



MINUTES

Subject: Active Essex Q1 Board Meeting
Date & Time: Tuesday 22nd July 2025 09:30 to 16:00
Location: Wat Tyler Park, Cordite Room, Basildon
Chair: William Bird

ATTENDANCE

Acronyms	Board Member Name	Board Position	Meeting attendance
WB	William Bird	Chairman	Full meeting
BM	Bob McClintock	Board Member	Full meeting
DD	Dan Doherty	Board Member	Full meeting
CR	Caroline Russell	Board Member	Full meeting
SL	Scott Logan	Board Member	Full meeting
FB	Fiona Bool	Board Member	Full meeting
LB	Lee Bailey	Board Member	Full meeting
AWS	Anne Wafula-Strike	Board Member	Apologies
EL	Emma Lewis	Board Member	Apologies
DS	David Sollis	Board Member	Apologies
	Active Essex Staff Name	Job Title	
HA	Holly Adams	Marketing and Communications Lead	Full meeting
JF	Jason Fergus	Director	Full meeting
HC	Hayley Chapman	Relationship Development Lead	Full meeting
AH	Amelia Hall	Intelligence Manager	Full meeting
RH	Rob Hayne	Strategic Lead Business Operations	Full meeting
NC	Neil Coggins	Delivery Manager	Full meeting
SH	Sally Hoyle	Assistant Project Manager (minutes)	Full meeting
LV	Louise Voyce	Relationship Development Lead	Apologies

MINUTES

Item	
2	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apologies were noted from Louise, Anne, Emma, David.• Introductions of Active Essex SLT staff to board members. <p>Any Conflict of Interest on agenda</p> <p>None</p>

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Matters arising:

No matters were mentioned by the Board.

Approval of minutes & actions from meeting held on 22 April 2025.

All Board members agreed the minutes are accurate and signed off.

Actions taken from the previous minutes: -

Item No./ Agenda item No.	Action	Lead/s	Progress
3	Board members to make any suggestions to William/Jason on any potential candidates they feel meet the desired skills for Board Recruitment.	All	Complete
5	JF to invite Audit committee to a future task and finish Devolution/LGR group to include Chairman and Scott Logan.	JF	Complete
6	Map out the next 12 months – what is the Essex timeline for Devolution Engagement Plan.	JF	Ongoing
9	Board to be sent slide deck so can be clear on structure.	HC /LV	Complete
11	Active Essex to submit a response to ICS reorganisation proposal.	WB	Complete
11	DD to provide an update at next Active Essex Board	DD	Complete
14	CR to speak with Hayley re Disability ‘Include to Improve’	CR /HC	Complete
16	Board to work with Dan Feist by engaging with contacts to build and hardwire the profile of sport and physical activity into Greater Essex.	All	Ongoing

Board member recruitment

WB spoke to members re the recommendation of Angela Hutchings (Chief Executive of Castle Point Borough Council) as the new Active Essex Board member. All seconded this appointment, and Angela will be joining the next full board meeting in November.

JF gave summary of interview.

WB discussed longer term plan for board member recruitment. Discussion followed on ensuring recruitment of a new board member adequately replaces the skills gap, particularly in education and business.

ACTION – RH to collate board members skills audit and share with chair.

ACTION – HW to share current board member recruitment application link with board members.

JF spoke to actions of last meeting.

4

Sport and Youth Crime Share and Learn (JW/SP)

BM gave introductions to Active Essex Foundation (AEF), Suzanne and Jim. Noted that three further years of funding secured from the Lottery, and this is down to the hard work of Jim, Suzanne and the AEF team.

JW presented to board on the following: -

Key outcomes identified in the AEF theory of change:

1. Improve health and wellbeing - the benefits of an active lifestyle to our physical and mental health are enormous.

2. Reduce vulnerabilities to crime and exploitation – ensuring sport and physical activity is a proven tool to help reduce levels of crime and anti-social behavior.

3. Improve education and employment - increasing knowledge and skills of a wide range of organisations, coaches, leaders, and volunteers.

Lottery funding

Key brief from National Lottery was as follows:

1. Taking a pro-social approach to make a significant difference to the vulnerable young people who engage in sport to divert them away from exploitation and criminality towards a positive lifestyle with positive outcomes.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Grow a network of Locally Trusted Organisation (LTOs) who use sport effectively to divert young people away from crime and youth violence. 3. Demonstrate to the Youth Justice System that sport is an effective tool to enhance positive outcomes for young people in the context of youth crime and violence. 4. Create a strong evidence base of proven blueprints and approaches that increase positive lift outcomes for vulnerable young people that can replicated at scale across Essex. <p>Impact to date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AEF already had strong working relationships with Streetgames and Loughborough University. - Theory of change developed and used Essex VVU's Strategic Needs Assessment for Essex to establish where (locality) the serious youth crime violence took place – Southend and Harlow had the highest number of serious violence investigations in the last 5 years. This helped to focus approach. - Started work in 2022 with eight keen Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs), working with 10–25-year-olds who face barriers to engagement/more vulnerable to criminality and exploitation. LTOs were supported with their governance, training trauma informed approach, behavior management, fundraising and bid writing, youth work and mentoring, networking. After year one of funding, 20 organisations were supported. - AEF have become a voice for the sector for those who deliver Sport for Good in Southend, Essex and Thurrock. - Relationships held with statutory agencies such as the police, probation and youth justice service were capitilised on, and demonstrated the power of sport and physical activity to these agencies. - Life of the project so far (2022-2025): Over 6,000 vulnerable young people engaged and supported Additional £590,553 of funding leveraged from various sources, including Thurrock Youth Justice Services, Essex police and Sport England Network of 80-85 LTOs are now supported. <p>Future opportunities and support needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AEF Conference taking place on 16 September at Colchester Football Stadium. The home office will be in attendance. - Possibility of expanding training offer to an Active Essex Foundation Training Academy to offer commercial courses, workshops etc. <p>WB thanked Suzanne and Jim for fantastic presentation, showcasing the effectiveness of a full system approach.</p> <p>JF gave reflections on presentation and the importance of communicating the system change and benefits that the excellent work AE and AEF undertakes.</p> <p>WB what struck me was the reflections of a young person in the video clip on the importance of AEF and if the foundation wasn't here, they had commented they would be dead. It shows the importance of breaking the generational cycle.</p> <p>LB queried if there is a cost benefit saving to the system?</p> <p>ACTION: Suzanne and Jim to share any information on savings to the system with the board.</p> <p><i>See attached PDF for full presentation.</i></p>
5	<p>Diversity Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) (HC)</p> <p>Progress since launch last year (12 month review) HC summarised highlights and learning on the following areas: Strategy & Leadership, Governance, Representation, Stakeholder Engagement.</p> <p>Next Steps Moving to Inclusion (MI) has replaced the equality standards nationally. MI toolkit and pillars discussed. Five pillars: culture, leadership, experience, relationship and communication.</p> <p>WB thanked HC for a brilliant presentation with a wealth of content.</p> <p>Discussion followed on diversity and inclusion in the AE team. HC we were slightly under representation with ethnical and LGBT diversity at the point at which the DIAP was done. There have been a number of new staff join the team and the survey will be updated for the next quarter.</p>

	<p>JF reflected on presentation.</p> <p>ACTION: HC to share staff survey results from the quarter with board.</p>
	<p>DCMS Visit – 21 July 2025</p> <p>JF gave reflections on the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (Secretary of State team) visit which took place on Monday 21 July in Canvey Island. Focus of the days was bring policy place-based activity to action. Visited a Primary School which was a great example of a leading movement school. Then to an older people community session with Lets Move. Cllr McKinlay and DCMS party all took part in the session.</p> <p>Three key things DCMS wanted to understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the role of central government in placed based delivery. 2. Community and People 3. Culture and media linking to Sports <p>WB reflected on the afternoon which was a roundtable session. Key themes of trust with communities, creating the conditions and ‘deflecting with glory’. Reflections on uniting on the outcomes is essential across the system to ensure the budgets align.</p> <p>Noted that DCMS have given very positive feedback following the visit.</p> <p>JF reflected on the visit and the importance of the relationships AE and board members hold to drive this momentum forward. Take away message - how do we continue to raise the profile that AE does in relation to government priorities?</p>
6	<p>Greater Essex ICS Update (DD/WB)</p> <p>10-year NHS plan DD gave summary of plan which was publish on 3 July 2025. Noted that there was a strong focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the use of digital throughout the plan. The three main strands of the report were: Hospital to Community, Analogue to Digital and Sickness to Prevention.</p> <p>There is a large section of the plan that relates to meaningful employment, returning to work and the health and wellbeing benefits lead on from this.</p> <p>ICS update The plan notes that Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) become strategic commissioners, focusing more on data and coming away from operational focus. Implications for Essex mean a change in structure. East of England will move to having three delivery areas to be formed by 1 April 2026. Chief Executive appointments will take place in September 2025.</p> <p>In Greater Essex a three-pronged structure under a single Neighborhood Director is planned. The plan describes a neighborhood as synonymous with where the individual lives and is more relatable than the current structure.</p> <p>Discussion followed and all agreed that there is a real opportunity for the Active Partnerships to leverage some of the NHS plan.</p> <p>JF and WB met with DD and Tom Able to discuss closer working relationship and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).</p>
7	<p>Devolution Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) (JF/SL) SL provided Board with latest update on plans for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation: -</p> <p>Essex are on track for mayoral election in 2026. The powers will be ‘level 1’ in the first term which won’t have significant power and influence over ICBs (to start with). There is current conversation on proportionally nationally.</p> <p>Three unitary model has been favored. Essex has the largest presence of consultants (currently seven are working on LGR) out of the 10 Local Authorities. Business cases will need to be finalised to submit back to government in September 2025; one submission with three business cases per district.</p>

	<p>Thurrock are currently consulting on four unitary models.</p> <p>Surrey was ahead of the curve as first to be involved in LGR. They submitted their two or three option by May 2025. The outcomes will be confirmed in February 2026 to start delivery in April 2026. Noted that the timeframes make delivery particularly difficult.</p> <p>Discussion followed. All agreed that it was important for AE and AEF to remain natural and not distract for the course business purpose of embedding Sport and Physical Activity.</p> <p>Noted that funding streams from ECC and Public Health are clearly at risk.</p> <p>Debate on the various hosting options and potential for becoming an independent Organisation. Benefits and risk were highlighted.</p> <p>WB asked RH to draft an exploratory paper to be discussed in detail at a focused LGR/Devolution task and finish group meeting in early October.</p> <p>ACTION: RH to draft an options appraisal detailing hosting options and risks to inform future decision making.</p> <p>JF highlighted how unclear the DCMS current direction is from the published White Paper. Key message is that there are bigger opportunities to input on the design of the policy of what a combined authority will look like.</p> <p>WB it is clearly understood what the benefits of physical activity are and we will continue to fly this flag. The real opportunity the placed based work and trusted relationships is the key. Reflections from the board.</p> <p>WB commented that Jason will continue the conversation with DCMS. The narrative will change dependent on the audience/person we presenting to. What we now need to do is build the story on the blank piece of paper and ensure this is strong case.</p>
8	<p>Finance</p> <p>Budget report (RH) RH noted that there were no overspends to report as per the Q1 report shared.</p> <p>Income wise £1.8m from Sport England has come in from Deepening (Basildon, Colchester, Tendering).</p> <p>Audit Committee Report (CR) CR noted the vulnerability of HAF budget moving forward given the impending announcement expected from the Department for Education (DfE) later in the year.</p> <p>Risk register One risk outstanding risk discussed re AE team form and function. The board recommended that this now be removed as there is now a brilliant team in place.</p> <p>ACTION: RH to update risk register.</p> <p>No other concerns to raise.</p>
Business as Usual	
9	<p>Directors Report – Q1 Review</p> <p>HA gave overview of the in-depth report outlining the impact, learnings and challenges of Q1 on AE work across four strategic priorities (Connected Places, Children & Young People, Preventative Approach, Highly Skilled Workforce) between April and June 2025, summarising the impact in relation to what was set out in the Implementation Plan 2024-25.</p> <p>Published indicators will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>AH noted that the quarterly report will impact the end of year report. HA noted that the quarterly report will be populated live, so progress in real time can be viewed and analysed. This information can then be shared with funders. The PMO team are working on this to further enable the reporting capability of</p>

	<p>AE and AEF.</p> <p>WB, the report is excellent and there is a whole host of information, well done to the team.</p>
10	<p>Communications Update (HA)</p> <p>HA provided a Communications update to the Board, highlighting:</p> <p>Staffing update – AE back to full capacity. A new experienced Marketing Officer, Hannah has been with the Comms team for around 5 weeks and is settling in well.</p> <p>Key highlights in the new Q1 report shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since January we have forged a great relationship with Lewis Richardson and is now an athlete ambassador for Active Essex. Jack Berry has been managing this relationship. It has allowed AE to access a new platform to promote and showcase work. - There has been an increase in UGs (User Generated) content and real-life stories. - New website launched for AEF. - Q1 reach numbers have reduced, in line with a national trend. However, June's data has spiked, with an increase in engagement. Jack and Hannah have been more targeted in their approach. <p>Upcoming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find Your Active is in its third phase. - Exploring a partnership with Mind - Active Essex Activity Awards are taking place on 4 December at Hatfield Place. Currently looking for sponsors and hope to see all board members in attendance.
11	<p>Safeguarding Update (JF on behalf of DS)</p> <p>JF gave update on behalf of DS provided a safeguarding update to the Board, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new safeguarding lead in Cheryl Lomas with Wayne, Marianne as Safeguarding Officer and Emma Alderman, Relationship Development Officer supporting. - Emma Alderman leading iHasco training for new starters and refreshers for AE team. - New system for incident log on Monday.com
12	<p>Active Essex Foundation Update (BM)</p> <p>BM provided an Active Essex Foundation update to the Board, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Last AEF board meeting took place on 18 July 2025 with good attendance. - ABCD is being led by Jamie. Jamie is doing a great supporting Jim and Suzanne administratively. - Finance – first £1m of income generated which means there will be a more comprehensive audit. Jamie is researching and will come back to board. - The chairman of ECC, Ray Gooding, is one of the AEF trustees. Noted that he has the opportunity to nominate a charity and one of those will be AEF. <p>SL, Well done to Bob and the team for raising the first £1m.</p>
13	<p>People, Culture, Skills Progress (HC)</p> <p>HC provided an update on People, Culture and Skills update to the Board, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People plan has been refreshed, which continues to act as the AE continuous improvement plan. - New huddle groups are settled and are currently working on a 'plan on a page' with goals for the next year. - Personal development maps have been collected, and the central huddle will review ensure learning and development needs of the team are support. - Three new interns and Timi as part of Black Intern program have started. <p>JF reflected on the importance of being part of the Essex Skills Board which could be another lever to position AE at a strategic level.</p>
14	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>All agreed an online LGR/Devolution task and finish group to be set up for early October would be beneficial to review the exploratory options paper.</p> <p>ACTION: NC to send a doodle poll to all board members to agree date for an online LGR/Devolution task and finish group to be set up for early October</p>

	SL will not be in attendance at January 2026 meeting. Agreed that next meeting will now be a face-to-face, taking place on Thursday 27 November 2025, face to face, venue TBC.
15	Close Meeting was closed at 15:30

Item No./ Agenda item No.	Action	Lead/s	Progress
3	RB to appraise the current skills set of board which will be shared with the board members to help inform recruitment.	RB	
3	HW to share current board member recruitment application link with board members.	HW	
4	Suzanne and Jim from AEF to share any information on savings to the system with the board.	AEF	
5	HC to share staff survey results from the quarter with board.	HC	
7	RH to draft an options appraisal detailing hosting options and risks to inform future decision making.	RH	
8	RH to update risk register.	RH	
14	NC to send a doodle poll to all board members to agree date for an online LGR/Devolution task and finish group to be set up for early October.	NC	
	Jason to send calendar invitation for future Active Essex Board meetings until April 2026	JF	

Upcoming scheduled meetings

Date	Time	Title	Face to Face/Online	Status
27th November 25	09:30 – 16:00	Active Essex Board	Face to Face	TBC
Thursday 11th December 25 (incl. Christmas Lunch)	10:00 – 15:00	Active Essex Board Charity Engagement Session	Face to Face (venue TBC)	TBC
Tuesday 27th January 26	10:00 – 12:00	Active Essex Board	Online	TBC
Thursday 23rd April 26	09:30 – 16:00	Active Essex Board	Face to Face (venue TBC)	TBC