

ERF weekly briefing note

WC 15 June 2020

The Essex Resilience Forum Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) was put into action to provide coordination and alignment for member services in Essex.

The SCG is chaired by Chief Constable BJ Harrington and Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Rick Hylton. The two Chairs rotate responsibility to provide resilience.

Current SCG Chair – Rick Hylton

The purpose of the SCG is to:

- Minimise the risk to the public by assisting Public Health to contain the spread of the virus and to support the contact tracing.
- Maximise, where practicable, the safety of our staff and partners by providing advice and appropriate PPE where necessary.
- Ensure business continuity plans are in place to enable the provision of key services and continued delivery of essential services to the public.
- To reassure the public by supporting Public Health guidance and Public Health messages.
- To ensure that community tension and intelligence/information is being effectively managed through the strategic co-ordinating group and existing structures.
- To support Local Resilience Forum partner agencies and local communities to mitigate the impacts of the virus.
- To ensure a coordinated approach to any arrivals to UK (By Air or Sea) of persons who pose a Public Health risk arising from Covid-19.
- To promote a return to business as usual and restoration of disrupted services at the earliest opportunity.

To support the work of the SCG and provide consistency of messaging a Multi Agency Information Cell has been formed which provides daily updates from all of the services on who COVID-19 is impacting in Essex. The report covers a UK update, health, East of England Ambulance Service, Essex Police – including community tensions, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, ports, Southend Borough Council, Essex County Council (Covering all 12 districts) and Thurrock Council.

We have an established joined up multi-agency approach in place, that is delivering against the expectations of the government. Our SCG is meeting twice-weekly, and coordinating the plans and response for Essex. This means we are working together, keeping everyone across Essex as safe as we can, and providing the most up-to-date information as possible.

SCG work streams/ tactical groups

Five streams continue to be the core focus for the SCG – notes/ issues as below.

- **Excess Death Planning** – the temporary mortuary site at Chelmer Valley Park and Ride will be decommissioned following a decision by the SCG, and will be taken down by the end of June.
- **Shielding the vulnerable** – Essex residents have come out in their thousands to volunteer to help shield the vulnerable. Essex County Council have now recruited around 3,000 volunteers via Essex Welfare Service. The service continues to make emergency food deliveries, give help with essential supplies to people who have asked for help.
- **Care Provision – Adults & Children** – The Every Family Matters Campaign, which provides advice on children’s health and wellbeing, continues.
- **PPE** – We are receiving deliveries each week and have shared the new guidance around its use from Public Health England.
- **Volunteers** – Good practice guidance continues to be available. Volunteers can also continue to find support via the **Facebook Coronavirus Action Group**. The group is a collaboration between Essex County Council, the Essex Public Health team, and local Facebook group owners.

Key updates from the Chair

Schools – From Monday 1 June, the government allowed primary schools to reopen to pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Special schools and early years settings were also permitted to open to more pupils. This wider opening is in addition to settings accommodating vulnerable children and the children of critical workers.

In Essex, we have seen a return to primary schools and settings begin to take place on a gradual, phased and small-scale basis. This is in line with the advice and support we issued in the run up to 1 June.

School opening and attendance figures

On 5 June, we issued an update on the first week of the wider opening of education settings in Essex. At the time, we explained that we did not have figures for school opening or attendance due to data collection issues the Department for Education (DfE) were experiencing. This issue now seems to have been resolved, and data has been made available to us.

While the data has been backdated, we believe figures for the week beginning 1 June were heavily impacted due to a number of schools not being able to supply information to the DfE. The data we do have suggests that, each day, between 32

and 65 per cent of Essex primary schools opened to at least one of the year groups now able to return. We believe the actual numbers were higher than this.

The data suggests that, in Essex:

- 78 per cent of primary and special schools are open to at least one of the year groups now able to return.
- 42 per cent of primary and special schools are open to all three year groups (Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) in some form.
- 5 per cent of schools are open only to vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers.
- Schools are open to approximately two thirds of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 year groups in some form each day.
- Approximately one quarter of pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 are attending schools each day.
- Approximately 20,000 pupils are attending primary and special schools each day, up from approximately 4,400 across primary and secondary settings before half term.

We anticipate attendance and opening figures will increase over the coming weeks as the confidence of schools and parents rises. We are working with schools who feel they are currently unable to accommodate wider opening.

Further updates

Last Tuesday, the government retracted its ambition for all primary school children to return in some form before the summer holidays. Instead, they have said that if schools have the capacity, they would like to see them bring back more children in other year groups using a flexible approach.

Secondary schools are able to welcome back pupils in years 10 and 12 due to be taking exams next year (years 10 and 11 for alternative provision settings as they have no year 12) from Monday 15 June. Up to 25% of each year group is permitted to return at a time, and the face-to-face contact is to supplement their remote learning.

We have issued guidance and support for secondary schools in much the same way as we have done for primary and special schools. We have been clear that the priority is the health and safety of children, families and staff. As set out by the DfE, each school has undertaken their own risk assessment bespoke to their setting / community to determine their response to wider opening being possible. This means arrangements in settings will vary.

We are beginning to work with schools, unions, other local authorities and the DfE in anticipation of government guidance on September opening. Any changes in September will need to follow risk assessments and consultation with staff, unions

and parents. Much of this planning will need to take place between now and the end of term.

Recovery - The LRF is planning for return to normal, with specific TCGs being set up across the agencies to approach this in a joined-up way. Recovery will recognise the sovereignty of our local authorities and will be led and shaped by our political leadership. We are working to establish this independence from the SCG whilst retaining the important mechanisms to best enable this to occur. More details will follow next week.

Testing - There are a number of ways people can be tested across Essex. These testing sites are to enable key workers to return to work and keep vulnerable and older people safe. Anyone wanting to be tested must meet the eligibility criteria, pre-book an appointment and travel to the centre by car – i.e. not on foot or by public transport.

Mobile testing units are at various locations across Essex. They are run by the Ministry of Defence and tests are by appointment only.

You can [apply for a coronavirus test](#) if you meet the [criteria for testing](#). Find out more about how the [NHS test and trace scheme](#) works.

Current dates and locations for mobile testing units

Monday 15 June 2020

Basildon Sporting Village, Basildon, SS14 3GR
The Civic Hall, Grays, RM16 2JU

Tuesday 16 June 2020

Rayleigh Leisure Centre, Rayleigh, SS6 9NF
Clacton on Sea Leisure Centre, Clacton, CO15 6DB
Long Stay Car Park 3, Southend Airport, Southend on Sea, SS2 6YE

Wednesday 16 June 2020

Harlow Football Club, Harlow, CM19 5BE
The Jobserve Community Stadium, Colchester, CO4 5UP

Thursday 18 June 2020

Basildon Sporting Village, Basildon, SS14 3GR

Friday 19 June 2020

Harlow Football Club, Harlow, CM19 5BE
The Civic Hall, Grays, RM16 2JU

Saturday 20 June 2020

Long Stay Car Park 3, Southend Airport, Southend on Sea, SS2 6YE
Clacton on Sea Leisure Centre, Clacton, CO15 6DB
Rayleigh Leisure Centre, Rayleigh, SS6 9NF

Sunday 21 June 2020

The Jobserve Community Stadium, Colchester, CO4 5UP

Last updated 7 June 2020

Care homes and testing

Care homes can now request courier service for tests to be delivered directly.

Test and Trace

The government has announced £300 million additional funding for councils in England to support the new Test and Trace Service and to develop tailored outbreak control plans. Work on the plans will start immediately. Plans will focus on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as workplaces, housing complexes, care homes and schools.

Essex plans are being developed between Local Authorities, NHS England and Public Health England with the support of the ERF.

Wider partner updates

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/coronavirus>

www.southend.gov.uk/coronavirus

https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/About_Us/Coronavirus/

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/government-and-health-information>

<https://www.essex.police.uk/news/essex/news/news/2020/march/keeping-you-safe-in-challenging-times/>

Key Focus Areas for communication

The proactive communication of the ERF will focus on four main strands:

- **Protecting the vulnerable;**
 - Community Shield;
 - Engaging volunteers;
- **Staying safe in the home;**
 - Tackling domestic abuse and supporting victims;
 - Prevention and tackling fraud;
 - Preventing exploitation;

- Fire safety in the home;
- **Social cohesion and communities together;**
 - Paying tribute to frontline workers keeping people safe;
 - Activities which bring people together – volunteering, acts of kindness, community spirit, cultural activity, support to others;
 - Recognising those staying at home and following restrictions;
 - Visible policing in our communities;
 - Accessible and available fire and rescue services;
 - Emergency services working together;
- **Health and social care;**
 - Building capacity within our health service;
 - Keeping frontline worker safe;
 - Maintaining frontline services.

This briefing will focus on providing detail and messaging to help support and amplify these strands of work as the fight against the pandemic continues.

Protecting the vulnerable

Shielding

The Essex Welfare Service (EWS), established by Essex County Council, is now enabling access to more support services across the county.

The county council service, delivered by Provide, was set up to help those most vulnerable during the Coronavirus pandemic and has so far seen almost 9,000 vulnerable people across the county receiving support and over 3,000 volunteers helping to make this happen.

Despite the easing of some Covid-19 restrictions the Essex Welfare Service (EWS) is still available to those who need to shield or might need to self-isolate over the coming months.

There is no change to the service the EWS is providing and vulnerable residents are encouraged to still access the support available if required.

Covid-19 is unlikely to just disappear and although restrictions are being eased for those shielding, residents are reminded to follow guidance safely and responsibly in order to protect each other and the most vulnerable.

You can register for support at www.essexwelfareservice.org.uk or call 0300 303 9988.

Community Engagement

Thurrock

Non-essential shops reopening

Thurrock Council has issued a press release informing residents of how to continue to follow social distancing guidance and #ShopSafe. This is supported with a social media campaign across the councils resident and business facing digital channels including e-newsletters. Graphic attached.

Thurrock Council is continuing to send twice weekly email newsletter to a mailing list of over 100,000 residents updating on health advice, council service updates and other news related to the pandemic and what it means for the borough's residents

Since social distancing measures came into place Thurrock Council has shared almost 1.3k social media messages relating to coronavirus. These have appeared on 2.7 million screens and have achieved 10k clicks.

Miscellaneous

Thurrock Council has distributed over £25 million worth of government grants to local businesses. Any business owner who thinks they are eligible for one of these grants and has not yet received it should go to Thurrock Council's [business rates web pages](#) to find out more about the help on offer and update their contact and payment details via an [online form](#).

Thurrock Council has [restarted weekly bidding cycles](#) on Thursday 11 June for those on the housing register.

Essex County Council underlines importance of social distancing and regular hand washing as £5.78m funding for track and trace support is announced

Health experts at Essex County Council are underlining the need for social distancing and regular hand washing as new funding to support the track and trace service is announced.

Local authorities are central to supporting the new track and trace service across England, with the government providing a new funding package of £300 million to authorities across the UK.

Essex County Council has been allocated £5,780,000 (£5.78m) from this funding package.

The authority is now using this funding to develop tailored outbreak control plans, working with local trusts and other partners.

This local provision is in addition to the national activity and is specifically to deal with particular local situations.

However, Essex County Council is clear the message remains for county residents to maintain two metres of social distance and to keep washing hands at every opportunity.

Stay alert and continue social distancing

Essex residents are being urged to continue following social distancing guidelines in order to reduce the chance of catching or spreading COVID-19, particularly as shops and other services start to re-open across the county.

By keeping a minimum distance of two metres between yourself and another person, the risk of catching COVID-19 is greatly reduced – even if the other person is showing symptoms of the virus.

Provided you have not been within two metres of someone who is being investigated as a case, the risk is also so low that the NHS Track and Trace service - set-up to identify people that may have come into contact with someone showing symptoms - will not regard you as a contact and you will not be required to self-isolate.

If an individual has been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 and they haven't adhered to social distancing measures, they will have to self-isolate for 14 days. It's therefore in everyone's best interest to maintain social distancing as much as possible.

Safer, greener and healthier town centre streets

Business leaders and health experts have welcomed ambitious plans to improve the safety, the environment and people's health in Chelmsford.

The project has been drawn up as a direct result of the COVID 19 pandemic to allow people to travel safely by walking and cycling over short distances.

New lanes for cycling and walking are to be introduced to ensure those areas of the city centre with some of the highest footfall are safe and healthy places to move through, following the easing of lockdown restrictions and the re-opening of shops and businesses.

Further details about the corridor from Colchester Mainline Rail Station to Colchester Town Centre have become also available.

An Essex Highways spokesperson said: "These safer, greener, healthier measures have been introduced in response to the Government's instruction to provide and promote social distancing measures both within town centres and their key accesses to support public health and reduce the spread of Covid19.

“The main station to the town centre corridor along North Station Rd is considered an important transport corridor with high footfall, especially as we see the return of non-essential retail from the 15th June.

Libraries

On Monday 6 July 2020, sixteen sites re-opened; Basildon*, Billericay, Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Clacton, Colchester, Dunmow, Epping, Harlow, Harwich, Maldon, Rayleigh, Rochford, South Benfleet and Witham. The initial sixteen sites re-opening were selected as they also provide Registration Services, and therefore allow this important service to be more easily delivered too.

Essex Libraries initial site re-openings are in line with other Counties, and the schedule avoids the initial expected increase in travel as non-essential shops begin to open during Mid-June.

Further library sites will re-open as they are made safe and ready, staff are available, given shielding and support requirements, and they have finished assisting with vital redeployment activities being provided to the most vulnerable people; with as many as possible opening by mid-August 2020.

Engaging volunteers

Essex County Council continues to support the **Facebook Coronavirus Action Group**. This involves close working with local community Facebook group administrators to create a group of volunteers willing to help those in need. The group is a collaboration between the council, the Essex Public Health team, and local Facebook group owners.

Excess death planning

The temporary mortuary at Chelmer Valley, outside Chelmsford is to be taken down. It was built in case there were more deaths during the coronavirus pandemic than hospitals and funeral directors in Essex, Southend and Thurrock could cope with. The Essex Resilience Forum (ERF) has managed the countywide work around the greater-Essex fight against Covid-19 and established the site at the park and ride.

One of the joint chairs of the forum, Essex Police Chief Constable BJ Harrington, said: “The combined work across greater Essex from those working in the NHS, in care homes and as carers, has meant that this county has not seen the worst possible impact of this dreadful disease coming to pass so this means the necessary preparations at the Chelmer Valley Park and Ride site have not been needed.

The site has been on standby since 27 April but has not been needed. Essex County Council commissioned the temporary mortuary as part of the emergency plan for responding to the pandemic. It was set up at the closed park and ride site at Chelmer

Valley. Specialist disaster recovery firm, Kenyon International built the space and was ready to run it if needed. It will be taken down by the end of June.

Social cohesion and bringing communities together

On Friday 12 June, Cllr John Spence, was interviewed as part of BBC Essex's Essex Unites interview series, highlighting the following:

1. The importance of national carers week is for carers to be visible and valued in the community. Essex County Council is joining organisations across the UK to increase the visibility of carers' vital work.
2. Throughout the week Essex County Council will be sharing stories and links to support carers on social media linking to **#ThankyouEssex**
3. This year, when carers have the additional worry of how to keep themselves, and those they care for, safe during the coronavirus outbreak, it is important that carers have the information, guidance and support they need. Essex County Council is keen to make it known to carers that their vital role is recognised and help is always available via the Essex Welfare Service. Carers First, Action for Family Carers and Essex Carers Support (our carers support providers)
4. Support for all carers in Essex can be accessed via the Essex Welfare Service at www.essexwelfareservice.org or on 0300 303 9988
5. Throughout the week Essex County Council will be sharing stories and links to support carers on social media linking to **#ThankyouEssex**
6. For further information about National Carers Week and for a range of resources available to carers visit <https://www.carersweek.org/about-us/making-caring-visible>
7. There are thousands of people in Essex who provide care to their loved ones; be it looking after a family member or friend who has a disability, mental or physical illness, or who needs extra help as they grow older.

Shops and places of worship are due to open on Monday 15th June.

8. Most shops and places of worship will have systems in place to observe social distancing and keep people two metres apart.
9. It is absolutely crucial that everyone continues to follow appropriate social distancing guidelines and that we maintain the progress we have made so far in terms of ensuring local NHS services can cope with the number of COVID-19 cases.
10. As shops and other attractions start to re-open, it might feel like the threat of COVID-19 is lessening and that we don't need to follow Government advice as strictly. However, this is not the case.

11. Social distancing is in place for a reason and that is to protect you. I would like to thank those that have and continue to follow the guidelines – we all have a responsibility to stay alert.

The re-opening of towns and cities on Monday 15th June

12. Essex County Council, Essex Highways, Business groups, walking and cycling pressures groups have worked in partnership to implement measures to allow social distancing and open up town and cities in Essex on Monday. To begin with this will be Chelmsford and Colchester, but other towns will follow.
13. These measures promote **Safer, Greener, Healthier** travel, allowing people to travel safely, while promoting cycling and walking.
- Measures are in place temporarily to protect everyone in the High Street, including you, customers, staff, emergency services and keyworkers.
 - We've all worked together to make sure that shopping is as easy and calm as possible, while still keeping everyone safe.
 - This is all as new to your local retailers and to other shoppers as it is to you, so please be patient. If you see something in a shop that doesn't look quite right, please don't go straight to social media: tell the staff there has been a mistake and give them a chance to fix it.

Black Lives Matter

The appalling killing of George Floyd and the responses around the world has demonstrated that racism is still very present in our society.

The purpose of the Council is to help all people of all backgrounds prosper, and in doing so to treat everyone equally and with respect. This is our basic human right.

And we at Essex County Council have a responsibility to influence positive action. Not only within our own organisation, but within Essex as a whole.

We would want to reassure all our black residents that we are working, with and alongside our black employees, to make sure that the Council's policies and actions as a public body, an employer, and most of all an organisation people depend on, are informed by, reflect and embody our commitment to equality.

If you have been affected by racism, you can contact Stop Hate UK on 0800 138 1625

Staying safe in the home

New support services launched for children and families

A new range of services has launched this week to give young people and their families a little extra help during the coronavirus pandemic.

Family Innovation Fund-Xtra services are provided by the voluntary sector and community partners and provide early support across key areas including understanding coronavirus; managing and coping with change; separation and loss; managing and coping with anxiety; healthy family relationships and staying active and curious.

The services are available to children and young people aged between 0 and 19-years (up to 25-years for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) and are aimed at helping young people and families who are not already receiving specialist or statutory support.

They can be accessed directly by families, through referral from a professional such as a teacher, via the [Essex Welfare Service](#), the [Getting Help in Essex Directory](#), or by calling one of the organisations themselves.

Young Essex Assembly and Social Distancing

Social distancing has been hard for lots of us over the past couple of months and for some children and young people, it might still be something they are finding difficult.

It is vital that we continue to practise social distancing to prevent the further spread of coronavirus and we'd like to say a big thank you to all the children and young people across Essex who are making a difference by doing so.

If your child is struggling with social distancing, the Young Essex Assembly has shared some tips which could help. Check out what they have to say below and for more information about how you can keep your children and family well during the pandemic, visit our [Staying Well Children and Families page](#).

Mental Health Awareness

In the current climate it is so important to take the time to look after ourselves and our loved ones. Many people are missing their friends and family, their hobbies and interests, their routine and their work.

Changes and loss can have a profound impact on our wellbeing – be this loss of a loved one, the change in our relationships – including at home – loss of work and therefore routine or financial stability. Prolonged isolation and limited contact with others can negatively affect our moods and outlook.

These changes to our “normal” will almost certainly influence our mental health, maybe making us anxious, apprehensive and unsure about the future. This is perfectly understandable but there is no reason to suffer alone.

The [Staying well](#) page includes information and advice on:

- looking after your mental health when you are social distancing
- online counseling and mental health services

- national and local organisations providing support
- things you can do to stay active at home
- how to work safely and comfortably from home

Reducing parental conflict

Family stability is key to achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, and maintaining that stability is at the heart of Essex County Council's (ECC) work to reduce parental conflict and the impact it has on children in Essex.

ECC, along with nine other Local Authorities, has worked in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Early Intervention Foundation since 2015 to develop what is now known as the Reducing Parental Conflict programme - aimed at supporting parents and carers to manage conflict in a healthy way.

We all have arguments, but some parents and co-parents may argue more frequently and intensely, and often leave them unresolved.

The current pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic and the prolonged periods of time spent at home, may also have increased existing tension in parental relationships which can impact on children and last through to adulthood.

However, Essex County Council (ECC) has been leading the way to support parents, carers and co-parents to resolve conflict more constructively through the 'Parenting Together' programme.

Every Family Matters campaign

Covering children's mental health and wellbeing, social distancing and young people and online safety, the campaign supports parents/carers and sign-post to relevant resources that can help them help their children.

The campaign has reached 70,034 people on Twitter and 84,182 people on Facebook.

3,093 users, with 4,117 pageviews, have visited the new [Staying well](#) page.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including emotional, physical and sexual. If being at home doesn't feel safe right now, or you're concerned about someone you know, please contact [Essex Compass](#) who will be able to help you.

Fire safety:

Background

As we continue to deal with the impact of coronavirus (covid-19), ECFRS will now issue a weekly briefing note to local press, to update you on our Service and you to help promote our safety messages and educate and inform the public to keep them safe.

There is still currently no change to the way we respond to incidents.

Fire Service set to continue partnership with Ambulance Service

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has extended its partnership with the East of England Ambulance Service Trust during the pandemic.

Jo Turton, Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive said:

“I am so proud of our firefighters and their work to support the East of England Ambulance Service Trust, they’ve made an incredible contribution and have been there in people’s hour of need.” Full press release: https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/news/Fire_Service_set_to_continue_partnership_with_Ambulance_Service

Firefighters praise local resident who raised £630 for charity

A Waltham Abbey resident has raised more than £630 for The Fire Fighters charity after pushing a wheelie bin from her home to Waltham Abbey Fire Station and back again. Station Manager Steve Wintrip from Waltham Abbey Fire Station said: “We’re really pleased to see one of our local residents raising money for a charity close to our hearts. We look forward to meeting Nicola when restrictions lift to thank her in person.” Full press release: https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/news/CharityTuesday_Firefighters_praise_local_resident_who_raised_630_for_charity/

Fire Service join virtual pride celebrations

ECFRS staff have sent across messages of support to its LGBTQ+ colleagues and communities to wish them a happy pride and is set to tune in on the day.

Matt Hill, Chair of BEING, the Service’s LGBTQ+ support group said: “We’re gutted that we can’t celebrate together in person this year but we’ll be celebrating virtually alongside our communities. We’ve shared our messages of support to Essex Pride attendees and look forward to meeting again in person in the future.”

Full press release: https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/news/Fire_Service_set_to_join_virtual_pride_celebrations/

Fire Service shares home fire safety advice for carers

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has thanked the county’s carers and has shared home fire safety advice to help protect vulnerable people in Essex.

Andrea MacAlister, Head of Community Safety said:

“If someone you care for doesn’t have working smoke alarms or could benefit from our home fire safety advice, please book a visit online at www.essex-fire.gov.uk/book

or call us on 0300 303 0088."

Full press release: <https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/news/Fire-Service-shares-home-fire-safety-advice-for-carers>

Barbeque and bonfire safety advice as the weather warms up

Bonfire safety:

Youtube video: https://youtu.be/aY2g2_aaJGg

Suggested advice:

Planning a bonfire this weekend?

- Site the bonfire well away from houses, sheds, fences, trees and shrubs
- Never leave the bonfire burning unattended
- Pour water on embers before leaving

Read more safety advice here: www.essex-fire.gov.uk/staysafe

Barbeque Safety:

Suggested advice:

Youtube video: <https://youtu.be/WBNoo5f2Qvs>

Planning a barbeque this weekend?

- Never leave a barbeque unattended
- Set it away from sheds, fences, plants and trees
- Keep a bucket of water, sand or a hose nearby
- If you're in charge of the barbeque, don't drink too much alcohol

More advice here: www.essex-fire.gov.uk/staysafe

Contact us

For more information on any of these topics please contact our press office by emailing press@essex-fire.gov.uk or calling 01376 570814. As always, do not contact any of our staff, stations or sites directly – all press enquiries **must** come through our press office.

All of our press releases are published on www.essex-fire.gov.uk/news

Feedback

If you have any feedback on this briefing note please let us know by emailing press@essex-fire.gov.uk

Health and social care

North East

With the lifting of some restrictions relating to the use of our high streets expected next Monday, our system's partners have been working tirelessly to ensure our town centres are open, safe and ready to do business. They are working to achieve this aim and I remain very grateful to them for all their hard work to support the re-opening of shops and businesses in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Colchester and our other urban areas.

The chairman of the North East Essex CCG, Dr Hasan Chowhan, conducted an interview with the regional ITV Anglia about how GP practices have adapted and are open for business following COVID-19. This forms a key part of our strategy – Help Us Help You – which is aimed at encouraging more people to seek medical help when they need it.

This week we celebrate the work of the many unsung heroes across the UK, who are carers. This year, carers are under more pressure than ever because of the pandemic. According to Community 360, there are approximately 32,000 unpaid carers in Essex who provide care for more than 50 hours a week – an incredible statistic.

New research from the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex shows single parents and workers from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups have experienced the hardest economic effects because of the COVID-19 crisis. Findings confirm that the earnings of households across the UK have fallen, with lowest earners suffering disproportionately. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Mid and South Essex

Thanks to a successful bid for extra funding our Partnership is set to establish three more mental health support teams in education settings. This positive outcome means we have received funding for three new teams as part of the wave four cohort. The three school teams will be based in Maldon, Braintree and Basildon. Each team will cover a population base of 8,000 children and we will be contacting schools to invite an expression of interest in due course. The resource in each team includes around seven team members including a high level therapist, educational mental health practitioners (EMHP), team manager and administrative support. The anticipated timetable is likely to be impacted by the current situation we all find ourselves in but there has never been such an important time to focus on the needs of our children as they face such disruption to their routines and networks of support.

This Partnership board this week ratified a memorandum of understanding is to help formalise and build on our existing partnership arrangements and relationships. Responding to COVID-19 has accelerated transformational change across the

system and the emergency has led to even closer working between organisations and sectors at place level. The health and care system will continue to be under significant pressure, and we must continue our priority to address health inequalities.

As partners we all agree that working more closely together at System, Place and Neighbourhood level will enable us to tackle these challenges and achieve our ambitions. Agreeing this MOU demonstrates our clear commitment to do this.

Integrated workforce strategy A system wide integrated workforce strategy has been agreed by all Partners this week. This strategy will enable the system to develop a more joined up approach with health and care on our workforce challenges especially key priority areas on recruitment and retention. Our strategy identifies a range of actions and initiatives to be delivered at a system level and those to be taken forward by individual partners and at Place. Working collaboratively on specific areas such as, training, education and development of the workforce creates invaluable learning and sharing of resources.

System partners have worked together this week to support both Diabetes Week and Carers Week. Our social media campaign for Diabetes Week has been based around the new national Help Us Help You diabetes resources from Public Health England. A key area of activity for Carers Week has been signposting carers to support services both local and national, advice on mental health and wellbeing and to publicly thank all carers in mid and south Essex who face the extra worry of how to keep themselves and those they care for safe during the coronavirus outbreak. Please send items of inclusion in this brief to meccg.essex.incident.comms@nhs.net

West

Mobile testing

The locations for mobile testing units this week (w/c 15 June), are:

Monday 15 June 2020

Basildon Sporting Village, Basildon, SS14 3GR, The Civic Hall, Grays, RM16 2JU

Tuesday 16 June 2020

Rayleigh Leisure Centre, Rayleigh, SS6 9NF, Clacton on Sea Leisure Centre, Clacton, CO15 6DB, Long Stay Car Park 3, Southend Airport, Southend on Sea, SS2 6YE

Wednesday 16 June 2020

Harlow Football Club, Harlow, CM19 5BE, The Jobserve Community Stadium, Colchester, CO4 5UP

Thursday 18 June 2020

Basildon Sporting Village, Basildon, SS14 3GR

Friday 19 June 2020

Harlow Football Club, Harlow, CM19 5BE, The Civic Hall, Grays, RM16 2JU

Saturday 20 June 2020

Long Stay Car Park 3, Southend Airport, Southend on Sea, SS2 6YE, Clacton on Sea Leisure Centre, Clacton, CO15 6DB, Rayleigh Leisure Centre, Rayleigh, SS6 9NF

Sunday 21 June 2020

The Jobserve Community Stadium, Colchester, CO4 5UP

The CCG has developed content for a testing-specific web page on Essex County Council's Coronavirus Hub which is updated weekly with the venues for the following week. Thurrock and Southend Councils both display a link from their websites to this one for their residents to access further information on testing.

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/getting-tested-for-covid-19>

Test and trace

Information is available on the NHS website about what people can expect if they have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Antibody testing

The CCG is working with partners to establish an effective antibody testing programme in West Essex. This will begin with all frontline NHS staff and roll out to NHS office staff, colleagues in the care industry and eventually to members of the public.

NHS Help Us Help You/ Health at Home campaign

The CCG continues to support the NHS England national campaigns that encourage people to seek medical advice and treatment if they need it, and signpost patients to information about how they can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions, as manage their wellbeing

LOCAL MEDIA INTERVIEWS – ERF

Representatives of the ERF have been giving regular media interviews on BBC Essex local radio from Tuesday 7 April.

A regular schedule has been established to ensure local residents are updated on the work of the ERF and the county to help keep them safe in uncertain and challenging times.

Tuesday 16 June – Cllr Stephen Robinson

Friday 19 June – tbc

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

Volunteering – Essex County Council [Coronavirus Action Group](#) – Facebook

Essex Community Shield – The message will set out the instructions for those people who do not have the support of friends, families and neighbours to register with the Essex Welfare Service (EWS), part of PROVIDE (a health and social care provider), should they need food deliveries. www.essexwelfareservice.org

Good news – Please flag any good news with your local communications colleague for potential highlighting in media opportunities.