

Climate Action Commission Briefing

# Introduction to Essex County Council



Essex County Council

# AIM OF THE COMMISSION

The Climate Action Commission has been established to provide advice to help Essex County Council (ECC) tackle climate change.

The Commission is asked to:

1. Identify ways in which ECC can mitigate the effects of climate change, improve air quality, reduce waste across Essex and increase the amount of green infrastructure and biodiversity in the county by drawing on in-house expertise, commissioning research and forming new external partnerships (year one)
2. Explore how we attract investment in natural capital and low carbon growth (year two)

The full Terms of Reference will be agreed at the first meeting of the Commission.

# THIS BRIEFING

This briefing paper gives a high-level summary of Essex County Council (ECC) as an organisation to provide the context against which the Commission's recommendations will be made.

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1. Key stats
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# 1. KEY STATS

**ECC IS THE  
SECOND  
LARGEST  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

**SERVING A  
POPULATION  
OF JUST UNDER**

**1.5M** 

**75 COUNTY  
COUNCILLORS**

53 CONS • 6 LAB • 8 LD • 8 OTHER

**REVENUE**

**B<sup>£</sup>UDGET**

**2019/20**

**£2.5BN**

(INCLUDING SCHOOLS)

**12 LOWER TIER  
COUNCILS  
IN ESSEX**



**TWO UNITARY  
COUNCILS**

**3 STPs • 7 CCGs**

**306 PARISH COUNCILS**

NHS organisations:

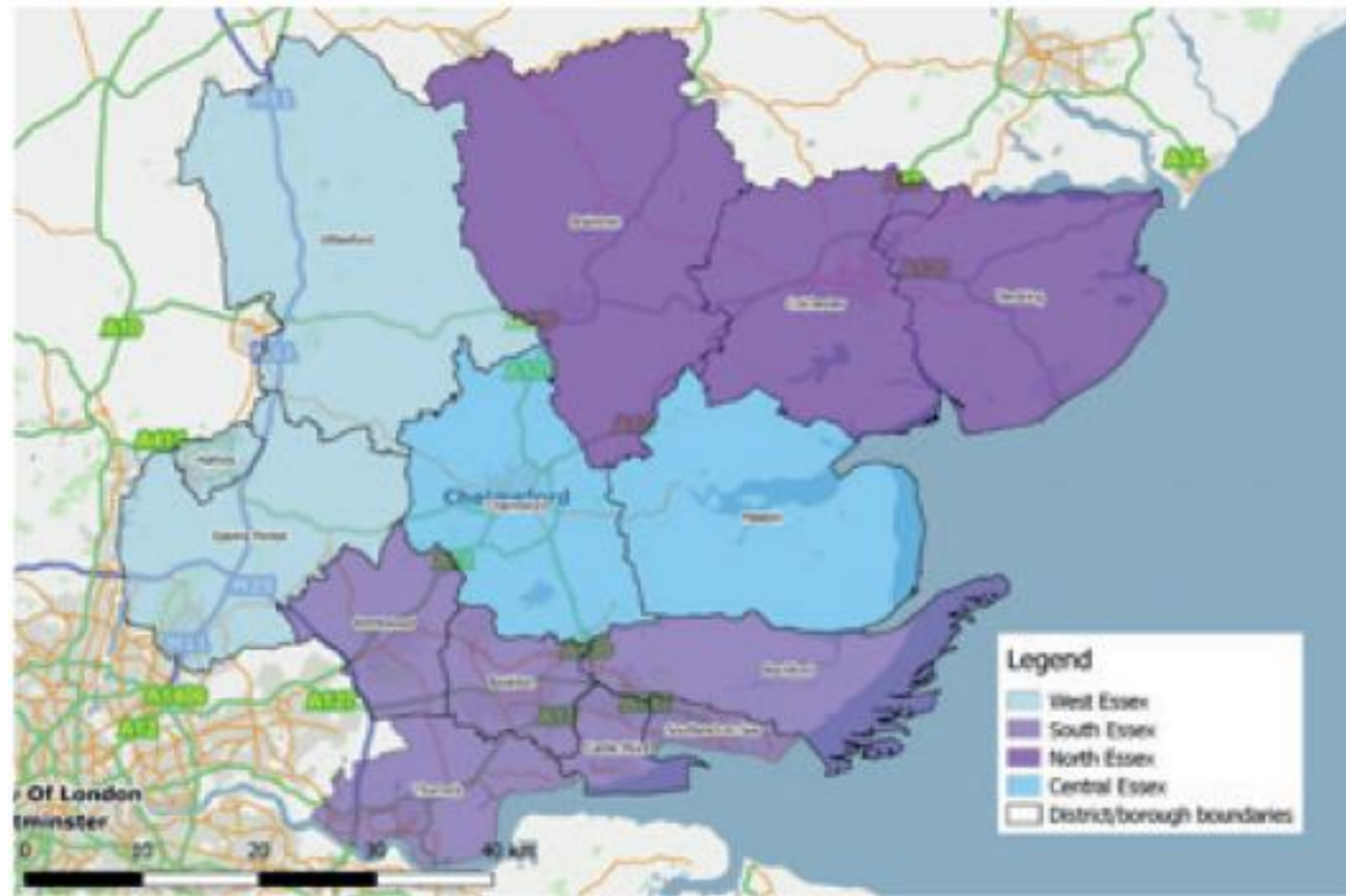
STP = Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships

CCG = Clinical Commissioning Groups

## 2. GOVERNANCE

ECC is a two-tier county, comprising the county council and 12 district, borough and city councils:

- Basildon
- Braintree
- Brentwood
- Castle Point
- Chelmsford
- Colchester
- Epping Forest
- Harlow
- Maldon
- Rochford
- Tendring
- Uttlesford



There are also two unitary authorities in Essex (Southend and Thurrock) who are independent of ECC.

## Political Leadership

Every four years, Essex residents elect 75 County Councillors (elected members) to represent them.

The current political makeup of the council is 53 Conservative, 6 Labour, 8 Liberal Democrat, and 1 Independent. The remaining 7 councillors sit together as the Non-Aligned Group.

The next county council elections will be in May 2021.

The Cabinet comprises of the Leader of the Council, David Finch, and nine other members appointed by the County Council. Each of the 10 members of the Cabinet has a defined portfolio of responsibilities for the discharge of the County Council's business.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action is Councillor Simon Walsh. He is supported by Councillor Mark Platt.

## **Corporate Leadership**

The senior officers of the Council form the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

CLT consists of the Chief Executive, Gavin Jones, and a team of Executive Directors and Directors.

The Executive Director of Place and Public Health, the function in which Environment and Climate Action sits, is Mark Carroll. The Director for Environment and Climate Change is Samantha Kennedy

More information on Leadership and how the Council is run can be found here:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/running-the-council>

## 3. OUR ECONOMY

We are a significant driver of the UK's prosperity with an economy that is worth over £33bn a year. We are known for our entrepreneurial culture with more start-ups per £bn/GVA than anywhere else in the country.

We have excellent connections to London and international markets and, over the next twenty years, will be even better economically connected through Crossrail and a new Lower Thames Crossing.

We also face challenges. We require £10bn of infrastructure investment over the next twenty years to cope with our scale of growth. The amount of new housing we will be accommodating means we need to think carefully about the communities we are creating, not just the housing we are building. We are aware we need to improve our productivity and raise our skills levels to continue to compete economically in the future.



ESSEX IS

 **72%**

RURAL

WITH

**350**

 **MILES**

OF COASTLINE

SIGNIFICANT  
HOUSING  
GROWTH

OVER NEXT 15 YEARS

TO 2035



**145,000**

GREATHER ESSEX

 **EIGHTH**  
LARGEST  
ECONOMY  
IN THE UK  
OUTSIDE LONDON

**£33BN**

GROSS VALUE ADDED

**78%**

EMPLOYMENT  
RATE

**72,100**

BUSINESSES

## 4. OUR SERVICES

ECC is:

- the strategic highway and transport authority
- the lead local flood authority
- the local education authority
- a statutory consultee for national government and local council plans.

Planning applications, Local Plans and development control, parking, housing and bin collections are managed at the district level.

The services we provide include:

- Highways and transport
- Planning services
- Adult social care
- Children's Services
- Education
- Libraries
- Waste management

## 5. OUR PARTNERS

Essex is the second largest county council in the country with a complex set of key partners and stakeholders, including:

- **South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)**, which is the largest in England outside London. SELEP covers Essex, Southend, Thurrock, Kent, Medway and East Sussex. This includes the Success Essex Board, providing strategic direction for Essex businesses
- **Transport East:** sub-national transport body including councils, business leaders and transport providers covering Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock
- **Health and wellbeing partnerships:** there are five Clinical Commissioning Groups in Essex, which span three NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships, one mental health trust and many community and voluntary sector organisations.
- The **Fire and Rescue service and Police Service**, led by a single Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- Higher and Further Education establishments including the **University of Essex, Anglia Ruskin University** and **Writtle University College**

# 6. THE ESSEX VISION: THE FUTURE OF ESSEX (2017)

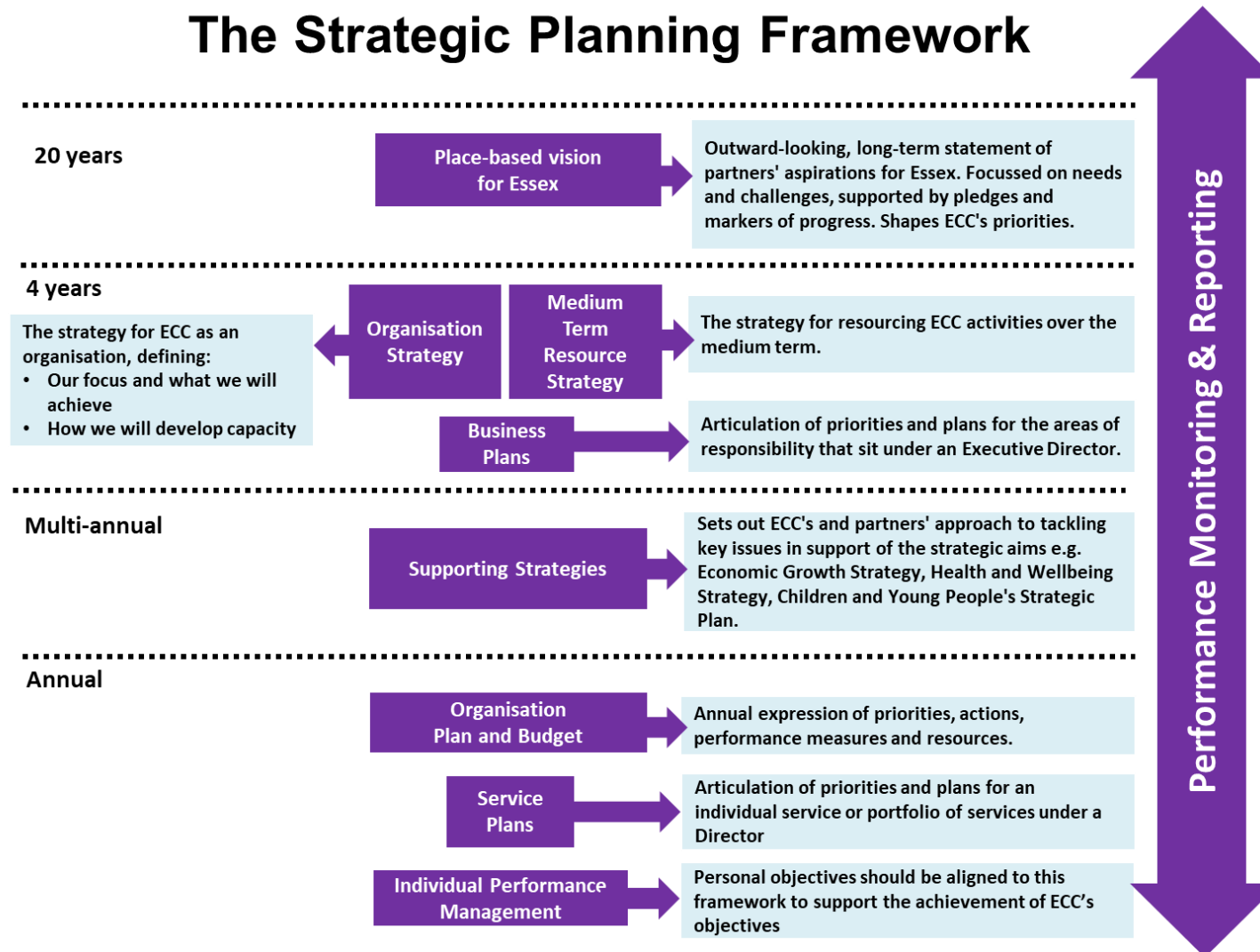
- Developed by the Essex Partnership – leaders from across public services in the county – in consultation with citizens
- Seven themes were through examining the evidence base and extensive consultation with groups of residents and partners.
- ECC coordinates the Essex Partnership
- There are regular meetings and a bi-annual Essex Assembly event
- These could be an opportunities for the Commission to consult with a range of stakeholders on issues, ideas and emerging recommendations

<https://www.essexfuture.org.uk/>

AMBITION	PRIORITY
Unite behind a sense of identity	Busting stereotypes, celebrating achievement, building pride
Enjoy life long into old age	Reducing the gap in life expectancy, tackling avoidable physical and mental illnesses and promoting independence wherever possible
Provide an equal start for every child	Improving school readiness, supporting safe and secure relationships, and making sure every child can go to a great school
Strengthen communities through participation	Nurturing a safer, better connected society by giving people more ways to control and contribute to their communities
Develop our county sustainably	Enhancing the things that make Essex a great place to live – our countryside, our coastline, our heritage – and working with local people and communities, to build homes not houses, places not developments, communities not estates
Connect us to each other and the world	Tackling congestion on our roads and railways, securing large scale investment in low carbon modes of transport and delivering super-fast broadband to every part of Essex
Share prosperity with everyone	Giving more people the chance to achieve the highest qualifications in key growth industries, providing the space for businesses to grow and relocate, and developing a united and relentless focus on attracting and maximising investment in Essex

# 7. ECC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## The Strategic Planning Framework



- Our **Organisation Strategy** covers the period 2017-21, aligned with the County Council elections. It sets out four strategic aims and twelve strategic priorities to which the Council is committed (see next slide)
- Progress towards our strategic aims is reviewed and published annually in our **Organisation Plan**, which also sets out our annual **Budget** and three-year Financial Strategy. This is due for publication by the end of March.
- Our strategic aims and priorities are translated into four-year **Functional Business Plans** by the corporate functions. Executive Summaries of the Functional Business Plans will be published in the next few months.
- The work of the Commission will be a key input into the next Organisation Strategy (2021-26) to ensure our future budgets and resource plans support our plans for action on climate change. Work is starting now on developing the new strategic aims and priorities.

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies>

# 8. ECC ORGANISATION STRATEGY 2017-21

## OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

### ENABLE INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH



- » Help people in Essex prosper by increasing their skills
- » Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries
- » Target economic development to areas of opportunity

### HELP PEOPLE GET THE BEST START AND AGE WELL



- » Help keep vulnerable children safer and enable them to fulfil their potential
- » Enable more vulnerable adults to live independent of social care
- » Improve the health of people in Essex

### HELP CREATE GREAT PLACES TO GROW UP, LIVE AND WORK



- » Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities
- » Help secure sustainable development and protect the environment
- » Facilitate growing communities and new homes

### TRANSFORM THE COUNCIL TO ACHIEVE MORE WITH LESS



- » Limit cost and drive growth in revenue
- » Develop the capability, performance and engagement of our people
- » Re-imagine how residents' needs can be met in a digital world

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

We will tackle the causes of disadvantage, ensuring that all Essex residents can access good jobs and an excellent education, regardless of their background.

We will remove the obstacles that hold Essex residents back, tackling inequalities between children and supporting older people to live independently with dignity.

We will help make it easier for people to travel across Essex, bringing communities together and connecting people to services, employment and learning opportunities.

We will employ a diverse workforce, drawing on the different values and experiences that reflect the communities we serve.