



Essex County Council - Hedingham Division

Cllr Peter Schwier – 2023/24 Annual Report

Serving the residents of all the villages and 33 parish councils that make up the Hedingham Division has been a real privilege and a challenge, over the past year (especially potholes). The responsibility of representing the diverse interests and needs of all the villages both large and small have been both demanding and rewarding.

I have also included additional information, in my report, an attachment on what we are delivering for our extraordinary county.

Health and Social Care in Essex

Essex currently spends £496m on providing long term support

- £207million - people aged 65+ (41.7%)
- £289 million - working aged adults 18-64 (58.3%)
- **Longer term assurances over finance have supported joint planning with NHS partners. We welcomed the 2-year planning cycle for the BCF and hope to see more multi-year settlements and planning in the future.**
- **The Discharge Fund has been positive for the local system. Flexibility to address admissions avoidance and prevent people entering hospital in the first place would be welcomed in further iterations of the fund.**

Adult Social Care Services and Performance

- At any one time we provide care and support to about 16,000 people and through the course of the year we have contact with over 40,000 people
 - 90.1% - Proportion of people who use services who say those services make them feel safe and secure. Higher than the national average of 87.1% and improved on 88.3% in Essex in 21-22
 - 349.3 - Long term support needs of older adults (65+) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population. This is the 2nd best score nationally for a county council.
 - In 2022-23 Essex provided Reablement service to 5% of older adults discharged from hospital, verses a national average of 2.9% and a peer group average of 2.8%.
 - 86.3% - Our reablement services are successful in supporting people's independence, with 77.1% of adults not requiring any ongoing support from ECC post reablement.
 - The Council is forecast to spend £33m on Reablement in the 2023/24 financial year. Since May 2021, total weekly Reablement activity has increased by 23% and, within that, the activity delivered by spot purchasing has increased by 48% driven by an increase in referrals and acuity.
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Economic impact
- Care is one of the biggest employers in Essex

- 39,000 total filled jobs in adult social care; care is one of the biggest employers in Essex.
- 32,000 jobs are in the independent sector, of which 25,000 are in direct care roles.
- There are also an estimated 1,500 adults using direct payments recruiting their own staff.
- **We would like to see continued focus at a national level on supporting skill development and recruitment into the care sector and giving it equal billing with the NHS.**

Care technology offers new opportunities

In Essex, our vision is to “put communities at the heart of ASC and enable people to live their lives to the fullest. Care Technology is seen as a big part of this.

- 8,820 Residents in receipt of Care Technology.
- 98% People advise Technology improves them feeling safe and secure.
- 84% People advise Technology reduces their Social Isolation
- £24.7m - Gross avoidable savings since 1st July 202
- £10.41m - Social Value achieved across employment, training, green project and reducing service demand.

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- **We are pleased to have had the opportunity to access the Accelerating Reform Fund to further develop our plans for technology enabled care and share learning from the Essex experience with other authorities. We hope to see further support for the development of technology in health and care in the future.**
 - The Reconnect Service, which will be Essex-wide from April 1st, is a place-based prevention and early help service which uses therapeutic interventions alongside physical activity to support and encourage adults living with learning needs and/or disabilities, as well as those living with long term health conditions, to build independence, skills, and confidence within their community. This unique service was developed from taking a whole system change approach across Public Health, Adult Social Care and Active Essex, with support and input from Alliances. This service will focus on delaying/reducing demand on Adult Social Care and community health services.
 - Essex Wellbeing Service has delivered over 42,000 NHS Health Checks and supported 73% of people who set a quit date to succeed in giving up tobacco in the last year – work that will now increase significantly, with a focus on those who smoke in Mental Health Services and smoking in pregnancy, thanks to the additional investment from the Government.
 - Concerns remain, however, regarding the financial position of NHS provider organisations across Essex. Continued overspends are resulting in a lack of investment in preventative services to address the causative factors of low health life expectancy in more deprived areas. It is clear that this short-term approach will result in a continued growth in demand for acute services in the long run and this must be addressed.

Budget/Council Tax

Council Tax

Increasing council tax by 2.99% plus the social care precept of 2%.

Given the above challenges plus risks that lie ahead: inflation; interest rates; in-year demand pressures; and uncertainty over government grants in future years.

Our proposals for the year ahead

- £2.5bn gross spend.
- Take out Dedicated Schools Grant, nearly two thirds of remainder - £1.1bn - spent across children's and adults social care and public health
- Take out income and specific government grants as well:
- **Net spending of £1.15bn**
- **An increase of £55m on the current year.**
- Take out the general government grants, including the revenue support grant, and non-domestic rates, and you are left with. A council tax requirement of just under £850m
- £1,522.53 per Band D household for ECC services next year.
- £72 more a year
- £6 a month
- £1.39 a week – feel free to pick your preferred grocery item of choice to which this compares!

Among comparable councils, we will still have one of the lowest council taxes in the country.

Example - Use of social value in procurement

- **563 jobs created** for people who have been long-term unemployed or who were not in long-term employment, education or training;
- **130 jobs** for people with disabilities.
- **4,198 weeks** of apprenticeships
- Over **50m car miles** driven using low- or no-emission vehicles.

Capital

- **£1.1bn of investment over the next four years**
- **£320m in the coming year.**

Infrastructure

- **£206m capital on infrastructure next year, including:**
- **Funding for the new Beaulieu Park Railway Station**
- **Major road improvements**

School infrastructure

- **5,1000 new school places over the last four years**
 - **Part of a ten-year programme that will deliver over 9,000 new school places in total.**
 - **£67m spent on schools next year**
 - **Nearly £200m over the next four years.**
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My Locality Fund

Once again it has been a pleasure to support local Communities through my Locality Fund
The details of schemes supported are as follows.

LF	Organisation	Amount
LF682	Learning Pathways Academy on behalf of Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership	2500
LF712	Castle Hedingham Bowls Club	1500
LF752	De Vere Primary School, Castle Hedingham	400
LF760	Helions Bumpstead Community Benefit Society Ltd	500
LF775	Ridgewell Parish Council	1500
LF795	Steeple Bumpstead Pre School	1100

Meanwhile, last July I became Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling while continuing my work as Climate Czar. This has been extremely rewarding meeting people across Essex and beyond; championing the work and achievements of people throughout our county; lobbying government on environmental causes.

However, following successful re-election in the Gosfield & Greenstead Green Ward Braintree District Councils, May last year, I continue to be a member of the planning and licensing committee but additionally, appointed as Deputy Cabinet Member for Resources & Performance and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment & Customer Services - which has resulted in increasing attendance of evening, and some day meetings, at Braintree District Council.

I hope these reports gives you an idea of the amount of work that has gone on over the last year to develop our plans and deliver them for the people of Essex.

Looking ahead, I am committed to continuing this work for the next year, building upon the progress made and striving to address new challenges and opportunities that arise.

Best wishes

