

Inspiring Ideas to improve Essex Communities: outline process

In assessing and short listing community ideas, Essex councils propose to follow the following process.

- Stage 1. On 22 February, on behalf of all council Leaders in Essex, the Leader of Essex County Council (ECC) will invite communities to submit ideas. An application form, together with details of the process and criteria will be published on the ECC website to help communities develop their ideas. We are keen the district and borough councils also publish these details on their own websites.
- Stage 2. ECC officers will review ideas as they are submitted. Where ideas relate to district/borough functions, they will discuss these with named contacts in the relevant authority. Officers may agree to contact the individuals and groups proposing ideas to suggest ways in which they could be strengthened or amended to better meet the criteria.
- Stage 3. A final officer sift of community ideas will be carried out to produce a 'long-list'. This sift will be carried out by nominated officers from all Essex councils. Where ideas systematically fail to meet the criteria outlined, those proposing the ideas will be contacted and informed.
- Stage 4. A panel of elected councillors, drawn from across Essex Districts, Boroughs and the County Council, will be convened to shortlist proposals for further action.
- a. short-listed ideas that related to ECC functions will be investigated further by Essex County Council departments with a view to promoting opportunities and removing/reducing barriers to action;
 - b. short-listed ideas that relate to District/Borough functions will be investigated by officers from the relevant authority with support from ECC as required.
 - c. referred to central government under the provisions of the Sustainable Communities Act.

Where local barriers are investigated and it is found that these cannot be removed because of national regulations or restrictions, these can also be referred to government departments under the Sustainable Communities Act.

[Arrangements for the composition of the Member panel will need to be agreed over the coming months. Ideally this would make use of existing forums, but a specially convened meeting of nominated members is another option].

- Stage 5. All those who submitted proposals will be contacted and informed of the progress of their idea.