

Update for Braintree Eastern Division Parishes, January 2020

Please contact Cllr.Robert.Mitchell@essex.gov.uk for more information on any issue.

Essex County Council Budget 2020/2021:

Essex Council Cabinet will be proposing a number of positive initiatives & investments to Full Council for final approval on Tuesday 11 February.

These include an extra £5million for highways to enable investment in improving the condition of roads and pavements; new investment in technology to support social care case management; more money to help meet increased demand for home to school transport, and adult and children's social care.

A further, more detailed, update will follow after the Full Council meeting.

Essex Climate Change Commission:

ECC is in the process of setting up an independent, cross party Climate Action Commission, which will have a high profile independent chair and representation from ECC Members, academics and experts in their field. This Commission will, over its two year life, make recommendations to the County Council for actions to be taken to help tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions across Essex. Cllr Finch has allocated a reserve of £5m in the budget for the implementation of recommendations from the Commission.

Essex Forest Initiative:

The Essex Forest Initiative was launched in Tree Week on the 23rd November 2019 with Cllr Finch and Andy Wright, the CEO of Braintree Council along with local school children planting 61 trees

All forestry projects depend on finding the land to plant up and people enthusiastic to improve their environment. ECC will start with our own land and land for approximately 50,000 trees has already been identified. In addition, ECC are working with our partners in the district and borough authorities to plant on their land. As for enthusiastic tree planters, ECC are being contacted by charities, parishes, communities and individuals and are now asking these partners to begin to work up their tree planting proposal so ECC can make a long-term difference to these areas of Essex which will make up the new Essex Forest.

ECC are particularly keen to engage work with the parishes in Essex as we know they are passionate about improving their villages and towns. As your County Councillor, I will be happy to champion tree planting in any/all of the five parishes, should appropriate parish or private land be identified – please contact me for more details. The Essex Forest Initiative is a 5 year project so ECC will have plenty of time to make a real difference to your local environments and doing our bit for the climate change global challenge.

Essex 2020:

Essex 2020 is an Essex-wide, year-long programme of science and creative events, exhibitions, festivals, performances, workshops, activities and opportunities for every Essex resident to be a part of. It offers a unique opportunity to celebrate Essex's pioneering past and embrace the future to create a sense of identity and pride that can drive prosperity.

Essex 2020 aims to deliver:

- 350+ events
- 500,000+ participants
- 100s of businesses, schools and community organisations taking part.

Residents can check out all the details of events registered so far here at www.Essex2020.com and find out more about the specific events in their area. Through the website, organisations and community groups are able to submit expressions of interest/event proposals, so that they too can become a part of this landmark programme.

Parishes are asked to spread the word about this very special year of events and encourage residents to check out the Essex 2020 social media channels:

<https://www.facebook.com/Essex2020>

https://twitter.com/essex_2020

https://www.instagram.com/essex_2020/

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkrZUvwcSerOjfGWfkh0NuQ/about>

Rough Sleeping:

ECC formed a partnership with four district councils to launch the Essex Rough Sleeper Outreach Service in the summer of 2019. The service operates in Chelmsford, Maldon, Braintree and Epping Forest. The partnership commissioned CHESS, a local voluntary sector provider and has helped 82 rough sleepers in the first six months.

Homelessness:

ECC recognises that homelessness goes beyond rough sleeping. ECC commissioned the voluntary organisation Peabody in April 2019 to provide advice and support to households at risk of losing their home in the county. Peabody provides people with support and advice on: Money management advice, housing law, attending court, housing benefit and wider benefit advice. Peabody helped over two thousand Essex families and individuals with their housing in the first six months of the financial year.

Essex Highways Member led footway scheme:

Cllr Kevin Bentley invited all Members at ECC to nominate up to five footway defects for consideration for priority repair - the work, wherever possible was to be resolved in addition to the already scheduled forward capital works programme in place for footways.

Officers have been working hard to assess, schedule and deliver the repairs Members asked for by the end of March 2020.

Children and Families:

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Louise McKinlay is leading on a project to develop a better package for care leavers. This includes improving access to and quality of housing, developing better work experience opportunities for care leavers and reducing the impact of Council Tax on care leavers. At a recent meeting of Leaders and Chief Executives from across Essex, leaders were in agreement to exempt care leavers from council tax up to the age of 21.