

The Leader's Report of Cabinet Issues

1. Essex Health and Wellbeing Board Area 5-Year Strategic Plan

In May, Cabinet approved the proposed process to complete the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board area 5-Year Strategic Plan which will see the final plan being submitted to Cabinet on 23 September and the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board on 25 September. In June Cabinet considered the draft Plan.

The latest guidance from NHS England is that the "Units of Planning" are based on the individual Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) locality and the five CCGs within the geographical area of the County Council will be submitting 5-year plans to NHS England. The Essex Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed that an Essex 5-Year Strategic Plan be created to include programmes of work by the County Council and the CCGs to integrate health and care. The Plan will aim to ensure that the interdependencies between the CCGs and the County Council are identified and managed effectively. The Essex 5-Year Strategic Plan is being developed jointly by the County Council, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England in line with NHS England guidance.

2. Market Field School, Elmstead Market, Colchester

Cabinet approval was sought to approve the appointment of the contractor for the works proposed for the demolition and rebuilding of the Market Field School, which is a community special school. The works are required to provide an additional 44 permanent pupil places at the school by replacing temporary accommodation and the existing main building.

Cabinet authorised the Director for People Commissioning, with overview from the Leader, to enter into a contract with Lakehouse Contracts Limited for the demolition and rebuild of Market Field Community Special School once he is satisfied that

- statutory proposals to expand the School to 200 places have been approved
- satisfactory planning permission has been granted
- construction costs proposed by the contractor are overall in compliance with benchmarking rates.

Cabinet also approved the advance of £1.616m from 2015/16 to 2014/15 in order to fund the accelerated planned programme of delivery.

3. Proposal to establish a New Primary Academy / Free School - Colchester

In light of the growing demand for additional primary school places in North Colchester, Cabinet approval was sought to publish a specification inviting proposals

to establish a new primary academy or free school on the Severalls site in north Colchester for the purpose of primary school education.

Cabinet agreed that a new school be established in north Colchester in order to accommodate population growth in the area. It agreed that the Director for Commissioning: Education and Lifelong Learning issue a document seeking proposals to establish a new 420-place (two form entry) primary academy / free school from September 2016 in a new building to be constructed by the local authority on the site secured under a section 106 agreement on the Severalls development and publicise the proposals by sending them to operators of schools in Essex and by public notice.

4. Proposal to establish a New Primary Academy/Free School - Chelmsford

In light of the growing demand for additional primary school places in Chelmsford, Cabinet approval was sought to publish a specification inviting proposals to establish a new primary academy or free school on Maltese Road, Chelmsford for the purpose of primary school education.

Cabinet agreed that a new school be established on Maltese Road, Chelmsford in order to accommodate population growth in the area. It agreed that the Director for Commissioning: Education and Lifelong Learning issue a document seeking proposals to establish a new 210-place (1 form entry) primary academy / free school from September 2015 at the existing site on Maltese Road, Chelmsford and publicise the proposals by sending them to operators of schools in Essex and by public notice.

5. Redesign of Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service

The provision of services for Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health is a joint responsibility of local authorities and the NHS. The service is provided in different ways around Essex. In 2013 a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was undertaken and found that the service was fragmented and, in some parts of the County, difficult for people to access.

Cabinet agreed to work with the Southend and Thurrock Unitary Councils and the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering wider Essex for provision of a jointly-commissioned and integrated service to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of Children and Young People. It agreed by the partners the County Council will act as lead commissioner and will undertake a competitive dialogue process for selection of a contractor and enter into a collaboration agreement and commissioning contract with all the partners.

The Council and the NHS are each responsible for providing services to improve the emotional well-being and mental health of children and young people. The services are provided in four tiers which range from services designed for everyone (tier 1) to complex and critical services (tier 4) which will only be required by a few people. This commissioning relates to tier 2 and 3 services. These are currently delivered

by three providers operating under multiple contracts throughout Essex, Southend and Thurrock. In addition there are a number of voluntary sector providers which are commissioned to provide particular kinds of support. This support is outside the scope of this commissioning and is expected to continue alongside the new service.

6. 2013/14 Provisional Outturn Report

Cabinet noted the provisional outturn positions for revenue and capital which are for:

- a net underspend for the year of £1.842m on the Revenue Budget, after agreeing specific proposals for appropriating funds to and from earmarked revenue reserves and for carrying underspends forward for use in 2014/15;
- an underlying underspend of £2.320m against approved capital payment guidelines, after taking account of decisions for re-profiling and revising capital payment approvals.

The Council's external auditor, Ernst and Young, will carry out their audit of the Council's 2013/14 Statement of Accounts during the summer and it is possible that changes may be made to the Accounts during this period. The results of the external audit review will be reported to the Audit Committee on 22 September at which stage that Committee is expected to approve the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts for publication. The Statement when published will be placed on the Council's website.

7. Tender for the Substance Misuse Specialist Prescribing Services

Cabinet authority was sought to procure an Essex-wide contract for Specialist Treatment and Recovery Services which include the management of the tier 4 process (rehabilitation and detoxification), shared care, supervised consumption and social care elements.

Cabinet agreed to the competitive retendering of the Substance Misuse Specialist Prescribing Services for the County of Essex with a contract period of five years, with the possibility of extension to a maximum of seven years. Cabinet agreed that the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing may award the contract.

Community specialist prescribing services are a key part in any substance misuse treatment system that seeks to reduce dependence on illicit drugs, problematic alcohol use and reduce crime rates locally. Historically there have been four community prescribing services in Essex provided by a mix of funding. Since April 2013 the commissioning responsibility for all of these prescribing services transferred to local authorities as part of the transfer of Public Health services resulting from the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Once the funding transferred in April 2013 it gave the County Council full control over the specialist prescribing services for the first time and therefore full control over the contracts with the service providers. It has also provided a first opportunity for the service to be competitively market tested.

8. Digitisation of Speed and Red-Light Camera Sites

Cabinet was informed of the need for the Council to digitise its enforcement camera network and gave its approval to complete the digitisation of the network. Cabinet approved the addition of £1,172,270 to the capital programme for Phases 2 and 3 of the project. It also approved the transfer of £693,270 from the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme revenue budget to the Reserve for Future Capital Funding. Cabinet approved the exercise of the option in the contract to complete the digitisation of the remaining speed camera sites (phase 2). It approved the commencement of the tendering process for Phase 3 of the digitisation project and the subsequent award of the contract for Phase 3.

The Essex safety camera operation is run as a partnership working arrangement between Essex County Council, Essex Police, the Highways Agency and Southend and Thurrock Borough Councils. The County Council acts as the procuring authority for this element of the Operation. Up to now the cameras have used wet-film as the recording medium for the offences detected. This technology is fast becoming obsolete and because of the difficulty in getting spares it is becoming increasingly challenging to keep the equipment in an operational state.

It is important to digitise the sites in order to enable the service to continue to promote road safety. The digitisation proposal is also an integral element to enable the Council's Road Safety Budget to be reduced by £800,000 by 31 March 2016.

9. Future of Leverton House and Leverton Hall

The Council owns and operates Leverton Hall which is a purpose-built block of local authority secure accommodation for children and young people. There are 17 such units in England and Wales. Council also owns and operates Leverton House, a listed building which has for the last year operated as a children's home providing transitional support for children leaving Leverton Hall. Both units are empty at present. The Council has no operational need for a significant amount of accommodation of this type. Most children staying at the unit have been placed there by other local authorities. Ofsted has found there to be variable quality in service at Leverton Hall over the last two years which has led to a number of placing authorities withdrawing their placements. The building itself has been deemed inadequate for provision of secure care.

Cabinet has agreed to close Leverton Hall and Leverton House and release the site from Family Operations' use and in consequence for Essex Property and Facilities to consider future use of the site and potential disposal of the properties. The decision to close the facilities is no reflection on the quality of work carried out by staff at either unit.