

Dear stakeholder,

I wanted to start this briefing by expressing my deepest thanks to our local businesses for all the support they have given our staff, services and communities during these challenging times. One such business is Colchester-based ROL Cruise, which this afternoon presented our system leaders with a cheque for £100,000. They raised this money by donating £25 of the company's own funds for each of the 4,000 bookings made by their customers since the coronavirus outbreak began, an exceptionally generous contribution at a time when the tourism industry itself is experiencing many challenges. Thank you to all staff and supporters who work for ROL Cruise – your contribution will make a significant and positive difference on local services.

Sunday 21st June was 'Suffolk Day', and once again the county's singing legend Ed Sheeran gave his support to local causes. He has kick-started the Suffolk Community Foundation's 'Rebuilding Local Lives Appeal' which aims to get funds to groups and charities helping individuals in need of support during the recovery phase of COVID-19. Ed has made the appeal's 'founding gift' to coincide with the special day which celebrates the county. The Suffolk Community Foundation and Essex Community Foundation both play crucial roles in the way our system works, so it is fantastic to get this level of support from such a high profile, talented, local star.

A new public health driven 'test and trace' operations centre is being set up in Suffolk and should be live by the end of the month. This will provide a single point of contact for receiving and distributing national guidance and offer direct support and co-ordination to settings in the event of an outbreak, seven days a week. The move will form a significant part of our system's future response as we look to the COVID-19 recovery phase.

Our colleagues at Community Action Suffolk have this week announced the launch of the report on the state of the VCSE sector in the county. The research captures insight into its strengths, weaknesses, challenges and risks. It highlights funding challenges and technological change - please click [HERE](#) for more details.

The NHS North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group has agreed to fund and commission additional emotional wellbeing and counselling support services specifically in response to COVID-19 follows feedback from local organisations. Extra counselling and support are now available, and a wide range of needs are being addressed including anxiety and excessive worrying, low self-esteem, feelings of isolation, dealing with financial concerns and welfare rights for those living with autism. The investment of £100,000 is aimed at increasing support in particular for young people and families in north east Essex affected by coronavirus.

Finally, this month is Pride Month, which is all about celebrating differences and diversity. Pride in Suffolk will be hosting a virtual Pride celebration on 27 June. Organisers have been gathering short films of people dancing, waving and clapping with their families, partners and friends – just as they would on the day. The events will be streamed online between 12noon and 8pm. I'd like to wish everyone a very happy Pride day!

Stay safe,

Ed.