

## NEWS RELEASE

Publication: 13 April 2007

### ESSEX LEADS IN SUPPORT FOR CHARITIES

Charities and the voluntary sector in Essex are set to benefit from new arrangements that are now in place between central and local government. It is believed that Essex County Council is the first local authority in the UK to adopt a long-term approach to strengthening the engagement of local voluntary organisations in Local Area Agreements.

Local Area Agreements are three year agreements requiring partners from all sectors to work together to address the county's priorities in the key service areas of: children and young people, safer stronger communities, health and older people and economic development and enterprise.

A series of initiatives have been agreed by the LAA Essex Partnership, through its accountable body, Essex County Council, to enable voluntary organisations to play an active role in improving the quality of life for local people.

The LAA brings together central government funding streams to provide greater financial flexibility to respond to local concerns, and this has enabled the Executive Group of the LAA Essex Partnership to make decisions that will have a long term impact on the sector.

- The LAA Engagement Fund has been established within Essex Community Foundation to enable senior voluntary sector staff to take up specific leadership roles under the LAA.
- A £2 million endowed fund will be set up from Performance Reward Grants which become available when Essex LAA has achieved 60% of its priority targets. It is expected that money will be released in 2009 and income from the fund will be available to develop the capacity of local voluntary organisations.
- Essex County Council has seconded a senior officer to work within the sector, under the direction of a voluntary sector steering group, led by the Rural Community Council of Essex. The LAA Engagement Officer will liaise between the voluntary sector and the LAA for the remainder of the two year programme.

It is hoped that by taking these steps, greater recognition and support will be given to the voluntary sector's contribution to tackling the county's priorities.

(Release No/ 131 ; 15/04/07

For further information contact Laura Warren Essex Community Foundation  
Tel: 01245 355947 E-mail: [general@essexcf.org.uk](mailto:general@essexcf.org.uk)

#### See Over for Notes to Editors:

E. [general@essexcf.org.uk](mailto:general@essexcf.org.uk)  
[www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk)

Patron: The Lord Lieutenant of Essex

Chief Executive: Laura Warren



121 New London Road  
Chelmsford  
Essex  
CM2 0QT  
T. 01245 355947  
F. 01245 346391

**Notes to Editors**

Essex Community Foundation was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen more than 2500 Essex based charities and community groups receive over £8million in grants. Funds are distributed on behalf of a wide range of donors who want their charitable giving to be accessible to local charities. [www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk)

Local Area Agreement sets a shared agenda for local service providers. Over fifty public organisations in Essex have come together as partners to focus on fourteen shared priorities. By combining funds and agreeing a way forward, the LAA will increase efficiency and effectiveness. The LAA offers local government, the NHS, education providers etc the chance to leave behind silo-based working patterns and to adopt common objectives. This approach will target services towards those in greatest need and achieve better value for money across Essex's public services as a whole. [www.essexcc.gov.uk](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk)