

Report title: Update on Changing Futures	
Report to: Essex Health and Wellbeing Board	
Date: 18 May 2022	For: Discussion
Enquiries to: Ben Hughes, Head of Wellbeing and Public Health ben.hughes@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All non-unitary Essex	

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this presentation is to provide an update on the progress of Changing Futures within Essex, and to seek the continued commitment and support of wider partners in achieving the aims of the programme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Support the aims of the Changing Futures programme within Essex, as set out within the Changing Futures Strategy appended to this report.

3 Background

National context

- 3.1 Changing Futures is a three-year national programme, which commenced in July 2021. Essex is one of 15 areas taking part, having successfully secured £2.8m grant funding to deliver the programme until the end of March 2024.
- 3.2 Largely due to the way services are commissioned or designed to deal with single issues only, those experiencing multiple disadvantage, invariably struggle to access the support they need. Similarly, many individuals do not reach the thresholds for statutory services, but are passed from service to service whilst still clearly needing some level support. Instead, they end up presenting in crisis to emergency services, creating an unnecessary and costly impact on public services, and more importantly, destabilizing the person further and increasing their level of need.
- 3.3 Therefore, Changing Futures is testing a range of approaches to improve the way in which services work together to better support those experiencing multiple disadvantage, and ultimately drive system change across the complex health and social care landscape.

Changing Futures in Essex

- 3.4 In Essex, Changing Futures is focusing on adults in contact with the criminal justice system (as victim or perpetrator), coupled with *two* of the following: substance misuse; homelessness; and mental health issues. However, they will invariably have other complex needs such as a learning disabilities and long-term physical health issues.
- 3.5 In summary, Changing Futures in Essex is a major expansion and enhancement of Essex County Council's (ECC) tried and tested approach over a number of years, through the Full Circle/Horizons service which seeks to build non-punitive, non-time limited therapeutic relationships through positive persistence. Coupled with this, the service forges strong links with partners from all sectors, including for example police, probation, housing, health and social care, bringing them together to form a multi-disciplinary/multi agency network of support around the individual.
- 3.6 The benefits of this approach and change in practice is already being demonstrated through the project being run in partnership with Adult Social Care. The project, which is also being delivered by Phoenix Futures and commenced in July 2020, provides support to vulnerable adults known/open to the Learning Disability and Autism Team, and who are being, or who are at risk of criminal, sexual or financial exploitation by others.
- 3.7 At present, there is good engagement from a wide range of partners, with recognition that the aim of Changing Futures similarly aligns to a number of partners strategic aims, including for example, the Essex Recovery Foundation, the Reducing Reoffending Board, Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit and the Supporting Families programme.
- 3.8 However, in order to really improve the way in which services work together, ECC needs increased engagement and support from wider partners. For example, there is a great deal of activity happening through the Community Mental Health Transformation agenda, but this is happening at different stages across the County. As such, ECC is keen to engage with health partners to better understand what provision exists and to ensure that those we are supporting through Changing Futures (and related services), who ordinarily find both primary and secondary services difficult to access, can obtain support. ECC would also advocate for wider partners to endorse a multi-agency approach to supporting vulnerable citizens.