



CHRIS SIDDALL - HALSTEAD DIVISION REPORTING BACK 2023-2024

MY ROLES AT ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

- Chairman of the Braintree LHP (Local Highways Panel), there are 12 panels in Essex which look at small schemes to improve road safety.
- Large schemes will now be referred to a newly formed Chairmans panel for consideration.
- Vice Chairman of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee, 21/22 external audit has now been completed.
- Member of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee.
- Member of the Transformation Board, looking at how the Council can change the way it delivers its services in the future.

GROUPS AND PROJECTS SUPPORTED WITH ECC LOCALITY FUND

- Tree planting in Greenstead Green.
- Table tennis table for Earls Colne Recreation Club.
- Football goal nets for the playing field, Colne Engaine Parish Council.
- “Grow with the Flow” scheme Halstead delivering schools help and education for young girls as they go through into menstruation.
- Gosfield Parish Council recreation ground fencing and improvements.
- Earls Colne Scout group equipment.
- Earls Colne “Brick Meadow Trust” funds to purchase a strimmer.
- White Colne SID device for traffic calming.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND MORE TO COME

- Cancellation of sections of HS2, has resulted in the money saved being given to local councils for infrastructure repairs and improvements.
- Significantly more money will be invested this year to bring the road network up to scratch.
- The member pothole repair Scheme will continue, and be extended to give each Councillor a road repair crew for a full week.
- Essex County Council members can direct the crew to carry out the most important repairs to both Roads and Pavements in their division.
- Major improvements to road repairs has already been seen, such as on Colchester Road in Halstead, both quantity and quality.

COUNCIL TAX INCREASE

- 2.99% for the general ECC council tax precept.
- 2 % Increase for Adult Social Care – costs have increased significantly, the total population of Essex is around 1.5 million, Essex County Council has a main budget of around £1 billion, with around half of this, £500 million is spent on 17,000 persons who are the most vulnerable in our society.

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL NEW APPROACH TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

- We have all heard of the North South divide, but it's a fact that deprivation is greater within regions than between regions.
- Essex has some of the most deprived areas in Britain, Harwich and Jaywick.
- A new scheme has been developed to help families overcome their problems and build resilience. Building stronger links with their communities, this approach has been so successful in the north of Essex it has now led to it being rolled out in the south of Essex. Research shows there is a high number of vulnerable families living in south Essex experiencing a range of complex challenges. In some cases, these challenges can escalate and lead to the breakdown of the family dynamic.
- With targeted support however, the new team will help families overcome their problems and build resilience. Colleagues will build on families' strengths and support them to make links with their community.
- The new team includes professionals from drug and alcohol recovery, mental health, domestic abuse, youth work, education and housing. It will support existing frontline social care colleagues.

RECYCLING CENTRE BOOKING MADE PERMANENT ACROSS ESSEX

- Following on from the pilot schemes this has now been made permanent across Essex.
- With the possibility of ringing and booking a slot on the day.
- Disabled badge holders do not need to book a slot.

FUTURE OF HIGHWAYS REPAIRS AND SERVICES TO CHANGE FROM 2027

- The new model agreed by ECC Cabinet will give more power to Essex County Council to ensure better value for money for residents.
- Faster response times will be key to the new services going forward.
- With greater flexibility a key to how work is undertaken.
- The current contract is with Ringway Jacobs which ends in March 2027.

HIGHWAYS CALLING ON LANDOWNERS TO KEEP ON TOP OF ROADSIDE VEGITATION

- Private trees, Hedges, Shrubs, and ditches all need to be maintained and if not can cause disruption to both road users and pedestrians.
- Lack of attention to ditches by land owners can also lead to flooding.
- Essex County Council is putting more resources into working with land owners to ensure they keep up with their responsibilities.
- More will also be invested in enforcement to make sure this happens.

SUSTAINABLE WARMTH SCHEME

- If you're an Essex homeowner with a household income below £30,000, you may be able to get funding for energy-saving improvements to your home.
- To be eligible, your home should have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rated E, F or G (D-rated homes may also be considered).

