



CHRIS SIDDALL - HALSTEAD DIVISION REPORTING BACK 2022-2023

ROLES AT ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

- Chairman of the Braintree LHP (Local Highways Panel)
- Vice Chairman of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee
- Member of the Corporate Policy And Scrutiny Committee

GROUPS AND PROJECTS SUPPORTED WITH ECC LOCALITY FUND

- Tree planting in Greenstead Green
- Earls Colne Football Club goal nets
- Colne Engaine Village Hall foot path improvements
- Equipment for under 8 football team in Halstead
- Gosfield parish council Speed camera
- Cooking equipment for Halstead Gateway project

COST OF LIVING ASSISTANCE FROM ECC

Allocating £9.4m of the Household Support Fund, including:

- £4.2m for food vouchers for children in school holidays.
- £3.2m for food vouchers for pensioners.
- £1.3m for the Essential living fund for general living expenses, furniture, household furnishings, white goods, clothing and other essential goods for people on low incomes.
- £482,000 for support for unpaid carers, vulnerable adults and targeted family support delivered through trusted voluntary and community sector organisations and foodbanks to support children and their families.

Keeping families and individuals warm this winter by:

- Investing **£17m** in helping households improve their energy efficiency.
- Distributing **£600,000** from the Warm Homes Grant to help residents with energy efficiency.
- Through the new Community Winter Warmth and Welcome Programme, working with partners, community organisations and using our services to provide local and accessible places for winter warmth over the coldest months. This includes a grant scheme to enable community groups to access small grants to put on activities.

Ensuring people have food on their tables and are eating well by:

- Investing an additional **£4.2m** to continue the Essex Activate Holiday Activity and Food Programme, providing families with a healthy meal, activity sessions and education on the importance of eating well and moving more.
- Supporting foodbanks and other food support groups through the OP4

Household Support Fund.

- Helping residents learn how to cook low-cost meals and giving them access to equipment to do so through 'Slow Cooker Clubs'.
- Investing up to **£500,000** to establish community supermarkets in Essex, starting with ECC's 6 priority levelling up areas.

Providing help with money management for residents by:

- Offering 14,000 residents easy access to free maths and finance training through the **£7.9m** Essex multiply initiative.
- Delivering free financial wellness sessions to Essex businesses and employers to support employees in being able to better manage their money and build financial confidence.
- Piloting financial wellbeing coaches in a number of parts of Essex, supporting 1,000 working families to manage their finances.
- Exploring the development of financial support tools and services for jobseekers and benefits claimants.

Providing information and guidance for residents by:

- Investing **£120,000** in the Citizens Advice network in Essex this year to assist them in supporting residents with information and advice.
- Investing **£50,000** to offer free legal advice thanks to a partnership with Central Law Community Interest Company.
- Working with Age Well East to help with information and advice for older people in relation to cost of living pressures.
- Through a partnership with UK Power Networks, create a Priority Service Register so vulnerable customers are supported quickly should there be any power disruption.

Looking after the wellbeing of our residents by:

- Investing £6m in the Essex Wellbeing Service to support residents across a range of wellbeing issues and day-to-day needs.
- Continuing to connect people and communities through the digital social movement 'United in Kind' which helps people connect with their community and foster neighbourly acts of kindness.

ECC Cost of Living Guide – The full range of the £50m support from ECC is outlined in the Council's Cost of Living Support for Households and Communities Plan, which aims to help those needing support. There is also useful information on our [website](#) for residents and businesses.

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).

SUPERFAST ESSEX

Superfast Essex, the broadband improvement programme through which Essex County Council has upgraded 1 in 6 addresses across the county to superfast broadband.

ECC has committed a further £1.88 million and is launching a new programme: [Digital Essex](#). The current Superfast Essex team has been refocused and is now responsible for delivering digital connectivity and inclusion projects which align to the Digital Strategy and Everyone's Essex agenda.



Strategy goals

We want to see:

	Superfast speeds available at all premises in Essex		That no one is left behind in the digital revolution
	Gigabit-capable services available at more than 85% of premises in Essex		That residents have access to affordable equipment and connectivity
	4G available across 99% of Essex and 5G available at all key employment locations and priority areas		That residents and businesses have access to the digital skills needed to manage everyday tasks

Plans include a top up voucher scheme in collaboration with BDUK, to provide additional funding to reach the final 1% of rural addresses that still can't access decent broadband.