

# Policy E-bulletin

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The policy e-bulletin pulls together the week's news, reports and publications. These are grouped by ECC's corporate outcomes to keep you up-to-date with research and developments in your areas of interest. **Click on the headings to link to the sources.**

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## Children in Essex get the best start in life

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### **National Children's Bureau : Losing in the Long Run**

The 'Losing in the long run' report published by the National Children's Bureau, Action for Children, and The Children's Society, examines the amount of money central government gives to local authorities for early intervention services and how this funding is projected to change until 2020.

### **National Children's Bureau: Fuel poverty - What it means for young parents and their families**

Funded by Economy Energy, NCB carried out a project to gain insight into fuel poverty and its impact on young people, working directly with those affected to give voice to their experiences. They found that families with children, and young parents in particular, face multiple challenges when it comes to keeping their homes warm and healthy.

## People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing

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### **The Week: NHS Hospitals Demand Tax Cut and £15bn rebate**

The Week have reported on the claims by NHS trusts that they are writing to Local Authorities expecting a cut in their business rate payments, arguing that the NHS should be classed as a charity rather than a business.

### **NHS: Staff Survey results 2015**

The NHS has released the results of the 2015 staff survey. This includes a breakdown of key findings per Hospital trust.

### **NHS England: Specialised Services clinical commissioning policies and service specification - 5th Wave**

NHS England has launched a 30 day public consultation on a proposed number of new products for specialised services, (including service specifications and clinical

commissioning policies). NHS England says that there has already been extensive engagement on these national specifications and policies, as they have been developed with the support and input of lead clinicians and patient and public representatives.

### **King's Fund: Building the foundations: tackling obesity through planning and development**

This report outlines the actions and role that councils can take in helping to prevent and reduce the prevalence of obesity. It examines the role of town planning in contributing to the public health agenda and includes examples from various local authorities around the country.

## **People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning**

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### **Association of School and College Leaders: Survey on teacher shortages**

The ASCL have reported on the results of a survey they conducted of 900 School and college leaders across the UK. The survey found that nearly nine in ten respondents said they are experiencing difficulties in recruiting teachers, and nearly three quarters said the situation was worse or much worse than it was 12 months ago.

### **DfE: Proportion of young people in England NEET plunges to record low**

The government have released figures suggesting that there are almost 100,000 fewer 16- to 24-year-olds classified as not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to same period last year. They also believe that this brings the NEETs rate to its lowest for the time of year since comparable records began in 2000.

## **People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm**

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### **Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Great British Bungalow sell off: 1 in 4 forced council house sales could be bungalows**

The JRF believe that older people could be hit disproportionately hard by Government plans to sell off high-value council owned homes, this is in relation to the Housing and Planning Bill, which will have its reading in the House of Lords today (3 March 2016). The JRF say that the act will force Local Authorities to sell off high value housing stock as it becomes vacant to fund the Right to Buy extension for Housing Association tenants.

### **London Assembly: Improving Motorcycle safety on London's Roads**

The London Assembly Transport Committee report into motorcycle safety assesses the difficulties had by motorcyclists using London roads. The report says that in the past two year's one in five motorcyclists has been involved in a collision (20 per cent) and Just over three in five motorcyclists have been involved in a near miss incident (62 per cent). The report believes that motorcyclists are one of most vulnerable road user groups in London, along with pedestrians and cyclists.

## Sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses

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### **Joseph Rowntree Foundation: Uneven Growth – Tackling City Decline**

This report shows that some cities are falling behind national trends and suggests policies to ensure growth is spread more equally across UK cities. Key findings include 10 of the UK's top 12 struggling cities are based in the north, no city in the South featured in the top 12 or 24 of the index.

### **Transport Focus: Do passengers trust the bus?**

This report explores passengers' trust in and relationship with the bus industry and how to get more people choosing to use bus services. It found to improve passengers' trust in the bus industry, bus companies need to get the basics of a bus service right and build better relationships with their passengers.

## People in Essex experience a high quality and sustainable environment

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### **Local Government Lawyer: Swindon launches first-ever 'council solar bond' with investment platform**

LGL have reported on Swindon Borough Council's peer-to-peer investment platform called 'Abundance' and the launch of what is claimed to be the first 'council solar bond' in the UK. Under the scheme, the local authority and the public will invest £4.8m to fund the building of the 5MW Swindon community solar farm.

### **NHS England: NHS Chief announces plan to support ten healthy new towns**

The head of NHS England has announced plans to create ten NHS-supported 'healthy new towns' across the country, covering more than 76,000 new homes with potential capacity for approximately 170,000 residents. Areas of interest include the Ebbsfleet Garden City in Kent, Darlington which is developing a 'virtual care home' and Whitehill and Bordon, who are developing a new care campus for those with long term conditions and an integrated care hub.

### **House of Commons: Planning and Flood Risk**

This briefing paper sets out the Government's planning policy on flooding and relates to England only. This is in relation to the Government planning policy on flood risk and development, particularly for housing, which has been called into question following recent flood events.

## People in Essex can live independently and exercise control over their lives

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### **Alzheimer's Society: Prime Minister announces new UK Dementia Envoy**

The Prime Minister has appointed David Mayhew as the new UK Dementia Envoy, following the World Dementia Council setting a global agenda on the fight against

dementia. The envoys role would be to work with countries, corporations and leaders from around the world, sharing expertise and promoting research and support for people with dementia and their carers.

### **Alzheimer's Society: Keeping the mind active may delay physical symptoms of Alzheimer's disease for some people**

Research published by the Alzheimer's society suggests that staying in school for longer and keeping your brain busy may help to delay some of the brain changes in Alzheimer's disease, but only for people with the ApoE4 gene.

## **Local Government and Devolution**

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### **Local Government Lawyer: Districts call for abolition of county council and creation of four new unitaries**

This report talks about a joint statement issued by 5 district councils in Oxfordshire, which call for the creation of 4 unitary councils and the abolition of the County Council. The district councils believe that such a move would simplify local government in the county and bring about significant savings that could be reinvested in public services.

### **ComRes: Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) State of the Nation Devolution Survey**

A new ICE poll conducted by ComRes highlights the appetite for devolution of some powers in England from central to local government. Key findings include 2 in 5 English adults believe devolution would have a positive impact on local services, although attitudes are more mixed towards linking devolution to elected mayors.

### **Commission on Freedom of Information: Open and transparent government**

The commission have released their final report in regard to research they carried out on the freedom of information act. The commission made 21 recommendations including that they did not believe charging for Freedom of Information requests would be appropriate.

### **Government Digital Service: Consultation on 'Better use of data in government'**

This consultation, which closes on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, seeks feedback on how the government can use data to improve public services for citizens and to improve decision-making.

### **HSCIC: NHS delivers ambitious IT project - believed to be the biggest of its kind**

HSCIC has just completed an 18 month transition project to entirely rebuild and redevelop their software called 'the Spine' and to move it to in-house management. The new Spine is believed to be the biggest public sector IT system to be built entirely on Open Source software, making it easier for developers to work with. HSCIC say that the system has saved £21m in its first year; has operated at 100 per cent availability since August 2015; and saves the NHS 750 working days of time every single day.



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