

Report for Parish Councils regarding Essex County Council Matters- Mid April

Councillor Penny Channer – Essex County Councillor for the Maldon Division

Future of Essex Libraries Consultation

Over 21,000 people responded to the Future of Libraries consultation which closed last month and now groups from all over the county have come forward interested in running community managed library services.

50 expressions of interest have been received so far from a broad range of groups. Two of these proposals are for brand new locations that have never had a library to call their own.

Interest has been received from pre-schools, parish councils, churches, small local businesses, charities, care companies, community groups, those interested in forming a community group as well as the University of the Third Age.

The Council has now started to engage with these groups and local communities in these areas ,however no decisions have been made. Detailed proposals and agreement with community groups and organisations is expected to take place following approval of the Final Libraries Strategy.

Expressions of Interest can still be made at <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/libraries-consultation/community-library-services/>

New Domestic Abuse Helpline to access Community Based Services and Specialist Accommodation in Essex

A new helpline has been launched to help people in Southend, Essex and Thurrock who are victims of or who have experienced domestic abuse.

COMPASS went live on Monday 1 April 2019 and is the new point of access for victims of domestic abuse across Southend, Essex and Thurrock; providing information, advice and guidance and, where appropriate assessment and access to specialist services. Its function is to increase accessibility to ensure victims of domestic abuse get the right support at the right time.

COMPASS is funded by Essex County Council in partnership with the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex to support victims of domestic abuse across Southend, Essex and Thurrock.

It will help women, men and young people aged over 16 to access specialist support including community-based services and specialist accommodation to help them recover and move on from domestic abuse.

COMPASS will be accessible 24hrs a day. Callers can speak with a trained member of staff and there will also be an online form for both public and professionals wishing to make a referral via the website.

COMPASS is delivered by Southend on Sea Domestic Abuse Projects. The telephone number is 0330 333 7 444. The website is www.essexcompass.org.uk

Community services and specialist accommodation will be delivered by SOS Domestic Abuse Projects, Changing Pathways and Next Chapter. These community-based services are local hubs incorporating specialist accommodation such as refuges, IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) and outreach work.

Who Will Care? Awards 2019

The prestigious Who Will Care? Awards 2019 make a much anticipated return in May, nominations closed on Friday 12 April.

The date of the 2019 awards has now been confirmed as 22 May and will see a celebration of volunteering across the county.

The awards bring together communities and individuals across Essex who are working to make Essex an even greater place to live, work and visit.

The awards recognise those that make a real difference to people's lives by giving up their time to help others and their local communities.

This year there are nine categories:

- **Business Award:** awarded to commercial organisations who have made an impact on their community.
- **Individual Overcoming Adversity Award:** awarded to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment within their community either independently or through a charity/community group or through their employer, whilst overcoming personal adversity.
- **Individual Volunteer – Young Person's Award:** awarded to a volunteer under 18 who have demonstrated outstanding commitment within their community. This may be something they have done independently or in connection with a charity or community / youth / school group or employer.
- **Individual Volunteer – Adult 18+ Award:** awarded to a volunteer aged 18+ who have demonstrated outstanding commitment within their community. This may be something they have done independently or in connection with a charity or community / youth / school group or employer.

- Individual Volunteer – With a Disability Award: awarded to a volunteer with a disability who has demonstrated outstanding commitment within their community either independently or through a charity/community group or through their employer.
- Innovation Award: awarded to social enterprises, commercial organisations and individuals of any age who have demonstrated innovation in developing a service / project to support the community.
- Voluntary Community Service Award: awarded to charities and community groups who are able to demonstrate outstanding service delivery to support their community and / or service users.
- Volunteer Team Award: awarded to a group of two or more volunteers of any age who have made an outstanding contribution to their community either independently or with a charity, community group or employer.
- Social Media Volunteer Award: awarded to a volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding commitment within their community through the use of social media. This may be something they have done independently or in connection with a social media group.

For more details please email whowillcareawards@essex.gov.uk

Essex Highways go to work to keep the roads safe for everyone and like everybody else deserve to be safe, not threatened or insulted.

Evidence grows across Essex of the increasing abuse that road workers are facing from drivers and members of the public. Almost daily, incidents are recorded by Essex Highways staff, not only of threats and abuse, but of impatient drivers ignoring temporary traffic lights and cones, and driving through active roadworks at speed, putting workers in danger.

Last year, Highways England, who run the motorways and the A12 and A120 in Essex, reported 300 incidents of abuse per week and 3,500 “incursions” – vehicles breaking the law and endangering staff by driving through roadworks. There were 150 serious incidents, with four workers injured.

It is very important that those who work on our roads feel both safe and respected. They do a valuable job both building and maintaining our transport network to ensure we can all get from A to B. They certainly do not deserve to be subjected to threatening behaviour from members of the public - instances of which continue to happen. Support has been given for the introduction of CCTV, body-worn video cameras to ensure that anyone abusing colleagues for simply doing their job will be prosecuted.

If you witness any of our road workers being subjected to threatening behaviour, please report it to Essex Police on 101. If you have dash cam or mobile phone film, you can also pass a copy of it on to the police through the Extra Eyes website.

Essex County Council and Essex Highways are asking members of the public to:

- Respect our road workers – slow down near road works and obey speed limits and signs.
- Remember that just because workers aren't visible, it doesn't mean they are not present. This is especially true when operations take place at night, but also applies when visibility is restricted by works vehicles and equipment.
- Consider that we plan maintenance and improvement projects to allow works to proceed in the safest and most cost-effective way, with minimum disruption to road users: cones, barriers and lights are there for a good reason.
- Think what it would be like if you had to contend with lorries and cars driving through your place of work.
- Remember that every worker on the road is a Dad, husband, son or mother, wife, daughter. Would they want their loved one injured, threatened, abused or living in fear of people driving aggressively through roadworks?