

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board held via Zoom at 10:00am on Wednesday 17 March 2021

Present:

Board Members (Statutory)

Cllr John Spence	Essex County Council (Chairman)
Dr Hasan Chowhan	North East Essex CCG
Dr Anna Davey	Mid Essex CCG
Dr Rob Gerlis	West Essex CCG
Samantha Glover	Healthwatch Essex
Dr Mike Gogarty	Essex County Council (Director, Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities)
Clare Kershaw	Essex County Council (substitute for Helen Lincoln, Director of Children's Services)
Cllr John Moran	Essex County Council
Nick Presmeg	Essex County Council
Cllr Andrew Sheldon	Essex County Council (substitute for Cllr Louise McKinlay)
Dr Kashif Siddiqui	Castle Point and Rochford CCG
Dr 'Boye Tayo	Basildon and Brentwood CCG

Board Members (Other)

Tom Abell	Essex Acute Hospital Trusts (substitute for Clare Panniker)
Paul Burstow	Independent Chair, Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS
Cllr Mark Cory	Borough/City/District Councils
Cllr Peter Davey	Voluntary Sector (Essex Assn of Local Councils)
Ian Davidson	Borough/City/District Councils (ECEA Rep)
Dr Sunil Gupta	Mid and South Essex CCG Joint Committee
Nick Hulme	Essex Acute Hospital Trusts
Jemma Mindham	Voluntary Sector
Professor William Pope	Independent Chair, Suffolk and North East Essex ICS
Professor Mike Thorne	Independent Chair, Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership
Sue Waterhouse	Essex Mental Health and Non-Acute Providers (substitute for Paul Scott)
Simon Wood	NHS Commissioning Board Essex LAT Director

Co-opted Members

David Archibald	Independent Chair/Facilitator, Essex Safeguarding Adults Board
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Deborah Stuart-Angus	Independent Chair, Essex Safeguarding Adults Board

Other Attendees

David Akinsanya	Suffolk and North East Essex ICS
Gemma Andrews	Essex County Council
Brian Balmer	Essex Local Medical Committees
Claire Bartoli	Essex County Council
Mark Carroll	Executive Director of Place and Public Health, Essex County Council

Jo Cripps	Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership
Tricia D'Orsi	Castle Point and Rochford CCG
Peter Fairley	Director, Strategy, Policy and Integration, Essex County Council
Michelle Grant-Richardson	Suffolk and North East Essex ICS
Dr Jane Halpin	Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS
Cllr Dave Harris	Essex County Council
William Hooper	Senior Strategy Adviser, Essex County Council
Susannah Howard	Suffolk and North East Essex ICS
Gary Hyams	Chair, Healthwatch Essex
Chris Martin	Essex County Council
Dr Rachael Morant	North East Essex CCG
Judith Dignum	Democratic Services Officer, Essex County Council

1. Membership, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

Apologies for absence were received from Board Members as follows:

Georgina Blakemore	Borough/City/District Councils
Cllr Graham Butland	Borough/City/District Councils
Anthony McKeever	Partnership Executive Lead and Joint Accountable Officer for Mid and South Essex CCGs
Cllr Louise McKinlay	Essex County Council
Clare Panniker	Essex Acute Hospital Trusts (for whom Tom Abell was substituting)
Paul Scott	Essex Mental Health and Non-Acute Providers (for whom Sue Waterhouse was substituting)

The Board noted that Jemma Mindham, CEO of Rainbow Services, Harlow, had replaced Lorraine Jarvis as the Voluntary Services representative. She had attended previous Board meetings as named substitute for Ms Jarvis.

2. Minutes and progress report on actions: 17 January 2021

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 17 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and Members noted that all the actions agreed were complete.

3. Public Questions

None received.

4. Covid in Essex (HWB/03/21 a and b)

Impact of Covid on Public Health and Public Health Services (HWB/03/21a) Covid 19 Vaccination Equalities (HWB/03/21b)

The Board received updates on the latest position with regard to Covid in Essex, including a briefing from the Director of Public Health about the impact on public health and public health services and a report by Susannah Howard (Suffolk and North East Essex ICS) on work currently underway to promote equality and address health inequalities in the vaccination programme.

The following issues arose during consideration of the updates:

- With the easing of lockdown restrictions, it would be important for people to be vaccinated and to continue to observe social distancing. The impact would be carefully monitored. As people began to feel that life was returning to normal, meaningful communications messaging would be needed to encourage them to remain vigilant.
- Availability of Covid testing was to be increased in a national move towards regular testing, particularly for those with school-age children and those in frontline roles. For this to be most effective, disincentives, such as a lack of financial support for those self-isolating, would need to be addressed.
- Members requested action to ensure that vaccine promotion material was shared as widely as possible, for example at testing centres. It was suggested that communications from the Essex Wellbeing Service could be shared via the Essex Coronavirus Action Facebook page.
- Although vaccine take-up rates in Essex were generally good, there was a need to work with those who had not accepted an appointment in order to understand the reasons behind their reluctance and find ways to overcome this if possible. GPs welcomed an offer by Mike Gogarty for assistance from the Essex Wellbeing Service to contact those concerned.
- The Board highlighted mental health and physical activity as key future issues for public health, as well as continued focus on population health management, given the excellent progress being made in this area pre-pandemic. Members also referred to the need for capacity to enable a flexible response to issues which may emerge unexpectedly over the next 12-18 months, possibly associated with the general reluctance to access healthcare services during Covid, or the diversion of resources to delivery of Covid support.

During the course of debate, the Chairman on behalf of the Board recorded his appreciation for the vital and sustained contribution made by volunteers to the successful delivery of the vaccine programme. He expressed sincere thanks to them, and to those across the health, local government and voluntary sectors who had been responsible for their recruitment.

The briefing was **noted**.

Action

Action	Lead / Comments
1. Ensure that vaccine promotion material is being shared as widely as possible.	Mike Gogarty
2. Liaise with GPs (via CCG Chairs) regarding the potential for the Essex Wellbeing Service to seek out and contact people in hard-to-reach groups who have not yet been vaccinated.	Mike Gogarty

5. Integrated Care System (ICS) / Health and Care Partnership (HCP) Verbal Updates

The Board received and **noted** updates from the ICSs and HCP as set out below, focusing particularly on progress towards recovery from Covid:

- Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS: Dr Jane Halpin
- Mid and South Essex HCP: Jo Cripps and Tom Abell
- Suffolk and North East Essex ICS: Susannah Howard

Referring to recovery from Covid, Professor Mike Thorne highlighted that this may take longer in Mid and South Essex than elsewhere due to the high proportion of total Covid cases in the East of England which had been treated in the HCP's three acute hospitals. He congratulated Tom Abell, HCP staff and those working in social care and the voluntary sector for their hard work in managing the heavy workload.

The Chairman echoed Professor Thorne's comments and expressed thanks to all partners and colleagues for their efforts during the pandemic.

6. Southend, Essex and Thurrock Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR): Annual Report 2019-20

The Board received the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) Annual Report for 2019-20 upon which Members' comments had been sought in advance of the meeting.

Resolved:

That the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) Annual Report for 2019-20 be acknowledged and agreed.

7. Update report on action being taken to reduce the rise in suicide rates in Essex (HWB/04/21)

Gemma Andrews and Claire Bartoli, Essex County Council, were present during consideration of this item.

The Board received a report detailing progress against action proposed at the November 2020 meeting of the Board and presenting a clear ask around the support required from the Board in order to deliver suicide prevention progress.

The following issues arose from consideration of the report:

- Progress regarding Real Time Suicide Surveillance (RTSS) was noted, with a commitment by Essex Police to deliver the initial release by the end of May. Further work would then be carried out on a phased basis to include access to additional data sets, enabling more detailed analysis of the information captured.
- Members highlighted the need for improved data analytic capability to help identify why rates of suicide in Essex were high even when compared with

areas displaying similar economic and demographic characteristics. It was noted that work to provide a greater degree of granularity would be achieved through a task and finish group of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Suicide Prevention Board, and would be reported to the Board.

It was agreed to circulate the membership and terms of reference of the Task and Finish Group and invite members to contact Gemma Andrews if they were interested in participating.

- It was noted that research had been carried out into initiatives taking place across the country to identify and tackle the contributory factors influencing suicide levels. There had also been engagement with Professor Louis Appleby.
- The need for capacity to act immediately once the influencing factors were understood was highlighted.

The Board agreed to receive a further report sometime before September 2021.

Resolved:

1. That the Board support all actions currently being taken, specifically through commitment of ongoing support from Acute (including ambulance first responders), EPUT, Primary Care Commissioning (including GP representation, Essex Police, Coroner and wider key partners to
 - Quarterly representation at the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Suicide Prevention Board (SSPB), in terms of (i) representation and (ii) organisational resource to implement arising actions that contribute to a reduction in suicides in Essex
 - Representation from identified key stakeholders at two coproduction events for the Mid and South East Essex Adults Self-Harm Toolkit (17 March and 13 April 2021, pm), followed by an organisational commitment to provide a co-ordinated strategic response to the May/June 2021 MSE Adults Self-Harm Toolkit consultation.
2. That partners whose engagement and consultation is vital to this agenda, the impact of Covid-19 and/or the Covid-19 recovery period on their capacity to commit to providing appropriate representation to the above be acknowledged, and pragmatic solutions sought to avoid delays.
3. That endorsement continue for the development of Real Time Suicide Surveillance (RTTS) in Essex, co-led by Essex Policy and Essex County Council's Public Health Team, to move towards robust, timely data capture for suspected suicides.
4. That focus continue on initiatives which address both mental health more widely and suicide prevention, including initiatives to reduce socioeconomic pressures and health issues, which may be contributing to suicides in Essex.

Action

Action	Lead / Comments
3. Circulate membership and terms of reference/scope of SET Suicide Prevention Board sub-group, established to update the Suicide Prevention Strategy	Mike Gogarty / Gemma Andrews
4. Action Plan to be reported to the Board before September 2021	Mike Gogarty / Gemma Andrews
5. Board Members to advise Gemma Andrews if they are interested in participating in the task and finish group (gemma.andrews@essex.gov.uk)	Secretary to advise Board members

8. New Statutory Duties for Domestic Abuse (HWB/05/21)

Clare Burrell, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Policy (Essex County Council) was in attendance during this item.

The Board received a report detailing the statutory duties and agency guidance for domestic abuse taking effect from 1 April 2021 and seeking Members' views on how the Board should engage in the issue. A set of presentation slides was provided for circulation to Members after the meeting.

Partner organisations were asked to review the final guidance, based on the following questions:

- Is there an awareness of the new guidance and statutory duties and what they will mean for the organisation, including in its role as an employer?
- Who in the organisation takes the lead on domestic abuse?
- Is the organisation linked into the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Partnership Board?
- Is the organisation linked into the ongoing work to prepare for implementation?

Ian Davidson undertook to liaise with Clare Burrell to ensure that all Essex borough, city and district councils were aware of the four questions set out above.

Resolved

That partner organisations review the final guidance with reference to the four questions set out above and consider their roles and responsibilities as employers and providers of services for supporting the response to and reduction in domestic abuse and in keeping those who are victims safe.

Actions

Action	Lead / Comments
6. Circulate slides to Board members	Secretary

7. Ensure all Essex borough, city and district councils are made aware of the questions directed at Board Members during the meeting
- Clare Burrell and Ian Davidson to liaise

9. Adjournment of Meeting

Upon the proposal of the Chairman, the Board agreed to a brief adjournment from 11.30 – 11.35am.

10. Population Health Management (HWB/06/21a)

The Board received an update on the development of Population Health Management across the three Integrated Care Systems in Essex.

Members welcomed Dr Rachael Morant, a GP in Colchester, who spoke of her positive experience of participation in a pilot project targeting falls prevention. The project had been well-received by patients, and the outcome had been a reduction in numbers of falls.

In considering the report, Members noted that the ability to share information effectively was a key factor influencing success.

The Board expressed support for the population health management programme and agreed to assist as required, including by identifying opportunities for support and cross county learning, collaboration and liaison.

11. Physical Activity in Essex (HWB/06/21b)

Jason Fergus, Head of Active Essex, was in attendance for this item.

The Board considered a report explaining and seeking recognition for the increased importance of physical activity in the daily lives of all citizens in Essex. The report sought also to galvanise, enthuse and mobilise support for urgent action to promote physical activity in order to create an upsurge, ensuring people in Essex are fit for the future.

The Chairman indicated that he was seeking the Board's support for a system-wide programme aimed at stimulating physical activity entitled 'Fit for the Future'. The context was that improving both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the Essex population, particularly during the recovery from Covid, would have a positive impact on maximising the quantity and quality of employment opportunities.

The following issues arose during consultation of the report:

- The Board acknowledged the importance of physical activity in terms of enabling physical and mental wellbeing, as well as delivering social benefits. Members' expressed the view that an innovative approach to encouraging exercise was needed, and that people would require encouragement to undertake organised activities such as Parkrun once they were able to recommence.

- There was a role for employers in supporting staff wellbeing, for example by allowing time for meaningful breaks during the working day and encouraging employees to move away from their desks.
- Developing the habit of exercise from an early age was crucial. Primary schools had an important role to play in this and were able to access government funding for the delivery of PE and sports activities via the PE and sport premium. Essex County Council had made funding available to support clubs facilitating sporting activities for children and young people, recognising that the costs involved may be prohibitive for many families.
- In response to a question, Mr Fergus detailed some of the lessons learned from implementation of the Essex Local Delivery Pilot (LDP) and explained how this knowledge would be fed into the design of Fit for the Future. Further information on the learning was available in the 'People and Places' section of the Local Delivery pages on the Sport England website, and it was agreed to circulate the relevant link Board members following the meeting.
- Members were informed of the recent establishment of a small task and finish group to shape the detail of the Fit for the Future programme, with membership to be drawn from a broad range of bodies and organisations, including the voluntary sector, district and parish councils and GPs. Ian Davidson and Jason Fergus undertook to liaise on this outside the meeting and also to consider the potential involvement of the Essex Strategic Co-ordination Group. Samantha Glover indicated her willingness to be involved and Danielle Frost (EALC) was also proposed as a representative of town and parish councils. Any other members wishing to participate were invited to contact the Secretary.

Referring to the Chairman's earlier statement concerning establishment of a 'Fit for the Future' programme, the Board expressed its unanimous support for the creation of this as a strategic movement to drive up meaningful physical activity and contain within it details of how to ensure suitable urgency over the coming weeks and months.

Resolved:

1. That the urgency of promoting physical activity across the Essex population be recognised and acknowledged.
2. That the Board record its unanimous support for the creation of the 'Fit for the Future' programme as a strategic movement to drive up meaningful physical activity and contain within it details of how to ensure suitable urgency over the coming weeks and months.

Actions

Action	Lead / Comments
8. Circulate Sport England 'People and Places' link to Board members	Jason Fergus/Active Essex

9. Consideration to be given to membership of task and finish group to shape the details around 'Fit for the Future', ensuring broad representation (voluntary sector, district and parish councils, GPs) and potential involvement of the ESCG Jason Fergus and Ian Davidson to liaise

(NB Sam Glover and Danielle Frost (EALC Health and Wellbeing Officer) already expressed interest/nominated

Board members to advise if they wish to be involved with the task and finish group or wish to nominate someone. Secretary to remind Board members

10. Report on the outcome of the Task and Finish Group to be considered at the April Board Jason Fergus/
Secretary: add to FP

12. Intergenerational Living

The Board received a presentation by David Akinsanya (Suffolk and North East Essex ICS) outlining an approach being developed by the ICS for tackling loneliness through the sharing of housing for mutual benefit. The approach worked by matching elderly people with surplus accommodation with young people in need of a home. The person accepting the offer of accommodation was there to provide company for the older person, not to act as their carer.

Chris Martin (Director, Strategic Commissioning and Policy, Essex County Council) updated the Board on 'Shared Lives', a similar approach being taken by the Council, which focused on people with learning disabilities. Placements were currently limited to the long term, but there was potential to broaden the scheme to include fixed-term, task orientated arrangements and possibly also to extend the offer to people leaving hospital following treatment for a mental health condition.

The mutual benefits of both schemes were noted, and the Board acknowledged the importance of addressing loneliness due to the adverse health impacts associated with it. There was, however, a need to fully understand the potential challenges inherent in the schemes and to build the confidence of potential participants. It was suggested that this be progressed via liaison with a group of potential participants (identified through GPs), with a view to raising awareness and considering factors which would make such schemes attractive.

The Chairman asked Board members to provide any additional feedback outside the meeting either to the lead officers direct or to the Board Secretary, Judith Dignum, for forwarding.

13. Forward Plan

Members received the Forward Plan, noting that the content was likely to change in the light of decisions to be taken under the next agenda item (Date of Next Meeting) – minute 14 below refers.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Further to a previous email from the Chairman proposing a revised approach to the conduct of Board business during April and May, it was:

Resolved

1. That an additional meeting of the Board take place online for a maximum of 90 minutes at 10.00am on Wednesday 28 April. The purpose of the meeting will be to consider:
 - a. actions from previous meetings.
 - b. a follow-up on actions resulting from the Ofsted inspection on Special Educational Needs, incorporating a discussion on the findings of the Annual Family Impact Survey for 2020 conducted by Essex Family Forum
 - c. ideas for the creation of a strategic plan for stimulating physical activity, based on the discussion at this meeting (minute 11 above refers).
2. That a symposium on mental health in Essex, expected to take place online, be held in private at 10.00am on Wednesday 26 May.

15. Schedule of Meetings for 2022

The following dates were agreed for meetings of the Board in 2022:

19 January	20 July
16 March	21 September
18 May	16 November

(all Wednesdays at 10am)

The meeting closed at 12.35am

**Councillor John Spence
Chairman**

28 April 2021