Essex County Council

North Provider Forum – 21 September 2026

Commissioning Update

Maria Blanche

Essex County Council

Autumn 2026 Locality Forums

Commissioning Updates

September 2026



To cover

1 **Live at Home**

2 **Seasonal planning**

3 **Strategy updates**

4 **Frontline**

Live-at-Home

Summary of activity

LAH Summary



High proportion of placements on framework

93% of existing placements were made on the framework. 63% of care providers are rated good or outstanding (a requirement to be on T1)



Tier 1 engagement event being planned

ECC Commissioners have met with T1 suppliers to work together on development and improvement of the offer. A further event is being planned for the autumn.



Cost of care discussions in the diary

Every year ECA support forums with suppliers to understand how cost inflation is impacting on their business.



ECA collating views on framework functioning

ECA is supporting providers and ECC to gather feedback on people's experiences of the LAH framework.

Seasonal planning

- Reflections and learning from summer 2026
- Preparing for winter

Summer 2026

Summer 2026 has been unprecedented but is the continuation of a trend for increasingly hot and arid summers. Weather such as this is a particular risk for vulnerable people and the Council is keen to ensure we understand best practice for supporting people and are planning for further such events in future.

What we can do, and some asks:

The Council is keen to learn from 2026 and is proposing follow up work:

- Would suppliers be happy to share steps they took at a future forum?
- Can we work together on some best practice guidance?
- Is there anything that care suppliers think ECC or ECA could do to support in future around extreme weather / business continuity?



Winter planning

Our approach to winter this year seeks to build on initiatives from 2025/26 and strengthen what was already in place, this includes the Home to Assess (H2A) service, ongoing focus on outcomes and length of stay (LOS) in Essex Cares Limited (ECL) and Alternative Reablement Capacity (ARC) pathway 1 reablement services which supports better use of capacity we have in place.

Initiatives:

In addition to this, the following schemes will support winter resilience:

- ECL ‘safe and settled’ approach (cases can start with ECL where they have care assistant capacity available)
- Joint work with ICB on ‘Intermediate Care Beds’
- Funding allocated for ‘spot’ reablement capacity
- Early work and discussion with our care market



Winter is always a challenging time for adult social care. We are engaging now to discuss our plans and to welcome ideas for how we best prepare for 2026/7.

Strategy updates

Development of strategies including:

- Dementia strategy refresh
- Disabilities strategy
- Carers strategy

The Southend, Essex & Thurrock Dementia Strategy

The Strategy has been in place for four years we want to hear your thoughts on the effectiveness of current priorities and commitments and understand the emerging challenges and opportunities.

We have an opportunity to

- Recognise the progress that has been made in delivering the Mission, Priorities and Commitments
- Recognise that priorities may have changed for people living with dementia, their families & carers influenced by local and national changes.
- Ensure the strategy is a relevant and up to date mechanism to continue to deliver positive change for people living with dementia, their families and carers until 2030.



We want to hear your views

Dementia priorities in Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) We want to hear your views

We want Essex to be a place where:

- People affected by dementia feel seen, heard and understood.
- No one faces dementia alone and can access the right support at the right time.
- Communities understand dementia and help people remain connected, independent and valued.
- Everyone supporting people with dementia has the skills, confidence and compassion to make a positive difference.
- We do everything we can to prevent dementia and reduce its impact on future generations.

The Disability Strategy

Launched in May 2023 our Strategy highlights four different themes that came from engagement with adults across Essex on what was important to them, and it built on past transformation programmes such as Meaningful Lives Matters.



Good relationships

Because people told us that they want to grow and keep good relationships with people they get on with.



Staying healthy, safe and well

Because people told us looking after their health and being able to get help with being unwell are important.



Being Active

Because people told us they like to stay busy and they want to feel part of their communities.



A place to feel at home

Because people told us that where they live is important, it needs to feel safe and feel like home.

As the strategy has been in place for three years now, we'd like to understand from you your thoughts on it's impacts and success. We'll be sending out some surveys and queries to gain your views, alongside some more information on the strategy and look forward to hearing your thoughts!

Frontline

An update on Frontline

Supporting People At the Right Time

What is Frontline?

- Free directory of health, wellbeing and community support across Essex
- Over 1,000 services available in one place
- Accessible via website and mobile devices
- Supports self-service, signposting and referrals

Current Focus

- Improving accessibility and user experience
- Working with providers, professionals and people with lived experience
- Using feedback to inform future development
- Promoting awareness and uptake across Essex

Help Shape Frontline

We would like your feedback

Tell us:

- What works well?
- What could be improved?
- Is anything missing?
- Is Frontline easy to use?
- How can we make it better?

Feedback welcomed from:

Providers | People with lived experience | Carers | Families | Support Workers | Professionals

Essex Frontline

Feedback Survey Form