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## Sustainable Essex Partnership (SEP) Executive Board

### Essex Record Office, Chelmsford

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Wednesday 15 July 2009, 09:30am

#### **Board members:**

Cllr. Graham Butland	Chair, District and Borough Councils representative. Braintree District Council.
Cllr Jeremy Lucas	Representative for Essex County Council. Essex County Council.
Cllr. John Buchanan	Essex Association of Local Councils representative. Billericay Town Council.
Canon John Brown	Stronger Essex Partnership representative.
Suzanne Harris (Also representing Duncan Wood)	Essex Rural Partnership Representative and Co-Lead for NI 4, Influencing Decisions. Rural Community Council of Essex.
John Hall	Voluntary Sector representative and Target Lead for NI 197, Biodiversity; LI 10.1, Living Landscapes. Essex Wildlife Trust.

#### **Target leads:**

Dan Gascoyne (Also standing in for Gwyn Owen as Lead Officer)	Target Lead for NI 5, Overall Satisfaction. Essex County Council.
Kevin Jones (Also representing Jason Searles)	Target Lead for NI 186, Carbon Reduction; NI 188, Climate Change Adaptation. Essex County Council. Target Lead for NI 191 Residual Waste Per Household; NI 192, Recycling; NI 195 Improved Cleanliness. Essex County Council.
Michelle Keene	Environmental Projects Officer. Essex County Council.
Sue Sumner	Target Lead for NI 7, Thriving Third Sector. Essex Association of CVSs.
Paul Murphy	Target Lead for NI 6, Volunteering. Maldon CVS.
Richard Gravatt	Target Lead for NI 198, Children Travelling to School. Essex County Council.
Nick Shuttleworth	Target Lead for LI 5.1, Access to Services. Rural Community Council of Essex.

#### **Officers:**

Jan Plummer	Essex Partnership Secretariat. Essex County Council
Sam Olomo	Risk Management Advisor. Essex County Council.
Sarah Arnold (Also representing Margaret Read)	GO East Representative.
Louise Crew	Essex Partnership Secretariat. Essex County Council (minutes)

#### **Apologies:**

Frank Saunders	Environment Agency representative.
Steve Nelson	Confederation of Passenger Transport representative. Nibs Buses.
Cllr Pam Challis	LSP Chairs Forum representative. Castle Point BC.
Ian Vipond	Target Lead for LI 2.2, Affordable Housing; NI 154, Additional Housing. Colchester Borough Council.

Malcolm Knights	Target Lead for NI 156, Temporary Accommodation.
Liz Saville (will only attend bi-annually)	Target Lead for LI 5.2, Congestion. Essex County Council.

**1. Welcome and previous minutes:**

Cllr Graham Butland opened the meeting as Chairman. The Partnership agreed the previous minutes as a correct record.

**2. Performance update**

Jan Plummer gave an update on Sustainable Essex's improved arrangements for managing Equality and Risk. The Essex Partnership carried out an audit of the EIAs and found gaps in sections 1 and 2 and the quality of the existing section 1. The Thematic Leads were asked to fill in the gaps and improve the quality to identify how to improve the forms. All EIAs are now up-to-date, Thematic Leads are to sign them off and agree for them to be published on the Essex Partnership website.

NI 4, Ability to Influence Decisions – There was an update circulated regarding recent performance on this indicator at the previous meeting. This was in response to performance that was no as good as anticipated. The paper shows a number of measures that will help us get back on track.

NI 7, Thriving Third Sector – Sue Sumner was welcomed back as target lead. Jackie Sully will continue to support her in delivering the action plan as it is a demanding agenda.

NI 156, Temporary Accommodation – Malcolm Knights has left Chelmsford Borough Council. He is currently working freelance, and EHO (with the agreement of ECC) have agreed for him to continue as target lead for NI 156. Jane Greer from Harlow District Council will be Co-Target Lead.

LI 2.2, Affordable Housing and NI 154, Housing – The new LAA Housing Coordinators are in post. This will clear the backlog of actions due.

LI 5.1, Access to Services – on track

NI 198, Children Travelling to School – on track

LI 5.2, Congestion – Agreed at previous meeting that Liz Saville (target lead) will attend Sustainable Essex bi-annually at this stage. This is because the nature of the action plan means that she is working primarily with the Highways Agency and Police at this stage. If circumstances change, Liz will attend every meeting again.

NI 6, Volunteering – ECC's volunteering policy is going through internal processes. This policy should be operational by end of September at the latest.

NI 195, Street and Environmental Cleanliness – on track

NI 186, CO2 Reduction – agenda item 6.

NI 191, Residual Waste Per Household – on track

NI 192, Percentage of Household Waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting – on track

NI 188, Planning to Adapt to Climate Change – all bar Basildon, Chelmsford, Rochford, Harlow and Uttlesford are at level one. These partners will be at level 1 very soon (they are in reality at level 0.9)

NI 197, Local Wildlife Sites – Gwyn was given an action to try to facilitate the participation of a partner organisation in this target. Following discussions, the partner has agreed to 'have regard to' this indicator, help the Wildlife Trust locate private landowners, and also put all their own sites into Positive Conservation Management. JH commented that private landowners are reluctant to put their sites into PCM, this could be due to funding, feeling constrained, and also reluctance to fill in paperwork. JL suggested a mentor from ECC to guide the landowners through this process, helping them to complete forms, and visiting them on regular basis to check they are happy.

### 3. Taking forward additional workstreams alongside the LAA

Given the growing number of requests Sustainable Essex receive to engage with areas of work being pursued by a range of partner organisations, clarification was needed for how and when Sustainable Essex will take forward additional areas of work and how these will be managed. Members were asked to decide whether:

1. Criteria is required
2. The proposed criteria are fit for purpose or need amendment
3. To adopt this set of criteria

The proposed criteria are that Sustainable Essex will adopt additional workstreams when:

- Members agree that the objective can be delivered most effectively through partnership
- Members agree that Sustainable Essex or a partnership that comes under its thematic area is the most appropriate partnership to progress the specific area of work
- The individual leading on the area of work agrees to becoming a full member of Sustainable Essex
- A project plan with clear objectives, actions, milestones and a date to review or end the project is available to be incorporated into the Sustainable Essex workplan
- The area of work is linked to performance indicators (National, Local or other) so that data is available to help monitor performance

It was questioned whether the other 5 Thematic Partnerships are also adopting this approach. Dan confirmed that at present it is only SE, but once agreed with SE it is proposed to be rolled out across the other Partnerships.

The proposal was agreed by the Partnership.

### 4. The Water Management Bill – responding through Sustainable Essex

Kevin Jones gave a presentation outlining the need for a new partnership underneath SE to help deliver a single approach to the Water Management Bill, which will come into force next year, placing new responsibilities on Local Authorities regarding floods (reacting and preventing).

The Bill needs to be anchored to the Essex Partnership and SE is the most suitable Thematic Partnership to do this. KJ will report progress to the Partnership and take back feedback to the subgroup which will perform the technical side of the process.

It was agreed that the Partnership will take on this general approach and monitor it at future meetings. **KJ to produce a paper on what the new partnership under SE will look like/involve to be discussed at the next meeting.**

### 5. Update on NI 156, Temporary Accommodation

Malcolm Knights was unable to attend the meeting but produced a progress report for the Partnership on NI 156, Temporary Accommodation.

The County-wide rent deposit scheme will be launched at the end of August. EIA and Risk Assessments outstanding at the last SE meeting have now been concluded, and PRG is currently being apportioned by agreement between the districts in accordance with population numbers and anticipated demand as a starting point.

Temporary accommodation reduction is an example of a 'cross cutting' issue which impacts on many aspects of community wellbeing and links to the performance of many indicators in the LAA. A meeting has therefore been scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> September to bring together representation from Essex Housing Authorities, North East Essex PCT, Supporting People, The Skills Unit at ECC, Schools, Children and Families Directorate of ECC, and Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing Directorate from ECC. The purpose of the meeting is to examine over the medium and long term how issues around Temporary Accommodation can be tracked more effectively.

## **6. Revised approach to NI 186, Carbon Reduction**

Kevin Jones updated the Partnership on the improvements he and his team have made to the NI 186 action plan whilst working with partners.

The new service based approach is an outcome focussed programme, focussing on things that can be delivered that will add value to customers, this includes a voluntary thermography service which will initially be launched as a pilot and advice to homeowners on how to improve energy efficiency/where to go next. The team are also arranging training for handy-men, alongside the Home Improvement Agency, to enable them to give energy efficiency advice to vulnerable homeowners when they visit, with a checklist for the handy-men to complete. The training will be to City & Guilds level and will be rolled out in the Winter. The team are also working on behavioural reinforcement in the kitchen; for example not putting food into the fridge until it is room temperature so that the fridge doesn't have to work as hard to keep it cool.

Kevin also discussed other pilots such as smarter driving in which drivers are encouraged to use their brake less. A driving simulator will help promote this and will be based in Maldon in the first instance.

**Michelle Keene to send training information to Gwyn for circulation to the Partnership.**

## **7. Essex Conference Feedback**

Over 300 delegates attended the conference on 9<sup>th</sup> July, where 35 workshops took place, the five most popular workshops were:

- Developing a common approach to reducing health inequalities in Essex led by Loretta Sollars of ECC.
- Strategic commissioning led by Tina Holland from IDEa. A proposal from this workshop was to develop a Commissioners for Essex Group.
- Can anyone hear me? This looked at sharing and co-ordinating public consultation. It was facilitated by Duncan Wood and Suzanne Harris
- Shared Services - which developed a list of blockers to developing shared services – facilitated by Patrick Smith from IBM and Richard Waterhouse from ECC.
- What a performance facilitated by Gill Butterworth from ECC.

The Essex Strategy Review Process was explained with the 'wicked issues' facing Essex and some of the partnership activity delivering improved outcomes. Interim findings from the Review can be viewed by visiting the new Essex Partnership Portal ([www.essexpartnershipportal.org](http://www.essexpartnershipportal.org)). Partners were asked to review these and feed their comments back to the Partnership Secretariat prior to the Partnership Forum in September. After EPF there will be a series of consultation summits throughout the autumn. Partners will be consulted with regard to the summits in the near future.

The partnership team at ECC are now looking at the feedback and workshop outcomes to develop a conference report which will go to the Essex Partnership Forum on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Meanwhile, Thematic Partnerships are being encouraged to take forward their relevant recommendations from the day.

Jan Plummer discussed the outcome reports from the workshops that she hosted (below).

## **8. Essex Partnership Equality Strategy**

Jan Plummer outlined the proposed Equality Strategy which is currently out for consultation to all Thematic Partnerships.

**Members to feedback comments to Jan within the next month.**

## **9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business raised.

**Close.** The date of the next meeting is 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009. This will be held at the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, 9:30-11:30.

**FIGURE 1 PROPOSED FUTURE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT IN ENGLAND**

**Environment Agency**

**Strategic overview role**

- Setting National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management.
- Support and guidance to LAs, e.g in producing flood risk assessments and plans.
- Develop modelling, mapping and warning systems.
- National investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management measures.
- Report to the Secretary of State on the state of the Nation's flood risk assets.
- Powers to instigate works on non-EA assets and channels when directed to do so by the Secretary of State.
- Statutory consultee on flood (and possibly in future coastal erosion) planning applications.

**Delivery/executive role**

- Flood risk management on main rivers and the sea.
- Coastal erosion risk management work (concurrently with local authorities).
- Flood warnings for all sources of flooding.
- Produce and contribute to strategic plans.
- Consenting and enforcement powers for sea and main river flooding.
- Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

**Local Authorities (LAs)**

**Local leadership role (county councils in two tier areas)**

- Setting Local Strategy for local flood risk management.
- Leadership and accountability for ensuring effective management of local flood risk from ordinary watercourses, surface run-off and groundwater.
- Production of local flood risk assessments, maps and plans including an asset register.
- Improved drainage and flood risk management expertise.
- Co-ordinate Surface Water Management Plan production.
- Drainage from non-Highways Agency roads
- Prioritising local investment.
- Consenting and enforcement powers for certain works affecting ordinary watercourses.
- Promoting partnerships with local planning authorities to produce Strategic Flood Risk Assessments.

**Delivery/executive role**

- Powers to do works for surface run-off and groundwater flood risk.
- Duty to undertake Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management functions in accordance with local and national strategies.
- LFRM decision-making integrated into local asset management and investment programmes.
- Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act including local delivery of flood warnings.

**EA's Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (currently Regional Flood Defence Committees)**

- Advisory/consultative role to EA and LAs on flood and coastal erosion approaches, priorities etc.
- Consent to levies for local priority flood and coastal erosion risk management work with executive responsibility for work in this area.

**Internal Drainage Boards, district authorities (in two-tier areas), highways bodies, water companies**

**Executive/Delivery Role**

- Duty to undertake Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management functions in accordance with local and national strategies.
- We consult in section 3 on IDB structures, powers and levy raising options.

# Sustainable Essex

## Draft Consultation on Flooding and Water Management Bill

Presentation by:

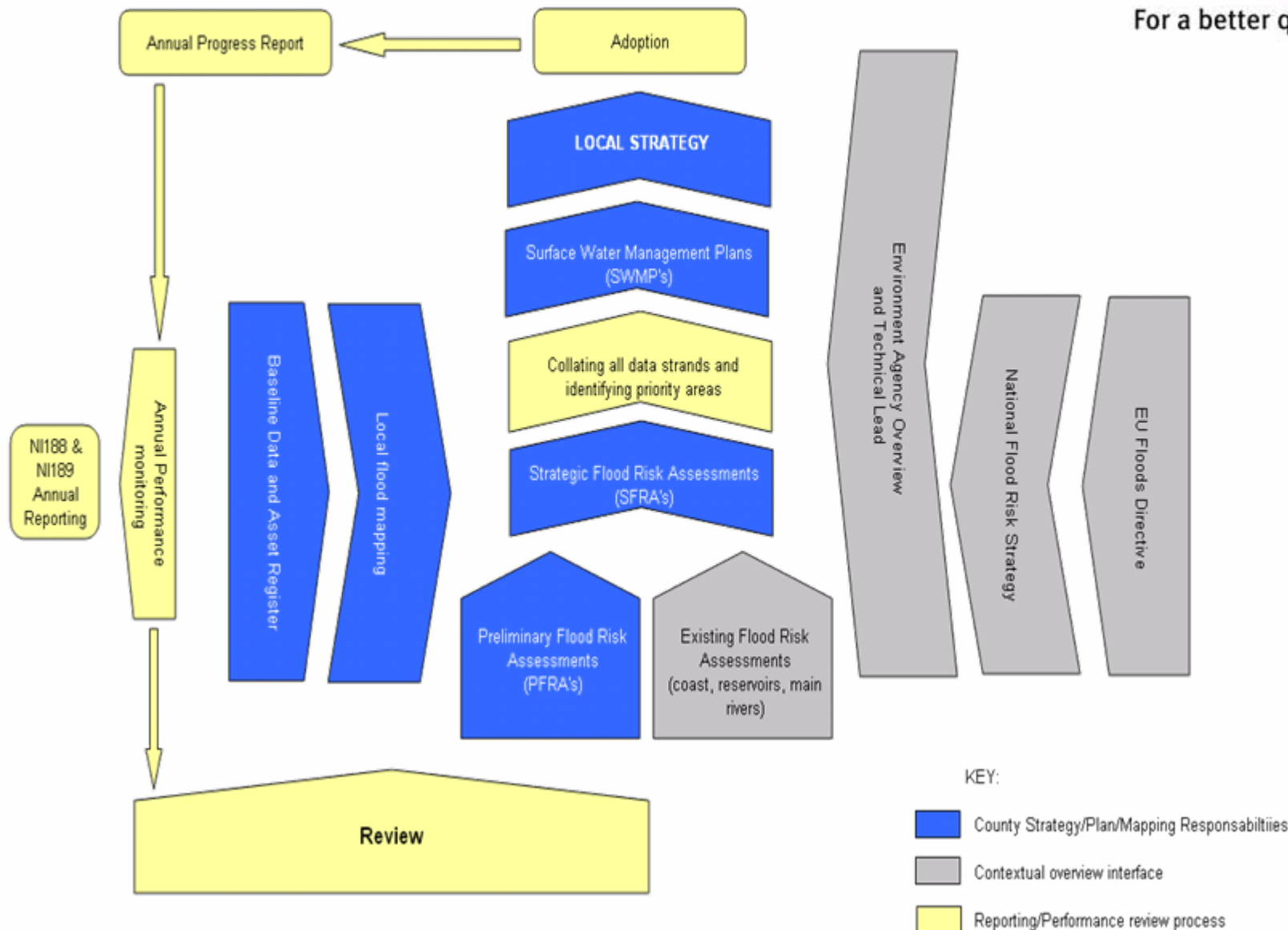
Kevin Jones     Head of Environment Strategy ECC



# Story so far

- Pitt Review (June 2008);
- Hilary Benn letters to local chief executives;
- Draft Consultation Bill (April 2009)
  - EA to provide technical lead and overview;
  - Counties and Unitaries lead in local flood management:
    - Significant new responsibilities & expectation;
    - Partnership approach.

Local Hierachy/interdependence



# Challenges

## 1. RESPONSE

## 2. PREVENTION & MITIGATION

- Funding;
- Lack of Clarity;
- Knowledge and Skills Gap;
- Partnership and Governance.

# Progress so far

- ECC Corporate Leadership Team briefed;
- Report circulated at Essex Chief Executive Meeting;
- ECC Lead officer assigned;
- Essex Planning Officers & Highways briefed;
- County and Regional contacts made;
- ECC draft consultation response prepared;
- Member scrutiny on 22<sup>nd</sup> July;
- High level draft programme plan being prepared.

# Discussion

- The role of Sustainable Essex in local flood risk management?
- How can we deliver an effective partnership approach to local flood risk management?

# Thank you

Kevin Jones

Head of Environment Strategy

Essex County Council

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# NI 186: Community CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction

*Kevin Jones*  
*Head of Environment Strategy*



# The story so far...

- Target reduction and de-designation
- Visibility-focussed initiatives
  - CRed
  - Education and awareness
- Outcome-focussed programme e.g. Heat Seekers politically unacceptable
- Recent focus on delivering customer-focussed services
  - Energy monitor loan scheme (Libraries)
  - Buy with Confidence (Trading Standards)

EssexWorks.

For a better quality of life



Essex County Council

# Proposed service-based approach

- Innovative and engaging
- Responsive to customer needs
- Using partnership's sphere of influence
- High visibility
- Adding value to existing partners' services



## Approach

### ECC Services

#### Domestic housing

- Thermography service for households
- Essex Buy With Confidence scheme
- Energy monitor loan scheme with libraries
- SLA and promotions with Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre
- CORE Group (District CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction)
- Capacity building with HIAs

#### Business and industry

- Thermography service for business
- Essex Buy With Confidence scheme

#### Transport

- Smarter driving

#### Schools

- Essex Sustainable Schools Programme

COMMUNITY

REWARD/INCENTIVE MECHANISMS

# Next steps...

- Approach supported by ECC
- Pilot areas for each service to be launched Autumn 09
- Performance monitoring
- Service roll out dependent on success/ partner interest

***Do the Sustainable Essex Partnership support this approach?***

# Contact Details

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## Essex Conference July 2009: Leading the future together

### Session One Workshop report: Eco-bling to Enabling

This workshop was attended by 7 people. The first part consisted of a presentation on environmental issues and the Essex context, as well as an exercise on the 5 principles of sustainable development. For details please see the workshop programme.

The second part consisted of discussions on key ideas and actions for Essex.

#### The three key recommendations for action from this workshop are:

1. Use the 5 principles of sustainable development as criteria to plan and monitor all our strategies, policies and action plans.
2. Make low carbon transport part of all our service plans as well as what we do individually
3. Raise public understanding of climate change, peak oil, etc. using scientifically proven facts to illustrate what is happening. Promote sustainable development courses in further education.

#### Ideas for action are:

- Reduce car use and encourage people to walk or cycle, especially on journeys to school and in town centres at night, to improve public perception of feeling safe. Cars isolate people from each other as well as cause stress, noise and danger.
- Encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport to improve public physical and mental health.
- Raise awareness of sustainable development throughout the curriculum in schools and HFE Colleges. Promote sustainable development courses.
- Provide an education package for vulnerable people to enable them to live sustainably – explain local recycling, sustainable home improvements, what to do in a heat wave, etc.
- Improve rural one stop shops/one local agency, for vulnerable people to minimise environmental impact as well as improve services. Use a cross-reference agency for the vulnerable so they get one visit for everything, i.e. Homeshield.
- Improve access to green space for hospital patients to aid recovery, e.g. Basildon cardiothoracic dept.

- Reduce fear of crime by increasing and improving green space in urban and inter-urban areas. Encourage these small “green projects” with seed funding, promotion in media etc.
- Encourage buying of locally produced food. This is better for the environment, supports local businesses, and promotes healthy eating. Essex peppers not worldly peppers!
- Support growing of own food through providing more land for allotments to engage, especially vulnerable, community groups. This is better for the environment, promotes healthy eating and encourages physical exercise.

### Our discussions covered:

- How to encourage behavioural change
- How to keep people interested, motivated and moving on
- Always think about the wider environmental picture of what we do
- Use peer-reviewed scientific evidence of climate change
- Spatial projects, like the Haven Gateway, must audit and monitor plans and outcomes to ensure: the use of green energy; green industries; raising the quality of the environment; environmentally friendly and economic housing; easy access to low carbon transport.
- Anglican Church in Essex has an environmentally-friendly policy for listed buildings as well as individual behaviours.
- Essex Fire & Rescue has an environmental policy and plan - which is regularly reviewed – covering the way they work, home to work travel, reduced travel, performance of fleet, sharing facilities with other agencies in rural areas. It will be reviewed next using the 5 principles of sustainable development.
- Gaining planning permission for sustainable energy e.g. wind turbines, is a problem we need to do something about
- Lack of information, guidance, help in Eastern region, e.g. Carbon Trust is only for large businesses.
- Encourage expansion across county of key example green businesses.
- Review procurement, e.g. Market Place sells desk lamps with environmentally unfriendly bulbs.
- Need more investment in green products.

## Essex Conference July 2009: Leading the future together

### Session Two Workshop report: Gypsies & Travellers – Part of the Essex Community

This workshop was attended by over 20 people, including 5 people from the gypsy community. The first part consisted of presentations on: the Essex context of gypsies and travellers; official sites; mobile services; education; and health. For details please see the workshop programme.

The second part consisted of an open discussion around the issues affecting the lives of gypsies and travellers and how those issues might be tackled effectively.

**The three key recommendations for action from the workshop are:**

1. Improve services and communications by building bridges, good relationships and confidence, through sustained and personal contact between frontline staff, and gypsy/traveller people – “easing things”.
2. Enable and promote security of homes for all traveller families in Essex - which will increase access to services; raise attainment in education & skills; and improve some of the currently lowest levels of health and education in our population.
3. Promote, to the public, the local press, the police, and elected politicians, positive information about the social identity, history and culture of Gypsies/Travellers in Essex.

**Other recommendations are:**

- Ensure all partners, especially District Councils, include Gypsies & Travellers in their policies and planning. This will support partnership working to reach all our NI targets, but especially those for education and health.
- Include Gypsies/Travellers in all strategies and plans to tackle homelessness, improve health, extend education and skills, employment, small businesses, communications, etc.
- Involve Gypsies/Travellers in planning sites intended for them, as well as other services.
- Relationships need to be built. Councils should appoint an elected member as a Gypsy advocate/ambassador. There should be named key officers for service delivery.

- Racial behaviour towards Gypsies/Travellers should be declared unacceptable – by front-line staff, elected members etc.
- Introduce front-line staff, such as local police, personally. Training for new police recruits should include a number of days spent on a Gypsy/Traveller site. Training for elected members should include visits to sites to meet Gypsies/Travellers in their constituencies.
- Use Gypsy/Traveller History Month – June – as one way of promoting better understanding with the public and in schools
- Work with Gypsy/Traveller children and young people to support their culture and develop self-esteem.
- Focus with the community on health education in all aspects, especially sexual health - smear tests, pregnancy, reproduction, etc.
- Use mobile units for well-women/ well-men clinics; taking health services to sites (Bristol has one). This can be the start of linking Gypsy/Travellers to mainstream services. These mobile units can also provide health services to rural areas in general.
- Use “Skills Lorry” – like Thurrock – to up-date skills. Again this eases transition to mainstream work and these lorries can be used in rural areas generally. Local firms could sponsor them.
- Provide sustainable funding for longer-term programmes, not short-term projects, so that issues can be tackled properly.
- Use schools to get information out to the Gypsy/Traveller community.

**The open discussion ranged across a number of subjects:**

### **Services**

Current relationships with local councils and the police are difficult and stop Gypsies/Travellers from accessing services.

### **Public attitudes**

Gypsies feel that racism is more widely considered acceptable towards them – in contrast to other groups. They feel that they are not listened to when they do complain. Most Gypsies/Travellers won't report hate crimes nor bullying in schools.

### **Homes**

A huge number of Gypsies/Travellers from Essex have never had secure stopping places - ever in their lives. This is having a substantial effect on their feeling of security, their health, and their education, and makes reported statistics regarding their well-being some of the lowest in Essex.

There was some discussion about trailer sites isolating Gypsies/Travellers from other members of the Essex community. Views included: housing is isolating for everyone; Gypsies don't feel ghettoised on sites; the ideal situation would be small sites for extended families – as the basis of their culture.

### **The Police**

Don't understand Gypsy/Traveller culture, especially when doing searches of homes, and can unintentionally offend women.

### **Health Education**

The Gypsy group felt that there is a lot of ignorance and fear in their community about sexual health and diseases such as cancer, and that this was partly cultural but mainly because of lack of access to information. They felt that, if tackled sensitively regarding their culture, sexual education was best taught in schools.

# Essex Conference July 2009: Leading the future together

## Session Three Workshop report: Carbon Reduction

This workshop was attended by 11 people. The first part consisted of a presentation on carbon reduction.

The second part consisted of discussions on key ideas and actions for Essex.

### The three key recommendations for action from this workshop are:

1. Resource 1 or 2 iconic projects in Essex as examples of what can be done (business, domestic, schools etc).
2. Enable joint communication, as well as branding, of green initiatives in Essex
3. Encourage behavioural change and raise awareness to change minds by giving the public the scientific facts about climate change and peak oil.

### Discussions:

What is being done now in different organisations in Essex:

- Recycling
- Walking to work
- Awareness training or staff
- Rainwater collection
- Green procurement
- Public awareness raising
- Carbon reduction action groups
- Low energy lamps
- Water restriction or displacement devices
- Low energy lighting
- Street lights switch off
- Wind turbines
- Travel planning
- Terminology – saving v wasting
- Top level committee
- Technical fixes to bypass behavioural change
- Travel plans, flexible working, congestion
- Cycle training
- SME information
- Carbon credit
- Joint funding with PCT
- Home insulation

- Working with advice centres
- Basildon green business forum
- Measure and monitor energy use
- Club to reduce C2O
- Business awards
- Mentoring between businesses
- Food waste to energy – feasibility study
- Mapping public sector buildings
- Mileage monitoring through expenses claims
- Business travel decision tree
- Bike pools
- Car sharing
- Colchester sustainable travel plan
- Park & ride in Chelmsford
- Community white bike schemes
- Southend national bike initiative
- Community link transport
- First bus travel plans and bus passes
- Walking buses
- Vulnerable groups public transport awareness
- Wii fit
- Travel training for bus drivers (re encouraging young people)
- Seed funding subsidies for public transport
- Concessionary scheme for over 60s

What could be done:

- Re-use roadshows
- Bringing IT to older residents
- Joint communications
- Data hubs
- Environmental education using scientific evidence to bring cost savings
- One or two iconic green projects in Essex as examples
- Buy only green energy – procurement (see Good Energy website)
- Encourage green industries
- Joint planning policies according to sustainable principles

## **Essex Partnership Equality Strategy**

### **1. Our Intent**

1. To make sure that the views of people from the whole range of equalities groups: Age; Disability; Gender; Race & Culture; Religion & Belief; Sexual Orientation; as well as Economic Deprivation and Rurality, are fully reflected in all our the partnership work.
2. To ensure that responsibility for addressing equality issues is distributed between and owned by individual partners, partnerships and the Essex Partnership Delivery Team.
3. To add significant value to what we do in partnership; in particular to make sure that partnership plans promote equality, build cohesive communities and contribute towards making a better quality of life accessible for all people in Essex
4. To make sure our partnerships comply with requirements regarding equality, and the new single Equality Framework for Local Government, so that individual partners - acting in partnership - meet their legal requirements – in particular with regard to publication of EIAs and outcomes of action plans
5. Improve data collection and monitoring to ensure our partnerships understand variations in outcomes across equality communities and different geographic areas.
6. To support progress towards attaining the new “excellent” corporate Equality Level for all partner organisations in Essex

### **2. Our Partnership Principles and Equality**

The Essex Partnership is made up of statutory organisations such as: the County Council; District and Parish Councils; Health; Police; and Fire services; the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), and the private sector. At its first meeting in 2007 the Essex Partnership approved 8 principles for governance and joint working arrangements. These principles also guide how partners work together with regard to equality. The most relevant Principles regarding equality are:-

#### ***Added value***

There is widespread recognition amongst partners that many of the issues that have the most direct impact on the quality of life of our communities can be most effectively addressed by working together. Equality is one of the issues to which, by working together, the Essex Partnership can add value to what we do, e.g. providing equality information or co-ordinating public engagement.

***Subsidiarity***

This means that actions should happen at the lowest level appropriate to the outcomes desired. Our partnerships and their members recognise that many equality outcomes are best achieved by working at the most local level possible, particularly by supporting communities and groups to self organise to make sure they can easily access services.

***Transparency***

The Essex Partnership will develop a consistent, rigorous and open approach. Partnerships and partners will seek to address equality in a way that is open to scrutiny and fully engages all relevant individuals and organisations so that they know how we are performing.

***Accountability and sovereignty***

Many of our partnerships have no formal legal existence and therefore no formal legal responsibility under legislation that addresses equality issues. ?? However individual partners have the responsibility of complying with equality legislation and therefore have a collective duty?.

***Equality & Inclusion***

We seek to reduce inequalities across different parts of the county and between different communities; therefore The Partnership should enable all partners to have a voice. This is particularly relevant to defining the priority issues and future vision for Essex based on an analysis of needs and an understanding of the aspirations of local people.

**3. Our Strategic Approach**

<p><b>1. Review existing partnership arrangements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the new single Equality Framework for Local Government as an opportunity to review what we do in partnership regarding equality</li><li>• Map the current equality arrangements of all partners and partnerships including public, voluntary and private sectors to identify areas where skills and knowledge can be shared</li></ul>
<p><b>2. Engage effectively with equality communities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine and improve how partnerships engage with equality groups to enable them to contribute their views – to the Essex Strategy as well as other partnership activities - so that we understand their needs and aspirations</li><li>• Publicise any positive outcomes for the public realised as a result of engagement with equality communities in Essex</li></ul>

<p><b>3. Embed equality in partnership practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed equality throughout all Essex Partnership processes; especially partnership action plans, monitoring of equality outcomes and performance management</li> <li>• Use Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to shape partnership activity and refer issues raised by the EIAs to individual partners if required.</li> <li>• Facilitate partnerships and target leads to review their LAA Action Plans with regard to equality and work with partners to address issues raised.</li> <li>• Assist partnerships to publish and publicise their EIAs</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Strengthen capacity in partnership organisations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an action plan to assist partnerships improve knowledge of equality issues</li> <li>• Set up an equality page on the new Essex Partnership website to provide basic information and links to detailed information and guidance to improve equality practice.</li> <li>• Report to each Partnership on equality developments which affect their work</li> <li>• Provide advice and support to partnerships</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Improve the Essex Evidence Base on Equality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the current provision of good quality, comprehensive information on equality strands in Essex.</li> <li>• Map existing information</li> <li>• Identify information gaps and examine options for filling these.</li> <li>• Co-ordinate the production of county wide equality statistics, public engagement reports and other information</li> <li>• Disaggregate county-wide equality statistics and information to district level</li> <li>• Make statistics and information easily accessible for partners.</li> </ul>

#### **4. Where does Responsibility for Equality lie?**

##### **Individuals**

Equality duties are the responsibility of each and every person in our organisations. Individual staff should take up equality training offered by their organisation

##### **Partners**

Most organisations involved in delivering the LAA have distinct statutory roles and their sovereignty must be respected; They, as well as the VCS and private sector, are responsible for developing their own approach to equality and diversity in accordance with legal requirements. The development and implementation of partnership actions should balance each individual partner's approach to equality with the Partnership's agreed approach.

##### **Thematic and other Partnerships**

Partnerships are responsible for identifying the significant equality issues relating to their partnership organisation, policies, strategies and action plans, they should:

## Essex Partnership Equality Strategy

- agree, publish and promote their overall approach to equality, and ensure that this takes account of individual partners difference approaches.
- be aware of the key equality issues in the area of work for which they are responsible; using national, regional and local reports, statistics and public engagement results to identify them.
- identify and address significant gaps in local or Essex level information by commissioning research or public engagement – ensure that this is co-ordinated by sharing plans at Essex level
- monitor equality outcomes in implementation of action plans through a “critical friends” approach.
- share and use knowledge about equality performance to drive continuous improvement in services delivered in partnership and by partnership members.
- Develop, agree, publish and review Equality Impact Assessments of their action plans

### **Essex LAA Performance Management Sub Group**

- Ensure Thematic Partnerships are aware of the importance of considering equality issues when developing and delivering their plans; including the need to prepare and publish equality impact assessments.

### **Essex Equality and Diversity Network – EEDN**

Options for EEDN are set out below in Annex 3.

## **Annex 1: Context**

### **Current Legal Requirements**

1. Sex Discrimination Act 1975
2. Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
3. Disability Discrimination Act 2005
4. The Equality Act 2006
5. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Under these partners are required to:

- address race, disability and gender equality in particular when reviewing policies, strategies, plans, and organisational processes.
- consult race, disability and gender communities in particular on policies, strategies, plans, and organisational processes.
- complete and publish EIAs, as well as the process undertaken, to demonstrate how equality has been taken into account
- remove unlawful discrimination from policies and their implementation
- promote equality and social cohesion

### **The New Equality Bill**

Part of a package of equality measures, the Bill was announced in the 2008 Queens Speech and published on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009. When it becomes an Act - in 2009 - it will provide a simpler framework, strengthening and replacing current requirements. It will:

- distil 9 pieces of legislation into a single Act
- create a single new Equality Duty for public bodies to tackle discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and encourage good community relations
- extend current equality duties, on race, disability and gender, to age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief, and to ensure “equal life chances” for a wider range of people
- understand and remove the barriers people experience, so that they get equal access to services
- in particular, ban age discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities or services
- simplify the definition of disability

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009, as part of the package of measures, the 2001 Equality Standard for Local Government was replaced by a new **Equality Framework for Local Government**. This Framework will complement the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy as well as the work of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs).

### **The New Single Equality Framework for Local Government:**

- uses 10 clear dimensions to describe equality across the board (see Annex Two)
- attributes particular importance to having a robust process for EIAs and the implementation of action plans
- strengthens procurement to increase equality
- mainstreams equality into the areas of performance management
- emphasises quality data collection and use of information on equality issues

### **Ealing Council Case Ruling 2009**

Ealing Black Sisters won a court case against their council when they demonstrated that, because statistics showed that the incidence of domestic violence was higher in their community than across the council area, comparatively more resources should be given to tackle it.

The case upheld 4 principles for race equality and relevance to local government:

- Promotion of equality is obligatory
- It applies to all relevant functions
- It should be proportionate to relevance
- Fulfilling the elements of a duty is necessary to meeting the whole duty

This case has implications for Essex regarding equality data collection, analysis and decision-making. Although we may have small numbers of some minority groups in Essex, the implications of the Ealing case are that we have to understand what the issues are for these individual groups. And, if statistics show that a particular community disproportionately experiences a particular problem compared with the rest of our population, e.g. lower educational achievement for Traveller & Gypsy children or housing requirements for Bangladeshi families, then we have to prioritise effort and resources where improvement is most needed.

## Annex 2: The 10 Dimensions of Equality

The new **Equality Framework for Local Government** uses a wider definition of equality:

*“An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes barriers that limit what people can do and be.”*

The Equalities Review, 2007

These 10 dimensions cover all equality strands. They also address socio-economic status and other vulnerable groups - such as looked after children.

	Dimension	Includes:-
1	<b>Longevity</b>	Avoiding premature death - in the widest sense
2	<b>Physical Security</b>	Freedom from violence and physical/sexual abuse
3	<b>Health</b>	A feeling of well-being as well as access to high quality health care
4	<b>Education</b>	Being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications and having access to training and life long education
5	<b>Standard of Living</b>	Being able to live with independence and security, and covering: nutrition, clothing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport
6	<b>Productive &amp; valued activities</b>	Access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance and being able to care for others
7	<b>Individual, family and social development</b>	Self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage
8	<b>Participation, influence and voice</b>	Participation in decision-making and democratic life
9	<b>Identity, expression and self-respect</b>	Freedom of belief and religion
10	<b>Legal security</b>	Equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system

### **Annex 3: The Role of Essex Equality & Diversity Network (EEDN) – a choice of models**

#### **General Points from EEDN Meeting**

- EEDN was set up as a network consisting of statutory and voluntary bodies
- It was not intended to be representative of all equality strands
- It provides a “safe space” for discussion and sharing of information
- It gives expert advice and support on equality issues, information and legislation
- It can provide contacts for engagement with equality communities
- It formerly reported to the Essex Partnership
- It is independent of the Essex Partnership, the Partnership Forum and other bodies so that it can act as a critical friend

#### **Activities EEDN could take on to support the Essex Partnership**

- Map current information, research and public engagement in Essex and make it accessible to partners on EEDN website – with link from Equality Page on Essex Partnership website
- Identify major gaps in equality information regarding the 8 equality strands in Essex and organise collection of relevant information through research or engagement
- Ensure co-ordination of public engagement activities or research to address substantial identified gaps in knowledge
- As a base of expert knowledge, to provide advice and support on equality to Partnerships on the structure of their organisation, processes, action plans and EIAs
- Monitor Essex Partnership performance and assess outcomes for relevant equality strands
- Act as a critical friend to challenge and review Partnership policies, EIAs and Action Plans
- Report formally to the Essex Partnership on findings
- Promote best practice and share expertise on equality with Essex Partnership members
- It would have other informal roles outside that of its support for the Essex Partnership

There are 4 possible models for EEDN:-

#### **Model One**

1. EEDN holds regular themed meetings/workshops, where relevant partners are invited, to discuss the structure, processes and action plans with regard to equalities.

THEN

2. EEDN produces an Annual Report, on relevant equality issues and challenges, which goes to the Essex Partnership Performance Management Group, AGM, Partnership Forum, and Board, **as well as back to Thematic and other relevant partnerships.**

### **Model Two**

EEDN employs someone part-time – through the PDQ of L team - to do the above on their behalf.

### **Model Three**

EEDN funds and manages a voluntary sector partner to offer these services to the Essex Partnership on behalf of EEDN. ECC would provide some funding and administration support.

### **Model Four**

Set up a project with a third party, such as Essex University, to fulfil the research/public engagement and assessment roles. Bid for £50,000 from Innovations Day in October.

### **Model Five**

EEDN remains as it is

### **Suggestions on participation of elected members in EEDN:-**

- They are invited to each EEDN meeting
- They are invited to an EEDN AGM to agree the Annual Report
- They are invited to issue based meetings/workshops
- They are invited to an annual Equalities Conference