



Essex County Council

People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee

09:30	Thursday, 08 June 2023	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 033301 34574

Email: democratic.services@essex.gov.uk

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1	Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest	5 - 6
2	Election of Vice-Chairmen for 2023/24 Municipal Year	
3	Minutes: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 9 March and 6 April 2023 and consider matters arising.	
3a	Minutes - 9 March 2023	7 - 13
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- 4 Questions from the Public**
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 democratic.services@essex.gov.uk by noon on the day before the meeting (Wednesday 7 June) and that questions must relate to an item on the agenda for the meeting.
- 5 Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance 25 - 26**
- 5a Appendix - Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance PAF Scrutiny June 2023 presentation 27 - 39**
- 6 Work Programme 40 - 47**
- 7 Date of Next Meeting**
To note that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 13 July 2023, in Committee Room 1, County Hall.
- 8 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.

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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

Full Council on 16 May 2023 agreed changes to the various committee memberships including the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee. The following changes have been made to the PAF membership:

1. Cllr Susan Barker, Cllr Mark Durham, Jane Fleming, Laureen Shaw and Andrew Wiles no longer serve on the Committee;
2. Cllr Eddie Johnson, Cllr Daniel Land, Cllr Sue Lissimore, Cllr Mick Skeels and Cllr Mike Steel are appointed in their place;
3. Cllr Michael Hardware is appointed as a Sub.

PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (14 + 4)

(10 Con: 1 Lab: 1 LD: 2 NAG + 4 Co-opted)

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

Conservative Subs:

Jeff Henry
Jaymey McIvor
Michael Hardware

Labour Sub:

Lee Scordis

Liberal Democrat Sub:

Mark Cory

Non-elected Members

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.

Recommendations:

To note

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

Minutes of the meeting of the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held at 9.30am on Thursday, 09 March 2023 in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford.

Present:

County Councillors:

Cllr Ray Gooding (Chairman)

Cllr Susan Barker

Cllr Mark Durham (until 11.25)

Cllr Jane Fleming

Cllr Ian Grundy

Cllr Peter May

Cllr Aidan McGurran

Cllr Ross Playle

In virtual attendance via Zoom:

Cllr June Lumley

Cllr Laureen Shaw

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

1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Marie Goldman, Cllr Carlo Guglielmi, Cllr Wendy Stamp, Cllr June Lumley and Cllr Laureen Shaw with the latter two however both joined the meeting via Zoom. Sharon Westfield de Cortez from Healthwatch Essex had also sent her apologies.

Cllr Ross Playle declared an interest in that his mother worked for Action for Family Carers.

Cllr June Lumley declared an interest in that she was an unpaid Chairman of Supporting Carers and Families Together, a local organisation supporting young carers and their families.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Questions from the public

There were none.

4 The Youth Service and Support for Young Carers

The Committee considered report PAF/06/23. The following attended the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questions:

- Cllr Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability
- Julie Auger, Youth Services Manager
- Glenn Crickmore, Service Strategic Lead for Young Carers

Contributors updated the Committee on the Youth Service Delivery Model specifically in relation to support provided for young carers, and included:

- Data on the Young Carers Statutory Assessments
- The process from assessment to key worker allocation and their roles including action plans
- Examples of respite activities, workshops and training
- Overview and breakdown of the Young Carer in School Awards
- Examples of voluntary sector support for young carers
- System changes and service development
- A young adult carer conference was taking place this year to give the opportunity for them to co-design and shape the service

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

- (i) There was currently three vacancies and two members of staff waiting to start within the assessment team. At full capacity there were twenty-five staff members. There were eighteen staff members across the key worker team and when under capacity senior youth workers from other youth service teams would provide support.
- (ii) Key workers were recruited from schools and other jobs working with children and young people. There was a training programme as part of the induction process. The service supported career progression.
- (iii) The service did not experience a great deal of resistance from families but they did have a right to refuse support. Conversations would take place to help the family to fully understand the young carers' offer.
- (iv) Referrals mainly came from social workers, schoolteachers, youth workers, parents and also self-referrals as raised awareness enabled more self-identification. Approximately fifty referrals were received a week. Referrals to an assessment could take up to three to four weeks. Assessments were only

carried out when the whole family were at home. Not all referrals led to an assessment.

- (v) The Department for Education now required schools to produce data on young carers as part of the school census. Generally, engagement with, and access to, schools was good but there was room for improvement.
- (vi) The service was raising awareness of young carers wherever possible. Assembly work in schools was helping young people self-identify.
- (vii) As secondary schools were often bigger and therefore had more complex mechanisms to work through, primary schools sometimes could be better at identifying young carers. Work around Levelling Up and the Inclusion Framework was helping schools to understand how to support young carers and it was important to help make it as easy as possible for schools to engage with what was on offer.
- (viii) There was school governors training available upon request, and governors also attended the Young Carer in School Awards training.
- (ix) Key workers also worked with some of the schools that were not currently engaged in the Young Carer in School Awards.
- (x) Each young carer had an action plan, with an ongoing assessment of how they were getting on in school. Key workers worked closely with schools as part of that.
- (xi) Digital systems needed to work better to be able to draw data down on school attainment and better manage data information to lead to improved analysis and data quality.
- (xii) A suggestion was made to look at the baseline assessments children took in schools prior to Year 7 to see whether caring responsibilities had an adverse effect on their education.
- (xiii) Respite activities for young carers were extremely important and had a positive impact on their education and general wellbeing and should be further promoted. The voluntary sector also played an important part as increasingly more support mechanisms were developing.
- (xiv) More digital communications would be considered in terms of promoting the service further.

Contributors were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11.00am and recommenced at 11.05am.

5 Adult Community Learning Strategy

The Committee considered report PAF/07/23. The following attended the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questions:

- Cllr Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability
- Lisa Jarentowski, Adult Community Learning Principal

Contributors updated the Committee on the Adult Community Learning Strategy Implementation, which included:

- Portfolio vision and statement
- Key points of Ofsted 3 I's; Implementation, Intent and Impact
- Key points of the delivery model including flexible hybrid and online delivery. Outreach activity would be expanded in Rochford, Dovercourt/Harwich, Canvey and Stansted
- Learner characteristics headlines such as 73.2% of learners were female and there was a higher take up of qualification courses in deprived areas compared to least deprived
- Curriculum streams and course offers
- Figures around apprenticeships including that Business and Finance apprenticeships remained the most popular
- Progress and future work for ACL property

Following the presentation, the following was highlighted, raised and/or noted:

- (i) From July 2023 the nine physical centres would be reduced to eight. Learner numbers had dropped significantly at the Rayleigh library centre in recent years, and it was estimated that it would be more cost effective to run that provision on an Outreach basis although some teaching may still be delivered in a shared space in the library.
- (ii) Room utilisation data had been used to inform the decision to reduce the ACL footprint on the Maldon site and consolidate it to one floor above the library.
- (iii) There was discretionary support for travel and there were online and flexible offers which helped learners who had difficulties accessing education due to travel.
- (iv) Learners who attended courses during the day preferred to attend face to face, whilst learner feedback suggested people attending in the evening found courses easier to attend online.

- (v) Following the Government consultation there would be no change to the ESFA community learning funding allocation until 2024/25 as the sector had been successfully vocal on the benefits of Community Learning. The curriculum being followed by each learner receiving Education and Skills Funding Agency non-accredited community learning funding had to align with one of seven identified educational, health or social strands as part of an external check that it offered value for money.
- (vi) Investment from the National Skills Fund was used to help adults train and gain skills to improve job prospects. ACL had reached their target allocation from the National Skills Fund at the end of November 2022 and subsequently had been successful in requesting further investment.
- (vii) A levy Transfer Hub would be created to support Levy paying employers to 'gift' unspent levy funds to Essex based SME's. Additionally, the County Council had committed to also gift 25% of any unspent levy although first it would aim to spend what it could of the levy.
- (viii) The rising cost of living had had some impact and had influenced some of the rolling programmes, flexible starts and in-year starts being offered. Learners could apply for the discretionary support fund. Community learning courses now included cooking on a budget and enabling people to make life choices which were more cost effective.

Conclusion:

It was **agreed** that:

- The Committee supported the work done on developing and finalising the strategy and its implementation.
- 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.
- An update on Canvey Island and staffing activities would be provided to Cllr Peter May.
- Further information would be provided on the efficacy of outcomes for apprenticeships and specifically what percentage successfully completed their end point assessment.
- Further information would be provided on how apprenticeships could lead into further opportunities for professional qualifications.

Ms Jarentowski was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting.

6 Life-Long Learning and Belonging Strategic Plan

The Committee considered report PAF/08/23. The following attended the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questions:

- Cllr Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability
- Ruth Gilbert, Head of Employability and Skills
- Anita Kemp, Head of Strategy Planning and Performance

Contributors updated the Committee on the draft Lifelong Learning and Belonging Strategic Plan, which included:

- Defining Lifelong Learning and explaining that Belonging had been included in the Plan to emphasise the importance of building more access and links to local opportunities
- That the Plan had been developed with the Education team and through working with schools, colleges and industry
- Explaining some of the interlinks with other corporate strategies
- Outlining the delivery approach and suggestions as to how and where ECC could have the most impact, including the priorities that needed more work such as Careers, Digital and Integration
- Visual examples of delivery including the Essex Opportunities Portal and Apprenticeship Brokerage and wanting to further involve anchor institutions and the private sector

Following the presentation, the following was highlighted, raised and/or noted:

- (i) Project Jigsaw was an internal Skills and Employability Team transformation project to bring more cohesion to the service offer. It was focussed beyond just education and training and looked at linkages with other partners including the NHS and facilitating links to schools.
- (ii) Some members challenged how ECC were working to encourage employers to bring high quality jobs to Essex both with current and potential future employers.
- (iii) A greater focus was needed on careers education and that young people, in particular, were supported to make informed career choices with clear signposting and navigation routes to such support.
- (iv) There would be greater focus on raising attainment at 16 so more people can progress to Level 3 courses, ongoing refinement to the place-based curriculum offer, and a more strategic approach to investment in initiatives with more depth for greater impact and greater sustainability.
- (v) It was suggested that further work was needed with some employers to encourage greater accessibility and inclusion in

their selection processes. A new post in the Skills and Employability Team was working on brokerage and breaking down some of the barriers and would be able to update more on this in the Autumn.

- (vi) Initiatives to facilitate re-training were highlighted and encouraged with retraining for electric vehicles maintenance given as a specific example.
- (vii) Small businesses constituted the vast majority of employers in Essex and it was important to further develop existing links with the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chambers of Commerce to further understand the priorities of their members. There was also a Department for Education initiative for priority skills-based work with schools.
- (viii) The Skills and Employability Team were looking to further promote joint work with other service areas within ECC and also understand more what other local authority partners were doing.
- (ix) A new careers magazine was available through the Essex Opportunities portal and would be distributed in various community settings.

Conclusion:

It was **agreed** that a further update would be provided in approximately six months 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.

Contributors were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

7 Work Programme

The Committee considered and discussed report PAF/09/23 comprising the work programme for the committee.

8 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was going to be re-scheduled and that the date would be confirmed and circulated as soon as possible.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1.20pm.

Chairman

Minutes of the meeting of the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held at 14:05 on Thursday, 06 April 2023 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Chelmsford.

Present:

County Councillors:

Cllr Susan Barker

Cllr Jane Fleming

Cllr Marie Goldman

Cllr Ray Gooding (Chairman)

Cllr Ian Grundy

Cllr Carlo Guglielmi

Cllr Jeff Henry (substitute for Cllr Mark Durham)

Cllr June Lumley

Cllr Aidan McGurran

Cllr Jaymey McIvor (substitute for Cllr Laureen Shaw)

Cllr Ross Playle

Cllr Wendy Stamp

In attendance:

Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager

Paul Turner, Director Legal & Assurance

Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Jasmine Langley, Democratic Services Officer

1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Peter May, Laureen Shaw (for whom Councillor Jaymey McIvor attended as substitute), Mark Durham (for whom Councillor Jeff Henry attended as substitute) and Andy Wiles.

2 Questions from the public

There were none.

3 Call-in: Recommissioning of Short Breaks Provision for Children with Disabilities (FP/032/02/23)

The Committee considered report FP/032/02/23 comprising of a call-in of a proposed Cabinet Member Decision made on 21st March to Recommission the Short Breaks Provision for Children with Disabilities.

The following joined the meeting.

Presenting and supporting the call-in:

Councillor Mike Mackrory

Councillor David King
Councillor Marie Goldman (Member of the Committee)
Gary Knowles, founder of 'Save our Respite' Group
Lorraine Woodhouse, member of 'Save our Respite' Group
Cllr Dan Land (via Zoom) – local member also supporting the concerns raised in the call-in.

Responding to the call-in:

Cllr Beverley Egan Cabinet Member Children's Services and Early Years
Cllr Mark Platt – Deputy Cabinet Member Children's Services and Early Years
Clare Burrell, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Policy
Gaye Cole, Director Local Delivery

The reasons for the call-in

On 24 March 2023, the decision was called-in by Councillor Mike Mackrory with the support of Councillors Marie Goldman, David King, and Stephen Robinson.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mackrory outlined his reasons for the call-in:

- That Lavender House provided the precise care that was required by its users at a location that was reasonably convenient for families who lived in the north of the County. The Maples centre in Harlow, which was proposed as an alternative was not deemed the same and was approximately 40 miles and a one-hour drive away on the other side of the county.
- Councillor Mackrory deemed it unacceptable for the users to be expected to travel the distance for a similar provision, especially for parents who have other childcare and / or work commitments. Councillor Mackrory stated that it would be unviable to expect children with complex needs to travel by taxi or school bus.
- Councillor Mackrory referenced the Cabinet Decision Paper, paragraph 3.5 in particular, and that 5 of the 6 identified alternative providers listed were outside of Essex, in Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury and Hertfordshire.
- That the alternative provisions outlined, particularly foster care and home-based care were different to the care provided at Lavender House.
- Councillor Mackrory referenced the Supplementary Information provided in Appendix C by the Cabinet Member and Lead Officer in response to the call-in which outlined older children transitioning to an adult provision. Councillor Mackrory stated that this did not address the number of younger children potentially entering the service in the future and who could need access to the specialist care provided by Lavender House.
- Councillor Mackrory outlined the concern he had regarding the affect the closure would have on the users of the service as they grew older and the impact that would have on the children's and parents' health. He stated there was concern that parents would be unable to cope without the specialist

respite breaks and that due to this, some children would inevitably have to go into full time care, which he wished to avoid, and which would also be a cost to the authority in the future.

- Councillor Mackrory asked that the decision was referred to Full Council for further consideration.

Mr Gary Knowles was called as a supporting witness and gave a statement outlining the issues facing some families and the importance of the service to all families who access it.

Lorraine Woodhouse was called as a supporting witness and gave a statement about the day-to-day pressures she faced and how the Lavender House service had provided support for her and her family.

Councillor Land was called as the local member for the area in which Lavender House operated and gave a statement supporting the families' comments.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor King outlined his reasons for supporting the call-in some of which had already been stated and he also stressed:

- That he believed that by allowing the closure of Lavender House the Council would be falling short of its responsibilities to families using the service.
- That emotional, practical, and financial implications of the decision had not been fully assessed.
- That families in the North and East of Essex would be the most impacted from the closure.
- That Lavender House should be available to meet latent and known demand.

Cabinet Member response to the call-in

Thereafter, at the request of the Chairman, Councillor Beverley Egan, Cabinet Member for Children Services and Early Years, responded to the issues raised in the call-in notice with support from the following:

- Councillor Mark Platt – Deputy Cabinet Member, Children's Services and Early Years
- Gaye Cole, Director of Local Delivery
- Clare Burrell, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Policy

The following key points were made in response to the call-in:

- The decision had been considered over several years and points raised by the call-in had been addressed in the decision papers.
- That the decision was not to stop the provision of overnight respite care.

- ECC had engaged with external providers and that, whilst some of the alternative provision identified was outside of the County, it was often closer to North Essex residents than other provisions in Essex. It was suggested that there may be more external provision in the north of the county than in the west.
- Further work had been done regarding specialist foster carers and other alternative opportunities for respite care. ECC had grown the number of overnights available with foster carers and it was suggested that for a lot of children a home-based setting worked better for them.
- That the Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment had taken into consideration the points raised by the call-in.
- That the service would continue to consider each family's circumstances to ensure that every child's needs were met.
- That the decision to consolidate all internal provision of overnight respite with external provider provision and specialist foster carers and to increase the number of direct payments families can access, would all together meet the estimated future demand.

Issues raised by and discussed with the Committee

During subsequent discussion, the following clarifications were given and/or points acknowledged and noted:

- Councillor Goldman, who had supported the call-in, referenced page 10 of the agenda pack, paragraph 3.6, page 15 - paragraph 3.30, page 20 - paragraph 5.8, page 22 – paragraph 6.1.2 and asked how those statements referencing financial implications, were compatible with Councillor Egan's statement at the Cabinet Meeting on 21st March 2023 that the decision was not a financial led decision.
- Councillor Egan stated that there were savings of £54k per year from the decision, which would be invested back into the service. It was stressed that the decision was about ensuring the needs of the whole county were met and were not purely financial.
- The £400k saving detailed in the decision papers related to the whole short breaks offer across the system as part of the short breaks commissioning strategy. The total cost of running Lavender House was £556k but that there was no information available on how the savings would be redistributed throughout the service.
- Staff from Lavender House would be redeployed within the service and there would be no savings associated with staffing costs, which was the biggest cost associated with the delivery of the Lavender House service.
- Some members queried some of the narrative in the decision papers referring to future demand at Maples but only talking about current demand at Lavender House.

- Councillor Egan confirmed that the external provision identified was suitable for both medical and behavioural needs.
- Some members suggested that children with complex needs needed routine and any change to that had a significant impact on them. It was stressed that there would be time after a decision being made to work with families to prepare for the change.
- Some members suggested that, if the closure of Lavender House were to go ahead, some young people would require full time care instead which had a substantial cost associated with it.
- Councillor Egan confirmed that the decision was not to remove the provision of short breaks but to change the provision. Families would still be supported through the same assessment process as now to find the best care for their specific circumstances.
- Clare Burrell confirmed that a short break was defined as a break of one night or more and that all travel was covered for the children to return to their education settings whilst on a short break.
- Cllr Beverley Egan confirmed that if families who were previously using Lavender House chose to then make use of The Maples, that there may be some assistance with the extra associated travel costs.
- It was suggested by some members that Councillor Egan should write to the parents and carers in this county whose child qualified for short breaks to inform, them of all the options available to them. Councillor Egan indicated that she would consider that.
- It was suggested that a list detailing all the alternative provisions arranged by electoral division, could be collated to allow all Councillors and parents to clearly see what was available to them.
- Councillor Egan confirmed she was satisfied with the way that the evidence supporting the proposed decision had been collected and assessed and that the proposals outlined in the decision would address future demand. ECC would continue to work with the provider market to further develop a mixed and blended approach for overnight breaks provision.

At the invitation of the Chairman Cllr Mike Mackrory summed up his case for the call-in and urged members to refer the matter back to Full Council.

Motions proposed and the decision of the Committee

The Committee were reminded that it had the following courses of action open to it:

- (i) allow the proposed decision to be implemented without further delay;
- (ii) refer the proposed decision back to the decision taker setting out in writing its concerns; or

(iii) refer the matter to Full Council, also with a record of its concerns.

Two motions were proposed.

Councillor Guglielmi moved that the proposed decision to be implemented without further delay, which was seconded by Councillor Jeff Henry.

Councillor Goldman moved that the matter be referred to Full Council, also with a record of the Committee's concerns, which was seconded by Councillor Aidan McGurran.

The first motion proposed, namely that the proposed decision be implemented without further delay, was put to the meeting, and agreed with 6 votes in favour and 3 against with 3 members abstaining:

Resolved:

To allow the decision to be implemented without further delay.

As a result of the first motion being agreed, the second motion that had been proposed was not put to the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on 11 May 2023 - 09:30 to 13:30

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:37

Chairman

MATTERS ARISING (page 1 of 5)

Date	Agenda item	Action	Status
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
		Further information would be provided on the efficacy of outcomes for apprenticeships and specifically what percentage successfully completed their end point assessment	TBC
		Further information would be provided on how apprenticeships could lead into further opportunities for professional qualifications	TBC
	Life-Long Learning and Belonging Strategic Plan	It was agreed that a further update would be provided in approximately six months 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	To be scheduled
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 ideally at or around the formal launch of the Strategy.	To be scheduled
		A further update would be given in due course demonstrating progress and the changes being implemented.	To be scheduled

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
15 February 2023 cont...	Disability Strategy continued...	District/borough councils should be encouraged to include provision for supported housing in their Local Plans; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate specifications and provision for supported housing should also be reflected in the County Council's own Design Guide; - Representation be made on the increasing need for supported housing in the current consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework; - Request that Essex Housing consider if there is a role for it to further promote and influence the increase in supported housing provision. 	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
		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 scheduled
	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 would be provided to Members	TBC
		Further information on the rate of the contract would be provided to Members	TBC

Date	Agenda item	Action	Status
11 January 2023	Update on the HCRG Contract for the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service cont...	Further 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 December 2022	Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2022-2027: End of Year One Update	Further information be provided on the lobbying undertaken by the County Council with Government, the Local Government Association and other bodies to help drive further improvement in standards and outcomes.	TBC
		A more detailed report of the 2022 EY Foundation Stage profile which measured a good level of development – which had been the first published data since pre-pandemic – would be circulated	TBC
		A further broad update would be arranged in due course	TBC
	SEND Strategy Update	To talk to representatives from the Family Forum in the new year to seek their views on the changes to services being seen and the challenges still being faced.	TBC
		Cabinet Member and officers to come back in six months with a further update to include some analysis of numbers and spend compared with other local authorities	TBC
10 November 2022	Adult Community Learning	A further update would be brought to the committee in the new year including a work plan (particularly on implementation of strategy and related workstreams), progress and impact of actions so far.	Scheduled for March 2023 meeting.
13 October 2022	Domestic Abuse update	Further data on how domestic abuse cases broke down by area to be provided to the Committee.	Timing TBC
		An information leaflet/card would be circulated to food banks before Christmas.	TBC
		Information cards for COMPASS would be sent to members if this had not already been done.	TBC

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
	Domestic Abuse update continued...	It would be looked into whether support was provided to those victims who were directed to commercial rental market.	TBC
		Further information on cases where private legal proceeding in family court being brought against victims inappropriately.	TBC
		Opportunities to work with the Refugee Council would be raised with the Domestic Abuse Board.	TBC
		The impact of Court backlogs was discussed regularly at the Domestic Abuse Board. It was agreed an update would be provided on the current situation	TBC
		More detail would be provided on the figures showing a rise of repeat victims.	TBC
8 September 2022	Essex Adults Safeguarding Board	An operational briefing would be arranged [this may incorporate further information on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards]	To be scheduled later in the year
		Further information and breakdown on the age bands use for some disclosures	TBC
		A breakdown of the contributions made by the three statutory partners would be provided	TBC
	Essex Adults Safeguarding Board cont..	More information would be provided on the continued upskilling of the care sector in safeguarding and awareness.	TBC
		Further update to be provided in due course incorporating suicide prevention work	Chairman and VCs to decide on timing for a formal follow-up
14 April 2022	Essex Safeguarding Children Board update	Information on accessing services in the Dengie area to be provided	TBC

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Status
		More knife bins should be placed in smaller towns, including placing them within Essex libraries to prevent vandalism	TBC
		Broader conclusions around (i) MASA arrangements, (ii) further streamlining Board activities, (iii) continued focus on County Lines and (iv) stronger links to Everyone's Essex aspirations and priorities,	To be taken up by the PAF Chairman and VCs with the Independent Chairman
	Our Co-Parenting Strategy – How we do Corporate Parenting in Essex	A Champion within each district/borough for children in care and care leavers should be considered	TBC
		Priority policies on housing allocation to help give young people the opportunity to progress in life be considered	TBC
		That figures be included within the introduction section showing the number of children taken into care in the last three years	TBC
		The paragraph regarding co-grandparents in the Strategy be expanded	TBC
		Further consideration be given to increasing the corporate parenting role at Full Council	TBC
		Further consideration be given to how to encourage other anchor organisations to help and that a guarantee of a job interview could be a significant first step.	TBC

Report title: Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance	
Report to: People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Nick Presmeg, Executive Director for Adult Social Care	
Date: 8 June 2023	For: Consideration and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
Enquiries to: Clare Hardy, Head of Strategy & Innovation clare.hardy@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: County wide	

1. Introduction

This item has been requested by the Chairman, in consultation with and after discussion with the Cabinet Member and Lead Officer to understand how the Council is preparing for the new Care Quality Commission Assurance Framework.

2. Action required

The Committee is asked to consider:

- (i) **The attached update on how Adult Social Care is preparing for the new Care Quality Commission assurance framework.**
- (ii) **The learning and priority areas for focus arising from the self-assessment, peer challenge and regional sector led improvement activities.**
- (iii) **Identify any follow-up scrutiny actions.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Health & Social Care Act 2022 established a new duty for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to quality assurance how local authorities discharge their adult social care responsibilities. 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 The People and Families Committee has had a private briefing session on the responsibilities of CQC in relation to its new duties covering Local Authorities to enable it to now focus on the specific preparation being undertaken by ECC.

Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance

4. Update and Next Steps

Adult Social Care has recently completed a self-assessment, a Local Government Association peer challenge and a range of sector led improvement activities. The attached presentation sets out the activities it has undertaken and the key insight gained from these processes. Following this period of reflection Adult Social Care has prioritised 5 key areas of focus:

- 1) Carers
- 2) Lived experience & coproduction
- 3) People Waiting & Operational Service Efficiency
- 4) Safeguarding
- 5) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Directors are now putting in place plans to ensure we deliver improvements in these areas.

Expected attendees to support the discussion:

Cllr John Spence, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health
Nick Presmeg, Executive Director, Adult Social Care
Clare Hardy, Head of Strategy & Innovation

5 Appendix

Power Point presentation titled: Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance
PAF Scrutiny 2023

Preparing for Care Quality Commission Assurance

People & Families Scrutiny Committee

8th June 2023

CQC Assurance

- Health & Care Act 2022 established a new responsibility for CQC to quality assurance local authority social care functions and Integrated Care Systems
- CQC will commence this role in April 2023
- CQC undertaking pilots from April 2023-Sept 2023
- CQC will inspect each Local Authority and Integrated Care System between Oct 2023 - Sept 2025
- CQC have developed a single assurance framework across health and social care
- Local Authority Assurance Framework covers 4 themes: Working with People, Providing Support, Ensuring Safety and Leadership

Our preparations

As part of our preparation for this new quality assurance we have:

- Developed and rolled out a new quality assurance framework aligned to the CQC assurance framework
- Undertaken a self-assessment
- Collated an evidence base to support our self-assessment
- Undertaken a Local Government Association peer challenge
- Engaged in regional peer sector led improvement activities
- Programme around better use of data and intelligence
- Engaged staff and partners

Our learning approach

- Self-assessment – completed a self-assessment aligned to the CQC assurance framework in Dec 22/ Jan 23
- LGA peer challenge, 8 peers, 5 days reviewed self-assessment and evidence, case file audit, focus groups with Members, staff, partners, providers, carers, adults with lived experience in Feb 23
- Regional sector led improvement – range of improvement networks, regional review and challenge sessions against the self-assessments, buddy system review self-assessments and evidence in March 23



“ECC staff are proud and passionate about the work they do in Essex”

1. Working with People

- ✓ Innovative work including Equipment and Connect
- ✓ Satisfaction with Assisted Technology
- ✓ Good preventative services
- ✓ Person centred approach in the Disability Accommodation Hub
- ✓ Co-production in Meaningful Lives Matter
- ✓ Evidence of strength-based practice in teams

Considerations



Work with carers on the delivery and outcomes of the Carers Strategy

Consistency across the County, improve the customer journey

User voice needs to be further embedded

Learning from covid regarding impact for residents

EDI needs to be further embedded to benefit residents

Backlogs on assessments, reviews, DoLS

2. Providing Support

- ✓ Provider feedback was positive
- ✓ Reconfigured day opportunities to support paid employment
- ✓ Using people's stories to create a strong narrative and push through barriers
- ✓ Training opportunities for care providers and staff

Considerations



Inconsistencies regarding use of additional needs funding

Relationships with voluntary and community organisations needs to be nurtured

Further opportunities for pooling budgets between Health and Social Care

Improvements in information and advice for carers

Processes for implementing direct payments requires improvement

3. Ensuring Safety

- ✓ Quality Assurance of provider services
- ✓ Home First is embedded across all Acute Hospitals
- ✓ Safeguarding Adults Board engagement with partners
- ✓ Dedicated Principal SW role
- ✓ Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews

Considerations



Quality Assurance of practice needs to be further embedded

Feedback to providers on safeguarding to enable learning

Safeguarding triage needs further work on its processes

Safeguarding case recording does not always reflect strength-based conversations

Ensuring Safety self-assessment may benefit from review

4. Leadership

- ✓ Everyone's Essex, is clear on levelling up
- ✓ Mature leaders at strategic level
- ✓ Director of Public Health more engaged in Council and System working
- ✓ Principal SW and OT are visible and have positive identity
- ✓ Strong approach to business planning
- ✓ Strong wellbeing support for staff

Considerations



Public Health is an investible proposition

Consider further how to bring partners in at Alliance level

Further develop insight to understand our workforce

Health and Wellbeing Board to continue to develop common purpose and strengthen collaboration

What's Next...

Priority areas of focus:

1. Carers

2. Lived experience & Coproduction

**3. People Waiting and Operational
Service Efficiency**

4. Safeguarding

5. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- ✓ Agreed priority areas of focus
- ✓ Of key importance to our Adults and Carers
- ✓ Step change in activities in these areas
- ✓ Progress within 6 months

What's Next....

Current areas of improvement:

Quality Assurance
Strengths based practice & Case recording system
Disabled Facilities Grant
ECL & Market Shaping
Locality working & pooled budgets
Direct Payments Support Service

Opportunities for further consideration:

Consistency & Local variance	ASC
Additional Needs Funding	ASC
Public Health	Corporate
Learning from covid	Corporate
Workforce data	Corporate
Health & Wellbeing Board	Corporate
Voluntary & Community Sectors	Corporate

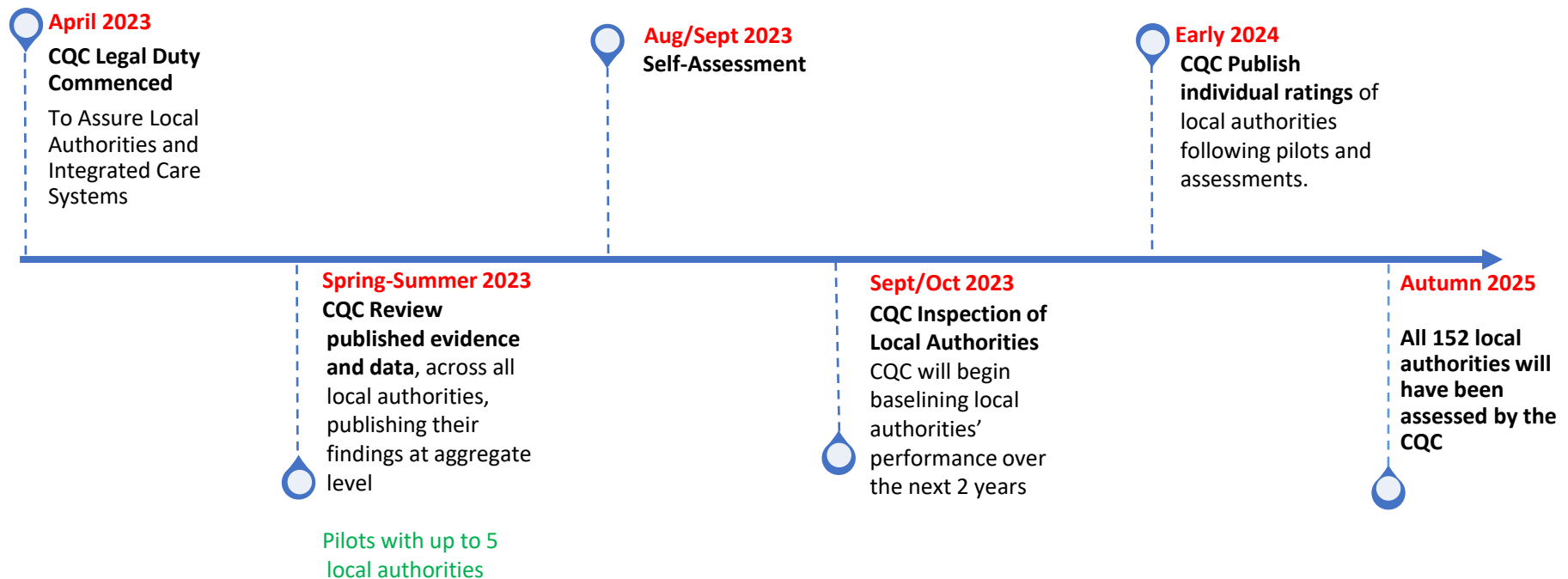
Expected CQC Areas of Focus

- People waiting (Assessment, Reviews, Safeguarding, DoLS)
- Quality of practice
- Provision of Care and the Market (inc Care provider ratings and People waiting for care)
- Choice and Control Adults/Carers
- Adults/Carers voice
- Safeguarding systems & process
- Hospital pathways/transfers of care

Key Metrics

1. % of carers who receive a service in their own right
2. Number of working age adults (18-64) admitted to permanent residential care following an assessment or review
3. Number of older adults (65+) admitted to permanent residential care following an assessment or review
4. % of new clients who received short-term support during the past 12 months, where no further request was made for ongoing support
5. % of adults who use services who receive a direct payment
6. % of adults receiving LTS for a learning disability, who are supported in their own home or with family
7. % of adults known to secondary mental health services who live independently, with or without support
8. % of adults receiving LTS for a Learning Disability, who are in paid employment
9. % of adults known to secondary mental health services who are in paid employment
10. % of new care act assessments which were completed within 28 days of incoming
11. % of adults supported for 12m+ who have received a review in the past 12 months
12. Number of adults waiting for a package of care per 100k population
13. % of adults in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' placements
14. Safeguarding Concerns received per 100k population
15. % of s42 enquiries where a risk was identified and the outcome was reported as the risk reduced or removed
16. Number of safeguarding enquiries not yet started
17. Number of adults benefitting from Care Technology
18. % of older people (aged 65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement

Timeline - Adult Social Care CQC Assurance



Report title: Work Programme	
Report to: People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 8 June 2023	For: Discussion and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
Enquiries to: Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer at graham.hughes@essex.gov.uk .	
County Divisions affected: 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 Committee is asked to consider the notes of the private session held on 11 May 2023 and any issues arising (Appendix 2).
- 2.3 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

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

Work Programme

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](#)

Cont.....

5. Update and Next Steps

- 5.1 See Appendix 1 for current work programme
- 5.2 See Appendix 2 for notes of the private session held on 11 May 2023 reflecting on the work of the Committee.

See Action Required (above) for next steps.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Current work programme.

Appendix 2 - notes of the private session held on 11 May 2023 reflecting on the work of the Committee

People and Families Policy and Scrutiny - Work Programme as at 8 June 2023

APPENDIX 1

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead Contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes	Everyone's Essex Commitment	Cross-Committee
8 June 2023	Preparation for Care Quality Commission inspection of Adult Social Care	Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Health/Head of Strategy and Innovation	To consider preparations for a future inspection.	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable
28 June 2023	Essex Adults Safeguarding Board	Independent Chairman, statutory partners and the Board Manager	To be briefed on aims and structure of Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and consider findings from recent cases	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable
13 July 2023	Provider Quality update and working with the Care Quality Commission	Head of Provider Quality	To consider the working relationship ECC has with the Care Quality Commission in supporting providers.	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	TBC
14 September 2023 - TBC	Essex Adults Safeguarding Board – follow up	Independent Chairman, statutory partners and the Board Manager	To consider actions arising from last formal discussion and consider draft annual report	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable
September/October 2023- 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
TBC	Disability Strategy	Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Health/Director of ASC for Adults with Disabilities	To consider a further update on the Delivery Plan and identified actions soon after formal launch	Promoting Independence, Healthy Lifestyles	Not applicable

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes	Everyone's Essex Commitments	Cross-committee
TBC	Houses for Life	Director Strategy Policy & Integration (People)	May be cross -committee work	Promoting Independence, Healthy Lifestyles	TBC
TBC	Home Education/Children Missing Education	Cabinet Member Education Excellence, Skills and Training	To consider update and links with County Lines and drug gangs	Education Outcomes	Not applicable
TBC	County Lines and Drug Gangs	TBC	Use of funds and the work of the Violence and Vulnerability Unit	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable
TBC	Youth Service	Deputy Leader & Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance/ Head of Specialist Education Services	Introduction to the service including profile and raising engagement, what the service has delivered and new projects.	Education Outcomes/ Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable
Autumn 2023	Lifelong Learning and Belonging Plan	Cabinet Member, 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 could be invited
TBC	SEND Strategy update	Cabinet Member, Education Excellence, Life-Long Learning and Employability/Head of SEND Strategy and Innovation	Support available and reflect on launch of new strategy	Family Resilience and Stability, and Safety	Not applicable

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes	Everyone's Essex Commitments	Cross-committee
TBC	Childcare and Early Years' Strategy	Cabinet Member, Children's Services and Early Years/ EYCC Sufficiency and Sustainability Manager	Support available and reflect on launch of new strategy	Family Resilience and Stability, Education	Not applicable
TBC	Education	Cabinet Member Education Excellence, Skills and Training	(i) Portfolio priorities (ii) Attainment	Education Outcomes	Not applicable

Private briefings

A schedule of private briefings is also being arranged to give background to issues and subjects ahead of formal items coming before the Committee in 2023. At the time of writing this report, the first three of these have been held on Further Understanding Social Care and Social Care Charging and an initial session on the Care Quality Commission inspection regime. Further sessions are planned on safeguarding, Funding Reforms, and further consideration of the Care Quality Commission inspection regime.

Further issues not scoped or currently being scheduled

Children in care being placed outside Essex

Backlog in Courts and Justice System

Education - academisation

Possible Task and Finish Group reviews – not scoped or currently being scheduled

Impact of the pandemic on Essex County Council

Suicides in Essex

APPENDIX 2

NOTES OF A PRIVATE REVIEW AND REFLECTIONS SESSION HELD ON 11 MAY 2023 ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (PAF)

Review

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented some analysis of how the Committee had spent its time over the last two years matching agenda items to the Committee's Terms of Reference. This prompted further discussion which is summarised below.

Approach

PAF members wanted to add value by challenging and collaborating with decision-makers to drive improvements.

In relation to the Committee's Terms of Reference, members reflected that the PAF had not discussed or decided to give a greater priority or focus to any specific areas. However, PAF Members did acknowledge that a significant proportion of the Council's budget and resources was directed towards adult social care.

Members agreed that some further financial context would often help increase their level of understanding of some of the issues being presented especially on sensitive formal decisions being proposed. It was also felt that more detailed and informative service spend information could often be buried within consolidated disclosures in ECC's budget.

It was suggested that the PAF could prepare for formal items by speaking to witnesses with lived experience beforehand. This had seemed to work well with two previous agenda items.

Members discussed the balance between the committee's work programme being driven by them and requests from Cabinet Members asking to attend and present a new strategy or issue.

There was a suggestion that a future approach could also consider themes as opposed to just specific services. In addition, a more holistic approach could be taken so that, for example, when looking at SEND services, to look at the whole family impact and not just the child with SEND.

Outcomes

Commenting on draft corporate strategies and policies was the policy development part of the PAF's remit. However, there seemed to be an imbalance at present with those dominating the work programme.

Outcomes continued....

The PAF had commented on several draft corporate strategies during the last two years. Currently, members felt that the Committee was not yet seeing outcomes from their implementation and particularly the difference their implementation should be making to residents. It was suggested that there should be a change in approach and focus from the PAF going forward and that it should increase the focus on challenging what was changing in the delivery of services.

It was suggested that future agenda items could include more data on how ECC was achieving outcomes with some degree of KPI reporting and an indication of impact assessment.

It was suggested that further consideration be given to analysing Committee outcomes with anticipated dates for any outstanding matters possibly via an expanded Matters Arising Report for discussion (probably) at pre-meetings.

To assist the above, going forward Members may need to consider some re-framing of suggestions/recommendations being made in formal meetings and push for a time scale to investigate and respond.

Members confirmed that they thought the private reflections time after the close of formal meetings should resume.

Advance notice of upcoming proposed decisions

Consulting the Forward Plan could be useful to see upcoming proposed decisions but there needed to be other mechanisms in place to get even earlier notice to enable meaningful scrutiny engagement with the issue beforehand. Reference was made to recent changes in the Cabinet-Scrutiny protocol which would be presented to the next Full Council as part of the Annual Scrutiny Report.

Call-ins

It was suggested by some members that two recent call-ins had been based more on concerns about process and governance. Concern was expressed by those members that there had been no advance briefing and consultation with PAF ahead of those decisions being taken which could have given the PAF the opportunity to ascertain full context and, in the case of the decision on Lavender House, how the user consultation had been structured.

See overleaf for Work Programme suggestions and the update from Healthwatch Essex.

Work Programme suggestions

Missing Children/Children Missing Education and link with youth mental health issues such as anxiety and depression - partly as part of post pandemic recovery.

Look at absentee rates including post pandemic trend. Is pastoral care in schools sufficient?

Follow-up on County Lines Task and Finish Group

- understand impact on mental health
- PFCC involvement

Services in rural areas (including SEND in the Dengie).

Sufficiency of education services

(Housing) Provision for domestic violence victims/other vulnerable people

Responsibility for academies and Regional School Commissioners.

Healthwatch Essex update

Sara Poole from Healthwatch Essex (HWE) then joined the session via Zoom and outlined some of their upcoming lived experience work. This included:

- Young Mental Health Ambassadors particularly looking at transitions
- Collaborate Essex Forum for people with disabilities and helping them with day-to-day activities
- Hidden Voices Network:
 - Podcasts
 - Gambling
 - Drug addiction
 - Mental health
 - LGBT+ groups
- Essex Fellas forum
- Trauma Ambassador Group – developed a Trauma Awareness Card
- Learning Disabilities Ambassadors – looking to do some more work with learning disabilities nurses in local hospitals.
- Travellers wellbeing – further building connections

HWE were keen to assist the PAF with its work wherever it could.