
WHOLE ESSEX COMMUNITY BUDGET (WECB)

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the work on the Whole Essex Community Budget Initiative. It seeks Members' support, in principle, to the submission to be made to Government at the end of the month, along with a commitment to the implementation phase. This report also updates Members on the emerging 'Deal for Growth' initiative and seeks Member endorsement to further participation and commitment to discussion on that.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Community Budgets are a flagship initiative of this Government, being piloted in four localities in England throughout 2012. Essex has been chosen as one of these localities, along with Cheshire West and Chester, Greater Manchester and the tri-borough area of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham. Work on all the pilots is nearing completion, with the main findings from each being submitted to Government at the end of this month.
- 2.2 The Community Budget initiative forms a key element of the Government's localism agenda and is also part of the broader efficiency agenda. The core idea of community budgets is that a broad range of partners should agree common outcomes, pool resources and join up activities to achieve those outcomes. Important elements are about improving quality, the efficient use of public money, promoting choice; and the prevention of social and economic problems.
- 2.3 To aid the work in each of the pilot areas, teams of Government officials have been working in partnership with local public sector agencies on specific projects. In Essex, the work around Community Budgets has centred on 4 policy domains – Health and Wellbeing, Community Safety, Economic Opportunity and Families with Complex Needs.

3 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Detailed business cases have now been produced for –
- **Health and Wellbeing: Integrated Commissioning**
Aiming to develop a Greater Essex Integrated Commissioning Framework – integrating health and wellbeing commissioning across public services based on Clinical Commissioning Group boundaries.
 - **Community Safety: Reducing Re-offending**
The proposal looks to develop integrated 'pathways' across public sector agencies to tackle the factors which address the likelihood of offending and change attitudes and behaviours. A commissioning

group and overseeing governance body is proposed to facilitate and drive this.

- **Community Safety: Reducing Domestic Abuse**

This proposal is to create a multi-agency service hub where victims can be identified at an earlier stage before the abusive behaviour escalates, and where those victims can receive the help and support that they need.

- **Economic Opportunity: Skills for Growth**

Proposal to pool 16 – 24 vocational skills funding and allocation decisions to create a learning environment more aligned to the local economy. Local employers would have a key role in influencing this.

- **Families with Complex Needs: Multi-Disciplinary Teams**

The proposition is to establish a new approach to working holistically across Essex with disadvantaged families with multiple difficulties to enable them to make significant changes and improvement to their lives and thus reduce their dependence on high cost public services.

3.2 In addition, work is ongoing in relation to ‘Strengthening Communities’, a cross-cutting theme aimed at improving community resilience and reducing dependency on public services. Copies of the business cases have been placed in the Members’ Library for information. Copies are also accessible via www.wecb.org.uk. In respect of the work done to date, it is estimated that the savings to the public purse in Essex could be around £450 million – see Appendix 1.

3.3 As well as the above, an operational plan has been produced which links all the business cases together and provides the main narrative for the submission to Government. As outlined, all the documentation will be submitted to Government at the end of this month for consideration, discussion and approval; and then implementation. That said, much of the activity contained within the detailed business cases can be implemented with partner consent without the need for Government approval.

3.4 This report seeks the Council’s consent to support the principles behind the submission to Central Government and commitment to working with the County Council and other partners on the implementation phase.

4. ‘DEAL FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH’ INITIATIVE

4.1 In the course of the work on the Community Budget, Government has suggested that Essex might like to consider entering into negotiations with Government in an attempt to promote economic growth within the County. Recent ‘Deals for Economic Growth’ have been negotiated by Government with city regions such as Manchester and Sheffield. The Government would like to promote an arrangement in a County context and sees Essex as a potential forerunner for this.

- 4.2 It could cover aspects such as infrastructure, investment, employment and development. In looking at these types of deals elsewhere, public sector partners have asked for freedoms, flexibilities and funding certainty from Government, in return for bringing forward infrastructure improvements, development opportunities and facilitating job creation.
- 4.3 Discussions are still at a relatively early stage between the Essex Authorities, including the Unitaries, on the benefits of this type of an agreement with Government. This report, therefore, seeks Council's endorsement for this Authority to continue to be involved in such discussions, so that prior to any 'Deal for Growth' being finalised, this Council can take a view as to whether it wishes to be a party to such an agreement or not.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are potential resource and reputational risk implications to the Council in participating in the Whole Essex Community Budget Initiative and the negotiations around a 'Deal for Economic Growth'. Equally, there are resources and reputational risks in the Council's non-participation and involvement.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The key resource implications at present both in connection with the Community Budget work and 'Deal for Economic Growth' relate to officer and Member time and involvement in the development of these initiatives. Not all the Community Budget Business Case projects will directly impact upon the Authority. However that relating to Families with Complex Needs in particular and potentially those relating to Domestic Abuse and Re-Offending will have some impact, not so much in terms of requiring new resources, but more in terms of the way existing resources are directed and managed.
- 6.2 Any resource implications arising from the 'Deal for Economic Growth' will only become apparent once a draft deal has been finalised for consideration.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**
- (1) To support the principles behind the Whole Essex Community Budget submission to Central Government and contained in the individual business cases.
 - (2) To confirm the Council's commitment to work with the County Council and other partners progressing the delivery of the business cases, with any detailed resource implications specifically related to this Council being reported back for consideration prior to implementation.
 - (3) To work with Essex County Council and other Essex partners on the pursuit and negotiation with Government of a "Deal" for economic

growth, with any finalised draft agreement being reported back for consideration and approval by the Council, prior to any formal Council commitment being given to entering into any such agreement.

Paul Warren
Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Paul Warren (Chief Executive) on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Gross Benefits Summary

Benefits by Partner						
Partner	Families with Complex Needs	Health & Wellbeing	Skills for Economic Growth	Reducing Domestic Abuse	Reducing Re-offending	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
ECC	-10,557	-31,005				-41,562
District/Boroughs/City/Unitaries	-10,200	-6,806		-450		-17,456
Police	-3,196			-3,297		-6,493
Probation	-64					-64
Health	-492	-54,519	-1,659	-23,031		-79,701
Treasury	0		-124,198			-124,198
DWP	-16,677		-1,092			-17,769
MoJ	-3,261		-193	-531	-16,938	-20,923
BIS	0		-24,264			-24,264
Schools	-13,112					-13,112
Wider Social Benefits	0				-108,511	-108,511
Totals	-57,559	-92,330	-151,406	-27,309	-125,449	-454,053