

ECC Report January 2023

Recommendations for children's mental health

A new report is available which outlines recommended improvements for children's mental health.

Work has taken place this year by a Mental Health Services for Young People Task and Finish Group. It comes following a motion put forward at our Full Council meeting in May. The motion expressed the need to review the current challenges young people face.

I chaired a group of cross-party Councillors who considered different evidence during their review. This included the impact of the pandemic, funding and the importance of early support. There is already positive work happening across the county in this area. However, the evidence highlighted some common areas of improvement needed across Essex. It also demonstrated how central government, local authorities and health services need to work together to address them.

The Essex Health and Wellbeing Board will review the final report in the New Year. This will include considering how and when to progress the recommendations with our partners. Please click the link below to

[Read the full recommendations report](#)

I have provided a summary of them for ease of reference:

Recommendation 1 – Staffing

a) As it currently takes around three years for a person to obtain the relevant qualifications to undertake a clinical role in mental health, the group recommended that the North East London Foundation Trust who provides the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Essex should work with local universities, to see whether it is possible to introduce a fast-track training programme or a more simplified programme to enable vacancies to be filled sooner.

b) Although the group was fully aware of the reasons why individuals are currently leaving the profession, they have asked the Secretary of State for Health and the Essex Integrated Care Systems (ICS) Chief Executives to get to the root of the problem and to see what could be done to retain these highly skilled and experienced staff.

c) The group felt very strongly that more innovation should be used in recruiting mental health staff and mirror the great achievements of the Colchester Institute in designing a health apprenticeship specifically for the diagnostics hub at Clacton Hospital where so far, 300 places have been offered with 60 full time positions already filled.

Recommendation 2 – Single point of contact

The group recommended that a single point of contact (hub) should be set up in Essex for young people, including parents and carers, who require mental health support, information, and guidance on who to contact for help, such as 111, 999 and 0800 1111

Recommendation 3 – Schools

a) The group recommended that the Secretary of State for Education produces a plan, and then provides further financial resource to enable schools to provide more extra-curricular and enriching activities, and appropriate support and resources, which may then prevent people presenting with more complex mental health issues.

b) The group recommended that the ECC Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Health, Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability and Children's Services and Early Years, lobby the Secretary of State for Education to obtain funding to provide a Primary School Wellbeing Hub in every school in Essex.

c) Because of the great success of the Primary School Wellbeing Hubs Project in the Great Bentley Primary School in Tendring, that has so successfully tackled mental problem with young people, the group felt that this project should be rolled out throughout the whole County of Essex. It is currently in place in 21 schools across Colchester and Tendring.

d) The group recommended that the Council's Trauma Practice Perceptive Programme now in place within over half of Essex schools engaged should be offered to every school. This programme helps schools to be able to positively help pupils who require mental health support.

e) The group felt that the evidence provided to them, highlighted a lack of awareness of mental health support across some schools in Essex. It therefore recommended that Essex County Council's Education Team provide clearer, more concise guidance to all schools in Essex detailing the support available and how it can be accessed.

Recommendation 4 – Communications

a) The group recommended that ECC Communications Team, undertakes a review of its external Child and Adolescent Mental Health communications plan, and prepare an interim report for the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) specifically around access to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and referral pathways; and

b) that the Communications and Marketing team continue its focus on promoting mental health support available to young people, such as dance, drama, sport, youth clubs and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and submits an interim report for the above Committee.

[Read the full recommendations report](#)

New digital offer for unpaid carers

Unpaid carers in Essex play a vital role in supporting families and friends to live independently within their own homes and communities.

Many of them simply see it as their role to support family members, relatives, friends, or neighbours who need help to live independently. They won't identify as a "carer" and not realise there is information, advice, guidance and support if and when they may need it.

This month ECC has launched a new digital offer for carers called [Mobilise](https://support.mobiliseonline.co.uk/essex)

This aims to reach an estimated 30,000 unpaid carers across Essex, offering them support and helping them connect to others in a similar position.

The service is free and led by carers themselves. It runs alongside services provided by local carer support organisations and will see free personalised guidance and coaching, website guides, regular contact through emails, a guide to caring e-course, 'virtual cuppas' and even individual support calls seven days a week, including Christmas day.

Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health at Essex County Council, Councillor John Spence said: "We want to identify more carers and provide additional support, so carers can continue to provide their crucial care and enjoy positive lives.

"We want to create a 'Carers Community' in Essex and Mobilise is a great way for us to achieve this by helping carers to connect, reducing isolation and helping get the right support to the people that need it."

[Find out more about Mobilise](#) as well as the [other support available for carers](#) in Essex <https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/support-for-carers>

Win an animal experience with the Winter Reading Challenge

Essex Libraries has teamed up with Colchester Zoo to offer one lucky reader a chance to win an animal experience.

Everyone who completes this year's Winter Reading Challenge will be entered into a prize draw. The winner will receive a day at the zoo and the chance to get closer to some of the animals, learning more about them with the help of the Animal Care Team.

The winner will be announced after the challenge finishes, Saturday 28 January, and as part of this year's challenge, young people will complete challenges in an interactive booklet to help Lyra the penguin discover how others celebrate winter.

The Winter Reading Challenge is being led by Essex Library Service, in partnership with Penguin books and the Essex Year of Reading.

Essex County Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities, Cllr Louise McKinlay, said: "We are pleased to have teamed up with Colchester Zoo to offer this amazing prize as part of this year's Winter Reading Challenge.

"Our Reading Challenges are always so popular, and it is wonderful to see so many children and young people improve their literacy skills by taking part.

"We are always looking at exciting ways to encourage a love of reading and learning within our communities, and initiatives like this are a great way to engage both young people and adults.

"Find out more on our website, and pop into your local Library to sign up - there's still time! While you are there, take a look at all of the other activities on offer, there really is something for everyone at Essex Libraries."

Sign up to the challenge by [visiting one of Essex's 74 libraries](https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/library-locations-and-opening-times/)

[Read the terms and conditions for the competition](https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/e-books-e-audio-e-magazines-and-book-groups/book-groups/wrc22-prize-draw-t-and-c/)

Essex County Council joins UK100 climate network

The Council has set out its commitment to tackle climate change by signing up to the UK100.

The [UK100](https://www.uk100.org/) <https://www.uk100.org/> is a network of local authority and government leaders that work together to create and implement ambitious plans to tackle the climate crisis.

The UK100 Membership Pledge requires us to:

- Set ambitious net zero targets for greenhouse emissions of 2030 for council operations and 2050 for areawide emissions, which we have already done in our [Climate Action Plan](https://assets.ctfassets.net/666666666666/666666666666/666666666666/Climate_Action_Plan_Report_v3_-_Digital_Accessible.pdf) https://assets.ctfassets.net/666666666666/666666666666/666666666666/Climate_Action_Plan_Report_v3_-_Digital_Accessible.pdf
- Report annually on greenhouse gas emissions, both for the council and for Essex as a whole. We have just published our [Climate Action Report](https://assets.ctfassets.net/666666666666/666666666666/666666666666/Climate_Action_Report_2021-22.pdf) https://assets.ctfassets.net/666666666666/666666666666/666666666666/Climate_Action_Report_2021-22.pdf giving updates on actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase climate resilience.
- To limit the use of carbon offsets, and if used, for these to be as local as possible.

As part of the network, we will be working with others across the UK to support our efforts to become net zero by 2050.

We join 106 other local authorities already part of the UK100.

Speaking on the County Council becoming part of the UK100, Leader of the Council Cllr Kevin Bentley said: "By signing this pledge we are increasing our capability to effectively fight climate change and work to become a net zero county.

"At Essex County Council we take tackling the climate crisis seriously and understand that to fight climate change we need to go above and beyond.

"Joining the UK100 will enable us to work with other local authorities and reap the rewards of collaboration with our counterparts from across the country."

[Find out more about the Essex Climate Action Commission and plans for tackling climate change](https://www.essexclimate.org.uk/) in Essex <https://www.essexclimate.org.uk/>

Useful links (Circulated with my last report)

Report or track a problem with roads or pavements. Road closures and utilities works: <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us/problem-check>

Public transport information <https://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus>

Live traffic news and update to roads <https://www.essexhighways.org/interactive-maps-and-live-travel-information>

And many, many more links

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/search#?cludoquery=Useful%20links&cludopage=1&cludorefurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.essex.gov.uk%2F&cludorefpt=Welcome%20to%20Essex%20County%20Council&cludoinputtype=standard>

New Links

Jobs and Apprenticeships opportunities <https://www.essex.gov.uk/jobs-volunteering-apprenticeships>

Schools and all Education matters <https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/schools-and-learning>

Births, Deaths, and Ceremonies <https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/births-ceremonies-deaths>

Social care, Health Matters, Report neglect or abuse, Blue Badge applications <https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/adult-social-care-and-health>