

## **Meeting of:- Cabinet**

**On:-** Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2006

## **Agenda Item No.:-**

**Topic:- Single Non-Emergency Number for Essex (101)**

**Type of Report:-** Non-Key Decision

## **Executive Summary:-**

This report is to update Members on the latest position regarding the roll out of the Single Non-Emergency [telephone] Number (SNEN) across Essex.

The national 101 project is funded by the Home Office and the Dept. for Communities and Local Govt.

The 101 project in Essex is being driven by Essex Police and being managed by the Essex 101 Partnership.

Full information on the national 101 project can be found at <http://www.101.gov.uk>

## **1. Process and progress**

The expression of interest (non-legally-binding agreement) submitted by the Essex 101 Partnership was accepted, and the Home Office has invited the Partnership to submit a 101 solution for Essex to go live in 2007. This will then be subjected to a bidding process with all the other partnerships included in Wave 2. A successful bid will secure capital funds for implementation together with revenue contributions for operational costs going forward until 2010. Full national coverage is expected upon the completion of Wave 3 during 2008.

The Home Office bidding process has an extremely tight timetable with a requirement that Essex Local Authorities (The Partnership) agree an operational model and implementation plan for Essex during August & September for submission by 5<sup>th</sup> October.

To move the project forward quickly to meet the timetable the Partnership has set up a Project team with appropriate governance. All Local Authorities in Essex are parties to the Partnership although Tendring have expressed concern about capacity to commit human resource to the project and elected not to be within the Partnership. This position however appears likely to change.

The task has been to design a call handling capability, to deliver the 101 operation across Essex, and to prepare and submit the bid. Brian Cox, also

our Customer First Programme Manager, was appointed to manage this project. The Essex On-Line Partnership has agreed to supply human resource to support and assist in producing the bid.

## **2. The 101 service in brief**

The 101 service is designed to give the public one number to call (24/7) in relation to the following:-

- Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property
- Noisy neighbours
- Threatening and abusive behaviour
- Abandoned vehicles
- Rubbish and litter including fly tipping
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places
- Drug related anti- social behaviour
- Problems with street lighting

People should still dial 999 when there is immediate danger or they witness a crime taking place.

The concept is based around a telephone contact centre environment where 101 operators will take details from callers and forward service requests to the appropriate service delivery partner, i.e. to BDC/Police/ECC where appropriate. The arrangements are already operating in parts of the Country where 101 was rolled out earlier this year in Wave 1.

The ambition is to make local communities safer places to live and work through an easily accessible 24/7 service that will provide action, advice and information to the public on these community safety and anti social behaviour issues. A joined up service that will create improved co-ordination between Councils and Police and provide better information about what problems are happening where, leading to improvement in the management of resources and services to the public. The new service is also designed to take such calls out of the 999 environment.

## **3. How 101 could work in Essex**

The Essex Partnership considered that 101 in Essex should build on the existing investments in local authority call centres in Essex rather than the creation of a new facility which would duplicate resources and investment.

The original plan to link together all existing contact centres has not proved feasible or acceptable to the Home Office and therefore the Partnership has now expressed a preference for a single call-taking partner for the whole of Essex. The rest of the Essex Partnership, including Braintree, will be receiving service requests from the chosen call taker.

This has formed the basis for a competitive bid situation. Essex County Council (At ECC Contact Centre, Colchester Business Park) and Thurrock

Council (Vertex) both took part in the bidding. This bidding and subsequent evaluation by the Partnership will have been completed by 15<sup>th</sup> September and therefore Cabinet can be updated on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

#### **4. Recommendation**

To note the report.

**Options:** N/A

**Risks:** None identified at this stage.

**Background Papers:-** None

**Financial Implications:-** None at this stage

**Equalities Implications:-** None at this stage

**Legal Implications:-** None at this stage

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**Author(s):-** Roger Bramwell

**Designation:-** Head of Customer Services

**E Mail Address:-** [roger.bramwell@braintree.govuk](mailto:roger.bramwell@braintree.govuk)