
.Essex County Council

12 December 2023

Order Paper

Agenda item 8

Motions

The following amendments to Motions have been received:

Motion 3 Central government constriction of local democracy

An amendment moved by **Cllr Andrew Sheldon** and seconded by **Cllr Chris Whitbread**

(The words deleted are shown ~~struck through~~ and additions are shown underlined)

That the motion be amended to read:

~~'This Council notes the requests made of Government by Kent and Hampshire County Councils in November 2022 for: that Central Government should start to fund councils properly. Council also notes the statements made by those councils that~~

1. Annual increases in funding that match the growth in adults and children's social care services or legislative change to reduce the demands on the service.
2. Full funding of the Social Care Funding Reforms and Special Educational Needs growth, both of which are new burdens imposed by Government.
3. Freedoms and flexibilities around council tax setting and charging for services.
4. Legislative change that can help local government help itself.

~~"We have experienced more than 12 years of national austerity and cuts to our core budgets. Inflation continues to grow, along with demand for services such as social care for vulnerable adults and children. We are also constrained by outdated laws created in the 1940s and 1960s and have no autonomy to be able to introduce initiatives for some local services to help generate our own revenue. As a result, our budgets are now at breaking point. We have gone as far as we can to close the budget gaps we have~~

~~faced to date, and there is nowhere left to go in future without severely impacting some of the most vulnerable people in our society."~~

Essex County Council has faced and continues to face many of the same pressures of greatly reduced Government funding, high inflation, and restrictions on income. as Kent, Hampshire, and other councils, including high inflation and increasing demand.

Council notes the statements made by Cllr Whitbread on 8 November 2023 confirming the financial pressures Essex County Council is under.

~~As well as the issue of reduced Government funding, the extra money we can raise from council tax and business rates is significantly below inflation each year. This is not just a medium-term problem that can be fixed with more one-off handouts; to keep the sector limping along, it needs fundamental change.~~

We have a responsibility to the residents of Essex to do everything possible to protect the future of their vital local services such as the maintenance of our roads and footpaths, the ~~running~~ supporting and ~~maintenance~~ maintaining of our schools and libraries as well as adult and children's social care. ECC ~~urges the Government to take steps to address the financial challenges faced by local authorities, and to halt the long-term decline in council service provision.~~

~~Therefore, Council supports the requests made by the county councils of Kent and Hampshire to Government to fund local authorities properly.'~~

This is not just a medium-term problem that can be fixed with more one-off handouts; it needs fundamental change.

This Council therefore welcomes that:

1. ECC has a strong track record of successfully transforming its services to meet these challenges and launched the latest phase of Transformation earlier this year.
2. The Leader of Council who is also Senior Vice Chair of the LGA, consistently lobbies Government to provide appropriate support to Local Government and recently met with the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and also the Chancellor of the Exchequer.'

(The motion, if amended, would then read:)

'This Council notes the requests made of Government by Kent and Hampshire County Councils in November 2022 for:

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1. Annual increases in funding that match the growth in adults and children's social care services or legislative change to reduce the demands on the service
 2. Full funding of the Social Care Funding Reforms and Special Educational Needs growth, both of which are new burdens imposed by Government
 3. Freedoms and flexibilities around council tax setting and charging for services
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Essex County Council has faced and continues to face many of the same pressures as Kent, Hampshire and other councils, including high inflation and increasing demand.

Council notes the statements made by Cllr Whitbread on 8 November 2023 confirming the financial pressures Essex County Council is under.

We have a responsibility to the residents of Essex to do everything possible to protect the future of their vital local services such as the maintenance of our roads and footpaths, the supporting and maintaining of our schools and libraries as well as adult and children's social care.

This is not just a medium-term problem that can be fixed with more one off handouts; it needs fundamental change.

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Boundary Review

As members will know the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published its draft recommendations for the future divisions of this Council, to read the recommendations and comment visit their website -

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/essex>