

## ESSEX STRATEGY AND THE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PROCESS

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report details the County Council's programme in connection with the production of a new Sustainable Community Strategy for Essex and the subsequent development of a new Essex-wide Local Area Agreement (LAA) covering the period 2008-2010.

### 2 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The County Council have embarked upon the production of a new Sustainable Community Strategy for Essex – the Essex Strategy – which the County hopes will be:-
- A cohesive vision based on fundamental principles; its objectives and actions joined up to improve the lives of people living in different communities;
  - Recognised by a broad range of organisations and individuals as reflecting their concerns and desires;
  - Propose in a realistic way how to do something concrete to achieve the outcomes that people agree are important
  - Based on a strategic needs assessment of the socio-economic evidence and public and stakeholder engagement activity
- 2.2 It is anticipated that the key outcomes as identified in the Essex Strategy will then form part of the new Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA), which it is envisaged will be signed off by Government by June 2008.
- 2.3 A copy of the timetable around the production of the new strategy and the LAA negotiation process is attached. The County have just embarked on a major consultation exercise, as part of the Essex Strategy work, and clearly as part of that, the District Council will be asked for its views, as will all the other key agencies operating in the District. The Rochford Local Strategic Partnership, chaired by the Leader of the Council, will also be asked to input.
- 2.4 The County-wide consultation exercise will include:-
- Dissemination of evidence about key facts and challenges facing the county.
  - A short questionnaire about what is good about Essex and what could be better, widely distributed in the community. This has been drafted to facilitate the sharing of information with Districts LSPs.

- A marketing campaign to raise general awareness among Essex residents of the consultation and encourage participation.
  - A series of presentations or workshops at stakeholder meetings such as a County Councillors' conference, LSPs, LAA working groups and the boards or management teams of Essex Partnership members.
  - Over the course of the consultation period, a public meeting per theme with partners, e.g. a summit on the economy, children and young people, older people, crime and crime and Disorder and rural issues.
  - A website allowing people to read about the big issues and give their views. This can be accessed through the Essex Partnership website [www.essexpartnership.org.uk](http://www.essexpartnership.org.uk)
  - Engagement with the Young Essex Assembly.
  - Using Local Democracy Week to enable schools to have discussions about the big issues for the Essex Strategy.
  - 12 "control" focus groups comprised of carefully chosen Citizens Panel members to ensure a demographically balanced view of the issues. These will be designed to gather information that will not only inform the Essex Strategy but District Strategies and Local Development Frameworks.
  - Debate in an assembly of the Essex Partnership.
- 2.5 At the same time as the consultation on the strategy, the County Council, in conjunction with Health partners, will be preparing what is known as a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Essex. This is required by the Department of Health and is in effect a "state of health of the County's population" report and what is needed. This work will also feed into the new Essex Strategy and is likely to have a considerable influence on some of the key targets that find their way into the new LAA.
- 2.6 There will clearly be a considerable amount of activity over the next 6 months and it is important for the Council and the Executive Board Members to be aware of the process and to take the opportunity to input as appropriate.

### 3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Executive Board **RESOLVES** to note the timetable and activities associated with the County Council's work in relation to a new Essex Strategy and Local Area Agreement and to agree to take the opportunity to input as appropriate.

Paul Warren  
Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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