

EALC Services 2018/2019

NALC



The EALC is affiliated to NALC, who work on behalf of the Councils in Essex to bring services and support, including legal advice and training. The EALC has lobbied hard to get NALC to adopt the abolition of the LGA 1894 as national policy, where it includes a statutory provision prohibiting Local Councils from supporting the church financially. The EALC continues to work on this, after it became National Policy. The Legal Services (referrals for desk top advice) and the provision of Legal Topic Notes and briefings available through the web site, are professionally provided through the NALC Solicitor Team.

The Development Team work hard on lobbying government on policy and influencing Ministers to achieve the very best for the sector. The strong leadership by the NALC Council and the Chief Executive Officer ensure that the needs, wants and aspirations of our communities can be achieved.

EALC Training

EALC training is one of the most comprehensive services that the EALC runs to benefit Member Councils. The Service is available to Non Members at a cost of +200%, which broadly places the costs similar to the commercial sector. The courses are aligned to the Clerks qualification and to support and develop members. During the last year the EALC has held 13 Saturday courses which exceeds the aim of delivery 10 per year. We are therefore building on the need of Councillors that has been determined.

We are planning to continue with this and will test the market by holding a Saturday CiLCA (Essex Equals) course for the first time. In 2018 we held 57 courses and in this year 2019 we plan to hold 89. The number of courses has increased as in many areas of Essex there has been elections. Additionally we have run 12 Short Courses, this is where the courses are taken to the Council. The courses have been on a wide range of subjects including: Planning, Councillor Training Days, Chairman's Day and Web Accessibility.

VineHR

The EALC has through a subscription provided the membership of VineHR to all our Member Councils. This is a pay for service, where any Member Council can seek HR support for the Council. This is normally at a preferential rate as part of the membership package.

Essex Legal Services (ELS)

The EALC has negotiated good rates from Essex Legal Services, enabling the Councils in Essex to be able to commission work that requires a solicitor to act for the Council. These services have been used during the last year and Councils are encouraged to ask for a quote.

Clerks Bursary

Essex Clerks Bursary Scheme: Parish and Town Councils are invited and encouraged to apply for a Bursary towards any skills or personal training that will aid them in their Council's work.

The Bursary Limit is 75% of the cost of the training course, to a limit of £500 in any one financial year. Clerks from Council's with an annual budgeted income up to £80,000 are eligible to apply. If a clerk works for more than one Council, they are eligible if one Council comes within the £80,00 criteria. Please find the application form on the EALC website.

We encourage you to use one form for as many courses that you wish to attend. For all enquiries please contact Pearl Willcox or Charlene Slade for more information.

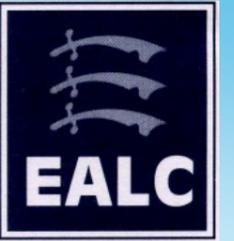
ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

COUNTY UPDATE

Special Edition

Celebrating Community

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019



No. 186

Health & Wellbeing

The first priority was to promote the offer of undertaking Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA) to the Local Council sector. This training is FREE and delivered in your Parishes through PROVIDE. In the first week of publicising the course 17 Councils registered an interest. We now have well over 30 Parish/Town Councils organising their training. The MHFA training is open to Cllrs and Officers but also to members of the community who are involved in community initiatives, youth workers and businesses etc. Feedback from the courses has been very positive, especially where the attendees represented a diverse cross section of society.

The EALC has set up a Health and Wellbeing Board for Parish/Town Councils. The Board will meet three times a year and will have representation from the Local Councils, ECC, the EXEC and the Voluntary Sector. The Board will promote the Health and Wellbeing agenda through the sharing of best practice, highlighting initiatives and encouraging Local Councils to develop Health and Wellbeing plans and Health and Wellbeing Committees of their own. It will also endeavour to develop partnerships and map current activity in Local Councils in respect to the 5 key areas of Mental Health, Social Isolation, Learning Disabilities, Activity and Diet and Obesity.

There is other training coming along too, specifically J9 Domestic Abuse training, Asset Based Community Development training (ABCD) and Learning Disability Awareness training. Plus, we are strengthening our links between the CVS', RCCE, Active Essex and Sports England to allow a clearer dissemination of information to promote and support initiatives in your Parishes.

Community Initiative Fund & Micro-Grants

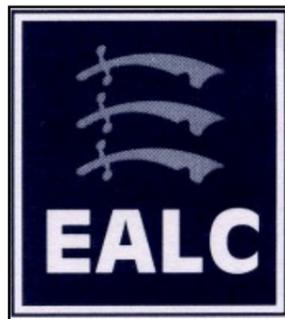
In April 2019 the new Community Initiative Fund launched, this brought together a variety of Essex County Council funded grant schemes under one roof. The £600,000 fund, which comprises of the existing Community Initiatives Fund, Local Service Fund and the Cultural Development Grant, will be administered by the EALC over a two year period. Applicants can apply for grants of up to £10,000 for Capital, Revenue or Cultural projects which will help bring local Communities together.

Along with the Community Initiative Fund, Micro-Grants of up to £500 are available throughout the year to enable Community projects at a grass root level to apply for vital funds, again for a two year period, with £50,000 per year allocated. All we ask of our applicants, is that they have their own organisation bank account.

Within the first two months of the Micro-Grant launching, we had received 26 applications, 18 of those have been approved and £8,472 given away for new initiatives. The type of projects that have been successful are: Community Shop Refit, Dementia Memory Café, Community Fridge, Community Allotment Tools, Equipment for a New Baby Group, Marquee for a Community Event and Memory Boxes for Local Care Homes.



The Essex Association of Local Councils wishes to thank Essex County Council for the continued support and financial commitment to enable services to be delivered to the Parish sector in Essex.



Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer
Joy Darby

Executive Responsible Finance Officer & Buildings Manager
Charlene Slade

Executive County Training Officer
Pearl Willcox

Parish Support Officer
Amanda Brown

Funding Officer
Louise Gambardella

Office and Training Administrator
Kerry Wood

Office and Training Co-ordinator
Rebecca Sheppard

Health & Wellbeing Officer
Danielle Frost

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ASSOCIATION NEWS



Partnership Working with Essex County Council

For many years ECC has developed a good working relationship with the EALC and the Parish, Village, Community and Town Councils in Essex. The partnership continues to grow with new initiatives and the EALC playing a larger role in developing new schemes and ideas. In the last 12 months we have seen the 'Devolution Agenda' in respect of Highway matters being rolled out to interested Councils.

The promotion of the Local Service Fund and now the Community Initiative Fund, and the Community Chest (micro grants), administered by the EALC. Work on the consultation to bring community libraries, where ECC are closing them, and in communities that have not had a library, a new community venture. Additional, work and support through the emerging Health and Wellbeing Agenda.

The EALC has developed over the years due to the support of the Leader Cllr Finch and Essex County Councillors who have provided the sector with a range of financial and other support. The EALC wishes to record the thanks of the EALC, and the Membership for the continued partnership working. Together we can make a real difference.

EALC President & Vice Presidents

In 2015 Cllr John Jowers was elected at President of the EALC for a term of four years. It is with great pleasure that his name will be placed before the Membership for another four year term. Cllr Jowers has indicated that he is willing to stand again for the next four years.

Margaret Grimster, Dominic Petre and Mike Page are the current Vice Presidents (they will be standing for election again in 2021. The EALC is able to have 6 in total.

This year the EALC will be proposing to add Cllr Anne Brown to this list. Cllr Anne Brown has been working with the EALC over the last few years and is a strong advocate.

We ask our Presidents and Vice Presidents to speak well of us throughout the County and where required, support and help develop partnerships.

Events Briefings (not including training courses)

The EALC has this year held numerous events to support the work of the Councils in Essex. During the year we have held the following events.

- ◇ Highways Briefing –Focus group (September 2018).
- ◇ Police Conference—November 2018.
- ◇ Devolution Agenda — Highways (November 2018).
- ◇ Highways—devolved services briefing (February 2019 (2))
- ◇ Local Service Fund (3) (February 2018 and October 2018)
- ◇ Health and Wellbeing Focus Group (October 2018)
- ◇ Local Council Awards (4) October and February 2018/2019
- ◇ Library briefing (2)- February 2019
- ◇ Highways—Health and Safety (March 2019)
- ◇ Highways—Buddy Briefing (May 2019)
- ◇ Mental Health First Aid Training (July 2019)

**Report to the EALC by the Chairman
Cllr Peter Davey**

The EALC continues to be recognised nationally in its own right for the work it carries out in support of the Parish and Town sector within Essex. Through our highly professional training programme and legal support services which will always remain our top priority, and whilst looking for new areas where value can be added to member Councils.



This year has seen a restructuring of the EALC staffing at Gt. Dunmow, following the retirement of Linda Golding the Deputy CEO, with emphasis on both succession planning and the requirement to strengthen the Management team for us to be able to meet and exceed the challenges ahead. This resulted in the promotion and appointment of Charlene Slade to the position of Executive Responsible Finance Officer and Buildings Manger covering all aspects of financial management and building management and the appointment of Pearl Wilcox to the position of Executive County Training Officer covering all aspects of Training within the Association. This has enabled our CEO, Joy Darby, to play a more strategic role within the EALC at both County and National levels, a role Joy has excelled at and she is respected throughout the industry for both her business acumen and knowledge of the sector.

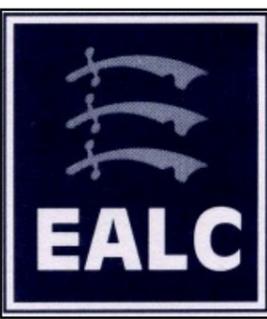
Following the outstanding success of the Local Service Fund under the stewardship of the EALC, the Leader of Essex County Council, David Finch, has requested the EALC to manage the new CIF which will be both capital and revenue based with grant monies of £300,000 per annum awarded for a 2 year period with a £10,000 per applicant ceiling with applications being assessed once a year. The EALC will also be administering a new ECC initiative in the form of a Micro Grant fund of up to £500 per application (£50,000 per annum) which will be awarded on a monthly basis and will also run over a 2-year period. Together these funds will enable Constituted Community Groups and Town/Parish Councils to deliver new services into the area in which they operate. I would like to acknowledge David's continuing support for the sector despite the severity of austerity policies of Government.

We continue to strengthen our involvement with the ECC initiatives on Health and Wellbeing and Mental Health through the recent appointment of the EALC Health and Wellbeing Officer, Danielle Frost, and this key appointment has been funded by the ECC for a 3-year period. It is also our intention to form an EALC Health and Wellbeing Board.

Since my appointment as the Chairman of the EALC in November 2017, together with our staff and with your support and cooperation and the collaborative work with our partners, we have made significant progress towards making Essex both a safer and more enjoyable place to live whilst enhancing our support for Town and Parish Councils. I have also retained my role as Chairman of the Accreditation Panel of Essex. This panel awards the Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold National Accreditations to Councils in Essex to enable them to excel at what they do.

I would like to thank Cllr John Gili-Ross, Cllr Sheila Jackman MBE my Vice Chairs and David McPherson Davis, our treasurer, for their work with our strategic partners as well as the Executive Members who ensure that our Members voices are heard and acted upon.

Also without the absolute commitment, hard work, dedication, professionalism and foresight given to the Association by Joy Darby, our CEO and her Staff, the many EALC achievements this year could not have been possible.



Executive Committee Members (current)

Chairman
Cllr Peter Davey

Treasurer
Cllr David McPherson-Davis

Vice Chairmen
Cllr Sheila Jackman MBE
Cllr John Gili-Ross

Committee
Cllr Alan Acott
Cllr John Anderson
Cllr Linda Belgrove
Cllr Stuart Berlyn
Cllr Mandy Cohen
Cllr Jim Devlin
Cllr Abdul Hafiz
Helen Symmons
Cllr Roy Martin
Cllr Richard North
Kathryn Richmond
Cllr Don Smith
Cllr Michael Talbot
Cllr Alan Townsend
Kirsty O'Callaghan
Cllr Jeanette Stilts
Cllr Mandy Hensing
Cllr Susan Meyer

President
Cllr John Jowers

Vice-Presidents 2017– 2021
Margaret Grimster
Dominic Petre
Mike Page