



Essex County Council

Cabinet

10:15	Thursday, 29 July 2021	Essex Restaurant, 4th Floor, County Hall
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

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1	Membership, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest	5 - 5
2	Minutes: 22 June 2021	6 - 15
3	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. No statement or question shall be longer than three minutes and speakers will be timed. On arrival, and before the start of the meeting, please register with the Democratic Services Officer.	

4	Acknowledgement of the Essex Climate Action Commission's Final Report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' (FP/088/06/21) The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is available online – please scroll to bottom of page, below Meeting Documents	16 - 137
5	2021/22 Financial Overview as at the First Quarter Stage (FP/011/03/21)	138 - 161
6	Essex Housing - Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22 (FP/077/05/21) The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is available online – please scroll to bottom of page, below Meeting Documents	162 - 167
7	Land at Hamberts Farm South Woodham Ferrers - Residential Development (FP 058/04/21) The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is available online – please scroll to bottom of page, below Meeting Documents	168 - 176
8	Intensive Coaching Service for Young People in Care (FP/082/06/21) The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is available online – please scroll to bottom of page, below Meeting Documents	177 - 186
9	Procurement of the Substance Misuse Specialist Treatment and Recovery Service (FP/060/04/21) The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is available online – please scroll to bottom of page, below Meeting Documents	187 - 195
10	Decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members (FP/086/06/21)	196 - 197
11	Date of Next Meeting To note that the next meeting of the Cabinet will take place at 10am on Tuesday 21 September 2021 at County Hall, Chelmsford (exact location to be determined).	

12 Urgent Business

To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Exempt Items

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

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

13 Confidential Appendix: Essex Housing - Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22 (FP/077/05/21)

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

14 Confidential Appendix: Land at Hamberts Farm South Woodham Ferrers - Residential Development (FP/058/04/21)

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information);

15 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.

Committee: Cabinet

Enquiries to: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager
Emma.tombs@essex.gov.uk

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note:

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

Membership
(Quorum: 3)

Portfolio

Councillor K Bentley	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Councillor L McKinlay	Deputy Leader and Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor T Ball	Education Excellence, Skills and Training
Councillor M Buckley	Waste Reduction and Recycling
Councillor G Butland	Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture
Councillor B Egan	Children's Services and Early Years
Councillor L Scott	Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
Councillor J Spence	Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor L Wagland	Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning
Councillor C Whitbread	Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet meeting that took place in the Chamber of County Hall on Tuesday 22 June 2021

Present:

Councillor	Cabinet Member Responsibility
Councillor K Bentley	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Councillor T Ball	Education Excellence, Skills and Training
Councillor M Buckley	Waste Reduction and Recycling
Councillor G Butland	Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture
Councillor B Egan	Children's Services and Early Years
Councillor L Scott	Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
Councillor L Wagland	Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning
Councillor C Whitbread	Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs (via remote link)
Councillor J Spence	Health and Adult Social Care

Councillors Pond, Henderson, King, Durham, Platt, Schwier, Barker and Aspinell were also present.

1. **Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest.**

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received and the following were noted:

1. There had been no changes of membership since the last report.
Councillor Whitbread, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs attended the meeting via video link and did not vote on any item within the agenda.
2. Apologies were received from Councillor McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance, and Councillor Mackrory, Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group.
3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Questions from the public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

4. **2020/21 Provisional Outturn Report (FP/697/05/20)**

The Cabinet considered a report presenting and providing commentary on the provisional outturn position for financial year 2020/21 prior to formal closure of

the accounts. The report also explained the key movements since the third quarter financial overview report (presented to Cabinet on 19 January 2021) to the year-end position.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs and the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care responded to questions from Councillors Henderson, King and Pond in relation to the following points:

- Why existing reserves had been renamed to the Ambition Fund and Renewal Fund reserves, and why the funds held therein were restricted or earmarked;
- Options for reallocating the revenue underspend of £7.619m;
- The underspend on schools;
- The need for an analysis of spend against adult social care, and the level of confidence that the current resilient position would continue.

Written answers would also be provided to Councillor Henderson in respect of the following:

- Whether a greater level of capital funding should be provided to support Fleet purchases;
- The intentions for the unspent project funding against the Carbon Reduction Reserve;
- Why underspends against residential and nursing care were being moved to the General Balance as opposed to being retained by Health and Adult Social Care;
- The ability to move funds from the COVID emergency grant to the Renewal Fund;
- Why it was no longer considered financially viable to operate the volunteering and project work scheme for young people previously delivered by the National Citizenship Service;
- Redundancy costs related to the new Occupational Health Contract;

And to Councillor King in respect of the following:

- The need for ongoing monitoring and analysis of the impacts of and on capital spending.

Resolved:

To approve the following in relation to the 2020/21 outturn position:

1. Rename the Service Improvement Reserve to the Ambition Fund Reserve;
2. Rename the COVID-19 Recovery Reserve to the Renewal Fund Reserve;
3. That the net under spend £11.482m is appropriated to the General Balance to support future years' budget planning;

4. General Balance returns of £15.714m in relation to Adult Social Care COVID funding that is no longer required or has been recovered from Health (£15.385m), Slough libraries (£300,000) and Excess Deaths COVID funding no longer required (£29,000);
5. Withdrawal of £31.542m from the General Balance to earmarked reserves in respect of reassignment of COVID grant funding;
6. That under spends are allocated between portfolios as set out within the 'Transfers of under / over spends between Portfolios' column of Appendix A;
7. That the following amounts are appropriated to / from restricted and other revenue reserves;

Restricted Funds

- Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Reserves

- Building Schools for the Future - **£354,000** contribution (Appendix D 6iii)
- Clacton Secondary Schools - **£479,000** contribution (Appendix D 6iii)
- Debden School - **£835,000** contribution (Appendix D 6iii)
- A130 Road - **£219,000** contribution (Appendix D 3iii)

- **Waste Reserve - £4.574m** contribution mainly relating to PFI credits received during the year (Appendix D 7iii & 17ii)

- **Grants Equalisation Reserve - £501,000** contribution in relation to Public Health grant to be utilised in 2021/22 relating to under spends following the maximisation of grant funding (Appendix D 9v)

- **Schools - £8.958m** net contribution to the Schools' reserve, following under spend against schools' budgets in 2020/21 (Appendix D 5i)

- Partnership Reserves

- Essex Safeguarding Childrens Board Partnership Reserve - **£50,000** withdrawal (Appendix D 1iii)
- Adults Safeguarding Board Partnership Reserve - **£17,000** contribution (Appendix D 9v)
- Public Sector Reform Partnership Reserve - **£47,000** contribution (Appendix D 1iii)
- Youth Offending Teams Partnership Reserve - **£343,000** contribution (Appendix D 1iii)
- Public Law Partnership Reserve - **£19,000** contribution (Appendix D 12iii)

Capital funding

- **Capital funding - £2.841m** net contribution to transfer capital financing resources to revenue in respect of:

- Replenish the reserve to retain funding to support the capital programme - **£8.450m** contribution
- Essex Housing - **£7.746m** withdrawal for the technical adjustment relating to projects transferring to Essex Housing LLP. The Council will transfer the housing development sites to the LLP during 2021/22 at a price that reflects the market value of the sites and includes the pre-construction costs being treated as abortive by the Council. This is in line with the Cabinet decisions taken in December 2020
- To support Fleet purchase in 2021/22 - **£1.276m** contribution
- Highways expenditure which is capital in nature - **£500,000** contribution
- Capital works relating to the in-house Adults Residential Service - **£200,000** contribution
- Capital expenditure on networking and communications infrastructure - **£82,000** contribution
- Compensation claims for highways as a result of works carried out for Colchester Integrated Transport Package scheme - **£79,000** contribution

Other reserves

- **Carry Forwards - £8.471m** contribution, in respect of revenue budget underspends that it is proposed are carried forward for use in 2021/22. The proposals for utilising this Reserve in 2021/22 are set out in **Appendix C** of this report
- **Adults Digital Programme - £877,000** contribution to continue with projects within the programme for use in 2021/22 (Appendix D 9v)
- **Adults Transformation - £3.5m** contribution to support the Adult Social Care medium term budget (Appendix D 9v)
- **Carbon Reduction Reserve - £192,000** contribution due to unspent project funding which is now required for use in 2021/22 (Appendix D 7iii)
- **Children's Transformation Reserve - £1.314m** contribution to replenish the reserve to support transformation capacity to deliver the Children's Transformation Programme (Appendix D 1iii)
- **Collection Fund Investment Risk Reserve - £42,000** contribution to support funding in 2021/22 (Appendix D 16ii)
- **Community Initiatives Reserve - £275,000** withdrawal to support expenditure incurred on community projects during 2x 20/21 (Appendix D 2iii)
- **COVID Equalisation Reserve - £12.638m** net contribution – withdrawals to and contributions from multiple portfolios to fund COVID pressures and return COVID funding where actual expenditure was lower than previously forecast, plus a contribution to transfer all remaining COVID emergency grant required for future commitments to this reserve; this will be applied

- to expected COVID related costs from 2021/22 (Appendix D 1iii, 2iii, 3iii, 6iii, 7iii, 9v, 14iii & Appendix M)
- **Emergency Reserve - £10.169m** contribution due to actual expenditure being lower than previously forecast relating to the pandemic and to replenish ECC funds originally used for COVID pressures and losses with emergency grant (Appendix D 3iii, 6iii & Appendix M)
 - **Health and Safety Reserve - £681,000** contribution relating to unspent funds for planned projects now slipped to 2021/22 and also a contribution from the General Balance to replenish ECC funds originally used for COVID pressures and losses with emergency grant (Appendix D 6iii, 10iii & Appendix M)
 - **Insurance Reserve - £1.238m** contribution in respect of recovery of income relating to Highways claims, to meet ECC budget pressures in 2021/22 as planned in February budget setting (Appendix D 13iii)
 - **Quadrennial elections reserve - £668,000** withdrawal towards preparation work incurred for the May 2021 elections (Appendix D 10iii)
 - **Renewal Fund Reserve - £21.518m** net contribution – a contribution of COVID emergency grant from the General Balance to support the creation of a £25m Renewal Fund within the reserve and to replenish ECC funds originally used for COVID pressures and losses. Partially offset by withdrawals for COVID pressures and losses (Appendix D 4iii, 6iii, 11iii, 12iii & Appendix M)
 - **Ambition Fund Reserve - £6.069m** net contribution due mainly to replenishment of the reserve using part of the funds received from UBB in respect of the costs order relating to a litigation between the authority and UBB Waste (Essex Ltd) and the ECL Dividend (Appendix D 1iii, 6iii, 8iii, 9v, 10iii, 14iii & 16ii)
 - **Technology Solutions Reserve - £1.187m** contribution due to unspent funds for corporate systems reprofiled into 2021/22 (Appendix D 12iii)
 - **Tendring PPP Reserve - £303,000** withdrawal of the remaining funds now the contract has been terminated (Appendix D 6iii)
 - **Transformation Reserve - £2.445m**, net contribution due to unspent funds relating to slipped or paused projects to use in 2021/22 and also a contribution from the General Balance to replenish ECC funds originally used for COVID pressures and losses which can be funded from government emergency grant (Appendix 1iii, 2iii, 3iii, 4iii, 12iii, 15iii & Appendix M)
8. The financing of capital payments in 2020/21 is approved on the basis set out within Appendix G to this report.
 9. Capital payment budgets, and associated capital financing, of **£18.032m** are reprofiled into subsequent financial years, in respect of slippage in schemes (as shown in the 'Slippage' column of Appendix H).
 10. Capital payment budgets, and associated capital financing, of **£4.347m** are brought forward in respect of schemes that have progressed ahead of schedule (as shown in the 'Advanced works' column of Appendix H).

11. Portfolios' 2020/21 capital payments budgets are reduced by **£16.016m** (as shown in the 'Reductions' column of Appendix H), with increases of **£11.845m** to other schemes (as shown in the 'Additions' column of Appendix H), to reflect achieved activity in 2020/21.

To approve the following in relation to the 2021/22 budget:

12. Agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Finance and Technology (S151 officer), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs to release **£8.471m** from the Carry Forwards Reserve in 2021/22 for the purposes detailed in Appendix C of this report, as well as those previously approved in the Half Year report (FP/694/05/20) and Third Quarter report (FP/695/05/20).

5. **Procurement of the Essex Community Wellbeing Service (FP/054/04/21)**

The Cabinet received a report seeking agreement to procure a community wellbeing service to deliver a cohesive and innovative model of wellbeing for residents which approached the issues impacting wellbeing holistically and focussed on unmet need, a single point of access, equality and a digital offer.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care responded to questions from Councillors King and Henderson in relation to

- Whether triage would be delivered by qualified social workers;
- The degree to which personal contact would be replaced by digital methods;
- How engagement with the voluntary sector would be managed and how this meshed with service provision;
- The mechanisms to monitor delivery including customer feedback and contractual obligations;
- The level of efficiencies expected to be achieved;
- The degree to which the efforts of volunteers would be used to deliver services.

Resolved:

1. To procure a provider to deliver an integrated, countywide Essex Community Wellbeing Service for a period of five years, with the option to extend for a further two years.
2. To undertake a competitive procurement exercise using a two-stage tender process, with bids to be evaluated on 60% quality of which 10% will be allocated to social value, and 40% price with agreement of the detailed evaluation criteria being subject to the approval of the Director, Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities.
3. That the Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Health, is authorised to award the contract to the successful bidder following completion of the procurement process.

6. Bus Back Better: Proposed Enhanced Bus Partnership for Essex (FP/063/05/21)

The Cabinet received a report asking for agreement that ECC formally issue a statement of intention to set up enhanced quality bus partnerships.

The Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport responded to questions from Councillors Barber (via video link), Pond, King and Henderson in relation to:

- The importance of the proposal in delivering a service to rural areas;
- Whether the approach could be seen as a stepping stone to eventually adopting a franchise model;
- The future of the Bus Strategy Board;
- How engagement with the districts would be delivered;
- How any future failure of the enhanced bus partnerships would be managed.

A written answer would also be provided to Councillor Pond in relation to how differing approaches may be delivered in different parts of the county according to need.

Resolved:

1. That the Council will progress the development of an Enhanced Partnership Plan for the whole of the administrative county of Essex with the intention of delivering an Enhanced Partnership Plan and one or more Enhanced Partnership Schemes as soon as possible, and if possible, by April 2022.
2. To note that the Cabinet Member will take decisions relating to:
 - the final number of schemes,
 - the draft issued to give operators the chance to object
 - the consideration of objections from operators; and
 - the final consultation draft.
3. To note that as there are likely to be additional resources required in order to issue a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by 31 October 2021, a further decision relating to the resource requirements may be required once the detailed requirements have been developed.
4. To note that the Cabinet will take the final decision on adopting the Enhanced Partnership plan and scheme(s) and on the adoption of the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

7. Expansion of New Rickstones Academy, Witham and Southview SEN School with residential provision (FP/033/03/21)

The Cabinet received a report requesting endorsement of the expansion of New Rickstones Academy in Witham in order to meet the need for secondary school places in the locality and the endorsement of the expansion of sixth form places and residential provision at Southview SEN School.

The Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Skills and Training and Councillor Schwier, as Climate Change Czar, responded to a question from Councillor King in relation to the carbon reduction methods that may be deployed, beyond the photovoltaic cells referenced in the report.

Resolved:

1. To support the expansion of New Rickstones Academy by increasing capacity from 6 forms of entry to 8 forms of entry with effect from September 2022.
 2. To support the expansion of Southview SEN School by adding 24 sixth form places and residential provision for ten children.
 3. To the procurement of the associated building works for New Rickstones Academy and Southview SEN School through a two-stage design and build mini competition using the Essex Construction Framework 2.
 4. That the Head of Infrastructure Delivery is authorised to award the contract to the successful bidder, when he is content that the following conditions have been met:
 - a. A satisfactory planning permission has been granted; and
 - b. The construction costs are within the agreed budget and represent value for money.
 5. To approve the capital budget for construction and associated project fees, as per the profile stated in the confidential financial appendix, including a re-profiling of budget in relation to Southview School of £80,000 from 2021/22 to 2022/23.
8. **Adoption of the Essex County Council Walking Strategy (FP/073/05/21)**

The Cabinet received a report asking that the Essex County Council (ECC) Walking Strategy 2021 which outlined the actions the Council would take to achieve its strategic priorities around active and more sustainable travel be adopted.

The Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport responded to questions from Councillors King, Pond, Aspinell, Butland, Barker and Henderson in relation to:

- The clarity of the language used in the Strategy and how this could be improved;

- The need to be realistic about the timescales required to achieve the priorities set out in the Strategy and the necessary financial investment;
- The priority given to school streets;
- The need to encourage the levels of activity and exercise seen during the first lockdown in March 2020;
- The helpfulness to walkers of the old ‘fingerpost’ signage as opposed to their replacements;
- The links between the Strategy and the promotion of tourism, and the importance of the public rights of way network;
- Whether the “Highways Panels” should be renamed to better reflect that walking fell within their remits;
- The low priority given to making a currently flooded right of way accessible;
- The need to encourage walkers to feel safe, particularly in relation to speed limits and lighting, and the need for clear way finding signs.

Resolved:

To adopt the proposed ECC Waking Strategy in the form appended to the agenda report.

9. **Decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members (FP/081/05/21)**

The report was noted.

10. **Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Cabinet would take place on the morning 29 July 2021, with the venue and time to be confirmed.

11. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

12. **Confidential Appendix: Procurement of the Essex Community Wellbeing Service (FP/054/04/21) (Public and press excluded)**

The confidential appendix to report FP/054/04/21, to which minute 5., above, refers was agreed.

13. **Confidential Appendix: Expansion of New Rickstones Academy, Witham and Southview SEN School with residential provision (FP/033/03/21) (Public and press excluded)**

The confidential appendix to report FP/033/03/21, to which minute 7., above, refers was agreed.

14. **Urgent exempt business (Public and press excluded)**

There was no urgent exempt business.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.31am.

Forward Plan reference number: FP/088/06/21

Report title: Acknowledgement of the Essex Climate Action Commission's Final Report - 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral'	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Leader for Essex County Council	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Sam Kennedy, Director, Environment and Climate Action Samantha.Kennedy@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report asks the Cabinet to receive the final report of the Essex Climate Action Commission, entitled 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral'. The Essex Climate Action Commission was set up to provide expert advice on climate change and to make recommendations on the actions to take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which are causing global warming.
- 1.2 The Cabinet has already responded to the interim report of the Commission. The full report will need to be considered in detail and the Council will need to respond to the recommendations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to accept and welcome the 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' report from the Essex Climate Action Commission as at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Agree that a response to the Commission's Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral report is brought to the Cabinet meeting later in 2021.
- 2.3 Formally thank the Commission for their work in producing the final report.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 Climate Change is an issue facing the whole world. Without action to reduce or offset greenhouse gases that is causing global warming, temperatures are set to rise significantly. Such temperature rises will impact our very existence, including (but not limited to) our water and food supplies, land use, health and well-being and wildlife.
- 3.2 The UK has signed up to the 1995 Paris Agreement along with 193 other countries committing the world to act to hold global temperature rises to below

- 1.5°C and has enshrined in law a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.
- 3.3. Net-zero is the state where there is a balance between the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by a human activity, and the amount which is removed by other means e.g. by the planting of trees that 'absorb' carbon.
- 3.4 Essex must take appropriate action and become net-zero by 2050.
- 3.5 In October 2019, the Council established the Essex Climate Action Commission to advise on ways to mitigate against climate-change and held its first inaugural meeting in May 2020. The Commission produced an interim report in November 2020 on recommendations of steps to take, to help Essex become net-zero by 2050. This was welcomed by ECC in November 2020, and formally responded to by ECC in March 2021.
- 3.6 At the March 2021 Cabinet meeting:
- We adopted a policy to transform the Council's estate to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, creating an electric vehicle strategy for Essex and the setting up of a Net-Zero innovation network,
 - Cabinet asked officers to report annually to Cabinet on greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilience measures from ECC and from all sources in Essex
 - The Cabinet did not respond in detail to all the recommendations in the interim report as to do so required further work.
- 3.7 The Essex Climate Action Commission continued their work after the interim report. On 20 July 2021 the ECAC launched the Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral report, with their recommendations on the steps that need to be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move Essex to net-zero by 2050. Recommendations are grouped under core themes of land use and green infrastructure, energy, the built environment, transport, waste, and community engagement and include actions for adapting to an already changing climate.
- 3.8 The report builds on and supersedes the interim report. Some of the recommendations of the interim report are repeated in the report and the others have been reiterated and expanded upon. The report also adds in additional recommendations which were not made in the interim report as they relate to an issue which had not been considered at that time.
- 3.9 This report seeks acknowledgement of the Essex Climate Action Commission's complete report of recommendations and seeks ECC's approval to consider the report fully and provide a detailed response on the actions that ECC will take as a result, expected to be in Autumn 2021. This will carry forward and update the response agreed in March 2021 and respond to the additional or reiterated recommendations.

3.10 Examples of the positive action ECC has already taken or is taking:

- Our Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, published in 2020, was awarded a Building with Nature Accreditation of Excellent, one of only eight local authorities to gain this.
- The Essex County Council Energy and Low Carbon team is delivering solar panels through their Empower project, funded by the European Commission. Danbury Park Community School is just one of the examples.
- School extension projects for Merrylands Primary, Earls Colne Primary and Beauchamps Secondary have been carried out using innovative modular forms of construction to reduce waste and carbon emissions, with more planned.
- We have designed and are now installing/constructing 3 net-zero carbon school buildings that are net-zero in use. This will give a saving to the schools' budgets so that more money can be spent on educating our children, rather than on energy bills. The schools are Clacton County High School, The Colne Community School & College, and Sweyne Park School.
- Two of the most energy-consuming sites in ECC's core estate have both begun a refit programme to help reduce their carbon emissions. Essex Records Office and Goodman House will benefit from LED lighting and control upgrades, decarbonisation of their gas heating with installation of two air source heat pumps, and 100kw of roof-mounted Solar PV combined battery storage.
- The Council's Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme provides grants for businesses of up to £20,000 for energy efficiency measures to reduce their carbon emissions, as well as funding to SMEs in the Low-Carbon sector to grow. Since the programme started in 2016, £2.6m has been awarded to 397 businesses with almost 3000 tonnes greenhouse gases equivalent emissions reduction. Funding is available until 2023.
- Our Green Homes Grants Local Authority Delivery scheme is supporting lower income homeowners across the county with free funding to upgrade their heating systems and go green.
- ECC is leading an innovative cross-border project to help local authorities in England and France transition to a circular economy – this project aims to increase recycling rates, reduce waste and encouraging lasting behaviour change.
- Our Stop. Swap. GO! Campaign to help residents out of cars and into active travel has reached over one million people.

- The 'Essex is Green' social media channels actively engage and inspire thousands of residents online to get involved and tackle climate change.
- Love Essex has a partnership with Freecycle, an online platform that allows you to give and receive items for free in your local area and supports promotional costs. There are now 20 local Freecycle groups across Essex, with over 70,000 members. In the last 12 months, 164 tonnes of 'stuff' were reused via the platform, saving an estimated 83.8 tonnes of CO₂.

3.11 Over the next year the Commission will be monitoring the implementation from Year One recommendations and provide regular updates as well as continuing to make further recommendations for actioning. They will also work on delivery plans with partners across Essex to drive recommendations from Year One forward. The Commission will be considering two new key areas for discussion: green growth for the future and green finance as both have significant impact towards making Essex net zero by 2050.

3.12 Alongside the report we will be producing advice packs for schools, businesses and residents in upskilling and educating them on what climate change means to them, what they can do to help to get to net zero by 2050 and links for further advice and support. All these packs are to be launched ahead of COP26 in November 2021, with exact dates yet to be finalised.

4. Options

There are two options to consider:

4.1 Option 1: Do not accept the report (Do Nothing)

Climate change is a global issue and will have a significant impact on Essex. ECC is already running a Climate Action programme in response to the recommendations in the interim report, work is underway to meet some of the recommendations, and the Leader of ECC has publicly committed to tackling Climate Change. To not accept the report that ECC commissioned, would greatly undermine the Council's public commitment to Climate Action and erode trust with Essex residents. This option is not recommended.

4.2 Option 2: Accept the report and respond to the recommendations in full at a future Cabinet Meeting (This is recommended)

It is recommended that Cabinet accept and welcome the report, prioritise the consideration of the recommendations and respond fully in Autumn 2021.

There are over 130 recommendations included in the report. Consideration later in 2021 will allow ECC the time to review the recommendations, review work that is in progress or planned, assess the impact of accepting each recommendation on both the Council and Essex residents and determine how best to incorporate them into a pragmatic ECC Climate Action programme that is appropriately funded and delivery monitored against.

5. Links to Essex Vision

5.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision

- Strengthen communities through participation
- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world

5.2 This links to the strategic aims in the Organisational Plan, which are as follows:

- Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
- High quality environment
- Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
- Best start in life for children and families

6. Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial implications

6.1.1 Decision FP/898/11/20 approved a drawdown from the Climate Change Reserve of £2.5m for additional resource (£2.1m) to support the reduction of emissions and building resilience in the ECC estate and more broadly across Essex, plus £400,000 of targeted capital investment.

6.1.2 With regard to achieving the Net Zero requirement for the ECC estate, detailed plans will be drawn up for future consideration. As such there is as yet no approval to spend outside of existing budget.

6.1.3 In financial year 2021/22 the Capital Programme details £8.7m of climate action and green infrastructure schemes, over the 4-year MTRS period £41.1m, the majority of which relates to LED Roll-out and Flood Management.

6.1.4 Over the coming months as the Essex Climate Action Commission report recommendations are considered in detail and an ECC Climate Action programme is developed this will include a full analysis of the associated financial implications that will be presented for consideration by Cabinet later in 2021

6.1.5 A full financial appraisal will support each of the recommendations at the relevant stage.

6.2 Legal implications

6.2.1 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires the council to have regard to the need to conserve biodiversity.

6.2.2 When responding to the recommendations of the Commission the Council will need to have regard to the interim response agreed in February 2021.

7. Equality and Diversity implications

7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (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.

7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

7.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8. List of appendices

Appendix A: Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral
(Essex Climate Action Commission Final Report of Recommendations)

Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment

9. List of Background papers

None



Essex Climate Action Commission
Powering positive change

Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral

Essex Climate
Action Commission





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Foreword

Leader of Essex County Council

I'd like to begin by offering this Council's sincerest thanks to the Commission's Independent Chair Lord Randall, his Co-Chairs Prajwal and Daniel and all of the expert Commissioners. For me, their work is an international exemplar, the gold standard for how local government can tackle climate change and we owe each of them a great debt of thanks for their hard work and their expertise in producing what is an excellent and stretching report.

I do not think I need to tread old ground here, we have explored at length just how important it is to take immediate meaningful action to tackle climate change. As the new Leader of Essex County Council, I have set out my vision for Renewal, Equality and Ambition across Essex, the central pillar of which is climate action. It must be at the heart of everything we do. I am grateful to have a Commission that is independent of the Council and that can tell us how to do exactly that.

As a demonstration of how seriously this council is taking climate change, I have moved responsibility for Climate Action into the Leader portfolio and allocated Cllr Peter Schwier the newly created role of Climate Csar. His sole role is to ensure that sustainability is at the heart of everything we do and to hold us to account for delivering the recommendations pertaining to us.

The actions recommended in this report are not just the responsibility of Essex County Council and we will have failed if we are ploughing a lone furrow. This takes the collective might of everyone in Essex and beyond: our district, borough, city, town and parish councils; our public and private sector partners; our residents and of course national government. This report is for all of us. We will of course share our plan for how we as a council will implement the recommendations made in this report soon, but we must also help ensure that everyone takes this responsibility as seriously as we do.



Cllr Kevin Bentley
Leader of Essex County Council

Foreword

Lord Randall

I am really delighted to be able to present a clear and ambitious plan for Essex which aims to tackle the climate and biodiversity challenge head on. We have been able to set out a vision for a future for Essex which has not shied away from the scale of the challenge or the difficult choices and changes we all need to make, but is also alive with the vision and hope for a better future for all of us. I am personally committed to, and passionate about the need to preserve our precious natural world.

We have recognised through this work that the natural world is our best ally in reversing climate change – it is key to absorbing and storing carbon. We also face ever increasing risks from our already changing weather systems – more flooding, over-heating, soil degradation, subsidence and water shortage. Here too, making space for green infrastructure and nurturing our natural world is the best and most effective way to manage and reduce these impacts which will continue to affect all of us.

This plan brings together the work of the Commission across the past year, which we have undertaken, like so many others, online. This was certainly not how I envisaged the Commission working when I was first asked to chair it in 2020! However as we have struggled together through the pandemic, this is just one example of how quickly we can all move to change and adapt to manage challenges. Whilst this year has been extraordinary, it has also highlighted our capacity for working together and we will need that even more now as we re-build. In the year that the UK is host to COP 26 – the next round of international negotiations to shape climate action around the world – we are reminded we all have a role to play and a contribution to make. We have been able to showcase here some of the excellent work already going on in Essex and it is so inspiring to see pledges from across the county to do more. We have a fantastic opportunity to build on these commitments and open up a cleaner, greener future in Essex for us and our children.



Lord Randall

Chair of Essex Climate Action Commission

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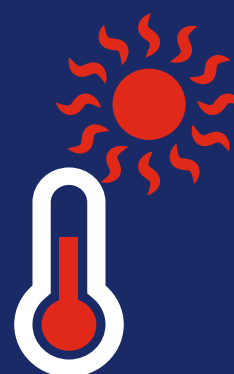
Opening statement

1 The Challenge

In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)¹ set out the impact of global temperature rise of 1.5°C from pre-industrial levels.

The report warns of increasingly extreme weather events with rising sea levels and melting glaciers; wildlife becoming threatened and at risk of extinction and our own health deteriorating; food becoming scarce and clean water running dry; tensions rising between people and increasing migration and environmental refugees as people flee inhospitable parts of the Earth.

How did we get here? In the 11,000 years before the Industrial Revolution, the average temperature across the world was stable at around 14°C. The Industrial Revolution began in the mid-1800s when humans started to burn fossil fuels such as coal and oil. Burning fossil fuels produces energy, but also releases greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane into the air. Over time, large quantities of these gases have built up in the atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, greenhouse gases form a 'blanket' around the planet. This blanket traps the heat from the sun and the earth heats up. This causes global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes to the climate².



Human activities have caused approximately a 1°C rise above pre-industrial levels already. If we do not change course, global warming is likely to reach a 1.5°C rise between 2030 and 2052³. The UK Met Office states that if we continue to burn fossil fuels and cut down forests at the same rate as we currently do, the planet could warm by more than 4°C by 2100. This warming could fundamentally change life on earth, with potentially drastic consequences⁴.



¹ www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm

² www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change

³ www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm

⁴ www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change

1 The Challenge

The 2015 Paris Agreement – an international treaty signed by 194 countries – commits the world to act to hold global temperature rises to below 1.5°C. However, Patricia Espinosa, Head of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has noted that governments are nowhere close to the level of ambition needed to limit climate change to 1.5°C and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

This next decade is critical. The World Economic Forum sets out that climate change is not incremental. The ways the earth stores and releases carbon could change suddenly in response to the gradual global warming that is underway⁵. Think of it as a game of Jenga and the planet's climate system as the tower. For generations, we have been slowly removing blocks. But at some point, we will remove a pivotal block, such as the collapse of one of the major global ocean circulation systems, for example the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), that will cause all or part of the global climate system to fall into a planetary emergency. Recent research suggests the AMOC has already weakened by around 15 per cent since the middle of the 20th century⁶. If this continues, it could have a major impact on the climate of the northern hemisphere, but particularly Europe. It may even lead to the cessation of arable farming⁷ in the UK, for instance.

These global changes can sound far away but in fact in Essex, we are already experiencing some of the impacts. The Met Office's State of the UK Climate report for 2018 shows the ten hottest years in the UK since 1884 have all happened in the last 17 years and note that we can expect warmer, wetter winters, hotter drier summers and more frequent and intense weather extremes. This has real impact on us. The number of homes at risk of flooding in Essex could double by 2050. We already experience water shortages in the summer, and this is expected to worsen. It will negatively affect our health and wellbeing. Our homes, jobs, businesses, and agricultural land could all be at risk. The green spaces and wildlife, which were so important to us during the COVID-19 pandemic, are also threatened.

⁵ www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/01/climate-change-sudden-cataclysmic-need-act-fast

⁶ [Atlantic 'conveyor belt' has slowed by 15% since mid-20th century | Carbon Brief](#)

⁷ [Shifts in national land use and food production in Great Britain after a climate tipping point \(exeter.ac.uk\)](#)

The number of homes at risk of flooding in Essex could double by 2050.



1 The Challenge

The UK is at the forefront of responding to the climate crisis. We have signed the Paris Agreement and are the first country to enshrine in law a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. This year, the Government has committed in law to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, 78 per cent, by 2035 from a 1990 baseline. The UK Climate Change Committee Chair Lord Deben has said this target emphasises the importance of the 2020s as a decade of delivery on our climate ambitions, and urgent action is needed now to make this a reality⁸.

“What happens next is up to us all.”

David Attenborough (from Climate Change – the Facts, BBC)

Here in Essex we need to play our part. The good news is we are already doing a lot of good work – we have the UK’s first electric vehicle charging forecourt in Braintree, we are building exemplar schools and a greener Essex with local authorities collectively planting 107,593 trees last year – but we need to plant more and plant faster.

If we are to succeed in our goal of Essex becoming a net zero county by 2050, the bulk of the work needs to be done in the next decade. In this report, the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) makes recommendations that we believe are both necessary for Essex to be net zero by 2050 as well as achievable. Many of them are for measures to be taken, or be well underway, by 2030.

If our recommendations are implemented, we strongly believe that not only can we successfully tackle the climate crisis, but Essex will have an improved natural environment for people to enjoy and a vibrant economy for the benefit of local jobs and livelihoods. By transforming Essex into a net zero county, it can become a sustainable, thriving place to live, work and play.

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-enshrines-new-target-in-law-to-slash-emissions-by-78-by-2035



By transforming Essex into a net zero county, it can become a sustainable, thriving place to live, work and play

2 The Commission

The Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) is an independent, voluntary, and cross-party body, bringing together groups from the public and private sector, as well as individuals from organisations, to promote and guide climate action in the county. As a Commission, our purpose is to provide expert advice and up-to-date recommendations to move Essex to net zero by 2050.

When we were established as a group, we agreed that recommendations should include actions for adapting to an already changing climate. We need to ensure Essex is resilient to climate change impacts such as the extreme weather and flooding we are now experiencing.

Our recommendations also consider the roles of multiple partners across Essex, all of whom will have responsibilities and contributions to make in moving Essex to a net zero county.

We know the next decade is critical and we have set targets for action with this in mind. Essex needs to have halved its greenhouse gas emissions in the next 10 years.

About our Commissioners

We have over 30 commissioners and they are drawn from a wide cross-section of society.

Our two co-chairs come from the Young Essex Assembly and represent the views of the young people of Essex. We have elected officials, drawn from all political parties, representing the residents of Essex.

A full list of Commissioners can be found on page 106 .

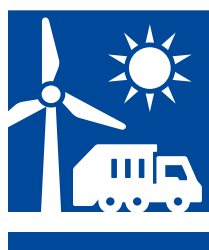
What we do

We have been meeting virtually as the ECAC regularly throughout 2020/21 to present, debate, and agree the recommendations that we are presenting to Essex County Council in this Report.

The UK Committee on Climate Change supported the Commission in considering current and future potential impacts of climate change in Essex. The recommendations for adaptation and resilience measures have been integrated and are fully reflected in the Commission's work which has been structured around six core themes:



**Land Use
and Green
Infrastructure**



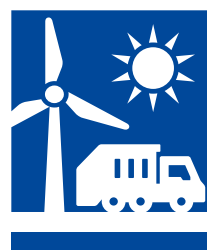
Energy



**The Built
Environment**



Transport



Waste



**Community
Engagement**

2 The Commission

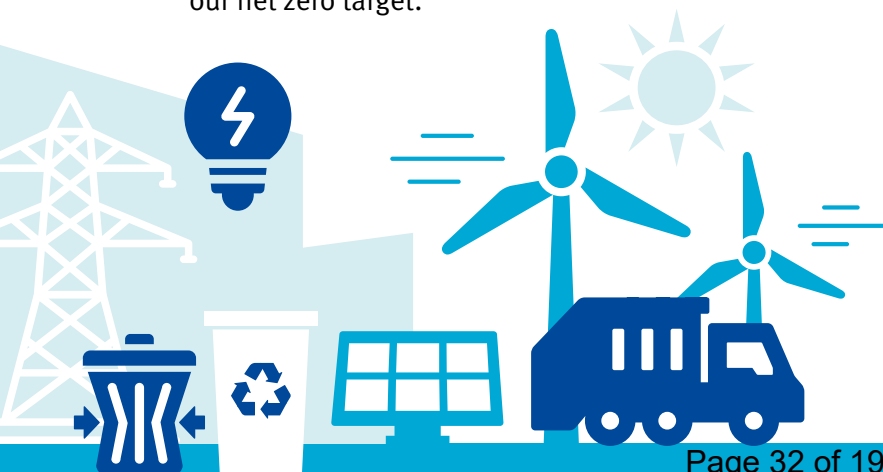
Commissioners formed different working groups, each joining a group (or groups) that fits their interests and areas of expertise. With support from Essex County Council and other local authority officers, each working group has worked hard to develop evidence-based recommendations that will be set out in the following chapters.

The Commission has set out recommendations for Essex County Council on tackling the climate crisis across the six core themes with a trajectory of targets and milestones that need to be met for Essex to become a net zero county by 2050.

The next 10 years will see a lot of change. What will Essex look like for me in 2031?

By 2031 we will be well on the way to becoming a net zero county. If we grasp the challenge now, all the 2031 targets in this report (Essex Climate Action Commission's 2021 report) will have been met, and Essex will be on track to achieve net zero by, or before, 2050. We are building a world where:

- Everyone can enjoy our green spaces. We all value and get the best out of our incredible landscape and our public spaces.
- We buy local and support our local businesses.
- We avoid waste and recycle, reuse, repair and refurbish as much as we can. Our universities, colleges, and schools inspire and equip future generations with the skills we need to tackle the climate crisis.
- Essex is a key centre of innovation in the UK where green economy is booming. Skilled workers want to come and live here, and green industries want to invest here. Our existing businesses are transforming into low carbon, and environmentally responsible organisations. We operate a Circular Economy where we no longer throw anything away but instead our industries are set up to re-use our materials carefully.
- Our local businesses and organisations, and all the people who live, work, and play in Essex – understand the climate challenge. We are all doing the right thing and helping to move us towards our net zero target.



We avoid waste and recycle, reuse, repair and refurbish as much as we can.

2 The Commission

- We have built clean solar and wind farms, and we can have a share in these - helping to fund them and seeing the benefits in our own communities. Our public services – the local councils, NHS, police, and fire services – have improved their buildings so they are net zero. They are leading by example, making sure they source properly sustainable goods and services locally and supporting projects that carry us closer to net zero.
- We don't need to travel so much because lots of us are working from home. When we do need to go somewhere, it is safer and easier for us to walk and cycle or get on public transport. Where we need to use a car, it's electric, and we can charge our electric vehicle (EV) easily.
- Nature is recovering. We have planted new forests and created new saltmarshes to absorb carbon and protect us against flooding and overheating. We have doubled the amount of natural green space and half of all Essex farmland is being managed according to sustainable principles. We have a new network connecting our green spaces together so that our wildlife can have more space to live. We all can enjoy more wildlife across the county.
- When we build new homes, they include green space for the people and the local wildlife, and these homes can cope with wetter winters and hotter summers – they don't flood or overheat. We know that when we move into one of these new homes, we will be able to walk or cycle to the things we need locally like shops, doctors, schools, and parks.
- We are much less likely to see our homes and roads flooded because we have invested in flood prevention – using planting and green spaces to soak up water quickly and store it effectively. We have put plants throughout our towns and villages, and on our buildings, to stop overheating and flooding. Our farmland includes stable hedgerows, trees, and wild areas – all of this means our land can store water – stopping flooding and reducing drought.
- We are a leading green tourist destination – visitors come for our great landscapes, stunning coast, fantastic green spaces, and iconic wildlife including beavers which we have re-introduced.

Half of all Essex farmland is being managed according to sustainable principles.



Essex Climate Action Commission's key steps to reaching net zero by 2050

2021 EV strategy; E-Scooter Pilots running;
Ten Liveable Neighbourhoods
Community owned renewables
Essex Design Guide; Green construction training
Smart meters in schools
All new builds to have solar panels

2022 New schools commissioned net zero
25 school streets
10 local delivery hubs
5 E-cargo bike schemes
Energy sector innovation hub

2024 Network community reuse
and repair hubs

2023 Essex Housing Demonstrator net zero development
Developers to fund flood risk management via CIL
Coastal flood resilience scheme in critical areas completed

2025 All New buildings net zero and support circular
economy recycling
50% Essex schools retrofitted to net zero
All residents & businesses to have kerbside recycling
All biodegradable waste to beneficial use

2030 25% all roofs have solar panels
1.43GW solar energy
Bioenergy in difficult rural homes
Hydrogen store for renewable energy
20 Liveable Neighbourhoods
3 new park and choose sites

2030 All public sector estates in Essex Net Zero
100% fuel poor homes retrofitted & supplied
with renewables
2/3 Essex houses retrofitted
1/3 commercial buildings retrofitted
100% schools retrofitted
All new buildings carbon positive

2030 25% land natural green infrastructure
(urban and rural)
50% farmland uses sustainable land stewardship
30% Essex in a Climate Focus Area
Per capita waste reduced by 10%
70% recycling rate
Zero waste to landfill

2035 All waste heat reused
All gas fired power repurposed to bioenergy
Network of community energy neighbourhoods
in every district

2040 All housing retrofitted
Zero GHG emissions from housing
Essex renewables meets all county needs
30% all land natural green infrastructure
75% farm land adopts sustainable
land practises

2050 All roofs have solar panels
75% all developments have integrated natural water management
100% farm land uses sustainable land practises





Land Use and Green Infrastructure

Where are we now?

We have a nature crisis as well as a climate crisis. Over the last century, huge areas of meadows, hedgerows, fresh and saltwater marshes, orchards, and woodland, together with the wildlife they contained, have disappeared in Essex, primarily due to intensification of agriculture and growth of our towns and villages. We have one of the lowest areas of land given over to trees in the UK and many local species are threatened with extinction.

In making its recommendations, the Commission deliberately targeted land use measures that address both the nature and climate crises.

More than 60 per cent of Essex is farmland, and agriculture currently generates approximately 10 per cent of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions⁹. Food production is of course essential to our survival, but agriculture needs to change to more sustainable farming practices if we are also to reach net zero and achieve nature recovery.

Another key land use change is to double the amount of natural green infrastructure in Essex. This applies in our towns and villages, as well as in rural areas. It will mean more land can absorb and store carbon, help restore nature and biodiversity, alleviate flooding and drought, and improve both soil and air quality. Every piece of land in our county has a role to play.

Enhanced natural green infrastructure has other benefits as well, such as physical and mental wellbeing for Essex residents, as has been demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet only 29 per cent of our population is within a five-minute walk of a publicly accessible green space. There is a lot of work still to do to achieve the change we need.



The **Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy**, published in 2020, was awarded a Building with Nature Accreditation of Excellent, one of only eight local authorities to gain this authentication¹⁰.

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-to-2019

¹⁰ www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/newsblog1/2021/3/30/essex-county-council-lead-the-way-in-developing-an-exemplar-green-infrastructure-strategy



Why is this important?

Sustainable land stewardship

Agricultural production can either deplete or increase carbon stocks. Sustainable land stewardship can a) absorb carbon by increasing organic matter in plants, roots, and soils; and b) lower carbon use through less artificial inputs.

These techniques will also have benefits for biodiversity and water quality. Incentivising them will be built into the new Environmental Land Management Scheme, and the Commission's recommendations centre around helping increase scheme uptake.

It will not be possible to transform the whole of Essex farmland through sustainable land stewardship practices immediately, but we must make substantial progress in the next decade to meet the 2050 net zero target. The Commission is therefore recommending a target of 50 per cent of Essex farmland adopting sustainable land stewardship practices by 2030, 75 per cent by 2040, and 100 per cent by 2050.



The **RSPB's Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project**, based just north of Southend, is helping to tackle several climate-change impacts, including creating conditions for colonising species, replacing habitat lost to rising sea levels and reducing flood risk to local communities.

Natural Green Infrastructure

Natural Green Infrastructure (natural and semi-natural habitat) currently covers about 14 per cent of Essex. The Commission is recommending that this be increased to 25 per cent by 2030 and 30 per cent by 2040. This will be a major undertaking, but the Commission believes it is essential to achieve net zero from land use in Essex and will have enormous other benefits – for biodiversity, flood and drought control, soil health, air quality, reduced urban heat island effect, human health and wellbeing.

Increasing Natural Green Infrastructure will help carbon absorption, locking more carbon into nature. It will create more space for nature. Biodiversity is fundamental for the effective functioning of natural ecosystems, and healthy natural ecosystems provide humanity with essential benefits and services to thrive. It will also increase resilience and help nature survive the impact of climate change that is already happening.

The **Essex Forest Initiative** has exceeded its first-year target of planting 25,000 trees, by digging in 38,615 trees this year. This was done with the help of local farmers, charities, district, borough, and city councils¹¹.

¹¹ www.essex.gov.uk/the-essex-forest-initiative Page 37 of 197



Why is this important?

To flourish, nature needs space and connectivity. Both the United Nations and the UK Government have pledged to protect at least 30 per cent of land and sea by 2030. Connectivity is also crucial, so our natural green infrastructure is not in isolated islands. We should adopt the UK Government's commitment to a Nature Recovery Network and use natural river corridors, other green linear features and planned new green infrastructure to create effective interlinked nature corridors across Essex.

Local nature recovery networks in every part of the County will be hugely important; they can be in urban as well as rural areas, and we hope every town, village and parish can develop their own Natural Green Infrastructure enhancement plan.



Chelmsford, Colchester, Harlow and Uttlesford Councils

The four Councils are joining forces to plant more trees across Essex, with Colchester aiming for 200,000 trees by 2024 and Chelmsford 150,000 by 2030.

Natural Flood Management

Over the next 30 years, the risks from flooding are projected to double across Essex. The Commission is recommending that 75 per cent of schemes to increase flood resilience pursue nature-based solutions.

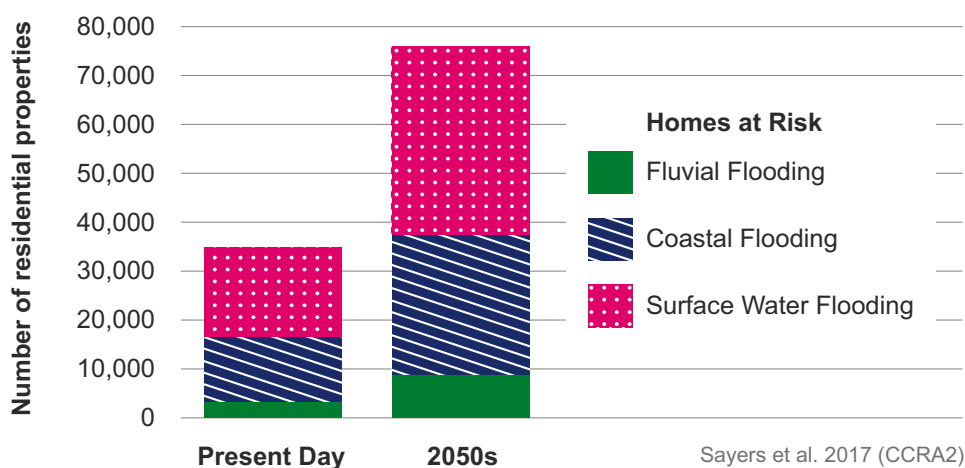


Figure 1. Residential properties at significant flood risk in Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk, Sayers et al 2017 (CCRA2)

Nature-based flood solutions accumulate carbon and enhance biodiversity as well as reduce flood risk. They create large areas of Natural Green Infrastructure, improve wetland habitat, and act as a sponge, allowing water to percolate more slowly into groundwater and rivers, improving both water conservation and water quality.



Why is this important?

Essex has a long, low coastline that is particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and increasing risk of coastal flooding. Many areas of coastline have already experienced significant loss. It is therefore a recommendation that new policies and action plans on coastal flooding and shoreline erosion risk management are developed. This will include specific long-term, evidence-based, quantified outcomes with the agreement of affected communities and stakeholders that will be sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms. Through these interventions, we can increase resilience to sea level rise, absorb more carbon and enhance biodiversity through natural flood management such as restoration and creation of saltmarshes, mudflats, and washlands.

Urban Green Infrastructure

The Commission is recommending that its targets for increasing Natural Green Infrastructure be applied to urban as well as rural areas. Increasing urban green infrastructure through measures such as tree planting, sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) and green buildings will help absorb carbon and lower the “heat island effect” in built up areas. It will also reduce air pollution, address urban flooding, improve water quality and reserves, and improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents.



Chelmsford City Council

Chelmsford plans to establish a new ‘green wedge’ through the Chelmer River Valley and will be creating new natural open spaces and country parks in North East Chelmsford and Sandon.



50 per cent of farmland in Essex will adopt sustainable land stewardship practices by 2030.



Our recommendations

The recommendations for Land Use & Green Infrastructure are:



30 per cent of all land in Essex will enhance biodiversity and the natural environment by creating natural green infrastructure. We expect these figures to be 25 per cent by 2030 and 30 per cent by 2040.



50 per cent of farmland in Essex will adopt sustainable land stewardship practices by 2030; 75 per cent by 2040 and 100 per cent by 2050.



To increase urban greening – 30 per cent greening of our towns, villages, and new developments by 2040: increased greenspace creation, naturalising existing green space, greening the public realm, and developing SuDS. Every citizen of Essex can contribute by making space for nature, either in their own gardens or buildings, or through communal areas where they live.



For the 75,000 properties in Essex still at risk of flooding, we will develop schemes to increase their flood resilience by 2050 and aim for three-quarters of the schemes developed to include integrated water management and natural flood management techniques.



Develop and agree new policy on coastal flooding and erosion risk management that specifies long-term, evidence-based, quantified outcomes that have the buy-in of the affected communities and stakeholders.



Coastal flood resilience schemes in critical areas to be implemented by 2023.



Ensure that adaptation (and mitigation) are integrated into the Environmental Land Management system.



Develop a Funding and Partnership Development Programme.



Our recommendations

The Commission's recommendations cannot be delivered by any single agency or body. It will require a massive effort across society, both financial investment and partnership building, to encourage everyone to play a role. The Commission is recommending a funding and partnership development which can act as a catalyst, using local funds as seed capital to attract other funders and can empower others to invest in land use change, flood risk management and resilience schemes.



RSPB's Horsey Island Recharge Project is looking to increase the resilience of the most important Little Tern colony in Essex to climate change and predicted rises in the sea level. This will be done by recharging an existing beach with sand and gravels from Harwich Haven Authority Capital Dredge.







Energy

Where are we now?

Energy provides heat and electricity for our homes and places of work, and powers our transport but a long-standing reliance on fossil fuels (e.g. coal, gas and oil) has resulted in energy generation being responsible for 21 per cent of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, which is a huge contributor to the climate crisis¹².

Good progress has been made in recent years to decarbonise – that is reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the UK's electricity supply by phasing out the remaining coal-fired power stations and growing the offshore wind industry. However, we are still heavily reliant on gas being burned in gas power stations to generate electricity.

As we decarbonise, we will need to improve the energy efficiency of our homes and other buildings. We will need a substantial increase in renewable energy generation capacity, to provide power and heat to homes, places of work and for electric vehicles. As energy produced from renewable sources is often variable and it is inefficient to transmit energy over long distances, we will need to be able to generate and store more energy locally.

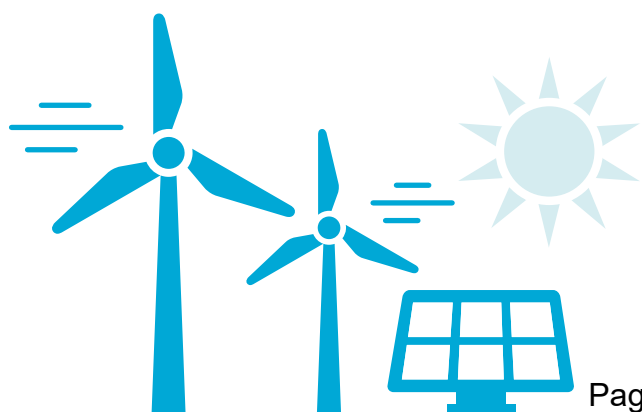
What we need to do now is reduce our greenhouse gas emissions from energy to net zero as quickly as possible. This can be achieved by decreasing energy consumption through improving energy efficiency of our buildings, changing our behaviour and alongside embracing cleaner, renewable energy technology.



Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

The Broomfield Hospital site in Chelmsford uses state-of-the-art heat pumps which saves 60–70 per cent on current carbon usage and will provide a return on investment in less than five years. During periods of high carbon usage, the hospital has a system that works from storage batteries, running the heat pumps at more cost-effective times, while providing cooling for a data hub, as well as supplying domestic hot water to a ward block.

¹² assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957687/2019_Final_emissions_statistics_one_page_summary.pdf



We should embrace large-scale renewable energy installations, such as solar and wind farms.



Why is this important?

We want our residents and businesses to be supplied by 100 per cent renewable energy and we want to see Essex produce enough renewable energy within the county to meet its own needs by 2040. Solar generation photovoltaics (Solar PV) will be important because it is more affordable and can be installed more quickly compared to other technologies and also because it performs well – Essex is one of the sunniest counties in the UK with an average of 1,598 hours of sunshine per year compared to the national average of 1,373¹³. We should have solar panels fitted by default on new builds, on a quarter of our existing buildings by 2030 and every available roof by 2050.



Danbury Park Community School in Chelmsford has gone solar. In October half term 2020, solar panels were fitted which will save 15 tonnes of carbon in the first year and 375 tonnes over the panels' lifetime. At the same time, the school embarked on a sustainability journey with the pupils researching all aspects of sustainability in class, including how to recycle plastic and participating in Sustrans Big Pedal Week. The pupils explored simple ways to reduce the school's carbon output and save the school money in energy costs. (See full case study on page 78) Essex Outdoors, Danbury was also fitted with solar panels at the same time as part of the Council's commitment to acting on climate change. Most recently, in June 2021, St John's C of E Primary School also in Danbury was fitted with solar panels as part of the same project.

We should embrace large-scale renewable energy installations, such as solar and wind farms. We can do this without giving up too much agricultural land and in a way that benefits the local community and supports developments that offer community ownership, and improvements to biodiversity.

We should make Essex a centre for renewable energy innovation, working with universities and businesses to explore and develop opportunities for renewables, energy storage and other new technologies such as small scale nuclear. A Local Government Association study¹⁴ into local green jobs estimated that Essex would need over 15,000 new jobs in the local carbon and renewable energy economy sectors by 2030 and over 27,000 by 2050. We should support hydrogen storage facilities by 2030 to help capture excess renewable energy, from solar and wind, when it cannot be used immediately. Solar and wind energy is dependent on availability, i.e. when it is a sunny day or when there is sufficient wind blowing. Furthermore, supply and demand dictates that often the most productive time for renewable energy generation is when demand is its least. Therefore, to utilise this excess renewable energy it can be used to produce hydrogen via a number of processes, for example electrolysis, which can then be stored for later use in fuel cells or to supplement heating via the gas network.

¹³ www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-climate-averages/u10q3cdwd

¹⁴ lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/estimated-total-number-of-direct-jobs-in-low-carbon-and-renewable-energy-sector?mod-area=E09000006&mod-group=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup



Why is this important?



Willmott Dixon Construction

The company is aiming to be net zero in all their operations, including new builds, by 2030 without carbon offsetting.

We want to see much more local involvement, where residents play their part in this by generating more of their own energy, either as individuals or through community energy schemes and co-operative purchasing clubs. We will build a network of community energy neighbourhoods by 2035 where residents generate, store, share and use far more of their energy locally, helping to bring down bills and tackle issues like fuel poverty and keep more of the value of the energy they produce in their local community.



Figure 2. Graphic taken from Energy Systems Catapult

<https://es.catapult.org.uk/reports/local-area-energy-planning/>



South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)

The partnership will be supporting innovation in green energy and technologies, including through the Freeports. It will support the development of renewable energy infrastructure and low carbon technologies and behaviours and work with partners to ensure new developments protect and enhance our natural resources to deliver social and environmental benefit.



Our recommendations

The energy recommendations focus on ways to invest in renewable energy, switch to a greener electricity supply and create community energy neighborhoods. We are calling for:



Essex to be made a centre of innovation for emerging renewable technologies (e.g. small scale nuclear and manufacturing of renewables products such as solar tiles).



A network of community energy neighbourhoods to be built across every district in Essex, to generate, store, share and use energy locally by 2035.



Essex to produce enough renewable energy within the county to meet its own needs by 2040.



All large-scale renewable developments to have an element of community ownership from 2021.



1.43 GW of large-scale solar panels to be built on available land without compromising current agricultural land by 2030.



Solar panels to be installed on every available roof on domestic, industrial and commercial buildings by 2050, with a target of 25 per cent by 2030.



All new build houses, industrial and commercial units to have solar panels fitted immediately.



One-third of commercial buildings to be retrofitted as far as possible with renewable systems by 2030.



Retrofit across the whole housing stock by 2040, introduce an incentive to accelerate the shift to low carbon heating solutions.



Our recommendations



Bioenergy to be used for all rural homes that are hard to decarbonise through electrification by 2030.



100 per cent of fuel-poor households to be retrofitted and supplied with affordable renewable energy by 2030.



All gas-fired power in Essex to be repurposed to bioenergy by 2035.



All waste heat from industrial and commercial use to be captured and reused (where local demands exists) by 2035.



Create hydrogen storage facilities to store excess renewable energy (off-shore wind and solar) by 2030.



Facilities to be created to produce green hydrogen to fuel heavy goods vehicles by 2040.



The EV charging network to be rapidly expanded beyond the UK national average, focusing particularly on rural locations.



University of Essex

Plans are in place to install additional solar PV roof-mounted panels at nine locations on the University's Colchester campus. This has the potential to generate circa 720,000 kWh of own electricity, saving approximately 276 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year.





Built Environment

Where are we now?

In 2019¹⁵, 17 per cent of greenhouse gases were created in the UK by buildings including homes, industrial and commercial property, hospitals, and schools¹⁶. In 2020-21, buildings in Essex are predicted to emit just under 3MtCO₂¹⁷. It was predicted that the building stock across Essex will emit 3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide during 2020/21 with 60% (1.862mt) emitted from dwellings and around 15% (0.486mt) from each non-domestic and industrial buildings. The greenhouse gases emitted from buildings are mainly the result of burning fossil fuels – gas and oil – for heating. Our buildings are a significant contributor to the climate crisis.

Within Essex, we have over 600,000¹⁸ existing homes, 85 per cent of which were built before the introduction of standards for energy and insulation performance. Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)¹⁹ give a rating to properties showing how energy efficient they are. Many of our residential properties, around 67 per cent, have a poor Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below, meaning most residents are paying more for their heating than is necessary and creating more greenhouse gas emissions. The Government set standards for privately rented homes. Since April 2020 landlords can no longer rent properties below EPC E, and there is a national target of EPC band C for all private rented homes by 2030²⁰. The Government has also set out that as many existing homes as possible should hit EPC C by 2035²¹.



¹⁵ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-to-2019

¹⁶ www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Sector-summary-Buildings.pdf

¹⁷ www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/Briefing%20papers/92993_BRE_Poor-Housing_in_Europe.pdf

¹⁸ [Essex Built Environment study – Element Energy](#)

¹⁹ www.gov.uk/buy-sell-your-home/energy-performance-certificates

²⁰ www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-private-rented-property-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-landlord-guidance

²¹ assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945899/201216_BEIS_EWP_Command_Paper_Accessible.pdf



Where are we now?



Retrofitting: Two of the most energy-consuming sites in Essex County Council's core estate have both begun a refit programme to help reduce their carbon emissions. Essex Records Office and Goodman House will benefit from LED lighting and control upgrades, to decarbonisation of their gas heating with installation of two air source heat pumps, and 100kw of roof-mounted Solar PV combined battery storage.

Despite Essex's relative prosperity, it also has some of the most deprived areas in the East and South East of England. These areas are also most vulnerable to flooding. Housing here tends to be of lower quality with poor energy efficiency performance and consequently, have higher heating and lighting costs perpetuating wealth inequality²².

In Essex, 72,054 (8.9 per cent) of households live in fuel poverty where they cannot afford to heat their homes properly. This has significant impacts on their health and the educational outcomes of their children. 10 per cent of excess winter deaths are directly attributable to fuel poverty, and an estimated 9,700 winter deaths are directly related to living in a cold home, with the majority (6,900) linked to the coldest 25 per cent of homes in the UK²³. Cold homes also contribute to respiratory illnesses and circulatory problems, as well as mental health issues such as stress, anxiety and depression in both adults and children. The costs to the NHS are estimated to be £848 million per year attributed to excessively cold homes.



Two developer-led schemes working with a developer and District Councils: a new medium-sized developer in Uttlesford and a national house-builder at Beaulieu Park are working to achieve a portion of net zero homes in their developments. These will be designed and costed, with viability assessments, and the information used to scale up and extend the project elsewhere. They will inform emerging Local Plan policy and future planning guidance.

The domestic boilers heating our homes, contribute to air pollution. Gas boilers generate 19 per cent of Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) emissions – a key air pollutant, which affects human health – in urban areas. In addition, domestic wood burning and coal for heat contribute 38 per cent of particulate matter – another air pollutant that affects human health, in the UK.

²² [Essex Built Environment study – Element Energy](#)

²³ [Cold homes and excess winter deaths: a preventable public health epidemic - E3G](#)



Where are we now?

However, it is not just our homes which are the problem. Non-domestic buildings such as hospitals, schools, hospitality premises, offices, retail, storage, and community and leisure facilities contribute to carbon emissions on multiple levels and present us with a real challenge for the future. These buildings also perform poorly with the majority of businesses operating in buildings with poor EPC ratings (EPC D or below). Our businesses and public sector all need to reduce their energy demand by improving their energy efficiency, alongside moving to renewable energy. The Government's Energy white paper confirmed that all rented non-domestic buildings will need to be EPC B by 2030²⁴.

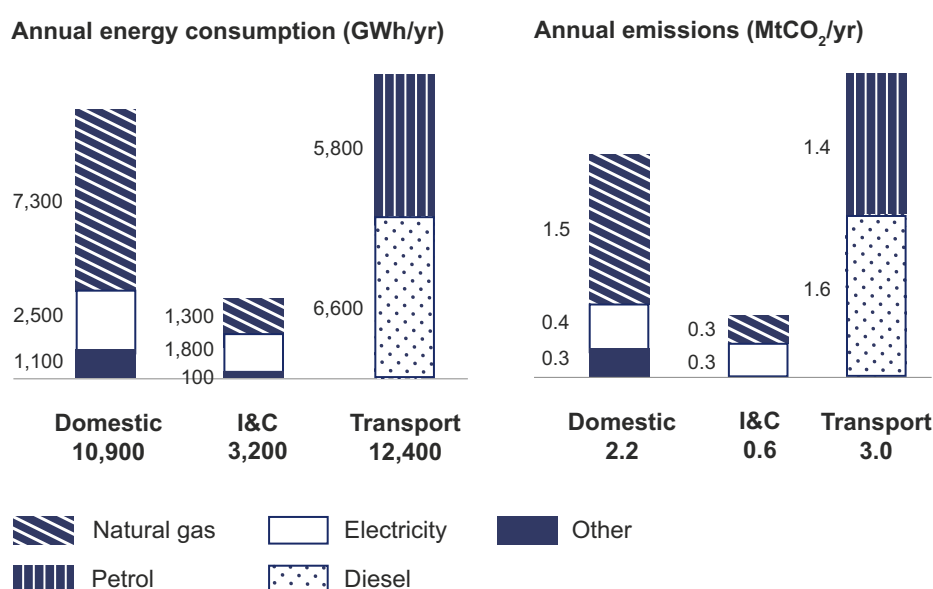


Figure 3. Energy consumption (left) and emissions (right) in building's in Essex in 2019, broken down by sector: Domestic, and Industrial & Commercial (I&C), Essex Climate Action Commission Interim Report, 2020

Government has set ambitious targets for around 160,000-180,000 new homes in Essex to be built by 2040. This will be reflected in the local plans across the county either adopted or in preparation. Building homes means we need to provide the associated facilities for employment, health, and schools. It is critical we minimise the carbon emissions of these buildings. The County has responded to this in setting ambitious targets to achieve net zero emissions in its new schools by 2022 and to be carbon positive by 2030.

Our buildings are also facing new challenges from our changing weather. Nationally, around 4.5 million homes overheat, even in cool summers; 1.8 million people live in areas at significant risk of flooding; and average UK water consumption is higher than in many other European countries²⁵.

²⁴ assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945899/201216_BEIS_EWP_Command_Paper_Accessible.pdf

²⁵ www.theccc.org.uk/2019/02/21/uk-homes-unfit-for-the-challenges-of-climate-change-ccc-says/
www.theccc.org.uk/publication/uk-housing-fit-for-the-future



Where are we now?

Here in Essex, hotter, drier summers brings water shortages – we are already one of the areas with the highest pressure on our water supplies in the summer²⁶. We are also seeing increased risks of subsidence²⁷. Essex is identified as one of the areas most affected as clay in the county is vulnerable to losing moisture leading to ground cracking and shrinking. At the same time we are experiencing increased risks for flooding from warmer, wetter winters and coastal erosion, with the number of homes at risk of flooding expected to double between now and 2050²⁸.



Retrofitting: University of Essex

The University is planning to install additional roof-mounted solar panels across the University's Colchester campus. This will give them the potential to generate circa 720,000kWh of their own electricity, reducing our carbon emissions by over 270 tonnes per year.



²⁶ www.theccc.org.uk/publication/climate-change-risk-assessment-ii-updated-projections-for-water-availability-for-the-uk

²⁷ www.bgs.ac.uk/datasets/geoclimate-ukcp09-and-ukcp18

²⁸ www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CCRA-Future-Flooding-Main-Report-Final-06Oct2015.pdf.pdf



Why is this important?

Essex – in common with areas across the UK – is still building new homes, schools, offices, and shops to meet the current building regulation standards which are not net zero. The UK Government has brought in a new [Future Homes Standard](#) and from 2025 new build homes will be required to have low carbon heating such as heat pumps, and much higher levels of energy efficiency. However, every building we build today that is not net zero will need to be updated and retrofitted before 2050. Each new building added below a net zero standard is adding to the retrofit challenge and increasing costs for future residents and business owners. When we do renovate our existing buildings, we are missing the opportunity to move them to net zero, we will only have to go back and do more work to make these changes we have missed.

Local authorities need to work together to drive up standards in our local plans, by promoting and requiring standards which deliver on net zero and improve climate resilience by building with nature. We can utilise the planning system and embed climate change in local plan-making, planning policy, negotiations, and decisions. Policy makers and development managers, as well as portfolio holders and other key Planning Committee members are critical to securing real change in new developments and the places we will be creating for our future. The effective use of the planning system in Essex can help deliver the future we aspire to.

Local authorities, universities and businesses must work together to drive innovation and support skill development to ensure Essex can benefit from the economic opportunities that moving to net zero brings. The Construction Industry Training Board notes that to achieve net zero by 2050, the UK will need 350,000 new roles to be created by 2028²⁹.

Partners across Essex can band together to ensure all regeneration and investment schemes put climate resilience and net zero at the heart of all new and regeneration plans of any scale across the county. This will unlock a significant pipeline of investment in the construction sector in Essex.

All new developments: homes, schools, offices, retail, and leisure should all be built to a much higher standard. The aim should be for greener, climate resilient, net carbon zero developments which provide balanced communities, with easy walking access to work, shops, and a good quality environment.



New build: Chelmsford, Colchester, and Uttlesford Councils

The three local councils will be joining forces to encourage developers to build to zero-carbon standard, retrofit existing buildings and, where possible, encourage renewable energy measures.

²⁹ www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/news-events-and-blogs/net-zero-350-000-new-construction-roles-to-be-created-by-2028



Recommendations for all new buildings

Our new developments can showcase the best in new design. We can build homes that will not flood in wet winters but have been designed in a landscape that can manage increased rainfall, do not overheat, and can keep us warm without using gas or oil. New developments have the potential to showcase the future today: to help us see what a net zero future looks like and help us think about how to adapt our existing towns and villages. We need to deliver healthy places with a focus on walkable neighbourhoods not reliant on car journeys to access local shops and services. We aim to:

- Create healthy communities, places, and buildings that both, promote good health and wellbeing and, address health inequalities and climate changes through, for example reducing the use of energy and water, using more renewable energy, and increasing more and better sustainable transport choices include; walking and cycling.
- Build new net zero energy-efficient housing.



All new schools commissioned to be carbon zero by 2022 and carbon positive by 2030.



All new homes and all new commercial buildings granted planning permissions to be carbon zero by 2025.



All new homes and non-domestic buildings granted planning permission to be carbon positive by 2030.



District Local Plans should reflect the Government's 25-year Environment Plan and incorporate green infrastructure, including making sustainable drainage (SuDs) as a default requirement on all new developments, supported by the developer contribution.



New homes should provide space for high levels of recycling to support a new circular economy (see chapter Waste).



Recommendations for all new buildings



Essex Design Guide (essexdesignguide.co.uk) to be updated to reflect best environmental practice in net zero and resilience.



Essex to set goals for reversing the national decline in urban greenspace.



Support local planning officers, by providing training and building expertise in responding to the climate crisis.



Review of the Essex employment, training, skills, procurement, and business operations to deliver the ambitions of the ECAC and partners in relation to innovative and green construction for a carbon zero future. We need to support the housing sector – which is a key employer in Essex – to develop new opportunities and skills and make sure we can be part of green construction sector growth.



Essex seeks to lead the way, working with our universities, buildings industry and local planners to be at the forefront of building innovation, with a clear focus on building with nature.



Essex should bring forward net zero developments urgently to showcase these new approaches, with a major scheme under construction by 2023.



The industry needs to secure sustainable building materials with an urgent focus on green procurement standards in place by end of 2022.



The Essex Developers Group should establish a Climate Change Charter and ‘demonstrator’ projects.



Recommendations for all new buildings



New developments (buildings and infrastructure) should have SuDS as the default option and only be given the right to connect to the sewer system once national SuDS standards have been met.



Local Plan policies and transportation policies must support active travel and prioritise walking and cycling, promoting them as the natural choice, particularly for shorter journeys.





Recommendations for existing buildings

Updating our buildings and moving away from oil and gas to heat our homes and workplaces is critical in moving to a net zero country and county. We need to invest in our homes, our public buildings and our commercial buildings, shops, factories, and offices: they all need to be tackled.

Our buildings are expensive to run we have too many that leak heat in winter and overheat in summer. We are wasting too much water and increasing pressure on our water supplies. Our buildings may also not help us to make lower impact choices by, for example, homes that have adequate space to dry clothes naturally.

Of course, some of our homes can be more difficult or expensive to bring up to date. Some homes are built with solid walls which can only be fitted with solid wall insulation or have glazing which is not cost effective to improve. There is also a significant number of heritage buildings which require specialised treatments. There are challenges, but we need to take urgent action to improve the energy efficiency of our housing. This will cut our energy bills and make our homes more comfortable.

Alongside reducing our energy demand, we need to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the energy we use. We need to move away from fossil fuels (coal, oil, or gas) for lighting, heating, and cooling systems and replace these systems. This transition opens new opportunities and the Government's 10-point plan for a green industrial revolution notes that action on retrofit and a move towards heat pumps will support 50,000 new jobs by 2030³⁰.

Our buildings and urban landscape also need to be able to cope with the new realities of changing weather - heavier rainfall and hotter summers bring challenges such as flood risks, overheating and water shortages. We need to give more space in our towns and villages to trees and core planting to manage water flows, cool our streets and buildings and improve our air quality (see chapter on Land Use & Green Infrastructure).

³⁰ www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-ten-point-plan-for-a-green-industrial-revolution/title





Recommendations for existing buildings



All schools should have smart meters by the end of 2021. 50 per cent of Essex schools to be retrofitted to net zero standards by 2025 and 100 per cent by 2030.



All anchor institutions estates – that is buildings owned by the public sector in Essex, and all local authorities, NHS, police, fire, schools, and universities - to be retrofitted to net zero carbon standards by 2030. We need to develop adaptation and mitigation plans for these estates including care homes, hospitals, schools, and prisons.



Two-thirds of all homes to be retrofitted as far as possible to net zero carbon standards by 2030 and all by 2040 with incentives introduced to accelerate the shift to low carbon heating solutions.



Existing homes – carbon emissions reduction of 50 per cent by 2030 and carbon zero by 2040.



100 per cent of fuel poor homes to be retrofitted and supplied with affordable energy by 2030.



All retrofit schemes should include water efficiency alongside energy efficiency.



Prioritise using waste heat where possible – usually in urban areas where there is a high demand for heating and cooling.



Rural homes that are hard to decarbonise with electric heating, will be supported to move to more sustainable fuel sources such as bioenergy.



Bring forward a programme to implement 10 walkable neighbourhoods by 2021 and then 20 schemes each year between 2022-2030.



Recommendations for existing buildings



Existing towns and villages must seek to support and provide for more adaptation measures. This should include green space to be retrofitted in local areas, which includes measures such as tree planting, and green roofs and walls (see chapter Land Use and Green Infrastructure)



Introduce a stronger policy on sustainable drainage (SuDS) which will replicate natural water drainage. There must be clarity on who is adopting and maintaining the SuDS systems.



Transportation policies must support active travel and prioritise walking and cycling, promoting them as the natural choice, particularly for shorter journeys.



Optimise energy use in the public estate by 25 per cent by 2025 and 50 per cent by 2030.



Essex should invest in green construction training for a zero carbon future by 2021.

We have historic and listed buildings in Essex and while much can be done to reduce their carbon footprint now, it is important to explore innovative techniques, approaches, and funding options to reduce their carbon impact over time. Although many of these buildings may not get to zero carbon emissions: the carbon positive new builds by 2030 will go some way to offsetting these buildings and other offsets e.g. tree planting and reducing the energy use in the public estate by 25 per cent by 2025 and 50 per cent by 2030, will help.

We recognise that this scale of ambition will require significant investment and the Government should support the retrofit challenge – especially for more challenging heritage and listed buildings – alongside private investments. There should be an incentive to move to low carbon heating.

These substantial changes required in our buildings, towns and villages present a huge economic opportunity. Essex should invest in construction training to unlock green employment opportunities by ensuring we have the right skills in our workforce. Manufacturing sector and supply chains will benefit from the new jobs created in the county. The opportunity presented by the scale of new developments and improvements to the existing environment is enormous.



Carbon Reduction Projects

Merrylands Primary, Earls Colne Primary and Beauchamps Secondary Schools

Essex County Council has recently added new capacity to three schools in the county. These new buildings were all awarded an EPC rating of A plus and will produce an average of $-75\text{kg CO}_2/\text{m}^2/\text{year}$ compared to the industry benchmark of $66\text{kg CO}_2/\text{m}^2/\text{year}$: a net impact of $-141\text{kg CO}_2/\text{m}^2/\text{year}$.

The expansion projects at Merrylands, Earls Colne Primary and Beauchamps Secondary have used a mix of new technologies and high energy efficiency standards.

The buildings used an innovative modular form of construction where most of the work was undertaken in a controlled factory setting, meaning that:

- Waste is significantly reduced, and wood off-cuts can be used as biomass fuel to provide space heating in manufacturing facilities.
- Materials are received without packaging that saves time and more waste.
- Deliveries are minimised because products arrive in bulk, rather than individually to disparate sites. There are up to 90 per cent fewer vehicle movements to site, further reducing disruption, congestion, and carbon emissions.

The walls delivered by this system are twice as energy efficient as current Building Regulations requirements and ensured an air-tight construction. This means the heat demand for these buildings is already low. Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery systems have been installed, combining comfort with economy. Heat is removed from the stale air before it is expelled and used to pre-warm the fresh air as it is supplied – recycling over 90 per cent of the heat in the building during the colder seasons. Energy consumption is further reduced through LED lighting and is closely monitored alongside renewable energy generation from the solar PV panels on the roofs.





Carbon Reduction Projects

Delivering 62 Carbon Zero Homes – Brookfield Close, Brentwood

In December 2020, Brentwood Borough Council submitted innovative plans to redevelop Brookfield Close in Hutton, an area of underused and derelict housing and multi-use garages, which is in urgent need of improvement and regeneration. This will deliver much needed new affordable housing in the area for local people and transform the site completely. These homes will be built to be net zero carbon set in a beautiful, landscaped green space.

Brookfield Close currently has 47 homes, some owned and some socially rented. The proposed plan will create 62 new homes – 16 houses (2, 3 and 4 bedrooms including detached, semi-detached, and terraced) and 46 apartments (1 and 2 bedrooms). Most of the properties will have their own private external space in the form of either a rear garden or a balcony, or easy access to nearby communal gardens. 70 per cent of the new homes will be affordable³¹ with the remainder for private sale. Three are designed to wheelchair user home standards.

The existing homes will be demolished except for the three-story Courage Court comprising 15 flats. This building will be stripped back and retrofitted to zero carbon fabric standards. Residents will enjoy warmer, better ventilated, and more comfortable environments to live in. This forward-thinking approach will give Brentwood Council the chance to assess the impact and benefits of new build versus retrofitted zero carbon products for its future programmes.



Figure 4. Brookfield Close, Hutton – Design & Access Statement December 2020

³¹ Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It can be a new-build property or a private sector property that has been purchased for use as a home. Source: gov.uk



Carbon Reduction Projects

The site will have huge benefits for all its residents. Each home will be net zero carbon and designed to use solar power for heating, reducing energy bills to around £40 per year. The homes have been designed to maximise natural daylighting and create a comfortable, healthy environment.

Outside, the landscape will be redrawn and will include a new play area and outdoor gym. The site is set within a walkable neighbourhood – where walking and cycling are safe, secure and routes well-lit. There will also be communal gardens, outdoor seating, and community allotments, all by their nature designed to prompt residents to spend greater time outside, collectively, and communally managing the space.

Residents' parking will include at least four disabled spaces and an electric charging station to encourage the switch to electric vehicle (EV). There will be cycle storage for 69 bikes and storage space for waste and recycling.

Although flood risk is not deemed high here, the development will include a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) – using planting to ensure any surface water is managed effectively.

A significant level of community engagement has taken place during the pandemic via Zoom. The residents have been consulted as both part of the planning process and on one-to-one basis to gauge opinions and understand their aspirations for their area and the scheme.

This is one of the first net zero housing schemes in Essex and we hope it will be the first of many. The Commissioners of Essex Climate Action Commission have wholeheartedly endorsed the innovation and measures taken with the quality and design of these new homes.

The planning committee was held in June 2021 and had a successful outcome.







Transport

Where are we now?

We depend on fast, efficient transport to keep us connected and move goods and people around to fulfil our needs and keep our economy growing. However, transport is also the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions and is responsible for over quarter of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK³². Our transport emissions are higher than the national average (see Carbon emissions in Essex chapter). Many current forms of transport are also a major source of toxic air pollution – notably nitrogen oxides and particulate matter – which are seriously damaging our environment and our health.

The cars, vans and lorries on our roads are an integral part of our daily lives but are increasing air and noise pollution, and significantly contributing to the climate crisis. We need to challenge the status quo and find new, sustainable, and less harmful ways for our transport systems to operate.

For a county like Essex with landscape that is 72 per cent rural, this presents specific challenges for our more rurally located residents and businesses. Around a quarter (354,669) of our 1.4 million population live in rural areas and, due to the increased distances to key services and main transport links, they are more inclined to commute by car and travel 53 per cent further each year than the majority of people living in urban areas. We have made urgent recommendations for ways Essex can help provide specific and appropriate approaches to decarbonisation for our rural population³³.

Across the county, we know that a lack of reliable, fast, and efficient public transport alternatives and, in the case of walking and cycling the perception of road danger and lack of safe infrastructure mean people are reluctant to switch from their cars. In 2018/19 under 10 per cent³⁴ of residents cycled at least once a week. We know, too, that more and more children are being driven to school than before the COVID-19 pandemic³⁵. The number of children cycling to school is low³⁶ – around 5 per cent and 49 per cent of UK school children expressed concern about pollution levels around their school³⁷.



³² assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957687/2019_Final_emissions_statistics_one_page_summary.pdf

³³ www.essexruralpartnership.org.uk/Docs/Strategy%202016%20etc/Rural%20Data%20Briefing%20V1.pdf

³⁴ www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw

³⁵ Essex Highways Covid Traffic Counts

³⁶ Trips to and from school by main mode, region and Rural-Urban Classification: England
www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts98-travel-by-region-and-area-type-of-residence

³⁷ [Increase in children's concerns over air pollution - Sustrans.org.uk](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/increase-in-childrens-concerns-over-air-pollution)



Where are we now?

Buses are, by far, the largest provider of public transport in Great Britain³⁸. In 2018/19³⁹ Essex residents caught the bus 43 million times. We use the bus to go shopping and make trips to cinemas, pubs, theatres, restaurants, and leisure centres, contributing an estimated £660 million to the local economy across Essex every year⁴⁰.

Almost half, (42 per cent) of bus users are travelling to or from work or education, 29 per cent are going shopping, 13 per cent are visiting friends or relatives, 5 per cent are on a leisure trip and 10 per cent are doing something else. Just under half of those who use buses (49 per cent) are choosing to do so because it is either cheaper or more convenient than other methods of travel and 51 per cent have no choice⁴¹ – the bus is their sole means of getting around. Satisfaction rates for bus travel in Essex is good at 83 per cent,⁴² but this is still relatively low compared to other local authorities who were surveyed.

Where journeys cannot be made by more sustainable forms of transport, we need to encourage ways to move around that run on alternative fuels such as electricity. In 2020, Essex County Council introduced six e-scooter pilot schemes across the county, offering an electric alternative to the car. From 2030, the UK will no longer sell new petrol and diesel cars and from 2025 companies such as Jaguar, VW and Volvo will withdraw their sale too. There are currently 5,970 plug-in cars and light good vehicles⁴³ in Essex but only 60 public charging points, which is below the national average, so we have recommended that Essex County Council urgently increases the number of EV charging points. However, Essex is moving quickly on this agenda. Braintree is now home to the UK's first private developer's electronic charging station (see case study *The UK's first electric car charging forecourt opens in Essex*). A target of 196,000 electric cars by 2030 is an achievable goal. Many organisations including Essex County Council and Essex Police are introducing EVs into fleets this year.



Harlow and Uttlesford District Councils

Harlow and Uttlesford are working towards installing more electric car charging points and improving digital connectivity to reduce the demand to travel for/to work.

³⁸ www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus/bus-strategy

³⁹ Essex County Council Passenger Transport Team, 2021 - Latest pre-COVID figures

⁴⁰ www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus/bus-strategy

⁴¹ www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus/bus-strategy

⁴² https://nhtnetwork.org/nht_product/public-satisfaction-survey/

⁴³ [Dft Vehicle Licensing Statistics Table VEHO131 - All vehicles \(VEH01\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk/government/statistics/dft-vehicle-licensing-statistics-table-veh0131-all-vehicles-veh01)



Where are we now?

It is also important that the road network is maintained in a way that minimises carbon emissions. Essex Highways will be updating its Highways and Transportation Policies in 2021 but is already exploring several low carbon innovations, such as using survey drones and artificial intelligence (AI) road inspections. Drones are used to get to difficult to access areas, such as bridges and tunnels and in-car artificial intelligence is used to identify damage and defects, like potholes and surface cracking, keeping service cars and vans off the road until they are required to carry out repairs. The team is adapting their road scheme design processes to account for carbon impact in the operation, maintenance, and construction of roads, using Highway England's carbon emissions calculation tool. Essex Highways is also trialling warm tarmac, which is hoped will become the standard material for inlay surfacing. This form of asphalt is better for the environment because it uses less energy when it is being mixed and laid. This one simple switch is expected to significantly reduce carbon emissions and work is underway to quantify this saving.



'Warm' Asphalt: Eurovia's 'Tempera' driving low carbon, local asphalt solutions. Eurovia has been supporting Essex Highways road resurfacing operations by supplying a 'warm mix' asphalt solution, which has been trialled on some of the repair work on our roads. This form of asphalt is better for the environment because it uses less energy when it is being mixed and laid. Coupled with the supplier's production facilities in Dagenham and Thurrock, it also offers transportation cost savings resulting in a cut in carbon emissions of over 25 per cent.





Why is this important?

Transport is responsible for 27 per cent of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions⁴⁴ and is the largest, single contributor to the climate crisis. It is essential that travel is decarbonised if we are to meet the UK's climate commitments.

Congestion on Essex roads is an environmental disaster and economically is costing local businesses billions. In 2017, more than £37.7bn in the UK was lost, directly and indirectly, through traffic congestion. This amounts to an average of £1,168 per driver.⁴⁵

We know that residents can be highly dependent on their cars - many of the things we do in our daily lives assume the use of a car for everyday travel. Alternatives to the car need to be better so that we can change assumptions about car ownership and use and build awareness and understanding of possible alternatives to car use. In rural areas, life without a car is particularly challenging and alternatives such as cheap, reliable bus services, often do not exist.

The real alternatives to the car – walking, cycling, bus and train travel – need to be more widely available. These need to be more attractive options for residents which means safer roads for walkers and cyclists, cost effective public transports and all these options easy and convenient to use. We are recommending Essex County Council find ways to encourage residents to change their behaviour to make sustainable travel their default choice.

It's important for everyone's health and wellbeing that we find ways to encourage and excite everyone about the benefits of 'active' travel, such as walking and cycling. Someone who cycles regularly lives a year longer than someone who doesn't and takes 0.5 day a year less off work⁴⁶.



Stop. Swap. GO!: Essex County Council's modal shift campaign to help residents out of cars and into active travel has reached over one million people. It is part of an overreaching Safer Greener Healthier campaign which aims to transform sustainable transport in Essex.

⁴⁴ [Final UK greenhouse gas emissions national statistics: 1990 to 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-to-2019)

⁴⁵ www.highwaysmagazine.co.uk/Congestion-costs-UK-nearly-40bn-a-year-report-finds/3854

⁴⁶ www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/get-active/2019/everyday-walking-and-cycling/the-benefits-of-being-a-cycle-friendly-employer



Why is this important?

For Essex to achieve net zero carbon transport emissions by 2050, we need to adopt an Avoid, Shift, and Improve strategy.

Avoid: We need to encourage residents to avoid or reduce unnecessary private car journeys. One way is through ‘destination shifting’, e.g. working from home or using local shops rather than driving to out of town retail parks. It requires residents to change their behaviour and address not only the way we travel, but also question why we are travelling.

Shift: We need to embrace a shift in attitude towards active and sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, and taking the bus or train to encourage their use and reduce pollution and congestion.

Improve: Where road journeys are essential, we want to improve vehicle efficiency by making alternatively fuelled options, such as electric vehicles (EVs), easier to run for both personal and professional use. That said, it’s important we don’t simply replace carbon-emitting cars with electric – this doesn’t solve the congestion problem, so we still have to make it easier for people to take alternative methods of transport, and improve their reliability and quality.



Greater Anglia: The train company has invested £1million over the last 12 months in creating over 700 extra bicycle parking spaces in Essex to make it easier and more attractive for people to cycle to their local station. Greater Anglia is also replacing all its old trains with new, longer trains with better environmental performance.



Our recommendations

The Transport recommendations focus on increasing active and sustainable travel provision within the county; reducing reliance on the car; and creating new cycling, walking and bus routes from/to key destinations for residents and visitors, while supporting the shift to alternative fuels. Here are our key recommendations:



Essex Highways to update its Highways and Transportation Policies in 2021.



To minimise the need for travel, all new developments (residential, business, tourist etc.) need to be built in the right place, designed around sustainability – designing out the need to travel. Where this isn't possible sustainable and active travel should be embedded in full, from the start.



By the end of 2021 introduce 10 Walkable Neighbourhoods across Essex and further 20 every year to 2030, where all key amenities, such as shops, are available within a 20-minute radius, reducing rat running and pollution, and returning streets back to their communities.



By 2022: introduce School Streets for 25 schools across the county and an additional 20 every year to 2050. This can be done using current walking and cycling infrastructure, speed restrictions and traffic management systems to promoting safer, greener, and healthier streets. We also need to encourage bus and train travel over cars for longer journeys to school.





Our recommendations



By 2030 reduce city centre and town car congestion by:

- Introducing dedicated, well-planned cycling and walking routes across all urban and rural locations and to all railway stations.
- Upgrading and expanding the National Cycle Network and integrate with existing local routes.
- Working with businesses to improve onsite facilities and develop routes.
- Promoting bus travel. Introduce three new subsidy-free Park & Choose (pedal, scoot, stride) sites.
- Using Park and Ride as a stepping stone to more widespread public transport use.



Explore options to create car-free town centres by:

- incentivising the pedestrianisation of key centres and rural locations.
- introducing road tolling and multi-occupancy lanes.
- introducing charges for car use in city centres.
- reducing the availability of city centre parking.
- launching a county-wide Car-Free Day.



Encourage both formal and informal car-sharing options and car-sharing clubs, and introduce five workplace levies, with local anchor institutions to encourage car-sharing.



Expand 3PR (a school parking initiative) and school zones projects.



Our recommendations



Work with local businesses to introduce new delivery hubs and greener delivery vehicles

- Introduce 10 local delivery hubs by 2022 followed by the wide adoption of local delivery hubs.
- Introduce e-cargo bike pilots in five locations by 2022, leading to wider introduction through 2030.
- Explore other delivery vehicle types including autonomous options.
- Explore complementary solutions e.g. retiming delivery.



Essex County Council to develop a detailed EV strategy including the charge point business models to help businesses and the public sector electrify their current fleet.

- Expand the charging network beyond the UK national average, focusing particularly on rural locations.
- Electrify the Essex County Council fleet.
- Explore options for alternative fuelling of vans.
- Comprehensive trial and roll out of e-bikes.



Essex County Council will embrace new technology

- Embed micro-mobility solutions. Expand e-scooter and e-bikes schemes to new developments / Park and Ride and explore rural options.
- Kickstart innovative solutions such as electric demand responsive transport with a clear pathway to commerciality.



It is vital to publicly commit to rebuilding public transport post-COVID and funding our bus and rapid transit network effectively. Ringfence income from other initiatives, e.g. parking levies, to improve sustainable, low carbon bus travel.



Build behaviour change strategy and education campaign focussing on active travel, public transport and discouraging unnecessary car use. This underpins all other recommendations.



Our recommendations

There is still more work to do in this area to encourage future developments, reduce emissions and harness the latest technologies. Key areas are:

- **Freight:** to work with Transport East, the freight and logistics industry, maritime and Freeports to reduce the high levels of emissions from road freight by using alternative fuels, full truckload shipping, and increased use of rail and sea routes.
- **Construction:** to work to net zero on highways construction.
- **Smart Parking bay sensors:** to help people know where free car park spaces are located and stop them driving around searching somewhere to park.
- **Carbon credit schemes:** to encourage car scrappage in exchange for free bus travel or an e-bike. With a ban on sales of ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicles from 2030, a car bought then could still be on the road in 2050 without such car scrappage initiatives.
- **Mobility hubs:** to create centralised hubs in new housing, business and retail developments where bikes, cars and e-scooters can be hired for a specific amount of time.
- **Future funding of highway and transport networks:** looking at public attitudes to and consultation on how this will be funded in the future as an alternative funding model will be required as we switch to modes of transport like electric cars with no fuel taxes. Road travel is currently funded indirectly via the £40bn (approximately) raised from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and fuel taxes.
- **The impact COVID-19:** recovery from the pandemic will have an effect on working patterns, lifestyles, and transport choices. It's much more complex than 'more remote working' and this will need time to settle down.
- **Understand how to effectively disincentivise unnecessary car travel:** people want to travel for a wide variety of reasons, the challenge is to find ways to disincentivise the most damaging travel and nudge people towards more sustainable choices.





The UK's first electric car charging forecourt opens in Essex

In December 2020, GRIDSERVE unveiled the UK's first Electric Forecourt® in Braintree. It is designed to make charging your electric vehicle (EV) as simple as using a petrol station.

This first-of-a-kind project was delivered by GRIDSERVE, whose mission is to deliver net zero carbon energy and help move the needle on climate change. It was financed by Hitachi Capital (UK) PLC with a substantial grant through Innovate UK, funded by The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. Several partners worked together on the Innovate UK project including Essex County Council.

The project removes range and charging anxiety for electric vehicle drivers, irrespective of whether people have the ability to charge an electric vehicle at home or are one of the more than 40 per cent of UK households that can't. Any type of electric vehicle can be charged from the 36 chargers at the Electric Forecourt®, 30 of which are high power DC chargers, 6 of which are Tesla Superchargers, and 6 are AC chargers to cater for legacy electric vehicles. GRIDSERVE's highest power chargers can deliver up to 350kW of power – which theoretically can deliver over 200 miles of charge in around ten minutes, however initially charging sessions typically last 20-30 minutes.

The energy for the chargers is provided from both 'zero carbon', and 'net zero carbon' sources. The zero carbon energy is provided from the 206kWp solar power canopy above the chargers as well as a solar roof, which is expected to generate enough energy to drive around 800,000 miles every year in electric vehicles. The balance of the net zero carbon energy is provided from a 9.84MWp hybrid solar farm 44-miles from the facility that is virtually connected to the project through the national grid and generates around 10GWh of energy every year. This is enough energy to drive 5,000 electric vehicles 8,000 miles each, every year. Every kWh of energy that is taken from the grid through the 5MW(AC) grid connection is netted off against a zero carbon kWh of solar energy that is put on to the grid from the hybrid solar farm.

As well as using the grid connection for electric vehicle charging, a 5MW(AC) 6MWh battery provides grid services. The battery stores electricity from renewable sources: we may not need the electricity when the sun is shining but it can be stored for when it is needed. It also helps smooth out peaks in electricity demand which lessens pressure on the supply from the electricity grid and reduces pressure to upgrade the electricity distribution grid in the local area which is very costly.

While their vehicles are charging, drivers and their families can shop at the onsite retail stores such as Costa Coffee, WH Smith, The Post Office, Booths, and Gourmade, plus the first floor has a waiting lounge, exercise bikes, a kids' area, and meeting room pods. The entire facility is designed to help showcase electric vehicles, book test drives and help you learn more about EVs. GRIDSERVE is supporting the uptake of electric vehicles in the earliest possible timeframes.





Waste

Where are we now?

A staggering 700,000⁴⁷ tonnes of household waste are being collected every year by Essex County Council and the 12 Essex city, district, and borough councils, with even more being picked up by commercial waste companies from our homes, businesses, and industry⁴⁸.



BLUEPRINT to a Circular Economy

Essex County Council is leading an innovative cross-border project to help local authorities in England and France move to a circular economy. The project will see partners in England and France collaborate to increase recycling rates, reduce waste, and encourage lasting behaviour change across multiple sectors and train people to help them secure employment in the green economy. Through the development and delivery of a circular economy toolkit, local authorities both here and across the Channel will be able to establish a policy framework which will enable them to embrace a circular economy.

Around the world, one million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute⁴⁹, while five trillion single-use plastic bags are used worldwide every year. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed to be used only once — and then thrown away⁵⁰. The average Essex household throws away more than a tonne of waste every year⁵¹. Managing this waste is impacting on our climate and, it contributes to the pollution of our local environment and represents an unsustainable use of natural resources – this environmental disaster can't go on.

The good news is we are recycling more than ever, with over 54 per cent⁵² of our household waste being reused, composted, or recycled into new products but progress has slowed over the last decade. We continue to generate too much waste, use things that cannot be easily recycled and send thousands of tonnes of recyclable waste to landfill every year by not always using the recycling services that already exist.

Although more products are being designed that minimise the use of our precious resources and make recycling and reuse easier, we continue to use too much difficult-to-recycle plastic and too many single-use disposable items.

⁴⁷ Essex County Council Integrated Waste Data Management System (iWDMS)

⁴⁸ [Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan \(Adopted July 2017\)](#)

⁴⁹ www.unep.org/interactive/beat-plastic-pollution

⁵⁰ www.unep.org/interactive/beat-plastic-pollution

⁵¹ assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966042/LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_1920_rev.ods

⁵² Recycling, Composting and Reuse of Local Authority Collected Waste in Essex [Essex County Council and the 12 Essex city, district and borough Councils] April 2020 – March 2021



Where are we now?

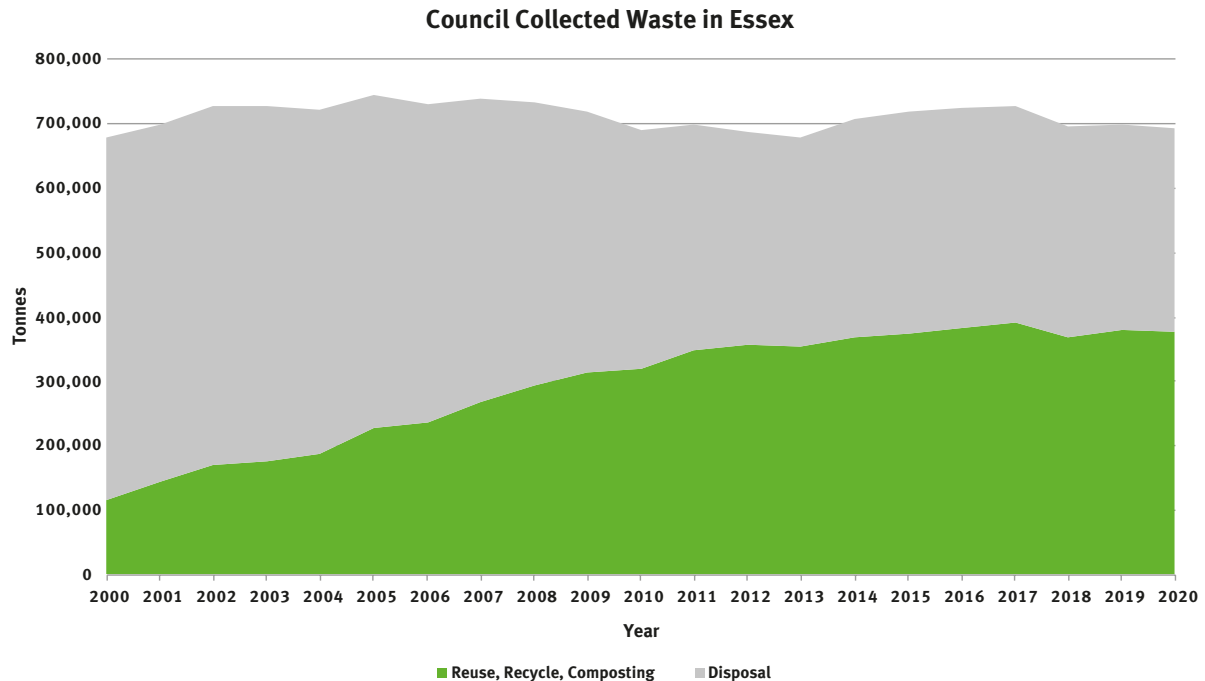


Figure 5. Essex County Council – Waste collected by Essex County Council (the Waste Disposal Authority) and the twelve Essex city, district, and boroughs councils (the Waste Collection Authorities). Essex County Council

This chart shows that great strides have been made in the amount we have recycled, reused, and composted in Essex over the last 20 years but recently improvements have levelled off and, in some areas, fallen. It shows, too, that the level of waste generated has largely remained static over the last 20 years despite an increasing population⁵³.



Anglia Ruskin University

By 2022, Anglia Ruskin University will ban all sales of single-use plastics on campus and by 2026 increase its recycling rate by 60 per cent.

⁵³ Essex County Council Integrated Waste Data Management System (iWDMS)



Why is this important?

Waste management directly contributes four per cent to UK greenhouse gas emissions. Although this doesn't sound a lot, the choices we make can have a big impact on how resources are used, and the amount of waste produced.

All waste treatment methods, such as landfill, incineration, recycling, or composting have negative impacts on emissions and will likely be a net contributor to our carbon emissions output. Reducing waste at source is therefore key to tackling the challenges we face.

We all need to push for more efficient manufacturing processes and make smart choices about what we buy, avoiding single-use items, fast-fashion, and over packaged products. Only then, can we avoid resources being used and waste being generated in the first place. This will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other sectors, such as manufacturing, extraction, and transport.

For the waste we cannot avoid producing, we need to recycle and compost as much as possible as these treatment methods have lower emissions compared to disposal, such as landfill.

We need to accelerate our move to a circular economy. This is where we:

- Work together to 'design out' waste and pollution from products and services.
- Keep items in use for as long as possible.
- Recycle and compost as much as we can (see Waste Technical Annex).

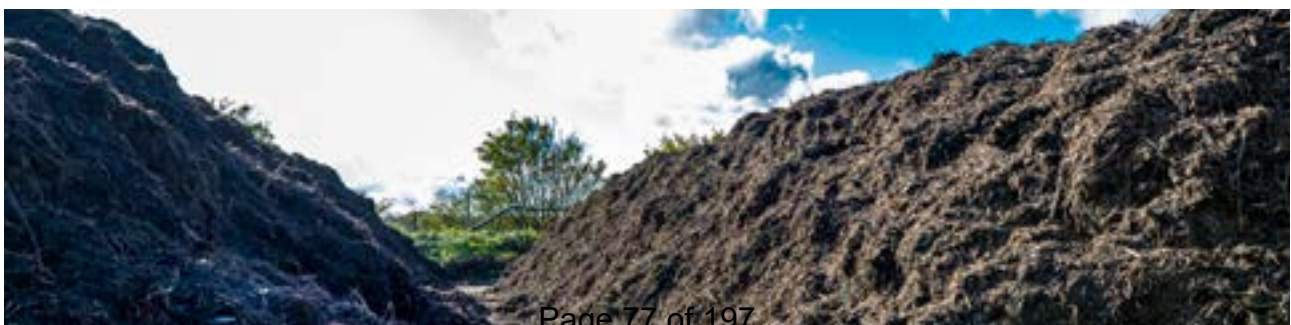
This will require manufacturers and retailers to use resources more efficiently and improve the recyclability of their products, and for us to change our behaviour when making choices about what to buy. We need to encourage innovation and seek investment in solutions and technology that help us recycle more types of waste. It is also important everyone has access to easy to use recycling services.

Waste reduction remains our primary focus, coupled with treating and disposing of waste through technologies which minimise emissions.



Colchester Borough Council

In 2021, Colchester will explore the trial of smart waste technology to improve waste monitoring and collection in the borough.





Our recommendations

As a Commission, we've been working on ideas and policy suggestions over six interconnected key areas. How we manage our waste is one of them.

We've looked at how we can reduce the amount of waste we create in Essex and ways it can be disposed of in a way that's less damaging to our environment. We've created targets which, although challenging, we believe are achievable if we all work together.

One of our targets is to increase the current recycling rate in Essex from 54 per cent to 70 per cent. We also believe it should be a relatively 'easy fix' for us all to reduce the amount of waste we produce by just 10 per cent over the next few years. If we work collaboratively and commit to this, we can help Essex become a net zero county by 2050.

Some great partnership work is already going on in the county delivering high-quality services and encouraging behaviour change. We would like to develop this further through the existing Essex Waste Partnership and fully engage with manufacturers, industry, and the community sector to help reduce waste at source and maximise community benefits.

We'd also like to establish an Essex Innovation Fund to identify and develop solutions to deal with problematic materials in waste. We are suggesting an initial focus on this should be to reduce plastic waste and encourage local reprocessing capacity.





Our recommendations

Our waste recommendations are:

Reduce and recycle

We need to make it easier for local people, businesses, and industry to recycle and help people make good choices. We recommend:



By 2025: all Essex residents and businesses will have access to kerbside recycling services. We know the service currently varies greatly within the county and we want to see a commitment to make sure a minimum standard of kerbside recycling is consistently available to all properties. With at least the core materials being collected for our residents to encourage them to adopt the habit of recycling.



By 2030: at least 70 per cent of the waste the Council collects is reused, recycled, or composted.



By 2030: everyone in Essex to have reduced their waste by 10 per cent of 2020 levels.

Establish an Essex Waste Innovation Fund with an early focus on plastic substitution opportunities and enhancing local reprocessing capacity.



Develop the Essex Waste Partnership to fully engage with producers, industry, and research bodies to support the circular economy and unlock opportunities.



Provide support to residents and businesses so they can make the right choices.

Landfill

Essex sent over 320,000 tonnes of waste to landfill last year. We want to see this reduced. We recommend:



By 2030: Essex should commit to send zero waste to landfill sites.



Our recommendations

Reuse and repair hubs

The popularity of BBC1's Repair Shop shows that there is a will to stop buying more goods and repair and reuse the items we have. We recommend:



By 2024: a network of community-based reuse and repair hubs to be established across Essex to help people fix what they already have or donate items for others to reuse.

Biodegradable waste

This means food, garden waste, paper, and cardboard. This can be composted or recycled. We recommend:



By 2025: systems are in place so all biodegradable waste in the county is put to beneficial use through composting, recycling, or energy generation.

Life-cycle analysis

Resource and waste systems are complex, and the greenhouse gas emissions associated with them are impacted by many factors. We recommend:



The adoption of life-cycle analysis so the greenhouse gas emissions from the products and services bought, and the waste system, service design and treatment technologies used, can be measured and fully considered to ensure choices that minimise impacts.



The development of a strategic vision for waste shared by the local authorities in Essex, which has principles of the circular economy at its core.



A blueprint to a circular economy

Our planet's natural resources are becoming scarcer due to years of over-exploitation in the rush for economic growth and development. It has had a devastating effect on the environment.

It is important now, that we stop and question how we act as consumers. We need to reuse and recycle so much more than we do already and take part fully in what is known as the 'circular economy' – a economic system where we strive to eliminate waste and the over exploitation of our natural resources.

Essex County Council is at the forefront of this, leading an innovative new cross-border project called 'Blueprint to a Circular Economy' which is helping local authorities in the UK and France transition to a circular economy.

The project will see partners in England and France collaborate to increase recycling rates, reduce waste, and encourage lasting behaviour change across multiple sectors. Through the development and delivery of a circular economy toolkit, local authorities will be able to establish a policy framework which will enable a circular economy to flourish.

A switch to a more circular economy will have many benefits for Essex residents by, for example, saving money from more efficient waste management services, higher recycling, and waste reduction.



Figure 6. Circular Economy – Ellen MacArthur Foundation

Source: Ellen MacArthur Foundation



Creating Climate Focus Areas

Creating Climate Focus Areas for accelerated action on climate change is a key recommendation of the Commission. To drive innovation and change across Essex, we are recommending the formation of two climate focus areas which will spearhead change for the whole county.

Creating Climate Focus Areas (CFAs) will serve as pathfinders and pilot areas for demonstrating best practice. We believe that by establishing a CFA we can achieve change faster and trial and test new approaches that can act as pilots to roll out in other areas. We will collaborate with public authorities, charities, residents, landowners, and businesses to accelerate action and improve the natural and urban environments.

The two recommended areas are the river catchments of the **Blackwater and Colne** and the **Harlow and Gilston Garden Town**.

Blackwater and Colne catchments – CFA

We recognise that the land use and green infrastructure proposals for the whole of Essex are challenging but achievable. In order to demonstrate this achievability, we are proposing the concept of a CFA, as a demonstration site for best practice in sustainable land use management.

The Commission is suggesting that the Blackwater and Colne river catchments should be the CFA – approx. 30 per cent of Essex and going from coast to headwaters right through the middle of the county. These river catchments provide natural corridors, are rich in history as well as diversity of landscapes, and include both rural and urban areas.

The Commission is also recommending that the CFA targets should be more ambitious than for the rest of Essex, with the following targets recommended by 2030: all farmland to adopt sustainable land stewardship practices, 30 per cent of rural and urban land cover to be Natural Green Infrastructure, native tree cover to increase by 30 per cent, and every parish to have a climate and biodiversity action plan.

Targeting a designated area within the county allows for more focused, ambitious, and intensive action within shorter time frames where learning and acquired new knowledge of positive impacts can quickly be disseminated across the county. In order to implement this, we have chosen a representative area of Essex, the catchments of the Blackwater and Colne rivers, where a focused effort can be made to combat climate change, leading the way for the rest of Essex to follow.

This area comprises 930km² or 27 per cent of the area of Essex. It forms part of the Northern Thames Basin and Greater Thames Estuary National Character areas.

The area is rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history and has diverse landscapes ranging from ancient woods, open arable areas, heathlands, and areas of urbanisation. It also includes coastland of shallow creeks, drowned estuaries, low-lying islands, mud flats and broad tracts of tidal salt marsh and reclaimed grazing marsh.

Creating Climate Focus Areas

This CFA includes parts of the boroughs and districts of Uttlesford, Braintree, Colchester, Maldon and Tendring which have a combined natural green infrastructure of 296km² or 13 per cent of the combined area of the five local authority areas.

The recommendations for the Blackwater and Colne CFA

The Commission is also recommending that the CFA targets should be more ambitious than for the rest of Essex, with the following targets recommended by 2030: all farmland to adopt sustainable land stewardship practices, 30 per cent of rural and urban land cover to be Natural Green Infrastructure, native tree cover to increase by 30 per cent, and every parish to have a climate and biodiversity action plan.

Recommendations for Blackwater and Colne CFA by 2030:



All farmland to adopt sustainable land stewardship practices.



30 per cent of land cover to be managed as natural green infrastructure.



30 per cent of urban areas under natural green infrastructure.



Native tree cover to double from five to ten per cent.



Every parish to have a biodiversity action plan.



Every parish to have a climate emergency strategy.

Creating Climate Focus Areas

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town project

Harlow and Gilston was designated a Garden Town⁵⁴ by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2017, and is one of the most exciting growth opportunities of any place in the UK. The project will create over 23,000 new homes of mixed sizes including 30-40 per cent affordable homes, in and around Harlow.

Since it was created as a New Town 70 years ago, Harlow has grown in both size and ambitions. Its location at the heart of the burgeoning UK Innovation Corridor between Cambridge and London, means the time is ripe for expansion and sustainable development to boost the local economy with a wide range of jobs in easy access.

In consultation with local people, the project will see new, high-quality sustainable homes, new schools, health facilities, a new state-of-the-art hospital, new community facilities and vast areas of green, public spaces. Transport services, such as buses, will be fast, frequent, affordable, and comfortable with designated cycle and walking routes and e-bike schemes are all designed to make car driving less attractive. The aim is to enhance the natural environment by attracting wildlife and making sure the area is climate resilient.

This Garden Town development will seek to reflect all the recommendations for new build developments as set out in section ‘Built Environment – New Build’ above.

The proposed standards for the new town have been agreed between Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils, East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils. As a Garden Town this is being delivered to meet the Town and Country Planning Association Garden City principles. The Garden Town also has vision which sets the overarching principles. This vision is articulated in [Our vision - Harlow and Gilston Garden Town](#).



54 (SOURCE: harlowandgilstongardentown.co.uk) Page 85 of 197





Community Engagement

Where are we now?

The recommendations in our report are designed to be embraced by everyone and we want people and organisations across Essex to be involved, including:

- All local authorities including Essex County Council and parish, town, city, district, and borough councils across Essex
- NHS, police, and fire services
- Universities and colleges
- Schools
- Industry and businesses
- Landowners and farmers
- Community and charity groups
- Residents and visitors

We recognise that many areas need national action. We have set out how Essex can lead by example and stakeholders across the county have already started pledging what they are going to do to tackle this climate crisis.





Where are we now?

Since our first meeting in May 2020, the Commission has started to engage with the Essex community, including our residents, businesses, public sector including local authorities, universities, and hospitals across the county. We began to develop a communications strategy and plan.

In the Interim Report, we outlined a three-pronged approach to our communications, focusing on **formal communications**, **community-led action**, and **stakeholder engagement**.

Formal communications

This strand of work has been progressing, with our meetings being live streamed and press releases being issued afterwards to inform residents of the Commission's findings throughout the year. A newsletter for residents was also set up and is proving very popular as a way for residents to keep up to date.



Figure 7. Social media advertising to promote the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme

Following a successful bid for Government funding made by Essex County Council and seven city, district, and borough councils in the county, in January 2021 a campaign was launched to inform residents about the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme. As well as a campaign at county level, toolkits were produced for local councils to communicate to their own residents. The scheme helps residents on low incomes access government funding to have energy efficiency measures, such as heat pumps and insulation, installed in their homes. Not only does this help reduce the county's emissions but saves residents money through reduced energy bills. This is a good example of local authorities joint working to promote the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme which has seen residents benefit from up to £10,000 worth of funding to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes.

A plan is in development to raise awareness about future coastal change and the risks to local people and property from climate change and flooding. We need a communications strategy to engage and manage the impact, by sharing knowledge and building community partnerships.



Where are we now?

We are launching a website for the Commission which will feature biographies of the Commissioners, host the Commission's reports, provide details of upcoming events and feature pledges for climate action made by other partners. The website will also signpost visitors to further helpful information on acting on climate issues.



Green Influencers Scheme

The Wilderness Foundation UK is a host organisation for the Green Influencers Scheme. The pioneering Green Influencers Scheme is a project match-funded through the #iwill Fund which is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and Department of Culture, Media & Sport. The Scheme has been created to help young people aged 10-14 years old to realise their potential to positively impact the environment and communities through youth social action. Young environmental activists will be at the forefront of youth social action projects and follow in Greta Thunberg's footsteps.

Community-led action



As part of the community-led action approach, in July 2020, a collaboration was established between Essex County Council, the Essex Climate Action Commission and local Facebook, Twitter and Instagram administrators to create a suite of social media channels under the 'Essex is Green' banner. Through these channels, the Essex is Green team began to actively engage with Essex residents across the county.

The Essex is Green Facebook page was the first channel to be established which now has over 7000 followers. This was followed by a Facebook discussion group – a smaller, private group of over 700 members where climate matters are discussed in greater detail.

Also, on Facebook, a Changemakers group was opened where over 100 Essex admins or local community group leaders could meet to work and learn together to achieve their shared goals of fighting climate change and improving the environment.

The group is both for those looking to start or grow Facebook or other community groups and those who already have established groups. It is a safe space for everyone to reach out, find common ground and work together to share, learn, discuss, and collaborate.

The group includes a section called 'Units' in which members can find information about climate change, the environment and building communities to increase their knowledge.

Essex is Green also has Twitter and Instagram accounts with over 2000 followers on Twitter and over 1000 on Instagram.



Where are we now?



Love Essex

Love Essex is an initiative developed and shared by the Essex Waste Partnership that is made up of Essex County Council, our 12 city, district and borough councils and the unitary authority of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to collaborate consistently and county-wide on waste projects with residents, businesses and schools.

The aim of the Love Essex team is to inspire behaviour change and encourage residents to reduce waste and litter. The team use social media platforms and the Love Essex website. Love Essex also sends out a successful e-newsletter that reaches over 18,000 people.



Freegle

The Love Essex team runs campaigns including reducing single-use plastics, promoting use of cloth nappies and home-composting, and encouraging sharing and re-use in partnership with Freegle. 'The Love Essex Fund' supports community-based projects, 43 so far, that promote repair, reuse, and recycling.

The Love Essex team has supported a network of volunteers that spread the message to residents and schools about reducing their waste and climate impact. They also manage the 'BLUEPRINT to a Circular Economy' (see page 60).



Freegle

Freegle is an online platform that allows you to give and receive items for free in your local area. Love Essex has a partnership with Freegle to support the online resource for local groups and promotional costs.

There are currently twenty local Freegle groups across Essex, with over 70,000 members. In the last 12 months, 164 tonnes of 'stuff' were reused via the platform, saving an estimated 83.8 tonnes of CO₂.



Where are we now?



Community Energy

Two community energy groups have recently been launched in Essex, making them the first ones of this kind in the county – Saffron Walden Community Energy group and Colchester Community Energy.

Saffron Walden Community Energy (SWCE) group is working with Essex County Council to explore solar on schools' projects in the Saffron Walden area, as well as other projects focusing on renewable energy and sustainable transport. They are currently looking for volunteers to help run the group, so residents local to Saffron Walden and Uttlesford can visit the SWCE website to find out more about joining.

Colchester Community Energy has completed its business plan and is considering a hydro scheme on the river Colne and an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility based on a local farm, which would take food waste from the surrounding area.





Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Public Sector

Public organisations across Essex are meeting to work together on the climate challenge.

The Essex Association of Local Councils held its Climate Conference at the end of January 2021. Delegates heard from a range of speakers with Commissioner Jules Pretty setting the scene on the climate crisis to start the five-hour conference. The objective of the conference was to gain an overview of the climate crisis, gain practical advice on how to engage with the climate crisis and to get an understanding of the work already being actioned by our partners.

Essex County Council, city, district, and borough councils meet regularly across many settings including the District Climate Action Forum, which brings together climate leads across the county. More examples include the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA). The Association represents all 15 councils in Essex and is attended by Chief Planning Officers at a director level.

EPOA nominated three Chief Planners from Chelmsford, Uttlesford and Brentwood Councils to work with the Commission. These partner authorities have been vital in supporting and helping shape the work for those Commissioners who focused on the Built Environment and the recommendations that they have proposed (see Built Environment chapter).

Through this work, each of these three partner authorities have committed to bringing forward a pilot carbon zero housing scheme. The Brentwood carbon zero homes scheme is being referenced in the Essex Design guide as best practice. Not only is this net zero, it is bringing about regeneration and social value requirements.

Working with Uttlesford Council, Essex County Council has endorsed, and Uttlesford has since adopted, non-statutory planning policies to help influence the early consideration of climate change within the new development proposals coming forward. Uttlesford has also taken on the role of Climate Change Champion within the EPOA network and their peers.



Southend-On-Sea Borough Council

Southend will be prioritising action to enable schools in the borough to support net zero and climate positive aspirations and to ensure that young people in the borough are involved in the decision-making process on net zero and climate positive action.

Likewise, Chelmsford City Council, which in 2020 adopted its Local Plan, has committed to looking at and using all means to address the requirements and Commission's recommendations when it comes to new build, particularly in relation to its strategic sites and the Chelmsford Garden Community. Chelmsford City Council is looking to ensure each new show home is built to a carbon zero standard to allow future purchasers to understand what this looks like.



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

The Chief Officers of EPOA are all looking at ways and means to bring about good quality, sustainable development that addresses climate mitigation measures as early as possible. The Chair of EPOA recently wrote in support of the Town and Country Planning Association's Healthy Homes Bill they are promoting.

The Essex Flood Board has been in partnership for 11 years involving all flood risk management authorities and local members, chaired by the Essex County Council cabinet member. Over the years, the board has developed and agreed local measures for flood management in Essex. As well as delivering that statutory role, Essex County Council has also seen many community-led, behaviour-change schemes be a success, such as the Community Flood Improvement Fund, Where Does Water Go? Property Flood Resilience Grant Initiatives. With one of the Commission's key recommendations being that organisations, partners and communities in Essex should be encouraged to develop and implement mechanisms for funding potential flood risk management and resilience schemes, there is plenty of good work already going on to build upon.



Colchester Borough Council

Colchester will continue to communicate frequently with residents to improve participation in recycling and waste minimisation initiatives taking an asset-based community development approach to discovering and enabling existing and new community led initiatives associated with repair, upcycle and reuse social movements.

Essex County Council published a Green Infrastructure Strategy in 2020. The Council worked with over 60 different partners from University of East Anglia, local planning authorities and Government public sectors, such as the Forestry Commission, Environment Agency and Natural England. Community groups and third sector organisations such as the RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust were also heavily involved. Each was able to contribute their different areas of expertise to help shape and structure the strategy.

The strategy is setting out a way to protect and improve the county's green infrastructure and green spaces and create a network of areas which could play a key role in residents' health and wellbeing, protect the environment and bring a host of economic benefits. The county has taken its first steps towards achieving its vision of a more climate resilient and greener Essex.



Businesses

The Commission has also been engaging with businesses via the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), Success Essex and Opportunity Essex. In addition, it has been working with business intermediaries such as the Essex Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses who are informing their members on green funding opportunities and about the work of the Commission.



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Working closely with the Essex Chambers of Commerce, the Commission has been helping to promote opportunities for Essex businesses to get involved in the journey to net zero, such as dedicated workshops run by Clean Growth South East showcasing opportunities for growing low carbon businesses in Essex. The Commission is also highly supportive of Chambers' plans for a climate action conference in the autumn of 2021, ahead of COP26.

One of the Commission's key recommendations from the Built Environment working group was to encourage and support Essex's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to invest in: energy efficiency, including their own premises; climate resilience and renewable energy sources, such as solar energy.

There is already some good support for SMEs in this area. For example, the Council's Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme provides free support to businesses in the South East. It aims to help businesses become more competitive, profitable, and resilient while protecting the environment and encouraging low-carbon solutions. LoCASE provides grants for businesses of up to £20,000 for energy efficiency measures to reduce their carbon emissions as well as funding to SMEs in the Low-Carbon sector to grow their business training workshops and fully funded events. Since the programme started in 2016, £2.6m has been awarded to 397 businesses with an estimated 2,902 tonnes greenhouse gases equivalent emissions reduction and £992,534 cost savings per annum within Greater Essex (including Southend and Thurrock).

Further funding has recently been secured for the partnership to extend the delivery of support to SMEs until June 2023, with an expected £1.3m of grants available to Greater Essex businesses.

We are also encouraging large businesses to disclose physical risks, using frameworks such as the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosure or the Adaptation Reporting Power. This will help our businesses assess climate-related risk for themselves, their suppliers, and competitors, allocate capital effectively and plan strategically to minimise climate-related risks in the short, medium, and long-term.

Swan Housing

In August 2020, the SELEP, which encompasses the local authority areas of Essex, East Sussex, Kent, Medway, Southend, and Thurrock was awarded £85m from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Getting Building Fund.

Essex County Council had supported Swan Housing Group to bid for £4.3m of this funding to help build a second factory to produce increased volumes of low carbon, modular housing. Swan was one of the first housing associations to move into modern methods of construction, and is committed to creating more high-quality, environmentally sustainable homes. It is expected the project will generate over 120 new jobs in Basildon and help to build over 1,000 new Low-Carbon homes a year when both factories are working at full capacity. Construction of the new factory is currently under way and it is due to come on stream early in 2022.



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Net Zero Innovation Network



In direct response to one of the Commission's Community Engagement recommendations, in March 2021, the inaugural meeting of the new Net Zero Innovation Network (NZIN) took place, designed to engage more directly with businesses. It will bring together individuals from a wide range of education and business sectors across Essex. The aim is to support partnerships and drive innovation, helping Essex achieve its target of being a net-zero carbon emissions county by 2050.

NZIN includes academics and some of the work the Commission is undertaking to focus on low-carbon solutions in the built environment may partner with appropriate academic institutions in the county, which would fit the Commission's recommendation for a partnership between University and Built Environment specialists.

Also, in the built environment-related recommendations, the Commission recommends the Essex Developers Group should establish a Climate Change Charter and 'demonstrator' projects. The group is run for, and with, developers across Essex to discuss development and planning issues. The Commission recommends the group work up a charter which developers could 'sign' and adhere to which will take on board the Commission's aspirations and provide an informal commitment to working towards a net zero county.

The Commission is also keen for Essex County Council to take a leadership role in supporting both industry and academia to explore what opportunities exist to reduce the use of plastic. We recommend that Essex County Council establishes an Essex Waste Innovation Fund for the provision of research grants, with an early focus on plastic substitution opportunities, and enhancing local reprocessing capacity.

Residents

In March 2021, the Commission launched a consultation on its proposed recommendations to understand the level of stakeholder support for what it suggests needs to happen for Essex to become a net zero county by 2050. Individuals, local councils, educational establishments, and businesses were invited to give the Commission their views on its recommendations. The consultation closed on 4 May 2021.

The vast majority of respondents indicated they were very concerned about climate change and general support for most of the recommendations was strong, particularly in the subject areas of adapting to an already changing climate, the built environment and energy and waste.

Among the recommendations which received the most support from respondents were two about improving recycling services and increasing the amount of waste we recycle. Recommendations which received the least support included those involving reducing parking availability in town centres or introducing emissions or parking charging. Page 95 of 197



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Just over three quarters of those taking part in the consultation agreed that recommendations were focused on the right issues however this did vary according to the age of the participant. When asked whether the recommendations were focused on the right areas and priorities a higher proportion of participants aged 44 and under agreed whereas in the 65 and over age group there was more disagreement or indifference.

Similarly, at 70 per cent, there was a higher proportion of respondents in the lower age group stating they strongly supported the Commission's recommendations. Around half of consultees felt that the Commission's recommendations were strong enough but over a third didn't consider them ambitious enough and wanted change to happen sooner and without delay, instilling a greater sense of urgency in the need to take action. Many of those who responded to the consultation clearly feel that now is the time to act.

The full results of the consultation can be found in the Community Engagement Technical Annex.

What respondents said

“There really isn't time to lose and urgency is of the essence. The plans could be a lot more ambitious too.”

Basildon resident aged 35-44.

“Communication is key, and residents need to understand what their personal contribution can be to help achieve the goals. Climate change is one challenge where we are truly ‘all in it together’.”

Uttlesford resident aged 65-74



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Young people

Our two co-chairs from the Young Essex Assembly recognise the importance of engaging with young people in our work.

The Commission has been working with Ashden and schools in Essex to develop plans to help promote the Let's Go Zero 2030 campaign from the start of the new school year in September 2021. From a starting point of two schools, the Commission will work with Ashden to make sure many more Essex schools sign up to the campaign.

Encouragingly, young people across the county are starting to proactively engage with the Commission. There are students creating 'green groups' within their school or college, such as at Braintree Sixth Form College. The Commission has also engaged with groups of young people arranging litter picks and transforming barren land, including four 19-year-old friends who set up Clean Up Chelmsford to improve the city's environment for the benefit of the local community. It is clear that many of the younger generation are leading the way on climate action in Essex.



Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service

Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) in Maldon has joined with Abberton Rural Training in offering horticultural qualifications and home growing kits to families, aiming to provide basic gardening skills including how to grow your own vegetables. Along with this course ECFWS will be linking with the tutors throughout the course so families are offered additional community services such as slow cookers, home cooking packs and vouchers etc.





Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Danbury Park Community Primary School



Danbury Park Community Primary School was one of two community buildings in Danbury to see the installation of solar panels completed in the October 2020 half term week. Panels were also installed at Essex Outdoors, Danbury.

Electricity produced by the solar panels across the two sites is equivalent to the amount of electricity needed to supply 22 average homes per year.

Figure 8. Solar panel on the roof of Danbury Park Community Primary School

As well as energy savings, the installations will also save 15 tonnes of carbon in year one and over 375 tonnes over the lifetime of the systems installed.

The solar panels were delivered by Essex County Council's Energy and Low Carbon team as part of a project called "Empower" Enabling More People's OWNership in Energy tRansition which was funded by the European Commission (Interreg North Sea Region Programme).

Since the installation of the solar panels, Danbury Park school has embarked on a sustainability journey and lots of activities are being delivered - classes are doing research on sustainability and why it matters. There is also a plastic recycling project which involves working with the local community to collect crisp packets and children are participating in the Sustrans Big Pedal week. The school also marked Earth Day on 22 April 2021, assigning sustainability projects to each class.

Pupils at the school are also keen to learn more about the school's energy consumption. With the help of engineer, Gary Hicks, one of the pupil's grandparents and with the support of the headteacher, Carol Gooding, the school began to monitor its energy consumption with a view to trying to reduce it.

To achieve this, real-time energy metering was installed to develop a profile of how the school uses electricity and explore potential ways to reduce energy consumption. Pupils looked at ways they might be able to reduce the school's energy use such as limiting the number of photocopies produced or switching lights off sooner. A range of options was tried and tested and the school discovered that turning on the kitchen's oven just an hour later each morning resulted in a significant reduction in energy use, saving the school almost £2000 over the course of the school year.

As a result of his work with Danbury Park school, Mr Hicks created Points4Planet, a social enterprise which hopes to engage other schools in monitoring energy consumption and reducing their carbon footprint.



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Fingringhoe Primary School, Inspire Project, Colchester

Professor Stephen Heppell has dedicated his career to improving learning environments so that they inspire children to work better and achieve more.

In 2019, he was invited by Essex County Council to help Fingringhoe Primary School in Colchester improve their Year Six classroom.

The small school, housed in a Victorian building, was very dated and hadn't been changed for decades. The Professor, the teachers and children came together to put some of his ideas into practice and transform their classroom environment.

They started by having the whole classroom painted white, removing the false ceiling, changing the lighting, and monitoring the acoustics and CO₂ /Oxygen levels.

Professor Heppell's research has proved that learning, attention span and behaviour can be impacted by poor lighting, so a LED lighting control system was introduced with the light changing colour from morning to afternoon to replicate changes in natural daylight. Children's pictures were also taken down from the windows so that more natural light could flood into the classroom.

Noise level 'wardens' were selected from among the pupils, who were tasked with keeping an eye on the decibel application on the class iPad. Here, they could track whether the noise went over or under the recommended levels.

The children also each bought a plant into the classroom in a white pot to reflect light and absorb CO₂. New ergonomic chairs were introduced, and some tables and chairs were replaced with a 'Heppell Bench' - a set of benches at three different heights which help children's posture and concentration. All the surfaces of the benches have wipeable white boards.

A handheld device called a 'Gratnell's Learnometer' was used to measure the light, temperature, carbon dioxide and oxygen levels, noise, humidity, pollution, and dust levels within the classroom.

As a result, the children took ownership of their classroom environment and were very involved in the project. They began to understand the impact environment has on their learning and continued to monitor their surroundings by logging onto their Learnometer dashboard. They also appreciated the choices they could make about where to sit and write to make the most of their new environment.



Who is already travelling with us on the journey to net zero?

Charities and Voluntary Groups

We are keen to build on the work we have been doing with charities and voluntary groups. As well as the work with young people, Ashden and the Wilderness Trust, the Commission and Essex County Council have already been working with several charities.

Working in partnership with experts at the Woodland Trust, the Forestry Commission and Ground Control's Evergreen Fund, the Essex Forest Initiative has committed to invest £1million to benefit the county's environment over five years, starting last year. Essex County Council has exceeded the Essex Forest Initiative's first year planting target of 25,000 trees by 13,725 with a total of 38,725 trees now in the ground and growing across Essex. Essex County Council has also been working closely with the Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) on setting up a Local Nature Partnership. EWT and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, are also undertaking a mapping exercise to identify suitable Nature Recovery Networks that we expect will form part of an Essex-wide Nature Recovery Strategy.

We are also keen to build on the work we have been doing with voluntary groups. Our Essex is Green platforms recently shone a light on the work of Plastic Free Feering after Feering was awarded Plastic Free Communities status by Surfers Against Sewage – the first community in Essex to achieve this.

This achievement was only possible thanks to the involvement of local businesses, organisations and individuals including Feering Parish Council, Feering Community Centre, Kelvedon and Feering Cricket Club, Prested Hall, Eco Feering and Kelvedon & 1st Feering Rainbows.





Why it is important

Our vision is that all organisations and communities in Essex take action on climate change to drive down greenhouse gas emissions and build nature-based climate resilience. Essex is established as an exemplar, with the Commission and council empowering and supporting organisations and residents with the need for transitioning to a sustainable green economy by 2050.

The Commission aims to reach out to all members of society across Essex to establish a strong foundation of trust and integrity through honest, impartial and evidence-based dialogue and communication and to inspire, motivate and engage people to take action against the challenge of climate change.

Developing specific community engagement programmes to co-create large scale change in communities in specific geographical areas such as in the proposed Climate Focus Area or coastal areas at risk of flooding should be a priority.

The Commission has observed that people can see the climate is changing and many want to act – they simply do not have good information on steps to take. Therefore, many of the Community Engagement group's recommendations focus on making sure everyone – residents, educational establishments, anchor institutions and businesses – can access the information they need to do something to help.





Our recommendations

The Commission has made far reaching recommendations to help further engage with everyone in Essex:



Provide an online resource that provides key information to enable action for individuals and households with associated carbon impacts; amplified by social media and other communications tools; signposting to apps and good advice that already exists.

We would like to see the Community Engagement work build on the wealth and plethora of information about climate change that already exist rather than attempting to reinvent the wheel. Perhaps its most important recommendation is that it should signpost Essex residents, schools and businesses to good advice, toolkits and apps that already exist. It suggests doing this via an online resource that provides key information to enable action for individuals and households, detailing their associated carbon impacts so that individuals and households can take the most appropriate action with the greatest impact.



Invest in research to identify Essex audience groups and develop more targeted communications.

The Commission recommends investment in research to develop more targeted communications. Research to underpin future engagement and communication began in February 2021, looking into the attitudes to and perceptions of Essex residents on climate change. The research also sought to understand residents' willingness and ability to act on climate change and play a role in reducing the county's emissions. This will allow future communications and engagement to be tailored and more effective.



Public bodies and local authorities across Essex – parish, town, city, district, and borough councils – should align on key public messaging around climate.



Provide additional toolkits to enable effective action at a local level whilst providing links to possible funding opportunities.

We recognise the need to support other local authorities at parish, town, city, district, and borough level by giving access to toolkits and information on funding opportunities to help them engage with residents at a more local level.



Our recommendations



Establish Essex as a centre of excellence for innovation in addressing the climate crisis. Small and medium enterprises should be encouraged and supported to invest in energy efficiency including their own premises, climate resilience and renewable energy source, such as solar energy. Support should be provided to help land managers transition to alternative land uses. This includes help with skills, training, and information to implement new uses of land, and support with high upfront costs and long-term paybacks of investing in alternative uses.



A Net Zero Innovation Network should build on excellent networks across the County, to deliver this ambition. There is potential to partner with universities, colleges, specialists and businesses to develop innovation hubs across multiple industries including the energy sector to support the transition to renewables; the construction sector where the Essex Developer Group should develop a climate change charter and demonstrator projects; and the waste sector where a waste innovation fund should focus on plastic substitution opportunities, and enhancing local reprocessing capacity.



A climate recognition scheme for businesses should be developed where businesses are awarded a logo or badge in recognition of climate action taken. Anchor institutions should investigate if this could support green procurement practices. The Commission advises that reward and recognition schemes should also be used within the county, whether that be for individuals, households, schools to recognise good practice in climate action within the community.



The business and green growth opportunities arising from Commission recommendations should be modelled and communicated to Essex businesses and investors both inside and outside the county. Organisations should also be made aware of the benefits of switching to greener procurement practices as well as the opportunities for green growth as we build back following the impact of the pandemic.



Essex is Green should continue to be supported. Essex is Green should be used as an overarching brand for climate action in Essex, widely seen across the County. Essex is Green awards for community action should be developed.



Our recommendations



There should be a specific community engagement programme to co-create large scale change in communities. Community engagement is critically important for the implementation of all Commission recommendations. We believe this is vital to the success of the full suite of recommendations to improve local knowledge and gain widespread support for change

There are recommendations across the report that can only be done in conjunction with communities including: developing a network of community-based reuse and repair hubs by 2024; and a network of community energy neighbourhoods across by 2035

Delivering the ambitions of the Climate Focus Area (CFA) will require wide ranging collaboration and engagement through participatory community processes. We will need to work with communities to catalyse action in the CFA and then whole of Essex. This should be done by consulting with local people and communities, whether they live in rural areas, villages, or towns.



There should be public consultation on the full suite of Commission recommendations



A regular review of the communications approach to ensure it is responsive and relevant.





Carbon emissions in Essex

Our modelling shows Essex emitted 6.96 million tonnes of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions in 2019⁵⁵. Essex is home to 1.5m people and contributes 1.7% of the total greenhouse gas emission in the UK. The majority of our greenhouse gas emissions come from three sectors: transport, housing and businesses. Waste and farming also make smaller but still significant contributions. Trees, soils and natural landscapes store significant amounts of carbon and creating new green infrastructure absorbs more carbon.

As we do not host heavy industrial clusters in Essex our business and commercial emissions are relatively low per capita.

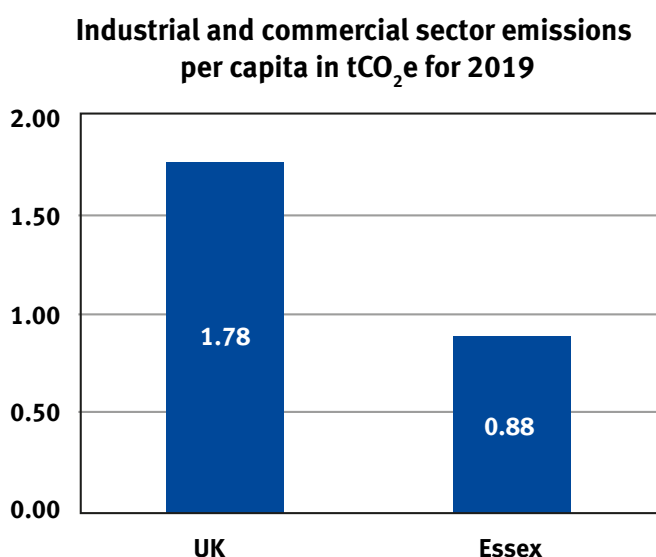


Figure 9: Industrial and commercial sector emissions per capita.

We have found that our transport emissions are higher than the national average. Travel on our roads which includes passenger cars, vans, taxis, buses and goods vehicles, in Essex produces 2.06 tCO₂e per capita against the UK's⁵⁶ 1.84 tCO₂e, or 12 per cent more per annum, as shown in Figure 9. This difference is consistent with the higher levels of road traffic observed in the East of England when compared to elsewhere in the UK.

⁵⁵ ONS local authority population data –

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

⁵⁶ National average value for road transport calculated from BEIS “Emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas”, available from <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b61-cdb93e5b10ff/emissions-of-carbon-dioxide-for-local-authority-areas>

Carbon emissions in Essex

The greenhouse gas emissions from our homes are broadly similar to the national average. These include energy consumed for heating as well as electricity for appliances. The average emissions per household in Essex and the UK are similar. Essex emits on average 3.56 tonnes of CO₂e per annum per home compared to the UK average⁵⁷ of 3.48 tonnes of CO₂e, as shown in Figure 10.

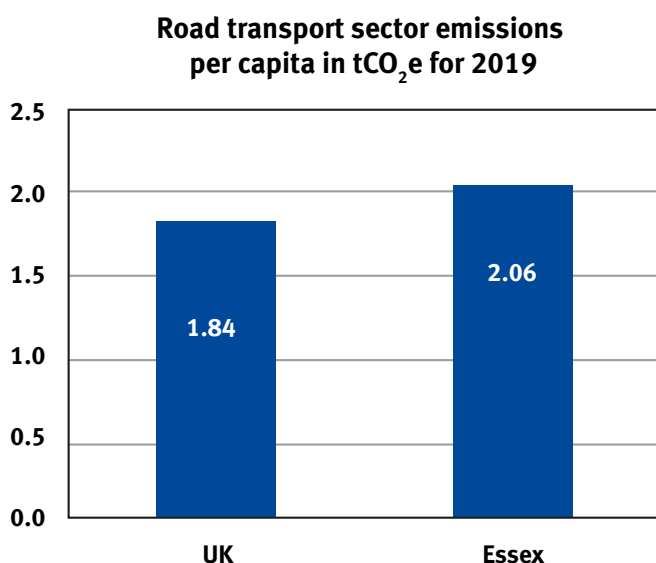


Figure 10. Road transport emissions per capita

Emissions from household waste treatment in Essex is slightly higher than the average in England⁵⁸, at 0.075 tCO₂e versus 0.065 tCO₂e respectively per capita per annum. The difference is driven by two factors: Essex produces slightly more waste than the English average, and a higher proportion of Essex's waste is sent to landfill. Landfill is the waste treatment type with the highest emissions intensity per tonne of waste produced.

We have modelled the impact of the Climate Commission recommendation across road transport, housing, business and household waste and are confident the recommendations outlined in this report, if implemented, will deliver net zero emission in these sectors by 2050 and as early as 2045 in the housing sector (assuming that a reasonable level of negative emissions is allocated to Essex to offset any residual emissions, such as those from waste treatment). Further work is needed to fully model more complex interactions on land use. These actions deliver a 40 per cent cut in total emissions from the road transport, housing, business and household waste sectors by 2030.

⁵⁷ National average value for domestic homes calculated from National Statistics' "Digest of UK Energy Statistics", available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-chapter-1-digest-of-united-kingdom-energy-statistics-dukes> and "Sub-national residual fuel consumption", available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-residual-fuel-consumption-2005-to-2018>

⁵⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966114/Statistics_on_waste_managed_by_local_authorities_in_England_in_2019v3_accessible.pdf

Monitoring and Evaluating Climate Change Interventions across Essex

Monitoring and data

Equally important for the implementation of all Commission recommendations is monitoring and evaluation of progress, and data and knowledge platforms to make information widely available and accessible.

Monitoring and evaluation systems are vital for the sustainability and viability of any project. Both play an important part in identifying the most efficient use of resources; providing data for informed decision making and strategic planning; gathering evidence to make sure goals are fulfilled; and influencing best practice by tuning into successes and learnings.

Monitoring and evaluation ensure projects stay on track and continue to perform well. It is also important for catching any problems early and establishing quick interventions and solutions; for making sure resources are used efficiently, e.g. identifying gaps or issues which need resources to be addressed and making priorities clearer; for providing data on what went right and pinpointing specific failures; for giving essential information to influence future learnings; and helping organisations to develop good methods for collecting, distributing and analysing data and thus increasing transparency and accountability among stakeholders.

One of the Commission's key recommendations is that robust monitoring and evaluation on climate change interventions – both mitigation and adaptation – are undertaken across Essex to understand the best way to deliver actions on climate change and measure their impact.



Our recommendations



An annual report on progress against the Commission recommendations, to celebrate progress and show how far Essex is on track towards a net zero, climate resilient county.

This should include an integrated Sustainability Appraisal Framework, an Essex Climate Observatory and a Knowledge and Decision Support Framework to support the ambitions in changing land use across the county.

Public Authority Investment Decisions

Public authorities have a key role in ensuring they are building climate considerations into key planning decisions. The Commission recommends:



Evaluate emission impacts in all future procurement decisions and develop a framework that can be adopted by others.



Adopt life-cycle analysis so emission impacts are fully considered in waste system and service design.



Support schools in monitoring their energy use in and exploring innovative approaches to energy consumption.

What we are going to do

Essex County Council is committed to monitoring and evaluation processes and agreed to track progress against the net-zero targets by producing annual reports sharing progress and tackling greenhouse gas emissions and building resilience across Essex. This will help track how the county is moving towards a climate-resilient, net zero future in line with the Commission's recommendations.

Essex County Council intends to use a combination of quantitative (e.g. measuring carbon savings) and qualitative (e.g. using narratives of behaviours and attitudes to climate action among our residents) techniques to understand whether and how well Essex's interventions for achieving carbon neutrality are working. The framework includes a plan to report progress (e.g. annually) which could feed into a process of continuous revision of the delivery of Essex's climate change interventions.

Our recommendations

A central approach of the monitoring strategy should be to use a 'theory of change' (logic model) to understand what is intended by each action and determine the best way to monitor and evaluate progress. The following questions will help Essex understand what change was intended through each action:

- What are the outputs from the proposed action?
- What is the desired outcome and impact/change resulting from the action?
- How does the action reduce climate risk/vulnerability?
- What indicator, baseline, narrative or measure best monitors and evaluates progress for each action?

The Commission recognises that an annual report is critical but does not give an immediate view of progress day to day. Therefore, the Commission also recommends that Essex:



Develop an online dashboard that brings together annual carbon figures alongside more readily available proxies for progress e.g. numbers of trees planted, air pollution levels, numbers of car-free streets, numbers of electric vehicles, traffic volumes, renewables capacity, tonnes of waste etc.





What is next for the Commission?

As we go forward into the second year of the Commission, we will provide regular updates on the status of the Year One recommendations and will monitor their implementation, report on the progress made and continue to make further recommendations for future action.

We will work on delivery plans with partners across Essex to drive the recommendations from Year One forward.

We will meet four times during the second year and consider two new key areas for discussion:



Green growth for the future: we will look at ways we can embrace a greener economy where we not only care about business, but we care about our planet too. This will un-lock new opportunities for businesses, but also for residents in the form of more sustainable homes and jobs.



Green finance: we want Essex to be a place where we can attract green investment to create a resilient and net carbon zero Essex by 2050. If we manage our resources sustainably, we will be attractive to businesses that want to invest and this, in turn, will reap social, economic, and environmental benefits for everyone.

As well as:



Updating the Commission with a report at the end of our second year.

In summary, we feel there is the will to drive forward and make the fundamental structural changes needed, both in our local area of Essex and across the world, to meet the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, if not before.

Our working groups have spent many hours debating and discussing what our recommendations to Essex County Council should be across all the interlinking areas. We know there is no easy solution to the climate crisis and there are many things to fix – some easier than others.

But we believe our recommendations are achievable. We have the expertise and tools to do it and utilise that knowledge now. If the Coronavirus pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we can respond rapidly and make big changes. Climate change is part of our future, we made it, we must fix it. As David Attenborough has said 'What happens next is up to us all.'⁵⁹ We hope the people, families and businesses of Essex will come on board with us and make change happen.

⁵⁹ BBC Climate Change – The Facts www.bbc.com/programmes/00049b1

Glossary

We understand that conversations around climate change and the environment can become very technical, which in turn can lead to lower levels of engagement. We have provided a comprehensive list of the definitions of key terms and phrases that we believe will help to break the barrier and provide clarity on the topic of climate change for absolutely anyone.

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Adaptation	(see Climate Change Adaptation)
Anaerobic Digestion	A natural process by which organic matter is broken down by micro-organisms in the absence of oxygen. This is one process to manage waste and/or to produce fuels (biogas).
Anchor Institutions	The term Anchor institutions refer to large, typically public sector or non-profit organisations like hospitals, local councils, and universities whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the populations they serve. Anchors get their name because they have ‘sticky capital’ (i.e. are unlikely to move given their connection to the local population) and have a significant influence on the health and wellbeing of a local community through their sizeable assets. It is from this vantage point, that Anchor Institutions can make an important contribution to the local economy and local communities.
Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)	A large system of surface and deep currents in the Atlantic Ocean which plays a crucial role in regulating Earth’s climate system. This system carries warm, salty water in the upper layers of the ocean from the tropics to the North Atlantic, whilst colder, deep waters are travelling southwards. The AMOC is vulnerable to climate change. Climate models suggest that the AMOC will weaken over the 21st century as a result of an increase of greenhouse gases.
Biodegradable Waste	Any organic matter in waste which can be broken down naturally into carbon dioxide, water, methane, or simple organic molecules, with the help of natural agents such as sunlight, microorganisms, and water, by composting, aerobic or anaerobic digestion and similar processes. Biodegradable waste also includes some inorganic materials such as gypsum which can be decomposed by bacteria and produce plasterboard.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Biodiversity	The variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. The term also means, the variety of life at every hierarchical level and spatial scale of biological organisations: genes within populations, populations within species, species within communities, communities within landscapes, landscapes within biomes, and biomes within the biosphere.
Bioenergy	Energy generated from organic matter which comes from plants and animals and is known as biomass.
Built Environment	All forms of human-made environment from housing, industrial and commercial property, to hospitals and schools, streets, sidewalks, and even open spaces.
Carbon Footprint	The total greenhouse gases emissions generated directly and indirectly by human activities, which are expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent during the period of a year.
Carbon Emissions Baseline	The total scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gases emissions for the year 2019. These are expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent emissions during the period of a year and are based on the most recently publicly available data sets. Sectors in scope: domestic homes, industrial and commercial electricity and space heating, road transport, waste, land use and green infrastructure.
Carbon Neutral	A state by which the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere as a result of an activity, is balanced by an equivalent amount being taken away via “offsetting” (see Carbon Offsetting), or removing from the atmosphere, an equivalent amount of carbon. Carbon neutrality is not associated with a commitment to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions.
Carbon Offsetting	Environmental practices and activities implemented to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide in order to compensate for unavoidable emissions made elsewhere, e.g. the creation of new woodlands and the restoration of peatlands, providing habitats for wildlife, and green spaces for the public. Offsets are measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Carbon Positive	A carbon positive project, e.g. a building, goes beyond achieving net-zero carbon emissions. It makes use of low carbon materials and produces an energy surplus under operation which sends back to the grid. This creates an environmental benefit by removing additional carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
Carbon Zero	The state where no carbon emissions are being produced from a particular human activity. For example, carbon zero homes are those which do not produce any greenhouse gas emission in their operation (note, some material used in construction may have produced greenhouse gas emission which are not included).
Catchment Area	Catchment areas (or drainage basins), are locations in low lying regions where water from higher areas collects when it rains, into a single water body, which finds its way into streams, rivers, and lakes.
Circular Economy	An economic model whereby waste is eliminated, and closed loop systems are created to ensure the continual and effective use of existing resources for as long as possible (see also Closed Loop System).
Climate Change	A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period (typically decades or longer).
Climate Change Adaptation	Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects. Adaptation seeks to reduce the risks from and the impact of expected changes weather patterns.
Climate Change Mitigation	Actions taken to avoid and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere with an aim to reduce impacts to the point where they have no adverse effects.
Climate Crisis / Climate Emergency	The term refers to the severe adverse effects of climate change because of human activity, posing a threat to the biosphere and humanity. This terminology reflects the urgency of action required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Climate Focus Area (CFA)	Areas selected to pilot and showcase best practise and accelerated action on climate change, in collaboration with public authorities, charities, residents, landowners and businesses. Targeting a designated area within the county allows for more focused, ambitious, and intensive action within shorter time frames where learning and acquired new knowledge of positive impacts can quickly be disseminated across the county.
Coastal Flooding	A situation when dry and low-lying coastal land is submerged by seawater because of waves, tides, storm surge, or heavy rainfall from coastal storms.
Closed Loop System	The term refers to the product life cycle of the Circular Economy system where products are recycled and reused to produce additional products without degradation of properties. This system aims at waste elimination by converting the used product back to the raw material.
Colonising Species	Colonisation (in biology) is the process whereby a species succeeds in spreading to and become established in new areas or habitats.
Commercial Waste	Any waste produced from premises used for the purposes of a trade or business, including sport, recreation, education, or entertainment.
Community Energy	The term refers to community-led projects that aim to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy, whereby the local community benefits collectively from the outcomes. These projects can be wholly owned and/or controlled by communities or through partnership with commercial or public sector partners.
Composting	The biological process of decomposing organic solid materials into simple organic and inorganic compounds. The process involves organic matter, e.g. plant materials and animal manures, moisture, oxygen, and bacteria. The product, a humus-like material, is a good plant fertilizer.
Decarbonisation	The process of removing carbon from a product or to reduce the amount of gaseous carbon compounds released in or because of a process.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Decibel (dB)	The unit of measuring sound intensity.
Demonstrator Project	A project used to promote innovations and showcase best practice. A demonstrator project can help develop an evidence base to test and support improvements in different sectors.
Electric Forecourt	An all-electric car charging facility.
Electric Vehicle	A vehicle which runs either partially or fully on electricity through an electric motor, as opposed to using fossil fuels.
Electrification	The process of converting a machine or system to the use of electricity as a source of energy, replacing technologies that use fossil fuels.
Electrolysis	A non-spontaneous chemical reaction effected by use of electric current whereby substances are decomposed into simpler ones through losing or gaining an electron.
Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)	A rating that measures the energy performance of buildings. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is graded on a scale of A (most efficient) to G (least efficient) and have two metrics: a fuel cost-based energy performance rating and a rating relating to CO ₂ emissions.
Environment Land Management Schemes (or Environmental Land Management System)	A set of three new schemes announced by the government in March 2021 that will reward environmental land management. These schemes are: Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery. Farmers and other land managers may be paid for delivering the following public goods: clean air; clean and plentiful water; thriving plants and wildlife; protection from environmental hazards; beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment; reduction of and adaptation to climate change.
Erosion	The geological process by which soil, rock, or dissolved earthen materials are worn away and transported from one location to another by natural forces such as wind or water.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Essex Design Guide	This is a reference guide that was established in 1973 by Essex County Council to help create high quality places with an identity specific to its Essex context. There was a 2005 publication and a 2018 edition which seeks to address the evolution of socio-economic impacts on place-making.
Essex Waste Partnership	The collaboration of Essex County Council with the 12 city, district, borough councils and the unitary authority of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. This was set up to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable waste management across the county and Southend, with the aim to reduce and reuse as much waste as possible.
Fertiliser	A natural or synthetic substance which is added to the soil to promote plant growth.
Fossil Fuels	Fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas, which contain carbon and release energy in combustion. Fossil fuels were formed because of natural processes (such as anaerobic decomposition) acting on the remains of buried organic matter of ancient plants and animals, which began in the Archean Eon (4.0 billion to 2.5 billion years ago). Fossil fuels also include oil shales, bitumen's, tar sands, and heavy oils.
Freeports	Secure customs zones located at maritime ports or airports, where business can be carried out inside a country's land border, and different customs rules apply. Freeports can reduce administrative burdens and tariff controls, provide relief from duties, and import taxes, and ease tax and planning regulations.
Fuel Cell	A device that converts the chemical energy of a fuel into electricity.
Fuel Poverty	Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low-Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under the LILEE indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below, and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line. www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Garden Town	The concept originated from the Garden City movement of urban planning in the 19th and early 20th century and referred to well-planned, sustainable towns. According to the Town and County Planning Association, a garden town or city is a “holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment, tackles climate change and provides high quality housing locally and accessible jobs in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities”.
Gas Network	The network of transmission and distribution pipes that transports gas to homes and businesses.
Geodiversity	The term refers to the variety of earth materials, (rocks, minerals, fossils), natural processes and structures, landforms, and soils that that compose and shape the physical landscape and environment. Together with biodiversity, geodiversity constitutes the natural diversity of planet Earth.
Green Construction (or Green Building)	The term refers to both a structure and the application of principles in its design, construction and operation that aim to reduce or eliminate negative and create positive impacts for the climate and the environment, promote resource-efficiency throughout a building’s life-cycle, and improve quality of life.
Green Economy	A model of economy where the reduction of the environmental impact of business enterprises results in economic advantages for the companies themselves.
Green Finance	Financial activity that employs financial instruments and services promoting the development of sustainable business models and mobilise investment that ensure a clean and resilient growth with environmentally positive outcome.
Green Growth	A model of economic development that promotes environmental sustainability and synergies between environment and economy.
Green Hydrogen	A form of clean fuel, produced by the electrolysis of water that is powered by renewable forms of energy (e.g. Solar PV or a wind turbine). In this form, hydrogen has significant potential to provide a clean energy source for manufacturing, transportation, and more.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Green Industries	Economic activity which continuously seeks to reduce environmental impacts as a result of their processes and products, through environmentally responsible practices, efficient use of resources, green investments, use of renewable energy sources, and elimination of risks to the environment, climate, and people.
Green Infrastructure	(see Natural Green Infrastructure).
Green Procurement	The process whereby organizations meet their needs of supplies and services, utilities and works not only on a value-for-money basis, but also with a commitment to use less harmful or environmentally friendly products and practices.
Green Retrofits	(see Retrofits)
Greenhouse Gas (GHG)	Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to climate change. This causes the greenhouse effect. Water vapour (H ₂ O), carbon dioxide (CO ₂), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), methane (CH ₄) and ozone (O ₃) are the primary greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
Habitat	The home environment for plants, animals, or other organisms; a place that meets all the environmental conditions this organism needs to survive, e.g. shelter, water, food, and space.
Heat Pump	A device which can be used to cool or heat a building. It works by pumping or transferring heat from one place to another, by using a compressor and a circulating structure of liquid or gas refrigerant, through which heat is extracted from outside sources and pumped indoors.
Incineration	A waste treatment method which involves the combustion of the organic substances contained in waste materials. The volume of the original waste can be reduced by 95-96 per cent and the solid mass by around 80-85 per cent; however, this method creates pollutants.
Industrial Revolution	The transition from primarily agrarian and handicraft economies, to economies based on mechanized manufacturing of goods and large-scale industry. This transformation of agriculture, industry, transport, and communications were enabled by the use of steam technology, and a series of inventions and technological innovations, that took place between mid-18th to mid-19th century.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Integrated Water Management	A model of collaborative process for planning and management of water, land, and related resources, to minimise damage to life and property, and to maximise the economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.
Land Management	The process of managing the use and development of land resources including farming, greenspace management, wildlife areas, woodlands etc.
Land Use	The function of land and what it is used for. Land use varies from area to area. In rural areas (countryside) land use can include forestry and farming. In urban areas (towns and cities) land use could be housing or industry.
Landfill	A common form of waste disposal, through burying in a landfill site.
Life-cycle Analysis	A method used to evaluate the environmental impacts associated with a product, through its life cycle from the extraction and processing of the raw materials, to its final disposal.
Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery	A ventilation system that continuously extracts stale and moisture-laden air from habitable rooms whilst supplying fresh, filtered air, to ensure good indoor air quality, and avoid condensation.
Mitigation	(see Climate Change Mitigation)
Mudflats (also Tidal flats)	Level tracts lying below the surface of water, in sheltered coastal environments such as estuaries, creek systems and lagoons, created by sedimentary deposition. Mudflats may form the largest part of the intertidal area and they play an important role in coastal defence, dissipating wave energy. Mudflats are habitats with high ecological value as they support large numbers of birds and fish.
Natural Flood Management	A system whereby natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion, for example: restoring bends in rivers, changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water and creating saltmarshes on the coast to absorb wave energy.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Natural Green Infrastructure	(also Green Infrastructure) – A strategically planned and delivered network of green spaces in an area which conserves wildlife, natural ecosystem values and functions, sustains clean water and air, and provides a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife. This includes parks, open spaces, woodlands, rivers, and allotments.
Nature Recovery Networks	A joined-up system of places important for wild plants and animals, on land and at sea. It allows plants, animals, seeds, nutrients, and water to move from place to place and enables the natural world to adapt to change. It provides plants and animals with places to live, feed and breed.
Net-zero carbon	The state where there is a balance between the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by a human activity, and the amount which is removed. A commitment to net-zero carbon is associated with a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to achieve this balance.
Overheating (in buildings)	A state where conditions in a building cause an accumulation of heat which can make occupants feel uncomfortable or heat stressed. The definition of “overheating” varies as it depends on local and regional climatic conditions. According to the World Health Organisation, ideally the room temperature should be kept below 32°C during the day and 24°C during the night.
Paris Agreement	A legally binding international agreement on climate change, adopted in 2015 at the Paris Climate Conference (Conference of the Parties – COP21). It aims at reducing greenhouse gases emissions to limit global temperature rise and support countries’ adaptation to climate change catastrophic events.
Photovoltaics (or Photovoltaic Systems)	Panels made of certain types of materials called semiconductors, such as silicon, which are used to collect solar energy and convert it directly into electricity.
Renewable Energy	Energy collected from renewable sources which are infinite and constantly replenished, e.g. solar energy and wind energy.
Resilience	The capacity of a natural system to recover from disturbance.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Restoration	The process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed. An ecosystem has recovered when it contains sufficient biotic and abiotic resources to continue its development without further assistance or subsidy. It would sustain itself structurally and functionally, demonstrate resilience to normal ranges of environmental stress and disturbance, and interact with contiguous ecosystems in terms of biotic and abiotic flows and cultural interactions.
Retrofitting	The addition of new components, technology, or features to a product or a system, to reduce carbon emissions and increase its efficiency.
Ringfence Income	To place restrictions on grants or funds so they can only be used for a specific purpose.
Salt Marsh	An area of low and flat coastal grassland between land and saltwater or brackish water, that is covered with grasses and grass like plants and is regularly flooded by seawater.
Solar Farm	(also Solar Park) – A large-scale installation where photovoltaic panels are used to collect solar energy, which is a form of renewable energy. Solar energy is converted into electricity which feeds into the power grid for distribution to the consumers.
Sustainability	A characteristic or state whereby the needs of the present and local population can be met without compromising the ability of future generations or populations in other locations to meet their needs.
Sustainable Building Materials	Materials that do not deplete non-renewable natural resources, have no adverse impact on the environment when used for construction, and do not pose specific risk to people's safety.
Sustainable Drainage Systems	Systems used to manage surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution) biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity.
Sustainable Farming Practices	See Sustainable Land Stewardship

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Sustainable Land Stewardship	A range of farm systems and strategies applied to agriculture and land use, and have a positive environmental effect lowering global carbon emissions. Sustainable agricultural systems exhibit key attributes such as: Use of efficient crop and animal varieties; Limit external inputs; Exploit natural biological processes; Minimise physical and chemical technologies that have adverse impacts on the environment and human health; Use local human resources, and Lower use of valuable resources and production of damaging resources.
Urban Heat Island (UHI)	This effect occurs when an urban area is significantly warmer than its nearby rural areas due to human activities. This is related to how well the surfaces in each environment absorb and retain heat. UHI is most noticeable during the summer and winter.
Warm Tarmac (or Warm Asphalt)	A 'warm mix' asphalt solution, which has been trialled on road repair work in Essex. This form of asphalt uses less energy when it is being mixed and laid so it is more environmentally friendly. Transportation cost savings can be achieved as the supply source is within Essex. The overall reduction of carbon emissions from the use of this material is estimated to exceed 25 per cent.
Walkable Neighbourhood	A neighbourhood where active and sustainable ways of transportation, such as walking and cycling area increased and motor vehicle traffic reduced. The objective is to design neighbourhoods where all key facilities are with a 15-20-minute walk.
Waste Treatment	Activities carried out on waste to ensure that it has the least detrimental impact on the environment.
Natural Corridors (also Wildlife or Habitat Corridors)	Wildlife areas in the landscape designed to keep connected local wildlife populations which would otherwise be fragmented by human activities.
Washland	Areas of land adjacent to rivers which are used as flood storage areas when the rivers are high, to reduce flooding in residential or agricultural areas. Several washlands include important nature reserves.

Glossary

Key term / Phrase	Definition
Wind Farm	(also, Wind Park or Wind Power Station) – An installation of wind turbines in the same location, used to “harvest” wind energy turning this into electricity. Wind farms can be either onshore or offshore.
World Economic Forum	International Organisation for Public-Private Cooperation.

Acronym / abbreviation	Definition
3PR	The 3 Parking Rules: Care Consideration and Caution. The 3PR initiative promotes a set of guidelines for parents to improve car-parking safety around schools.
AMOC	Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation.
CO₂ e	Carbon dioxide equivalent. A unit for measuring the impact on global warming of any quantity and type of different greenhouse gases, in terms of the amount of CO ₂ that would create the equivalent global warming impact.
COP26	The 26th United Nations’ Climate Change Conference of Parties, which will be hosted in Glasgow, UK, on 01-12 November 2021. The aim of the summit is to accelerate action towards the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
EF	Electric Forecourt.
EV	Electric Vehicle.
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate.
KWh	Kilowatt-hour: a unit of energy which measures how much energy is being used.
LED	Light-emitting diode: energy-saving light source.
LU&GI	Land Use & Green Infrastructure.
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Glossary

Acronym / abbreviation	Definition
MTCO₂ Eq	Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. A metric measure used to compare the emissions from different greenhouse gases based upon their global warming potential (GWP).
NOx	Nitrogen Oxides. Compounds of nitrogen and oxygen produced during combustion.
SuDS	Sustainable drainage systems.
PV	Photovoltaics.

Full list of Commissioners

Our Commissioners are:



Lord Randall of Uxbridge
(Chair)



Prajwal
(co-chair)*



Daniel
(co-chair)*



Prof. Jules Pretty
University of Essex



Prof. Graham Underwood
University of Essex



Prof. Aled Jones
Anglia Ruskin University



Prof. Peter Hobson
Writtle University College



Dr Simon Lyster
Northumbrian/Essex &
Suffolk Water



Prof. Jacqueline McGlade
Institute for Global
Prosperity, University
College London

*Our co-chairs cannot be identified in full for safeguarding reasons.

Our Commissioners are:



Dr Adam Read

Chartered Institution of
Wastes Management
and SUEZ Recycling &
Recovery UK Ltd



Toddington Harper

Gridserve



Ian Davidson

Tendring District Council



Jonathan Stephenson

Brentwood Borough
Council



John Lippe

Ford Motor Company



Right Rev. Roger Morris

Church of England



Rob Pilley

BBC



Natalie Chapman

Logistics UK



John Henry

Mid and South Essex NHS
Foundation Trust



Rob Wise

National Farmers Union

Our Commissioners are:



Jake Richards
National Farmers Union



Catherine Cameron
Agulhas Applied
Knowledge



Dr Laura Mansel-Thomas
Ingleton Wood



Jo Roberts
Wilderness Foundation



Heather Hilburn
Thames Estuary
Partnership



Dr Poone Yazdanpanah
Writtle University College



Peta Denham
Environment Agency



Chloe Rose
RSPB



Victoria Hills
The Royal Town Planning
Institute



Cllr. Peter Davey
Essex Association of
Local Councils

Our Commissioners are:



Simon Walsh (former Cllr)

Essex County Council
(Conservative)



Robert Mitchell (former Cllr)

Essex County Council
(Conservative)



Cllr. Sue Lissimore

Essex County Council
(Conservative)



James Abbott (former Cllr)

Essex County Council
(Green Party and
representing the non-
aligned group)



Cllr. Ivan Henderson

Essex County Council
(Labour)



Mark Carroll

Essex County Council



Julia Crear

Living Streets



Jillian Anable

University of Leeds

Technical Annex

We recognise we could not include everything in this report, so we have created detailed documents (technical annexes) consisting of in-depth scientific information and diagrams. They explain how they are contributing to climate change and helping us to achieve net zero.

For more information on the core themes please click the following links:

[Land Use & Green Infrastructure](#)

[Energy](#)

[Built Environment](#)

[Waste](#)

[Transport](#)

[Community Engagement](#)

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This document has been prepared by officers of Essex County Council to provide technical assistance to the Essex Climate Action Commission. Accordingly, this document constitutes factual analysis of the issues under review by the Essex Climate Action Commission and should not be taken as constituting recommendations or opinions of the authors.

Report title: 2021/22 Financial Overview as at the First Quarter Stage	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Cllr Christopher Whitbread, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Nicole Wood, Executive Director, Corporate Services and Adrian Osborne, Head of Strategic Finance and Insight email Adrian.osborne2@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the current forecast financial position of Essex County Council's (ECC) revenue and capital budgets as at the first quarter stage of the 2021/22 financial year. There is a forecast over spend of **£5.3m** (0.5%) against a net revenue budget of **£1bn**. The overall over spend position is driven largely by a heightened level of risk within Adult Social Care and pressures within Waste Reduction and Recycling.
- 1.2 At this early stage of the financial year there is a significant level of uncertainty and risk around the forecast for 2021/22. In the coming months ECC will continue to face considerable turbulence regarding the real impact of easing of pandemic restrictions, of entering the start of a third wave and of an upcoming winter period managing both COVID-19 and a possible resurgence of flu. All of these factors influence underlying patterns of demand, require careful monitoring and are likely to result in ongoing volatility of forecasting as we move through the year, making it difficult to produce an accurate forecast.
- 1.3 Adult Social Care continues to feel and respond to the significant impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, in particular the consequences of paused work and backlog on teams of reviews and assessments, changing demographics projections and the demand for services. The care market also manages the impact with both resident population plus staff recruitment and retention being key factors. These elements have created a challenge to manage within the service budget, together with uncertainty in the accuracy of future demand predictions.
- 1.4 We have continued to receive funding from Government to meet the substantial COVID-19 costs we are facing, and we currently estimate the funding will cover in full the known direct costs and liabilities we are experiencing from the pandemic.

- 1.5 There is an under spend of **£6.3m** (2%) on capital against the current budget of **£309.1m**. After taking account of budget change requests in this report there will be a residual under spend of **£167,000** (0.05%).

2. Recommendations

Approval is sought for the following:

- 2.1 To draw down funds from reserves as follows:

- i. **£1.3m** from the Adults Digital Programme Reserve to the Adult Social Care and Health portfolio to fund projects within the digital programme (section 5.1.iv)
- ii. **£1.2m** from the Insurance Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio in respect of recovery of income relating to Highways claims, to meet ECC budget pressures in 2021/22 as planned in February budget setting (section 5.15.iii)
- iii. **£3.7m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Adult Social Care and Health portfolio to support the COVID Resilience Fund (section 5.1.iv)
- iv. **£2.5m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio relating to: Essex Outdoors loss of income (**£2.4m**), additional staff required in Registrations (**£105,000**) and Coroner's inquest backlog (**£35,000**) (section 5.3.ii)
- v. **£1.6m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS relating to Delivery and Assurance (**£1.3m**), Transactional services staffing (**£150,000**), staffing re Entry Level Employment (**£149,000**), and People Operations (**£65,000**) (section 5.15.iii)
- vi. **£1.4m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS (**£1.3m**) and to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio (**£87,000**) relating to Business Support (sections 5.13.iii & 5.15.iii)
- vii. **£441,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport portfolio to cover lost income within Park & Ride services due to the impact of COVID (section 5.9.iv)
- viii. **£1.7m** from the Technology Solutions Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio relating to the Social Care Platform Programme (section 5.15.iii)

- ix. **£1.6m** from the Transformation Reserve to Children's Services and Early Years portfolio to support the 2021/22 budget (section 5.2.ii)
- x. **£903,000** from the Transformation Reserve to the Adult Social Care and Health portfolio; to support the savings programme (**£843,000**) and for the Independent Living Programme (**£60,000**) (section 5.1.iv)
- xi. **£654,000** from the Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) Equalisation Reserves to the Education Excellence, Skills and Training portfolio in relation to Debden PFI (**£389,000**) and Clacton secondary schools PFI (**£265,000**) (section 5.7.iii)
- xii. **£584,000** from the Ambition Fund Reserve to the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS portfolio relating to the Just About Managing project to cover the costs associated with the Working Families Initiative (section 5.13.iii)
- xiii. **£220,000** from the Ambition Fund Reserve to the Adult Social Care and Health portfolio towards funding for Mental Health (section 5.1.iv)
- xiv. **£187,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS (**£44,000**) and Leader RSSS portfolio (**£143,000**) to the Communications and Marketing team for pandemic related media campaigns (sections 5.13.iii & 5.16.ii).
- xv. **£383,000** from the Transformation reserve to the Children's Services and Early Years portfolio to support the Divisional Based Intervention Team within the Children's Sustainability Programme (section 5.2.ii)
- xvi. **£33,000** from the Transformation Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio relating to Technology Services Portfolio project. This was previously approved (FP/387/03/19) but has time lapsed (section 5.15.iii)
- xvii. **£28,000** from the Quadrennial Election Reserve to the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio relating to costs of the May 2021 elections (section 5.3.ii)
- xviii. **£25,000** from the Collection Fund Risk Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio to support analysis of the pandemic impact (section 5.15.iii).
- xix. **£125,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Children's Services and Early Years portfolio for the Family Innovation Fund Extra (section 5.2.ii)

2.2 To appropriate funds to reserves as follows:

- i. **£2.5m** to the Children's Transformation Reserve from the Children's Services and Early Years portfolio appropriating the Social Care Grant settlement to the reserve until it is required (section 5.2.ii)
- ii. **£2.3m** to the Waste Reserve from the Waste Reduction and Recycling portfolio due to a lower inflationary increase than budgeted (section 5.11.iii)
- iii. **£1.1m** to the Commercial Investment in Essex Places Reserve from the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio due to the receipt following the sale of Schools payroll (section 5.15.iii)
- iv. **£6,000** to the Community Initiatives Fund Reserve from Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio following receipt of grant, which will be utilised before planned use of reserves (section 5.3.ii).
- v. **£314,000** to the Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) Equalisation Reserves from the Education Excellence, Skills and Training portfolio in relation to Building Schools for the Future (section 5.7.iii)
- vi. **£150,000** to the Technology Solutions Reserve from the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS portfolio to support future years Technology programmes (section 5.15.iii)

2.3 To approve the following adjustments:

- i. Transfer the balance of funds relating to the Children's Sustainability programme, which are currently ringfenced in the Transformation reserve, to the Children's Transformation Reserve. The balance to be moved, after requests in this report, is **£3m**.
- ii. Agree to fund all future requests to withdraw money from reserves against decisions previously taken with respect to providing additional funding to services for COVID related reasons from the COVID Equalisation reserve, rather than the reserve(s) originally agreed.
- iii. Agreement is therefore sought that up to **£16.8m** which has not been drawn down but which was previously authorised to be drawn down from various sources (as set out in **Appendix E**) will now, if required, be drawn down from Covid Equalisation Reserve.
- iv. Vire **£33,000** from the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio to Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture portfolio to fund an additional post in relation to Brexit within Trading Standards (sections 5.3.ii & 5.4.ii)

- v. Vire **£40,000** from Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio to Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS portfolio to align delivery of a saving from Strategic Partnerships to Equalities and Diversity (sections 5.3.ii & 5.13.iii)
- vi. Agree that authority is given to draw down up to **£13m** from the Waste Reserve on an incremental basis but that the money may be drawn down in phases as determined by the Executive Director, Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs to resource the resolution of a dispute (including the referring of the dispute to litigation). This reflects the change in post title and structure of the original authorisation FP/655/11/16.
- vii. To create a new Equalities Fund Reserve to set aside resources to support the focus on the people and places where the council can make the biggest difference to improve lives, and to transfer **£10.3m** from the Collection Fund Risk Reserve to this reserve.
- viii. To amend the capital budget as shown in Appendices C (i) and C (ii) which allows for capital slippage of **£21.7m**, capital budget additions of **£15.1m**, capital budget reductions of **£1.5m** and advanced works of **£2m** (see section 7.2).

3. Executive Summary: Revenue

- 3.1 Appendix A summarises the revenue budgets and forecast outturn for each portfolio. There is a full year forecast over spend of **£5.3m (0.5%** against a net budget of **£1bn)**. The overall over spend position is driven by uncertainty and pressure within Adult Social Care and Health, and Waste Reduction and Recycling and specifically:
 - i. Adult Social Care and Health **£4.2m** - There are currently increasing volumes of domiciliary care, increasing levels of referrals to Occupational Therapists and for equipment and reductions in people self-caring following reablement. Face to face assessments are beginning to restart, and we expect to gain more clarity in the upcoming months on the sustained level of demand and the impact this has on financial delivery.
 - ii. Waste Reduction and Recycling **£1.5m** relating to over spends in Integrated Waste Management with non-delivery of 2020/21 savings that have yet to be mitigated.
- 3.2 We continue to face cost pressures and income losses related to COVID-19. There is still considerable uncertainty regarding the real impact of easing of restrictions, of entering the start of a third wave, and of an upcoming winter

period managing both COVID-19 and a possible resurgence of flu. All of these factors influence underlying patterns of demand, require careful monitoring and are likely to result in ongoing volatility of forecasting as we move through the year, making it difficult to produce an accurate forecast.

- 3.3 The Council has continued to be proactive in its response to COVID-19 and has been allocated in the region of £50m of funding from Government to support with general and specific COVID-19 pressures in 2021/22. Including the funds applied to the COVOD Equalisation reserve and specific grants carried forward at Provisional Outturn we have circa £110m available. It is currently anticipated that most of this funding will be fully utilised in 2021/22, based on the known knowns at present. Should the current situation surrounding COVID deteriorate, this funding position will be re-evaluated.
- 3.4 Requests to withdraw £10m to support COVID pressures and income losses are proposed in this report. This is the first tranche of known pressures in 2021/22, and includes £3.7m for the continuation of the COVID Resilience Fund, which reimburses some of the additional costs due to COVID incurred by Adult Social Care providers, and £2.4m for income losses experienced by Essex Outdoors sites due to COVID.
- 3.5 With the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme extended until 30 September 2021, as set out last year there is still a risk that the 2022/23 Council Tax base will be negatively impacted, which could result in a significant funding reduction for the Council. Unemployment rates of up to 6.5% are forecast for the end of this year and will be monitored closely throughout the year.
- 3.6 The position reported in section 5 is after proposed adjustments in this report, set out in sections 2.1 to 2.3.

4. Executive Summary: Capital

- 4.1 The original capital programme for 2021/22 as set by Full Council in February 2021 was **£290.3m**. The forecast outturn is **£302.8m**, before adjustments proposed within this report. This represents an under spend of **£6.3m** against latest budget of **£309.1m**. After taking account of budget change requests in this report, there is a residual under spend of **£167,000**. More detail is set out in Section 7.
- 4.2 The **£6.3m** under spend in the Capital Programme position relates to the following requests in this report:
- Slippage: £21.7m
 - Additions: £15.1m
 - Reductions: £1.5m
 - Advanced Works: £2m

- 4.3 Appendix C (i) summarises current year forecasts and changes to the Capital Programme for 2021/22 since approval of the original programme in the Budget Report to Council in February 2021. Appendix C (ii) contains the detail of the budget adjustments seeking approval.

5. Revenue Position

5.1 Adult Social Care and Health – £4.2m (1.0%) over spend

- i. Adult Social Care continues to feel and respond to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the consequences of paused work and backlog on teams, of reviews and assessments, changing demographics projections and the demand for services. The care market also manages the impact with both resident population and staff recruitment and retention a factor. These elements have all created both a challenge to manage within the budget set, together with the levels of historical data and intelligence, to enable future forecasting to accurately predict demand.
- ii. Public Health is forecast to spend in line with budget. Within the online position, there are a number of decisions that are expected to be funded by additional 'Contain Management Outbreak' funding ECC has received. At this early stage it is anticipated that all funding will be fully spent, this will continue to be monitored throughout the course of the year.
- iii. Within the overall forecast position reported for Adult Social Care, there are **£1.8m** of savings reflected as not deliverable, due to slippage in the Connect Programme resulting from COVID related delays. There are a number of demand pressures including mental health wellbeing and assessment which have increased over and above the assumptions made when setting the budget. Some of the demand pressures are as a result of placements made on the Hospital Discharge pathway, those over and above the normal placement trend are claimable from Health funding, the current guidance states that any cost associated with placements is capped at 6 weeks for placements made from 1st April to 30th June reducing to 4 weeks for placements made from 1st July to 30th September. At this stage Discharge to Assess processes are expected to continue beyond the end of September but there is no funding associated with this.
- iv. Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£3.7m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to support the COVID Resilience Fund with funds contributed to the reserve as per the Provisional Outturn report
 - **£1.3m** draw down from the Adults Digital Programme Reserve to fund projects within the digital programme

- **£220,000** from the Ambition Fund Reserve towards funding for Mental Health
- **£843,000** from the Transformation reserve to support the following; **£537,000** MLM savings programme, **£237,000** Choice & Control savings programme and **£69,000** PSI savings programme
- **£60,000** from the Transformation Reserve for the Independent Living programme

5.2 Children's Services and Early Years:

- **Non DSG - £31,000 (>0.05%) under spend**
 - **DSG - £30,000 (7.6%) under spend**
- This position reflects budgeted expenditure through the year of potential children in care placements, which may be required due to the pent up demand arising from lockdowns, as evidenced through increased contacts and caseload within the children's social care system. Given the volatility of this spend, should the demand not materialise and there are fewer placements into care, then an opportunity may be realised. The position will be kept under review.
 - Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£2.5m** to the Children's Transformation Reserve appropriating the Social Care Grant settlement to the reserve until it is required
 - **£1.6m** from the Transformation Reserve to support the 2021/22 budget
 - **£383,000** from the Transformation reserve to support the Divisional Based Intervention Team within the Children's Sustainability Programme
 - **£125,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve earmarked for Family Innovation Fund Extra.

5.3 Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance - **£28,000 (0.1%) under spend**

- The portfolio reports an under spend of **£28,000** which is attributable to Emergency Planning expecting additional income from Districts. Income relates to support provided by an Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer. The remainder of the portfolio is broadly online
- Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£2.5m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve relating to; Essex Outdoors loss of income (**£2.4m**), additional staff required in Registrations (**£105,000**) and Coroner's inquest backlog (**£35,000**)
 - **£44,000** to be vired to Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS to align delivery of a saving from Strategic Partnerships to Equalities and Diversity
 - **£33,000** to be vired to Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture to fund an additional post in relation to Brexit within Trading Standards

- **£28,000** from the Quadrennial Election Reserve relating to costs of the May 2021 elections
- **£6,000** to the Community Initiatives Fund Reserves appropriated to the reserve until expenditure is incurred

5.4 Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture - £26,000 (0.7%) over spend

- There is a small over spend forecast within this portfolio.
- Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£33,000** to be vired from the Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance portfolio to fund an additional post in relation to Brexit within Trading Standards

5.5 Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning - £16,000 (0.2%) over spend

- There is a small over spend forecast within this portfolio.

5.6 Education Excellence, Skills and Training (DSG) - £2.1m under spend

- The High Needs Block (HNB) funding was increased by the Government by **£18.2m** (post recoupment) for 2021/22. The HNB was expected to return to a surplus by the end of this financial year, however, after two months, it is forecasting to remain **£1.0m in deficit**.
- The main pressures are:
 - Independent Schools are forecasting a **£2.6m** over spend, a 16.5% increase in expenditure compared to 2020/21. The 2021/22 budget is **£25.0m**, an increase of 23.5% from 2020/21, following expenditure of **£23.7m** resulting in a **£3.4m** over spend last year. Further work is underway within the Children and Families service to review this forecast.
 - Number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) have risen by 9.5% since January 2020. Although this is less than the national average of 10.4%, this growth is greater than anticipated in the budget
 - Funding for banding changes and new starters in special schools
 - Interim funding solution for Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) provisions, potential minimum cost **£135,000**
- The Central School Services Block is forecasting an in year **£2.7m** over spend, which is mostly due to **£2.1m** carry forward being transferred to the SEND and PRU capital project as this funding is received for this purpose as part of the historic commitment allocation.

5.7 Education Excellence, Skills and Training - £25,000 (0.1%) over spend

- A small forecast over spend of **£25,000** is reported. However Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Operations continue to face

significant pressures with rising numbers of applications for EHCP. COVID-19 has delayed the assessment process resulting in a backlog, with new cases adding to the pressures, and the potential for an increase in tribunals. This is reported as an unquantified risk.

- ii. The inaugural meeting of the Education Recovery Task Force has taken place, with terms of reference being agreed. The Leader's Budget announcement included **£1.5m** to support this task force's work, including up to **£500,000** to expand the summer holiday scheme to a wider group than just those in receipt of free school meals and to support formal learning catch up. An additional **£500,000** was committed to support children's emotional wellbeing and mental health, with the Task Force being required to assess the impact of the pandemic on children's emotional wellbeing and mental health and determine where best to allocate this funding.
- iii. Approval is sought in this report for:
 - **£654,000** from the PFI Equalisation Reserves for Debden (£389,000) and Clacton (£265,000) PFI schemes
 - **£314,000** returned to the PFI Equalisation reserves for Building Schools for the Future

5.8 Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs - £3,000 (>0.05%) over spend

- i. The portfolio is reported as broadly online, with a small **£3,000** forecast over spend.

5.9 Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport - £11,000 (>0.05%) under spend

- i. The small forecast over spend is attributable to in-year staffing vacancies across policy lines forecast to be filled later in the financial year
- ii. Within the position there are income losses of **£748,000** within Park and Ride as a result of low patronage, due to low consumer confidence as a result of the pandemic. A draw down of **£441,000** will be sought from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to mitigate these losses. Should income levels start to improve as passenger numbers increase following lifting of lockdown restrictions then this will be returned to reserves.
- iii. There have been savings within Passenger Transport of **£700,000** which is mainly due to reaching an agreement with bus operators for Concessionary Fares at a lower cost than anticipated. This is partially offset with pressures of non-delivery of savings of **£334,000**.
- iv. Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£441,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to cover Park & Ride income losses due to the continued impact of restrictions associated

with the government roadmap which cannot be recovered from CBSSG (Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant).

5.10 Leader - £7,000 (0.3%) under spend

- i. The under spend is wholly attributable to Democratic Core, where there are small Chief Executive and Strategy, Insight and Engagement management team staffing under spends. Budgets for people in post were set marginally higher than the costs that are being incurred.

5.11 Waste Reduction and Recycling - £1.5m (1.8%) over spend

- i. The forecast over spend position is due to; **£927,000** pressure as a result of the non-delivery of savings that are in the baseline budget for 2021/22 which have yet to find a mitigation, **£352,000** additional costs of waste transfer stations in the south of county to help support District partners to dispose at a local site, and **£140,000** additional green waste disposal contractual commitments that have arisen as a result of the pandemic.
- ii. As a result of the anticipated inflation and market price increases not materialising following the procurement exercise, **£2.3m** will be returned to reserves.
- iii. Approval is sought in this report for:
 - **£2.3m** to the Waste Reserve as the inflationary increase built in at budget setting in relation to the procurement is not needed as the tender came in lower than had been anticipated.

5.12 Other Operating Costs – on line

- i. It is currently too early to forecast a different economic impact than budgeted on interest rates and capital borrowing, therefore Other Operating Costs is currently forecast as online. However, there is an unquantified opportunity within interest payable/receivable should interest rates and the level of balances held be favourable against budget due to improvements in the economic environment

5.13 Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance Recharged Strategic Support Services - £111,000 (0.7%) under spend

- i. The under spend of **£111,000** is reported after proposed adjustments. This is attributable to staffing under spends in Democratic Services **£44,000**, Equality and Diversity **£13,000** and Performance, Business Intelligence, Planning and Partnerships **£70,000** driven by vacancies, although recruitment is underway.
- ii. These under spends are partly offset by a **£23,000** under achievement reported in Internal Audit income as the service are awaiting confirmation that some of the external audit work that has previously been undertaken

will continue. There is an opportunity that the consultancy budget can under spend to offset this, but this is uncertain at the moment.

- iii. Approval is sought in this report for the following:
- **£1.3m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve relating to Business Support
 - **£584,000** from the Ambition Fund Reserve relating to the Just About Managing project to cover the costs associated with the Working Families Initiative
 - **£44,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve relating to pandemic related media campaigns
 - **£44,000** to be vired from Community, Equality, Partnerships to align delivery of a saving from Strategic Partnerships to Equalities and Diversity

5.14 Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning Recharged Strategic Support Services - £6,000 (0.5%) under spend

- i. The small forecast under spend is due to a small staffing under spend.

5.15 Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs Recharged Strategic Support Services - £159,000 (0.2%) under spend

- i. The forecast under spend is due to the forecast vacancy factor across Information Services - **£82,000**. Should the pace of recruitment increase, this favourable variance will be negated. There is a further under spend within Information Services under Information Governance of **£24,000** where recruitment has also been delayed to Information Governance Officer and Apprentice posts. Within Customer Services there is a **£35,000** under spend in this portfolio – however; this is due to an adjustment across cost centres in another portfolio; from a Functional perspective however, Contact Centres position is online.
- ii. There are also a number of smaller favourable variances on staffing across the portfolio.
- iii. Approval is sought in this report for the following:
- **£1.7m** from the Technology Solutions Reserve relating to the Social Care Platform Programme
 - **£1.6m** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS relating to the Delivery and Assurance team (**£1.3m**), Transactional services staffing (**£150,000**), staffing re Entry Level Employment (**£149,000**), and the People Operations team (**£65,000**)
 - **£1.2m** from the Insurance Reserve in respect of recovery of income relating to Highways claims, to meet ECC budget pressures in 2021/22, as planned in February budget setting
 - **£1.1m** to the Commercial Investment in Essex Places Reserve due to the Sale of Schools payroll receipt

- **£150,000** to the Technology Solutions Reserve to support future years Technology programmes
- **£87,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve relating to Business Support
- **£33,000** from the Transformation Reserve relating to Technology Services Portfolio Project. This was previously approved (FP/387/03/19) but has time lapsed
- **£25,000** from the Collection Fund Risk Reserve to support the data and analytics team to analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.16 Leader Recharged Support Services - £71,000 (4.0%) over spend

- This position is attributable to a Communications and Customer Relations staffing pressure. There are currently two additional posts in the service, contracted for a period of 6 months; a Communications and Marketing Manager and a Fellow. This over spend is fully offset with under spends in the wider Strategy, Insight and Engagement service. The Fellow position is delivering a key communications workstream focusing on community cohesion and faith.
- Approval is sought in this report for the following:
 - **£143,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve relating to the Communications and Marketing team for pandemic related media campaigns

6. Trading Activities

- Trading activities as a whole are reporting a surplus of **£304,000** against the budgeted surplus of **£300,000**.
- Place Services is reporting achievement of target and therefore a **£300,000** appropriation to reserves.
- Music Services is reporting a small over-achievement of target of **£4,000**; this amount is planned to be appropriated to reserves and therefore the service forecasts an online outturn position.
- These forecast positions will leave a net residual surplus in reserves of **£1.3m**, of which **£1.1m** relates to Place Services.
- Appendix B shows the position by each Trading Activity.

7. Capital

- An under spend of **£6.3m** (2%) is forecast against the latest capital budget of **£309.1m**. After taking account of budget change requests in this report there is a residual under spend of **£167,000**.

- 7.2 Approval is sought for:
- i. Slippage of **£21.7m**
 - ii. Budget additions of **£15.1m**
 - iii. Budget reductions of **£1.5m**
 - iv. Advanced works of **£2m**
- 7.3 The key points to note are listed below, and the detailed requests are shown at Appendix C(ii).
- 7.4 **Children's Service and Early Years – on line**
- i. There is no variance to budget
- 7.5 **Deputy Leader & Community, Equity, Partnerships and Performance – on line**
- i. There is no variance to budget
- 7.6 **Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture – £6,000 under spend**
- i. There is an immaterial £6,000 variance to budget
- 7.7 **Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning - £14.7m under spend**
- i. Approval is sought to reprofile **£17.4m** into future years - this largely relates to two areas, Essex Housing LLP Loans and Major Schemes. Essex Housing LLP Loans (£7.5m) is a result of programme delays relating to updated planning determination and preconstruction commencement activity (contractor tender and site mobilisation) timelines across various schemes. Major Schemes relates to the Colchester Rapid Transit System scheme (£6.4m) where the original spending profile provided by Homes England has been revised to an anticipated spend of only £5m for 2021/22.
 - ii. Approval is sought for net additions of **£2.7m** into the programme, which largely relates to additional works and an adjustment for land purchase at Essex County Hospital and additions to Jaywick Market and Commercial Space programme which will be offset by a reduction in the 2022/23 Capital Programme for the Clacton Future High Street Fund (FHSF project)
- 7.8 **Education Excellence, Skills and Training- £1.1m over spend**
- i. Approval is sought to reprofile **£3m** into future years due to slippage, including Harlow Primary (£1.4m) as this project is not yet progressing due to land transfer issues, Temporary Accommodation (£634,000) due to delays in St Marys PS Burnham and Maldon PS, and Braintree Primary

Basic Need (£562,000) relating to Lodge Farm, a new primary school, with ECC's S106 contribution not expected to be made until 2024/25.

- ii. Approval is sought to add **£4.0m** to the programme relating to Schools Capitalised Building Maintenance, with the School Condition Allocation (SCA) grant being £1.2m (20%) higher than assumed in the MTRS, and Salix Grant Funding which has been awarded for Schools Solar PV £589,000 and Schools Window replacement £1.8m also being an addition request to the programme for this year.

7.9 Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs – £4.5m over spend

- i. Approval is sought to add **£4.6m** into the programme due to various decarbonisation schemes which are funded by Salix grant for energy saving related projects to be completed on the ECC estate.

7.10 Adult Social Care and Health- £5,000 under spend

- i. There is an immaterial £5,000 variance to budget

7.11 Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport - £3.1m over spend

- ii. Approval is sought to reprofile £1.3m into 2024/25 as additional funding relating to Local Highway Panels is to be realigned across the three year programme of delivery as per the current expected programme of works.
- iii. Approval is sought to add £2.4m into the programme within Road Maintenance relating to DfT Pothole Funding for the road surfacing programme
- iv. Approval is sought to advance £1.9m from 2022/23 into 2021/22 for the LED Rollout scheme to align with the ramp up of project spending.

7.12 Leader - £178,000 under spend

- i. Approval is sought to reduce £187,000 from the programme relating to Locase II public estate

7.13 Controlled Elsewhere – on line

- i. There is no variance to budget

7.14 Appendix C provides a comparison of approved and forecast outturn capital payments by Portfolio and sets out the variance plan which summarise the proposals for addressing the forecast budget variances.

8. Policy context and Outcomes Framework

This report is an assessment of the financial position of the County Council, which itself is a representation of the corporate plan. The budget and organisation plan were approved in parallel in February 2021.

9. Reserves

- 9.1 A summary of the forecast balances on reserves is provided in **Appendix D**.
- 9.2 There has been a significant amount of movement on reserves as part of the COVID-19 response. Significant approvals from the COVID Equalisation Reserve sought in this report include £3.7m withdrawal for the COVID Resilience Fund that supports Adult Social Care providers with additional COVID-19 related costs, £2.4m withdrawal for income losses currently being experienced by Essex Outdoors, and £2.7m withdrawal for additional costs in the Council's Business Support and Delivery and Assurance services where extra capacity has been required to support the response to the pandemic.
- 9.3 Approval is sought to create a new Equalities Reserve. **Purpose:** To set aside funding to support the focus on the people and places where we can make the biggest difference to improve lives. £10.3m of the balance within the Collection Fund Risk Reserve will be transferred to the Equalities Reserve (section 2.3.vi).

10. Financial Implications

Finance and Resources Implications (Section 151 Officer)

- 10.1 The report is provided by the Section 151 Officer. There are no further comments.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 The Council is responsible for setting the budget each year. Once agreed the executive then have to implement the policy framework and keep within the budget, subject to the limits set by Financial Regulations.

12. Equality and Diversity implications

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- 12.3 The equality implications are assessed as part of budget setting process and as part of individual schemes.
- 12.4 There are no equality and diversity or other resource implications associated with this report.

13. List of Appendices

Appendix A	Revenue Forecast Outturn
Appendix B	Trading Activities
Appendix C (i)	Capital Forecast Outturn
Appendix C (ii)	Capital Variance Plan
Appendix D	Balance Sheet - Earmarked Reserves
Appendix E	Decisions to be funded from COVID Equalisation Reserve

(Available at www.essex.gov.uk if not circulated with this report)

14. List of Background Papers

Budgetary control reports.

Revenue

Portfolio	Latest Budget £000	Q1 Forecast Variance £000	% of Latest Budget
Adult Social Care and Health	442,265	4,246	1.0%
Children's Services and Early Years	134,005	(31)	(0.0%)
Children's Services and Early Years DSG	(401)	(30)	(7.6%)
Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance	23,003	(28)	(0.1%)
Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture	3,563	26	0.7%
Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning	6,539	16	0.2%
Education Excellence, Skills and Training DSG	(2,638)	(2,107)	(79.9%)
Education Excellence, Skills and Training NON DSG	19,590	25	0.1%
Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs	10,396	3	0.0%
Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	112,475	(11)	(0.0%)
Leader	2,246	(7)	(0.3%)
Waste Reduction and Recycling	82,219	1,457	1.8%
Other Operating Costs	113,630	0	0.0%
Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance RSSS	16,568	(111)	(0.7%)
Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning RSSS	1,067	(6)	(0.5%)
Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs RSSS	71,591	(159)	(0.2%)
Leader RSSS	1,804	71	4.0%
Total	1,037,921	3,354	0.3%
DSG Offset	(3,039)	(2,137)	
Total Excluding DSG	1,040,960	5,491	0.5%
Funding		(209)	
Revised Total	1,040,960	5,283	0.5%

Traded Services

	Revenue reserve 1 April 2021	Income	Budget Expenditure	(Surplus)/ Deficit	Income	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast (Surplus) / deficit	Appropriations To County Revenue Account	To Trading Activity reserve	Final Outturn position	Revenue reserve 31 March 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Traded Services											
Place Services	(1,113)	(3,192)	2,892	(300)	(3,261)	2,961	(300)	(300)	-	0	(1,113)
Music Services Traded	(228)	(3,889)	3,889	-	(3,889)	3,885	(4)	(4)	-	0	(228)
Total	(1,341)	(7,081)	6,781	(300)	(7,150)	6,846	(304)	(304)	-	0	(1,341)

Capital

	Year to date			Budget Movement		Revised Budget	Full Year	
	Budget	Actuals	Variance	Original Budget	In year approved changes		Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000
Children's Services and Early Years	577	313	(264)	2,235	468	2,703	2,703	0
Deputy Leader & Community, Equality, Partnerships	240	115	(125)	500	54	554	554	0
Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture	89	68	(21)	70	177	247	241	(6)
Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning	17,583	7,710	(9,873)	136,622	12,945	149,567	134,818	(14,749)
Education Excellence, Skills and Training	8,435	6,418	(2,017)	62,374	807	63,182	64,322	1,140
Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs	595	88	(507)	5,290	470	5,760	10,209	4,450
Health and Adult Social Care	35	(5)	(39)	1,160	208	1,368	1,363	(5)
Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	13,068	11,297	(1,771)	80,903	3,112	84,015	87,066	3,051
Leader	463	8	(455)	1,185	474	1,659	1,481	(178)
ECC Capital Programme	41,085	26,006	(15,080)	290,341	18,713	309,054	302,753	(6,300)
Schools Cash Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Devolved Formula Capital	10	61	51	-	61	61	61	(0)
Total School Balances	10	61	51	-	61	61	61	(0)
Total Capital Programme	41,095	26,067	(15,029)	290,341	18,774	309,115	302,815	(6,300)

Financed by:

	Budget Movement		Revised Budget	Full Year	
	Original Budget	In year approved changes		Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
ECC Capital Programme					
Grants	151,504	12,353	163,857	163,355	(502)
Reserves	2,900	(2,900)	-	-	-
Developer & Other contributions	16,028	1,532	17,560	17,477	(83)
Capital receipts	5,000	(3,700)	1,300	1,300	-
Unsupported borrowing	114,543	11,145	125,688	119,973	(5,715)
ECC Capital Programme	289,975	18,430	308,405	302,105	(6,300)
Grants	366	344	710	710	-
Unsupported borrowing	-	-	-	-	-
School Balances	366	344	710	710	-
Total ECC & Schools Capital Funding	290,341	18,774	309,115	302,815	(6,300)

Appendix C(ii)

Capital Variance Plan

Portfolio	Approved changes					Variance Plan					
	Slippage	Additions	Reductions	Advanced Works	Approved changes	Slippage	Additions	Reductions	Advanced Works	Residual Variance	Total Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children's Services and Early Years	501	191	(191)	(33)	468	-	-	-	-	0	0
Deputy Leader & Community, Equality, Partnerships	54	-	-	-	54	-	-	-	-	0	0
Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture	177	-	-	-	177	-	-	-	-	(6)	(6)
Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning	8,811	7,740	(1,702)	(1,904)	12,945	(17,436)	4,059	(1,315)	(0)	(56)	(14,749)
Education Excellence, Skills and Training	2,763	8,869	(8,930)	(1,894)	807	(3,003)	4,030	-	58	55	1,140
Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs	44	620	-	(194)	470	-	4,605	-	-	(155)	4,450
Health and Adult Social Care	8	200	-	-	208	-	-	-	-	(5)	(5)
Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	1,104	75,808	(73,408)	(392)	3,112	(1,250)	2,409	-	1,898	(6)	3,051
Leader	997	-	(523)	-	474	-	-	(187)	-	9	(178)
ECC Capital Programme	14,457	93,428	(84,755)	(4,417)	18,713	(21,690)	15,103	(1,502)	1,956	(167)	(6,300)
Schools Cash Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Devolved Formula Capital	-	61	-	-	61	-	-	-	-	(0)	(0)
Total Capital Programme	14,457	93,489	(84,755)	(4,417)	18,774	(21,690)	15,103	(1,502)	1,956	(167)	(6,300)

Appendix C(ii) cont'd

Portfolio & Scheme	Slippage ✓ £000	Additions ✓ £000	Reductions ✓ £000	Advanced Works ✓ £000	2021/22 Changes Requested
COLCHESTER RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM (HIF)	(6,402)	-	-	-	(6,402)
ADVANCED SCHEME DESIGN	-	-	(64)	-	(64)
A120 PREFERRED ROUTE	-	64	-	-	64
A127 AIR QUALITY (AQMP)	-	43	-	-	43
CHELMSFORD GROWTH AREA	-	159	-	-	159
COLCHESTER GROW ON SPACE	(918)	-	-	-	(918)
Jaywick Market & Commercial	-	300	-	-	300
ESSEX COUNTY HOSPITAL	(1,979)	3,492	-	-	1,513
ECH LAND PURCHASE	-	-	(1,251)	-	(1,251)
LOUGHTON LIBRARY	(226)	-	-	-	(226)
SHENFIELD LIBRARY	(402)	-	-	-	(402)
EH LLP LOAN FRIARY	(341)	-	-	-	(341)
EH LLP LOAN ROCHEWAY	1,268	-	-	-	1,268
EH LLP LOAN SHERNBROKE	(1,670)	-	-	-	(1,670)
EH LLP LOAN ST PETERS	(1,070)	-	-	-	(1,070)
EH LLP LOAN PURFORD	(2,544)	-	-	-	(2,544)
EH LLP LOAN HARLOWBURY	(6)	-	-	-	(6)
EH LLP LOAN PRIMROSE MEADOW	(2,866)	-	-	-	(2,866)
EH LLP LOAN HARGRAVE	(280)	-	-	-	(280)
Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning	(17,436)	4,058	(1,315)	-	(14,693)
SCHOOLS CAPITALISED BUILDING MAINTENANCE	-	3,712	-	-	3,712
BASILDON PRIMARY BASIC NEED	(148)	-	-	-	(148)
HARLOW PRIMARY BASIC NEED	(1,363)	-	-	-	(1,363)
COLCHESTER SECONDARY BASIC NEED	-	266	-	-	266
BRAINTREE PRIMARY BASIC NEED	(562)	-	-	-	(562)
MALDON PRIMARY BASIC NEED	(760)	-	-	-	(760)
TENDRING PRIMARY BASIC NEED	-	-	-	58	58
SPECIAL SCHOOLS	(170)	41	-	-	(129)
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION	-	11	-	-	11
Education Excellence, Skills and Training	(3,003)	4,030	-	58	1,085
SALIX GRANT GOODMAN HOUSE	-	1,056	-	-	1,056
SALIX GRANT ERO	-	804	-	-	804
SALIX GRANT CORE ESTATE SOLAR	-	478	-	-	478
SALIX GRANT CORE ESTATE WINDOW	-	2,113	-	-	2,113
SALIX GRANT GREAT NOTLEY CP	-	154	-	-	154
Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs	-	4,605	-	-	4,605
LED ROLLOUT	-	-	-	1,898	1,898
LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANELS	(1,250)	-	-	-	(1,250)
ROAD MAINTENANCE	-	2,400	-	-	2,400
SECTION 106	-	9	-	-	9
Highway and Sustainable Transport	(1,250)	2,409	-	1,898	3,057
LOCASE II (PUBLIC ESTATE)	-	-	(187)	-	(187)
Leader	-	-	(187)	-	(187)
ECC Capital Programme	(21,689)	15,102	(1,502)	1,956	(6,133)
Total Capital Programme	(21,689)	15,102	(1,502)	1,956	(6,133)

Appendix D

Reserves

	2021/22 movements				
	Balance at 1 April 2021 £000	(Contributions)/ Withdrawals agreed £000	Adjustments proposed in quarterly report £000	Future commitments £000	Estimated Closing balance £000
Long Term Contractual Commitment					
PFI Reserves					
A130 PFI	(36,448)	9,255		-	(27,193)
Building Schools for the Future PFI	(823)	-	(314)	(159)	(1,296)
Debden School PFI	(964)	-	389	(513)	(1,088)
Clacton Secondary Schools' PFI	(740)	-	265	(104)	(579)
Waste Reserve	(116,850)	6,857	(2,284)	1,279	(110,998)
Grant Equalisation Reserve	(50,409)	-		31,011	(19,398)
Trading Activities (not available for use)	(1,341)	304		(304)	(1,341)
Partnerships and Third Party (not available for use)	(1,764)	-		-	(1,764)
Schools (not available for use)	(43,601)	-		-	(43,601)
General Balance	(68,096)	-		-	(68,096)
Reserves earmarked for future use					
Adults Digital Programme	(1,288)	-	1,260	28	-
Adults Risk	-	(10,089)		-	(10,089)
Adults Transformation	(3,500)	-		-	(3,500)
Ambition Fund	(16,578)	(2,200)	804	7,896	(10,078)
Bursary for Trainee Carers	(500)	-		-	(500)
Capital Receipts Pump Priming	(4,204)	-		500	(3,704)
Carbon Reduction	(1,096)	114		-	(982)
Carry Forward	(21,273)	3,260		18,013	-
Childrens Transformation	(1,314)	-	(5,474)	-	(6,788)
Collection Fund Risk	(4,029)	(12,418)	10,286	-	(6,161)
Commercial Investment in Essex Places	(12,583)	-	(1,094)	-	(13,677)
Community Initiatives Fund	(401)	(350)	(6)	350	(407)
COVID Equalisation	(37,496)	(28,808)	10,028	49,972	(6,304)
EES Pension Risk	(4,000)	-		-	(4,000)
Emergency	(12,564)	(4,000)		4,000	(12,564)
Emergency Planning	(300)	-		-	(300)
Equalities (NEW)	-	-	(10,261)	-	(10,261)
Essex Climate Change Commission	(5,000)	-		2,500	(2,500)
Essex Crime and Police	(73)	-		-	(73)
Future Capital Funding	(9,847)	(3,074)		3,074	(9,847)
Health and Safety	(2,812)	(2,038)		459	(4,391)
Insurance	(7,498)	-	1,238	-	(6,260)
Newton	(122)	-		-	(122)
Property Fund	(977)	(326)		-	(1,303)
Quadrennial Elections	(925)	(500)	28	1,397	-
Renewal Fund	(27,900)	-		-	(27,900)
Social Distancing & Hygiene	(900)	-		-	(900)
Technology Solutions	(8,749)	(10,000)	1,546	12,244	(4,959)
Transformation	(54,686)	(5,066)	5,832	11,754	(42,166)

Appendix E

Decisions now proposed be funded from the COVID Equalisation Reserve

Any future requests for withdrawals relating to these decisions will be funded from the COVID Equalisation Reserve, rather than the reserve set out in the original decision.

Reserve as per CMA	CMA Reference	Title of CMA	Amount not yet drawn down £000
Emergency	FP/659/03/20	COVID 19 Response: Temporary Closure of Essex Outdoors and Cancellation of Bookings	696
Emergency			696
General Balance	FP/665/03/20	Coronavirus Outbreak – Temporary Highways and Transportation Service Changes	2,727
General Balance	FP/664/03/20	Coronavirus Outbreak – Temporary closure of Essex Records Office and suspension of certificates service	173
General Balance	FP/801/09/20	Funding for Children and Families: COVID 19 Response	410
General Balance	FP/878/11/20	Drawdown from the General Balance for the provision of emergency hubs to respond to the COVID pandemic (Shield)	340
General Balance	FP/885/11/20	Provision of Designated Isolation Settings for COVID-19	3,927
General Balance			7,577
Health and Safety	FP/740/06/20	Drawdown from Health and Safety Reserve: Implementing measures to reduce the risks of COVID-19 transmission in ECC core office estate	249
Health and Safety	FP/769/07/20	Funding for Personal Protective Equipment resources	160
Health and Safety	FP/854/10/20	Proposal to provide emergency temporary accommodation to King Edmund School, Rochford, November 2020	248
Health and Safety	FP/951/01/21	Drawdown from Health and Safety Reserve: works at Essex Country Parks	184
Health and Safety			842
Renewal Fund	FP/844/10/20	Drawdown from Recovery Reserve: Economic Recovery Programme	2,804
Renewal Fund	FP/833/10/20	Drawdown from the Recovery Reserve: Initiatives to support Essex residents aged 16-24	315
Renewal Fund	FP/872/11/20	Allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Fund	192
Renewal Fund	FP/886/11/20	Impacts of COVID ASC - Recovery funding request	1,300
Renewal Fund			4,611
Transformation	FP/856/10/20	Impacts of COVID - purposes of developing and implementing a project to support the exceptional pressures	1,298
Transformation	FP/880/11/20	Transformation Delivery Resourcing	1,750
Transformation			3,048
Grand Total			16,773

Forward Plan reference number: FP/077/05/21

Report title: Essex Housing - Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Councillor Lesley Wagland – Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Paul Crick, Director, Performance, Investment and Delivery paul.crick@essex.gov.uk or Gwyn Owen, Head of Essex Housing. (03330 136120, gwyn.owen@essex-housing.co.uk)	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

Confidential Appendix

This report has a confidential appendix which is not for publication as it includes exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Essex Housing is ECC's in-house development arm which works with public sector partners across Essex. In February 2021 it started to operate partly via Essex Housing Development LLP.
- 1.2 Essex Housing Development LLP is required to prepare an Annual Delivery Plan for Essex Housing that ECC will be asked to consider and approve. This report seeks approval of the Annual Delivery Plan for 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree the Essex Housing Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22 contained in the Confidential Appendix.
- 2.2 Note that that further formal decisions will need to be taken for each site for development, financing, and land disposal to Essex Housing Development LLP for 2021/22 as set out in paragraph 3.7.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 Essex County Council established Essex Housing in 2016 to work with public sector partners throughout Essex to identify and bring forward land and assets for development. It is now five years into that journey and has established a significant and exciting development programme that will deliver great quality, sustainable homes and create fantastic places to live, while reinvesting

returns into important public services and improved outcomes for the residents of Essex.

- 3.2 Essex Housing works with public sector partners across the county to develop land for the benefit of Essex, specifically in order to help address general, specialist and affordable housing need. By developing with a social conscience, Essex Housing enhances important assets, putting design, quality and sustainability at the forefront of what it does and shaping places that Essex can be truly proud of, all while reducing the burden on the taxpayer, generating capital receipts and delivering revenue benefits.
- 3.3 Taking this approach to development allows Essex Housing to include measures that contribute to carbon reduction, such as electric car charging points, cycle storage, photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps. It also means that Essex Housing can play a role in Essex County Council's equalities agenda by providing housing to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable residents. For example, Essex Housing delivers Essex County Council's Independent Living for Older People schemes, as well as schemes that include apartments for Independent Living for Adults with Disabilities.
- 3.4 Essex Housing has completed a number of successful developments, worked with a range of partners including local authorities, NHS, Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Essex Housing has been recognised nationally for its innovative approach through a number of publications and has been shortlisted for awards for both its operating model and completed developments. To date:
- Essex Housing has completed the construction of 64 units with a gross development value (GDV) of £17m
 - 59 units have been sold realising sales of £13.990m and the remaining 5 units are being marketed for sale.
 - 31% of the completed units are specialist units for people with learning disabilities which will deliver annual social care revenue savings of £365,000.
 - Across business cases already approved by ECC, Essex Housing's programme comprises of a further 919 units of which 48% are specialist/affordable.
 - 314 units have planning permission and a further 70 units are awaiting determination.
 - The GDV of the current programme is c.£267m (excluding units already delivered).
 - Essex Housing has secured over £3.4m of Government capital grant funding to overcome abnormal costs existing on Essex Housing schemes.
- 3.5 In July 2020, ECC Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a limited liability partnership, Essex Housing Development LLP ((FP-692-05-20) Essex Housing Optimisation Project) to carry out development activity. ECC is a member and designated member with a 99% interest and Seax Trading

Limited, a company 100% owned by ECC, is a member and designated member with a 1% interest. Surpluses generated from the Development LLP activities are to be returned to LLP members (Essex County Council and Seax Trading Limited).

3.6 As part of the Essex Housing Optimisation Project Cabinet Report, a five-year Business Plan was approved by Cabinet to outline the LLP's long-term objectives. This set out the blueprint to deliver an ambitious development programme, by building upon the work to date of the existing Essex Housing model. The purpose of the LLP is to further ECC's strategic aims and to deliver new housing and economic growth for the benefit of the area or persons resident or present in its area. Essex Housing contributes to the following priorities set out in the Council's Organisation Strategy:

- Enable more vulnerable adults to live independent of social care
- Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities
- Help secure sustainable development and protect the environment
- Facilitate growing communities and new homes
- Limit cost and drive growth in revenue

3.7 Each year, an Annual Delivery Plan is required to set out indicative capital expenditure and the development programme for the LLP over the upcoming year. To progress a scheme identified in the Annual Delivery Plan, the following steps will be undertaken:

- The LLP Board considers each scheme based on a set of criteria established by ECC as set out in the Annual Delivery Plan;
- Where schemes are approved for exploration Essex Housing undertakes design, secure planning, undertake some site clearance activity and procure a building contractor (but not award the contract). If a scheme proves not to be viable then it can be abandoned at any time;
- Once the preliminary work has been completed the LLP board will consider the scheme and whether or not to ask the Council for funding and for the land to be transferred so that the scheme can proceed.
- If the LLP Board agree to this then ECC will decide whether or not to sell the land to the LLP and advance money. These are two separate decisions and will be taken by the relevant cabinet members for finance and property or by the Cabinet in accordance with the constitution
- Once the land has been transferred and finance is in place the LLP can sign the contract if approved by the LLP Board.

3.8 It is important to note that some schemes will be developed by the Council not the LLP, for example some schemes which involve developing a site where ECC will retain ownership, or Independent Living for Older People schemes. The Annual Delivery Plan clearly lists these schemes and outlines where they remain with ECC. These ECC schemes are not included within the financial summary tables within the Annual Delivery Plan.

3.9 The effect of approving the Annual Delivery Plan is to authorise the schemes for exploration and to develop final schemes. It does not authorise any land

transfer or any scheme finance to be loaned to the LLP. The sites that are listed within the Annual Delivery Plan are existing LLP schemes and new schemes have not been added into the overall programme through this report.

4 Options

4.1 Option 1 – Agree the Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22

This option would provide Essex Housing LLP with the indicative capital requirements to deliver the activity set out in the Annual Delivery Plan in the confidential appendix to bring forward new and existing LLP schemes. This will also further ECC's objectives as set out in 3.4.

4.2 Option 2 – do nothing

This option would not maximise the potential benefits of the Essex Housing model. Furthermore, MTRS revenue benefits would not be realised.

5 Links to Essex Vision

5.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision

- Enjoy life into old age
- Provide an equal foundation for every child
- Strengthen communities through participation
- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world
- Share prosperity with everyone

5.2 This links to the following strategic aims in the Organisational Plan:

- Enable inclusive economic growth
- Help people get the best start and age well
- Help create great places to grow up, live and work
- Transform the council to achieve more with less

6 Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial Implications

The Annual Delivery Plan is required to set out indicative capital expenditure and the development programme for the LLP over the upcoming year. The update to the existing ECC capital programme sought within the Financial Overview First Quarter report elsewhere on this agenda, reflects the LLP funding required for 2021/22 and the 2022/23 requirement will be finalised through ECC's 2022/23 budget setting process. During the course of 2021/22 there are four schemes forecast to begin construction having previously achieved planning permission, therefore additional contractual commitments will be required beyond 2021/22.

The LLP is funded via working capital and development loan facilities from ECC. Funding of any future capital expenditure for the LLP will increase the Council's Capital Finance Requirement from borrowing. Funding received from the council will be repaid by capital receipts generated by the LLP

The detail of the capital and revenue budget profiling is contained in the confidential appendix to this document. The original ECC Capital loans Budget, as agreed by Council in February 2021 as part of the Medium Term Resource Strategy, and the current forecast summary taking into account the LLP Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22 is set out below:

	Capital Programme Expenditure (£'m)					
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Current						
Forecast	(13.0)	(29.0)	(37.7)	(19.5)	(6.4)	(105.7)
Budget	(20.3)	(44.6)	(30.5)	(6.0)	0.0	(101.4)
Variance	7.2	15.6	(7.2)	(13.5)	(6.4)	(4.3)

The variances presented are included in the Financial Overview First Quarter report.

Through the activities driven by the LLP, the intention is to obtain planning permissions at the earliest opportunity, subject to development risks associated with any individual scheme.

The underspend of Essex Housing LLP Capital Loans of £7.2m against budget in 2021/22 is due to slippage requests as a result of programme delays. Delays have been caused for a variety of reasons including planning determination and pre-construction commencement activity (contractor tender and site mobilisation) across various schemes. Seven schemes are not expected to result in planning permission being granted until after the originally projected date. Two of those scheme dates now falling outside of 2021/22. The spend is re-profiled out to future financial years.

In terms of project financing and associated risk to ECC:

ECC is expected to receive income as a result of providing loans to the LLP. ECC borrow at PWLB rates which are lower than the rate at which ECC lends to the LLP. Any margin between the two rates will be realised by ECC as income. Due to the adverse movement on the capital programme in 2021/22, the level of income will be lower than the budgeted value of £0.6m. This is detailed in the confidential appendix.

In addition, the costs of any scheme that does not achieve planning consent will need to be borne by the LLP. This could place additional financial pressure on ECC in the longer term as other schemes will need to compensate and loan repayments may take longer.

6.2 Legal implications

- 6.2.1 The LLP Agreement between ECC, Seax Trading Ltd and Essex Housing Development LLP that constitutes the LLP sets out the matters that require approval by ECC. A plan that sets out the company's investment and business strategy (including the Annual Delivery Plan) is subject to approval by ECC under the LLP Agreement.
- 6.2.2 The decision of the Cabinet will take effect as a decision by ECC as Member of the LLP.

7 Equality and Diversity implications

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - (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.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 7.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8 List of appendices

A - Confidential Appendix – Essex Housing Annual Delivery Plan 2021/22

B - Equality Impact Assessment.

9 List of Background papers

Essex Housing Optimisation Project Cabinet Report

Essex Housing Five Year Business Plan 2020-2025

Forward Plan reference number: FP/058/04/21

Report title: Land at Hamberts Farm, South Woodham Ferrers – Residential Development

Report to: Cabinet

Report author: Councillor Lesley Wagland – Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning

Date: 29 July 2021

For: Decision

Enquiries to: Paul Crick Director, Investment, Performance and Delivery email paul.crick@essex.gov.uk or David Thompson, Interim Head of Property email david.thompson@essex.gov.uk

County Divisions affected: South Woodham Ferrers

Confidential Appendix

This report has a confidential appendix which is not for publication as it includes exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to enter into a contract with Countryside Properties (UK) Limited ('Countryside') in relation to Essex County Council's (ECC) Hamberts Farm site. The Agreement contractual arrangements set out the process and terms of development of a 116 acre site in South Woodham Ferrers primarily for residential use. The proposals for development also include for the provision of a primary school, healthcare and recreational facilities for the benefit of the wider community together with road improvements, cycleways and footpaths. The proposed development also provides significant focus on sustainability and supports ECC's commitment to a carbon net zero Council by 2050 with sustainability measures included in the approved Masterplan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree that subject to the remaining recommendations the Council should enter into an option agreement with Countryside for the disposal of its interest in the land at South Woodham Ferrers shown outlined red on appendix A1 on the terms set out in this report.
- 2.2 Agree that subject to 2.1 the Director, Performance, Investment and Capital Delivery may determine the terms of the agreement in consultation with the Director, Legal and Assurance.
- 2.3 Agree that the option agreement may not be entered into until the Director, Performance, Investment and Delivery, in consultation with the Cabinet Member

for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning, and the Director, Legal and Assurance is satisfied that Countryside Properties (UK) Limited is giving sufficient security for the potential overage payments

3. Summary of Issue

- 3.1 The decision to commit to disposal of Hamberts Farm fits with a number of the Council's strategies and policies. The Essex Organisation Plan sets out strategic aims including: to facilitate growing communities and new homes with a target to deliver 140,000 new homes by 2035; supporting Chelmsford City Council to provide the strategic blueprint for sustainable growth within the district including delivery of 18,000 new homes by 2035; to promote delivery of high-quality, healthy places, and embed sustainable travel in new developments; to generate capital receipts from surplus assets to support the council's capital finance position beyond 2022. The Council's policy is to dispose of surplus assets including farmland owned by the Council and to seek best value in the open market
- 3.2 ECC owns the freehold title to Hamberts Farm which extends to 116 acres (47 hectares) of land in South Woodham Ferrers (the Site), of which approximately 40 acres of land is developable for housing. The Site is shown coloured blue on the plan at Appendix A2. The Site includes three houses and a range of barns which are currently let on an agricultural tenancy. The Council has not declared the land surplus to its requirements, although it has not been in the business of being a provider of rented agricultural property for many years.
- 3.3 The Site is adjacent to land controlled by Countryside Properties (UK) Limited (Countryside). The Countryside land is shown coloured red on the plan at Appendix A2. It is also adjacent to land owned by the Speakman Family which is shown coloured purple on the same plan.
- 3.4 ECC has considered bringing forward the Site for development for a number of years and agreed an Option Agreement with Croudace Homes which expired in 2010. Subsequently, Chelmsford City Council indicated that they would consider allocating the relevant land for residential development. Initial discussions with Countryside commenced in 2016.
- 3.5 Chelmsford City Council formally adopted its Local Plan at the end of May 2020. The Local Plan references an allocation north of South Woodham Ferrers for 'around 1,000 dwellings plus necessary infrastructure' and this allocation includes the Site along with land controlled by Countryside and the Speakman family.
- 3.6 The site – combining ECC's ownership with the adjoining land – meets the strategic priorities set out in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan particularly in addressing sustainability, housing growth, creating well-designed places and healthy communities. The development will make a substantial contribution to the total housing supply within Chelmsford during the Local Plan period to 2036. It will provide ECC with substantial capital receipts over the coming years from

2023 onwards and will be an early demonstrator for more sustainable forms of development through the imposition of more stringent planning policies.

- 3.7 The farm estate is no longer required to be retained by ECC following a policy decision in 2001 to dispose of all farms. Hamberts Farm has been retained until such time as the planning environment presents a suitable environment to engage a developer partner. With the adoption of the Chelmsford Local plan in 2021 and the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan the circumstances are right for disposal of the Council's ownership.
- 3.8 A decision of Cabinet in February 2021 (FP/800/09/20) agreed to the terms of ECC entering into negotiations with Countryside. Discussions between ECC and Countryside and terms are close to being agreed. Further detail on the proposed terms are set out in the Confidential Appendix.
- 3.9 The key benefit of this proposal with Countryside is that they are also proposing to develop an adjoining site which they control. An agreement with Countryside will achieve:
- Development of the site by a major developer with a good track record of delivering residential development schemes alongside an adjoining site.
 - Co-development with the adjoining land will mean that ECC can:
 - Agree a way of sharing the risks and benefits of development across landholdings. This arrangement has been detailed in the Confidential Appendix to this report at Appendix B.
 - A way to share risk and cost of installing infrastructure which will provide economies of scale and enhance returns
 - The proposals for development by Countryside also include for the provision of a primary school, healthcare and recreational facilities for the benefit of the wider community together with road improvements, cycleways and footpaths.
 - ECC will retain the ability to buy back part of the Site to allow for development of a social care / independent living facility if required. Any development of a social care facility will be at the direction and decision of ECC.
 - The evidence presented, with Lambert Smith Hampton's recommendation, supports the recommended Option of entering into negotiation with Countryside as potentially achieving the highest financial return for ECC's land holding.
- 3.10 Significant emphasis has also been placed on promoting sustainability measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the development. This will include the following:
- Non-gas central heating, together with photovoltaic cells for electricity generation.
 - Commitments to planting and a community inclusive approach to green infrastructure at the development which is extensive. This includes a planting commitment of one tree for every resident within the development.
 - The development layout and ethos is designed to dissuade car use and support walking and cycling modes of transport to key local amenities.
 - The wide range of uses at the site is designed to deliver a self-sustaining community and minimise the draw for undertaking unnecessary trips.

- All residential units on the development are to encompass electric vehicle charging points as well as making some community charge points available throughout the scheme.
- There will be improvements to the existing rights of way network to make the area more permeable (including the provision of a new bridleway route which links existing connections together from east to west).
- Smarter Choices travel guides to seek to engender lower patterns of base motorised use transport use and to link with enabling and maintaining healthy lifestyles.
- Homes are to be designed to facilitate home-working with secure and rapid internet connections as well as flexible design to facilitate workspaces.

The exact nature of sustainability elements will be expanded through the details submitted for planning permission in each phase of development and will pick up on sustainability interventions as these evolve during the course of development.

- 3.11 In addition to the Chelmsford City Local Plan reference to an allocation of 'around 1,000 dwellings plus necessary infrastructure', South Woodham Ferrers Town Council have consulted on the emerging South Woodham Ferrers neighbourhood plan which also included the proposed Chelmsford City Council allocation north of the town. The ECC and Countryside housing allocation in the Local Plan will see approximately 800 housing units being built across the combined ECC and Countryside site, with the balance being developed on land owned by the Speakman family.
- 3.12 The option agreement will potentially see ECC's entire landholding of 116 acres transferred to Countryside, other than the three farmhouses and some farm buildings. While only 40 acres are developable for housing, the remaining land will be used for development site assembly and fulfilling requirements for public open space and other planning agreement matters, delivering green space and recreation facilities for the new and existing community.
- 3.13 ECC will also look to dispose of the three houses and barns and achieve a capital receipt for these once vacant possession has been obtained. These properties sit outside of the area covered by proposed option agreement. ECC will also be responsible for ending the agricultural tenancy on the Site and will need to accept the risk relating to ending the tenancy and obtaining possession, which may require a court order to be obtained depending on the facts pertaining at the time.
- 3.14 Countryside have already produced and brought forward Master Planning for their land and for the ECC site required by the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan at their own risk. This has been done in consultation and collaboration with ECC and have carried out consultation with key stakeholders and submitted to Chelmsford City Council a site wide master plan. The consultation process has included presentations and feedback to Chelmsford City Council and South Woodham Ferrers Town Council as well as Essex Highways. Key areas raised have included density of residential development, provision of non-residential infrastructure, cycle routes and road / crossing improvements in and around the proposed development site. A revised Masterplan was presented to CCC in January 2021.

- 3.15 Development of the site will require infrastructure to be constructed. These arrangements and requirements will be subject to the conditions set out in a future planning consent. However, the risk and cost will be shared between ECC and Countryside through an equalisation mechanism. Details of this are set out in the Confidential Appendix.
- 3.16 Once the Option Agreement is completed, Countryside will look to submit a detailed planning application as soon as practicably possible. The contractual arrangements will compel Countryside to use reasonable endeavours to diligently pursue and obtain a Satisfactory Planning Permission
- 3.17 The Council has ensured that the interim recommendations of the Climate Change Commission have been considered and taken account as part of the negotiation with Countryside and are reflected in the final terms of the contractual agreement.

4 Options

A range of Options were presented in the Cabinet Report in February 2021. In summary-

- 4.1 Do nothing – continue to receive £11,700 per annum income from farm tenancy
- 4.2 Place the ECC land on the open market for immediate disposal
- 4.3 Deliver infrastructure to the site and sell as development parcels
- 4.4 Enter into a Joint Venture arrangement with another developer
- 4.5 ECC to self-develop the site
- 4.6 Enter competitive dialogue to select a developer to take an option agreement (conducted as a soft-market test in 2016)
- 4.7 Enter into negotiations with Countryside for an option agreement (recommended).

These were fully considered and evaluated and it was decided to progress on the basis of the option outlined in paragraph 4.7.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Complete the contractual arrangements with Countryside Properties (UK) Limited
- 5.2 Support Countryside Properties (UK) Limited with the submission, as soon as practicably possible, of a detailed planning application for the Site, to include an

outline of the site design to confirm the Masterplan principles with detail on infrastructure provision and first phase of development which is unlikely to include ECC's land or public or community land uses

6 Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial implications

6.1.1 Further details are included within the Confidential Appendix.

6.1.2 The recommended Option involves entering into negotiations with Countryside to ultimately achieve a significant capital receipt value once ECC's current land holding is developed rather than a) selling ECC's interest now and b) retaining ECC's interest in case of higher future value. The evidence in 3 above, along with LSH's recommendation, support the recommended Option of entering into negotiation with Countryside as potentially achieving the highest financial return for ECC's land holding

6.1.3 The capital receipt would be received in stages as various parcels of land are developed. An early payment, from Countryside, would be payable once the Option is agreed, as detailed in the confidential appendix.

6.1.4 The sale of the existing farm buildings is within ECC's gift regardless of which development option is pursued and so is not considered here.

6.1.5 There is a current use rental income stream that would be lost as the land is developed. The annual income is £11,700 as detailed above and in the appendix.

6.1.6 The final decision would be for Cabinet to consider when the negotiation process has concluded.

7. Legal implications

7.2.1 The draft option Agreement with Countryside, the heads of terms for which are set out in the Confidential Appendix will legally commit ECC into a long-term relationship with Countryside Properties (UK) Limited.

7.2.2 ECC have a duty to achieve best value when disposing of assets under s123 Local Government Act 1972. ECC has ensured that the terms of the proposed contractual agreement with Countryside deliver best value for ECC.

7.2.3 Whilst the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR) do not apply to a straightforward disposal of land, ECC has considered the application of the PCR in relation to delivery by Countryside for ECC of elements of the development such as public realm and the proposed social care facility. Such works could constitute public works under the PCR. However, if ECC reacquires land for this purpose it will need to make separate contractual arrangements to have the works constructed.

7.2.4 The Cabinet should carefully note the risks of the transaction as set out in the confidential appendix

7.2.5 The Council is under a duty to secure the best consideration reasonably obtainable when disposing of land and the Cabinet should note the advice in the confidential appendix in this regard.

8. Equality and Diversity implications

8.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (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.

8.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

8.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

9. List of appendices

- Appendix A1 - Site Plan showing Option land
- Appendix A2 – Site plan showing land ownerships
- Appendix B – Confidential Appendix
- Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

10. List of Background papers

None declared.

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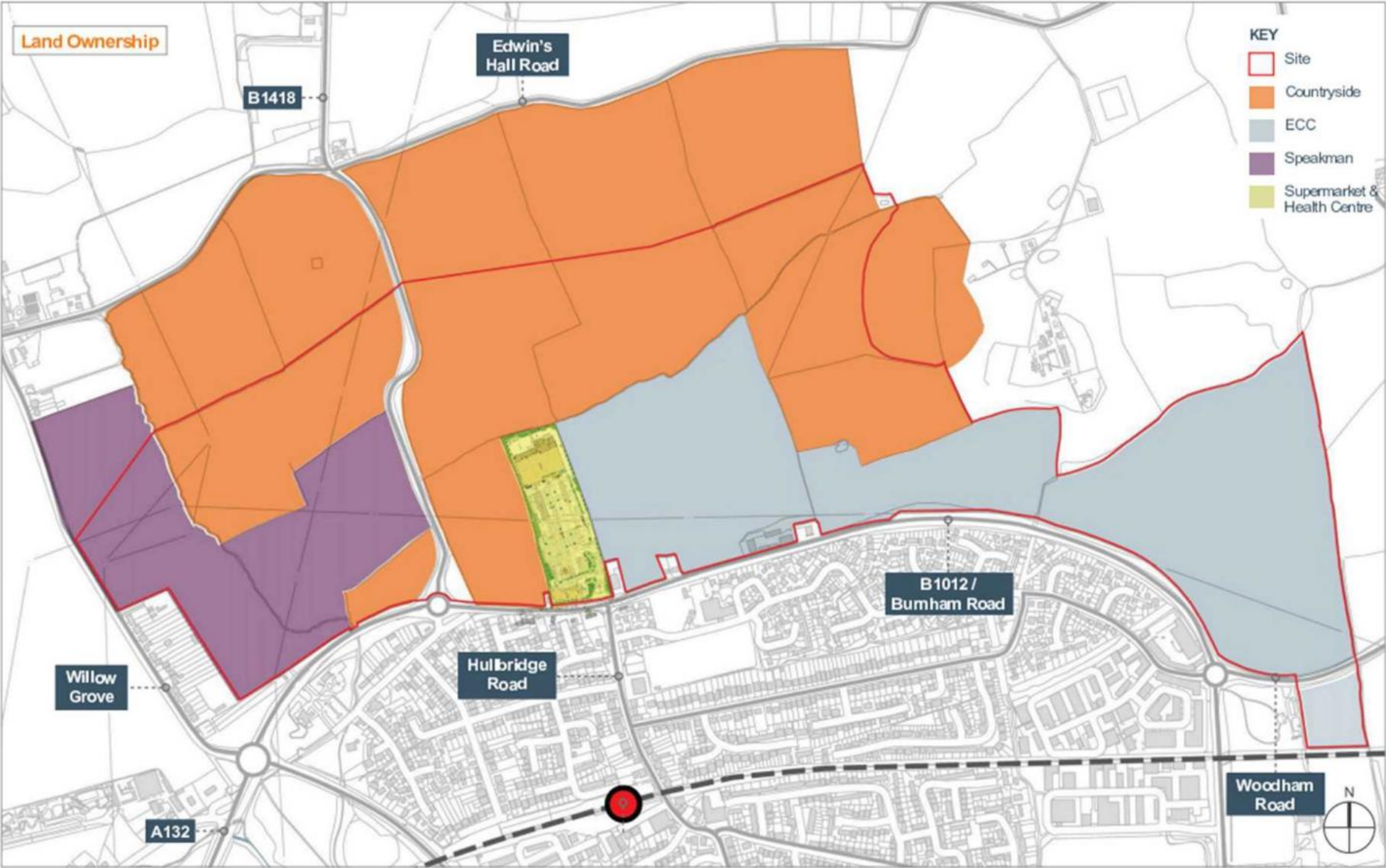
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Appendix A2 – Land ownerships



Forward Plan reference number: FP/082/06/21

Report title: Intensive Coaching service for Young People in Care	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Cllr Beverley Egan, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Early Years	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Clare Burrell - clare.burrell@essex.gov.uk 03330 136578	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Essex County Council has an ambition that children and young people are in residential care for the shortest time possible, receive high-quality provision and are supported to achieve a sustainable exit from care. The provision of intensive coaching support ('Inside Out') for young people in care contributes to this aim. The Inside Out programme has been evaluated and proven to deliver good outcomes for young people in care, by enabling a young person's stability through positive support.
- 1.2 The current Department for Education (DfE) funding for this programme ceases on 30 June 2022. It is proposed that this service is recommissioned and funded by ECC to ensure that this important provision continues post cessation of the DfE funding. Embedding this service into business as usual will mean that ECC can continue to support more young people in care to achieve positive outcomes, a sustainable step-down from residential care and placement stability.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to procure a contract for the provision of Inside Out coaching for vulnerable young people in care in Essex, Hertfordshire and Norfolk using an open, single stage procurement procedure for an initial 3-year contract term from 1 July 2022, with a 1 year plus 1 year option to extend to 2027.
- 2.2 Agree that ECC act as lead commissioner of the procurement of the Inside Out coaching Programme on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council.
- 2.3 Agree that the total contract value for all 3 Councils over a 5 year period will be £5.1m. The annual contract value for the Council will be £340,000 for the duration of the contract.
- 2.4 Agree that the evaluation model for the procurement will be based on 30% price and 70% quality, of which 10% of the quality criteria will assess social value.

- 2.5 Agree that the Director for Commissioning, Children and Families is authorised to approve the detailed evaluation model to be used for the procurement in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council.
- 2.6 Agree that the Cabinet Member, Children's Services and Early Years is authorised to agree the terms of and award the contract to the successful bidder.
- 2.7 Agree that the Cabinet Member, Children's Services and Early Years is authorised to agree the terms of the Collaboration Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council.
- 2.8 Agree that the Children's Services and Early Years portfolio is increased by £255,000 for 2022/23 with a full year effect of £340,000 in 2023/24. This will increase the budget gap of the Council's Medium Term Resource Strategy and will require a sustainable financial mitigation to be identified from the Children's Services and Early Years portfolio as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 ECC is responsible for providing social care services for children and young people who need them under the age of 18. Local Authorities have a duty under Section 22A of the Children Act (1989) to provide accommodation for a looked after child or young person. ECC is, therefore, the 'corporate parent' for these children and young people and is committed to supporting young people to reach their potential.
- 3.2 The ECC Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care (2018-22) sets out how ECC plans to fulfil its duty to meet the needs of the children and young people in our care, and care leavers. The strategy cites the ambition of "children to be in care for the shortest time possible to achieve a sustainable exit from care that meets all of their needs, whether that is a return home or a permanent alternative". The Inside Out coaching programme can help achieve this.
- 3.3 There is no statutory duty for ECC to provide Inside Out coaching, but the evaluation for the 3-year pilot has delivered evidence to support the recommendation for the service to be embedded in ECC's Children and Families portfolio.
- 3.4 Although overall the total number of looked after children has significantly reduced over time (from 2,274 in the year 2010-2011 to 1,451 in the year 2020-2021), the effect of the pandemic has resulted in a nationwide increase in children going into care. ECC continue to focus on reducing the number of children in care, and on reducing those who are placed in residential care. The Inside Out coaching programme identifies high needs placements and provides them with one to one coaching and support from other agencies to support them to return to their families, either directly or by moving (for example) from residential to foster care. The Inside Out coaching programme aims to support young people to achieve a sustainable step-down in support.

- 3.5 Whilst some teenagers in care are settled, well looked after and able to move onto successful outcomes, there are others with less stability and a history of multiple placement moves. Locally, service providers are seeing additional pressures due to the greater complexity of need that they are trying to meet. The Tavistock Institute were commissioned as part of the pilot programme in 2018 to evaluate the outcome of the pilot (the Evaluation Report). This Evaluation Report highlighted challenges for young people that have not settled in high needs placements such as a history of trauma, offending behaviour, frequent episodes of going missing and (particularly girls) at a high risk of child sexual exploitation.
- 3.6 The Evaluation Report highlights how frequent changes in those supporting young people (including social workers, placement providers, key workers, etc.) can often trigger previous traumas related to attachment. An Inside Out coach can offer stability to a young person regardless of changes in other support. Frequent placement breakdown does not assist in achieving the best outcomes for the child concerned and is costly to ECC.
- 3.7 The three core elements of the Inside Out coaching approach are: a coach who delivers intensive support to the young person and their families; ongoing support from a social worker to ensure care co-ordination; and development of a new relationship with the young person's care provider / care home. This approach has been tested on a pilot basis since 2018, starting in Essex before extending to Hertfordshire and Norfolk and has proven successful in supporting young people with a positive transition into adulthood.
- 3.8 Inside Out coaching delivers good outcomes for young people with more complex needs, and a history of placement instability, and can prevent, or reduce, periods of time that young people are placed in long-term, secure accommodation or residential placements. Inside Out coaching can also support family relationships to improve and therefore increase the potential for a child to move back home, where appropriate. This achieves better outcomes for a young person.
- 3.9 As at March 2021, 35 of ECC looked after young people had accessed the Inside Out coaching programme, with 21 being supported at the time of this report. Only 4 young people have disengaged from coaching support. To date, 7 young people have achieved and maintained a step-down from support. 5 of these are residing in post16 semi-independent accommodation and 2 have returned to their family home.
- 3.10 The Evaluation Report has identified the following outcomes for young people being achieved through the Inside Out coaching programme with the 1:1 relationship with their coach being critical to the success:
- Increased stability
 - Improved mental health and wellbeing
 - Improved relationships with family, carers and peers
 - Positive transition into adulthood and engagement in employment, education or training

3.11 The outcomes delivered through the Inside Out coaching programme will continue to contribute to delivering a number of the priorities within the Essex Children in Care and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy (2018-2021):

- Outcome 1: the right children are in care and the length of time in care is safely reduced
- Outcome 2: children in care are safe, afforded stability and the opportunity for a positive future
- Outcome 3: children in care and care leavers make a successful transition to adulthood and independence
- Outcome 5: children and young people in care and leaving care have good health outcomes

3.12 The Tavistock Institute were specifically required to include a value for money element to inform future commissioning intentions of the three local authorities. The analysis from the Tavistock Institute suggests that delivering and administering the programme costs approximately £16,900 per participant, but that the current and future benefits would outweigh these costs. There is an estimated benefit-cost ratio of around 2.5. This means that for every £1 spent on the delivery of Inside Out coaching, ECC and the wider public sector can expect to accrue £2.50 in benefits.

3.13 This evaluation was able to identify three key areas of cost reductions: social worker time, placement costs and missing episodes. The table below shows the cost benefit ratio documented:

Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) = 2.5	Increase in current costs	Decrease in current costs	Decrease in future costs
Inside Out cost per intervention – Local Authority (LA)	£16,900		
Social worker time – LA		£7,560	
Placement costs – LA		£16,130	
Missing episodes – Police, LA		£17,590	
Mental health – NHS, Schools (indicative)			£780
Overall	£16,900	£41,280	£780

3.14 It is intended that ECC will enter into a Collaboration Agreement with Hertfordshire and Norfolk County Councils. This has been the arrangement throughout the pilot and has worked well. The Collaboration Agreement will set out how the programme will be managed between the three authorities and will include provisions detailing: evaluation of bids and monitoring of the provider; implementation of practice and protocols; and engagement with and development of the relationship with residential providers of placements for children in care within each local authority.

3.15 As Lead Commissioner, ECC will lead on the procurement activity, preparing the procurement documentation and contract and will coordinate the evaluation and contract signing process. All three Local Authorities will be involved in the

evaluation of bids and will sign the agreement with the provider. Providers will be expected to bid for the full contract which will cover all three local authority areas.

3.16 It is proposed that ECC issue the procurement documentation to the market in October 2021 with a deadline for bids in December 2021.

3.17 The responses will be evaluated using a 30/70 (price/quality) model, with 10% of the quality score assessing social value. The rationale for this approach is that a provider who delivers a better-quality service is more likely to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people, as well as a reduction in spend as a result. To avoid overspend, the pricing envelope will be capped in the tender and bidders will be asked to identify a price for each local authority to account for differences in local delivery such as premises costs.

3.18 A 3-year contract with a 1 year plus 1 year option to extend is recommended in order to offer a meaningful service for young people without tying the three authorities into a longer term contract. Any extension must be agreed by the three local authorities and a separate decision will be taken for such extension.

4. Options

Option 1: Do nothing	Pros	Cons
Let programme cease from 1 June 2022 (Not recommended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional financial or resource costs required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of programme with proven impact on improved outcomes for young people Does not support ambition for young people to 'step down' and sustain this – meaning costs longer term are higher Loss of momentum for innovation in supporting young people with complex needs Likely increase in missing episodes of young people, this has a direct impact on ECC spend Increased pressure on social work teams
Option 2: Commission ISO Independently	Pros	Cons

Commission a new contract for ECC independently from Herts and Norfolk County Councils on a 3 + 1 + 1-year contract (Not recommended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of existing programme for improved stability and outcomes for young people Has evidenced cost avoidance Opportunity to build on the learning from the current pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional resource to embed the current model Significant internal resource required throughout commissioning / procurement activity
Option 3: Commission ISO on behalf of ECC, Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council	Pros	Cons
In partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council commission a 3 + 1 + 1-year contract (Recommended option)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of existing programme for improved stability and outcomes for young people Opportunity to responsibility with our partners and share ideas Further already positive working relationship with Hertfordshire and Norfolk CCs Strong governance and mechanisms already in place for decision making which are detailed in a strong Collaboration Agreement Has evidenced cost avoidance Opportunity to build on the learning from the current pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC not being able to have total control of the model design and monitoring – however, a Collaboration Agreement would be renewed to support true partnership working and how to overcome any discrepancies that might arise Dependant on factors outside of ECC control, e.g. other local authority funding / governance – however, ECC is in regular contact with colleagues in Hertfordshire and Norfolk.

5. Links to Essex Vision

5.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision

- Provide an equal foundation for every child

For more information visit www.essexfuture.org.uk

5.2 This links to the following strategic aims in the Organisational Plan:

- Help people get the best start and age well
- Help create great places to grow up, live and work

6. Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial implications

6.1.1 The current service has been funded through the Department for Education Innovation Fund and commissioned in partnership with Hertfordshire and Norfolk County Councils. The current contract expires on 30 June 2022 and there is no further option to extend the current contract.

6.1.2 The total value of the contract is **£5.10m**, with an annual value of £1.02m. The cost will be split between the Local Authorities based on the actual costs in each region. The cost to ECC to commission this service would be **£340,000** annually. The value is split across financial years as follows, assuming a contract from July 2022 to June 2027, this would enable 20 ECC young people to access the programme at any one time.

Authority	2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	2026/27 £000s	2027/28 £000s
Essex CC	255	340	340	340	340	85
Herts & Norfolk CC's	510	680	680	680	680	170
Total Contract Value	765	1,020	1,020	1,020	1,020	255

6.1.3 As the programme has been fully-funded by DfE grant to date and no further funding is forthcoming, the recommendation is to increase the Children Services and Early Years Portfolio by the values in the table above (£255,000 for 2022/23, increasing to £340,000 from 2023/24 onwards). This would increase the budget gap in future years and so impact on the councils Medium Term Resource Strategy (MTRS). In the first instance sustainable financial mitigations would be expected to be identified from the Children Services and Early Years portfolio as part of the Council's 2022/23 budget setting process.

6.1.4 The programme creates cost avoidance above the amount invested as outlined below, but cashable savings are inconsistent and volatile due to the small number of young people on the programme.

6.1.5 When the programme was originally designed with the DfE, there were cashable savings attached to the delivery of Inside Out in the MTRS. Although these have not been fully realised (30% of the agreed savings of £1.4m), the programme has shown progressive levels of both cashable savings and cost avoidance.

Financial Year	Savings in MTRS £000s	Placement savings achieved £000s	Placement cost avoidance achieved £000s	Other cost avoidance* £000s
2018/19	476	141	34	506
2019/20	476	114	165	506
2020/21	476	185	232	506
	1,429	439	432	1,518

*Other cost avoidance is social worker time and costs related to missing episodes which are hard to measure and shared with Schools and Police. We have used Tavistock's evaluation results to estimate the total cost avoidance in each financial year.

6.1.6 Due to the small number of young people that are on the programme at any one time, the savings and cost avoidance can be very volatile year-to-year. The success or failure of an intervention with one young person can make a huge impact, especially if, for example, they are in a high-cost residential placement. We have had several young people in £5,000+ per week residential placements when they have joined the ISO programme.

6.1.7 Cashable savings have not been assigned to Inside Out, however, a tracker to estimate the potential cost avoidance of the programme is proposed for the new contract period as part of evidencing that good outcomes are being delivered.

6.2 Legal implications

6.2.1 Local Authorities are responsible for providing social care services for children in need aged between 0 to 18 years old.

6.2.2 There is no statutory duty for the Council to provide this provision, but the evaluation of the 3-year pilot by an independent body has delivered evidence to support the extension of the service due to the positive outcomes for children who receive the coaching.

6.2.3 A collaboration agreement will be entered into with Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council to regularise the roles, risks and responsibilities between the respective bodies. ECC will take the lead role in procuring the provider and producing the procurement and contractual documentation. All three Local Authorities will be involved in evaluating the bids and all three Local Authorities will enter into the contract with the provider. The contract and collaboration agreement will need to be clear on risks and liabilities between the three Local Authorities and how decisions are taken.

6.2.4 The Council is a contracting authority for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). The value of the proposed contract is above the financial threshold (currently set at £663,540) and the nature of the service is one that falls under Schedule 3 of the Regulations. The procurement of these services must be undertaken in accordance with the light touch regime as set out in regulations 74 to 76 of the Regulations.

6.2.5 Regulation 67 of the Regulations sets out how evaluation criteria are to be established. The Council must select evaluation criteria that will help it establish the most economically advantageous tender. Regulation 67 allows the Council to consider social aspects of a tender in assessing quality, provided that they are relevant and proportionate to the contract and linked to the subject matter of the contract.

7. Equality and Diversity implications

7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (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.

7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

7.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

7.4 The equality impact assessment identifies the following positive impacts on certain protected characteristics in relation to the preferred option:

- Age – Positive. The Inside Out coaching programme specifically supports young people aged 14 – 16.
- Pregnancy – Positive. During the pilot, it was reported that a number of young girls became pregnant whilst in care. The Inside Out programme would continue to offer support to this group of young girls to support their wellbeing during this period.
- Disability – Mental Health – Positive. Often young people accessing the Inside Out programme have a history of trauma which can impact their wellbeing. The

service will continue to support young people with specific mental health needs provided a young person has the capability to effectively engage.

8. List of appendices

8.1 Equality Impact Assessment

9. List of Background papers

1. Inside Out Service Playbook
2. ECC Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care in Essex (2018-2022)
3. Evaluation Report from the Tavistock Institute

Forward Plan reference number: FP/060/04/21

Report title: Procurement of the Substance Misuse Specialist Treatment and Recovery Service	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Councillor John Spence, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Ben Hughes, Head of Wellbeing and Public Health: Safer Essex, Health and Justice, Risk Behaviours – ben.hughes@essex.gov.uk Sarah Tinker, Senior Public Health and Wellbeing Officer – sarah.tinker@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council has a responsibility to adopt a whole systems approach to support vulnerable people who are suffering the chaos of addiction and misuse of substances, to recover and go on to live meaningful / prosperous lives. To do this the Council has historically commissioned substance misuse, drug and alcohol, treatment and recovery services via the Public Health Grant. The contract for the delivery of the current substance misuse specialist prescribing service, an integral part of the wider treatment and recovery system, expires on 31 March 2022. A new service is needed to comply with the terms of the grant, and to ensure this element of the treatment system is available to residents, to enable them to work towards the restoration of stability in their lives.
- 1.2 As such, this contract represents a drive towards equality by enabling people to move out of positions of vulnerability and potential deprivation, illness and homelessness. With increasing adoption of a mixed ecology, there will be a positive but limited impact on climate change.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to procure a contract for the provision of a substance misuse specialist treatment and recovery service for Essex residents suffering with drug and alcohol misuse using an open, single stage procurement procedure for a 7 year contract term commencing in April 2022.
- 2.2 Agree that the provision of this service over the 7-year term will have a maximum total expenditure of £30.3m based on an annual spend of circa £4.3m.

- 2.3 Agree that the service will be procured using an evaluation model based on 30% price and 70% quality, of which 10% of the quality score will relate to social value.
- 2.4 Agree that the Executive Director, Place and Public Health is authorised to agree the detailed evaluation model for the procurement.
- 2.5 Agree that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health is authorised to award the contract to the successful bidder.

3. Summary of issue

Background

- 3.1 The Council has a responsibility to commission substance misuse, drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services via the Public Health Grant. The Council also has a responsibility to make sure that these services are reaching those who most need them and that they are adopting a whole systems approach to actively improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities for these people. The public health grant is ring-fenced for use on public health functions, and payment of the grant to the Council is subject to a number of conditions.
- 3.2 The Essex Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery System is made up of a number of services that each play a part in supporting those suffering from alcohol and drug addiction or misuse. The system is designed to work cohesively and collaboratively to promote recovery in clients, working with the wider determinants of health including housing, education, employment, community engagement, as well as physical health factors. The success of the system has an additional impact through potentially reduced crime rates.
- 3.3 Community specialist medical prescribing services are a key part of the overall substance misuse treatment system in Essex that seeks to reduce dependence on illicit drugs and problematic alcohol use. The service provides evidence-based substitute medications for illicit street-based substances and interventions to support safe detoxification from drugs and alcohol to allow misusers to “wean off” their substance of choice and for drug misusers to stop potentially dangerous injecting behaviours.
- 3.4 The service plays an integral part in the wider treatment system and health services, providing clinical provision as part of a balanced approach to treatment and recovery. The service also works closely with primary care, and other non-medical providers, supporting them to engage with these complex clients, their families, and carers, to improve health outcomes and promote recovery.
- 3.5 Prior to 2015 and the current contract, there were two community prescribing services across Essex. However, from April 2013, the commissioning responsibility for all of these prescribing services transferred to Local Authorities as part of the transfer of Public Health services. The current contract created one unified service across Essex, as well as moving from maintenance

prescribing as a default approach, towards a model based on recovery and reducing reliance on specialist prescribing.

- 3.6 The current service has been performing well. Waiting times for first treatment interventions with a waiting time of 3 weeks or less were at 97.3% at the end of 19/20. Subsequent treatment interventions with a waiting time of 3 weeks or less were at 98.7%. Successful planned exits from treatment and transfers to other structured treatments (in the community or transferred in custody) were at 95.6% at the end of 19/20. Early figures show that performance has not been affected by the pandemic, with waiting times for first time intervention of 3 weeks or less being at 94% at the end of 20/21.
- 3.7 In 2017, Public Health England estimated the prevalence of opiate users in Essex to be around 4,374, and 4,091 for users of crack cocaine. Numbers in treatment have remained steady through the course of the current contract. We have, however, seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of opiate users in treatment and the service has had to flex to meet this demand. Whilst we do not have direct access to data from Primary care, we know from recent presentations and discussions from the CCGs, that demand has increased significantly in primary care and acute trusts during the pandemic. It is very probable that we will start to see this filter through to this service and an increase in demand.

Service Redesign

- 3.8 The Essex Recovery Foundation (ERF) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that was set up to provide a community led commissioning approach for substance misuse services within Essex and to bring in new resources to the county. The ERF is co-run by the Recovery Advisory Committee (RAC) and a Board of Trustees. The RAC is made up of people from across Essex who are currently in recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction and have been through the recovery services in Essex. The Council is working in partnership with both organisations to inform the design of the services for the good of service users in Essex.
- 3.9 Feedback on the service specification has been captured from the RAC through various collaborative sessions which has enabled the Council to consider the journey of the people using the service and make adjustments and improvements from recommendations from first-hand experience. The Council will continue to work with the ERF through the life of the new contract.
- 3.10 Engagement with the wider service network, including clinicians, providers and other stakeholders, has been continuous throughout the life of the current contract and has informed the new service specification.
- 3.11 The new specification will include:
- the current main community specialist medical prescribing services;

- vital roles in the community such as Alcohol Liaison nurses in all Essex based Hospitals and family practitioner roles supporting Social Care across the County;
- virtual, technological and community-based solutions to engagement with the service, all of which will enable greater reach while minimising the impact on the environment;
- a requirement to demonstrate through the life of the contract how the provider is working towards the Essex Climate Action agenda including a reduction in carbon footprint year on year and innovation as to how it can reduce its carbon impact, as well as contributing to the Council's ambitions to reach net-zero emissions.

The specification will no longer include the prison provision, which is now the responsibility of NHS England, which means that delivery will be focused solely in the community, although strong links will be made with the prison provision to enable smooth transition from custody to community services.

- 3.12 Key performance indicators are proposed to remain the same for the new contract as they are working well and the current service is achieving good outcomes. The current KPI's include such measures as number of clients receiving a physical health review, vaccinations against blood borne viruses and the distribution of naloxone, the lifesaving drug that can be administered to counteract an overdose. All of these measures will enable the service to adopt a whole person approach to treatment.
- 3.13 In 2019, Professor Dame Carol Black was appointed by the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care to lead a major review to examine the harm that drugs cause and look at prevention, treatment, and recovery (the Independent Review of Drugs). The Part 1 report was issued in September 2020 and provided an up to date analysis of the problem. Part 2, which includes recommended policy solutions, is with the government for reviewing and agreeing, and it is not currently known when that will be agreed. It is believed that the recommendations may include an increase of funding to drug treatment services, which, if adopted by the government, may enable services commissioned in Essex to meet increasing demand, rising costs of pharmaceuticals and expand the provision of the service.
- 3.14 Given the current levels of demand, there may, if volumes continue to increase in this way, be a need for additional funds to be added to the contract if such funds can be made available internally or available from government grants or similar. Any such increase to the contract value will be subject to separate governance in line with the value of any such proposal and will be subject to the variation being permitted by The Procurement Regulations 2015.

Proposed Procurement Process

- 3.15 An open, single stage procurement is proposed. The recommended evaluation weighting is 30% price and 70% quality (of which 10% of the quality score will assess social value aspects).

3.16 The rationale for a weighting of 30% for price is as follows:

- the current contract value was significantly reduced when retendered in 2015 and there is no intention to seek further savings from this provision. Providers will be required to make the most effective use of the resources available with a focus on building capacity, digital innovation and quality and not shrinking the provision in light of the evidenced increase in need and demand;
- cost modelling based on the current delivery model has indicated that it is unlikely that the minimum requirements can be delivered for less than the budgeted contract value, especially given the increase in the cost of some pharmaceuticals. A higher price weighting would be unlikely to deliver value for money as cost savings would come at the expense of quality of support delivered.

3.17 The rationale for a weighting of 70% for quality is as follows:

- the quality of the service is key, in terms of the support that is provided to vulnerable people. Value for money will be evidenced in improved outcomes for people, rather than in limited annual savings;
- the clinical nature of the contract requires adequate weighting in order to differentiate bids to a sufficient degree. Bidders will be required to be Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered;
- the contract offers a number of opportunities for increased social value and outcomes such as enjoying life into old age, connecting us to each other and the world, and therefore increasing opportunities to address wider determinants of health.

The RAC, as specialists in this area, will support the evaluation process and provide case study based questions that will provide a balanced measure of the social value and impact of the bidder's tenders.

3.18 The staff engaged in delivering the existing services are employed by external providers. The incoming and outgoing provider will need to manage the transfer of staff where necessary, in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). The current provider will be expected to provide accurate TUPE information and prospective bidders will be expected to conduct their own due diligence to check the accuracy of the information provided.

4. Options

4.1. Option 1 (recommended): Procure the services with the current budget

This option enables us to meet the current needs of the service users in Essex and complies with the terms of the public health grant. The existing service has been working well. While there hasn't been price increase over this recent period, we are now looking to commission a service with a stronger emphasis on technological and community support. We believe we can achieve extended reach and will be joined up with the primary care sector and the wider treatment system to ensure a whole-system approach. We therefore believe a fixed price contract is worth pursuing to begin with but will be reviewing this and the level of demand carefully.

We are also expecting more government funding, as well as other opportunities to bring more money into the county through the ERF. If this is achieved, it can be directed into this area to support the service and any new demand. If this is not achieved, it would then be necessary to review, and potentially return for a new decision on additional funds under separate governance.

4.2. Option 2 (not recommended): Procure the services with a 3% increase on the current budget

Whilst this option would enable the service to meet the current needs of the service users and account for increasing demand on the service, increase in prescribed medication costs and general inflation costs, it will create a funding gap against current budgets as detailed in the financial implications of this report. As the Council cannot commit to this currently, the recommended option is to instead allow flexibility in the contract to increase the budget if possible as in option 1.

4.3. Option 3 (not recommended): Do nothing and let the current contract expire

The Council has a responsibility to commission drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services via the Public Health Grant. Should this contract not be reproced, vital clinical services supporting a reduction in drug related deaths and harm will no longer exist and the remaining commissioned services will have their impact and effectiveness significantly reduced.

5. Links to Essex Vision

5.1. This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision:

- Enjoy life into old age
- Strengthen communities through participation
- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world

5.2. This links to the following strategic aims in the Organisational Plan:

- Enable inclusive economic growth
- Help people get the best start and age well
- Help create great places to grow up, live and work

In addition, this report meets the Council ambition for renewal, equality and ambition; in particular the service is designed to tackle health inequalities, helping people to level up and restore their quality of life. The addition of the Essex Recovery Foundation is a 'never been done before' venture that will enable Essex to deliver the best service it possibly can whilst putting us at the forefront of commissioning innovation and leading the way for others.

6. Issues for consideration

6.1. Financial implications

6.1.1. The 2021/22 Medium Term Resources Strategy (MTRS) includes provision for £4.3m, which is funded by the Public Health Grant. There are no increases currently assumed in the MTRS for future years.

6.1.2. The recommended option of proceeding with the procurement with an annual budget of £4.3m can be covered within the MTRS provision. However, without an annual increase this will potentially lead to a reduction in capacity given the current contract value has not been increased over the preceding 7 years. Opportunities to increase the new contract value will be considered if this is demonstrated by the successful provider and funding is available. This can either be funded by any additional funding that may come from the Dame Carol Black review or resources sought by the ERF.

6.1.3. Option 2 would be to proceed with procurement, indicating to the market an increase to the contract value by up to 3% per year after the first year. This will create a gap of the value of up to 3% over the contract term. The potential impact of a 3% increase is shown in the table below.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL
Option 2	4,334,105	4,464,128	4,598,052	4,735,994	4,878,073	5,024,416	5,175,148	33,209,916
MTRS	4,334,105	4,334,105	4,334,105	4,334,105	4,334,105	4,334,105	4,334,105	30,338,735
Option 2 gap to MTRS	-	130,023	263,947	401,889	543,968	690,311	841,043	2,871,181

6.1.4. Option 3 of allowing the current contract to expire would release £4.3m for use in other public health activity, however Essex County Council have a responsibility to commission drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services from the Public Health grant. This will impact services available for which there is increasing demand.

6.2. Legal implications

6.2.1. The public health ring-fenced grant is made available by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (SOS) and is ring-fenced for use on public health functions. The SOS has attached conditions to the payment of the grant and forecasting and reporting is required. The grant must be used only for meeting eligible expenditure incurred or to be incurred by local authorities for the purposes of their public health functions as specified in section 73B(2) of the National Health Service Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act").

- 6.2.2. Pursuant to Section 2B of the 2006 Act, the Council must take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area. Steps that may be taken include providing services or facilities designed to promote healthy living whether by helping individuals to address behaviours that is detrimental to health or in any other way.
- 6.2.3. The Council is a contracting authority for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). The value of the proposed contract is above the financial threshold (currently set at £663,540) and the nature of the service is one that falls under Schedule 3 of the Regulations. The procurement of these services must be undertaken in accordance with the light touch regime as set out in regulations 74 to 76 of the Regulations.
- 6.2.4. The proposed potential addition of funds to the contract value will need to be included in the contract opportunity when it is advertised and in the contract in clear, precise and unequivocal terms to comply with Regulation 72 of the Regulations as a permitted modification to the contract. If this cannot be done, the Council will need to consider if it can rely on any of the other provisions of Regulation 72 in order to modify the contract without a new procurement procedure.
- 6.2.5. Regulation 67 of the Regulations sets out how evaluation criteria are to be established. The Council must select evaluation criteria that will help it establish the most economically advantageous tender. Regulation 67 allows the Council to consider social aspects of a tender in assessing quality, provided that they are relevant and proportionate to the contract and linked to the subject matter of the contract.
- 6.2.6. It should be noted that this is a substantial service which is funded by external grant. The contract with the successful bidder will therefore contain a termination clause permitting the Council to end the contract in the event the external funding is withdrawn.

7. Equality and Diversity implications

- 7.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies when the Council is making decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
 - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful;
 - (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.
- 7.2. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief,

gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

- 7.3. The equality impact assessments indicate that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8. List of appendices

- 8.1. Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

9. List of Background papers

None declared.

Report title: Decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members	
Report author: Secretary to the Cabinet	
Date: 29 July 2021	For: Information
Enquiries to: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager, 03330 322709	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

The following decisions have been taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members since the last meeting of the Cabinet:

Leader of the Council

- *FP/047/04/21** Approval to secure Designated Settings capacity beyond July 21
- *FP/095/07/21** Funding for Adult Social Care: Allocation of Government Funding – Adult Social Care Extension to Infection Control and Testing Fund 2021

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance

- *FP/092/06/21** Final allocation of the Covid Local Support Grant

Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate

- *FP/992/02/21** Re-Procurement of a Single Supplier Framework for the Provision of Software, Hosting and Associated Services

Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Skills and Training

- FP/094/06/21** The Helena Romanes School, Great Dunmow – temporary primary provision at Parsonage Downs, Gt Dunmow
- FP/100/07/21** Appointment and Re-Appointment of School Governors by Essex LA - Schedule 376
- FP/108/07/21** Appointment and Re-Appointment of School Governors by Essex LA - Schedule 377
- FP/109/07/21** Appointment and Re-Appointment of School Governors by Essex LA - Schedule 378

Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs

FP/099/07/21	Meeting Room Spaces in County Hall
FP/103/07/21	ERO Goodman House - Addition to Capital Programme in 2021/22 through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding Scheme
FP/104/07/21	Great Notley - Addition to Capital Programme in 2021/22 through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding Scheme
FP/105/07/21	Solar PV - Addition to Capital Programme in 2021/22 through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding Scheme

Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

FP/107/07/21	Change to Refresh Dates for the Live at Home Framework Contract
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Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport

FP/090/06/21	Award of contracts for local bus services
FP/097/07/21	40MPH Speed Limit on Chignal Road/Hollow Lane, Woodhall Hill and Clover Drive, Chelmsford
*FP/046/04/21	Full Business Case for removal of Air Quality Exceedances on East Mayne, Basildon and changes to crossing locations on East Mayne, Basildon
*FP/861/11/20	Essex County Council - Data Agency Service 2021
FP/101/07/21	Colchester Road, Elmstead – Tendring – Signalised crossing

*** Key Decisions: 6**

Decisions exempt from 28-day period and call-in: 2