

## NEWS RELEASE

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### ESSEX LEADS WITH GROUND BREAKING FUND

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Essex County Council (ECC) is setting up a ground-breaking £2 million endowed fund to support local charities in Essex. ECC is the first local authority in the country to secure a portion of the Government's Local Area Agreement (LAA) funding to specifically resource a healthy and thriving voluntary and community sector.

Lord Hanningfield, Leader of Essex County Council and Chair of the LAA Essex Management Board said, "We are delighted that our local voluntary sector is the first to benefit from funding that the Government is releasing as a Performance Reward Grant to Essex for achieving objectives aimed at improving the quality of life for local people."

Lord Hanningfield added: "This fund recognises the immense contribution of the sector to community well-being and will provide a stable source of funding to support local charities, in perpetuity".

Under the banner of a Thriving Third Sector, the LAA endowed fund will be managed by local grant-making trust, Essex Community Foundation, who will work with a panel of representatives from local charities and the LAA Management Partnership Board to identify priorities for funding. The Fund will provide grants to any charity based in Essex that is delivering a service to the most disadvantaged people in the county. Applications for grants will be invited in the autumn when the Panel will announce more detailed criteria.

Laura Warren, Chief Executive of Essex Community Foundation added: "This endowed fund will allow us to look at the most effective ways of sustaining local organisations to tackle social and economic disadvantage. We applaud the decision of Essex County Council and the LAA Essex Management Board in taking such a long term view, giving the opportunity for this fund to make a significant contribution to the development of a healthy and thriving third sector"

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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Lord Hanningfield presents a cheque for £2 million to Rhiannedd Pratley, Trustee of Essex Community Foundation and Caroline Taylor,

Patron: Lord Petre, The Lord Lieutenant of Essex  
Chief Executive: Laura Warren OBE DL

Programmes Director, to establish the LAA Endowed Fund for the voluntary sector in Essex

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**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

The public sector in Essex is represented by the Essex Partnership Forum with representation from all statutory public sector bodies and from the private and Third sectors. In turn this group is represented by the Essex Management Board chaired by the leader of Essex County Council, Lord Hanningfield.

Essex's Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a joint project between the county's thirteen Local Strategic Partnerships. It represents a real agreement between partners and is designed to bring a step-change in the collective effectiveness of the whole public sector in Essex.

The LAA focuses the activities of the local public sector and the community and voluntary sector on the needs of identified groups of service users and residents. It brings better value for money by channelling funds from different public organisations towards shared priorities and targets.

**Essex Community Foundation** was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen around 3,500 Essex based charities and community groups receive £13 million 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)

Community Foundations are independent charities committed to supporting projects that engage local people. Since the 1980s, a nationwide network of Community Foundations has developed, endorsed by many major public figures and leading companies.

There are 1000's of charities and voluntary groups working for the community to create a richer society for all. Community Foundations build endowed funds and make grants to these organisations.

- There are 55 local Community Foundations in the UK covering 94% of the population
- Collectively they manage endowed funds of circa £200 million
- In 2006/07 Community Foundations distributed grants totalling £75million.

