

Key Messages: Budget 2019/20

1. Essex County Council is the most efficient/effective Council of its size in the country and ranks seventh overall

- Consultancy iMPower surveyed 150 upper-tier councils, with ECC 7th for spending money effectively and getting the best results for residents
- ECC has improved its productivity/effectiveness, moving up from 23rd place last year
- The results are drawn from an analysis of performance in six key areas: children's social care, older people, disability, health and social care, housing and homelessness, waste and recycling

2. Reports of potholes decreased by 45% in Essex between 2015-2017

- National figures released by the RAC in December 2018 showed Essex bucking national trends, where reports have been increasing
- The figure reflects our hard work in tackling potholes, with extra funding/resources deployed to clear the backlog particularly following the "Beast from the East" cold snap at the beginning of 2018

3. ECC is the best social work employer

- ECC places great emphasis on training and career progression for social workers through the Essex Social Care Academy
- The Council has created a stable workforce with limited use of agency staff, which has been in part due to the introduction of a high-quality programme of support in employment
- We are committed to making our social workers feel valued and positive and achieve positive outcomes for vulnerable children, families and adults

4. Broadband rollout (£1.4m investment)

- As of November 2018, 115,000 properties have been enabled (phase 2 of the rollout continues)
- Delivery will reach its peak over the next nine months
- Just 3% of Essex (26,000 properties) has no existing or planned superfast coverage

5. Devolved funding to Parish Councils

- Parishes have been invited to take part in a pilot where they would undertake devolved highways functions, including grass cutting and special verge maintenance, weed control, tree and hedge cutting, minor footway repairs, installing/maintaining signs, winter salt bags, maintaining bus stops/shelters and maintaining Public Rights of Way
- 15 Parish Councils have expressed an interest in taking part in the pilot

6. Essex's Youth Offending team does "Outstanding" work with young offenders

- HM Inspectorate of Probation announced in December that the service was "outstanding", its highest category
- Many aspects of its work to prevent reoffending were found to be "impressive" and the service was praised for its consistent approach despite covering one of the largest areas in the country
- Dame Glenys Stacey, HM Chief Inspector of Probation said "The arrangements for youth offending work and the focus given to it by strategic leaders are clear and well understood. The work is led well by both strategic leaders and operational managers"

7. Schools and skills success

- 94% of ECC schools are rated as good or outstanding
- We are supporting the training of young people in Essex through apprenticeships and academic study, working in conjunction with further education providers and universities, to ensure we are producing people with the right skills to help grow the Essex economy

8. Reducing unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments

- Working with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, we have seen a 40% reduction in unauthorised Gypsy and traveller encampments

9. Children's Services

- In January we were given an overall grading of "Outstanding" by Ofsted following an inspection in November
- ECC has been recognised in Parliament and by the Children's Minister, Nadhim Zahawi MP, as being the leading light in children's services
- Mr Zahawi has visited Essex to look at how we provide services and achieve excellent outcomes for costs which are below national averages
- We anticipate we will shortly be offering advice to the MHCLG Parliamentary Select Committee on Children's Services funding