

A photograph of a rowing team in a boat on water. The rowers are wearing white tank tops and dark blue long-sleeved shirts. They are holding oars with yellow grips. The boat is dark-colored and has a white seat. The water is dark and rippled. The background is a bright, overcast sky.

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# Essex Horizon Scan: Final Report

Volume Two:  
Framing an Essex response

August 2016

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This report has been prepared by the RSA on behalf of the Essex Partnership Board.

It has been prepared as an input to the Board's collective planning and to the wider development of strategic policy within Essex. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the Essex Partnership Board or its members.

## Introduction

1. In December 2015 the Essex Partnership Board initiated a multi-partner 'Essex Horizon Scan', under the guidance of a multi-partner steering group. The project was designed to systematically identify and examine trends, issues, threats and opportunities that could impact upon public services in Essex. The project aimed to provide a platform upon which partners could plan – individually and collectively – to meet future challenges.
2. Specifically, the aims of the project were to:
  - a. consider and prioritise emergent trends/issues that will impact over the next 10-15 years;
  - b. develop a set of evidence-based outputs that can be used by partners across Greater Essex to support strategic planning at the organisational and partnership level; and
  - c. inform long-term policy interventions to mitigate risks or exploit opportunities.
3. Essex Partners have been working with the RSA to deliver this project. They invited the RSA to design a process of research and consultation to draw on the expertise of partners and engage them in thinking through future challenges and implications in a collaborative fashion.
4. Through this process, partners identified the top twenty trends that would shape the county over the next 10-15 and considered what these might mean for Essex: its leaders, its businesses, its civil society, and its citizens.
5. An overview of the top twenty trends can be found in volume one of this report. However, for this volume, these trends have been summarized as follows:
  - a. **An economy which is re-structuring** with new industries, jobs and opportunities but uncertain foundations and likely transitional stresses including adaptation to anticipated UK departure from the EU.
  - b. **Technologies changing our relationships with each other, work and services.**
  - c. Public services facing new possibilities but **new demands and expectations** with still limited resources.
  - d. Governance with **new powers** at the local level **but uncertainty** about how they can be best deployed and a search for new models of systemic leadership.
  - e. A changing population that exhibits **dynamism** and enjoys **longevity**, but creates new demands.
  - f. A society that is **plural but divided in many ways** creating stresses and some conflict.

**The purpose of this report is to consider general strategies that might be adopted by partners across Essex in responding to the opportunities and challenges posed by these trends.**

## Response pathways

### An introduction to two pathways.

6. As a way of thinking through responses to these trends, there are two alternative pathways to the future. These are presented as ‘ideal types’ – ways of thinking about potential responses to the trends. They are not mutually exclusive – different approaches will be applied to contend with different trends. They are designed to help frame thinking as Essex’s leaders consider how to navigate the key identified trends.
7. Pathway one is ‘**incremental innovation**’. Incremental improvement or ‘marginal gains’<sup>i</sup> is the path of sustaining innovations. A constant focus on such marginal gains can achieve constant improvement and is designed to be a more cost effective, adaptive strategy. However, there are risks in a fast changing context that these gains will be insufficiently rapid or at a sufficient scale to meet the challenges posed by the trends that have been identified.
8. If a place-based system of services cannot cope with the demands placed upon it then it will fail to meet the needs of its people. Service failures erode trust and further inhibit a change of course. So the promise of incremental innovation is that it allows experimentation, adaptation and evolution. The risk is that such an evolutionary approach may be too slow or could fail to scale effectively.
9. Pathway two is ‘**disruptive innovation**’<sup>ii</sup>. The key to this strategy if it were applied in a public services setting is to innovate an alternative system alongside the existing system with the aim of getting to a radically improved set of outcomes– step changes in outcomes such as health and wellbeing, educational achievement or economic investment. Disruptive innovations replace the old system and ways of doing things in a deliberate and scalable fashion.
10. The costs of failure, however, can be exceedingly high. Maintaining popular support in such circumstances can become impossible.
11. Here are some examples that illustrate the difference.

Incremental improvement – sustaining innovations	A step change – disruptive innovation
The <b>Ford</b> motor company has used continuous innovation to achieve sustained incremental improvements in its vehicles over time.	<b>Tesla</b> has built a completely different kind of all-electric car that can travel 300 miles and threatens to disrupt the market. The new model has received 400,000 deposits.
Iterative <b>improvements to public education</b> through careful system and relationship building between schools and other education institutions led by local bodies.	Introduction of new <b>independent education institutions</b> such as academies, Free Schools, and UTCs designed to develop new models of governance, leadership and provision.

Transferring <b>commissioning responsibility to GP groups</b> from Primary Care Trusts and shifting responsibility for public health from national to local government.	Investing in entirely <b>new models of healthcare</b> delivery such as complete and continuous primary, acute and social care supporting by new forms of patient mobilisation and peer-to-peer support. The complete <b>digitisation of health records</b> and information with patient access and ownership.
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### Alternative pathways in response to key trends.

12. We can apply the alternative pathways to the key future challenges inherent in the top twenty trends identified for Essex (see volume one). These are presented as illustrative examples to show what alternative strategic responses to future challenges, like ageing, healthcare, or skills, might look like. Depending on the characteristics of the particular trend, one pathway might seem more sensible at a particular time. Each pathway has risks and benefits.

Trend	Incremental improvement	Step change
<b>Population and demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ageing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diversifying</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> London Overspill</li> </ul>	<b>Action:</b> Promote volunteering for over 65s.  <b>Risk:</b> Lots of organisational energy deployed but wellbeing not significantly improved.	<b>Action:</b> Essex as “best place to grow old” – strategic investment in new models for care, culture and community.  <b>Risk:</b> Competing demands for resources reduces investment which prevents wellbeing being improved and means initial investment is wasted.
<b>Work and skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Home workforce</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demand for skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self employed</li> </ul>	<b>Action:</b> Monitor and report number of home workers.  <b>Risk:</b> No impact on economy.	<b>Action:</b> Develop “Essex offer” for home workers to build capacity and exploit economic benefits they offer.  <b>Risk:</b> Seen as irrelevant.
	<b>Action:</b> Develop/support enterprise hubs and networks to provide business services and skills development to new types of workers.  <b>Risk:</b> Lack of impact especially for excluded populations.	<b>Action:</b> Use the purchasing power of the major public employers and the university to foster a more stable eco-system of local small business. Adopt an ‘Essex by default strategy’ and deliberately foster a range of business forms. Work with business organisations, networks, and university to heavily support the spread of business skills throughout the county.  <b>Risk:</b> Cost and coordination challenges could overwhelm and dilute commitment over time.

<p><b>Housing and infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transport</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Energy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Encourage developers to bring forward new housing schemes.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Market fails to supply sufficient affordable housing.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Develop and fund new models of housing investment and design such as community land trusts, shared living and working.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Innovative models are hard to fund and difficult to scale so impact is minimal.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Incremental road upgrades and improvements.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Fails to keep up with traffic growth - maintains status quo.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Major investment in smart transport solutions – using big data analytics to develop cross-modal systems that are flexible and reactive to system conditions.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Fail to attract sufficient investment, high cost, risk of failure, lack of proven technology, may not achieve benefits.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Respond to proposals for new energy infrastructure through the planning system, allowing some experimentation.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Fail to meet carbon targets.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Smart energy infrastructure across Essex – micro-generation, renewables plus intelligent systems.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> High cost and lack of consumer buy-in (as costs can be passed on). Public opposition could increase.</p>
<p><b>Health and well-being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Obesity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital overload</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social care</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Community gardens and healthy eating and cooking education in all schools.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Difficult to manage implementation that depends on independent actors, hard to sustain.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Strategically develop a county-wide strategy for healthy living that would ensure that all local powers (e.g. planning, licensing and leisure), expenditure, services, housing (including social housing) were assessed for their contribution to a healthier Essex. Provide credits to at-risk individuals and communities to help them access healthier living learning experiences and activities. Create a 'healthy living' certification available for all through community and other learning settings.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Hard to attract and coordinate investment.</p>

	<p><b>Action:</b> Add social prescribing to GP offer.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Without investment in marketing and education for GPs, may fail to be adopted.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Total transformation of social care – shifting resources into community, prevention, and patient led services. Invest in training community practitioners and give local, nurse-led teams autonomy to meet patient needs.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Whole system transformation is costly and difficult to achieve.</p>
<p><b>Environment and hidden harm.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flooding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cyber-crime and terrorism</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Engage with insurance industry to manage risk through price mechanism.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Consumers ignore price signals so no impact.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> New strategy for long term flood alleviation and managing development integrated into all planning and infrastructure investments.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Imposes additional costs on development pushing house prices higher.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Access external expertise and upskill teams on threats to the person, e.g. domestic violence or child sexual exploitation.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Response can be reactive rather than preventative.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Strategic re-focusing of police resources in partnership with councils, housing providers, schools, the NHS, and other community institutions to identify individuals at risk and to intervene early. Collaboration, including data-sharing to make this systemic intervention more effective.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Barriers to collaboration prove too great - threaten vested interests and provokes institutional opposition.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Community crime and anti-social behaviour awareness campaigns.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Victims remain isolated and fails to deter or prevent domestic violence.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Investment in ‘whole justice system’ (police, courts, voluntary sector, community) support for victims, witnesses, and their families support- through investigation to trial and beyond including into rehabilitation and community reintegration.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Lacks advocates so resources hard to secure.</p>

<p><b>Finance and technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Austerity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Digital public services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Internet of things</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Big data analytics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Firm budgetary planning within each institution.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Fails to address duplication or release system economies.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Whole Essex outcomes based budgeting. Map spending across all public services to merge teams, reduce duplication and maximise system impact.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Institutional interests, and competition for resources make it impossible to build required coalition of support and undermine process</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Incremental adoption of digital services - responsive to service needs, technology improvements and public expectations.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Fails to release resource savings, pressure to improve services and keep all channels available.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Whole public, community, voluntary, business Essex strategy for “digital by default” supported by single team.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Resistance from services and public undermines support.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Support small scale innovation in areas with potential e.g. homecare or transport.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Takes a long time to realise benefits, low awareness of potential in other areas.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Major strategic investment to secure benefits and efficiencies from internet of things, e.g. in assistive healthcare and public health linked to institutional redesign and voluntary support services.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Benefits insufficiently clear to maintain support.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Exploit data analytics in key areas.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Insufficient internal capacity to reap benefits.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Make Essex a national leader in data analytics for the public and private sector. Create specialist “Essex Data Hub” to incubate opportunities for big data analytics in partnership with private sector, entrepreneurs, investors and the community.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Investment fails to bring applications to fruition or they do not add social value.</p>

<p><b>Culture and society</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Loneliness</li> <li>☐ Social networking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Encourage voluntary sector to develop schemes to befriend and support isolated people.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Makes little impact.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Concerted action to tackle social isolation - audit every household in Essex, develop and support full range of community and cross-generational interventions and track take-up and impact.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Expensive and may be seen as intrusive “nanny state”.</p>
	<p><b>Action:</b> Build “social networking” competency into all public job descriptions and run sessions to share tips and tool up staff.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> No shared view of purpose and underutilisation.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Develop social network for Essex to connect citizens and build social capital.</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Investment wasted, no take-up.</p>

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<sup>i</sup> Syed, Matthew. Black Box Thinking: the surprising truth about success. John Murray, 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Christensen, Clay. The Innovator’s Dilemma: when new technologies cause great firms to fail. Harvard Business Review Press, 1997.

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Published August 2016