

People and Families Scrutiny Committee

10:30	Thursday, 09 July 2015	Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex
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Quorum: 4

Membership

Councillor I Grundy
Councillor D Blackwell
Councillor R Boyce
Councillor J Chandler
Councillor M Danvers
Councillor K Gibbs
Councillor A Goggin
Councillor C Guglielmi
Councillor T Higgins
Councillor P Honeywood
Councillor R Howard
Councillor A Jackson
Councillor M McEwen
Councillor A Wood

Chairman

Non-elected Members

Richard Carson
Marian Uzzell

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Robert Fox, Scrutiny Officer

Matthew Waldie, Committee Officer

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www.essex.gov.uk/scrutiny



Essex County Council

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Part 1

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

	Pages
1 Apologies for Absence and Substitution Notices	
2 Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct	
3 Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2015 (copy attached).	5 - 10
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. On arrival, and before the start of the meeting, please register with the Committee Officer.	
5 Meals on Wheels To receive an update on the latest recommendations for the provision of the Meals on Wheels Service. Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Adults & Children, and Louise Hall, Head of Commissioning, Vulnerable People, will be in attendance. Report PAF/12/15 attached.	11 - 24
6 Domestic Abuse To receive a report on Domestic Abuse issues. Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Adults & Children, and Sheila Norris, Director for Integrated Commissioning and Vulnerable People, will be in attendance. Report PAF/13/15 attached.	25 - 28
7 NHS Success Regime To receive a report on the NHS Success Regime. Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Adults & Children, Sheila Norris, Director for Integrated Commissioning and Vulnerable People, and Peter Fairley, Head of Policy and Strategy People, will be in attendance. Report PAF/14/15 attached.	29 - 60

- 8 Educational Attainment Task & Finish Group 61 - 138**
To receive the draft final report and recommendations of the Educational Attainment Task & Finish Group. Report PAF/15/15 attached.
- 9 Date of Next Meeting**
To note that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 10 September 2015 at 10.30am.
- 10 Urgent Business**
To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Exempt Items

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

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

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

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

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD AT LATTON BUSH CENTRE, HARLOW, ON THURSDAY 21 MAY
2015**

County Councillors:

* I Grundy (Chairman)	* C Guglielmi
D Blackwell	* T Higgins
R Boyce	* P Honeywood
* J Chandler	* R Howard
* M Danvers	A Jackson
K Gibbs	* M McEwen
A Goggin	

Non-Elected Voting Members:

* Mr R Carson	Ms M Uzzell
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*present

The following Members were also present:

Councillor K Bobbin
Councillor R Gadsby
Councillor J Whitehouse

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Robert Fox	Scrutiny Officer
Matthew Waldie	Committee Officer

The meeting opened at 10.30 am.

1. Appointment of Vice Chairmen

The Chairman invited nominations for two vice-chairmen of the Committee. Cllr T Higgins and Cllr M McEwen, each having been proposed and seconded, were unanimously voted in as vice chairmen of the Committee.

2. Apologies and Substitutions

The Chairman reported the receipt of the following apologies:

Apologies	Substitutes
Cllr D Blackwell	
Cllr R Boyce	
Cllr K Gibbs	
Cllr A Goggin	
Cllr A Jackson	

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the People and Families Scrutiny Committee meeting of 12 March 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

5. Questions from the Public

There were no questions registered from Members of the Public.

6. Community Agent Essex Scheme

Members received Report PAF/11/15, which provided an update on the Community Agent Essex Scheme. The Chairman welcomed Andrew Gardner, Chief Executive of Age UK Essex, Sharon Longworth, Head of Commissioning Vulnerable People, and Helen Gilbert, Senior Commissioning Delivery Officer, Commissioning Support, to the meeting and invited Ms Longworth to introduce the item.

Ms Longworth pointed out that the scheme was delivered by the four major charities working alongside the County Council.

It introduced an entirely new service, with 36 salaried agents assisted by, in due course, 72 volunteers, working across the County. The model was set on the expectation that half of the 6000 anticipated annual referrals would come through Social Services and the rest through GPs, friends, family, friends, etc. There was a triaging system, and a focus on the most vulnerable. Volunteers were trained and supported by the British Red Cross. Efforts were being made to attract further recruits.

The Community Agents had been modelled on Village Agents, although their aim was to spend much longer with people, building resilience and helping individuals, rather than just signposting.

The Rural Community Council for Essex was the senior partner; it employed the agents in the Mid and North East areas. The British Red Cross employed the others. A very lean management structure was in place.

The inclusion of Essex Neighbourhood Watch was potentially very effective, as there were about 6000 groups across the County, all with members who were able to look out for unusual signs, indicating that people may need support.

The Scheme would receive ECC funding for five years: full funding for the first three, then reduced funding in years four and five. The intention was that the partners should work out a funding scheme for the latter stage. The partners did

not know exactly how they would achieve this, but were committed to producing some proposals during the first year.

Responses were given to points raised by Members:

- Village Agents received ongoing training and their understanding of what they were expected to do had greatly improved
- Agents operated in all parishes, but may not have managed to contact all parish councils as yet. They also worked in non-parished, urban areas; their contact details were attached to the Committee paper and members were encouraged to use these details and circulate them as widely as possible.
- As partners, the various parties contribute freely to providing solutions, and will use outside organisations as well, if appropriate. The overall aim is shared, so everyone may get involved
- Referral routes are varied, with agents being used to different degrees – usually less so when social workers are already allocated. Some agents already have their own routes. Best routes are developing. Agents may also work on the reablement side (when patients return home after hospital stays)
- The new Care Act sets prevention as a higher priority; this ties in well with the Council's preventative strategy. The Act also specifically targets the needs of carers, which is another area that the Scheme intends to address
- Although there has not been much engagement with Essex Cares in the past, there is likely to be more in future
- The policy is to engage with all district councils. They have also looked at what other counties do and tried to select the best elements
- A lot of data is being produced and analysed. This should enable areas of need to be better targeted, particularly from Year 2 onward
- Regarding the potential number of referrals involved, this may change in time – the priority would be to remain flexible, to be able to cope with changing situations.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for their helpful contributions and suggested that the Committee should receive an update on the scheme in 12 months' time.

7. People and Families Scrutiny Committee work programme, 2015-16

Members received Report PAF/12/15, setting out proposed topics for consideration by the Committee over the next 18 months, and including proposed scoping documents.

Members discussed these as follows:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The role of the Safeguarding Member Reference Group was raised. There was general contentment that both the Member Reference Group and the wider

Safeguarding Board cover CSE issues; however, the Group and the Board do not have a scrutiny function. The Committee agreed a formal **RECOMMENDATION** that the Member Safeguarding Reference Group report directly to the People and Families Scrutiny Committee. To this end a meeting between the Chairman of the Committee and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children would be established. Further there was a request that the informal structure of all Cabinet Member Reference Groups would be reported to each Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee agreed that the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children should provide and present a report to the full Committee in September 2015. The terms of reference and key lines of enquiry on the scoping document as presented were agreed as the basis for the September 2015 report. Following the receipt of the September report the Committee would be in a position to take an informed view as to whether it establishes a formal review.

Care Act Implications

It was agreed that the Committee should receive periodic (perhaps quarterly) updates on the implications of the Care Act with the recognition that a review might become a major item this time next year – twelve months following the implementation of the Act.

The updates might look at two separate aspects: 1) what does the County Council have to do to get itself ready; and 2) how is it progressing.

Residential and Domiciliary Care

A review of residential and domiciliary care was suggested to the Committee by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children. It was agreed that such a review form part of the Committee's work programme. A Task and Finish Group would be established.

It was noted that the Members Reference Group was already involved in the monitoring of homes, because of safeguarding issues; and there was probably much going on unknown to the Committee.

Health and Education Plans

This was a key tenet to the Essex County Council Commissioning Strategies priorities: *Children in Essex get the best start in life and People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning*. It was agreed that Health and Education Plans should form part of the Committee's work programme. A Task and Finish Group would be established. It was proposed that the review of Health and Education Plans should commence in 2016.

All Age Disability

Two particular issues were raised as possibly needing to be addressed: 1) the transition period; and 2) the fact that many individuals do not come into the system until they are quite old, when their parents become unable to cope.

As part of any review it was suggested by Cllr Carlo Guglielmi that the Committee undertake a visit to the Mistley Village Centre. This was agreed. It was agreed that All Age Disability should form part of the Committee's work programme.

The Committee noted that it was also committed to receiving updates on the Youth Services Redesign from the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning throughout the following 18 months.

8. Updates from Task & Finish Groups

Members received a brief oral report on the status of Task & Finish Groups:

Educational Attainment. The Group anticipates two further meetings, site visits. A draft report will be brought to the Scrutiny Committee in July, with final sign-off being sought at the September meeting.

Carers Strategy. The intention is to meet on a regular basis, probably quarterly. The Group wishes to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member in due course.

9. Date of next meeting

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting: 10.00 am on Thursday 9 July 2015. Venue: Committee Room 1 at County Hall.

The Chairman proposed that the Committee commence monthly meetings, with the formal Scrutiny Committee meetings taking place bi-monthly with the intervening months set aside as 'activity days' – which might be set aside for briefings, visits and Task and Finish Group activity. These activity days could be all-day events. However, the Chairman of the Committee would be able to call a full meeting, if required, on these intervening months.

The meeting closed at 12:23 pm.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		PAF/12/15
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	9 July 2015	
<u>Meals on Wheels Service</u>		
Enquiries to:	Louise Hall Head of Commissioning Vulnerable People Louse.hall@essex.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1. The contract for the community meals service, commonly known as “meals on wheels”, expires on the 30th September 2015. Sodexo the current Service Provider have indicated that they are not prepared to agree to extend the contract on the current terms.
- 1.2. This report sets out the recommendations for the new service
- 1.3. Attached is an example of the Meals on Wheels dashboard that has been developed to monitor the progress of the project (appendix 1).

2. Recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 23 June 2015

- 2.1. Agree to enter into a new one year contract with Sodexo on the terms set out in paragraph 3.31 – 3.35
- 2.2. Agree to grant a waiver from the Council’s procurement rules to enable this contract to be awarded.
- 2.3. Assess the users of the service who will be affected by the reduction in the geographical area covered by the service and ensure that they are provided with an equivalent service via domiciliary care or community alternatives.
- 2.4. Undertake a review of the transition and prepare a report to the Cabinet in autumn 2015 which sets out future options for the meals service
- 2.5. Agree a drawdown from the general balance of up to £175,000 over the next three years to meet the forecast budget shortfall arising from the new arrangements for the provision of a meals service.

Additionally, the project team have agreed to submit a bi-weekly report to the Leader’s Office to update on progress for those users directly affected by the change in service.

3. Background and proposal

3.1. History

- 3.2. The council is not required by law to provide the meals service. However it does allow the council to meet its statutory duty to ensure the nutritional needs of residents are met.
- 3.3. Traditionally meals services have been seen as enablers to support individuals to remain independent in their own homes thereby contributing towards the broader

programme to prevent or delay admission to residential care. With each delivered meal the provider also carries out a well-being check on service user's and for some this may be their only daily contact.

- 3.4. The meals service in Essex currently delivers over 670 meals a day and at the end of March 2015 had 918 service users. These are all individuals who were originally assessed as being unable to prepare their own meals, although many may not have been re-assessed since they first received the service. At the 31 March 2015, meals were being delivered to 788 service users each week. In addition there were a further 130 service users whose service was suspended (eg because they were away or in hospital).
- 3.5. In 2012 Sodexo were commissioned by the council to deliver the meals service and the initial three year term of the contract is due to expire on 30 September 2015.
- 3.6. The current charge made by Sodexo for a standard meal under this contract is £4.79 plus VAT although the price varies dependent on the volume of meals delivered each month.
- 3.7. Since the November 2014 the service user contribution for their meals has been £4.20 per meal with the remaining 59p subsidised by the council.
- 3.8. The council is able to reclaim the VAT chargeable against meals from central government.
- 3.9. Specialist meals are also available to service users with special dietary requirements with an increased subsidy paid by the council for these meals:

Table 3.8 specialist meal costs

Meal Type	Price per meal	Subsidy
Kosher	£8.89	£4.69
Halal	£5.33	£1.13
Caribbean	£5.33	£1.13
Texture Modified	£5.33	£1.13
Sikh	£5.33	£1.13
Hindu	£5.33	£1.13
Gluten Free	£5.33	£1.13
Diabetic	£6.29	£2.09

- 3.10. The Sodexo meals service provides frozen meals from their two Essex depots (Basildon & Colchester) and a further depot located in Enfield. Each day the meals selected by service users are heated in vans on route to service users. The time period for delivery is strictly controlled to ensure that the meals are delivered at the right temperature and to a good quality.
- 3.11. Analysis of service users highlights that at least 95% of those in receipt of the meals service are aged over 65.
- 3.12. 50% of service users accessing the meals service are known to social care teams and their needs are actively reviewed.
- 3.13. 66% of those accessing the meals service receive no additional care from the council as part of their package of care. 31% access the meals service as part of a domiciliary care package.

Table 3.11 Service User Care Packages

Care Package	Open	Suspended	Total
MOW only	514	88	602
Homecare	227	34	261
Day Care, Homecare	20	2	22
Day Care	11	3	14
Cash	11	1	12
Registered Care	3	1	4
Cash, Homecare		1	1
Cash, Day Care	1		1
Cash, Day Care, Homecare	1		1
Grand Total	788	130	918

- 3.14. The number of service users accessing the service has declined, and continues to decline. In the last financial year the number of referred service users from the council fell by 13% with a total of 21,971 meals delivered in March 2015 which included 3,234 specialist meals.
- 3.15. In 2013 the council was informed that under the current terms and conditions of the contract the service was becoming unsustainable and Sodexo would be unwilling to extend the contract should the standard meal price of £4.79 remain unchanged.
- 3.15 Sodexo have informed the council that they would not operate a private service in the Essex market if they were not commissioned by the council to deliver a countywide meals service. There are various alternatives to the current service across the county including a number of smaller suppliers who deliver hot meals to parts of Essex. In addition there are suppliers who will be able to deliver frozen meals across Essex. The Council's commercial team have undertaken an analysis of the private market in Essex which found an average price of £6.17 across all providers offering a hot meal delivery service. It should be noted that these smaller suppliers operate in smaller localities and as a result benefit from reduced travel times.
- 3.16 The price paid in Essex appears to be low compared to the current cost for delivering a meals service in Southend and Thurrock.
- 3.17 As part of the process to review the commissioning options for when the contract with Sodexo expires the following activity has taken place:
- Profile analysis of service users;
 - Co-production workshop with service users representatives, hot and frozen meal service providers, community agents and practitioner's;
 - In depth one – one interviews using the ethnographic approach;
 - Public consultation on the service user contribution;
 - Officers joining Sodexo on meals distribution routes;
 - Market mapping and research analysis;
 - Pathways into the service analysis;

- Local voluntary organisation workshop
 - Financial analysis of options up to March 2018.
- 3.18 The consultation on price undertaken in 2014 identified a lack of awareness amongst service users of alternative options available in place of the meals service.
- 3.19 The council's commercial team have undertaken an analysis of the Essex market in order to identify any gaps in local provision and to give an indication of the costs per meal providers charge their private clients. This has highlighted lack of countywide provision and higher costs from other providers.
- 3.20 The changing demand of citizens is seen as a significant contributory factor in the declining numbers of service users in receipt of the meals service. Ongoing work such as the reablement service, community mobilisation, community agents and the widening availability of alternatives such as online shopping is likely to see this trend continue with over 60% of service users referred to the meals service in the last financial year exiting the service within 12 months.
- 3.21 For many individuals the service is doing nothing to address their social isolation or reducing independence as the drive to deliver a financially viable service reduces the contact time with service users. Within the Sodexo contract there is no signposting or support to access community based solutions.
- 3.22 The Care Act promotes a truly personalised approach to care and encourages the use of resources of local communities to support service users.
- 3.23 The voluntary sector has indicated a real interest in working alongside the council to signpost individuals to a range of existing community support including formal and informal lunch clubs, befriending services, collection or delivery of meals from local schools, cafes and pubs; and to develop community based solutions such as volunteer led meal solutions (e.g. neighbourhood meal exchanges and casserole clubs).

Service Delivery Options

- 3.24 **Option 1:** Allow the current contract to expire (no service from 1 October 2015).
- 3.25 The council is under no obligation to extend the meals service contract with Sodexo beyond the expiry date of 30th September 2015.
- 3.26 If the increased costs of a standard meal are deemed unaffordable for the council the contract can be allowed to expire on the 30th September 2015 and all service users would have to be transitioned to an alternative provision before this date.
- 3.27 In the time leading up to the expiry of the contract with Sodexo all service users would be transitioned to alternatives.
- 3.28 As there would be no extension to the current contract the council would continue to pay the current rate for the meals service as numbers decline to zero service users.
- 3.29 As the council would not be extending the contract beyond the 30 September 2015 contingency plans would not be required in the event of a Sodexo refusal to extend.
- 3.30 Officers would work with colleagues in social care to support service users in finding an alternative provision. The capacity of the community engagement team who would undertake this piece of work would be insufficient given the short time frame to complete this. Additional social care resources would therefore be required. At present around 50% of service users have an allocated social worker who could be used to support those most vulnerable individuals to source alternative provision however there are no plans in place for social care reviews outside of statutory reviews. Additional cost will be incurred if this cannot be incorporated into existing

work programmes. This would be the highest risk option because it would require the migration of a large number of service users very quickly.

- 3.31 **Option 2:** Enter into a reduced coverage contract with Sodexo for one year, pilot local solutions and implement countywide alternatives.
- 3.32 The payment schedule put forward by Sodexo as part of their tender in 2012 was based on significantly higher volumes of meals and at the time there was no expectation that volumes would fall below 26,850 a month. Having said that, Sodexo did price for this eventuality, and they cannot reasonably raise any objection to the prices now being paid.
- 3.33 The continuing decline in the volume of service users has meant that Sodexo have reported that the contract is no longer sustainable for Sodexo to deliver under the current terms and conditions. Sodexo would only be prepared to continue to deliver the service on different terms. The proposed variations submitted by Sodexo detailed below would result in an increase in the standard meal prices as set out in the confidential appendix. Prices would increase should volumes continue to fall.
- 3.34 Sodexo have indicated that they would be able to minimise the increase in price per meal by closing their Colchester depot with effect from 1st October 2015. They would provide all meals from Basildon or Enfield depots. They would be able to provide meals to around 90% of the current service users whilst significantly reducing their cost base. This would enable them to deliver the service for a one year contract at a significantly lower charge than for option 3. The proposed prices for this option are set out in the confidential appendix
- 3.35 Sodexo have indicated that there would be a reduction of 10 rounds as a result of this option, mainly in the north of Essex, which could not be supported for operational reasons. This would impact around 120 service users who would no longer be able to receive meals via this service.

Table 3.34 Affected delivery locations shown highlighted

Basildon Depot	Colchester Depot	Enfield Depot
Broomfield	Colchester	Manuden
Hutton	Maldon	Stansted
Warley	Tiptree	Bishops Stortford
Great Wakering	Coggeshall	Hatfield Peveral
Hockley	Marks Tey	Little Dunmow
Burnham	Copford	Great Dunmow
Chelmer Village	Belchamp Otten	Barnston
Galleywood	Halstead	Great Waltham
Billericay	Braintree	Great Leighs
Rayleigh	Earls Colne	Saffron Walden
Laindon	Witham	Thaxted
Buckhurst Hill	Stanway	Takeley
Canvey Island	Boreham	
Wickford	Frinton-on-Sea	
Hadleigh	Walton-on-the-Naze	
Basildon	Clacton-on-Sea	
Writtle	Harwich	
Benfleet	Manningtree	
Southminster	Wivenhoe	
	St Osyth	
	West Mersea	
	Sible Hedingham	
	Belchamp St Paul	

- 3.36 Under this option the council would need to find alternative provision for these 120 service users and anyone else in the affected area who needs a service. This would be achieved as outlined in option 3 below.
- 3.37 If this option is selected, then between now and 30 September 2015 officers and community agents and the voluntary sector would work with service users to identify suitable alternative provision that meets the individual needs of each service users. There are providers who deliver hot meals locally in parts of Essex. There are also provides who will deliver frozen meals to any address in Essex, although service users may need a visit from a home care worker to heat the pre-purchased meal for them.
- 3.38 In the first instance officers would directly contact all service users to offer support in finding a suitable alternative to the current meals service where a service users does not have a planned social care review during the final year of the contract. The aim of the contact would be to find an effective alternative way to providing meals for that person. Officers are confident that this can be done by agreement with the service user and their families.
- 3.39 This may include requesting consent to pass cases to community agents or voluntary organisations to find a more suitable alternative within the local community using the knowledge of their locality.
- 3.40 Where a service user does not give consent for details to be shared with community agents officers, we would continue to work with service users until they have been moved to an alternative provision of their choice that ensures that their needs continue to be met.
- 3.41 The advantage of this option is that it allows the council a significant period of time to work with the affected service users, other providers, community agents and

voluntary sector agencies to find suitable alternative provision. It also means that if the pilot is unsuccessful then the Council can commission a new contract for the meals service after the expiry of a one year contract with Sodexo.

- 3.42 The value of the new one year contract would be under €750,000 and the Council could lawfully directly award the contract to Sodexo.
- 3.43 By carrying out this work with a small cohort of service users the council would be able to analyse the impact of this activity to fully understand the potential implications of its extension to cover all service users.
- 3.44 The learning from this first cohort will inform the decision on the future of the service. This may involve transitioning all service users to alternative provision or it may involve co-production of a redesigned service and local solutions if required. Any new services would be up and running by 1st October 2016.
- 3.45 The disadvantage of this option is that it means that we will be directly awarding a contract to Sodexo at a greater price than is currently paid. However, market analysis has identified that the rate we are currently paying is below market rates. This option carries a risk if we fail to find alternative provision for the affected service users, but that risk is lower than with the other options.
- 3.46 If the council are unable to agree terms on a one year contract with Sodexo then all service users would need support to source an alternative provision.
- 3.47 **Option 3:** Enter into a new contract for one year, develop community alternatives and transition all users to alternatives.
- 3.48 The current contract with Sodexo is set to expire on the 30th September 2015.
- 3.49 The payment schedule put forward by Sodexo as part of their tender in 2012 was based on significantly higher volumes of meals and at the time there was no expectation that volumes would fall below 26,850 a month. Having said that, Sodexo did price for this eventuality, and they cannot reasonably raise any objection to the prices now being paid.
- 3.50 The continuing decline in the volume of service users has meant that Sodexo have reported that the contract is no longer sustainable for Sodexo to deliver under the current terms and conditions. Sodexo would only be prepared to continue to deliver the service on different terms. The proposed variations submitted by Sodexo detailed below would result in an increase in the standard meal prices as set out in the confidential appendix. Prices would increase should volumes continue to fall.
- 3.51 The prices proposed by Sodexo under this option are set out in the confidential appendix. The highlighted row in the table is the price which would apply based on meals volumes for March 2015.
- 3.52 The increase in the price of a standard meal proposed by Sodexo places a significantly greater financial liability on the council compared to the existing contract. There is also financial risk associated with uncertainty over volumes and associated price points
- 3.53 During the one year period the council also has an opportunity to pass some of the increased costs of delivering the service onto service users by increasing their contribution however this would require a consultation with service users.
- 3.54 Over the course of the one year period officers along with colleagues from social care, community agents and the voluntary sector would work with service users to offer suitable alternative provision that meets individual needs. As outlined above, there are providers who deliver hot meals locally in parts of Essex. There are also provides who will deliver frozen meals to any address in Essex, although service

users may need a visit from a home care worker to heat the pre-purchased meal for them.

- 3.55 In the first instance officers would directly contact all service users to offer support in finding a suitable alternative to the current meals service where a service user does not have a planned social care review during the final year of the contract. The aim of the contact would be to find an effective alternative way to providing meals for that person. Officers are confident that this can be done by agreement with the service user and their families.
- 3.56 This may include requesting consent to pass cases to community agents or voluntary organisations to find a more suitable alternative within the local community using the knowledge of their locality.
- 3.57 Where a service user does not give consent for details to be shared with community agents officers, would continue to work with service users until they have been moved to an alternative provision of their choice that ensures that their needs continue to be met.
- 3.58 In transitioning service users to an alternative provision those due to receive a social care review of their package of care before the 30th September 2016 would be reviewed firstly by the social worker undertaking their review. Where social workers are unable to find an alternative during a review those service users would then be referred to community agents where consent is given or to officers where no consent is given.
- 3.59 Putting in place a contract with Sodexo for a year would ensure there was sufficient capacity amongst officers and social care teams to manage the transition process.
- 3.60 The council would remain compliant with its statutory duties and it would allow some time to plan the future of the service. The disadvantages of this option are:
 - (a) we do not have experience of providing large scale support to service users to find alternatives, and large scale transition involves inherent risks.
 - (b) the contract with Sodexo does not allow for price variations, and the value of a one year contract is over €750,000 meaning that it would be required to be tendered under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This option would be difficult to achieve lawfully given the need to hold a competitive procurement process by 30 September 2015.
- 3.61 A decision about the long term future of the service would be made in Autumn 2015. Under this option the Council will not, at that time, have any experience of transitioning service users to alternative services. This option could also entail ECC in having to undertake a large scale transition without any experience.
- 3.62 **The proposal being recommended – option 2**
- 3.63 Option 2 is recommended because it allows the Council time to introduce a new way of delivering meals to a small number of service users before making a decision on the long term future of the service.
- 3.64 Sufficient resources are immediately available to start consulting with the services users that would be impacted by closure of the Colchester depot and therefore we are recommending piloting community alternatives in this area as a matter of priority.
- 3.65 This pilot if successful would then inform the future work to be undertaken with all service users in Essex however if unsuccessful the council would look to procure for a meals service from the 1st October 2016 to cover all of Essex.
- 3.66 All affected service users will be engaged with as part of the transition.

- 3.67 The council will ensure that all service users continue to meet their needs as changes to existing care packages would be made for those individuals not able to access alternatives in their community. This would include a frozen meal and a 15 minute visit to support preparation which is more than the current provider is able to offer.
- 3.68 For individuals able to access their community, alternative options could help to reduce instances of social isolation and loneliness.

4 Proposed Timescales

Activity	Date
Begin working with service users affected by closure of Colchester depot to transition them to alternative forms of delivery.	1 st July 2015
Complete transition work	30 th September 2015
New 1 year contract with Sodexo begins	30 th September 2015

5 Policy context and Outcomes Framework

- 5.1 The delivery of this service aligns to the corporate outcome 'People in Essex can live independently and exercise choice and control over their lives' and to the aim in A Vision for Essex 2013-17 to protect vulnerable people.
- 5.2 The delivery of this service also aligns to the following outcome indicator:
- Proportion of people who live independently
- 5.3 The commissioning activity for the Meals service has been considered in line with the following principles:
- Promotion of independence and safeguarding
 - Prevention
 - Prioritisation of resources
 - Transitional protection.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Table 6.1 below sets out the potential financial impact of the three options being considered. This analysis assumes no change to the service user contributions.

Table 6.1 Financial impact of options

£s	Total 2015/16 - 2017/18 Expected Cost	Total 2015/16 - 2017/18 Pressure / (Opportunity)
Option 1 - Allow the current contract to expire (no service from 1 October 2015):		
Base Case	640,324	16,324
Option 2 – Enter into a reduced coverage contract with Sodexo for one year, pilot local solutions and implement countywide alternatives:		

Base Case	798,734	174,734
Option 3 – Enter into a new contract for one year, develop community alternatives and transition all users to alternatives:		
Base Case	1,055,950	431,950

- 6.2 The current budget allocation for this 3 year period is £624,000 leading to a potential budget shortfall range of £16,000 to £432,000, depending on which option is taken forward, the price points negotiated and the impact that this has on service user levels. The recommended option leads to a potential budget shortfall of £175,000.
- 6.3 In order to meet this budget shortfall additional funding will be required of up to £175,000 over the period 2015-16 – 2017-18. It is recommended that this shortfall will be met from general balances should sufficient headroom not be identified within service budgets.
- 6.4 This could be reduced if service user contributions were increased from their current level of £4.20. For every 25p additional service user contribution, an additional income of £56,000 is earned under delivery option 3 and £46,000 under delivery option 2.
- 6.5 Sensitivity analysis has been performed on each option to assess the impact of financial risk arising from price and volume uncertainty:
- (a) an increase to the hourly rate to heat meals from £14 to £28; the additional financial burden increases by £216,000 under delivery option 3, £240,000 under delivery option 2 up to £360,000 under option 1 over the 3 year period.
 - (b) an increase to the rate of decline in service users during the final 4 months of the one year contract; the additional financial burden is not material (less than £25,000); and
 - (c) a straight line decline in service users during the one year contract leading to an additional financial burden of £60,000 for delivery option 3 and £36,000 for delivery option 2.
- 6.6 The expected cost of the one year contract with Sodexo in the base case is £426,000 if the Colchester depot is closed, or £704,000 if all depots remain open – these figures rise to £463,000 and £764,000 respectively in the sensitivity analysis.
- 6.7 Please Note: Assumptions have been made around volumes and prices which may not be achievable through contract negotiations and implementation. The financial impact may vary from that set out in the table above. These assumptions have been set using the market information available today, information provided by Sodexo during contract negotiations for an extension and latest performance data under the existing contract.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 It would be lawful to extend the current contract with Sodexo on the current terms. However Sodexo have made it clear that they are not prepared to agree to this because of the falling volumes and low prices paid. It is not possible to vary the contract.
- 7.2 It is possible to award a contract with Sodexo without competition if there is no interest from providers outside the UK and if the value of the contract is less than €750,000. The proposed one year contract under option 2 has an estimated value of £426,000 – significantly less than €750,000 and there is considered to be little

interest in this contract because it would require the establishment of local depots, and it is unlikely to be viable to do this for a one year contract.

- 7.3 A waiver from the Council's procurement rules will be required.
- 7.4 When working with service users it will be important to ensure that they receive an alternative means of delivering meals which is at least as good as the service they currently receive. It will also be important to ensure that their personal data is not passed on without consent.

8 Consultation approach

- 8.1 The list of impacted service users for each locality will be shared with social care teams to confirm the most appropriate engagement route for individual service users dependent on their level of need.
- 8.2 Where social care have raised concerns around the Community Engagement & Involvement Team working with individual service users the allocated worker is identified for engagement with individual service users to be led through them.
- 8.3 Where social care have not raised concerns around the Community Engagement & Involvement Team working with individual service users they will then lead this activity without social care.
- 8.4 When contacting contact service users the Community Engagement & Involvement Team will first write to them informing them that they will be impacted by the proposed changes and that they will be contacted by phone within 14 days to arrange a visit with a member of this team. This phone call will then be used to book the appointment with each service user where a member of this team will seek to understand what alternatives could be used by service users and agree how this will be implemented.
- 8.5 Where a service user wants to access alternatives within their community we will look to refer them to Community Agents.
- 8.6 Community Agents will look to make contact with service users within 2 working days and then visit them within 2 weeks.

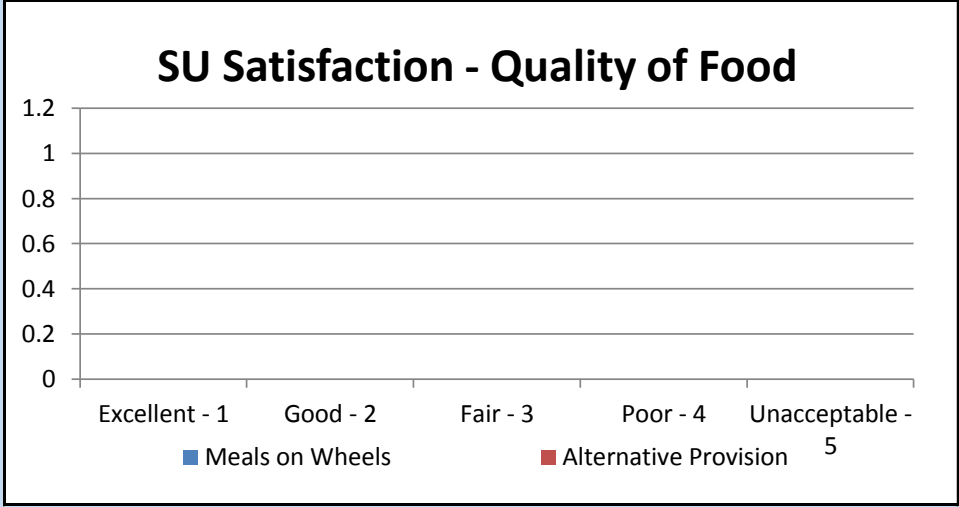
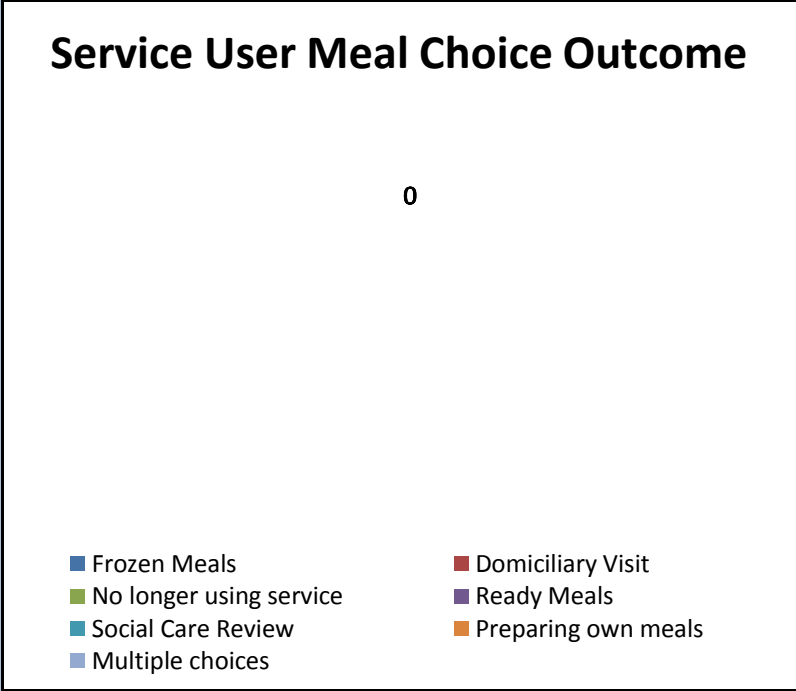
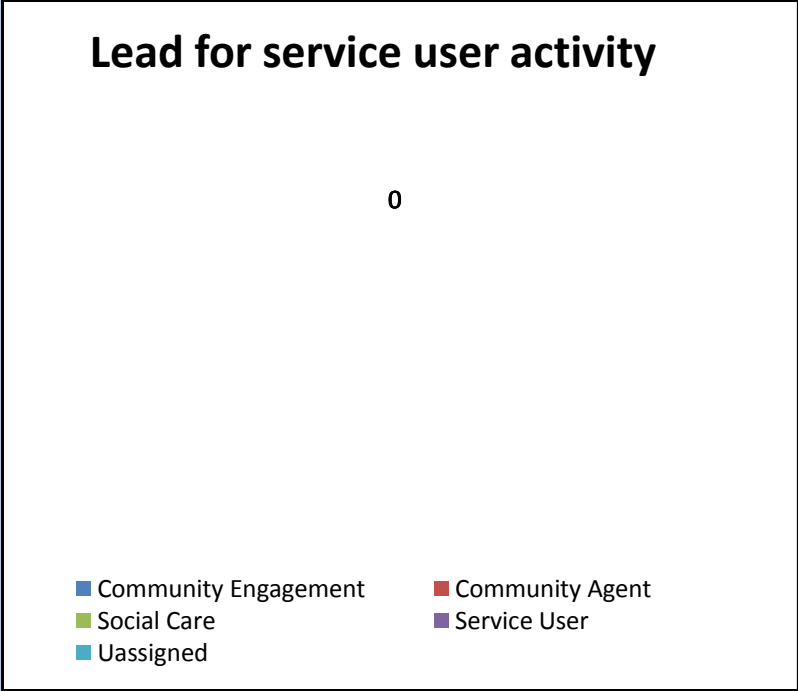
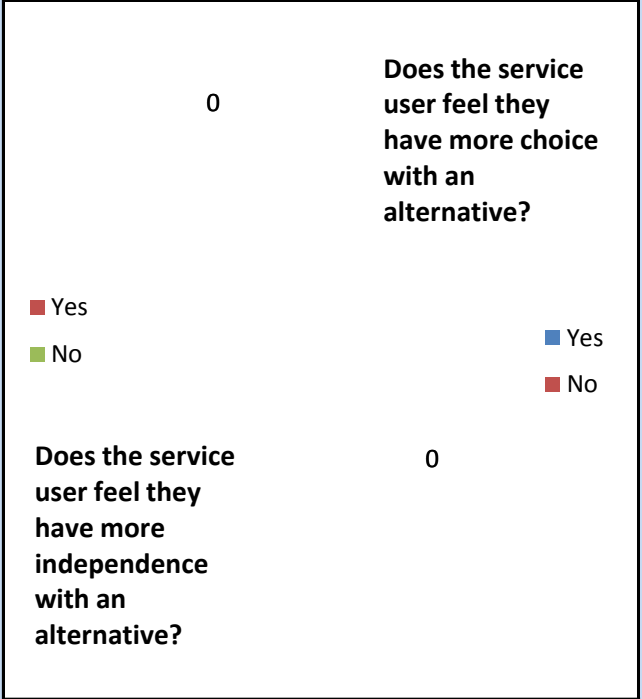
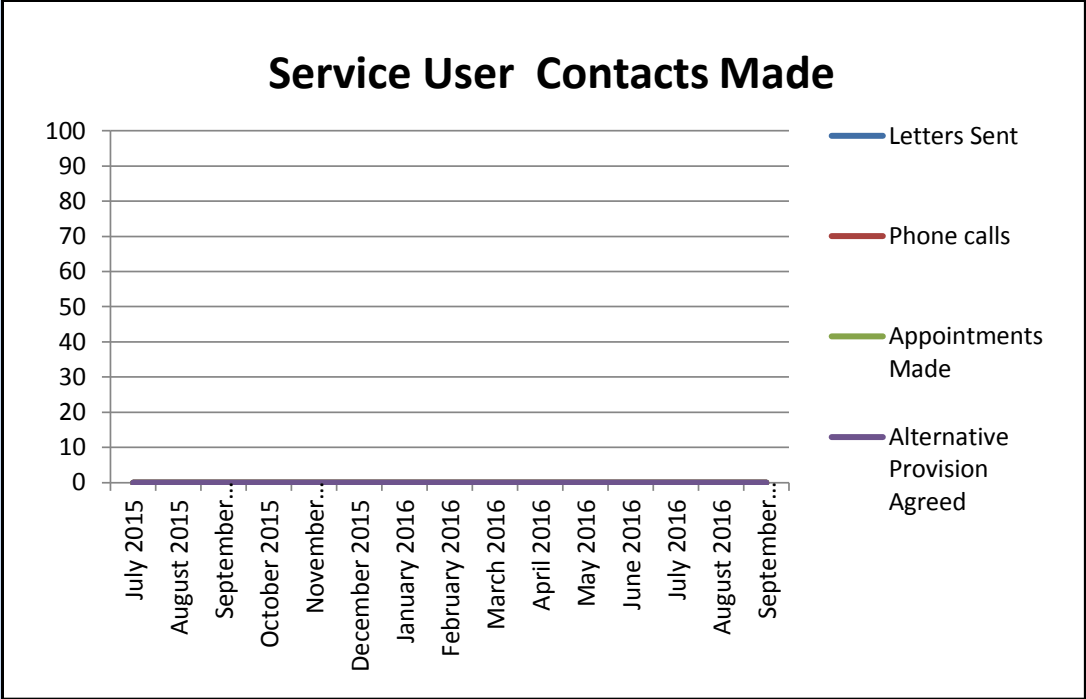
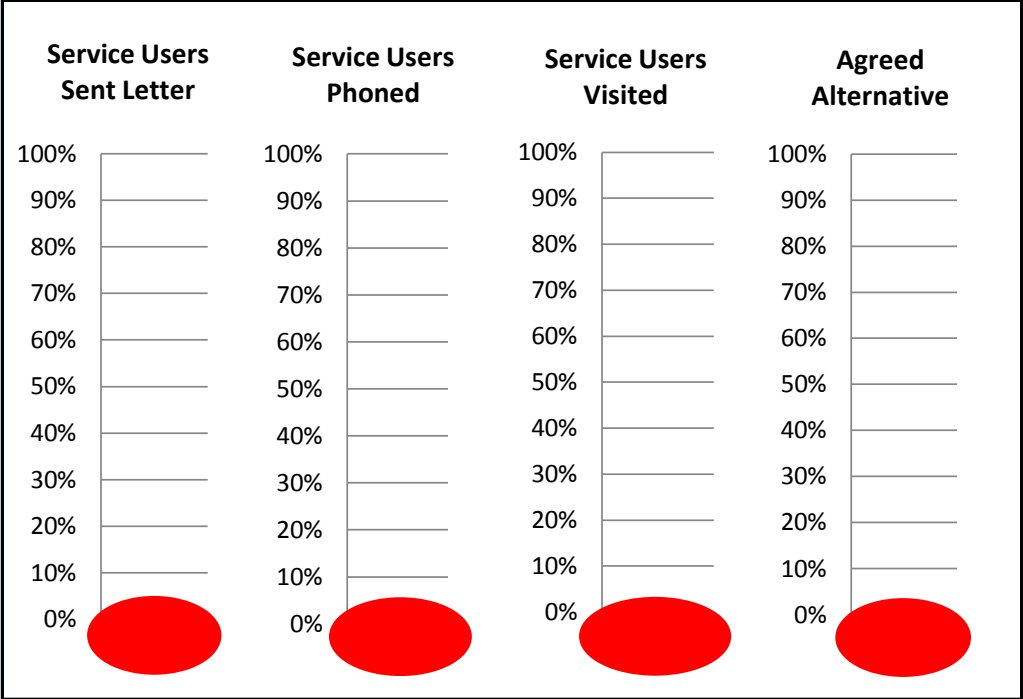
9 Staffing and other resource implications

- 9.1 Closure of the Colchester depot would result in redundancies for Sodexo staff. The cost of redundancies would be covered in full by Sodexo.
- 9.2 Development of local community solutions may provide both paid and volunteering opportunities.

10 Equality and Diversity implications

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed.
- 10.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when ECC makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
 - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 10.3 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- 10.4 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will/will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.



Meals on Wheels Service

Alternative Provision Planning Dashboard

		AGENDA ITEM 6
		PAF/13/15
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	9 July 2015	
<u>Domestic Abuse</u>		
Enquiries to:	Sheila Norris Director for Integrated Commissioning & Vulnerable People sheila.norris@essex.gov.uk	

Essex Strategic Children's Partnership Board
Exception report for Children and Young People's Plan Priorities

The report is to inform the Essex Strategic Children's Partnership Board on the progress being made against our priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. It is intended to be an exceptions style report to give the opportunity for;

- a) Issues of particular concern to be reported
- b) Inform the board about current work/developments pertinent to the priority
- c) Where needed seek support/information from Local Partnership boards and/or strategic partners.

Children's Partnership Priority	Domestic Abuse is a cross cutting issue across the priorities
Name of priority lead	N/A
Date of Report:	03 June 2014

Section 1: Priorities; Actions; Progress and Challenges

Summarise the *current* work/developments critical to delivery of the priority

Joint Commissioning Strategy for Domestic Abuse (DA Board)

The DA Board received a near final version of the Strategy and its underpinning activity plan on 11 May, and following an opportunity for final comments the strategy has been refined and shared with the DA Board for virtual sign off.

Support services for victims (Greg Myddelton - OPCC)

The IDVA service went live as planned on 1 April 2015. A geographical mapping of IDVA allocation is being developed and will be shared with partners on the Joint Commissioning Group. In addition the approach to monitoring progress is being developed by the task and finish group and will be implemented now the service has gone live. Discussions are being undertaken with Safer Places regarding the inclusion of an IDVA within the JDATT/MARAC team.

Community based services for victims (Simon Harniess – ECC)

Following the development of the specification, the tender has now gone live. The new specification has been developed via a multi-agency Task & Finish Group and seeks to shift the service away from an approach where refuge is the default solution towards a model which has a greater focus on outreach and a broader focus than accommodation needs.

Key characteristics of the new service, following feedback from service users and providers, include the provision of a service to groups who are currently not supported or who are under-represented in services; and

an emphasis on linking people back into employment, training or education.

Evaluation criteria have been agreed and developed with the Task & Finish group and the formal bid evaluation will be carried out by representatives from ECC, OPCC and Southend Council following the closure of the tender period on 21st May. It is anticipated the contract will be signed on 13 August and the service will commence on 1 October.

JDATT & MARAC (Lesley Forbes-Lange)

JDATT are now triaging between 15-18 cases per day – rather than the 9-10 initially forecast. Some of the up lift is due to additional information being gathered in MIU/CRU to escalate medium risk cases to high. Essex JDATT is also now triaging (for MARAC) Southend and Thurrock cases.

Essex Police have replaced the PROtect system with Athena, which went live from 1st April 2015. Athena is an intelligent system that will in time produce a richer picture regarding risk, however some teething issues have been identified and work is underway to resolve these. These include

- Insufficient information being sent from Athena for Children's Social Care and Health;
- Children not being linked to the victim and/or perpetrator.
- A significant decrease in the number of children listed against what would be expected for domestic incidents coming into the JDATT.
- Pregnancy warning markers being assigned; but not being included on the feed.

Finally, a new Case Management System is required to ensure timely information sharing across various agencies and systems to inform decision making. Options are currently being considered by the task and finish group.

Education and Prevention (Ben Hughes - ECC)

The draft of the Risk Avert program is completed, and is being piloted in two schools - Colchester School for Girls and St Martins, Brentwood. As part of the programme a screening tool has also been developed, this will support teachers in the identification of young people who may be at risk.

There are now direct referral pathways for schools. Links are being developed across new services being commissioned (Early Intervention – Clare Burrell) in Essex to build referral routes for identified Young People. In addition work is ongoing to ensure links to the developing CAMHS and 0 – 19 services (historically School Nursing). Schools will be supported as part of the Risk Avert training to identify referral pathways.

Other local authorities are looking to implement Risk Avert and these include.

- Medway (7 schools)
- Suffolk (Aiming for 11 schools to join programme from Sep '15)
- Hertfordshire (to run a limited pilot (5 schools) from Sep '15)

Perpetrator Programme (Susannah Hancock - OPCC & Tom Simons – Essex Police)

The Perpetrator working group has combined with the Essex Criminal Justice Board DA working group, to form a single cross agency working group with a single work plan. This means that we now have representation from across all key agencies to progress this important area of work. This merge has also now given the Perpetrator work stream access to CPS courts.

The programme of work is in the developmental phase and is making links with Safe Lives and Social Finance for potential development of perpetrator programs. Working in partnership to act as a national pilot area for a new approach to perpetrator change programmes. Funding has been identified from ECC and OPCC. Social Finance is seeking to lever in additional external funding. Essex is one of 4 pilot areas nationally (the others being London, Wales, Sussex). It has been decided to pilot the approach in the first instance in Tendring and Colchester. Pilots will begin in Sep '15. A full evaluation programme will be in place.

Work continues to progress re enforcement through Op Shield. A key performance indicator delivered through operation Shield is a reduction in the total harms score of the cohort. Since May 2014, this figure has reduced by 31%.

Safer Accommodation (Tracey Brushett - ECC)

The Housing representative in the JDATT is now making contact with the social housing landlords to gather limited information which is fed into the risk assessment process. The working group is exploring what are the 5 key things social landlords should do when receiving these notifications.

The Countywide Reciprocal Agreement has been signed by 11 Housing providers and will be implemented shortly. Supported providers have agreed to provide support to the needs of victims when being relocated, either through this agreement or through each agency's own internal management transfer process.

A bid to the DCLG Transformation Challenge award Fund was successful and Chelmer Housing Partnership have agreed to host and administer a database on behalf of partners across Essex. A working group made up of partners will now develop an action plan for the implementation of the database.

Training continues to be carried out to support providers and elements of the Police to raise awareness on the roles and responsibilities of Housing providers. This is now being scheduled in for the new IDVA's. The training includes an element of bringing a reality to the expectations of the victim and their support worker. A practitioner's guide is being drafted in partnership with all the stakeholders; this will give all of the partners' options for victims and how to progress those options.

Early Intervention in health settings (Jenny Phaure – West Essex CCG)

The Domestic Abuse Board and Health Executive Forum (HEF) have both endorsed the Terms of Reference for the newly established Great Essex Domestic Abuse Health Sub Group (DAHSG). The group is now meeting regularly to progress our agenda regarding case finding and support in health settings across greater Essex.

A work plan has been established. This currently comprises six workstreams including: funding governance and assurance processes, sign off to 13/14 and 14/15 funding allocations, monitoring, evaluation/market analysis across health, transformation funds 15/16 and health infrastructure. The DAHSG also recognised the importance of ensuring robust engagement and communication across the health economy and key stakeholders. A first draft communications plan has been developed to ensure the inward and outward facing processes are in place.

Three health based infrastructure posts have now gone live on NHS jobs – these includes an NHS DA health lead role, a countywide training coordinator position and also health representation within the JDATT/MARAC. It is anticipated that there will be wide interest in these posts to support the delivery of this agenda. The continuation of funding for these posts beyond the 1 year fixed period will form part of a health DA sustainable strategy. The posts will be hosted by the DA lead CCG (Castle Point and Rochford CCG).

Finally the health sub group are in the process of commissioning a piece of evaluation/market analysis – also to include stakeholder workshops. This will inform the development of a specification for health based commissioning priorities.

Communications (Andy Allsopp - ECC)

Campaigns and BAU communications will be linked to six elements of strategic action already identified (raising awareness/improving signposting, improving access to appropriate information, promoting risk avert, tailoring information for/to minority ethnic communities).

Campaigns and BAU activity in 15/16 will aim to highlight the different varieties of domestic abuse – (emotional, physical, sexual and financial) – providing a theme-led approach running through communications. Activity will be programmed across organisations, with a Campaign Mandate provide later this Spring.

Current performance against the delivery of the outcomes pertinent to the priority:

N/A

Support/information required:

No support required

Learning to be shared

None

Section 2 – General

Report here any emerging issues for the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board or Local Stay Safe Groups.
N/A
Report here any relevant emerging issues relevant to the board
N/A
Report here any emerging issues/gaps/trends that you want to bring to the attention of commissioners
N/A
Report here any specific issues relating to workforce development
N/A
Report here any other issues you would like to raise
N/A

The NHS Success Regime

Presentation

July 2015



NHS Success Regime

- Launched by NHS Chief Executive on 3 June. The other areas selected are North Cumbria and Northern, Eastern and Western Devon.
- The aim of the Success Regime is to provide increased support and direction to the most challenged systems in order to secure improvement in three main areas:
 - **Short-term improvement** against agreed quality, performance or financial metrics;
 - **Medium and longer-term transformation**, including the application of new care models where applicable;
 - **Developing leadership capacity and capability** across the health system.
- It will look at the whole health and care economy, not just individual organisations

Why Essex?

- The operational and quality challenges which present risks to clinical sustainability
- The financial sustainability challenges across the local health economy
- The limited success with previous strategic interventions to improve services
- The workforce challenges across primary and secondary care in the local health economy; and
- The benefit to be gained from using new models of care to deliver services.

What are the issues?

- Essex is relatively wealthy and healthy and we have some good health and care services across the county. Despite this all parts of the Essex health and care system are under strain:
 - Three of our five acute trusts are financially challenged and there are performance issues and pressures across all acute hospitals.
 - Essex has a growing and ageing population. 19% of the Greater Essex population are over 65 (much higher than national average) and Greater Essex is expected to have a 52% growth in this age group by 2031, rising from around 323,000 residents to close on 491,000.
 - Primary care is under pressure. Almost half our GPs are due to retire within 15 years. A quarter of GP practices are 'single-handed'. Some parts of Essex have very high patient to GP ratios
 - There are clear interdependencies between the health and care sectors. Almost 50% of admissions to residential care in Essex are via hospital discharge

What does this mean?

- A Programme Director will be appointed to work with all partners
- A diagnostic phase will look into these issues in more detail
- We will have access to national support and challenge
- Development of a plan to address strategic issues

What it doesn't mean?

This is not a national takeover; it is whole-system collaboration

It does not mean that services are failing; but it does recognise they are operating under challenging circumstances

The Care Act



What is the Care Act?

- **Biggest reform of adult social care since 1948**
- **Bulk of the reforms went live 1 April 2015**
- **Promotes an asset model – what people can do rather than what they can't**
- **Promotes integration of health and social care**
- **Focus on wellbeing and preventing, reducing and delaying needs**
- **Cap on personal contributions towards eligible care costs - due 1 April 2016**
- **Likely considerable extra costs on social care and will be challenging to implement**

Wellbeing includes:

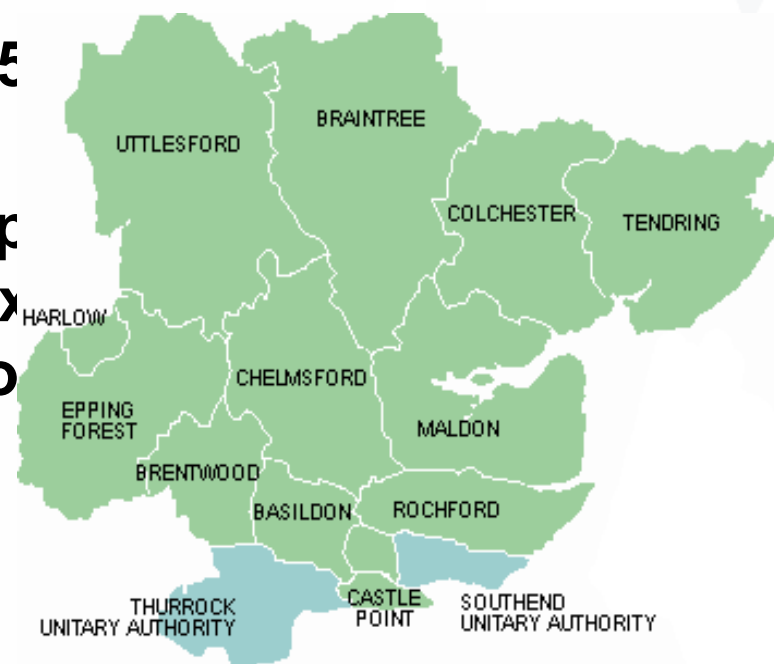
- personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect)
- physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day-to-day life
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic well-being
- domestic, family and personal relationships
- suitability of living accommodation
- the individual's contribution to society

Context 1: Who gets social care?

- **Adult social care is for individuals who are 18 or over**
- **Access is via a statutory assessment carried out under Care Act**
- **To qualify you must have assessed needs that meet the new national eligibility threshold set out in statutory guidance**
- **Essex CC currently carries out 18,000 assessments a year**
- **ECC also provides support for carers who are entitled to an assessment in their own right**
- **Majority of customers are aged 65+**

Context 2: the demographic challenge

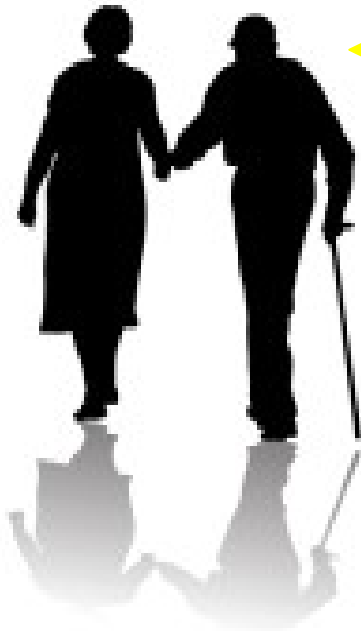
- Essex population getting older and larger
- 6% growth 2001-11; +20% to 2033
- 18.3% Essex residents aged over 65 (national figure = 16.4%).
- Between 2008-33, working age people to fall from 60% to 55% of the Essex population; older population to grow from 21% to 28% of the population. By 2031 there will be more people over 60 than under 20
- Almost 10% of our residents provide informal care to relatives, friends or neighbours - over half of these carers aged over 50



Context 3: affordability challenge

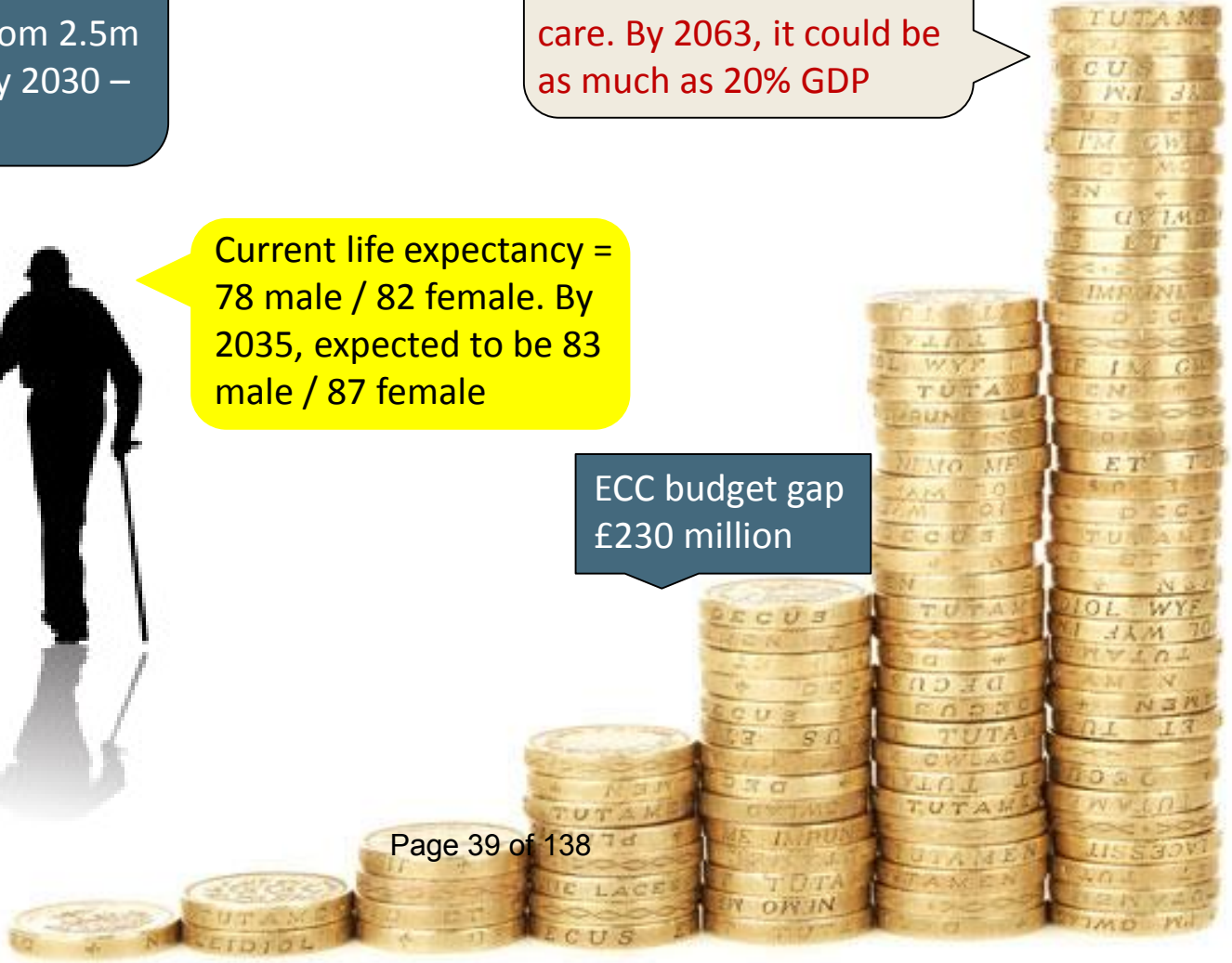
Nationally, the number of people over 65 with care needs will grow from 2.5m in 2010 to 4.1m by 2030 – a 60% increase

UK currently spends 9.5% GDP on health and social care. By 2063, it could be as much as 20% GDP



Current life expectancy = 78 male / 82 female. By 2035, expected to be 83 male / 87 female

ECC budget gap £230 million



The need for change

YEAH! Project – Young Essex Attitudes on Health and Social Care 2014-2015

- Spoke to 414 young people from across Essex, aged 15-19
- Key findings:
 - 65% felt their age group was more likely to have a negative experience, than children or adults, when visiting a GP; 4 in 10 said doctors speak to their parent/guardian instead of to them; A third had missed school, college or work to attend GP appointments
 - 8 in 10 had received no mental health information, and did not know how to access mental health support
 - wanted the opportunity to ask questions without judgement, and make informed choices for themselves
- Conclusion: young people want services that are accessible, equitable and age-appropriate
- Recommendations:
 - need for improved awareness and better access to services
 - promote behaviour change to enable young people to better manage their own health and care

Care Act – timetable

Key requirements	Timing
Duties on prevention and wellbeing	From April 2015
Duties on information and advice (including advice on paying for care)	
Duty on market shaping	
National minimum threshold for eligibility	
Assessments (including carers' assessments)	
Personal budgets and care and support plans	
New charging framework	
Safeguarding	
Universal deferred payment agreements	
Extended means test	From April 2016
Capped charging system	
Care accounts	

The Care Act – a quick summary of key changes (1)

Points to note

Changes to eligibility – new national minimum threshold may expand eligibility

A cap on lifetime costs from Apr 2016 (for eligible care needs) – including free lifetime care for people with eligible needs identified before their 18th birthday –this may rise to 25

Asset threshold for support with residential care raised from £23,250 to £118,000

Right to a Deferred Payment Agreement

Duty to maintain a care account for all individuals, recording accrual against personal cap

Duty to assess, support plan and review all individuals

Expanded duty to identify, assess and provide support for carers

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The Care Act – a quick summary of key changes (2)

Points to note

Portable care packages – to ensure continuity of care where individuals move local authority areas

Explicit requirement to provide universal but personalised information and advice service, including access to independent financial advice

Expanded new statutory duties to broker services that prevent, reduce or delay needs from developing (universal)

Duty to promote integration of care and support with health services (for the purposes of the Act, housing is considered a health-related service)

A new right for young people, parents, carers to request a care and support assessment before they reach 18

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A duty to assess and meet care needs of prisoners if the person was a resident in the local authority area where the prison is based

Information, advice and guidance

The Care Act says we must provide universal and personalised information and advice on:

- **how to access care and support available and the choice of providers in Essex**
- **taking care of yourself**
- **independent financial advice on meeting cost of care and support**
- **raising safety concerns about a vulnerable adult or carer**

“People in Essex will feel well informed about what’s available to them so they can lead safe, happy and healthier lives and know where to access the support that prevent or delay the onset of needs when they need it”

Our approach

- Website developed with Healthwatch involvement
www.livingwellessex.org
- Supported by Healthwatch telephone service
01376 572829
- Phase 1 live for 1 April 2015, phase 2 development
inc. service directory and e-marketplace



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Duties towards carers

- **New rights to assessment for carers – they do not need to request one. The only requirement is that the carer ‘may have needs for support – whether currently or in the future’.**
- **A national eligibility threshold also brings greater clarity around entitlement for carers and for those they care for**
- **New duty to provide or arrange for services, facilities or resources which will prevent, reduce or delay the development of need for care and support of carers . This has been delayed for residential care for a year until 2016**
- **Almost 10% of our residents provide informal care to relatives, friends or neighbours. Over half of carers are aged over 50.**

The Care Cap – Proposed for April 2016

- **Cap on eligible care costs - £72,000 for those over 65**
- **Tapered for under 65s; care will be free for life if needs identified before 18, this may rise to 25.**
- **Contribution to the cap is calculated as based on what the local authority would pay to meet the eligible needs of the individual and does not include living costs.**
- **If assessed as needing residential or nursing care by the local authority and you cannot find a home you like within this budget, you or your family will have to top up the difference. Additional payments will not count towards the care cap.**
- **Living costs are currently estimated to be approximately £12,000 p.a**
- **Financial threshold for support with care costs is set to increase and become more complex to operate.**
- **Public awareness appears to be low despite national publicity**

Care accounts, personal budgets and independent personal budgets

Given a legal basis for the first time:

- **Personal budgets** - if an individual has eligible care needs and qualifies for local authority support, they will be given a personal budget which shows the costs of meeting that person's needs.
- **Independent personal budgets** – provided where individuals with eligible needs but do not receive local authority support. It will show the rate the council would pay to meet those needs.
- **Care account** - shows how someone is progressing towards the costs cap. Once reached, the local authority will have to pay any further costs of meeting the person's eligible needs

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What does this mean for people

- **Focus on early intervention to prevent, reduce and delay need**
- **Services not the default position**
- **Emphasis on reablement, assistive technology, community based support**
- **Outcome based planning designed to maximise independence**
- **Greater use of direct payments for those with ongoing needs**
- **Integrated care planning with health at an individual level – the care and support plan**
- **Emphasis firmly on progression where possible**

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Support for Carers



Why carers are important

- An estimated **145,000 people** provide care and support for someone else who needs help with their day-to-day life in Essex.
- These unpaid carers play a vital role in supporting people who are frail, ill, disabled, or who have mental health or substance misuse problems.
- The value of care provided by these carers is estimated to be **£2.5 billion a year**, based on the cost of alternative home care provision.
- Their health and wellbeing can suffer if they are not supported and this is not only bad for them, but also has wider costs.
- **Caring can impact on carers' own health and wellbeing:**
 - Nearly half of people caring for an older person are themselves aged over 65, reporting high blood pressure or hypertension
 - Over 1 in 4 carers said that caring had a negative impact on their physical and mental health
 - Three-quarters had not had a regular break from caring in the past 12 months; with over one-third not having a single day off in the last year
 - Just under half of carers had been in debt as a result of caring
 - Over 1 in 4 young carers of secondary school age experience some educational problems

How we will make things better for carers

From 2015 onwards we will be very much focused on **achieving outcomes for carers**.

By outcomes we mean the change brought about by an action, intervention or service. Outcomes might relate to changes in skills, attitudes, knowledge, behaviours, status, or life condition.

The outcomes have been discussed and agreed with a range of carers, commissioners and service providers to ensure they reflect the changes that everyone considers important.

We've grouped these outcomes around the following themes:

1. **Choice and control** - Carers know what their options are now and for the future and are supported to plan for all stages of their caring role.
2. **Respect and recognition** - Carers are recognised, respected, valued and included as expert and knowledgeable partners by professionals.
3. **Access to networks of support** - Carers are connected to local community support networks.
4. **Achieving full potential** - Carers are able to access education, employment and life opportunities.
5. **Good health and wellbeing** - Carers are able to maintain their health and wellbeing, both physically and emotionally, whilst managing their caring role.
6. **Independence** - Carers are resilient and able to sustain a life of their own alongside their caring role.

A new model of support for carers

Community based and led activities

which support those people who take on a caring role, whether or not they define themselves as carers, helping them to find solutions to issues and support from within their communities and natural networks

Social care assessment and support

Improved social care assessment and support in line with the spirit and expectations of the Care Act, enabling carers to maintain their health and wellbeing, continue in their caring role and achieve their potential.



Locality level 'first stop' services

co-ordinating support for carers in each CCG area, a service to identify and respond to carers, providing, co-ordinating or facilitating access to a range of information, advice, and support.

Professional awareness and engagement

recognising and involving carers as partners in care; factoring their contribution and support needs into mainstream service commissioning, identifying and supporting young carers in education, employment and training.

What we're doing differently

The future picture of caring

- The need for care and support is predicted to rise significantly over the next five years, and as our population ages, so will our carers, with fewer people of working age able to provide the levels of care required.
- This makes it even more important to ensure that people are encouraged and supported to care; that caring becomes sustainable; and that crises (and escalated service needs) are avoided.

Prevention and early intervention

- By focusing on prevention, in line with the expectations of the Care Act, we can reduce the negative impacts of caring, enabling carers to maintain good physical and emotional health, achieve their aspirations and cope with crises in their caring roles.
- This requires a fundamental shift from reactive services that address ill health and care needs once they have arisen, to proactive approaches that build individual resilience and help people to achieve their potential.

Responding to increasing demand

- Into the future, carers will continue to be a critical part of our plan to respond to increasing demand for health and social care.
- The NHS recognised that “it’s likely that every one of us will have caring responsibilities at some time in our lives”, and we must keep supporting the increasing number of carers across Essex in a way that maintains their good health and wellbeing, independence and choice and control over their lives.

Key messages



What does this mean for the market?

- New duty to maintain a functioning market
- Signals fundamental change – empowered and informed customers
- Move away from contracting to a facilitation role over time
- New structures emerging – eg Personal Assistant Hubs- to support self- employment in the workforce and promote sustainability
- More integration with health in managing the market over time

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Conclusions

- The Care Act is a massive change to adult social care – the biggest since the 1940s
- The Act brings some welcome changes, include new rights for carers, clarity on a national minimum eligibility criteria, and a focus on prevention. Promoting integration between health and social care
- However, the reforms could create additional demand and generate cost pressures on adult social care
- There is much to do to implement the spirit of the Act and prepare for the changes coming in April 2016

Key commissioning messages

- Commissioning strategies in place in all key areas
- New carers model is developed and countywide enhanced support services in place. More carers being identified and offered support – key element of managing demand going forward
- New integrated delivery models beginning to emerge
- Community offer being strengthened to support prevention and facilitate meeting need without an ongoing personal budget
- Still more to do against a challenging background
- Success will depend on effective partnership

This report has been prepared by
Essex County Council's strategy function

If you have any questions on this report please contact

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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN ESSEX

A Report of a Review by a Task and Finish Group of
the People & Families Scrutiny Committee

July 2015



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FOREWORD

To be completed when the Task and Finish Group reports to
The September 2015 meeting of the Committee



I would wish to thank my fellow Task and Finish Group Members for their diligent approach and professionalism during the course of this review.

I commend this report to you.

COUNCILLOR MAGGIE McEWEN

Chairman of the Educational Attainment in Essex Task and Finish Group

Background

Background to the Scrutiny

The People and Families Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to review Educational Attainment in Essex in September 2014 following several iterations of the review scoping document (Appendix 1). It was agreed at the September 2014 meeting that the review would identify the levels and trends in educational attainment in schools in Essex at each Key Stage; evaluate how the levels of attainment compare nationally; identify the causes of underperformance and identify and evaluate all options to address the causes of underperformance; understand the barriers to improving school performance; understand the reduced funding regime; and identify how School Governors can influence improving performance. The Group would, ultimately, make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning to support improvement in educational attainment across the county.

The People and Families Scrutiny Committee confirmed the membership of the Task and Finish Group at its meeting on 4 September 2014. However, one of the Parent Governor representatives on the Committee subsequently withdrew his membership of the Task and Finish Group.

Membership

The Membership of the Task and Finish Group was agreed as:

Councillor Maggie McEwen (Chairman), Ongar and Rural
Councillor Susan Barker, Dunmow
Councillor Keith Bobbin, Pitsea
Richard Carson, Parent Governor non-elected representative
Councillor Ian Grundy, Stock (ex-officio)

Evidence base of the Scrutiny

Nine formal oral evidence sessions have been held where a range of contributors have been able to provide evidence to the Task and Finish Group. The contributors have been (Essex County Council unless stated):

- Five members of the Young Essex Assembly
- Huw Jones, Senior Analyst
- Pippa Shukla, Lead Strategic Commissioner, Pupil and School Intelligence
- Shamsun Noor, Head of School Admissions and Transport
- Debbie Rogan, Executive Headteacher, The HEARTS Academy Trust
- Leanne Hedden, Governor, Shenfield High School and the Essex Schools' Forum
- Rod Lane, Governor, Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery School
- Sean Moriarty, Governor, St. Benedict's Roman Catholic College
- Linda Oliffe, Governor, South Green Junior School
- Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning
- Chris Kiernan, Interim Director of Commissioning, Education and Lifelong Learning

- Alison Fiala, Lead Commissioner, Primary Education
- Lyn Wright, Standards and Excellence Commissioner: Secondary Education
- Richard Thomas, Executive Director, Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex (ASHE)
- Councillor Susan Barker, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Uttlesford District Council
- Councillor Graham Butland, Leader, Braintree District Council
- Councillor Terry Cutmore, Leader, Rochford District Council
- Councillor Peter Greig, Castle Point Borough Council
- Councillor Terri Sargent, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community, Basildon Borough Council
- Councillor Neville Watson, Castle Point Borough Council
- Andy Wright, Corporate Director, Braintree District Council
- Dr Tim Coulson, Regional Schools Commissioner for East of England and North-East London, Department for Education
- Ruth Bird, Chairman, Executive Committee of the Essex School Governors Association
- Russell Ayling, Executive Committee of the Essex School Governors Association
- Debbi Botham, Service Manager, Governor Services
- John Clarke, Executive Committee of the Essex School Governors Association
- John Hunter, Executive Committee of the Essex School Governors Association
- Joyce Sweeney, Executive Committee of the Essex School Governors Association
- Clare Kershaw, Head of Commissioning, Education and Lifelong Learning
- Councillor Giles Watling, Chairman Education and Skills Committee, Tendring District Council
- Keri Lawrence, Executive Projects Manager, Tendring District Council
- Malcolm Morley, Chief Executive, Harlow District Council
- Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Commissioning, Healthy Lifestyles
- Jane Richards, Head of Commissioning Public Health and Wellbeing
- Mike Blant, Liaison Officer, Essex Primary Headteachers Association (EPHA)

Additionally, written representations were received from Stavroulla Yiannou, Head of Commissioning Education and Lifelong Learning; David Burch, Director of Policy, Essex Chambers of Commerce; Richard Holmes, Director of Customers and Community, Maldon District Council; and Averil Price, Director of Community Services, Chelmsford City Council. Members of the Task and Finish Group have also, so far, undertaken visits to Wickford Church of England Infant School, Briscoe Primary School, Pitsea and Shenfield High School. Other school visits are planned for early in the autumn term 2015.

The Task and Finish Group is content that it has received, to date, a range of views and received contributions from a number of key individuals and groups to fully review educational attainment in Essex. The contributions received are highlighted in the section below, which is presented together with recommendations for the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning from whom the Task and Finish Group invites a response.

Issues, Evidence and Recommendations

Key Evidence

The first meeting of the Task and Finish Group established the scope of the review and it was agreed the following should be tested as part of the review:

- Performance data on all schools in Essex
- An understanding of past and present arrangements for managing the whole school estate, and the influence of new buildings and facilities on educational attainment
- An understanding of any influence the County Council can bring to bear on Academies/Free Schools. How does the Council fund the continuing services?
- The role and influence of LA School Governors with regard to school improvement
- An understanding of the reduced funding regime
- An understanding of statutory requirements
- An understanding of partnership working in local education with District/Borough/City Councils
- An understanding of the Ofsted inspection regime
- How do schools spend the Pupil Premium they receive?

In order to test these areas the Task and Finish Group agreed it would need to:

- To identify the levels and trends in educational attainment in schools in Essex at each Key Stage
- To evaluate how the levels of attainment compare nationally
- Where underperformance exists, to identify the causes
- To identify and evaluate all options to address the causes of underperformance
- To understand the barriers to improving school performance
- To understand the reduced funding regime including the role of The Schools Forum
- To identify how School Governors can influence improving performance
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning to support improvement in educational attainment across the county

By theme, the key evidence received at the Task and Finish Group sessions are outlined below:

Recruitment and Retention

Essex is a hard area to recruit teachers to in terms of both locality and subject. Subsequently there has been a significant increase in overseas teacher recruitment. The Task and Finish Group heard that between 10-20% of staff in Essex schools are 'imported' from overseas, with Canada and Ireland supplying many staff. There is 100 overseas staff being trained to go into schools in Colchester and Tendring. This is a reflection on a national system that is struggling in terms of recruitment. Last year 50,000 teachers nationally left teaching. The biggest wastage is in the first five years of teaching. Headteacher hours are increasing, with Primary Heads working, on average, 50-59 hours per week; and Secondary Heads working, on average, 59-64 hours per

week. There are 17 Teaching School Alliances in Essex more than any other county in the country. However, there are not enough applicants for training places.

In relation to recruiting to teach subject areas the Task and Finish Group heard there have been 97 jobs advertised for mathematics teachers this year. Two years ago Government data showed that there were not enough mathematicians in training to fill current vacancies. Schools have to exist within the funding envelope and recruitment of staff is problematic. In areas where there is a low level of higher education qualifications it is problematic to recruit teachers into programmes such as Train to Teach. Particular subject areas that are difficult to recruit to are: Mathematics, Physics, Design and Technology, and Religious Education. The Task and Finish Group heard that one of the problems with attainment is if the school is a category three or four school with *Ofsted* there comes with that a problem with recruiting staff; there are also recruitment issues for schools in seaside areas and on the London borders of Essex due to the London weighting allowance paid as a retainer.

With regard to unqualified staff it was reported to the Group on a site visit that unqualified staff can bring other skills and experiences into the classroom and that they are supported by non-class based outstanding teachers and leaders who have performance management targets and accountability for children's outcomes. Although unqualified staff are employed short term it is always as a route to qualified status and not a replacement for it.

Recruitment of teachers is a regional issue and some schools are now taking the opportunity to train their own teachers on the job. The DfE recognises that Academies are no panacea and that some schools have declined since leaving Local Authority control.

Recruitment and retention of staff in those schools which are seen to be failing is the most difficult; yet these are the very schools which require excellent qualified staff. The fluidity of staff within clusters or partnerships allows schools to share resources also. Excellent Headteachers create and motivate staff to stay. However, external support is often needed in supporting schools with a high turnover of staff.

The Task and Finish Group heard that the recruitment of is even more difficult for Headteachers. In deprived areas recruitment is even harder. Schools in the county spend thousands of pounds on recruitment. To assist with recruitment difficulties there are examples of schools providing housing on-site for new recruits.

Early Years

The Task and Finish Group learnt that a Quality and Development Team started to work with pre-school providers and schools with regard to Early Years in 2011 and 2012 and this work has started to reap rewards. This intervention has led to an improvement in Early Years outcomes in the county.

The Task and Finish Group heard the opinion that the biggest single factor to increase primary school attainment is investing in children prior to statutory school age with Early Years intervention. Until the issue of children meeting the necessary assessments when they join the school is addressed, schools, particularly in deprived areas will always be

trying to catch-up with other schools. Therefore, schools should look to develop relationships with feeder nursery schools.

The Task and Finish Group were informed, on a site visit, that early years children go into Wickford Church of England Primary School from the age of two. In this way, those with speech difficulties are more likely to catch-up with their peers than they are if they join the school in the Reception year. The view was stated that more pre-schools should be attached to infant or primary schools. There should also be a qualified person in a nursery class to monitor the progress of the children; however, this does not always happen in Essex.

Early Years provision is often patchiest in areas of relative deprivation with poor communication links and infrastructure to allow parents/carers to access any provision available.

With regard to Sure Start/Children's Centres the view was expressed that they have had very little impact on the achievement of young children from deprived backgrounds. The provision has little incentive with no statutory obligation to provide data. The provision does have SLAs attached to them; however, there is no moderation when children start school as, very often, the schools are told the children have reached their early learning goals, when they clearly have not. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children would be coming into schools with higher levels of attainment if Sure Start/Children's Centres were working. However, the reverse is true and they are not having the impact they were designed for. This is the national picture not just in Essex. It is difficult for individual officers at a Local Authority to have a handle on what is going on at the centres. Investment in Early Years is key to attainment throughout a child's education it was stated; and pre-schools do not often have access to outside facilities, and this is the reality for many young boys from underprivileged backgrounds who need to be able to access outdoors – this is with particular reference to white British boys being the single biggest underperforming group in the country.

The Task and Finish Group had heard from a number of sources that many children are not school-ready when they start the Reception year. Nursery education in Essex is patchy; and the most effective way to tackle the problem is through the providers which are linked to schools. Much of the nursery provision linked to schools takes children aged as young as two and there is clear evidence across the country that indigenous white working –class children are performing poorly including in early literacy. Dr Tim Coulson stated he is keen on nursery provision being linked to schools to tackle early literacy issues.

Dr Coulson's views echoed those heard on the site visits to Wickford Church of England Infant School and Briscoe Primary School as well as at the Task and Finish Group meeting with the Schools Forum members. It was agreed that the Final Report of the Task and Finish Group would include a **RECOMMENDATION** about linking Early Years provision with Infant/Primary schools.

RECOMMENDATION

The County Council should consider how best to link Early Years provision with Infant/Primary Schools in order to create a seamless transition from pre-school; and to prevent the discrepancies that have been reported to the Group with regard to the attainment levels of some EYFS children entering school. The Task and Finish Group heard conclusive evidence that linking provision would have a decisive impact on the literacy and numeracy skills of children. This would have a particular impact upon children from deprived backgrounds

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Implementation Review Date: March 2016

Impact Review Date: September 2016

School Governors

Cllr Barker queried what governors do to assist in achievement? The Task and Finish Group heard Shenfield High School which was previously rated by *Ofsted* as “requires Improvement” is now rated as “Good”, and crucial to this is having the right governance structures with governors recruited who exhibit a range of skills and expertise. These governors should then be actively involved in the school by attending meetings and conducting monitoring visits that look at something within the school improvement plan.

The Task and Finish Group agreed to formulate a **RECOMMENDATION** that the County Council should think of ways to encourage employers in Essex to enable governors to be released from their employment to enable their contribution and commitment to schools be increased.

RECOMMENDATION

The County Council should consider ways to encourage employers to enable governors to be released from their employment to increase their contribution and commitment to schools

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Implementation Review Date: March 2016

Impact Review Date: September 2016

Maintained schools have to reconstitute and look at the make-up of their governing bodies by September 2015. Instead of community governors there will be co-opted governors. Therefore, this opens up the opportunity for governing bodies to find people with the necessary skills rather than be people from the community.

Governors who come from business backgrounds are more able to keep up-to-date with training and have the commitment to do this. The training available from County ensures that professional people view the training as professional personal development. Parent Governors are much less likely to take-up training opportunities. The Parent Governor issue might be solved through the reconstitution of governing bodies in September 2015.

ESGA is working with governing bodies to ensure a maximum of two-four Parent Governors.

Some Academies are attempting to move to having no parental or staff representation on governing bodies; and looking to business expertise only. However, there is nothing wrong with having a different range of expertise on a school governing body. When he was Education Secretary Michael Gove stated there should be paid School Governors. Some Governors are in schools three or four times a week; however, the opinion was this was too much. Every school is different but the pressures are practically the same, and these pressures put many potential Governors off. There is an absolute need that people in authority should have a system of joined-up support and thinking to action the one aim of improving the educational attainment of children. If you challenge, as a School Governor, you can get answers.

The Essex School Governors Association (ESGA) answered unequivocally no when asked whether School Governors should receive a retainer? However, there are examples of Governors being paid by the sponsors of Academies.

School Governors play an important role in raising school attainment. The relationship between the Headteacher and the Chair of School Governors is vital to ensure attainment levels are raised. The challenges made of the Headteacher at governing body meetings should all be minuted. It is crucial that School Governors see the school as a business, and with the correct governance Governors can be the critical friend and the challenge to the school and the senior leadership team. Therefore, it is crucial that governing bodies have the right committees, sub-committees and effective terms of reference. Governors also have a role to play in ensuring the health and wellbeing of senior leadership teams. Good governance is crucial in ensuring Governors are part of the leadership of the school. Ofsted can recommend a review of school governance structures.

Different schools and different governing bodies have different strengths and weaknesses; this should enable greater collaboration and support between governing bodies. It was agreed that a **RECOMMENDATION** be included in the Final Report of the Task and Finish Group to suggest more collaboration between governing bodies.

RECOMMENDATION

There should be encouragement and incentives for school governing bodies to work collaboratively with other governing bodies to ensure best-practice is shared throughout the county

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Implementation Review Date: March 2016

Impact Review Date: September 2016

Data

Essex has data-sharing agreements through the National Pupil Database and has been praised by *Ofsted* for its post-16 data-sharing agreements. The Task and Finish Group

has concluded that data gathering is a key to success and was impressed to hear how information is gathered, by schools, on how every child is performing with early baselines established to allow for intervention when necessary. Data drives up standards when the senior leadership team of a school uses the data to assess individual student progress.

The Task and Finish Group were particularly impressed by the data 'war room' established by Shenfield High School which tracks the achievements of all students in Years 10 to 13, enabling the school to make interventions if students are not achieving the levels they should be. Although primarily for staff the 'war room' is also used as a motivational tool for students from time-to-time.

From next year Progress 8 and Attainment 8 standards will be used to measure students. This new measurement aims to erase the false divide between those who achieve a 'C' grade and those who do not. Progress 8 will show how students' progress against eight curriculum areas. However, the concern was raised to the Task and Finish Group that if a student, for example, does not have strong literacy skills and subsequently does not take a Humanities subject it will appear that the school is not achieving.

Essex is, by-and-large, in the third quartile on the key metrics. The Task and Finish Group heard the aim is to move the county into the top quartile. Historically at KS2 and KS4 Essex has only increased at the same pace as the national average; and this places the county in the lower end of second quartile or into the third quartile. However, if outcomes were increased for students in these two Key Stages at a rate higher than the national average this would place Essex firmly in the second quartile. The Task and Finish Group agreed to formulate a **RECOMMENDATION** stating that the County Council should commit to the indicator that the People in Essex have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning.

RECOMMENDATION

The County Council should commit to interim and ultimate targets to move to aim of being in the top quartile of educational achievement in the county at all Key Stages.

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Implementation Review Date: March 2016

Impact Review Date: September 2016

Two years ago, Essex, in line with what occurred nationally, had higher results in Mathematics than in English at KS4. Now, schools have focused so significantly on their English outcomes over the last two years that this has had an effect on Mathematics attainment. Therefore, Mathematics continues to be a significant challenge. There is a scarcity of good Mathematics teachers and there has been recruitment from overseas to plug the gaps. And a new GCSE curriculum is about to be introduced, which will be harder than the present one. One positive intervention, the Task and Finish Group heard about, on Mathematics is at Tendring Technology College, which is developing a curriculum in partnership with local primary schools from KS1 all the way through

schooling. This should help pupils cope with the Year 6 to Year 7 break, which had always proved challenging.

The Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium is used creatively across the county, the Task and Finish Group heard. Indeed, the Young Essex Assembly suggested it could be used to fund extra-curricular and revision clubs.

The Pupil Premium enables schools to release staff from classrooms so they can spend time with children who are less able. It enables schools to be, effectively, over-resourced in terms of teaching. Schools also look for innovative ways of utilising the Pupil Premium, for example, the Task and Finish Group were informed that St. Benedict's Catholic College encourages engagement with the parents/carers of Pupil Premium students. The school initiated a credit for Pupil Premium students which is worth £100 a term which they can use for music tuition, uniform, school trips etc. which is linked to attendance and reduces in scale if a student is absent from school. This initiative has proven to be successful.

On a site visit the Group heard the introduction of the Pupil Premium really has improved the educational attainment of the children. The very high level of Pupil Premium pays for uniform (including PE kit and shoes) for some children, and it also pays for a wide range of activities. There are over 20 after- or pre-school clubs, which are all free to children at the school. This has had a huge impact and is used skilfully, targeting the most needy children. The Pupil Premium has enabled the school to do more.

The Task and Finish Group would wish to see more creative and proactive use of the Pupil Premium and agreed to formulate a **RECOMMENDATION** as such.

RECOMMENDATION

The County Council should encourage all schools under Local Authority control to proactively and creatively make full use of the Pupil Premium to develop ways of improving the attainment of children from more deprived backgrounds

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Implementation Review Date: March 2016

Impact Review Date: September 2016

Actions and Recommendations

The Task and Finish Group has agreed its actions and recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning and seeks the formal approval of the People and Families Scrutiny Committee to file these recommendations to the Cabinet Member at its September 2015 meeting. The recommendations are outlined below and are also highlighted within the document itself. In the event that the Cabinet Member

does not accept any of the recommendations below, the Committee should be advised, in each case, the reasons for rejection in writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The County Council should consider how best to link Early Years provision with Infant/Primary Schools in order to create a seamless transition from pre-school; and to prevent the discrepancies that have been reported to the Group with regard to the attainment levels of some EYFS children entering school. The Task and Finish Group heard conclusive evidence that linking provision would have a decisive impact on the literacy and numeracy skills of children. This would have a particular impact upon children from deprived backgrounds.
2. The County Council should consider ways to encourage employers to enable governors to be released from their employment to increase their contribution and commitment to schools.
3. There should be encouragement and incentives for school governing bodies to work collaboratively with other governing bodies to ensure best-practice is shared throughout the county.
4. The County Council should commit to interim and ultimate targets to move to aim of being in the top quartile of educational achievement in the county at all Key Stages.
5. The County Council should encourage all schools under Local Authority control to proactively and creatively make full use of the Pupil Premium to develop ways of improving the attainment of children from more deprived backgrounds
6. The in a variety of formats.

ACTIONS:

1. The Task and Finish Group invites a response from the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning with regard to the influx of migrant children into Essex and the subsequent impact this has on class sizes in the county.
2. The Task and Finish Group would wish future Educational Attainment in Essex Annual Reports to provide detailed information to afford more clarity where improvements have been made.
3. The Task and Finish Group would wish the Cabinet Member to report if, and how, the County Council is working with the public sector to work with hard-to-reach groups to raise educational engagement and attainment.

Summary of the Evidence Sessions and Site Visits

Friday, 10 October 2014

The membership and Chairmanship of the Task and Finish Group were established and personal interests in terms of school governorships were declared. The scoping document which had previously been presented to the full Committee was considered and discussed. Although outside the scope of the review it was agreed that the influence

Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) has on educational attainment should be considered. The effect admissions criteria have on attainment was also added to the scope, particularly in relation to Academies acting as their own admissions authority. The Task and Finish Group agreed that the latest available performance data be requested in detailed form relating to both Local Authority maintained schools and Academies.

The role of The Schools Forum was discussed in relation to the impact it has on the funding regime and the recommendations it makes to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning. The nature and scope of the recommendations from The Schools Forum was questioned, and it was agreed to invite members of the Forum to a future meeting of the Task and Finish Group.

It was agreed the correlation between poor educational attainment and socio-economic deprivation be discussed with Borough/City/District Councils. Other issues potentially affecting the review such as the School Estates Strategy; the influence the Local Authority is able to exert over Academies; and Further Education Colleges was discussed.

Monday, 13 October 2014

As part of European Local Democracy Week the Task and Finish Group held a session with the Young Essex Assembly (YEA) starting at 5.30 p.m. – a time convenient for the five members of the YEA who provided their contribution to the review.

In advance of the meeting the Group had set 15 questions for the YEA which it had considered at a Sub-Group meeting on 20 September. Their responses are outlined below.

1. How effective has your education been in making you ready for work?

Although some schools give guidance on careers and “working for life”, more is needed - not only guidance about job-based skills but also things like mortgages. Cllr Grundy noted that the T&F Group on Financial Inclusion recommended that money matters should be included. It was agreed overall that there should be more and that schools should be more consistent in supplying it.

2. Does school size have any effect on education attainment?

Yes, it has a negative effect in several ways – bigger classrooms mean less quality teaching time and teacher’s attention for individuals. It also impacts on things like punctuality and attitude. Add to that mixed classes are not good, as pupils can feel worried about letting others down, if they make it apparent that they do not understand things.

3. In your experience is the transition between primary and secondary effective?

This can vary quite a lot. It can vary with the schools concerned and who you go with as well. Secondary schools will often do “fun stuff” with visiting pupils – but that is not what it

will be like at all in Year 7. In reality, both primary and secondary schools need to be more focused in how they approach this transition for their pupils.

4. How far are young people involved in school improvement plans?

Several views were expressed. One YEA member was unsure if the school was committed at all; another pointed out that providing feedback at their school was a long process. Another suggested that the plans should concentrate more on the social and extra-curricular side of things; another suggested it should be made more child-friendly.

5. What are your views on teaching and learning strategies?

The emphasis is on teaching staff to be able to model their style according to the pupils they are teaching, and to liaise with each other about this. The size of the school may have a direct bearing on this. Relating to the use of laptops, schools have a supply for pupils' use, and pupils have their own accounts; but they cannot use their own laptops or tablets. There is some use of smartphones.

6. In your view, how important are extra curriculum activities in raising attainment?

These can raise happiness levels, develop life and social skills – including teamwork in some cases – which in turn all give rise to more motivation and academic achievement. These should be entirely voluntary and preferably free, so that nobody is prevented from participation on grounds of cost. One suggestion was to use Pupil Premium to fund extra-curricular and revision clubs. Transport was raised as a specific problem, in that sometimes buses and trains beyond school hours were limited.

7. Do your schools offer extra revision classes during summer and half terms?

Some do – they are a very good idea, but they should be free, and they should be conducted by the school staff themselves, rather than outsiders who are not known to the individual pupils involved.

8. Does your school help and encourage what you wish to do after school? Does your school raise aspiration to join a university?

This depends on the school. There seems to be more emphasis on university in independent schools. More advice/guidance on this topic is needed for all

9. Who, in your view, are the most important people in influencing your educational attainment levels?

Teachers have the most influence, in providing the drive to achieve in pupils. The attitude of parents is also very important and this varies a lot. Some are very supportive, whereas others do nothing and then blame the children. It was pointed out that parents are usually less able to give practical assistance with homework, the older the children get.

10. What are the key influences on educational attainment and aspiration?

Rewards of some kind were suggested as key to attainment. These can take different forms, e.g. trips or electronic credits. Another form of “reward” was noted – when badly behaved pupils received some kind of reward to encourage them to behave better – e.g. a position of responsibility. This could have quite a negative effect on those who were well behaved.

11. What interventions might tackle issues of low educational attainment in certain communities?

This was not seen as major problem, but it might be possible to bring in teachers from outside, to explore different ways of learning. It was seen more of an issue with individuals rather than communities.

12. Research commonly shows that girls have higher educational aspirations than boys. Is this your experience; and what can be done to close this gap?

In general terms, this was not seen to be the case by the YEA members. It is an individual thing and not gender related. However, there are some areas where this may apply. There are certain subjects that show a difference – for example, boys seem to be more motivated in science classes. Also, boys do seem to develop slower than girls. Another element is classroom behaviour – girls tend to speak up more than boys. With regard to segregated classes, these may benefit girls more, as they tend to get on with their work, but, again, it was seen as more being related to individuals’ performances.

13. Do school league tables have an adverse effect on the attainment of young people where the pass-rates at GCSE are lower than average, can it become a self-fulfilling prophecy?

The YEA members had no real overall view on this issue. This can be the case with some people, but not all. Some look entirely to their own achievements. It is also possible that it will impact on teachers, in their own view of their abilities, but probably not to any great extent. The Chairman pointed out that such results are not actually yours, but of your predecessors.

14. Does peer pressure have an effect on educational attainment, either positively or negatively?

Peer pressure certainly can be influential, but it can pull pupils either way. The friendship group is very important to almost every pupil, and it can also lead to labelling of groups of friends – such as “geeks” for instance. This can sometimes be negative, especially for those on the edge of the group.

15. How important is a school’s pastoral policies in terms of educational attainment?

The pastoral element is very important, as it cuts across several areas, eg academic, social, friendships groups, etc. Different members had different experiences, with some having the Heads of Year taking on these roles, and others having pastoral managers who move with groups as they progressed through the years. The latter can provide stability and build up relationships with pupils. There is a big difference when pupils

enter Sixth Form, where they are treated more like adults and expected to take on more responsibility for themselves.

Friday, 19 December 2014

The Task and Finish Group were presented with the key priorities in the ECC corporate priority: People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning and that the three priorities within this that Education Services are measure themselves against are:

- Every child in Essex to go to a good or outstanding school by 2018
- The gap in outcomes for vulnerable children to be closed
- Educational performance at Early Years, KS2 and KS4 to be in the top 25% of Local Authorities nationally

Attainment data was also presented to the Task and Finish Group. The Group heard that data is collected on Academies as well as maintained schools, there being a data-sharing agreement with Academies on school level attainment data. Through the National Pupil Database Essex Education have details of all children educated in Essex schools and have specific data-sharing agreements with bordering authorities, for example Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Unitary Authorities. Essex has been praised for its post-16 data-sharing agreements in the *Ofsted* Annual Report.

The Task and Finish Group learnt that a Quality and Development Team started to work with pre-school providers and schools with regard to Early Years in 2011 and 2012 and this work has started to reap rewards. This intervention has led to an improvement in Early Years outcomes in the county.

At Key Stage 2 there are manifold measures used to assess performance but there is a standard that every child should achieve a level 4 at the end of KS2. In the last two years Essex has improved, but is still in the second quartile nationally.

At Key Stage 4 the standard measure is five GCSEs at Grades A*-C, including English and Mathematics. From this year there is a different measure in place. Schools are no longer able to include the best result of those students who had been entered early for a GCSE and then re-sit during May/June – schools now have to include the result from the ‘first sitting’ only towards their performance data. This has meant that many schools have stopped the early sit of exams. Equivalencies have also been excluded from the performance measurements, consequently the national scores have gone down this year.

In terms of Ofsted outcomes the last year has shown an increase in the number of primary, secondary and special schools being rated as either good or outstanding. This is an increase of 12% from 2012 for primary schools; and 16% for secondary schools. One of the prime foci of Ofsted at present is the improvement of educational outcomes of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Primary and Secondary School Improvement Advisors RAG rank schools to see which of them require support throughout the following year and what level of support they might require.

Monday, 26 January 2015

The Task and Finish Group received contributions from Members of the Essex Schools Forum. The contributors were School Governors and an infant school Headteacher. The Task and Finish Group also received a verbal response to a question raised at a previous meeting as to whether the county policy on school transport might have an effect on educational attainment. It was explained from September 2015 for new starters the policy of the County Council is to provide free transport to the child's nearest school if the school is above the statutory walking distance. Catchment area schools are no longer a relevant factor in this. It was stated that attainment should not be affected by this policy. Low income families will be protected and this is clearly spelt out in the school application process. A view from other contributors to the session was that school transport policies do have an impact upon attainment.

The Task and Finish Group learned the Schools Forum makes recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning; and makes decisions on other issues, for example the Forum is looking to reduce the spend on high-needs residential special schools outside of the county. The Schools Forum looks at the most pressing cases in relation to reduced funding. There are three blocks of funding which the Forum looks at: Early Years, High Needs and Schools.

The Task and Finish Group were informed about inspirational and energetic school leadership which can have a positive effect on a school. The group were given examples of schools where this had been the case in Clacton and Basildon. For example, improvements to Felmores Primary School have been as a result of leadership which shifted the culture within the school. Previously the culture was that the children being, largely, from deprived areas would not achieve. Alongside this, the school is part of Basildon Education Services Trust (BEST) and in the early days of this initiative learning mentors were appointed from the 'pot' of BEST monies. In 2010/11 the BEST funding was devolved to schools and this also coincided with the school having a new Headteacher. The monies were able to be diverted to teaching and learning. Since this the students have increasingly, over the last four years, narrowed the gap with their peers in terms of their progress. The Task and Finish Group heard the opinion that the biggest single factor to increase primary school attainment is investing in children prior to statutory school age with Early Years intervention. No children entering Felmores Primary meet the necessary assessments when they join the school, and until this is addressed the school will always be trying to catch-up with other schools. Therefore, schools should look to develop relationships with feeder nursery schools.

Schools have to exist within the funding envelope and recruitment of staff is problematic. In areas where there is a low level of higher education qualifications it is problematic to recruit teachers into programmes such as Train to Teach. Particular subject areas that are difficult to recruit to are: Mathematics, Physics, Design and Technology, and Religious Education. The Task and Finish Group heard that one of the problems with attainment is if the school is a category three or four school with *Ofsted* there comes with

that a problem with recruiting staff; there are also recruitment issues for schools in seaside areas and on the London borders of Essex due to the London weighting allowance paid as a retainer.

With further reference to Early Years the Task and Finish Group were informed that early years children go into Wickford Church of England Primary School from the age of two. In this way, those with speech difficulties are more likely to catch-up with their peers than they are if they join the school in the Reception year. The view was stated that more pre-schools should be attached to infant or primary schools. There should also be a qualified person in a nursery class to monitor the progress of the children; however, this does not happen in Essex. With regard to Sure Start/Children's Centres the view was expressed that they have had very little impact on the achievement of young children from deprived backgrounds. The provision has little incentive with no statutory obligation to provide data. The provision does have SLAs attached to them; however, there is no moderation when children start school as, very often, the schools are told the children have reached their early learning goals, when they clearly have not. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children would be coming into schools with higher levels of attainment if Sure Start/Children's Centres were working. However, the reverse is true and they are not having the impact they were designed for. This is the national picture not just in Essex. It is difficult for individual officers at a Local Authority to have a handle on what is going on at the centres. It was queried whether Essex County Council prioritises Early Years and what ECCs strategic direction is related to Early Years. Investment in Early Years is key to attainment throughout a child's education it was stated; and pre-schools do not often have access to outside facilities, and this is the reality for many young boys from underprivileged backgrounds who need to be able to access outdoors – this is with particular reference to white British boys being the single biggest underperforming group in the country.

The Task and Finish Group heard that schools located in areas of deprivation that have spare places become vulnerable schools. Thus, this has an impact upon attainment levels. High turbulence within a school also impacts upon attainment due to the effect it has on the school managing the curriculum, teaching, and on staff.

Cllr Barker queried what governors do to assist in achievement? The Task and Finish Group heard Shenfield High School which was previously rated by *Ofsted* as "requires Improvement" is now rated as "Good", and crucial to this is having the right governance structures with governors recruited who exhibit a range of skills and expertise. These governors should then be actively involved in the school by attending meetings and conducting monitoring visits that look at something within the school improvement plan. A group of governors meet with the Headteacher once a month and look at the emerging data across all key stages. As a result governors have a greater understanding of the data than was the case two or three years ago and, as a result, are able to actively challenge the data and challenge school improvement plans. Governors have moved away from a subject-based approach and have some concentration on the pupil premium, safeguarding as well as school attendance and attainment monitoring. It was agreed that this approach would also work well in primary schools. The advent of a Free School in Brentwood has had an impact on admissions at Shenfield High School; and with another Free School opening from September 2015 admission numbers may be affected further. Shenfield High School is currently a four-form entry school; whereas, in the past, it has been an eight-form entry institution. Leanne informed the Group that

Shenfield High School has a higher than average, for the area, number of children with special educational needs and this affects appropriate intervention for other students. It costs, on average, £10,000 per annum for an alternative education provision for a student.

In relation to the roles and responsibilities of a school governor, it was stated that governors should be knowledgeable and fully committed to the school. The last *Ofsted* report of St. Benedict's Catholic College said "the Governors are able to provide support to the management team at the school". Therefore, if governors have time to devote to the school during the school day to support the school leadership team this would be a positive move in to ensure good governance. The Task and Finish Group agreed to formulate a **RECOMMENDATION** that the County Council should think of ways to encourage employers in Essex to enable governors to be released from their employment to enable their contribution and commitment to schools be increased.

The Pupil Premium enables schools to release staff from classrooms so they can spend time with children who are less able. It enables schools to be, effectively, over-resourced in terms of teaching. Schools also look for innovative ways of utilising the Pupil Premium, for example, the Task and Finish Group were informed that St. Benedict's Catholic College encourages engagement with the parents/carers of Pupil Premium students. The school initiated a credit for Pupil Premium students which is worth £100 a term which they can use for music tuition, uniform, school trips etc. which is linked to attendance and reduces in scale if a student is absent from school. This initiative has proven to be successful.

Groups of schools making each other progress and being accountable for each other is better than raising attainment school-by-school, it was stated. There is no mechanism that looks at how groups of schools can make each other better. It was suggested that it would be fascinating to see how this could be done in Colchester as every year the Grammar Schools are lauded by the local press with little or no coverage of the other schools in the Borough. There was support from the contributors of having schools under an 'umbrella' as it enables sharing of teaching and resources. The Local Delivery Groups have money but not the resources, and some schools don't buy into them and use their own resources.

Thursday, 26 February 2015

Site Visit to Wickford Church of England School, Mount Road, Wickford SS11 8HE

Present:

Debbie Rogan – Executive Headteacher

Louise Johnson – Head of School

Lee Faris, Early Years Manager

Steve Clark – Business Manager

- Part of HEARTS Academy, which now has four schools: Wickford Church of England School (2010); Briscoe Primary School, Pitsea (2011); Waterman Primary School and Stambridge Primary School (both 2015) in Rochford
- The Trust has three directors: Julia Attridge, Michael Maguire and Tim Elbourne (Member of the Chelmsford Diocesan Education Trust)

- The school is rated as Outstanding by both *Ofsted* and Inspector of Church Schools. It is a national support school and a teaching school
- Additional Funding comes from selling services to others
- The Trust makes strategic decisions on HR, finance and financial monitoring, but relies on local governing bodies to make local decisions. The Trust selects the Governing Body.
- There are six teachers at the school.

A question was posed as to whether having only six teachers affects what the school can do with regard to the amount of outreach? Debbie responded that sometimes classes come together. With planning it is ensured the children are not disadvantaged in any way. The school uses a number of specialist teachers, brought in to teach particular skills, and shares staff with other members of the Trust. Leaders also have accountability for targets and achievement and despite the expectation that they will do school to school support and manage this their main priority is ensuring that they focus on children staying on track with high quality teaching at all times.

It was asked whether the school can identify anything that affects the children's educational attainment? Debbie replied the context the children find themselves in. Recruitment is an issue in Basildon, and there are three unqualified teachers at Briscoe Primary School one of whom is on the 12-week assessment route to achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) as well as salaried routes into teaching.

As a supplementary it was asked whether there are issues arising from having unqualified teaching staff? It was answered that unqualified staff can bring other skills and experiences into the classroom and that they are supported by non-class based outstanding teachers and leaders who have performance management targets and accountability for children's outcomes. Although unqualified staff are employed short term it is always as a route to qualified status and not a replacement for it.

A question was raised whether when recruiting the school looks for specialisms? The school often looks at Teaching Assistants with a degree. The school has staff to assist in training classroom management. Standards are maintained by the senior teachers making up the level that inexperienced teachers could not do. Research has shown that the level of care and pre-school education that children receive on a school site is greater than that of a nursery outside a school setting. Therefore, the school can prioritise vulnerable children.

With regard to funding it was asked what the impact of the imminent increase in National Insurance and Pension contributions might be? Steve responded that this will put a lot of pressure on budgets. Across the country contributions will be rising from 14% to 16.5%. The Academy will be able to handle it in the short term, but those schools running a deficit will find it a challenge. The Church of England is an overseeing body but provides no funding for the school. Core funding for the school this year has reduced by £20,000 – which is basically one teacher. In real terms school funding is not protected; the DfE has reformed its funding formula, and this is very complicated. Briscoe Primary School is different as it receives a lot of funding through its high level of deprivation – measured by the number of children receiving free school meals (65%). The school is affected significantly by its community, i.e. what is going on outside it. There is a large senior

leadership team at Briscoe Primary School due to the unpredictability of the local community and time rightly devoted to safeguarding and child protection which is over and above the average a school would normally expect. There are significant problems with many parents, and much less parental support for the children. This in equity can be seen easily across the group of schools and how the curriculum is context driven due to individual school needs. We also think carefully about new models of leadership and what schools need rather than old models which are sometimes unhelpful. We always looking at succession planning and overstaff in all schools.

Lee stated Early Years disadvantaged funding is essentially based on free school meals, which means other factors are not taken into consideration. It is no longer targeted and this has had a big impact. As a pre-school provider, this impacts on the ability to intervene quickly enough, as there is no funding for some pupils. The pre-school at Briscoe Primary is very good, and when children start in Reception the difference between those who have been to the pre-school and those who have not is very noticeable. There is certainly a problem in some private providers, with the quality of the staff due to poor pay and the lack of a qualified teacher overseeing provision. So often these children enter school without being “school ready” with the resulting issues about catching up and missing lost learning opportunities.

Debbie stated there is also a high level of turbulence in Basildon schools generally, as there are significant areas of temporary housing, which leads to many people moving frequently. People do not see the reality of communities that are treated as “White British Underclass” which has a very different culture to what would historically have been called working class. There is a level of chaos faced by many children at Briscoe Primary; it is extremely deprived, with very serious issues, like alcohol, domestic violence and mental health. This impacts on the ability of families to cope with the challenges of bringing up children and living in poverty and on the ability of schools in these areas to cope themselves with the high level of need, deprivation and challenges it brings. The Trust employs mental health workers to provide clinical supervision for staff as a result of this. Pupil premium supports this as it does the leadership structure of the school. Staff do an amazing job.

A question was asked about the support teachers give to children not fulfilling their potential? Debbie responded that at Briscoe Primary School the aim is to reach normal achievement targets and beyond. The support for teaching and the basic intention is that every lesson is good. High quality teaching is the first step. Across the trust, there is also support for reading and maths, but also speech therapy, and mental health – for the children, their parents and staff.

Data gathering is a key to success. Information on how every child is performing is collected and studied by staff. An early baseline is established and then there is early intervention, with tight tracking throughout and half termly expectations which ensure children achieve Age appropriate expectations. Children can achieve, with the right teaching, even with problems such as dyslexia. The number of 11-year-olds who should be able to achieve a Level 4B should be 95%. A link to Indian students is utilised, giving 1:1 tutoring online. There is an emphasis on access to learning, children go on trips. Learning to deal with risks is seen as an important part of the children’s education as is having access to opportunities that they would not normally be able to have such as

tutoring, visits to other parts of the country, residential visits. .We want to balance out the impact of deprivation and open children's eyes to what is on offer in the world.

Debbie stated Essex is a relatively affluent county with seemingly mediocre attainment levels. A great deal of hysteria confronts failing schools, and a culture of blame. There has to be a suitable culture to build confidence in the staff and ensure that in those areas where there are the most challenges and where the most resilient and skilled people are required there are systems, support and structures to allow the best people to lead there. Old models of leadership and support constrain this.

A question was posed about what the Trust is doing right, and what ECC can do to help? Debbie responded that *Ofsted* is irrelevant, but we try not to worry about them. Mostly all we are worried about is teaching the children. We have a responsibility to the children and their parents, not to *Ofsted*. The *Ofsted* approach impacts on the local authority and sometimes results in a stress and pressure on schools which has the opposite effect of what is intended. Public humiliation is not the answer. The attitude should be "this is an opportunity to develop and improve the school" not "You're rubbish". The best qualified and most special people should be employed to work in Basildon and Harlow and the Local Authority should be supporting this process, rather than trying to micro-manage failing schools. The Local Authority should be looking to help, but the achievements of the schools are the responsibility of the schools themselves. For instance, a RAG rating may could be done by the schools themselves, but not by the Local Authority or in the case of academies the HT board. Schools need to be talked up, not battered by the kind of hysteria that accompanies failing schools. All children in Essex, whether they be at a Maintained School or an Academy, are still Essex children and the Task and Finish Group should be interested in them all – not just those in maintained schools.

Site Visit to Briscoe Primary School, Felmores End, Pitsea SS13 1PN

Present:

Erica Barnett – Head of School

Lee Faris, Early Years Manager

- The school is 5th out of the 863 schools in Essex in terms of social deprivation
- The school is close to an estate with a lot of temporary accommodation. It had a 45% turnover in some year groups last year. The spirit of the Fair Access protocol was not in our view employed by planning and admissions during the journey out of special measures.
- School provides social care as well as education.
- The level of SEN in the school is well above average.
- The school pays for speech therapists and educational psychologists and health workers, who also offer counselling to parents
- The maintained nursery ('The Orchard') offers three-hours a day, five days a week but does not offer childcare. At the age of 3 children go to the school nursery, which is run by a qualified teacher. There are currently 26 children at age 3, but next year there will be 42. Unless they are Early Years Premium the children do not get automatic admission to the maintained nursery

- School achievement is now at national average or above.

A question was posed as to what the benefit of the affiliation with Wickford Church of England School is. Erica responded the Wickford Church of England School has good structures and they worked brilliantly which enabled us to transfer them here. Over the last two years we have very much become our own school. The school was one of Michael Gove's 200 failing schools. The school has a very high turnover and it is difficult to be consistent. Behaviour was appalling but we set in place a very strict policy and now the school's behaviour is outstanding. The culture of the school has changed – the children are now proud to be here. However, it is an exhausting place to work and at times has odd days.

Erica stated that the introduction of the Pupil Premium really has improved the educational attainment of the children. The very high level of Pupil Premium pays for uniform (including PE kit and shoes) for certain children, it also pays for a wide range of activities. There are over 20 after- or pre-school clubs, which are all free. It has a huge impact and is used skilfully, targeting the most needy children.

A question was raised whether the school would you have been able to achieve what it has without the Pupil Premium? Erica responded the Pupil Premium has enabled us to do more but creativity, recruitment and retention of high quality staff is key. Open thinking of senior management can change the teaching. Education has changed over the last 15 years. The ethos of good schools linking with other schools is such a good thing.

Erica stated that Local Authorities occasionally give the impression of “our schools” and Academies. School to school support could be used more strategically and effectively.

A question was raised about Children's Centres. Lee responded that they are usually very good but that the quality varies and not all Children's Centres regulate their nursery. Two and 3-year olds being taught/overseen by qualified teachers would increase future educational attainment.

Erica referred to the Nurture Group at the school which assists in growing the self-esteem of children who, for whatever reason, are being encouraged back into the education system. Many of these children are emotionally damaged and the school is able to get them back into mainstream education. The school has an application to extend the Nurture Group and has high quality resources funded by the County for the children within it.

Task and Finish Group meeting

The Task and Finish Group received a contribution from Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning; Chris Kiernan, Interim Director of Commissioning: Education and Lifelong Learning and Richard Thomas, Executive Director of the Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex (ASHE). Following Member feedback on the visits to Wickford Church of England Infant School and Briscoe Primary School conducted in the morning the contributors responded that many Headteachers with on-site provision, make comment on the standards of children coming

into pre-school from private sector providers; and such comments should be judged on this basis. *Ofsted* reports of pre-school private providers in Essex show that 80% are either outstanding or good; and that none in Basildon are inadequate. Essex has moved from 135th to 50th last year; and 57th this year in terms of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) results at the end of the Reception year.

The County is looking at things that sustain successful schools through a commitment to accountability; and it is recognised that Essex County Council needs to give a clearer message of what it is doing as the distinction is blurred with schools, at present, in terms of school improvement. Steps had been made in the last five years which have been significant in terms of improving educational attainment, including in primary schools in Basildon. In general Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results are improving and becoming sustainable.

There is reliable data available which compares Essex with the rest of England; with the county's ten statistical neighbours; and the rest of the East of England. With regard to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Essex is one point ahead of the rest of the country; two points behind statistical neighbours; and level with the rest of the region. At KS2 in 2011 Essex was 91st and is now 68th which puts the county just ahead of the rest of England; generally ahead of the East of England and even with the statistical neighbours. At KS4 Essex is 0.2% behind the national average; but us doing well at KS5.

Since September 2014 40 schools in Essex have been subject to an *Ofsted* inspection and 80% of these have been good or better which is hitting the national average. School attendance has improved in the county. The introduction of fixed penalty notices has had a significant effect. The attendance levels at primary schools in the county are now outstanding at above 96% The overall absence rate is 3.84% including unauthorised absences – this compares very favourably with the national rate of 3.89%. The penalty notices have focused minds that sanctions are in place and will be used.

Following a question from Cllr Bobbin about whether there has been any improvement in attainment levels at schools which have become Primary rather than split Infant and Junior Schools the Task and Finish Group heard that transferring from one school to another can become traumatic for a child so a seamless process is a preferred option. Both in Essex and nationally Primary Schools do better than Infant and Junior Schools. However, Essex County Council has no jurisdiction to force this. A review of Infant and Junior Schools was undertaken last year and a report was produced.

Following a question from Cllr Barker relating to Children's Centres a response came that indicated Children's Centres need to become a more targeted service and go back to first principles. There are areas of concern in the county despite Essex having *Ofsted* reports better than the national average.

Following a question from Cllr Barker relating to schools, potentially, changing behaviour due to the first entry rule, the Task and Finish Group heard it would be interesting to see the results based on best entry. The new measurements will be a fairer measurement of progress but will be more demanding in challenging areas.

In relation to school staffing in the county it was reported that between 10-20% of staff in Essex schools are 'imported' from overseas, with Canada and Ireland supplying many

staff. There is 100 overseas staff being trained to go into schools in Colchester and Tendring. This is a reflection on a national system that is struggling in terms of recruitment. Last year 50,000 teachers nationally left teaching. The biggest wastage is in the first five years of teaching. Headteacher hours are increasing, with Primary Heads working, on average, 50-59 hours per week; and Secondary Heads working, on average, 59-64 hours per week. There are 17 Teaching School Alliances in Essex more than any other county in the country. However, there are not enough applicants for training places. The Cabinet Member stated recruitment is very difficult in certain subjects, for example there have been 97 jobs advertised for mathematics teachers this year. Two years ago Government data showed that there were not enough mathematicians in training to fill current vacancies.

With regard to vocational education the Task and Finish Group heard that there has never been the investment in this country as there is in other parts of Europe. It is also likely that the new performance measures will push schools away from vocational programmes.

The Cabinet Member informed the Group that there is no evidence that there are differences in attainment levels in single sex schools. Indeed, most independent schools are now co-educational. Social development also works better in a co-educational environment. The Cabinet Member also stated there is likely to be a significant issue regarding teachers taking early retirement, due to the change in pension and national insurance contributions. This might influence teaching staff when they are budgeting and planning for the in-between years between early retirement and the national retirement age. There could be a 3% increase in staffing costs for a school. In real terms this could mean a 5% fall in overall budget taking into account salary increases and non-teaching staff. Schools will need to plan how it will budget for this change. Some schools are holding excessive balances at around 10% and they will need to reduce this.

Wednesday, 4 March 2015

Task and Finish Group meeting (morning session)

The Task and Finish Group received contributions from Dr Tim Coulson, Regional Schools Commissioner for the East of England, Department for Education (DfE); Councillor Terri Sargent, Basildon Borough Council; Councillor Graham Butland, Leader and Andy Wright, Corporate Director, Braintree District Council; Councillor Peter Greig, Councillor Ray Howard and Councillor Neville Watson, Castle Point Borough Council; and Councillor Terry Cutmore, Leader, Rochford District Council. Additionally, Councillor Susan Barker provided a contribution on behalf of Uttlesford District Council where she is Deputy Leader.

Braintree District Council

Councillor Butland and Andy Wright highlighted issues in the Braintree District. The Braintree town area has three secondary schools all of which are performing below national averages. Therefore, people in the town have no real choice when it comes to selecting a school for a quality provision. There are also difficulties in Witham; however, the two schools are now improving, with the teaching at Maltings Academy having

improved markedly. The Headteacher of the school is leading from the front and there are now no excuses for not performing well.

Braintree District Council provided a synopsis in advance of the meeting (see Appendix n) outlining the schools in the district as well as attainment levels and other issues affecting the district in terms of education, growth and housing, and health. Cllr Butland stated he saw a role for district councils in improving educational attainment. The council is going to establish an Educational Improvement Group as agreed by the ECC Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Students joining secondary schools in Braintree town are significantly behind what might be expected. Andy Wright mentioned the School Improvement Team at ECC has been looking at the data relating to schools in Braintree. There is a pattern throughout the district of individual schools turning themselves around, for example The Rickstones School and The Ramsey School in Halstead which jumped two Ofsted levels after its last inspection.

EYFS has Braintree as the worst performing district in the county in terms of attainment. The County is currently undertaking an Early Years Strategy Review. Primary Schools in the district, which were once performing well, are now playing 'catch-up' due to the EYFS results.

Following a question from Cllr Bobbin, Cllr Butland stated the district council, in terms of economic growth, sees the gap between the high-earners and low-earners as important to encourage people into the district for inward investment. The district area is a net-importer in terms of migration.

Recruitment of teachers in Braintree district is a major issue with one school going to Australia, Canada and Ireland to recruit staff. Many of the teaching staff live outside the district.

Castle Point Borough Council

Councillor Greig and Councillor Watson stated Canvey Island is a unique area, it is difficult to get teachers to the island. Travelling into or off the island is a real issue. Therefore, many of the teachers at island schools actually live there. There is apocryphal evidence that teachers on the island are concerned about class sizes. If there is a large influx of migrant children it might become a serious problem for the schools. It was agreed that this is, potentially, an issue across Essex and should be referred to in the final report of the Task and Finish Group.

ACTION

The Task and Finish Group invites a response from the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning with regard to the influx of migrant children into Essex and the subsequent impact this has on class sizes in the county

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Basildon Borough Council

Councillor Sargent informed the Group that Basildon is an area of low attainment and has had an education panel for the last four years involving Basildon County Members, Basildon Borough Council Cabinet Members and the ECC Cabinet member for Education and Lifelong Learning. There are 76 Primary Schools in the district rated either outstanding or good; and the development of Early Years is very good. There are no schools in the Primary sector now rated as inadequate. However, there are children in the borough who are not ready to start school. The County Council launched an initiative in the Lee Chapel North area of the borough which is now making very good progress. It is important that once intense work is undertaken the school should continue to run with the improvements.

Basildon has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancies. There are projects ongoing which are improving the situation but the Borough Council is concerned what might happen if funding is withdrawn. To date, the County Council has been a great help.

The focus of the Excellence Partnership Panel in Basildon has been on Early Years as well as getting good school governors. The concentration is on the Basildon town area, rather than the entirety of the Borough.

Following a question from Cllr Barker, Cllr Sargent agreed that the provision of an on-site pre-school, whilst potentially expensive, does have great benefits. Having the Early Years experience is absolutely vital and children in Basildon are benefitting from Early Years intervention to help prepare them for school.

Rochford District Council

Councillor Cutmore stated that there are areas of concern in the Rochford district related to primary schools. The skills of pupils coming forward into secondary schools is an issue as a result. Cllr Cutmore stated that there are many self-employed people that require help and support to update their skills so the standards in Further and Adult Education should be considered too. The Group has requested data on Further Education College performance.

Cllr Cutmore mentioned the development work that is to be undertaken in the Rochford DC area, and, therefore, there is a concern over the capacity of schools in the area to take on additional student numbers. Cllr Sargent stated that Noak Bridge Primary School has a planning application for a five-year extension of its Portakabins. All the extra housing within local plans needs to come into the mix, and it should be ensured that there are school places going forward. A further issue in Rochford is transportation as much of the district is rural.

Uttlesford District Council

On behalf of Uttlesford District Council Councillor Barker stated when reflecting upon data it should be ensured that what is presented is correct. Data for particular schools should be reviewed so that any potential problems can be picked up before any problems arise. Moving forward there could be an issue if schools are closed and then need to be re-opened due to the increase in housing.

Regional Schools Commissioner for the East of England

Dr Coulson explained his role at the Department for Education (DfE) working with Academies and Free Schools as well as other individual institutions. Dr Coulson works across the region and Essex is in a good situation, but it could be better. Norfolk and Suffolk are struggling and Cambridgeshire has the poorest funding and attainment in the region. Essex is performing at the level of the national average and it would not take a great deal of impetus to push the county further forward.

The secondary schools in Clacton-on-Sea, Harlow and Witham will soon all be rated as good schools; there have also been great improvements in Brentwood and Rochford, with Basildon improving also. There are, however, concerns about Braintree. Both Chelmsford and Colchester are unfulfilled areas with the schools, outside the Grammar Schools, not achieving as well as they could. Dr Coulson confirmed his opinion that there is now a real opportunity to influence the next drive for school improvement in the county. Dr Coulson stated that the school which stands out as the best in the region is Burnt Mill Academy in Harlow.

Dr Coulson confirmed the recruitment problems schools in the region have; and schools are now taking the opportunity to train their own teachers on the job. The DfE recognises that Academies are no panacea and that some schools have declined since leaving Local Authority control.

Ofsted, in its annual report, stated in the East of England nursery education, on the whole, is better than it is nationally; but then there is a sliding scale in primary, secondary and further education where standards get worse as each transition is reached.

Dr Coulson posed himself two questions: how do we shift the agenda to have the ambition and determination to succeed? How can we expect more from schools? He stated that there are some schools which aspire; whilst others do not. In the London Borough of Redbridge half the secondary schools are outstanding; and in the London Borough of Haringey every single secondary school is at least good. Therefore, we need to raise the level of what schools should be able to achieve. Cllr Barker posed whether the ethnic diversity of these two London Boroughs meant parents had more demanding expectations of their children? Dr Coulson responded that what the two London Boroughs have are different circumstances to Essex. They had momentum and positive leadership which said they could improve and this gathered steam. In Essex the positive leadership is there in a number of schools with Witham and Clacton being good examples of such localities. Tending, in particular is a real success story for secondary education and replicating this success is the challenge for the county.

Cllr Barker posed the question whether the increase in National Insurance and pension contributions will have an impact upon schools? Dr Coulson answered that school funding will get more difficult and that some schools will do better through collaboration. Schools are, in the main, developing better business acumen. It is likely, however, that primary schools will come under pressure in terms of funding in the next five years; and may, therefore, be forced to work collaboratively to find savings. Governance has not been strong enough in schools. Many schools have become only as good as their latest headteacher, and strong governance would be able to guard against this. Schools are increasingly on their own with regard to funding and there is an imperative for them to think about their own ways of making savings in a continued regime of lower funding.

Cllr Howard stated Canvey Island has excellent schools; but when a school fails it gets poor press. One primary school on the island has a situation where the Headteacher has been seconded to a failing school in London. The management team at the island school, which is trying to get out of special measures, have all gone off sick. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for the school to get out of its situation. There have been examples, on the island, of other schools being turned around from being placed in special measures. Dr Coulson responded that the challenge of the system is to have enough educational leaders who allow the teachers to perform. There is a plan for the school in special measures on Canvey Island and Dr Coulson assured Cllr Howard that he will make sure colleagues at ECC let the local Members know.

Cllr Barker stated the Task and Finish Group had heard from a number of sources that many children are not school-ready when they start the Reception year. Therefore, is there any evidence which backs this up? Dr Coulson responded that Headteachers are saying this and that ten years ago it was not an issue. Nursery education in Essex is patchy; and the most effective way to tackle the problem is through the providers which are linked to schools. Much of the nursery provision linked to schools takes children aged as young as two and there is clear evidence across the country that indigenous white working-class children are performing poorly including in early literacy. Dr Coulson stated he is keen on nursery provision being linked to schools to tackle early literacy issues.

Dr Coulson's views echoed those heard on the site visits to Wickford Church of England Infant School and Briscoe Primary School as well as at the Task and Finish Group meeting with the Schools Forum members. It was agreed that the Final Report of the Task and Finish Group would include a **RECOMMENDATION** about linking Early Years provision with Infant/Primary schools.

With regard to his own roles and responsibilities Dr Coulson stated schools who wish to become Academies have to come through him; this is also the case for any organisation wishing to become an Academy sponsor. Additionally he deals with applications for Free Schools; Academies which merge and he carries-out interventions when Academies are not performing.

Cllr Barker asked when will the time come when Local Authorities no longer become necessary for education as more-and-more schools become an Academy; and as a result what will Education Services of Local Authorities do? Dr Coulson responded that one way might be through sharing services with other Local Authorities. The formal responsibilities may subside but there will still be a role and influence for Local Authorities. Dr Coulson stated that Essex has the best Schools Human Resources Department in the region, and he would expect schools to continue to buy into ECC Schools Human Resources.

Dr Coulson mentioned evidence relating to summer-born children who are 25% more likely to get a statement of special educational needs; much less likely to get into school sports teams and do not achieve as highly in GCSE examinations.

Task and Finish Group meeting (afternoon session)

The Task and Finish Group had been invited to attend the meeting of the Essex School Governors Association (ESGA) Executive Committee by Ruth Bird, Chairman of the Committee. Cllr Maggie McEwen thanked Ruth for the invitation. As well as Ruth, Russell Ayling, Debbi Botham, John Clarke, John Hunter, Rod Lane and Joyce Sweeney from the Executive Committee were in attendance.

Cllr Bobbin asked, given the changing role of School Governors, how can the Local Authority find suitable Governors for schools and how can the Governors assist in raising educational attainment?

It was responded that just because somebody has been a Governor for a long time it does not follow that they are, necessarily, a good Governor. The National School Governors Association is encouraging Chairman to issue reports, once a year, on the effectiveness of Governors and the contribution they make to the school. Schools are also encouraged to do similar with the Chair of School Governors. With Multi-Academy Trusts the School Governors are practically all business people.

Maintained schools have to reconstitute and look at the make-up of their governing bodies by September 2015. Instead of community governors there will be co-opted governors. Therefore, this opens up the opportunity for governing bodies to find people with the necessary skills rather than be people from the community.

The Task and Finish Group heard that two threads impact upon attainment. One is that there is very rarely any joined-up thinking in terms of the multi-system of governance across Academy Trusts, Sponsored Academy Trusts, Academies, Maintained schools and Foundation schools. Wider than this the ways in which Governors are expected to keep up-to-speed as much as school senior management teams also has a lack of joined-up thinking. Therefore, too much time is spent on doing this than considering raising attainment levels.

Governors who come from business backgrounds are more able to keep up-to-date with training and have the commitment to do this. The training available from County ensures that professional people view the training as professional personal development. Parent Governors are much less likely to take-up training opportunities. The Parent Governor issue might be solved through the reconstitution of governing bodies in September 2015. ESGA is working with governing bodies to ensure a maximum of two-four Parent Governors.

Some Academies are attempting to move to having no parental or staff representation on governing bodies; and looking to business expertise only. However, there is nothing wrong with having a different range of expertise on a school governing body. When he was Education Secretary Michael Gove stated there should be paid School Governors. Some Governors are in schools three or four times a week; however, the opinion was this was too much. Every school is different but the pressures are practically the same, and these pressures put many potential Governors off. There is an absolute need that people in authority should have a system of joined-up support and thinking to action the one aim of improving the educational attainment of children. If you challenge, as a School Governor, you can get answers. Cllr Bobbin asked whether School Governors

should receive a retainer? This was answered emphatically “no”; however, there are examples of Governors being paid by the sponsors of Academies.

The Task and Finish Group heard that the recruitment of teachers is difficult, and even more so for Headteachers. In deprived areas recruitment is even harder. Schools in the county spend thousands of pounds on recruitment. To aid recruitment there are examples of schools providing housing on-site for new recruits.

The Task and Finish Group heard a prediction that in five years’ time there will not be any Local Authority maintained schools in Essex; and that schools will work in cluster-groups. The Local Authority has been looking at local needs and training for schools who work in cluster-groups.

Cllr McEwen asked whether, in the opinion of ESGA, there is anything that holds children back in educational achievement? The response was that good quality teaching and Headteachers was critical in ensuring student achievement. School finances were also raised as a concern, with some schools likely to be £250,000 worse off next year.

The ESGA reflected upon the understanding of data and how it is used within a school setting. Data drives up standards when the senior leadership team of a school uses the data to assess individual student progress. Governors need to be more focussed on data and performance management it was stated.

School Effectiveness Plus is being piloted in 70 schools. It is an online system that will provide a school effectiveness plan and make comparisons within a group of schools. This was highly commended by the ESGA and it was suggested the Task and Finish Group look at the system.

Playing devils’ advocate it was asked why do we need the Pupil Premium? Many parents do not claim free school meals that they are entitled to and this has an impact upon funding.

Cllr McEwen asked whether Governors play an important role in raising school attainment? The response was that they do; and the relationship between the Headteacher and the Chair of School Governors is vital to ensure attainment levels are raised. The challenges made of the Headteacher at governing body meetings should all be minuted. It is crucial that School Governors see the school as a business, and with the correct governance Governors can be the critical friend and the challenge to the school and the senior leadership team. Therefore, it is crucial that governing bodies have the right committees, sub-committees and effective terms of reference. Governors also have a role to play in ensuring the health and wellbeing of senior leadership teams. Good governance is crucial in ensuring Governors are part of the leadership of the school. Ofsted can recommend a review of school governance structures.

Different schools and different governing bodies have different strengths and weaknesses; this should enable greater collaboration and support between governing bodies. It was agreed that a **RECOMMENDATION** be included in the Final Report of the Task and Finish Group to suggest more collaboration between governing bodies.

Friday, 17 April 2015

Site Visit to Shenfield High School, Alexander Lane, Brentwood, CM15 8RY

Present:

Carole Herman, Headteacher

Leanne Hedden, Chairman of Governors

Sal Blewett, Deputy Headteacher

Jenny Comerford, Deputy Headteacher

Carole Herman joined the school as Headteacher in September 2011. At this point the school was expecting to take pupils in from Sawyer's Hall College which was closing. Shenfield High School was to establish a vocational centre on the site of Sawyer's Hall College. However, within six months a Free School (Becket Keys Church of England Secondary School) application was made and approved for the site. As a result, Shenfield HS did not receive the funding it was expecting and, thus, the vocational centre did not materialise.

Shenfield High School was associated with a failing school and admitted a number of students from that school. As a result, the school's reputation was affected. An *Ofsted* inspection in 2009 rated the school as "satisfactory"; previous to that the rating was "good". There have been significant changes in the *Ofsted* frameworks, however. Then following an inspection in 2012 the school was rated as "requires improvement", basically the same as "satisfactory". The school was given two years to improve and it was inspected again in November 2014 and received a "good" rating. The school is of the opinion that it was very close to being rated as "outstanding". *Ofsted* recognised the pride the students had in the school; and that staff have worked hard to get the school where it currently is.

The school has changed its ethos. The values and philosophy of the school are agreed with the whole school community, working with parents, students, staff, governors and community leaders.

When Carole Herman joined the school she decided that every aspect of the institution be reviewed. Management systems were reviewed and a decision was taken to grow the staff within the school. The leadership team has changed almost completely, with only two of the current leadership team having served on the leadership team prior to the arrival of the Headteacher. These changes have assisted in moving the school forward.

The school is now more outcome focused, also aiming to ensure the students are geared up for when they leave school. The school has established a 'war room' and forensically looks at the achievements of all students through the analysis of data, with interventions taking place if students are not achieving at a level they should be expected to. The 'war room' is largely for staff, but is used for motivational sessions for identified students. The school has several data entry points throughout the year. However, the shifting of grade boundaries sometimes leads to students who are expected to achieve a certain grade not quite achieving as projected. Data is at the heart of everything the school does.

The walls of the 'war room' have all students in Years 10 through to 13 with their target grades identified, across all subject areas. Those identified as wavering between a 'C'

and a 'D' grade are classed as 'C-' and have the level of improvement required to enable them to achieve a 'C' grade listed against them. The wall also identifies the number of students who need to improve their outcomes to achieve different percentage levels of five 'A*-C' grades at GCSE. However, this school year is the last that will have the five 'A*-C' measurement as standard, as schools, from next year, will be measured against the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 standards. This new measurement aims to erase the false divide between those who achieve a 'C' grade and those who do not. Progress 8 will show how students progress against eight curriculum areas. Carole stated that this is philosophically better but will be difficult to measure and manage.

Progress of children is measured from the end of Key Stage 2; however, primary and secondary assess differently. Carole informed the Task and Finish Group that secondary schools often find Year 7 students coming in to the school with a Level 5 but when they are tested they are actually lower than that. However, the primary school measurement is the starting point used for progress assessment. With regard to Progress 8 if students do not take the eight subjects because, for example, their literacy skills are not strong enough for them to take a Humanities subject it will make it appear that the school itself is not achieving.

With regard to A-levels Shenfield High School has a progress-led measurement and interventions are taken when progress is not being made as expected. The school sixth form has a base area, common room and study spaces with lessons taking place throughout the school site. Around 60% of the previous Year 11's are admitted into the sixth form; plus others students are admitted from outside the school. The school does some BTEC qualifications in sport and performing arts alongside traditional A-levels.

The school has a Football Academy and a Cricket Academy, and a Performing Arts Academy starts in September 2015. Students receive professional coaching and Masterclasses at the Academies which supplement their A-level and BTEC studies.

Shenfield High School is in a competitive area. Admissions at the school have been hit by the opening of the Becket Keys Free School. The opening of the Ongar Academy is also likely to have an effect. Additionally, changes to the Essex County Council school transport policy is likely to see parents sending their children to the Ongar Academy because of the cheaper travel rather than go to schools in Brentwood.

In terms of Special Educational Needs the school works closely with the students and parents to ensure specific needs are met and the school is aware of the prevalence of mental health needs of young people. The school has a nurture group, known as the Oasis Centre, with specialist staff for children who are having difficulties and need respite from mainstream education. The aim is to nurture the young people through their difficult periods back into mainstream education, if possible.

Sal Bluett informed the Task and Finish Group about the approach to staff development at the school. Staff at the school are in receipt of professional development to support student attainment, progress and achievement. The approach to staff development has three strands to it:

- the needs of the individual
- the needs of the department

- the needs of the school

School staff are asked to identify their own development needs. Staff development programmes are broken down into three sessions. Sal stated that colleagues have better practice if they are able to reflect and put what they have learned into practice; and then reflect again after putting the development into practice. Schemes of work are prepared through departmental training.

The school creates a 'pen portrait' of teaching staff and grades them as practitioners from a broad evidence base. Through cleverly crafted questions, the school asks the students how they learn within specific lessons and curriculum areas. The school has a two-week marking cycle. Students like the new way of marking the school has introduced which includes comments on what they are doing well, and what they need to do to improve further still. The students have to respond to the marking comments. As part of their monitoring visits the school governors look at marking.

Shenfield High School has several IT suites, one specifically for use by the sixth form. The school library has been re-vamped and is now a much more vibrant space and is used by book groups, craft groups etc. The school opens between 8.00 a.m. and an hour after the final school bell.

Jenny Comerford informed the Group that the interventions team at the school provide support on all the different aspects of student wellbeing. Both student mental health and self-harming is quite prevalent, so the school looks at patterns of behaviour and provides targeted support.

The vocational centre and the Oasis Centre are part of the strategic developments to support students. The Oasis Centre is a provision for any child who, through behaviour patterns, finds mainstream school difficult. Adults in the school provide 1:1 mentoring. A national programme *Achievement for All* provides support for children and families from a triangle of support. The first point of the triangle is the mentor within the school, whether a teacher or a member of support staff; the second point of the triangle is the student themselves. The mentor and the student meet together at least once a fortnight. The final point of the triangle is the parent/carer. The mentor within the school should liaise with the parent/carer to assist in the identification of the issue; and then a programme of support is developed from this triangulation. The parent/carer comes into the school once a year with other required communication on at least three other times in the year; however, the communication is usually much more frequent than that and helps in maintaining good dialogue. The school had a pilot programme involving 40 students and this whole cohort achieves as well as, if not a little better, the rest of the school's students. It is recognised that 'one size doesn't fit all' in terms of interventions. Each year between 20-30 students are identified in each year group for intervention (this is around 15% of the school population). Services, for example Child Mental Health Services, are at capacity outside of school so Shenfield High School provides the services otherwise the student would fall through the gap.

The nurture group is funded from mainstream resources rather than the pupil premium. *Ofsted* recognised that the school retains students that others exclude to ensure they are able to achieve.

A question was raised as to what the County Council can do to improve the lot of schools? In response it was stated that issues are coming back as the responsibility of the school because the services outside the school system are at capacity. Schools are developing expertise within diminishing budgets; and having to change systems to tackle the next potential hurdle. Monies are going down yet demands are increasing. There needs to be a more appropriate overview recognising the finite resource.

Task and Finish Group meeting

The Members who had attended the visit to Shenfield High School highlighted the special needs provision, the impact on the school of the opening of two new Free Schools in the locality, the marking schemes at the school and the impact of the data the school collects on every child from Year 10-13 to support attainment and intervention. The impact on the school of the new transport policy of Essex County Council was also mentioned, particularly with reference to the creation of the new Free School, Ongar Academy. This will mean a reduced choice for those who cannot afford transport.

The Task and Finish Group considered the data presented to the full People and Families Scrutiny Committee on DATE (see Appendix n) in greater detail. The data was presented by Clare Kershaw, Head of Commissioning, Education and Lifelong Learning; Alison Fiala, Lead Commissioner, Primary Education; and Huw Jones, Senior Analyst. Cllr McEwen stated the data shows that Essex is, by-and-large, in the third quartile on the key metrics. The response was given that the aim is to move the county into the top quartile. Historically at KS2 and KS4 Essex has only increased at the same pace as the national average; and this places the county in the lower end of second quartile or into the third quartile. However, if outcomes were increased for students in these two Key Stages at a rate higher than the national average this would place Essex firmly in the second quartile. The Task and Finish Group were informed that there are now more good or outstanding schools, based upon *Ofsted* frameworks, in the county than there have ever been.

There has been significant improvement in Early Years in Essex, which is at the top of the second quartile nationally. This should mean that there will be higher achieving young people coming through the system in future years. In primary schools the county is working to deliver interventions. One of these interventions is *Talk for Writing* and there is another which is directed at boys' writing. Boys have been a deliberate focus for interventions as there is a significant gap in the outcomes for boys and girls KS2 writing.

The County Council also commissions bespoke programmes for individual schools so that identified students can improve. There is also a shadowing programme which allows certain schools to learn from others that are performing well.

Key Stage 2 writing outcomes are not externally assessed, unlike Mathematics. However, the County Council moderates the teacher assessed elements of the primary curriculum as this is a statutory duty.

Two years ago, Essex, in line with what occurred nationally, had higher results in Mathematics than in English at KS4. Now, schools have focused so significantly on their English outcomes over the last two years that this has had an effect on Mathematics

attainment. Therefore, Mathematics continues to be a significant challenge. There is a scarcity of good Mathematics teachers and there has been recruitment from overseas to plug the gaps. And a new GCSE curriculum is about to be introduced, which will be harder than the present one. One positive intervention on Mathematics is at Tendring Technology College, which is developing a curriculum in partnership with local primary schools from KS1 all the way through schooling. This should help pupils cope with the Year 6 to Year 7 break, which had always proved challenging.

Every school in Essex is RAG rated and the data presented to the Task and Finish Group, and previously the full People and Families Scrutiny Committee, is a significant part of these ratings. It was suggested that future annual reports look at providing some more detailed information, to make it easier to see where improvements had been made.

ACTION

The Task and Finish Group would wish future Educational Attainment in Essex Annual Reports to provide detailed information to afford more clarity where improvements have been made

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

The data shows that despite Tendring, Basildon and Harlow being the lowest achieving districts the progress each is making exceeds that of more affluent districts. For example, Tendring has improved at KS2 by 12% over the last two years, comparing favourably against the 4% improvement across the county.

Essex is a large county and it requires a significant number of students or schools to improve outcomes to impact positively on data. Overall last year the results were good for Essex and the county is constantly striving to exceed national averages. To get into the second quartile Essex requires 450 primary school students and 550 secondary school students to improve their outcomes. Most of the Local Authorities in the top quartile are smaller unitary authorities or London/Metropolitan Boroughs which have a smaller number of schools and students. Following a question it was stated that 160 children would have to improve their KS2 writing outcomes for the county to improve by 1%.

Although the Council does assess vocational courses in schools; it does not have a remit to do this in Further Education Colleges (FECs), but it does monitor their outcomes. There is an uneven situation in Post-16 education, as there are a number of qualifications that do not earn the schools anything in respect of performance; also, not all qualifications are reported at the same time. There are a number of staff at the Council, however, who look at the quality of school sixth forms

A question was raised as to whether *Ofsted* help or hinder the improvement of attainment; and whether it looks at the right issues? In response it was stated that *Ofsted* provide external accountability and that this is crucial. *Ofsted* is in the midst of changing its frameworks; however. The quality of teaching is the most important thing with leadership fundamental in ensuring this. Where it does not go right is *Ofsted* depending upon the quality of its own staff and the inconsistencies in how the framework is interpreted. The County Council is able to feed back through the *Ofsted* regional body. A good or outstanding school should use *Ofsted* as a check and balance and not drive its

whole ethos through *Ofsted*, as it can cause a great deal of stress through continually trying to improve its *Ofsted* assessment.

Thursday, 23 April 2015

The Task and Finish Group received contributions from Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Commissioning Healthy Lifestyles and Jane Richards, Head of Commissioning, Public Health; Councillor Giles Watling, Chairman, Education and Skills Committee and Keri Lawrence, Executive Projects Manager; Malcolm Morley, Chief Executive, Harlow District Council; and Mike Blant, Liaison Officer, Essex Primary Headteachers Association (EPHA).

Public Health

The key issues for Public Health in relation to education were identified as the evidence base for the links between attainment and wellbeing – there is a national and international evidence base around this; school readiness, to enable children to achieve throughout their educational lives; the commissioning of the 0-19 Healthy Child programme – this includes working with other Local Authorities, as well as the voluntary sector and other Public Sector bodies; and the Essex Healthy Schools Award.

The 5-19 service is the key service working with schools and school staff. School nurses work closely with individual schools and conduct needs assessments through discussion with Headteachers and other staff with interests in health and wellbeing. Schools often raise issues around physical activity, healthy living, bullying etc. The needs assessments are undertaken annually. When particular issues are identified individual children may also be seen by the school nurse. In relation to schools for children with special educational needs the school nurse sees every child within the school.

Where programmes exist there are positive effects on attainment and it has been identified that students with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically.

In order to achieve the Healthy Schools Award schools have to have an active programme of working with children, in an age appropriate way, to raise the awareness of bullying.

In relation to school readiness an assessment to test a Good Level of Development (GLD) is conducted by a teacher following the Reception year. There are 17 measurements making-up the GLD, including communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; and numeracy and literacy skills. In Essex 61% of children achieved GLD in 2014 – this is 1% higher than the national average. The lowest achieving district in the county was Braintree (57%) and the highest was Maldon (67%). For those in receipt of Free School Meals only 43% achieved a GLD, as opposed to 64% achieving a GLD not in receipt of Free School Meals. This measurement was based on a cohort of 16,000 young people – 14% of whom were in receipt of Free School Meals. There is a small contingent of parents who do not claim Free School Meals despite their entitlement to do so.

A school readiness map for Tendring District was provided and, subsequently, these were provided for all districts. These are available to view at Appendix n. It was explained that the school readiness maps do change year-on-year so there is an element of caution which comes attached to them. It was stated the key issue in relation to school readiness is during pre-school. There is a universal 15 hours free provision for all 3-4 year olds; and an additional free entitlement for 2-3 year olds.

The interventions Public Health is involved with are within three broad areas; namely Home Visiting, Parenting programmes and Pre-school. In terms of home visiting these are the Department of Health recommended Family Nurse Partnership and MESCH (Maternal Educational Social Care and Health), which aims to improve the transition to parenting by supporting mothers through pregnancy; improve maternal health and wellbeing by helping mothers to care for themselves; improve child health and development by helping parents to interact with their child in developmentally supportive ways; develop and promote parents' aspirations for themselves and their children; and helping parents to foster relationships within the family and with other families and services. MESCH is an intensive support programme. The Family Nurse Partnership has been rolled-out across Essex and is a programme working with young parents where the mother is under the age of 20. It is also an intensive programme which supports the family through the post-natal period and informs the family of the programmes and support they are entitled to and ensuring they access the right services by acting as a family advocate.

Parenting programmes and pre-school programmes are also targeted interventions. The parenting programmes are Triple-P which uses a range of material for a universal or targeted approach and is used from the age of 2 onwards. This is delivered in two-hours sessions for up to ten weeks and reinforces positive relationships and behaviour. There are a range of trials using meta-analysis and evaluations which support improved behaviour, lowering stress of parents and improving parenting skills. The other parenting programme is Incredible Years which intervenes with 3-4 year olds over 12 weekly two-hour sessions and reinforces positive behaviour. The aim is to lower parenting stress, provide better parenting skills and improve behaviour – these outcomes have been tested in trial evidence.

The pre-school programme is based on evidence from a longitudinal study of pre-school education involving 3,000 children, of which 300 did not attend pre-school which showed those who attended pre-school achieved higher attainment levels at GCSE.

Public Health is working with Education and Lifelong Learning on a proposed model to reduce educational inequalities in the county. The model proposed is to produce a targeted offer for all families to have high quality pre-school provision.

The Healthy Child programme is a universal public health programme for children and families from pregnancy up to the age of 19. The vision is to develop an integrated offer to enable families to identify the services and key professionals who can assist them. Jane stated that we need to ensure an equitable offer across the county that is right for the families in different localities; as the needs in one part of the county will be very different from the needs in another. The programme is national with safeguarding at its very heart. The programme ensures that where families need support the critical agencies are aware of this; it also ensures there is no duplication of services. The key

relationships for different families will also be different – for some, for example, it might be the Health Visitors for others that person will be someone in the Children’s Centre.

The Healthy Schools programme will support schools throughout Essex to raise attainment and achievement by improving health and wellbeing for students, staff, parents and carers and the wider school community. There are 95% of schools in the county actively engaged on the programme

Harlow District Council

The underperformance in Harlow in terms of educational attainment was highlighted by Malcolm Morley/ He referred to the written submission provided to the Task and Finish Group in advance of the meeting (see Appendix n). It was stated the contribution by Public Health absolutely chimed with what is being found in the district. The ambition, however, is for Harlow to be in the top quartile in terms of attainment. Unless this becomes an aspiration the district and the county will continue to underperform. The view of the District Council is that there are no excuses to accepting that underperformance is down to areas of deprivation, and this should be challenged. For example, Burnt Mill High School is an outstanding school in a significant area of deprivation.

Harlow District Council undertook its own scrutiny review of educational attainment, and following this it created a partnership of people working together to understand the issues and work together to tackle these, Essex County Council is part of this partnership. It is clear from the exercise that flexibility is needed to respond to individual needs. The District Council recognises that there are people who do not have aspirations for their children. However, the District Council has identified interventions which will enable families in this situation to move forward. Tackling hard-to-reach parents is resource intensive and the public sector needs to work together to address the issues, and provide a pick-and-mix rather than a generic offer.

ACTION

The Task and Finish Group would wish the Cabinet Member to report if, and how, the County Council is working with the public sector to work with hard-to-reach groups to raise educational engagement and attainment

Owner: Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

It was stated that underperformance in Harlow has been tolerated for too long. The schools which are not performing should be challenged and supported to enable them to improve; and *Ofsted* can be used to assist in driving that change. The role of governors, parents and the school community is critical in engaging and supporting to give the opportunity to tackle underperformance.

Harlow does have issues related to school readiness; and this then has an on-going effect when moving from primary to secondary school. There are secondary schools in the locality working hard to address this.

One of the biggest challenges in Harlow is the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. Harlow District Council is asking questions as to how schools tackle this issue. It was stated that specialists in curriculum areas should share expertise across several schools.

It was stated that business has a role to play and Local Authorities need to work together to see how business can be supported to fulfil the needs of the local and national economy.

Tendring District Council

Councillor Watling stated Tendring District Council wishes to raise the aspirations of people living in the coastal areas of the district. He had recently visited both the Clacton Coastal Academy and Tendring Technology College and was impressed by the two Headteachers. They are inspiring, and teachers want to work with them. Cllr Watling referred to the paper provided to the Task and Finish Group in advance of the meeting (see Appendix n).

Keri Lawrence stated Tendring Education Improvement Group had gone a long way to bridging the gap between schools and the District Council with an effective partnership focused on key work streams including School Readiness, Teacher Recruitment and Governor Recruitment. There has been a big drive in Tendring on school governor recruitment and there are a large number of Tendring District Council officers who are school governors. The District Council also supported the recent launch of the Governor kitemark to give to school governors as a badge of recognition.

Much work is ongoing at Tendring Education Centre with a particular concentration on interventions in Jaywick. Tendring District Council supports the County on school intervention. There is a clustering of primary schools in Clacton which is being done in conjunction with the County and is actively creating partnerships, with schools being encouraged through difficult times. This model is being rolled-out across Tendring.

There are areas of Tendring that have significant deprivation. However, there is a problem with an itinerant population which compounds issues in relation to educational attainment; but, overall, things are improving in the district, it was stated.

There are localities in Tendring which are difficult to access for Children's centres; in particular with regard to transport and infrastructure. However, this is being tackled presently by the Tendring Locality Board. The Family Solutions programme in Tendring has seen some real progress in terms of the development of children.

Perception was highlighted as an issue with regard to an institution gaining a bad name which has a tendency to stick. One of the key challenges is to contest such perceptions.

Essex Primary Headteachers Association (EPHA)

Mike Blant, EPHA Liaison Officer was in attendance to contribute to the review. Mike stated that Essex County Council and the EPHA meet on a regular basis. The EPHA wants to be part of the thinking and the solutions to raising attainment in the county. There is now a much stronger, positive partnership with the County Council to move things ahead together.

It was stated that there had been lost opportunities in the past which led to some schools being in need of improvement. The County Council did lose a lot of its liaison with primary schools because of the loss of School Development Advisers. However, intelligence about all schools is now better which allows the Council to gauge if schools

are about to get into difficulty. However, there are, sometimes, mitigating circumstances for some schools which are failing. Schools are complex places and Headteachers are pulled from pillow-to-post on a daily basis, which can affect their capacity to deal with the strategic overview of the school.

Most schools in the primary sector in Essex would be described as small schools. With this in mind the sharing of expertise is critical. School-Led Improvement System is being implemented at present and this is about creating capacity between schools. Most schools are willing to be part of partnerships, with many in several partnerships already. The Local Authority is encouraging schools to consider their natural alignments with other schools to form new clusters and partnerships.

Partnerships such as the Basildon Education Services Trust (BEST), which has been working in Basildon for nearly five years, and the National Education Trust which is working in Harlow have been excellent initiatives in going forward to make improvements for these localities. There is much that can be learned from these partnerships, which have included people from the business sector working with children in Basildon.

The School-Led Improvement Programme is also a good move. The intention is to create cross-phase partnership, allowing the sharing of expertise across schools, benefiting both the primary and secondary sector and easing the transition from Year 6 to 7. Sometimes there is a suspicion from primary schools that secondary schools will overpower them; but this has not been the case.

In terms of recruitment and retention those schools which are seen to be failing are the most difficult to recruit to; yet these are the very schools which require excellent qualified staff. The fluidity of staff within clusters or partnerships allows schools to share resources also. Excellent Headteachers create and motivate staff to stay. However, external support is often needed in supporting schools with a high turnover of staff. The EPHA recognise where weak leadership is apparent within a school.

Initial Teacher Training is now complex and not as straightforward as it used to be. The number of routes into teaching means the quality of teaching does vary. The rigour is sometimes compromised by the calibre of new teachers. There needs to be intervention when a teacher is not achieving as they should and might even be informed that teaching is not the job for them.

Cllr Barker asked whether there is any peer review of infant and primary schools who, the Task and Finish Group have heard, are saying they are receiving children who are not school ready? Cllr Barker continued by stating junior schools are also saying something similar about infant schools; and this is then passed on to secondary schools with regard to primary/junior schools. In response, it was stated that it is difficult to make such an assessment but a level 3 achieved in Year 3 will be somewhat different from a level 3 at KS1, particularly in the way the assessment is carried out.

It was stated that the pre-school years are vital in terms of school readiness. Cllr Barker mentioned that Councillor Sue Lissimore, Cabinet Member Deputy, Education and Lifelong Learning, is currently doing some work on Children's Centres. It was agreed to invite Cllr Lissimore to a future meeting of the Task and Finish Group to make a contribution to the review once that work is complete.

Cllr Barker asked whether any evidence exists to show that primary schools achieve higher standards than schools with an infant and junior school split? In response it was stated primary schools are in a position to control the levels children are assessed more evenly over time. Therefore, in a way, they can be seen to be achieving better. The view stated was that, on the whole, that primary schools are a better way to set-up 4-11 education, but that there is no way this can be forced upon schools, only encouraged.

Written Submissions

A. Early Years

Essex County Council Commissioning Strategy - Outcome 1: Children in Essex get the Best Start in Life, details the Councils strategic approach.

Children in Essex get the best start in life:

Indicators

- Percentage of children ready for school
- Percentage of children achieving a good level of development by the age of five

People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing:

Indicators

- Percentage of children achieving at school

People in Essex have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning:

Indicators

- Percentage of children attending a good school
- Percentage of children achieving at school (measured at Foundation, KS2 and KS4)

Introduction

Outcomes for pupils aged 5 are determined at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (end of Reception year) using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). These profiles summarise and describe a child's attainment at the end of the EYFS and are based on ongoing observation and assessment. The attainment measure used is the percentage of pupils who achieve a 'Good Level of Development'.

In 2013 a new Framework was introduced with pupils being assessed as being emerging (1), expected (2) or exceeding (3) against seventeen Early Learning Goals. A Good Level of Development requires pupils to be at least at the expected level in the three prime areas of learning: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development and the early learning goals within the specific areas of learning: literacy and mathematics areas of learning.

Historically Essex has performed below the National average with a national ranking as low as 135th (out of 152 LAs) in 2011. 2012 saw the gap reduce through targeted interventions along with all pupils starting their Reception year in the Autumn term for the first time. Whilst 2013 was not directly comparable with previous years, it was the first time that Essex exceeded the Eastern Region and England averages and achieved its highest ever national ranking of 51st.

2013/ 2014

Essex is still above national in 2014 and the same as the Eastern region but 2 % below statistical neighbours.

Essex County Council Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results have moved from the bottom Quartile in 2011 / 2012 to second quartile in 2013 / 2014 based on the national profile of results.

DfE Statistic First Release, November 2014: Pupils achieving a Good Level of Development

Pupils achieving a Good Level of Development									
		2013				2014			
		Girls	Boys	All	Gap	Girls	Boys	All	Gap
Essex		62	44	53	18	70	53	61	16
Attainment	Statistical Neighbours	62	46	53	16	72	55	63	17
	Eastern Region	60	44	52	16	69	53	61	16
	England	60	44	52	16	69	52	60	16
Essex Rankings	Statistical Neighbours	5	5	5	8	6	6	6	4
	Eastern Region	3	2	2	10	4	3	4	4
	England	47	57	51	116	49	57	57	53

- 61% of Essex pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) in 2014 – an eight percentage points rise (15% improvement) on 2013 performance. Nationally performance increased from 52% to 60%
- Having seen performance significantly below England averages every year up to and including 2012, for the second consecutive year, Essex pupils achieving a GLD were one percentage point higher than nationally
- Rankings against SN, ER and England comparator groups are broadly similar to 2013. These see Essex maintain its position in the second quartile for boys, girls and all pupils
- Whilst the EYFS framework was very different prior to 2013 meaning actual performance cannot be compared on a like for like basis, national rankings show that as recently as 2011, Essex was ranked 135th and in the bottom quartile
- The gender gap in 2013 exceeded all comparator groups by two percentage points meaning that Essex was ranked 116th nationally. The gap reduced to 16% in 2014 and is now in line with comparators meaning a much improved ranking of 53rd

A detailed analysis has been undertaken in relation to Good Level of Development (GLD) results in Essex. This document creates a detailed narrative for EYFSP results for academic year 2013/2014 that will form an effective baseline for future reference and future comparison. The document considers performance by school, district and quadrant, considers each early learning goal and looks at attainment by pupil characteristics such as gender and ethnicity, EAL, as well as the impact of month of birth on attainment

Summer 2015 will see the last year of the current national GLD, EYFSP results

New Baseline Assessment from September 2015

Changes are now under way for assessment within the EYFS which will start to be implemented from September 2015

The Government are introducing a baseline assessment in reception year, the 'reception baseline', to improve how primary schools' progress is measured

Government-funded schools that wish to use the reception baseline assessment from September 2015 will need to sign up by the end of April 2015, and make decisions about which of the six Government approved providers they will select their baseline assessment from. In 2022 the Government will then use whichever measure shows the most progress: the reception baseline to key stage 2 results OR the key stage 1 results to key stage 2 results.

From September 2016 schools will only be able to use their reception baseline to key stage 2 results to measure progress. If schools choose not to use the reception baseline, from 2023 they will only be held to account by their pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2.

The baseline will score each pupil against the knowledge and understanding typical for children at the start of Reception year. This score will then be used as a basis for accountability throughout primary school. The majority of the content will be linked to the learning and development requirements of communication and language, and the literacy and mathematics areas of learning from the EYFS. The content will be age-appropriate and suitable for the range of children's attainment at the start of Reception. All suppliers are required to undertake in-depth trialling and development to ensure this is the case.

The assessment will be delivered in English and must be administered within the first half term of the child starting either full time or part time in Reception.

The administration will vary, depending on which assessment a school chooses, however the assessment could be tablet, computer or paper-based. Most assessments will be administered by the Reception teaching staff.

Early Education and Childcare provision in Essex

In Essex early years and childcare provision for children 2 – 4 years of age is varied and offered by a mix of maintained, public, private and voluntary providers.

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes for PVI provision.

In Essex 80% of providers of childcare on non-domestic premises were judged to be good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, for Childminders 82% of premises were judged to be good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection.

The table below shows a breakdown of PVI settings across Essex and the most recent Ofsted inspection results in each area. (Figures are accurate as at 12January.2015)

District	Outstanding	Good	RI	Satisfactory	Inadequate	Not inspected	Grand Total	% of Essex
Basildon	11	47	7	7	0	5	77	12%
Braintree	10	42	6	5	2	3	68	11%
Brentwood	7	31	2	3	0	1	44	7%
Castle Point	5	17	3	1	1	3	30	5%
Chelmsford	12	50	7	4	0	4	77	12%
Colchester	21	43	4	5	1	3	77	12%
Epping Forest	4	44	3	10	0	7	68	11%
Harlow	4	25	1	4	1	0	35	5%
Maldon	3	24	0	2	0	2	31	5%
Rochford	3	22	1	3	1	1	31	5%
Tendring	11	31	2	3	1	2	50	8%
Uttlesford	12	30	5	1	0	1	49	8%
Grand Total	103	408	41	48	7	33	640	

Stav Yiannou, Head of Education and Lifelong Learning (EYCC), People Commissioning, Essex County Council

B. Maldon District Council

Reported levels of educational attainment in the Maldon District are of concern to Members of the Maldon District Council. The relatively poor attainment levels (when compared to other parts of Essex) may affect outcomes of young people living within the district. This matter is now being reviewed by the Maldon Locality Board and representatives from Essex County Council and the main two secondary education providers within the district will meet to discuss performance at a future meeting of the Board

Richard Holmes, Director of Customers and Community, Maldon District Council

C. Chelmsford City Council

From the current performance levels of educational attainment reported for the Chelmsford Borough, the City Council currently has no specific concerns it wishes to submit to the Task and Finish Group. However it would welcome appropriate

representatives attending a future meeting of the One Chelmsford Board to discuss performance in more detail and to consider further ways the City Council could be engaged in such matters moving forward.

Averil Price, Director of Community Services, Chelmsford City Council

D. Essex Chambers of Commerce

David Burch, Director of Policy, Essex Chambers of Commerce provided a policy paper produced by the British Chambers of Commerce which he would have referred to at a meeting of the Task and Finish Group he was invited to attend but had to cancel. This policy paper is produced at Appendix n. The policy paper sets out a range of policies on skills development.

Cabinet Member Remarks

TO BE INCLUDED FOR THE FINAL SEPTEMBER 2015 REPORT

Acknowledgements

The Task and Finish Group would wish to thank the following for providing oral and written evidence across NUMBER meetings, as well as those who had expressed a willingness to attend sessions but were unable to do so due to other commitments: The Group would also wish to thank the school's they visited as part of the review for their hospitality and willingness to take an active part in this vital scrutiny exercise.

THE LIST OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO BE COMPLETED FOR THE SEPTEMBER FINAL REPORT

THERE WILL BE AN APPENDIX OF THE YEA RESPONSE

**Essex County Council
People and Families Scrutiny Committee
Review Scoping Document**

This form is a tool that should be compiled at the start of each inquiry to set out clearly the aims and objectives of the committee's involvement in a particular matter, and will be completed at the end of the inquiry to confirm what has been achieved. The form also provides an audit trail for a review.

Review Topic (Name of review)	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN ESSEX
Committee	People & Families Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify the levels and trends in educational attainment in schools in Essex at each Key Stage. 2. To evaluate how the levels of attainment compare nationally. 3. Where underperformance exists, to identify the causes. 4. To identify and evaluate all options to address the causes of underperformance. 5. To understand the barriers to improving school performance. 6. To understand the reduced funding regime including the role of The Schools Forum. 7. To identify how School Governors can influence improving performance. 8. To make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning to support improvement in educational attainment across the county
Lead Member, and membership of Task and Finish Group	<p>Cllr Maggie McEwen (Chairman)</p> <p>Cllr Susan Barker</p> <p>Cllr Keith Bobbin</p> <p>Richard Carson (Independent Member)</p> <p>Cllr Ian Grundy (ex-officio)</p>

Key Officers / Departments	<p>Chris Kiernan, Interim Director of Commissioning Education & Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Clare Kershaw, Head of Commissioning Education & Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Graham Ranby, Head of Commissioning Education & Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Stavroulla Yiannou,, Head of Commissioning Education & Lifelong Learning</p>
Lead Scrutiny Officer	Robert Fox
Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Ray Gooding, Education and Lifelong Learning
Relevant Corporate Links	To be discussed with key officers of the County Council.
Type of Review	In depth review
Timescales	An update on school performance will be brought to the People & Families Scrutiny Committee in March 2014 and this will be the precursor for the Committee to undertake an in-depth review of educational performance in the county throughout the civic year 2014/15.
Rationale for the Review	Priority 1 in the current ECC Corporate Plan is: <i>Enabling every individual to achieve their ambition by supporting a world-class education and skills offer in the county.</i> There are areas in Essex where school performance at both primary and secondary performance is significantly below standard. The Committee should scrutinise performance in Essex schools; but wider, in the new school world of Academies what is the role of the Local Authority and how can it plan strategically if it has little or no control.

Scope of the Topic	<p>Specify what is to be included/excluded from the review</p> <p><u>Include</u></p> <p>The following is included in the scope of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and historic performance data for all schools in Essex (both primary and secondary) • Educational performance in neighbouring authorities and in statistical neighbour authorities • School estates • Special Educational Needs in relation to the effect on educational attainment • Academies as their own admission authority • Admission requirements for FE/VI Forms • Early Years <p><u>Excluded</u></p> <p>The following falls outside the scope of the review:</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data on all schools in Essex • An understanding of past and present arrangements for managing the whole school estate, and the influence of new buildings and facilities on educational attainment • An understanding of any influence the County Council can bring to bear on Academies/Free Schools. How does the Council fund the continuing services? • The role and influence of LA School Governors with regard to school improvement • An understanding of the reduced funding regime • An understanding of statutory requirements • An understanding of partnership working in local education with District/Borough/City Councils • An understanding of the Ofsted inspection regime • How do schools spend the Pupil Premium they receive?
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>ECC Policy Paper for Education Estates Strategy.</p>

What primary / new evidence is needed for the scrutiny?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School attainment data to be received at the March 2014 meeting of the People & Families Scrutiny Committee • Performance plans that seek to bridge the gap in educational attainment • Oral evidence from the Cabinet Member and senior officers • Support plans for schools in special measures • Details of staff vacancies across schools in the county, particularly in respect of the locations of the vacancies • Information on the capital programme • Plans for schools to increase/reduce admission numbers
What secondary / existing information will be needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School performance and attainment data • Ofsted reports • Information on the Pupil Premium • Existing legislation and Government reports
What briefings and site visits will be relevant to the review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request specific briefings and reports from the Cabinet Member and senior officers of the County Council including current strategies, performance data, Ofsted reports etc. • Invite oral and written evidence from others identified in the section below • Commission specific research and consider the findings • Undertake site visits to relevant institutions • Committee meetings held in public session
Who are the witnesses who should be invited to provide evidence for the review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning • Senior officers from Essex County Council • Headteachers • The Schools Forum • School Governors • Faith and Denominational representatives • Young people through School Councils • Young Essex Assembly • Parents • District/Borough/City Councils • Experts on teaching and learning strategies (Anglia Ruskin University) • Youth Service • Employers

Implications	<p>In terms of topic, have the following matters been taken into consideration in the planning of this review:</p> <p>Legal implications Yes/ no</p> <p>Financial implications Yes/ no</p> <p>Equality and diversity issues..... Yes/ no</p> <p>Other critical implications.....</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it is necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</p>
Indicators of Success	<p>The recommendation of service improvements to improve educational attainment in Essex to assist ECC in meeting Priority 1 of the ECC Corporate Plan .</p> <p>An ongoing role for Members in monitoring and reviewing educational attainment in the county.</p>
Notes	<p>Potentially co-opt representative from the Young Essex Assembly onto the Committee for this review.</p> <p>Hold at least one of the Scrutiny sessions within an educational establishment.</p>
Provisional Timetable	<p>The Task and Finish Group will undertake the in-depth review throughout the civic year 2014/15 with the aim of producing an interim report at the March 2015 meeting of the People & Families Scrutiny Committee. Progress reports will be verbally presented at each Committee meeting.</p>

Audit Trail	
Date review formally proposed	Thursday, 16 January 2014 (Minute no. 7; pages 5 and 6)
Date of Committee's approval of original scoping document	Identify minute number and date of meeting
Date of Committee's approval of Scrutiny Report	Identify minute number and date of meeting
What was the outcome of the review?	Summarise outcome of review and identify if any recommendations have been agreed.
Date proposals arising from review are formally forwarded to the Executive	
How will the outcomes of the review be monitored?	
Date outcomes of review monitored formally by the Committee	Identify minute number and date of meeting

Report to the ECC People & Families Scrutiny Committee, Educational Attainment Task and Finish Group.

Braintree District Educational Attainment Presented by Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council

Introduction

In the Braintree District there are approximately 21,000 school age children making up around 14% of the overall population. Education has increasingly become an area where the Braintree District is underperforming compared to our neighbours across Essex. This report sets out the key areas where improvement is needed and highlights some of the possible longer term impacts that poor educational attainment could have on the Braintree District and wider community.

Schools

There are 63 state funded schools in the Braintree District including; 2 Special Schools, 12 Infants & Junior Schools, 41 Primary Schools and 8 Secondary Schools. There are also 3 independent schools offering private primary, secondary and special education provision (*These have been excluded from comparisons due to a lack of comparable data*).

As of February 2015 Ofsted ratings for schools in the Braintree District were as follows:

Primary (incl. Infant & Junior)	Secondary	Special Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 rated as "Outstanding" 35 rated as "Good" 10 rated as "Requires Improvement" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 rated as "Good" 1 rated as "Requires improvement" 2 rated as "Inadequate" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 rated as "Good"

GCSE Attainment

Compared to other Districts and Boroughs, the Braintree District has the lowest GCSE attainment rate in Essex, a trend which has been ongoing for several years.

- In 2014 50.3% of students achieved 5+ GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and mathematics. (*This includes results for those students who attend school in another local authority area but live in the Braintree District*).
- 2014 results were 6.5% below the average for England, 6.2% below the average for Essex, and 16.2% below the best performing Districts and Boroughs in Essex.

For the eight secondary schools within the District:

- The combined average GCSE attainment rate (for students achieving 5+ GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and mathematics) was 47.4%. *This 2.9% lower than the District total including all students who live in the District.*
- One school scored above the average for England and Essex, whilst all others scored below. The highest achieving school scored 63% whilst the lowest scored 38%.
- Two schools increased their GCSE attainment rates compared to the previous year, whilst all others had reductions of between 2% and 15%.

Early Years foundation Stage Profile

The EYFS Profile assesses children's development at age 5 based on prime and specific areas of learning, with assessments undertaken through classroom and playground observation. In 2014 the Braintree District had the lowest levels of children achieving a "Good Level of Development" (GLD) in the Essex County Council area. In more detail:

- 57.1% of students achieved GLD. This was:
 - 2.9% less than the England average of 60%
 - 3.1% less than ECC average of 61%.
 - 9.9% less than the highest achieving District (Maldon)
- 23 out of the 47 infant and primary schools in the District (49%) achieved less than the England average of 60%

Both data from student observation scores and feedback from Link-Head Teachers for the District highlighted that children's language and communication skills were an area requiring improvement and potential barrier for children's learning later in school.

Key Stage 2

At key stage 2 students are assessed for progress on Reading, Writing and Maths, with performance benchmarked against the number of students achieving Level 4 or above in all three areas. The average for the Braintree District is line with the national and county average of 79% however:

- 20 of 47 schools scored below the average for Essex
- The District was ranked joint 6th out of 12 Districts and Boroughs for Essex.

Issues Affecting the Braintree District

1. Education

Despite the majority of schools receiving positive Ofsted reports, those schools with poor Ofsted ratings significantly underperform, delivering results far below what would be expected for an area with otherwise low levels of deprivation and unemployment. More is needed to help improve standards and performance at all key stages.

2. Growth

As well as the impact on the life chances of individuals, low levels of educational attainment could have long term impacts on the development of the local area. In particular; Braintree District Council is currently working on a new Local Plan which will set out future sustainable development including an anticipated 14,000 new homes and 20,000 jobs required in the District. Poor educational attainment could impact on this process in the following ways:

- *Preventing Inward Investment*
Future inward investment is likely to be in higher skilled industries and is particularly important in District's like Braintree where proximity to Stansted Airport, Cambridge etc. is a potential asset. Potential investors could be put off by low educational attainment and the overall skill level of the economically active population.
- *Restricting Growth of Existing Businesses*
The Braintree District is also reliant upon the growth of our existing businesses to deliver the majority of jobs growth for the future. Employers will need to access a labour market that has

the skills to perform the jobs that they are creating. Employers may struggle to attract new skilled workers into the District if the education available to their children is not at a decent standard.

- *Impact on new schools and teacher recruitment*

If the District has a reputation for poor education, we may not attract the necessary teachers to be employed within the new schools being built. This could lead to overcrowding of existing school facilities, thus creating greater pressure for teachers and driving down standards. *In order to help address recruitment issues Braintree District Council would also like to know to what extent teacher recruitment is affected by affordable housing and to whether we should be considering including key worker housing for teachers in the new local plan?*

3. *Health*

According to the 2014 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment “The general level of educational attainment within a population is closely associated with the overall health of that population. The long-term demographic and health problems for a child born into a family with traditionally low standards of educational attainment may be severe, affecting health choice behaviour and service provision uptake into adulthood.”

Briefing Paper: Educational Attainment in Harlow

Introduction

In 2013 Harlow Council undertook a Scrutiny Review of educational attainment. The review included analysis of performance information and data; analysis of current arrangements for supporting schools; interviews with a wide range of professionals and an analysis of academic research into the causes of poor aspirations and low attainment. The review was led by Professor David Hawker who subsequently made a number of recommendations in relation to early years, school age and post school education. Professor Hawker proposed a new educational achievement partnership led by Harlow Council and the introduction of a 'Harlow Pledge' aimed at systematically improving the quality of education across the district so that Harlow could become one of the best places in Britain for children to grow up in.

The inaugural meeting of the Harlow Strategic Partnership for Educational Attainment (HSPEA) took place on 8 July 2013 and, in recognition of Professor Hawker's recommendations, it was agreed that there would be a partnership approach to address key identified issues under three main work streams:

- Early Years and School Readiness
- Schools Improvement
- Post-school Opportunities

The Chief Executive of Harlow Council is the Chair of the HSPEA which meets approximately every six weeks. Partners receive regular update reports on all three work streams to evidence partnership working, project delivery and positive outcomes for Harlow children, young people and families.

The context of Harlow

Provided below are some statistics to provide the context for educational attainment and progression in Harlow:

Schools

In September 2014 Ofsted ratings for Harlow Schools was as follows:

Primary (Infant and Junior)	Secondary	Special and Private
1 Outstanding 13 Good 8 Requires Improvement 4 Inadequate 1 Awaiting inspection	1 Outstanding 3 Good 0 Requires Improvement 1 Inadequate	- Outstanding 1 Good - Requires Improvement - Inadequate

There are currently 35 schools in Harlow (March 2015) – one special school, one free school (Aspire Academy), one private school, five secondary schools/academies and 27 primary schools/academies.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

The EYFSP assesses children's development at age five based on prime and specific areas of learning, with assessments undertaken through classroom and playground observation.

In 2013 only 38% of Harlow children were assessed as having a Good Level of Development (GLD). This increased by 21% in 2014 to 59% but remained 1% below National and 2% below the Essex average. See comparison chart below:

GLD	National	Essex	West	Harlow
2013	51%	52%	49%	38%
2014	60%	61%	62%	59%

Harlow has seen the largest percentage increase of all District Council areas in Essex since 2013 and has moved up two places in the District Council area ranking from 12th to 10th place.

In 2013, when compared with other District Council areas in the West Quadrant, Harlow was 18.8% behind Uttlesford and 16.3% behind Epping Forest. However, in 2014 Harlow closed the gap within the quadrant considerably and is now 6.6% behind Uttlesford and 3.4% behind Epping Forest.

The issue of children not being fully 'ready' to start school at age five was highlighted very early on in Professor Hawker's review in 2013. As a result Harlow primary schools were having a harder job ensuring that children still met the expected standard by the time they were ready to transfer to secondary school at age 11. Four key weaknesses were identified during the review:

1. A weakening in the scope and effectiveness of the children's centres because of budget reductions.
2. A weakening of the multi-agency work at neighbourhood level.
3. Variable and often poor quality early years provision with little opportunity for working across providers to improve quality.
4. Variable and often poor liaison between pre-school providers and schools, leading to loss of continuity in children's and families experiences.

'School Readiness' was therefore identified as a priority work stream for the HSPEA and both Harlow Council and Essex County Council agreed to contribute £50,000 a year for two years (2013/14 and 2014/15) to move this important area of work forward. **Harlow Council has committed a further £50,000 per year for a further three years and hopes that Essex County Council will do so as well.**

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, the key measures now are:

1. The percentage of children achieving level 4 or above in both English and Maths.
2. The percentage of children who make expected progress (defined as two national curriculum levels) since age 7.

According to floor standards, a primary school will be said to be underperforming if:

- Fewer than 65% of pupils at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) achieved level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths, and
- The school has a below median score (94%) for the percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 who made expected progress in reading, and
- The school has a below median score (96%) for the percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 who made expected progress in Writing, and
- The school has a below median score (93%) for the percentage of pupils at the end of KS2 who made expected progress in maths.

The comparative performance in Harlow is provided below:

	% of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths				% of pupils making expected progress in 2014		
	2014	2013	2012		Reading	Writing	Maths
England – All Schools	78%	75%	75%		97%	93%	89%
Local Authority – Essex	79%	75%	74%		91%	92%	89%
Harlow – All Schools	78%	75%	75%		91%	93%	89%

% of pupils achieving reading, writing and maths (2014)				
	Level 3 or below (Below expectations)	Level 4 or above (At level expected)	Level 5 or above (Above expectations)	Average point score
England – All Schools	6%	78%	24%	28.7
Local Authority – Essex	6%	79%	24%	28.2
Harlow – All Schools	6%	78%	24%	28.7

Harlow comparisons

Harlow KS2 results increased in 2014 compared to the previous two years. There are now 78% (+3% more) pupils achieving Level 4 or above (i.e. meeting expectations) in reading, writing and maths. This is also a similar percentage with the county and national averages. 24% of pupils achieved level 5 and above (i.e. exceeded expectations) in reading, writing and maths.

GCSE

At GCSE, the key measures are:

1. The percentage of students who achieve good grades (C or above) in at least 5 subjects, including English and Maths.
2. The percentage that has made the expected progress in English and Maths.
3. The percentage who achieve the newly defined 'English Baccalaureate' (Grade C or above in English, Maths, a Science, a foreign language and a humanities subject).

The majority of pupils are expected to achieve grade C or above in at least 5 subjects, including English and Maths. The comparative performance for Harlow is provided below:

	2012	2013	2014	English	Maths	
England – All Schools	59.4%	59.2%	53.4%	NA	NA	22.9%
England – State funded Schools	58.8%	60.6%	56.6%	71.6%	65.5%	24.2%
Local Authority – Essex	59.0%	60.5%	56.5%	72.8%	65.5%	19.9%
District Council – Harlow	59.4%	59.2%	53.4%	NA	NA	24.2%

According to floor standards, a secondary school will be said to be underperforming if:

- Fewer than 40% of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C or equivalent, including GCSEs (or iGCSEs) in both English and mathematics.

- The school has a below median score (74% in 2014) for the percentage of pupils making expected progress between key stage 2 and key stage 4 in English.
- The school has a below median score (67% in 2014) for the percentage of pupils making expected progress between key stage 2 and key stage 4 in mathematics.

Local issues affecting Harlow

Schools that are inadequate requiring improvement - in September 2014 Ofsted judged eight Harlow primary schools as requiring improvement and four as inadequate. More must be done to support schools to improve and to develop the leadership, skills, governance and approach to performance necessary. Establishing a new Harlow Education Improvement Partnership (see Schools Improvement below) is a good step in the right direction in responding to these challenges. HSPEA and the Council are keen to see the impact that the Partnership will have on supporting schools on their improvement journey.

More work is required to illustrate to the community more effectively:

1. *How these schools are being challenged, changed and improved.*
2. *The effectiveness of plans to address the causes of the inadequacy/need for improvement within defined timescales and how the learning from improvements achieved is being used to create sustainable and on-going improvement.*
3. *How the progress that these schools are making to address the causes and outcomes of their inadequacy/need for improvement are being communicated to all stakeholders in the community that they serve.*
4. *How the needs of students from these schools are being addressed to prevent the inadequacies of their school experience providing them with a legacy of under-achievement.*

Teacher recruitment – there have been concerns expressed about the ability of some Harlow schools to recruit and retain teaching staff of the quality and experience required. Delays in recruitment or the inability to recruit the staff required increases pressure on existing staff in schools that are already struggling. It is also the case that frequent changes of teaching staff in the form of temporary staff to cover vacancies can lead to instability for children and families. This can affect learning outcomes.

More work is required to understand:

5. *The nature, level, location and causes of teacher recruitment and retention issues.*
6. *The approaches necessary to address their causes with particular reference to experience in other areas of the country.*

7. *The action that is being taken to develop action plans for schools to address their specific teacher recruitment and retention issues and how they are planning for the future.*

Intergenerational issues – there continue to be issues regarding children growing up in families where education has not been a priority and parental encouragement and aspiration is low. Parental approaches to education and lifestyle can create barriers to the development of aspiration in children. Children growing up in families where parenting skills are poor and parents themselves lack basic skills can lead to poor levels of school readiness and subsequent inadequate academic progression.

More work is required to:

8. *Learn from the success of the Harlow approach, to extend the approach to all parts of Harlow and to learn from other areas in tackling school readiness.*
9. *Develop further a cross-cutting approach to improving the health and wellbeing of families using school readiness as a key proxy.*
10. *Ensure that the partnership working outside of schools, as well as within them, addresses the aspiration of parents for their children, their parenting skills and supports family learning.*
11. *Identify how 'hard to reach' parents can be engaged and motivated to address the needs of their children.*
12. *Engage with students to learn more about their views on aspiration and their perceptions of the barriers to educational attainment/progression.*
13. *Identify how the issues in (12) above can be addressed and the channel of communication to students be improved.*

Meeting the needs of businesses - employers require people with the education and skills to meet their business needs and aspirations. Frequently local people do not have the higher level educational attainment, skills and experience to take the opportunities that exist in Harlow currently. It is also the case that through the Enterprise Zone and other regeneration initiatives high level, high reward jobs are being created through inward investment that local people will require higher levels of educational attainment to access.

Whilst significant progress has been made through the provision of a university centre, a university technical college and the improvements achieved by Harlow College and some schools much more is required.

Investment is required to:

14. *Extend the portfolio of courses offered by the university centre in Harlow relevant to current and future businesses and its recruitment of local and other students.*

15. *Develop further the relationships between the university, the university technical college, Harlow College and the schools in Harlow to provide clearly defined and effective pathways for local students.*
16. *Change perceptions about the educational attainment and opportunities in Harlow to attract students from outside of Harlow and to reduce the 'leakage' of Harlow students to other areas.*
17. *Change perceptions about the educational attainment and opportunities in Harlow to remove barriers to employers and employees moving to Harlow.*
18. *Further improve the engagement of Harlow businesses in improving educational attainment and ensure that the business 'assets' of Harlow are pooled as far as practically possible to create a network of learning and development opportunities for local students.*
19. *Encourage more students to consider STEM subjects.*

Other activities

The Council has created the Harlow Young People's Fund to:

1. Support Harlow's young people identify and fulfil their own potential.
2. Help young people gain the education and skills necessary to share in the success of the town.
3. Develop to be focussed citizens contributing to the town.

The Young People's Fund was started with a contribution from the Council's Chief Executive to fund and to deliver the Harlow Educational Progression Awards. The Awards evening held in November 2014 saw students of varying abilities nominated by their schools receive awards in recognition of their commitment and attitude to learning and their academic progress between Key Stages. The Council has now committed £50,000 per year for three years to continue with the School Readiness Project and is approaching local businesses and partners for contributions.

What next?

Below are the actions (taken from the paper above) that the Council believes need to be carried out specifically in Harlow. The Council recognises that the socioeconomic context and challenges in different communities in Essex may require different approaches but the Council hopes that the learning from Harlow can inform the approaches to the contexts and challenges in other communities.

Harlow related actions:

Schools that are inadequate or requiring improvement

More work is required to illustrate to the community more effectively:

1. *How these schools are being challenged, changed and improved.*

2. *The effectiveness of plans to address the causes of the inadequacy/need for improvement within defined timescales and how the learning from improvements achieved is being used to create sustainable and on-going improvement.*
3. *How the progress that these schools are making to address the causes and outcomes of their inadequacy/need for improvement are being communicated to all stakeholders in the community that they serve.*
4. *How the needs of students from these schools are being addressed to prevent the inadequacies of their school experience providing them with a legacy of under-achievement.*

Teacher recruitment

More work is required to understand:

5. *The nature, level, location and causes of teacher recruitment and retention issues.*
6. *The approaches necessary to address their causes with particular reference to experience in other areas of the country.*
7. *The action that is being taken to develop action plans for schools to address their specific teacher recruitment and retention issues and how they are planning for the future.*

Inter-generational issues

More work is required to:

8. *Learn from the success of the Harlow approach, to extend the approach to all parts of Harlow and to learn from other areas in tackling school readiness.*
9. *Develop further a cross-cutting approach to improving the health and wellbeing of families using school readiness as a key proxy.*
10. *Ensure that the partnership working outside of schools, as well as within them, addresses the aspiration of parents for their children, their parenting skills and supports family learning.*
11. *Identify how 'hard to reach' parents can be engaged and motivated to address the needs of their children.*
12. *Engage with students to learn more about their views on aspiration and their perceptions of the barriers to educational attainment/progression.*
13. *Identify how the issues in (12) above can be addressed and the channel of communication to students be improved.*

Meeting the needs of business

Investment is required to:

14. *Extend the portfolio of courses offered by the university centre in Harlow relevant to current and future businesses and its recruitment of local and other students.*
15. *Develop further the relationships between the university, the university technical college, Harlow College and the schools in Harlow to provide clearly defined and effective pathways for local students to support aspiration and educational attainment.*
16. *Change perceptions about the educational attainment and opportunities in Harlow to attract students from outside of Harlow and to reduce the 'leakage' of Harlow students to other areas.*
17. *Change perceptions about the educational attainment and opportunities in Harlow to remove barriers to employers and employees moving to Harlow.*
18. *Further improve the engagement of Harlow businesses in improving educational attainment and ensure that the business 'assets' of Harlow are pooled as far as practically possible to create a network of learning and development opportunities for local students.*
19. *Encourage more students to consider STEM subjects.*

In addition to the above the following actions are suggested for consideration to tackle and improve educational attainment in both Harlow and the other communities in Essex.

20. *Improve the identification and dissemination of best practice, wherever it is to be found, to all schools and support/encourage its use consistently to inform and develop actions to improve educational attainment.*
21. *Encourage and support school governing bodies, as custodians of the education of the students attending their schools, to develop, where it currently does not exist, the willingness and ability to hold to account the leadership of their schools for the educational attainment of the students.*
22. *Encourage all schools to commit to being held to account by the representatives of the communities that they serve (Essex County and the District Councils) for the educational attainment of their students.*
23. *Increase the pooling of expertise and experience amongst the teachers for the benefit of all schools.*
24. *Ensure that the educational progression of students is identified, evaluated and communicated more effectively as part of the definition of success in improving the educational attainment in schools.*

Conclusion

Educational attainment and progression are crucial for the success of individuals and communities. The Council is fully committed, as community leader, to supporting all educational institutions, individuals and families in improving aspiration, educational progression and educational attainment. Whilst recognising that there is still much to do to get to the position that the Council would like all educational institutions to be at

in terms of the educational attainment and progression of students in Harlow, it believes that the progress made to date should not be overlooked. Success, as well as challenges still to be faced, needs to be acknowledged. Many schools and teachers do a tremendous job and illustrate their commitment and professionalism every day for the benefit of their students.

The Council's strap line: Working together for Harlow, represents its approach and its commitment to support tackling the challenges and barriers to improving educational attainment and progression in Harlow.

Malcolm Morley
2015
Chief Executive

15 April



**REPORT TO THE ECC PEOPLES &
FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT TASK AND
FINISH GROUP
23 APRIL 2015**

1. Background

Tendring experiences a number of challenges which impact on educational performance, including inward migration and difficulty recruiting and retaining teaching staff. The area has high levels of unemployment, with an often transient population reliant on seasonal employment. There is a need to raise aspirations amongst local young people and within families in order to improve educational performance, including the removal of barriers to higher education for students.

In 2012, Tendring District Council (TDC) expressed concern to Essex County Council (ECC) as to the quality of primary education in the area. By the end of 2011/12 academic year, a number of primary schools were in special measures. Educational performance in Tendring was significantly below the average for the rest of Essex. As a result, Tendring District Council has taken a partnership approach to addressing educational attainment and related issues for schools in the area. The three key drivers in this respect are:

- Tendring Locality Board
- Tendring Education Improvement Group (TEIG)
- Tendring Education and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2. Tendring Locality Board

Membership of the Board comprises all ECC Members for Tendring, TDC Cabinet Members and the Cabinet Member from ECC allocated to Tendring. Recently, representation from the Tendring District Association of Local Councils was also included within the membership; thereby bring together all three tiers of local government. The Board meets approximately every two months and is chaired by Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of ECC. The Locality Board provides a high level steer to shape the future of the locality and delivers a co-ordinated public service approach across a number of key County and District services and projects. This enables joined up delivery of key services within a wide range of partners.

Joint locality boards have been set up across Essex. In Tendring, Harlow and Basildon the boards have focused on educational improvement as a work stream. Through this focus by the Locality Board the Tendring Education Improvement Group (TEIG) was established in October 2013 with the responsibility for supporting improvement in the quality of education for children and young people across the Tendring District.

3. Tendring Education Improvement Group

Members of the strategic group include Essex County Council and Tendring District Council, Primary and Secondary Head Teachers and Tendring Education Trust (the local collaborative trust established by schools in the district). The group has had a positive impact on the working relationship between Essex County Council, local schools and Tendring District Council. The partners within the TEIG work together to bring their collective effort, energy and experience to address challenges faced by schools, including early year's provision and governance arrangements. It was accepted that the greatest impact would be secured by focusing on jointly agreed aspects as opposed to tackling the wider agenda as a whole

3.1 The aims of the TEIG are:-

- For every primary school in Tendring to be judged at least securely good by Ofsted by 2017
- For all schools and their communities to hold the highest aspirations for Tendring children and to ensure that outcomes for children across Tendring increase year on year towards being in line with the top 25% national outcomes
- To narrow the performance gaps for “disadvantaged” children in Tendring so that they are at least in line with national expectations

3.2 The key responsibilities of the TEIG are:

- To champion educational improvement and raising aspirations for all pupils across the Tendring District.
- To capture and disseminate best practice across the area groups within Tendring.
- To work with schools to tackle areas of difficulty faced including:
 - educational achievement
 - school leadership
 - teacher recruitment
 - issues brought by a transient population
- To pool resources and coordinate support for maximum impact.
- To learn from best practice across the country.

The Tendring Locality Board oversees the work of the TEIG, and receives regular updates on progress made against targets.

4. Tendring Education and Skills Committee

Tendring District Council (TDC) established the Education and Skills Committee in 2014 to support the Council's community leadership role in respect of improving the aspiration and attainment of young people in the District.

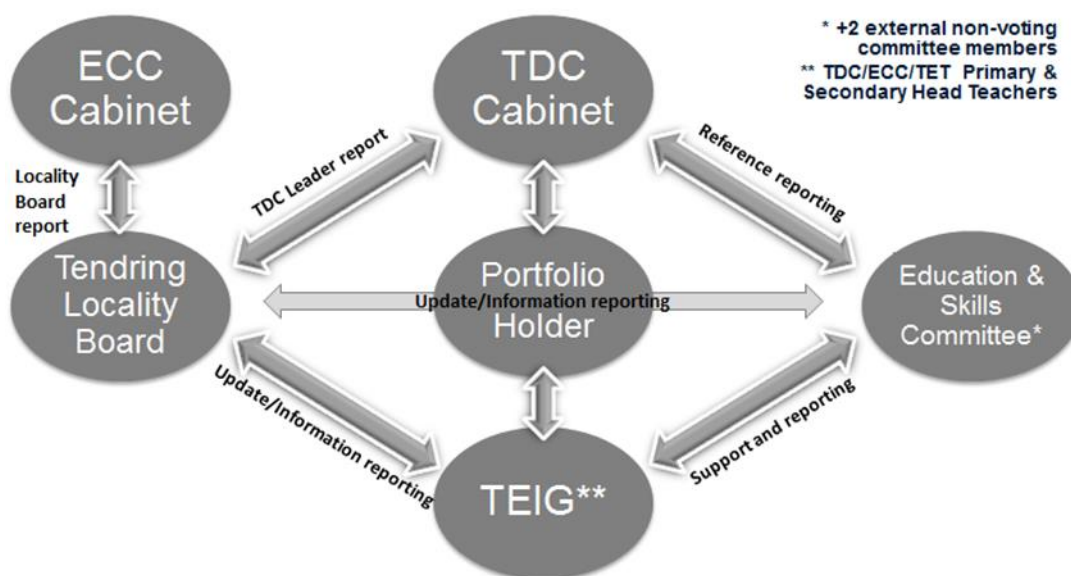
4.1 The Terms of Reference of the Committee

- Reviewing the key drivers that impact the educational attainment and aspirations in Tendring, including:
 - School performance in its wider remit (including how to support the recruitment and retention of teachers in Tendring schools);
 - School readiness of young people (including reviewing support that can be given to families);
 - The impact of migration into the District and contributory Council policies;
 - The roles of partners, including the business sector, in supporting schools;
 - Supporting the recruitment and training of school governors; and
 - The way partners work together to provide improved access to careers information to young people.
- Reviewing the work undertaken by the Council, including within its partnership activities to develop the skills of those that live and work in the District.

4.2 The Committee's Work Programme for 2015

Meeting date	Topic
22 June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting recruitment and retention of teachers in Tendring. Review of Secondary Schools. Review of how partners work together to provide access to careers information to young people.
21 September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of work undertaken to address entrenched worklessness and improve skills of those living in the District. Review of recruitment and training of school governors. Review of Colleges. Review of Tendring Children and Young People's Strategy.
30 November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of support given to families in Tendring to ensure School Readiness of children. Review of attainment figures. School attendance, the impact on attainment and what partners can do to support schools.

5. Reporting flow chart of the functions



6. Success of the Partnership Approach

Significant progress has been made since the TEIG partnership was formed. Since 2012, results at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved by 12%. Although results are still below the county average, the model has supported schools in becoming more self-sufficient in respect of their improvement programmes. Some schools had initially been reluctant to join the partnership, although confidence and momentum has built over the past year as the benefits of partnership working have become clear. Confidence in ECC and local schools to deliver an effective improvement programme has also increased. Essex County Council and Tendring District Council have jointly congratulated local schools on their improvement. Moreover, since the partnership had been formed, media coverage of local education provision has improved which is crucial in developing confidence in local education provision.

The partnership arrangements between Tendring District Council and Essex County Council provide the opportunity to share local knowledge, examples of good practice and for TDC to inform future education plans for the District. TDC has supported ECC in its interventionist activities in failing schools and a number of successful joint initiatives to improve governance arrangements in schools and early year's provision in the area have also been developed through the partnership.

OTHER APPENDICES TO FOLLOW.....

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