

Report for Parish Councils Regarding Essex County Council Matters-

July 2018

The inaugural National Democracy Week ran from 2 – 6 July and Essex County Council offered the public the chance to get involved and find out more about decision making, voting and democratic engagement in Essex.

On Tuesday 3 July members of the public were invited to take part in a one hour “Question Time” in the ECC Council Chamber – the chance to ask questions on specific topics to local council members.

All week there were information stalls in County Hall Atrium and outside Chelmsford Library, giving members of the public the chance to learn about democracy and how important it is.

The start of the Week – Monday 2 July – was the 90th anniversary of the 1928 Equal Franchise Act which gave women the same voting rights as men. The anniversary was also celebrated by the Snapping the Stiletto project which celebrated the achievements of Essex Women in the 100 years since some women got the right to vote.

Route D named in June as favoured route option for upgraded A120

Businesses, residents and road users were urged to “unite behind a shared vision for an improved A120” after Essex County Council announced the favoured route option for the key route.

In June Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader at Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, announced option D as the Council’s favoured route option for a new dual carriageway between Braintree and the A12.

The announcement follows a public consultation in which more than four out of five (82%) respondents agreed that this section of the A120 needed to be completely upgraded to a dual carriageway.

The proposed route would see Galleys Corner transformed leading onto a dual carriageway road joining the A12 at junction 23 just south of Kelvedon.

Make mischief at Essex Libraries during the Summer Reading Challenge

Children are being encouraged to unearth the Beanotown buried treasure in Essex Libraries this summer by taking part in Mischief Makers – this year’s Summer Reading Challenge.

The UK’s biggest annual reading initiative is delivered by The Reading Agency and libraries, who have partnered with Beano this year to help improve child literacy during the summer holidays when reading levels typically drop.

Reading just six books will help children earn their Mischief Makers certificate and medal. Along the way they’ll also collect stickers (including some special smelly stickers) which will help them find the buried treasure on their Beanotown map - available from all Essex libraries.

Those aged 10 and over can also get creative by joining in with ImagiNation 2018 to help their library make fantastic book displays by creating artwork or reviews inspired by the books they have read.

ECC know that reading is extremely important in helping children develop their language and communication skills and also a great way of supporting them to maintain these skills outside of term time.

More than 46,000 families are expected to visit Essex Libraries as part of this year's Summer Reading Challenge which is free and runs from Saturday 14 July until Saturday 1 September in all Essex Libraries, including mobile libraries.

Digital Boomers report published

ECC released a Press Release on behalf of the RETHINK Partners regarding the above.

Older people's passion for technology is about to get an upgrade for more independent living, health and wellbeing in Essex.

A ground-breaking report lifts the lid on how tech-savvy older people are in Essex - except when it comes to their health - and sets out the massive opportunity for the public sector to help local people use technology to live more independently for longer, aiming that by 2021, older people in Essex will be the most tech confident in the world.

The report Digital Boomers - A Theory of change for older people, technology and independent living (www.rethinkpartners.co.uk) myth-busts many common assumptions about how older people embrace digital and tech. It includes a Theory of Change: a step by step model to enable citizens, families, professionals and organisations to harness new technology at scale.

RETHINK Partners produced the report after being commissioned by Essex County Council to explore the question "How can technology be better used across Essex to promote independent living?" and worked with a group that included local and district councils, NHS, Fire, care delivery organisations and voluntary sector members from across Essex. They pooled their knowledge and set out to discover what may be enabling or hindering technology adoption amongst older people in the county; coupled with extensive face-to-face insight with people from across Essex, as well as an academic literature review by Anglia Ruskin University. The resulting Theory of Change makes six recommendations for collective action for citizens and professionals alike which together should take us closer to our world-leading ambition.

The Digital Boomers report and Theory of Change gives the entire county the blueprint for ensuring the people of Essex lead the way in tech and independent living. A strong forward programme of work is emerging with a wide range of potential programmes to support the Theory of Change, including creating spaces for people to explore and play with tech, and using volunteers with good IT skills to join up with those who are less confident. The outputs of this mobilisation stage will be published in the autumn and RETHINK Partners are asking anyone, be they citizens or professionals to get involved in this work.

Download the full Digital Boomers report at www.rethinkpartners.co.uk

Planned maintenance taking place for Army & Navy flyover this summer

Chelmsford motorists are being advised to allow extra time when travelling into and out of the city centre while flyover maintenance works taking place this summer.

Following works undertaken in April, maintenance will be carried out on the parapet connections and main traffic control and sign system.

Essex Highways is also considering reducing the speed limit on the flyover on a permanent basis from 30mph to 20mph as an additional safety precaution.

The flyover will be fully closed (24 hours a day in both directions) from 9pm on Monday 23 July until Monday 13 August 2018 when it is expected to reopen at 6am.

The flyover will remain closed during the daytime to allow engineering works to take place over the central roundabout and to allow time for materials to cure. Works will take place at night over the carriageway supported by temporary lane restrictions.

In addition, a partial roundabout closure will be necessary for approximately 3 consecutive nights during the works. Details will be advertised in advance on site signage, and drivers will be required to use local alternative routes and signed diversions which will be in place during these periods.

Access to subways will remain open and staff will be on-site where necessary to guide pedestrians.

Essex Highways urge all users of the roundabout to take additional care during the works, allowing extra time, observing signage and traffic management in place.

Colchester Park and Ride extended hours to start

From Monday 30 July Colchester Park and Ride is opening earlier and shutting later with the introduction of its extended operating hours.

Responding to customer feedback and public demand, Colchester Park and Ride will now run from 5.30am to 21.30pm Monday to Friday and 7am to 19.00pm on Saturday.

During August customers will get free travel on production of a valid rail ticket – ideal for those wanting to try the park and ride for commuting. The normal price is £3 and the journey time to the station is around eight minutes.

Essex County Council is also launching its 'Kids go free in August' offer with under 16s able to travel for free, after 9am, when accompanied by a paying adult. And the group fare of £5 for up to two adults and three children is also now available.

Detailed ticket and timetable information is available online at www.essexhighways.org/bus/park-and-ride/colchester-park-and-ride.aspx

Homes England - Community Housing Fund

The £163 million Community Housing Fund aims to deliver the following objectives:

- Increase housing supply in England by increasing the number of additional homes delivered by the community led housing sector
- Provide housing that is affordable at local income levels
- Deliver a lasting legacy for the community led housing sector in the form of an effective and financially self sustaining body of expertise within the house building industry in England

Phase 1 of the program is now open and can be broken down into two principal elements:

- Applications for revenue funding for capacity building and pre-development costs, including revenue grants to local authorities to support community groups
- Capital bids for associated infrastructure costs which will support community led housing development.

Phase 2 of the fund will be launched later in the year and will invite bids for capital funding to develop community led affordable housing schemes.

Who can apply: All organisations who are or intend to become, constituted as a body corporate, or an equivalent form of a constituted body. This includes a:

- Registered charity
- Community Limited by Guarantee
- Community Benefit Company
- Co-operative Society
- Community Interest Company
- Registered provider
- Local authority

Local authorities or registered providers may apply on behalf of community groups.

Bidders will be expected to demonstrate that they have maximised other sources of funding to lessen reliance on central government funding.

Deadline: 31 December 2019

The fund will close when all funding has been committed and could therefore close earlier than December 2019.

The Domestic Abuse fund

The Domestic Abuse Fund from the The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is looking to support the provision of refuges and accommodation based support services.

MHCLG recognises that victims of domestic abuse will have different needs and bids could focus on the following:

- Victims with mental health problems
- Victims with substance abuse problems
- Provision of services to best meet local need
- Provision of other accommodation based services with specialist support
- Other services that enable victims to access the support

MHCLG also welcomes bids that provide specialist services for local areas across the country (e.g. refuges which cater for the needs of women from particular BAME communities) which serves a broader need.

Local areas will need to ensure that provision is made for victims moving away from their home area and those moving into new areas due to abuse.

Who can apply: Local authority partnerships

MHCLG are particularly looking to receive bids that bring together three or more local authorities working across boundaries to form regional hubs where appropriate.

Local authorities must also demonstrate their partnership arrangements with other local commissioners including PCCs and health partners, and local specialist domestic violence service providers.

For more eligibility information, please read the prospectus.

Maximum grant: £100,000

Bids that work across a number of local authority boundaries will be considered for grants worth more than £100,000.

Deadline: 17 August 2018

Tobacco Control in Essex

Trading Standards have an important role to play in relation to regulating the supply of tobacco and safeguarding public health. Not only in terms of protecting children from harm by preventing sales to under 18's, but also in ensuring tobacco products aren't advertised, placed on open sale within shops and they comply with the plain packaging and picture warning requirements. Trading Standards also have an extensive programme of work dealing with counterfeit and illicit tobacco sold through shops, on-line and through other sources where we receive intelligence. The service use tobacco detection dogs to locate the increasingly sophisticated methods of concealment and have extensive powers of seizure. During 2017/2018 Trading Standards seized 130,180 cigarettes and 1,819 tonnes of hand rolling tobacco, which are a mixture of smuggled and counterfeit tobacco products. The service is able to prosecute sellers and/or apply for revocation of alcohol licenses if the seller holds one, and there are a number of persistent sellers awaiting their Court dates .If you

wish to report the sale of illicit tobacco contact Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline 03454 040506

The Building Communities Fund

In partnership with the Department of Digital, Culture and Sport (DCMS), Big Lottery Fund and Co-op Foundation, the £11.5 million Building Communities fund has been set up in response to the Jo Cox commission on loneliness.

Projects should:

- Make the best use of community assets and joining up local services to connect people in different local places. Or in different ways, using digital or technology, transport and travel, participating in sport or volunteering.

Enable communities to bring people together and build connections, helping people across all ages, who may be more likely to feel lonely, and encouraging those who are at highest risk of loneliness to participate.

- Understand more about the individual benefits of preventing loneliness and what works, resulting in benefits to people's health and well being, so that they live longer, healthier, more independent lives and improve their opportunities for employment.

2 funding strands are available:

- Main Funding strand - worth £9 million, this funding strand is seeking to fund organisations who have existing projects in place to reduce loneliness and projects that have a wide geographical reach.
- Youth Funding Strand - worth £2 million, this funding strand is operated by the Co-op foundation and will open for applications in August 2018.

Who can apply: Charities, Community and Voluntary Sector organisations, Social Enterprises and Community Interest Companies. Partnerships are also welcome to apply.

Maximum grant: £100,000

Look after yourself and others in the hot weather

With temperatures set to continue to remain above average, the heat can pose some serious health risks especially for older adults and those with chronic health problems. Top tips for how to cope in the hot weather can be found on the Living Well website.

Help improve the Essex County Council website

We've started a project to create a new website that will work better for you.

You can take part in a short survey to help improve our website.

Outdoor activities for 8 to 16 year olds

Essex Outdoors action-packed activity days for 8 to 16 year olds run at centres in Bradwell, Danbury, Harlow and Mersea commenced recently. They are the ideal way for children and young people to try new activities in the outdoors this summer.

Go to the Essex Outdoors website .

Book School Holiday Activity Days

6 to 10 August will be an action-packed week of water sports for 8 to 16 year olds at Essex Outdoors Bradwell. Work through the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) syllabus of sailing stages during the day and activities in the evening. A residential week includes full board and all activities for £399 and non-residential for £299. Call 01621 776256 or email for more information.

Your chance to learn something new

Are you thinking about retraining, starting a new career or progressing in your current role? Then ACL Essex might have the course for you!

Look out for the course guide which is being delivered across Essex this month and find out about the latest courses.

Escape to the parks

Are you worried about keeping the children occupied this summer, without spending a fortune? With interactive play trails and plenty of open space, Essex Country Parks are perfect for creating a magical escape for the whole family. Go to an event, build a den in the woodlands, climb trees, roll down hills, fly a kite or see what you can find hiding in the undergrowth. More details can be found on the web site.