

Policy, Economy, Investment and Property

ECC Member Induction

16th June 2026

Agenda

1. **Introduction to the Function** - Tom Walker, Executive Director
2. **The Policy Team** - Richard Puleston, Assistant Chief Executive
3. **Economic Growth Team** - Andy Burgess, Director
4. **Property Investment and Delivery Team** - Ben Finlayson, Director
5. **Questions**

Function Overview

- Supports the creation of Council **Policies and Strategies**, Internal and External **Communications**, Data and Performance
- Leads on much of our '**place based**' working, including strong partnership working with Districts
- Drives **Economic Growth** to create a prosperous Essex
- Housing - Skills - Businesses - Regeneration - Planning – Adult Community Learning
- Delivers complex **Capital Infrastructure** projects
- Manages and maintains the ECC **Property** Estate
- Works closely with **Partners** in the wider Essex System -Universities, Colleges, Police, Business, Freeports, Developers
- Net **Revenue Budget (26/27)** - £40.8m
- Delivering **Capital Budget (26/27)** - £221m containing Education, Highways and Regeneration Infrastructure projects
- Major **Procurement** – Facilities Management & Property Management (10-year contract value circa £450m)
- Circa 700 **FTE's** in the function with ACL being largest team with circa 200 FTE

Policy

Richard Puleston
Assistant Chief Executive

Policy Unit

The Policy Unit supports ECC's Cabinet to deliver its objectives and it supports the Corporate Leadership Team in providing advice to the Cabinet on how best to do this.

Our work helps the Cabinet and CLT to:



ensure the whole council is pulling in the same direction – by translating political priorities into corporate strategies and plans;



land key messages with the public – through our communications campaigns, engagement with the press and work on social media;



ensure that ECC's voice is heard – leading on external influencing with MPs and national government;



understand and respond to needs and views of key audiences – through the analysis of data, research and consultation;



target resources efficiently – using data, insight and intelligence on what works in meeting residents needs;



improve performance – reporting on the performance of services to ensure that the Council is well run and that officers are accountable for delivery;



protect the council from legal challenge – ensuring compliance with key duties around equalities, prevent etc



deliver improvements through partnerships – co-ordinating work with agencies across Essex on issues such as LGR, Devolution, community safety, tackling deprivation, and promoting health.

Policy Unit Teams

We bring together strategy, insight, communication, partnerships and performance to help ECC make strong decisions and improve outcomes for Essex residents.



STRATEGY & POLICY

We help ensure the Council is well-run by translating political priorities into delivery, strengthening our national influence, supporting Cabinet Members and communicating achievements clearly to the public.



DATA, ANALYTICS & PERFORMANCE

We turn data into insight that helps the council make smarter and faster decisions —enabling leaders and members to plan, prioritise, predict and perform with confidence.



RESEARCH & CITIZEN INSIGHT

We use research and evidence to drive better decisions — shaping what we focus on, the actions we take, how we assess impact, and how we improve.



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

We engage with all audiences — inspiring, listening and responding — to build trust, drive positive change, and strengthen staff engagement across the organisation.



COMMUNITY SAFETY & PARTNERSHIPS

We help the Council meet its statutory duties and strengthen partnership working. We lead community safety issues, support key priorities, co-ordinate partnerships, and drive system-wide improvement.

Key Deliverables

STRATEGY & POLICY	DATA, ANALYTICS & PERFORMANCE	RESEARCH & CITIZEN INSIGHT	COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY SAFETY & PARTNERSHIPS
- Supporting the Leader and Cabinet - Developing corporate strategy - Annual plan - Business plans - Shaping new policy ideas and proposals - Reporting progress on key deliverables - Leading policy priority projects - Developing strategies to reflect political priorities - Tracking national policy and implications for ECC	- Corporate performance reporting and statutory returns - Data science, forecasting and predictive analytics - Data management, dashboards and operational reporting - Single view of resident & customer insights - Responsible development and deployment of AI - Population Health Management insight - Greater Essex evidence base and Open Data - Essex Centre for Data Analytics (ecda) - LGR baselining and data lead - Building communities of practice across Greater Essex	- Evidence base to support corporate strategy - Research programmes on wider determinants of health - Intelligence to support Public Health duties - Delivering statutory surveys to inform national reporting - Leading major public consultations - Evaluating major programmes and interventions - Delivering the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) - Providing guidance and capability building across ECC and wider system	- Improving engagement with residents and stakeholders - Balancing strategic and day to day communications - Delivering programme of campaigns linked to strategic priorities - Prioritising communications and engagement requests - Strengthening internal staff engagement - Improving ECC's influence nationally, including MP engagement	- Leading implementation of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy - Providing secretariat support to system partners - Blueprint for new partnership infrastructure for system partnerships - Developing the Crime Prevention Strategy - Supporting the Community Safety Partnerships - Fulfilling statutory Prevent Duty responsibilities - Delivering ECC's equality objectives

Economic Growth

Andy Burgess
Director

The Essex Economy At A Glance



£55bn

Greater Essex
economic output
per year



81k

enterprises, from
SMEs to global
names



30m+

airport passengers
annually through
Stansted and
Southend



50%+

of England's
container freight
handled by major
ports



34,500+

jobs expected from
Freeport East and
Thames Freeport



Strengths

2 Freeports, 4 ports, 2 airports, 2 universities, 8 FE colleges, major employers, AI/data centres, logistics, energy, construction, manufacturing, defence, tourism and rural enterprise



Challenges

Productivity gap, skills shortages, housing affordability, infrastructure funding gap, rising deprivation, transport constraints, digital blackspots and uneven local outcomes



Essex is a major economy, similar to Northern Ireland - but not everyone or every place currently benefits equally

The Importance of The Economic Agenda

Bring in investment, create local benefit, help residents to thrive and reduce pressures on public services



1. Bring External Investment Into Essex

Government, developer and private investment into regeneration, infrastructure, skills, business growth, housing and major economic assets



2. Convert Investment Into Local Benefit

Apprenticeships, local jobs, town centre footfall, business growth, homes, transport, schools and digital access



3. Improve Residents' Life Chances

Well-skilled residents in good jobs and secure homes are more likely to be healthy, independent, prosperous and resilient



4. Reduce Future Demand And Cost

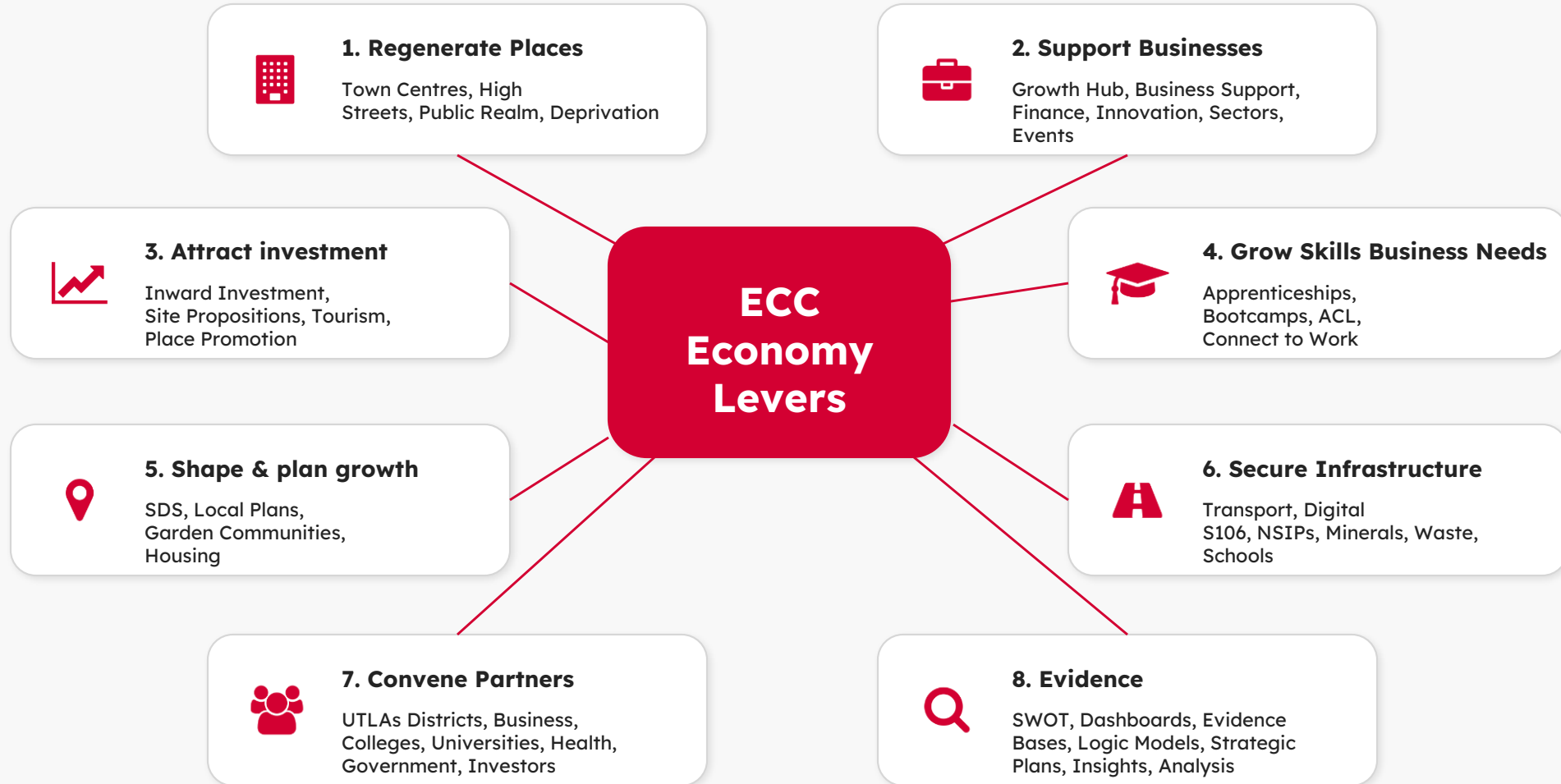
Better economic outcomes can reduce avoidable pressure linked to unemployment, poor skills, homelessness, poor health, deprivation and crisis support



Growth in Essex will happen regardless. ECC's role is to influence the right types of growth in the right places so that Essex residents can get the benefit

What Sustainable Growth Delivers

How ECC influences the economy and local growth



ECC is often the system convener, funder, commissioner, planner, influencer or delivery partner - not always the direct deliverer

Sustainable Growth

We are responsible for shaping and delivering sustainable economic growth across Essex by bringing together planning, regeneration, investment, skills and housing. Working with local authorities, businesses, communities and central government, we create the conditions for thriving places, increased productivity and work-related opportunities while supporting the council’s objectives. Our service enables high-quality development, strengthen local economies, maximise public and private investment and ensure that growth delivers long-term benefits for residents, businesses and future generations.



Future Regeneration Projects

Clacton Hub Project



St Botolph's Circus



Garden Communities Programme

Tendring-Colchester Garden
Community



Harlow & Gilston Garden Town

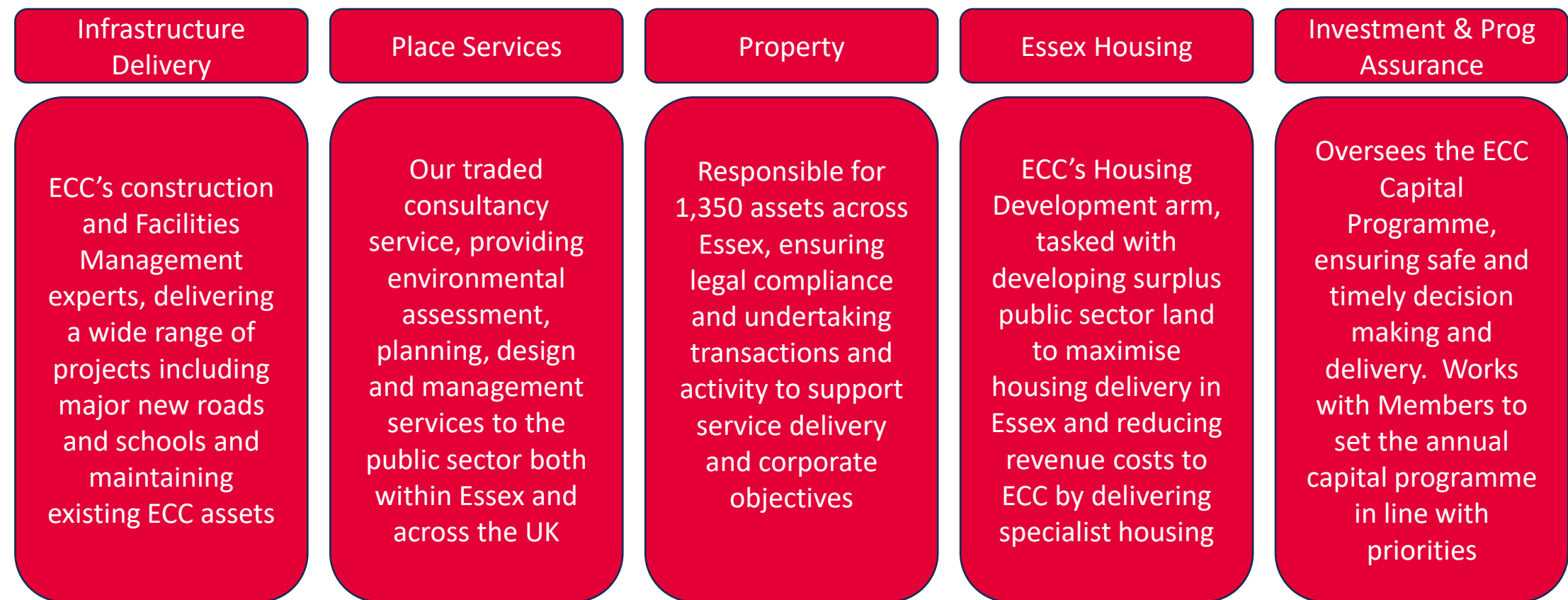


Property, Investment and Delivery

Ben Finlayson
Director

Property, Investment and Delivery

We are responsible for planning and delivering a wide portfolio of property, infrastructure and regeneration programmes that support Essex County Council’s strategic objectives, ensuring the estate is efficient and fit for purpose while enabling economic growth and community outcomes. We bring together major capital projects, housing delivery, school place provision, estate transformation and facilities management to optimise the use of public assets, generate value for money and ensure safe, compliant and high-performing environments that support services, residents and future development across Essex.



Property, Investment and Delivery Programmes

		Estates Transformation Programme A group of projects with the combined aim of delivering a smaller, better and more efficient property estate (e.g. Ely House, Rowan House). • Smaller = Buildings that are right-sized based on their typical use / Reduction in operational costs / Income generation e.g. rental / Capital receipts • Better = More modern workspaces that reflect the excellent services we provide / Improvement in staff productivity / Recruitment and retention / Colocation and community benefits • More Efficient = Reduction in energy use / Reduction in travel This programme of work also includes the replacement of the Total Facilities Management (TFM) contract, currently in place with MITIE which is due to expire at the end of September 26. Services include typical FM elements (cleaning, security, maintenance) as well as Estate Management consultancy support and Utility Management (bill validation and advance energy purchasing support).
Capital Delivery	Major Projects Capital Programme	Delivered by the Infrastructure Delivery Team and overseen by Investment & Programme Assurance. These significant infrastructure projects are the highest value projects being delivered by ECC with values up to £200m and include major highways improvements such as the Army & Navy as well as projects supporting housing growth in Essex such as Chelmsford North-East Bypass and A1331 Link Road.
	School Places Programme	Delivered by the Infrastructure Delivery Team under commission from the Schools Organisation and SEND Teams and again overseen Investment & Programme Assurance. The Team deliver building works to enable around 2,000 new school places to be provided to children across Essex each year to meet the needs of our growing population. Projects range from whole new schools to single classrooms to address a local bulge requirement. The team help ECC achieve a high level of performance in annual offers to parents as well as creating superb learning environments. The new Wolsey Park SEND School in Rayleigh is currently under construction.
Essex Housing Development Programme		Delivering a number of transformational projects providing much needed homes and community facilities for Essex residents. Projects delivered by Essex Housing incorporate high-quality architect designed homes and neighbourhoods with a particular focus on providing for some of our most vulnerable residents. The programme delivers huge value to the taxpayer, by generating savings, reinvesting surpluses and making best use of surplus public land. Essex County Hospital in Colchester will start selling completed units this year.
Place Services		Place Services will deliver specialist environmental advice to public sector organisations throughout Essex and beyond, supporting local planning authorities with strategic plan making and development management advice, resources and training and completing annual programmes of tree risk assessments for Essex Highways, country parks, schools and other parts of the public estate to keep them safe. As a fully traded service, Place Services programme will result in £400,000 appropriation to ECC.
Property		As well as continuing to manage the council's estate, ensuring legal compliance, financial efficiency and adequate provision to deliver essential services across the organisation, the Property Team are reviewing the operational estate to identify opportunities to improve efficiency.
Facilities Management		The Facilities Management Team will continue the day-to-day management of operational assets, ensuring statutory compliance and efficiency so that essential services can continue to be delivered.

Beaulieu Park Station



Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)

Colchester A1331



Chelmsford NE Bypass



Beaulieu Park School



Questions ?

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