circulated to members of the Committee.