



Essex County Council

## Summons

To all Members of Essex County Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the County Council to be held as shown below to deal with the business set out in the Agenda.

<b>10:00</b>	<b>Tuesday, 11 July 2023</b>	<b>Council Chamber, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH</b>
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**Gavin Jones**  
Chief Executive

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**Officer Support to the Council:**

Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer

**Telephone:** 03330131642

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**Prayers** The meeting will be preceded by Prayers led by Reverend Zena Smith, Minister at the Benfleet Methodist Church.

		<b>Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023</b>	<b>4 - 17</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Public Speakers</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Chairman's Announcements and Communications</b>	
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<b>12</b>	<b>Statutory Report External Audit Delays Causing Delays to the publication of certified ECC accounts for 2022/23</b>	<b>38 - 41</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Annual Report</b>	<b>42 - 52</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Essex Pension Fund Annual Report</b>	<b>53 - 67</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Oral questions of the Leader, Cabinet members, Chairman of a committee or the Council's representative on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel</b>	

## **Essex County Council and Committees Information**

All Council and Committee Meetings are held in public unless the business is exempt in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972. If there is exempted business, it will be clearly marked as an Exempt Item on the agenda and members of the public and any representatives of the media will be asked to leave the meeting room for that item.

The agenda is available on the [Essex County Council website](#) and by then following the links from [Running the Council](#) or you can go directly to the [Meetings Calendar](#) to see what is happening this month.

### **Attendance at meetings**

Most meetings are held at County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1LX. [A map and directions to County Hall can be found on our website.](#)

### **Access to the meeting and reasonable adjustments**

County Hall is accessible via ramped access to the building for people with physical disabilities. The Council Chamber and Committee Rooms are accessible by lift and are located on the first and second floors of County Hall.

Induction loop facilities are available in most Meeting Rooms. Specialist headsets are available from Reception.

With sufficient notice, documents can be made available in alternative formats, for further information about this or about the meeting in general please contact the named officer on the agenda pack or email [democratic.services@essex.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@essex.gov.uk)

### **Livestreaming of meetings**

In the interests of improving access to the Council's meetings, most meetings will be livestreamed on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#). Recordings of the meetings once they have finished are also available on the Channel.

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## Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council, held in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford on Tuesday, 16 May 2023

**Present:** Chairman: Cllr Jillian Reeves  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Ray Gooding

Cllr Barry Aspinell	Cllr Anthony Hedley	Cllr Mark Platt
Cllr Tony Ball	Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cllr Ross Playle
Cllr Lewis Barber	Cllr Jeff Henry	Cllr Chris Pond
Cllr Susan Barker	Cllr Paul Honeywood	Cllr Patricia Reid
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Cllr Michael Hoy	Cllr Stephen Robinson
Cllr Lynette Bowers-Flint	Cllr Eddie Johnson	Cllr Peter Schwier
Cllr Malcom Buckley	Cllr John Jowers	Cllr Lee Scott
Cllr Graham Butland	Cllr Sam Kane	Cllr Laureen Shaw
Cllr Mark Cory	Cllr David King	Cllr Andrew Sheldon
Cllr Simon Crow	Cllr Dan Land	Cllr Chris Siddall
Cllr Tom Cunningham	Cllr Derrick Louis	Cllr Mick Skeels
Cllr Jude Deakin	Cllr June Lumley	Cllr Kerry Smith
Cllr Mark Durham	Cllr Luke Mackenzie	Cllr Clive Souter
Cllr Beverley Egan	Cllr Mike Mackrory	Cllr John Spence
Cllr Jane Fleming	Cllr Bob Massey	Cllr Wendy Stamp
Cllr Martin Foley	Cllr Peter May	Cllr Mike Steel
Cllr Mike Garnett	Cllr Aidan McGurran	Cllr Mark Stephenson
Cllr Alan Goggin	Cllr Jaymey McIvor	Cllr Mike Steptoe
Cllr Marie Goldman	Cllr Louise McKinlay	Cllr Paul Thorogood
Cllr Ian Grundy	Cllr Anthony McQuiggan	Cllr Marshall Vance
Cllr Carlo Guglielmi	Cllr Dr Richard Moore	Cllr Chris Whitbread
Cllr Dave Harris	Cllr James Newport	Cllr Holly Whitbread
		Cllr Andy Wiles

### Chairman's Welcome and Introduction

The outgoing Chairman, Cllr Eddie Johnson informed those present that the meeting would be broadcast live over the internet by way of the ECC Democracy YouTube Channel.

The opening remarks, together with the broadcast of the entire meeting may be found on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#).

## **Prayers**

The meeting was preceded by prayers led by Councillor Spence, a lay Canon in the Church of England.

## **Councillor Eddie Johnson formally opened the meeting.**

### **1. Election of Chairman**

It having been proposed by Cllr Susan Barker and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay and there being no other nominations it was

#### **Resolved:**

That Cllr Jillian Reeves be elected Chairman of the County Council for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

Cllr Jillian Reeves made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

At the invitation of the newly elected Chairman, the Council passed a vote of thanks to the retiring Chairman, Cllr Eddie Johnson and Mrs Carol Johnson.

### **2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

It having been proposed by Cllr Carlo Guglielmi and seconded by Cllr Tony Ball and there being no other nominations it was

#### **Resolved:**

That Cllr Ray Gooding be appointed Vice-Chairman of the County Council for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

Cllr Ray Gooding made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **3. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Dave Blackwell, Cllr Mike Hardware, Cllr Sue Lissimore, Cllr Lee Scordis and Cllr Lesley Wagland.

### **4. Declarations of Interest**

Members were reminded by the Chairman of the need to declare any interests and to do so immediately or at the start of the consideration of any relevant item of business.

Cllr John Spence declared a non-registrable interest in respect of agenda item 14, Motion 2 – Health and GP Services in Essex, due to previously being a Governor at Anglia Ruskin University and remaining as a Trustee of

the Anglia Ruskin Foundation.

Cllr Graham Butland declared a non-registrable interest in respect of agenda item 14, Motion 2 – Health and GP Services in Essex, due to having worked within the NHS and in charge of general practice and primary care in Essex.

**5. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 9 February 2023**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**6. Public Speakers**

There were none.

**7. Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

**Coronation of King Charles III**

The Chairman on behalf of Members and the people of Essex wished His Majesty King Charles III and her Majesty Queen Camilla a very happy reign. The Chairman reflected on all the ways that residents had celebrated the coronation weekend with their friends, families and neighbours and also as part of the big help out. She extended thanks to everyone who had volunteered over the weekend and all year round and expressed gratitude for the time that individuals put into volunteering in their communities. The Chairman expressed her hope that the coronation and its events had brought together the community and that the good work and feeling continued throughout the King's reign.

**Deaths**

**Former County Councillor and Honorary Alderwoman Iris Pummell**

The Chairman informed members of the death of former County Councillor and Honorary Alderwoman Iris Pummell who died peacefully in hospital on 16 February.

Iris was first elected to Essex County Council in 1989 serving the residents of Wickford Crouch until 2013. Iris served on many committees during her time at Essex but had a particular interest in those relating to people, she served as Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Schools, Education and Community Services.

Cllr Malcolm Buckley and the Chairman paid tribute.

At the invitation of the Chairman, members stood in silent remembrance of Iris.

### **Flooding**

The Chairman informed members that she was sorry to hear about those in the county and beyond who had been impacted by the flash floods the previous week and acknowledged that some homes and businesses had suffered huge levels of damage in a matter of minutes. The Chairman's thoughts were with those individuals who had been impacted.

### **Awards**

#### **People Management Association Awards**

The Chairman announced that Essex County Council had won the Human Resources and Organisational Development Team of the Year award at the People Management Association Awards on 27 April 2023. At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Chris Whitbread, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs spoke on the award.

#### **Pension Age Awards**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Susan Barker, Chairman of the Essex Pension Fund Investment Steering Committee and Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board, spoke on the award won at the Pension Age Awards for Defined Benefit Scheme of the year 2023 award.

### **Boundary Review**

Lastly, the Chairman informed members that there was an extension to the consultation date for the boundary review, the new closing date being 31st July 2023. Members and residents could find more information on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England website and by searching for Essex.

## **8. Petitions**

The Chairman invited Cllr Aidan McGurran to present a petition relating to pavements on the Riverview Estate in Vange, Basildon. Cllr Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport, responded to receive the petition.

The Chairman then invited Cllr Dave Harris to present a petition relating to the condition of Queen Elizabeth Way. Cllr Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport responded to receive the petition.

## **9. Return of Members Elected and Proportionality**

The Chief Executive presented a report confirming the result of the by election for the Laindon Park and Fryerns division which was held on 4 May 2023. Cllr Pat Reid was elected and had joined the Labour Group.

It was confirmed that the effect of the by election meant that the composition of the Council remained:

The Conservative Group:	52
The Non-Aligned Group:	10
The Liberal Democrat Group:	8
The Labour Group:	5
Total:	75

It having been proposed by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

**Resolved:**

That there be no change to the allocation of committee seat places which remain as determined by the Council at its annual meeting in May 2021.

**10. To note the Political Group's appointments to Committees**

At the time that the agenda for the meeting was published, the Non-Aligned Group had not put forward a nomination for the vacancy on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee and therefore Council could nominate to the vacant seat outside the political balance rules. The Conservative Group, as the majority group had put forward a nomination. At the meeting the Liberal Democrat Group also put forward a nomination. The Non-Aligned Group then nominated cllr Wendy Stamp and as the seat is allocated to the Non-aligned group there was no longer an unfilled vacancy for the other groups to put forward a nomination to fill.

It having been proposed by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

**Resolved:**

That members be appointed to committees as set out in the report circulated to members prior to the meeting, with the addition of Cllr Wendy Stamp appointed to the vacant position on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

**11. Appointment of Chairmen of Committees**

It having been proposed by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

**Resolved:**



That chairmen of committees be appointed as set out in the report

## 12. Other Appointments

The Chairman reminded Members that the appointments to approved bodies contained within the report and Order Paper were only the appointments made since the last annual meeting, taking place in 2022, the full list is available on the website.

It having been proposed by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

### Resolved:

1. The appointments to the Health and Wellbeing Board were Cllr John Spence and Cllr Beverley Egan as members with Cllr Ray Gooding as the named substitute, as set out in the report.
2. The County Council's appointment on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel was Cllr Ross Playle as the member with Cllr Ian Grundy as the named substitute, as set out in the report.
3. The County Council's appointment on the Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board was Cllr Chris Siddall, as set out in the report.
4. That the full list of Approved Bodies be received and the changes to appointments to Outside Bodies since the last Annual Meeting, as set out in the report and Order paper, be noted.

## 13. Executive Statements

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley, Leader of the Council and Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance gave a statement on 'Everyone's Essex – Everyone Counts'.

*The Executive Statements are published on the ECC website and the broadcast of the meeting may be found on the ECC Democracy YouTube Channel.*

## 14. Motions

### 1. Rising sea-level and the Essex coast

It was moved by Cllr Paul Thorogood and seconded by Cllr Chris Pond.

'Given that the world is in all probability going to overshoot a +1.5C temperature rise Council asks the Cabinet to prepare plans for Essex to be ready for a world with higher sea levels, long-term droughts, occasional flash flooding and supply chain problems impacting food supply. Council further asks the Cabinet to present those draft plans to Council in December 2023 for the purpose of consultation'

It was moved by Cllr Ross Playle and seconded by Cllr Peter Schwier that the motion be amended to read:

‘This Council notes that, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report issued in March 2023, warns that global warming this century is on course to exceed an agreed 1.5°C limit without drastic and immediate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

This Council therefore acknowledges the significant progress that has been made to date and the ambitious programme of work in Essex County Council to reduce its emissions to Net Zero by 2030 along with the significant mitigation measure delivered and planned with partners at all levels.

This Council asks that the Essex Climate Action Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23 are presented to Full Council in December 2023 to provide a formal update to all Members’

The amendment moved by Cllr Ross Playle and seconded by Cllr Peter Schwier was put to the meeting and was **carried**.

Having been put to the meeting the motion was **carried**.

## **2. Health and GP Services in Essex**

It was moved by Cllr Marie Goldman and seconded by Cllr Stephen Robinson.

‘This Council believes that timely and face to face access to GP services are essential for the health and wellbeing of our residents and calls for more consistent access across the county and reduced waiting times, as this will help Essex residents, and reduce pressure on Accident and Emergency and other hospital services.

This Council notes unacceptable waiting times and difficulty in securing access to a GP. Same day appointments are available for some, but other residents can wait for a week or more, with significant risks to health for some. A face-to-face appointment is increasingly difficult to secure in some practices, and many residents are having to see other health professionals, rather than a GP.

This Council requests the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to obtain from the three Integrated Care Systems a position statement on the number of GP vacancies in the county and what steps are being taken to fill these.

The Council requests the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care asking that the Government fund additional doctor training places at Anglia Ruskin University's Medical School, to meet the need for new doctors, based on growing demand and forthcoming retirements.
- Support the City, Borough and District Councils in Essex when they want to make provision for GP surgeries and other health provision in their Local Plans.'

It was moved by Cllr Holly Whitbread and seconded by Cllr John Spence that the motion be amended to read:

'This Council believes that timely and, in many cases, face-to-face access to GP services are essential for the health and wellbeing of our residents and calls for more consistent access across the county and reduced waiting times, as this will help Essex residents, and reduce pressure on Accident and Emergency and other hospital services.

This council:

- Recognises the challenges GPs have had during and post the pandemic, resulting in them needing to adopt new working practices;
- Recognises that primary care will work best when doctors, local authorities and communities work in collaboration with shared knowledge;
- Welcomes the development of multi-disciplinary health care centres where residents can talk with the best person to address their needs but notes the importance of triage being fully and sympathetically explained;
- Recognises that in some practices the levels of same-day and/or face-to-face appointments are well below the expectation of patients and that delays inevitably create anxiety while possibly impacting on the health of the individual;
- Notes that there are simply not enough GPs practising in Essex, that some practices are closing and that – despite the Chelmsford Medical School success – more capacity is required.

This Council requests the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to obtain from the three Integrated Care Systems a position statement on the number of GP vacancies in the county and what steps are being taken to fill these.

The Council requests the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health to:

- Liaise with Anglia Ruskin University in approaching the secretary of state to secure funds for doubling the capacity of the medical school
- Work with relevant cabinet colleagues and all partners to ensure that City, Borough and District Councils require, and that the NHS requests, sufficient appropriate healthcare facilities when developing local plans and approving specific plans for housing development.'

The amendment moved by Cllr Holly Whitbread and seconded by Cllr John Spence was put to the meeting and was **carried**.

Having been put to the meeting the motion was **carried**.

## 15. Adjournment

With the agreement of Council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:04pm. The meeting reconvened at 2:03pm.

## 16. Council Issues

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley presented the report and it having been moved by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

### Resolved:

#### 1. Minor changes to the Constitution

1.1 Amend paragraph 16.11.1 (iv) of the constitution to read as follows:

- '(iv) The subject of any proposed statement and the identity of the person who will be making it should be notified to the Head of Democracy and Transparency by 5pm two working days prior to the Council meeting. The Head of Democracy and Transparency will send an e-mail notification to all Members of the Council.'

#### 2. Member Allowances – Annual Indexation

2.1 To note the new rates for Member Allowances.

2.2 Amend Appendix 2 – Member Allowances Scheme, of the Constitution to reflect the new rates for member Allowances as follows:

## Members Allowances Scheme

### Basic Allowance

£12,941 per annum

### Special Responsibility Allowances

Postholder	Rate	Amount
Basic Allowance (75)	-	£12,941
Leader	450% of basic allowance	£58,235
	As a % of the Leader's allowance	
Deputy Leader	80%	£46,582
Cabinet Member (8)	67%	£39,017
Deputy to Cabinet Member (11)	25%	£14,559
Scrutiny Board Chairman	30%	£17,470
Committee Chairman (8)	25%	£14,559
Leader of the largest opposition group	30%	£17,470
(The SRA for the leader of the main opposition group will be split equally between two or more leaders of opposition groups for the duration of any period of time in which they have an equality of members in the group.)		
Smaller opposition group leaders (for groups which include at least 5% of Members in their Group)	10%	£5,823
Chairman of the Council	40%	£23,294
Vice-Chairman of the Council	20%	£11,647
Co-opted members of Pension Strategy Board (in accordance with paragraph 26.8)		£16.92 per hour to include reasonable preparation time.

### 2.3 Amend Paragraph 8.1.4 Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board – **Remuneration**, as follows:

The agreed allowance to be paid is £16.92 per hour to include reasonable preparation time. Therefore it is considered that the following can be claimed:

- PSB attendance - up to four hours which includes preparation time = £67.68 per meeting

- ISC attendance - up to four hours which includes preparation time = £67.68 per meeting
- ISC Strategic meeting attendance - up to six hours which includes preparation time = £101.52 per meeting
- Extra activities = £16.92 per hour which includes:
  - attendance at internal training events hosted by Essex Pension Fund;
  - attendance at and preparation for Task and Finish Groups; and
  - attendance at and preparation for the Appointments Panel, as part of the Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board (PAB) appointments process.

2.4 Amend Paragraph 8.1.6 The Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board –  
**10. Remuneration and Expenses**, as follows:

### **10. Remuneration and Expenses**

(A) Subject to (B) below, an allowance may be made to Scheme Member representatives for attending meetings relating to Board business at a rate of £16.92 per hour, in line with the PSB Co-optee allowance at Appendix 2.

This allowance includes reasonable preparation time. Therefore it is considered that the following can be claimed:

- PAB attendance - up to four hours which includes preparation time = £67.68 per meeting
- Extra activities = £16.92 per hour which includes:
  - attendance at internal training events hosted by EPF; and
  - attendance at and preparation for Task and Finish Groups.

This allowance does not include time spent on external training events or observing at PSB or ISC meetings.

## **17. Cabinet Issues**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley presented the report and it having been moved by Cllr Kevin Bentley and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay it was

### **Resolved:**

To receive the list of urgent decisions taken and the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 21 February, 21 March and 18 April 2023.

## **18. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Ray Gooding, Chairman of the Scrutiny Board, presented the report.

During the discussion two points were raised for improving the scrutiny process going forward. The first being a request that Cabinet Members engage with the relevant scrutiny committee as part of the consultation process on significant and potentially controversial issues. The second point was to request that scrutiny work and reports are publicised more widely as part of the scrutiny communications strategy.

It having been moved by Cllr Ray Gooding and seconded by Cllr Jeff Henry it was

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**19. Member Development Annual Report**

The Chairman, as Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group, presented the report.

It having been moved by Cllr Jill Reeves and seconded by Cllr Jeff Henry it was

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**20. Oral Questions of the Leader, Cabinet Member, chairman of a committee or the representative of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.**

*The oral questions and answers as part of the broadcast of the meeting may be found on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#).*

The questions asked were:

<b>Asked by</b>	<b>Asked to</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Cllr Dave Harris	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance	Essex Girls and Boys Clubs
Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling	Booking system for recycling and household waste centres.
Cllr Jaymey McIvor	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Visually impaired highway users
Cllr Aidan McGurran	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Member led pothole scheme

<b>Asked by</b>	<b>Asked to</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Cllr David King (for Cllr Mark Cory)	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Highways drainage and flash flooding
Cllr David King (for Cllr Mark Cory)	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	20mph zones
Cllr Marie Goldman	Leader of the Council	Essex Business Boards
Cllr Mike Mackrory	Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling	Residual waste procurement
Cllr Pat Reid	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Changes to pothole repairs to make them more durable.
Cllr Chris Pond	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Safety of motorcycles – follow up of scrutiny review. Especially on A104.
Cllr Jude Deakin	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance	Future of youth grants given morphing of Youth Strategy Grant into Local Community Fund.
Cllr Michael Hoy	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Flooding of Watery Lane, Hullbridge.
Cllr David King	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Rumble strip near Hythe Tesco
Cllr David King	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Information for members about planned highway works.
Cllr Susan Barker	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Thanks to Ride London team.
Cllr Alan Goggin	Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling	Booking system for recycling and household waste centres.
Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Additional money for highway maintenance
Cllr Mike Steptoe	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Warners Bridge – maintenance responsibilities between ECC and Southend.
Cllr Mike Steptoe	Cabinet Member for Highway Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Gulleys blocked by mud deposited by developer of new houses at Ashingdon Road, Rochford.



**21. Closure of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 3:03pm.

A recording of the meeting is available as [a video on YouTube](#).

**Chairman**

# Motions

Members have given notice that they intend to move the following motions in accordance with paragraph 16.8.2 of the Constitution:

The Courts have made it clear that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it is considering these motions, even if they are motions without legal effect. There is not a general requirement for an equality impact assessment but regard should be had to the equality duty when drafting and considering motions.

The equality duty requires Council to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes it unlawful to discriminate etc on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

## 1. Railways and fares in Essex

Moved by Cllr Chris Pond and seconded by Cllr Paul Thorogood.

'Council much regrets the proposed withdrawal of the London Day Travelcard and its form of an add-on from Essex; on a wider canvas, draws attention to the positive role of railways in the life and economy of Greater Essex, applauds the construction of the new station at Beaulieu Park, asks the Executive to support suitable opportunities to reopen closed stations and lines, and as far as possible to elimination of diesel traction from the County.'

## 2. Youth Service in Essex

Moved by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor McGurran.

'Essex is a diverse county and there are significant differences in the opportunities for our young people to attend youth facilities and participate in activities with other youngsters. Some of our young people are being denied these opportunities because of where they live in the county.

Clearly youth provision is hampered in some areas because of a lack of volunteers and voluntary organisations – compared with communities that are

well organised with established links to groups who can set up appropriate facilities for the youth.

The Council therefore asks the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee to consider creating a “task and finish group” to consider Youth Services and Youth Club provision, using information held by Essex Youth Service Officers and details held at District, Borough, and City Councils.

The aim is to ascertain areas of lack of service and viability of volunteer led groups so that Essex County Council officers can provide appropriate support to “level up” youth service provision.’

### **3. HGV SAT NAV**

Moved by Cllr Dan Land and seconded by Cllr Lewis Barber.

‘HGVs using standard car Sat Navs that collide with local infrastructure, such as railway bridges, or becoming stuck on narrow roads causes major disruption and is costly to local communities. They often take significant amounts of time and resources to free, causing major congestion across the Essex Road network, generating more emissions, and disrupting local rail services.

This Council therefore calls on the Government to work with Satellite Navigation companies, and others providing road information to remove By Ways, By Roads and other similar roads from their systems.’

### **4. ULEZ Expansion**

Moved by Cllr Holly Whitbread and seconded by Cllr Marshall Vance.

‘This Council recognises the importance of air quality for Essex residents and the Council’s forthcoming strategy sets out the current understanding of the air quality issues and clear actions to improve the air quality in Essex going forward.

However, this Council condemns the London ULEZ expansion which will impact businesses and could separate families and friends who live in Essex from those who live in the historic parts of Essex that are now within the Greater London Boundary. This ULEZ expansion will also disproportionately hit key workers and those on low incomes who cannot afford to buy new, compliant cars and therefore calls upon the Mayor of London to reverse this decision.

This Council also calls upon the Cabinet Member for Highways and Sustainable Transport to not permit any new ULEZ signage on Essex County Council land or highways, nor allow any existing ULEZ signage on Essex Highways property to be changed.’

## Agenda item 9

# Council Issues

### 1. Executive Statements

- 1.1 The Council has made numerous changes to the rules about executive statements over the last two years and as a result the drafting has become somewhat complex and it was apparent at the last meeting that it was being interpreted differently by different people.
- 1.2 As a result the Constitutional Working Group have undertaken a comprehensive review of the rules and they have been rewritten to be clear and to ensure there is a single understanding.
- 1.3 In summary, if the Council adopts the text below:
- The Leader nominates subjects, speakers and maximum lengths of statements at least two days before the meeting (late statements can, exceptionally, be accepted by the Chairman).
  - Statements can't be longer than 10 minutes or 20 minutes overall.
  - Leaders of groups can make statements of up to 3 minutes per statement each – either enbloc or after each statement, at the chairman's discretion.
  - Leader has up to 5 minutes to respond.
  - After the Leader has responded questions are permitted for a maximum length of time permitted by the Chairman.
- 1.4 If approved the new rules would apply for the October meeting.

#### **Recommendation:**

- (1) That paragraph 16.11.1 be replaced with:
- (i) An item ('Executive Statements') will be included on the agenda for every Council meeting other than an extraordinary meeting.
  - (ii) The purpose of an Executive Statement is to allow the Leader of the Council or a Cabinet Member to update the Council on current issues of importance that cannot be covered elsewhere as part of the usual business.
  - (iii) No executive statement may last more than 10 minutes. The executive statements made at a meeting shall not in total last more than 20 minutes. The maximum length of each statement shall be notified in accordance with (iv).
  - (iv) No statement shall be made unless
    - a. The subject of any proposed statement and the identity of the person who will be making it should be notified by the Leader to the Head of

Democracy and Transparency by 5pm two working days prior to the Council meeting. The Head of Democracy and Transparency will send an e-mail notification to all Members of the Council; or

- b. the Chairman agrees that there are exceptional circumstances which mean that the statement should be made notwithstanding that (a) has not been complied with. Any request under this paragraph must be made at the earliest possible opportunity to the Head of Democracy and Transparency. If the Chairman agrees the request the Head of Democracy and Transparency shall notify the leaders of all political groups at the earliest possible opportunity.
- (v) At the meeting, the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Member will be entitled to address the Council on the subject of the Statement for the time allocated.
- (vi) After a statement has been made or, at their discretion, after all statements have been made, the Chairman shall then invite leaders of opposition groups (or a member nominated by them) to make a statement in reply for up to three minutes for each statement that has been made.
- (vii) After all opposition group leaders (or their nominees) have had the opportunity to speak on all statements the Leader (or their nominee) shall have up to five minutes to respond.
- (viii) After the Leader has responded the Chairman will set a period of time during which Members of the Council may ask questions relating the statements. The originator of the Statement shall respond to the questions as they are raised or, at the discretion of the Chairman, at the end of all the questions.

# The Leader's Report of Cabinet Issues

This report is

- a) To note decisions that have been taken as urgent key decisions, not on the forward plan (Constitution para 19.17), or non-key decisions exempt from call-in on the grounds of urgency, of which there were none since the last meeting of Council on 16 May 2023; and
- b) To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 23 May and 20 June 2023 attached as appendices 1 and 2.

## Recommendations

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 23 May and 20 June.

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet that took place in the Council Chamber at County Hall at 10.15am on Tuesday 23 May 2023**

### **Present:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Cllr Louise McKinlay	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance
Cllr Tony Ball	Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability
Cllr Graham Butland	Cabinet Member for Devolution, the Arts, Heritage and Culture
Cllr Beverley Egan	Children's Services and Early Years
Cllr Lee Scott	Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
Cllr John Spence	Health and Adult Social Care
Cllr Lesley Wagland	Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning
Cllr Chris Whitbread	Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs

Cllrs Tom Cunningham, Mark Durham, Ivan Henderson, Bob Massey, Mike Mackrory, Mark Platt and Peter Schwier were also present. Attending remotely via Zoom were Cllrs Alan Goggin, David King and Chris Pond.

### **1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest.**

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and the following were noted:

1. There had been no changes of membership since the last meeting.
2. Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Malcolm Buckley, Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling.
3. There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. Minutes: 18 April 2023**

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 18 April 2023, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Questions from the public**

None.

#### 4. 2022-23 Provisional Outturn Report (FP/307/02/22)

The Cabinet received a report which presented and provided commentary on the provisional outturn position for the financial year 2022/23 prior to formal closure of the accounts. The report also explained the key movements since the third quarter overview report (presented to Cabinet on 17 January 2023) to the year-end position.

In presenting the report, the Cabinet for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs highlighted amendments to appendices G, H and M of the report, revised versions of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The recommendations contained within the report were unaffected.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs, with contributions by the Cabinet Members for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport and Health and Adult Social Care, responded to questions on the following points by Councillors David King, Ivan Henderson and Chris Pond:

- When the current assumptions in respect of inflation would be revisited;
- The benefits of using earned value measures, rather than purely financial terms, when considering capital underspends;
- Whether the £8m allocated to the Reserve for Future Capital Funding was felt to be sufficient;
- How the £17m of incurred inflationary pressure had been managed and the impact on reserves;
- The relationship between the underspend for Highways and the level of compensation claims received in respect of damage to vehicles.

#### Resolved:

Agreed to approve the following in relation to the 2022/23 outturn position:

1. Appropriation of the net under spend **£11.742m** as follows:
  - **£8m** to the Reserve for Future Capital Funding to provide some level of resilience to the growing cost escalation risk across the £1.2bn capital programme,
  - Create a new earmarked reserve to be known as the Highways Reserve **and** transfer **£3m** to support one-off investment in Highways. Drawdowns will be approved by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
  - **£742,000** to the Technology and Digitisation reserve to support ongoing digital transformation, including any emergent pressure coming from 2030 work.
2. Allocation of under spends between portfolios as set out within the 'Transfers of under / over spends between Portfolios' column of Appendix A to report FP/307/02/22.



3. Appropriation of the following amounts to / from restricted and other revenue reserves

### **Restricted Funds**

#### **- Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Reserves**

- Building Schools for the Future - **£574,000** contribution (Appendix D 8iii)
- Clacton Secondary Schools - **£880,000** contribution (Appendix D8iii)
- Debden School - **£22,000** withdrawal (Appendix D 8iii)
- A130 Road - **£1.034m** withdrawal (Appendix D 10iii)

#### **- Waste Reserve – £7.053m net contribution comprising:**

- Contribution of **£7.227m** to return balances not needed as tonnages were lower than anticipated and **£268,000** to replenish the reserve relating to interim investment in senior resources (Appendix D 12iii)
- Contribution of **£780,000** for site dilapidation works and unspent project funds, for use in 2023/24 (Appendix D 12iii)
- Withdrawal of **£1.222m** to fund waste related projects (Appendix D 12iii)

#### **- Schools - £5.508m net withdrawal from the Schools reserve, following net decreases against schools' budgets in 2022/23 (Appendix D 7i)**

#### **- Partnership Reserves**

- Youth Offending Service Partnership Reserve - **£94,000** net withdrawal (Appendix D 3iv)
- Essex Safeguarding Children's Board Partnership Reserve - **£38,000** withdrawal (Appendix D 3iv)
- Adults Safeguarding Board Partnership Reserve - **£33,000** contribution (Appendix D 1vii)
- Public Law Partnership Reserve - **£10,000** withdrawal (Appendix D 15iii)

### **Reserve for Future Capital Funding**

#### **- Capital funding - £781,000 net contribution to transfer revenue financing resources to capital in respect of:**

- Capital Financing - £2.508m contribution due to slippage in the capital programme (Appendix D 17ii)
- To offset write off expenditure in relation to Essex County Hospital - £1.182m withdrawal (Appendix D 6iii)
- Schools Devolved Formula Grant categorised as revenue - £612,000 withdrawal (Appendix D 7iii)
- Capital works relating to lift replacement - £20,000 contribution (Appendix D 15iii)

- DUCCL capital project - £47,000 contribution (Appendix D 15iii)
- This is in addition to the £8m contribution to this reserve proposed in recommendation 2.1 above, and will bring the net contribution to £8.781m (Section 2.1)

### Other reserves

- **Carry Forwards - £6.468m** contribution, in respect of revenue budget under spends that it is proposed are carried forward for use in 2023/24. The proposals for utilising this Reserve in 2023/24 are set out in **Appendix C** of this report
  - In addition to this there is a £298,000 contribution returning unused 2021/22 carry forwards no longer required, and a withdrawal of £24,000 relating to a 2021/22 carry forward not previously drawn down in year (Appendix D 3iv, 5iii & 13iii)
- **Adults Risk - £139,000** contribution relating to the Market Initiatives fund, the funding will be withdrawn for use in 2023/24 (Appendix D 1vii)
- **Adults Transformation – £780,000** net contribution comprising:
  - £951,000 contribution, due to unspent project funding (Appendix D 1vii)
  - £171,000 withdrawal to fund expenditure relating to Charging Reform and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). (Appendix D 1vii & 13iii)
- **Ambition Fund - £1.068m** net contribution comprising:
  - £1.404m of contributions, due in the main to unspent project funding, which is required for use in the next financial year and therefore will be withdrawn in 2023/24 (Appendix D 1vii, 4iii, 11iii, 13iii & 15iii)
  - £336,000 withdrawal to fund expenditure for various Leader led initiatives. (Appendix 5iii, 7iii, 8iii & 13iii)
- **Bursary for Trainee Carers Reserve - £75,000** withdrawal relating to the Nightingale Health and Care Bursary Programme (Appendix D 8iii)
- **Children's Transformation Reserve - £634,000** net withdrawal comprising:
  - £651,000 withdrawal to fund foster care fee uplifts and a number of projects to deliver the Children's Transformation Programme (Appendix D 3iv)
  - £17,000 contribution due to the under spend on Children In Care Books project to be used in 2023/24 (Appendix D 3iv)
- **Commercial Investment in Essex Places - £11,000** contribution due to unspent resource costs related to Essex Renewal Fund, for use in 2023/24 (Appendix D 6iii)
- **Community Initiatives Reserve - £279,000** withdrawal to support expenditure incurred on community projects during 2022/23 (Appendix D 4iii)
- **COVID Equalisation Reserve - £30,000** net withdrawals comprising:

- £786,000 contribution to return Covid funding where actual expenditure or income losses were lower than previously forecast in year, of which £660,000 is for use in 2023/24. (Appendix D 6iii, 10iii, 13iii & 15iii)
- £816,000 withdrawals to help cover the continued impact of the pandemic on services (Appendix D 3iv, 4iii & 8iii).
- **Emergency Reserve - £734,000** withdrawal to cover increases in Home to School transport public ticket increases and Local Bus fuel costs (Appendix D 10iii)
- **Essex Climate Change Commission - £846,000** contribution relating to Climate Change for use in 2023/24. (Appendix D 11iii)
- **Everyone's Essex Reserve - £218,000** net contribution comprising:
  - £415,000 contribution relating to Everyone's Economy and Everyone's Environment projects for use in 2023/24 (Appendix D 6iii, 8iii & 10iii)
  - £197,000 withdrawal mainly relating to the Arts and Culture Fund, Adult Community Learning and Community Challenge Fund initiatives (Appendix D 3iv, 5iii, 8iii)
- **General Risk Reserve - £4.296m** contribution relating to Utilities and Energy costs as additional costs were lower than anticipated due to the receipt of government funding and to replenish in relation to the approved pay award decision for 2023/24 (Appendix D 9iii, 10iii & 15iii)
- **Insurance Reserve - £4.865m** contribution due to year end actuarial evaluation and provision (Appendix D 15iii)
- **Quadrennial Elections Reserve - £13,000** contribution due to unspent election funds (Appendix D 4iii)
- **Technology and Digitalisation Reserve - £549,000** net contribution comprising:
  - £1.443m contribution relating to mitigation of future pressures and under spend against Social Care platform programme (Appendix D 15iii)
  - £894,000 withdrawal relating to various technology projects (Appendix D 15iii)
  - This is in addition to the £742,000 contribution proposed in paragraph 2.1 above, and will bring the total net contribution to this reserve to £1.291m (Section 2.1)
- **Transformation Reserve - £1.993m**, net withdrawal comprising:
  - £2.041m withdrawal relating to approved decisions mainly for work on Property Transformation, Libraries Strategy, Concessionary fares reimbursement, Charging Reform and CQC, Support Services and Corporate Print services projects (Appendix D 1vii, 4iii, 6iii, 10iii, 13iii & 15iii)
  - £48,000 contribution relating to the return of North East Quadrant Office Strategy and Digital Connectivity Resourcing funding for use in 2023/24 (Appendix D 6iii & 15iii)

4. Financing of capital payments in 2022/23 on the basis set out within **Appendix G** to report FP/307/02/22.
5. Reprofiting of capital payment budgets, and associated capital funding, of **£31.385m**, into subsequent financial years, in respect of slippage in schemes (as shown in the 'Slippage' column of Appendix H to report FP/307/02/22).
6. The bringing forward of capital payment budgets, and associated capital financing, of **£13.314m** in respect of schemes that have progressed ahead of schedule (as shown in the 'Advanced works' column of Appendix H to report FP/307/02/22).
7. Reduction of capital payment approvals by a total of **£33.395m** (as shown in the 'Reductions' column of Appendix H to report FP/307/02/22), with increases of **£36.244m** to other schemes (as shown in the 'Additions' column of Appendix H to report FP/307/02/22), to reflect achieved activity in 2022/23.
8. Agreed, in relation to the 2023/24 budget:
  - Delegation of authority to the Executive Director for Corporate Services (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs, to apply the total of **£11.917m** from the Carry Forwards Reserve in 2023/24 for the purposes detailed in Appendix C to report FP/307/02/22 for amounts that have been requested at year end, plus amounts previously approved by Cabinet to carried into the Reserve during 2022/23. The Section 151 Officer will advise the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs if, after consultation with the relevant Executive Director, the amount of any carry forward should be reduced.

**5. Adoption and Implementation of ECC Tree Management Plan (FP/540/10/22)**

The Cabinet considered a report which sought approval for the adoption and implementation of an ECC Tree Management Plan

The Leader of the Council and the Councillor Peter Schwier (Climate Tsar), speaking at the invitation of the Leader, with contributions from the Cabinet Members for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport and Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning, responded to questions by Councillors Mike Mackrory, and Chris Pond in relation to:

- Whether Essex Highways had subscribed to the Plan;
- The intended dissemination of the Plan;

- The feasibility of simplifying the process of making small areas of land available for 'adoption' by residents;
- How Parish Councils would be engaged in the delivery of the Plan.

**Resolved:**

1. Agreed to adopt the Essex County Council Tree Management Plan as appended to report FP/540/10/22).
2. Noted that Tree Management Statements will be produced by officers and published on the ECC website.

**6. Supporting Local Bus Services – 2024 Onwards (FP/093/03/23)**

The Cabinet considered proposals regarding the review of ECC supported bus services following expiry of the existing contracts in July 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport responded to questions by Councillors Ivan Henderson, Mike Mackrory and Chris Pond in relation to:

- The opportunities for Scrutiny to consider the consultation proposals;
- Assurance that before any services were discontinued information on the impact of such on the socio-economic groups using the service were considered;
- Why the Bus Service Operator grant had not been included in the Financial implications data within the report;
- Whether decisions to stop particular services would be made on purely financial grounds;
- The time at which evening, as opposed to daytime, services commenced;
- Whether the contracts allowed for action to be taken against poorly performing operators.

**Resolved:**

1. Agreed that the Director, Highways and Transportation shall consult as follows:
  - a. Retendering the 97 Local Bus contracts set out in Appendix A to report FP/093/03/23, with an approximate annual net cost of £4.9m, for a four-year period with the possibility of extending for a further two years.
  - b. The redesign and re-procurement of 43 contracts as set out in Appendix B to report FP/050/02/23: the 39 bus contracts with an approximate annual net cost of £3.3m and four new Local Bus contracts with an approximate annual net cost of £1.1m for a two-year period with an option for extension for up to a further three years.

- c. That the consultation referred to in b above will be on the basis that if these services are not on course to meet the subsidy requirement of no more than £5 per passenger journey by the time the Council needs to make a decision on what happens after the end of the two-year period, the Council may consult on withdrawal, noting that consultation would not take place until 2025 at the earliest.
  - d. The withdrawal of the 21 low use Local Bus contracts listed in Appendix C to report FP/050/02/23 where the cost is currently more than £10 per passenger journey.
- 2. Noted that following consultation, decision on which services to extend, which services to procure, which services to award and which services to withdraw will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport as long as decisions can be accommodated within the overall local bus budget.
  - 3. Noted that some contracts for services may need to be the subject of a short-term extension if it is not possible to consult and award contracts by the expiry of the current contracts in July 2024.
  - 4. Noted that the proposals for innovative new delivery models will be brought forward for consideration, including, but not limited to, devolving hyper local services, digital demand responsive services, low-rate flat fares building on the success of the national £2 fare offer, and marketing and promotion of services, including wider ticketing offers. Such investment proposals will be subject to agreement in a decision taken by the relevant Cabinet Members

**7. Decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members (FP/119/05/23)**

The report was noted.

**8. Dates of Future Meetings**

Noted that Cabinet meetings would take place on the following dates in 2024:

16 January	23 July
27 February	10 September
26 March	8 October
23 April	12 November
28 May	17 December
25 June	

(Unless otherwise notified, all meetings will take place at 10.15am in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.)

**9. Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Cabinet would take place at 10.15am on Tuesday 20 June 2023 in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.

**10. Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.10am.

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet which took place in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford at 10.15am on Tuesday 20 June 2023**

**Present:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Cllr Louise McKinlay	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance
Cllr Tony Ball	Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability
Cllr Malcolm Buckley	Waste Reduction and Recycling
Cllr Graham Butland	Cabinet Member for Devolution, the Arts, Heritage and Culture
Cllr Beverley Egan	Children's Services and Early Years
Cllr Lee Scott	Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
Cllr John Spence	Health and Adult Social Care
Cllr Lesley Wagland	Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning
Cllr Chris Whitbread	Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs

Cllrs Susan Barker, Mark Durham, Alan Goggin, Carlo Guglielmi, Ivan Henderson, Bob Massey, Mark Platt, Peter Schwier and Laureen Shaw were also present. Cllr David King attended remotely via Zoom.

**1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest.**

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and the following were noted:

1. There had been no changes of membership since the last meeting.
2. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mike Mackrory, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group (represented by Cllr David King) and Chris Pond, Leader of the Non-aligned Group.
3. Whilst not a declarable interest, for transparency Cllr Malcolm Buckley noted that Castledon School was in his electoral division.

**2. Minutes: 23 May 2023**

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 23 May 2023, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Questions from the public**

None.



#### **4. Procurement of a service to deliver positive outcomes for people with multiple and complex needs (FP/092/03/23)**

The Cabinet received a report concerning procurement of a contract for provision of a service of support for people with multiple and complex needs. The existing contract was due to end on 31 March 2024 and could not be extended.

Responding to questions by Cllrs Ivan Henderson and David King, the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social expressed confidence that the service delivered under the new contract would be of the same standard as the current one and confirmed that account had been taken of the potential impact of inflationary pressures on service quality. He offered to meet with Cllr King outside the meeting for further discussion on the issues raised.

##### **Resolved:**

1. Agreed to launch a competitive procurement using the open procedure to procure a provider to deliver an Essex-wide Multiple and Complex Needs Service at a maximum total value of £9.5m over the initial five-year contract period. The estimated cost in year one is £1.9m.
2. Agreed that the contract length will be five years with an option to extend for four years on a two plus two-year basis.
3. Agreed to apply the following award criteria in the procurement: 30% price, 70% quality of which 10% of the quality score will assess social value.
4. Agreed to authorise the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care to award the contract to the successful bidder following completion of the procurement process.

#### **5. Construction Works at Castledon School (FP/109/04/23)**

Whilst not a declarable interest, for transparency, Cllr Malcolm Buckley informed the meeting that Castledon School is located within his electoral division.

The Cabinet considered a report which sought approval to carry out construction works at Castledon School, Wickford to provide suitable and permanent facilities for the school's existing pupil admission number.

In presenting the report, Councillor Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability expressed thanks to all staff working in Essex's special schools.

The Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability highlighted the following in response to questions and

comments by Cllrs Ivan Henderson, David King, Malcolm Buckley, Peter Schwier, Carlo Guglielmi, Alan Goggin and John Spence:

- A written response would be sent to Cllr Ivan Henderson providing details of schools in Essex with temporary accommodation in similar condition to that at Castledon. Cllr Ball confirmed that the accommodation to be replaced at Castledon, though unsuitable, remained in serviceable condition.
- The Cabinet Member confirmed his awareness of the parking issues affecting the school.
- The Cabinet Member had written to Members setting out the Council's response to recently identified safety issues around the historic use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in schools and other public buildings. Further information would be provided as the situation developed. Members had also been invited to briefings on the education future planned maintenance programme and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) sufficiency.

**Resolved:**

1. Agreed to carry out construction works at Castledon School, Wickford so that it has the permanent accommodation required for its existing 240 pupil places along with 19 new car parking spaces and two mini-bus parking spaces.
2. Agreed to authorise the Head of Infrastructure Delivery to award a contract for enabling works to Morgan Sindall Construction PLC once he is satisfied that the enabling works costs are within the agreed budget and represent value for money.
3. Agreed to authorise the Head of Infrastructure Delivery to award a contract for the main construction works to Morgan Sindall Construction PLC once he is satisfied that:
  - (a) The Academy Trust has given formal agreement to the works being undertaken;
  - (b) Any relevant planning permission required for these works has been granted;
  - (c) The enabling works costs are within the agreed budget and represent value for money; and
  - (d) Arrangements are in place for the end user(s) of the building to be provided with collateral warranties by the principal contractors.
4. Agree to reprofile the budget as detailed in the Confidential Appendix to report FP/109/04/23).

**6. Decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members  
(FP/119/05/23)**

The report was noted.

**7. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Cabinet would take place at 10.15am on Tuesday 18 July 2023 in the **Council Chamber** at County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.

**8. Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

**Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved:**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person).

**9. Confidential Appendix: Construction Works at Castledon School  
(FP/109/04/23)**

The confidential appendix to report FP/109/04/23, to which minute 5, above, refers, was noted.

**10. Urgent Exempt Business**

There was no urgent exempt business.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.55am.

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**Chairman  
18 July 2023**

# Boundary Review

## Consideration of the Council's response on the initial consultation of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's review of Essex County Council

### Report of Councillor Kevin Bentley, Leader of the Council.

#### 1. Background and purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) is an independent body established by Parliament in April 2020 to undertake local government electoral reviews. An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for the whole local authority. The review looks at the total number of councillors to be elected to the council, known as council size, the names, numbers and boundaries or divisions and the number of councillors to be elected to each division.
- 1.2 As previously reported, Essex County Council meets the Commission's criteria for electoral inequality as 21 (30%) of our 70 divisions having an electoral variance outside 10% from the average. Four divisions have a variance of more than 20% and one division has a variance of more than 30%. The Local Government Boundary Commission has a responsibility to review local authorities from time to time and Essex's last review took place in 2004. Therefore the Commission have decided to undertake a review of Essex County Council. The Commission is currently looking at a number of district councils in Essex. ECC divisions cannot cross a district boundaries but they do not need to align with district ward boundaries.
- 1.3 The electoral review has two distinct parts, Council Size and Division Boundaries. The first part has concluded and ECC's submission was approved by Council in December 2022. We are now in the second part relating to division sizes. By the end of July 2023 we are, alongside other organisations and the public invited to present the Commission our suggestions for divisions and the communities that would underpin them to be implemented in May 2025.
- 1.4 In December this Council agreed the draft submission of a Council size of 77 councillors and sought a single member division review. These have been accepted by the Commission. However, following receipt of the finalised expected housing figures, it is agreed that 78 Councillors would be a better Council size and it has been recommended by members of the Working Group that we write to the Local Government Boundary Commission seeking a revised Council size of 78 councillors.
- 1.5 Following the member briefing by the Commission in the summer of 2023 a cross party member working group was been set up to support the review. The members of this group continue to be:

- Cllr Tom Cunningham (Chairman of the Group)
- Cllr Lewis Barber
- Cllr Dave Harris
- Cllr Jaymey McIvor
- Cllr Stephen Robinson
- Cllr Kerry Smith
- Cllr Holly Whitbread

The Group are being supported by the Head of Democracy and Transparency and the Director, Legal and Assurance. They will continue to work on the Boundary Review through the next stages.

- 1.6 Members were asked to provide feedback on communities that should be within the same division and should not be in the same division, this was reviewed by the Member Working Group who considered the feedback.
- 1.7 The Council is invited to respond to the initial consultation, this consultation closes on 31 July 2023. Unfortunately, due to the amount of work involved it has not possible to present a final version of the boundaries to this meeting as the work is being finalised and the submission needs to be made at the end of this month. We are therefore asking Council to delegate authority to the Director, Legal and Assurance to finalise the County Council's response after consulting Group Leaders and the Boundary Review Member Working Group mentioned above. The final version will reflect the Council's formal resolution and will take account of views expressed.
- 1.8 It is of course open to any member of the public to put forward their own proposals should they so wish. Everything will be considered by the Commission according to their principles which are mainly that elector numbers should be as equal as possible and boundaries should reflect communities as far as possible.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Council agrees that the response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England by 31 July 2023 after consultation with the four political group leaders and the Boundary Review Member Working Group.
- 2.2 That Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to write to the Local Government Boundary Commission with a revised request for a council size of 78 councillors.

Agenda item 12

# Statutory Report

## External Audit Delays Causing Delays to the publication of certified ECC accounts for 2022/23.

Report of Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a report issued under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to formally inform members that the County Council has, for reasons beyond its control, failed to publish its certified draft accounts for the 2022/23 financial year by the statutory deadline of 1 June 2023. The County Council is required by law to consider this report and decide what action (if any) to take in response. The Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service) and the Executive Director, Corporate Services (Chief Finance Officer) have been consulted on this report.

### 2 Context

- 2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that a period of public consultation on the draft accounts starts by 1 June following the close of accounts. The purpose of the consultation is to provide an opportunity for residents to:
- (a) Inspect the accounts and supporting documents
  - (b) Ask questions of the external auditor
  - (c) Make a formal objection to the accounts.
- 2.2 Before the period starts, the Council has to publish its draft accounts and a certificate by the section 151 officer confirming that they are satisfied that the statement of accounts presents a true and fair view of—
- (a) the financial position of the authority at the end of the relevant financial year; and
  - (b) that authority's income and expenditure for that financial year.
- 2.3 To be able to confirm that the statement of accounts represents a true and fair view of the council's financial position on 31 March 2023 the section 151 officer needs to be satisfied that the accounts are built on her having appropriate assurance that previous years' accounts are accurate. A key piece of assurance is the external audit of previous years' accounts. Regrettably, the external audit for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years have not yet been completed. The 2020/21 audit is nearly two years late and the 2021/22 audit is nearly a year late. Whilst the external auditor has completed substantial elements of both audits, the timescales for completion of these audits remains unclear to the Council. Officers and the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee have repeatedly pressed BDO LLP to complete the audits.

- 2.4 BDO have confirmed that the accounts and supporting material supplied by the County Council has been of a consistent high quality and that all requested information has been provided promptly, but for a number of reasons, principally their own lack of resources, they have failed to complete their audit. In addition BDO has raised a technical issue relating to infrastructure valuation which accounts for nine months of delay to the 2020/21 accounts, but many other county councils have had their accounts signed off by now and we do not believe it is operative cause of the delay.
- 2.5 There is currently little or no confidence in the timescale to which BDO will be able to complete these audits, meaning that the section 151 officer may not feel able to issue a certificate for the 2022/23 accounts for a considerable period of time. At present we are simply unable to assess how long the delay is likely to continue.
- 2.6 It should be emphasised that the section 151 officer has confirmed that there is nothing significant that she is aware of which would cause the accounts to be wrong. Our external audits do not generally lead to the identification of significant issues. That said, the longer the delay in the audit of accounts continues, the more likely it is that something is identified. If something is identified it could have a cumulative impact across financial years.
- 2.7 It is important to note that many authorities are in a similar or worse position. It is believed that Cambridgeshire, Kent and Oxfordshire county councils are faced with a similar position to ECC. Looking at the national picture for all local authorities rather than just county councils, the picture is that 31% of 2020/21 audits and 74% of 2021/22 local authority external audits were overdue as at 31 March 2023. This is an unprecedented and extremely concerning situation for the sector.

### **3. Impact of the delay**

- 3.1 The first thing to say is that failure to start the period for the exercise of public rights places the Council in breach of its statutory duty under regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. This has led to the Council having to place a notice on its website to explain the breach and it has led to this report. In the interests of transparency, the Council has published its uncertified draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 on its website. This does not however obviate the breach of its statutory duties and does not trigger the public rights.
- 3.2 It also means that our residents will be unable to scrutinise the accounts as quickly and as fully as they should be able to. We will of course answer any questions we may receive about the draft accounts, and the period for exercise by the public of their statutory rights will take place at some point. Any delay is undesirable and the rights become less meaningful and relevant as the delay lengthens.

- 3.3 The audit delay has a financial impact on the Council in two ways:
- A legacy IT system has had to be maintained purely for the purpose of seeing the 2020/21 audit through to completion at an estimated cost of £378,000.
  - Valuations we have commissioned for the draft accounts have, in some cases, become out of date and have had to be repeated, valuation of the Council's net pensions liability in particular.
  - The Council has had to repeatedly arrange and rearrange extra meetings of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee to accommodate BDO's assurance that they will have completed work by that date. Unfortunately those assurances are frequently not met.
- 3.3 The Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, the Chief Executive, the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs have all been kept informed as to the situation. This report formally notifies the full county council of the situation and the Council must decide what (if any) action to take in response.

#### **4. What action can the Council take with respect to the audit delays?**

- 4.1 The period for the exercise of public rights cannot lawfully start without the certificate, so all we can do is continue to implore BDO LLP to complete the audit of previous years accounts as quickly as possible. It is difficult to think of anything else which can be done to address the immediate breach of the regulations. In the longer term, there may need to be national action taken to facilitate the 'catch up' of audit.
- 4.2 BDO were appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, a company established by the Local Government Association to collectively procure auditors without authorities having to go through the extremely technical and legally complex statutory process of appointing their own auditor. This means that only PSAA can remove BDO as our auditor. We have complained to PSAA about the situation.
- 4.3 We are exploring what action can be taken against BDO to investigate whether BDO's failures could amount to a breach of statutory duty entitling ECC to claim damages. This would be a new claim but the failures of BDO represent new and worrying degree of failure which is causing ECC financial loss.
- 4.4 It should be noted that BDO's engagement as ECC's auditor ends with the audit of the 2022/23 accounts. EY has now been appointed as our auditor for the 2023/24 financial year. It is unlikely that EY will be able to commence its audit until BDO have completed their work. It should also be noted that BDO are understood to have withdrawn from Local Government audit work, at least for the short term.



## **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 That the County Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executive of BDO LLP to express its regret at the audit delays and to ask BDO to confirm that ECC won't suffer financial loss as a result of its delay in audit.
- 5.2 That the County Council formally thanks the finance team for working to such high standards, particularly given the current difficult circumstances with audit delays.

## **Annual Report of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee 2022/2023**

Report by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Chairman, Councillor Anthony Hedley

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Enquiries to Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance on 03330 134591

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Audit, Governance and Standards Committee has delegated authority to oversee internal and external audit work and lead on member standards work.
- 1.2 The Committee reports to Council annually, highlighting the work of the Committee during the previous financial year.
- 1.3 This report covers 2022-23. This report is not the same as the annual letter from the external auditor, which is reported to council separately, as soon as it is available.
- 1.4 Members should note the delays to the external audit, which is also the subject of a separate report elsewhere on this agenda.

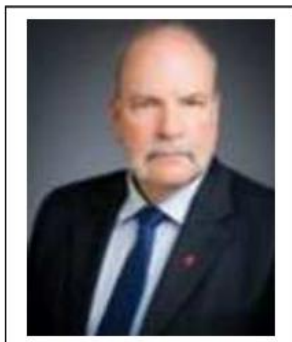
### **2. Recommendation**

That the Annual Report of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee covering the financial year 2022/23 be received.

# **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee**

## **Annual Report 2022/23**

## Foreward by the Chairman of the Committee



I present to you this annual report which provides an overview of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's activity and achievements during the financial year 2022/23. In line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Practical Guidance for Audit Committees (2018 edition), it serves to demonstrate how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities.

I was appointed Chairman of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee by the Council on 14 July 2020. I chaired all meetings that took place during the period referenced in this report.

This report highlights the important work of the Committee in providing an independent overview of the Council's governance arrangements. This role includes detailed consideration of the work of external audit, internal audit and counter fraud, plus robust scrutiny and challenge of the Council's financial performance and, through our Standards role, the approach the Council takes in upholding standards and investigating any complaints made about Members.

During 2022/23 the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee met six times, and the Standards Sub Committee were not required to meet. I would particularly like to draw your attention to the challenges that we have faced, and continue to face, in obtaining sign-off from the external auditor on the council's financial statements for 2020/21 and 2021/22, despite the external auditor acknowledging that the Accounts and supporting working papers were produced to a high standard and that officers have cooperated and assisted fully throughout. This is leading to problems and continuing costs for the council which is unable to archive records as quickly as it would like

I would like to highlight the effectiveness review which was an enjoyable and informative session which improved the Committee's overall awareness of its role and promises to lead to innovation in how the committee seeks assurance.

I would like to express my thanks to those officers and members who, throughout this most difficult and challenging of years, have supported the work and achievements of the Committee.

*Councillor Anthony Hedley,  
Chairman of Audit, Governance and Governance Committee*

*June 2023*

## **Introduction**

The committee reports annually to Council as an important way of keeping all councillors informed about the work of the committee in keeping things safe.

## **Membership**

During the 2022/23 financial year the Committee comprised of ten elected Members. Membership was made up of seven Conservative Members, one Labour, one Liberal Democrats, one non-aligned, and one independent. Committee members were as follows:

- Councillor Hedley (Conservative), Chairman
- Councillor McQuiggan (Conservative), Vice Chairman
- Councillor Siddall (Conservative), Vice Chairman
- Councillor Shaw (Conservative), Committee Member
- Councillor Barker (Conservative), Committee Member
- Councillor Mackenzie (Conservative), Committee Member
- Councillor Platt (Conservative), Committee Member
- Councillor McGurran (Labour), Committee Member
- Councillor King (Liberal Democrats), Committee Member
- Councillor Hoy (Non-aligned Group/Rochford District Residents), Committee Member (resigned in autumn 2022).
- Atta Ul Haque, Independent Committee Member

## **Terms of Reference and Purpose**

The terms of reference for the Committee are included in the Council's Constitution and extracted in full at Appendix 2.

The Committee is a key component of the authority's governance framework. It provides independent assurance, to Members and the public, on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes. By overseeing both internal and external audit it makes an important contribution to ensuring that effective assurance arrangements are in place.

The Committee monitors internal and external audit activity, reviews and comments on the effectiveness of the Council's regulatory framework, and reviews and approves the Council's annual statements of accounts.

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to "make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs". The Council's Section 151 Officer is key to discharging these requirements but to be truly effective, she requires an effective audit, governance and standards committee to provide support and challenge, as well as an adequate and effective internal audit.

The Committee brings many benefits:

- ✓ Demonstrates how good governance supports the authority in achieving its corporate objectives
- ✓ Reinforces the importance and independence of internal and external audit and supports an effective relationship between the two
- ✓ Provides additional assurance through the process of independent review and challenge
- ✓ Increases emphasis and awareness of internal control, governance and risk management
- ✓ Promotes anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements
- ✓ Promotes, develops and upholds high standards and ethics for Members

## **The Work of the Committee**

The Committee has a Work Plan designed to cover its responsibilities, appropriately timed, over the financial year. Agendas for the meetings are published on the Council's website a week or so before each meeting. Meetings are now livestreamed and can be attended by the public.

All the Committee agenda papers, minutes and audio recordings are available on the Council's [website](#).

During the course of the year, the Committee has undertaken work covering the full range of its responsibilities. A full list of reports considered is at Appendix 2 with key activities outlined below.

## ***Financial Statements and Accounts***

The Committee has responsibility for approving, on behalf of the Council, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts (including the financial statements for the Council and the Essex Pension Fund). They have responsibility for considering whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.

Despite receiving the draft Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year in June 2021 and those for the 2021/22 financial year in July 2022 (both in compliance with the respective statutory deadlines for each financial year), the Committee has been unable to formally approve the accounts for either year yet. This is because the Committee must consider the outcome of the external audit of the accounts before it can approve them. For reasons beyond the Council's control, the external audits for 2020/21 and 2021/22 are still ongoing.

The external auditor has been clear throughout that the Council's Accounts (including those for the Essex Pension Fund) and associated working papers have been produced to a high standard and that officers have cooperated and assisted fully. The audit delays have resulted from the auditor's own lack of capacity.

The Council's external auditor reported in March 2022 that the 2020/21 audit was largely complete, and that the auditor expected to issue an unmodified opinion, subject to the satisfactory resolution of a national and technical issue related to accounting for infrastructure (highways) assets. The government has subsequently amended statutory regulations and an update was made to the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in order to pave the way for resolution of this issue. Since these updates were published, the Council has completed extensive analysis to support its accounting approach, which was submitted to the external auditor at the beginning of March 2023. The external auditor's consideration of this work is still pending, although the external auditor has indicated that he anticipates being able to bring the 2020/21 audit to conclusion in time to present the audit completion report to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee on 3 July 2023.

In terms of the 2021/22 accounts, the external auditor commenced the audit work in November 2022, but recently paused the work in order to prioritise the 2022/23 external audits of NHS bodies. The timeline for completion of the 2021/22 audit therefore currently remains unclear.

Given the significant delays to completion of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 audits, it is appears highly unlikely that the external auditor will even commence the 2022/23 audit ahead of the statutory deadline of 30 September 2023 for publication of audited accounts.

These delays are extremely concerning but are not unique to the Council - similar delays are being experienced across the sector. It is now difficult to see how auditors can clear the severe backlog of outstanding accounts and value for money audits without system wide changes to the local audit framework.

### **External Audit**

The Committee is responsible for receiving external audit plans, reports about the effectiveness of the Council's financial and operational arrangements and for considering the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. They are further responsible for reviewing, commenting on and monitoring these and providing advice to the Cabinet and Council where the Committee believes appropriate.

#### ***The Committee's Activity in 2022/23:***

- Providing robust challenge to the external auditors in respect of the status of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 audits, and on the updates the Auditor has provided to the Committee during the year.
- Considering, monitoring and seeking to influence national developments to improve timeliness of local auditor reporting.

### **Internal Audit and Counter Fraud**

The Committee is responsible for receiving reports from the Council's Internal Auditors on the outcome of audit reviews and investigations and the implementation of recommendations, including the annual report and Opinion of the Chief Audit Executive.

### ***The Committee's Activity in 2022/23:***

- Considering and agreeing changes made during the 2022/23 financial year to the audit plan.
- Monitoring the delivery of the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan via quarterly update including outcomes of individual audits.
- Receiving updates from Directors where a Limited Assurance opinion was given, in particular from Technology Services (Disaster Recovery)
- Monitoring implementation of major and critical internal audit recommendations.
- Considering the Annual Report from the Head of Assurance, in her role as Chief Audit Executive giving a 'Satisfactory Assurance' annual audit opinion for 2021/22 (reported at the meeting in June 2022).
- Monitoring counter fraud activity and the progress / outcomes of investigations.
- Agreeing the updated Internal Audit Charter.
- Reviewing and commenting on the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Plan for 2023/24 prior to endorsing the Plan for delivery.

### ***Governance and Risk Management***

The Committee is responsible for considering the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and risk management and advise on any action necessary to ensure compliance with best practice.

#### ***Committee Activity 2022/23***

- Reviewing the Risk Management update report in order to assure themselves that effective risk management in place across the Council.
- Considering the Councils Strategic Risk Register
- Reviewing activity under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 to ensure that members have oversight of how the Council is exercising its statutory powers to carry out some surveillance activity for law enforcement purposes. At present the Council does not use these powers, but the Code of Practice requires members to have oversight of this area.
- Reviewing the register of gifts and hospitality.
- Approving the Councils policies on Money Laundering, Anti-Bribery and Corruption and Counter-Fraud

### **Committee Effectiveness**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) states that it is best practice for the Committee to regularly review its performance and effectiveness.

Accordingly, the Committee undertook a review of their effectiveness in March 2023 and as a result agreed to make additions to the work plan including receiving an annual report on standards complaints and scoping items on procurement and



contract management. Members also agreed that an AGS Committee Effectiveness Review is to be undertaken every two years. The full report on the outcomes can be found [here](#).

### ***Independent Member***

The Committee's independent member was appointed for a four year term in November 2020. The independent member has a background in accountancy and has received full induction training.

### **Members' Professional Development**

Continual professional development is key to the effective operation of the Committee. Being effective means having well informed Members able to confirm to the Council that the right processes are in place to give confidence that the authority's financial stewardship and overall governance arrangements can be relied upon.

In October 2022 and January 2023 members undertook training sessions led by the Local Government Association covering all aspects of Audit Committee membership including questioning techniques and committee responsibilities. Committee Members also attended a briefing on Accounting for infrastructure assets in October 22. Three members of the committee attended CIPFA's Introduction To The Knowledge And Skills Of The Audit Cttee in June 2022.

In addition, members kept up to date via CIPFA newsletters and ad hoc updates from officers on matters of interest. Members attend a range of internal briefings through the financial year to keep informed about ECC services.

### Audit, Governance Standards Committee - Terms of Reference

#### ***As per Article 8 of The Council's Constitution:***

Membership: Ten Members of the Council and one non-voting co-opted Member.

The co-opted Member shall be appointed the committee for a term of not exceeding four years and shall be selected by the Committee following public advertisement. At the expiry of the term of appointment the vacancy shall be advertised and a further selection process undertaken. The sitting member shall be eligible for reappointment.

No member of the Cabinet may be appointed to the Committee or any of its Sub-Committees.

#### **Purpose**

1. To review the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
2. To receive and approve the Council's Annual Governance Statement ensuring that it reflects the Council's governance arrangements.
3. To receive and approve the Final Accounts, Memorandum and the Report to those charged with Governance from the External Auditors.
4. To consider the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter from the External Auditors and to provide such advice and comments on the Letter to the Cabinet and Council as the Committee believes appropriate.
5. To receive the internal and external audit plans and comment on these plans, including the extent to which they provide value for money.
6. To ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit is actively promoted.
7. To receive reports from the Council's Internal Auditor on the outcome of audit reviews and investigations and the implementation of recommendations, including the Annual Report of the Head of Internal Audit.
8. To receive any reports from the External Auditor about the effectiveness of the Council's financial and operational arrangements and monitor Management's response to the issues raised by External Audit.
9. To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's Financial Regulations, and Procurement Procedure Rules and recommend changes to Council.

10. To approve and monitor the effectiveness of strategies for anti-fraud and corruption, whistle blowing and any legislation relating to the regulation of investigatory powers.
11. To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and risk management, and advise on any action necessary to ensure compliance with best practice.
12. To advise the Council on the local Code of Conduct for members and to promote, develop and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council.
13. To keep the Code of Member Conduct under review and recommend changes to the Code or the Constitution to support high standards of Conduct.
14. To grant dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 and under the Code of Member Conduct to councillors and co-opted members.
15. To approve processes for considering complaints that any Councillor or Co-opted Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.
16. To create one or more sub-committees as required to receive and consider allegations of misconduct of elected members, to take further oral and written evidence, adjudicate and make recommendations to the Leader of the Council and others.
17. To make arrangements for the appointment of Independent Persons under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.
18. To make arrangements for training of Members relating to standards issues.

### **Standards Sub-Committee – Terms of Reference**

Membership: Between 3 and 5 members of the Council appointed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee and the Leaders of relevant political groups in accordance with the political balance rules.

1. To exercise any of the Committee's powers with respect to decisions about individual complaints about breaches of the Code of Member Conduct.

### Key Reports Considered by the Committee during 2021/22

#### Financial Statements and Accounts

- Update on the external audit of the Council's 2020/21 and 2021/22 Statement of Accounts
- Council's draft Statement of Accounts for 2021/22
- External auditor's Audit Completion Reports for 2020/21 for both ECC and Essex Pension Fund
- Provisional External Audit Plans for ECC and Essex Pension Fund for 2021/22
- External Auditor's Annual Letter
- Closure of Accounts 2022/23

#### Governance

- Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22
- Members' gifts and hospitality for April 2021 to March 2022
- Risk Management Update reports
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000: Review of Activity
- Financial Regulations & Scheme of Delegation for Financial Management
- Counter Fraud & Corruption Strategy 2022
- Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy 2022
- Anti Money Laundering Policy 2022

#### Standards

- Consultation on proposed Local Government Association Code of Member Conduct
- LGA Model Code of Conduct Standards: Best Practice Recommendations
- AGS Committee Effectiveness review proposals for 2023
- LGA Debate not Hate Campaign

#### Internal Audit

- Chief Audit Executive's Annual Report and Opinion for 2021/22
- Quarterly Progress Reports on IA activity
- Quarterly progress reports on Recommendation Tracking
- Specific updates from Heads of Service on Internal Audit reviews receiving Limited or No Assurance
- Draft Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24
- Updated Internal Audit Charter

#### Counter Fraud

- Draft Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2023/24
- Quarterly progress reports on counter fraud activity

## **Annual Report of the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board, covering the period from 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2023**

Report by the Director for Essex Pension Fund  
Enquiries to Jody Evans on 03330 138489

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### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To present the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board's annual report to Essex County Council.

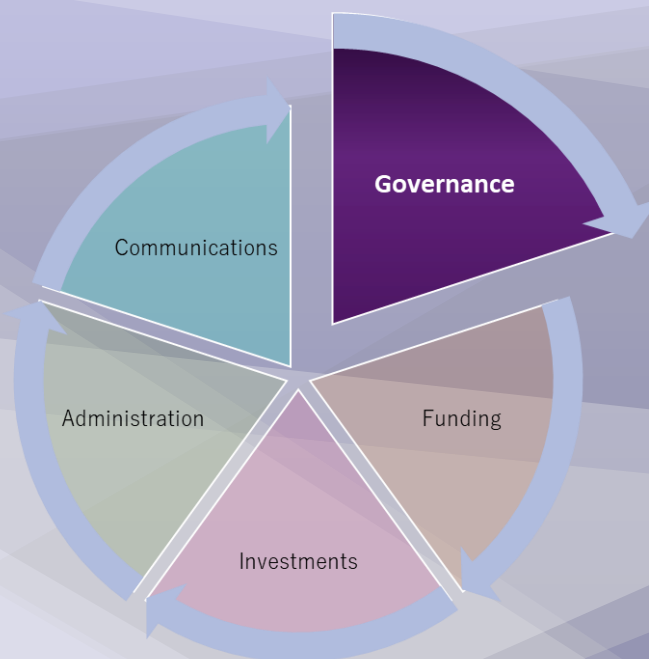
### **2. Recommendations**

To note the attached report.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

July 2023



# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### 1. Introduction

This is the fourteenth annual Report of the Essex Pension Fund Boards, covering the period from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

### 2. Roles and Functions

Essex County Council's (ECC) functions as the Administering Authority are delegated to the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board (PSB), the Essex Pension Fund Investment Steering Committee (ISC) and its Officers.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the PSB, ISC and Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board (PAB) are reviewed periodically as part of the Governance Policy and Compliance Statement and were last reviewed by the PSB at their meeting in December 2022. The TORs can be found within the [ECC Constitution](#).

#### Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board

The PSB was established by Essex County Council in May 2008 to ensure that the Pension Scheme complied with the best practice principles for governance as required by the amended Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 1997.

The PSB met four times during the period covered by this report, on 06 July 2022, 21 September 2022, 07 December 2022 and 22 March 2023.

#### Membership

During the period covered by this report the PSB had eleven Members. They represented ECC, the other local authorities in Essex (including Unitary Councils), Scheme Members and Other Employing Bodies (i.e. those which are not already specifically represented on the PSB).

The membership of the PSB as at 31 March 2023 was as follows:

##### Essex County Council (7)

Councillor Susan Barker	Chairman
Councillor Mark Platt	Vice Chairman
Councillor Alan Goggin	
Councillor Anthony Hedley	
Councillor Michael Hoy	
Councillor David King	
Councillor Clive Souter	

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### District/City/Borough Councils in Essex (1)

Councillor Colin Riley

Castle Point Borough Council

### Unitary Councils in Essex (1)

Councillor Stephen George

Southend-on-Sea City Council

### Scheme Members (nominated by UNISON) (1)

Mrs Sandra Child

### Other Employing Bodies (1)

Mrs Rachel Hadley

Chelmer Housing Partnership

#### **Attendance**

Attendance at PSB meetings during 2022/23 was **91%** against a target of **80%**.

### **Investment Steering Committee (ISC)**

The ISC is a sub-Committee of the PSB and its Membership is drawn from the PSB. It is made up of 7 ECC voting Members, 1 Employer representative (non-voting member) and 1 Scheme Member representative (non-voting member).

The ISC reviews the Essex Pension Fund's ("the Fund's") management of investments including, but not limited to, the approval of the Investment Strategy Statement.

#### **Attendance**

Attendance at ISC meetings during 2022/23 was **97%** against a target of **80%**.

### **Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board (PAB)**

The Essex Pension Fund Advisory Board (PAB) has been established as the Local Pensions Board for Essex in accordance with section 5 of the Public Service Pension Act 2013 and Part 3 of the LGPS Regulations 2013.

The remit of the PAB includes assisting the Administering Authority as Scheme Manager:

- to secure compliance with the LGPS regulations and any other legislation relating to governance and administration of the LGPS; and
- to secure compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the LGPS by The Pensions Regulator (TPR).



# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### Membership

During the period covered by this report the PAB had 9 Members. They represented Employer and Scheme Member representatives and an Independent Chairman.

The membership of the PAB as at 31 March 2023 was as follows:

<u>Independent Chairman (1)</u>	
Nicola Mark	Independent Chairman
<u>Scheme Member Representatives (4)</u>	
Andrew Coburn	Pensioner, Ex County Council, UNISON (Vice Chairman)
Debs Hurst	Active Member, Chelmsford College
Stuart Roberts	Active Member, Shenfield High Academy
Christopher Downes	Essex County Council
<u>Employer Representatives (4)</u>	
James Durrant	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority
Councillor L Barber	Essex County Council
Councillor J Duffin (up to 08 September 2022)	
Councillor G Snell (from 25 January 2023)	Thurrock Unitary Council
Councillor Martin Bracken	Chelmsford City Council

### Attendance

Attendance at PAB meetings during 2022/23 was **79%** against a target of **80%**.

### 3. Essex Pension Fund Achievements

Essex Pension Fund was delighted to **win** the **LGPS Investment Strategy of the Year** award at the LAPF Investments Awards 2022, celebrating the best in the LGPS, in recognition of its commitment to achieving its Responsible Investment (RI) and net zero carbon emissions aspirations.



# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

In addition, in recognition of the effort and commitment shown by the Fund over the past 12 months, Essex Pension Fund was successful in **winning** the 2023 Defined Benefit **Scheme of the Year** Award at the Pensions Age Awards earlier this year. This is a huge honour and an extremely desirable award which is open to both public and private sector pension schemes. To add further context to the significance of this achievement, Essex Pension Fund was the only public sector organisation to win an award in any of the five categories available to enter.



### 4. Dimensions of the Fund

The value of the Fund as stated with the Fund's unaudited Draft Annual Report and Accounts, as at 31 March 2023, was **£9.669bn** which has reached an all time high when compared to the value reported last year at 31 March 2022 of **£9.646bn**. This shows an increase of **£23m**.

The total value of benefits paid during 2022/23 was **£279m**.

The Fund's 12 month investment performance was above the benchmark by **1.1%**, and over the three years outperforming the benchmark by **2.2%**.

The total number of beneficiaries is as follows:

	2022	2023
<b>Contributors</b>	54,433	59,160
<b>Deferred Members</b>	77,268	72,337
<b>Pensioners</b>	48,121	49,770
<b>Total</b>	<b>179,822</b>	<b>181,267</b>

The PSB exercises on behalf of the Council the management of the Pension Fund whose membership comes from **770** separate active Employing Bodies, including:

- Essex County Council;
- Scheduled Bodies, which are Local Authorities/Academies and similar bodies who are automatically entitled to be members of the Fund; and
- Admitted Bodies, which are other organisations that participate in the Fund under an admission agreement between the Fund and the relevant organisation. Admitted Bodies include voluntary, charitable and similar bodies or private contractors undertaking a local authority function following outsourcing to the private sector.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### 5. Work of the PSB and the ISC

The following key issues were considered by the PSB/ISC between 01 April 2022 and 31 March 2023:

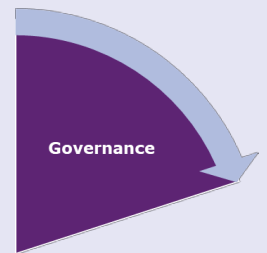
#### Governance

The Fund reviewed a number of key policies during 2022/23 and revised versions were agreed by the PSB in December 2022.

A larger-scale review of the **Terms of Reference** (TORs) of the ISC, PSB and PAB was undertaken to include remuneration for co-optee Members of the PSB and PAB as well as arrangements for PAB Observer attendance at ACCESS Joint Committee meetings. The revised TORs were agreed by the PSB on 07 December 2022, approved at Full Council on 09 February 2023 and subsequently incorporated into Essex County Council's Constitution.

A light touch review of the **Conflicts of Interest Policy** was undertaken, in collaboration with the Fund's Independent Governance and Administration Adviser (IGAA) and ECC's Monitoring Officer to incorporate minor amendments in line with ECC's Code of Conduct.

As part of its annual workplan, the PAB reviewed the **Communications Policy**. This thorough review allowed the PSB to sign off the policy with confidence. The review brought the policy in line with the stakeholder engagement strategy, reflecting progression in digital communications, accelerated by demand during the pandemic.



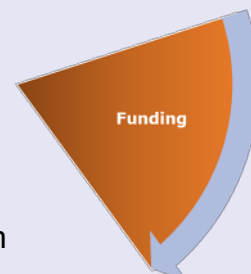
To comply with significant changes in regulation since the introduction of the new LGPS regulations in April 2014, the Statement of Policy on **Administering Authority Discretions** was reviewed. The PSB also adopted the IGAA's recommendation, in view of its technical and operational nature, to delegate future review of this Policy to Fund Officers, unless significant changes are required, necessitating Board approval.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### Funding

This year saw the outcome of the **Actuarial Triennial Valuation**, assessing the value of the Fund as at 31 March 2022. It indicated that the funding level had improved to a small surplus of 102.3% (compared to a small deficit of 97% at 31 March 2019).



The stability reserve introduced following the 2019 valuation was increased from 5% to 15% in anticipation of lower future expected returns, higher than expected inflation and to reflect increased prudence.

Valuation Date	Assets £bn	Liabilities £bn	Surplus/ Deficit £bn	Funding Level %
31 March 19	6.71	6.97	(0.26)	97%
31 March 20 (Interim Review)	6.90	7.17	(0.27)	96.2%
31 March 21 (Interim Review)	8.41	8.52	(0.10)	99%
31 March 22	8.10	7.92	0.18	102.3%

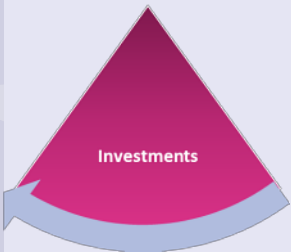
The **Funding Strategy Statement** (FSS) was issued to Members of the PSB, PAB and participating Employers for consultation during December 2022. At its March 2023 meeting, the PSB approved the final version of the FSS, incorporating changes made as a result of the consultation. The FSS was subsequently published alongside the Actuarial Valuation report, on the Fund's website, meeting the statutory deadline of 31 March 2023.

In line with the Fund's objectives to achieve a fully funded position while keeping Employer contribution rates stable and manage Employers' liabilities effectively, a programme of more frequent **Employer Risk Analysis** by Fund Officers was introduced. With **770** active Employers, and significant variance in terms of size and organisational resilience, and given recent economic volatility, Employer risk is now reviewed at every PSB meeting, ensuring that any financial issues are identified and addressed early.

# Essex Pension Fund

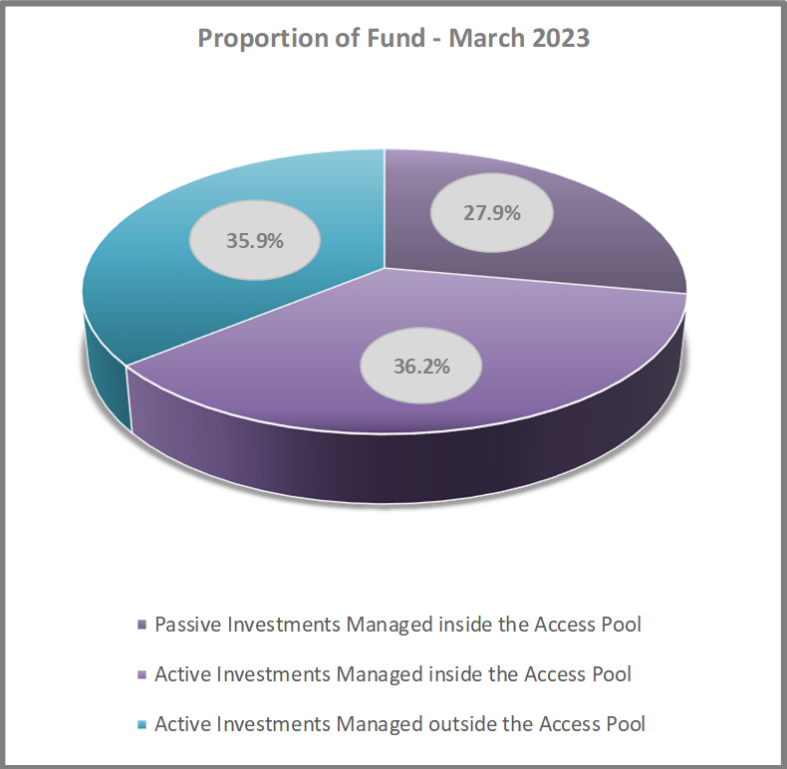
## Annual Report 2022/23

### Asset Pooling



Alongside the ten other Funds within the ACCESS Pool, the Fund continues to progress the pooling of its investment manager arrangements. A further **2** sub funds were launched by ACCESS's Pool Operator during the year 2022/23 with Essex making a commitment to invest within **1** of these new sub funds.

Over **95%** of the Fund's liquid assets have been pooled, the remaining assets are due to be pooled during 2023/24 following the launch of ACCESS's emerging market equity strategy solutions. The proportion of the Fund's assets in and outside of the Pool are as follows:



### Investment Strategy and Responsible Investment (RI)

The Fund is committed to being a responsible investor and achieving **Net Zero carbon emissions** by 2050. As part of this commitment, the Fund agreed in its 2021/22 business plan and RI project plan to aspire to become a Financial Reporting Council (**FRC**) **UK Stewardship Code signatory** and made its inaugural submission in April 2022. In September 2022, the FRC published its updated list of signatories and the Essex Pension Fund was one of only nine new UK pension funds to be **successful**.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

Having identified its RI priorities, and aligning the Fund's mandates to the RI Policy, the Fund partnered with its Institutional Investment Adviser, Hymans Robertson and UBS Asset Management to launch the UBS **Life Global Equity Sustainable Transition Fund**, which is available to the wider UK institutional pensions market. It will invest in companies believed to be best placed for the transition to a low-carbon economy and with better sustainability characteristics than the FTSE Developed Index benchmark. **£1.6bn** was committed to this fund with a further **£900m** committed to the low carbon version of the RAFI fund.

Furthermore, the ISC made a **£100m** anchor commitment to the **Stafford Carbon Offset Opportunity Fund**, further expanding its global timberland portfolio - now equivalent to 816 km<sup>2</sup>, able to sequester the equivalent carbon emitted by over 420,000 cars per year - and accelerating its transition to Net Zero. This commitment now forms part of a wider allocation of **10% (£1bn)** of the Fund directed to **Impact Investing** opportunities.



The continued implementation of the RI project plan has seen the Fund's investment in sustainable timber and renewable energy increase from **9.7%** as at 31 March 2022 to **13.8%** as at 31 March 2023. Direct Investment in fossil fuels has decreased from **0.02%** as at 31 March 2022 to **0.00%** as at 31 March 2023. The Fund now has no direct investments in fossil fuels.

### Administration



Following the revision of the Fund's Administration Strategy in 2021/22 which highlighted the move from Annual to **Monthly Returns**, the impact of this was highlighted to all PSB, ISC and PAB Members at the Back to Basics training event held in January 2023. Monthly Returns is where the Fund collects 70 pieces of data from all 770 Employers on all active Scheme Members on a monthly basis (previously annually). The transition to Monthly Returns has largely been **successful** in terms of improving the accuracy and efficiency of data, despite challenges experienced by the Fund. The Fund have continually engaged with and supported **770** Employers who have made the change and are now using this process which has resulted in the receipt of accurate and more timely data. This change alone has led to increased speed and saved the Fund valuable time when producing Annual Benefit Statements to approx. **131,000** active and deferred Scheme Members, whilst also allowing the team to perform various calculations without the need and unnecessary delays which came from the Annual Returns model.



# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

The Fund continually seeks ways to engage with stakeholders and has introduced webinars which have proved to be a resounding success and very popular. A Retirement Webinar was held on 07 February 2023 with over **750** attendees and feedback on the event was overwhelmingly positive.

The event was also recorded and as at 31 March 2023 the video had **1,185** views on YouTube via the Fund's own dedicated channel. The Fund felt passionately about Employer Roadshows prior to the pandemic, during which time these events had to be put on hold. However, the Fund has begun reaching out again to, and is also being approached by, Employers, with dates now in the diary to attend sites across Essex during 2023/24 to engage, help and support various stakeholders. Fund Officers are also attending Employer Wellbeing events to support them in highlighting the importance of **financial wellbeing** with the first of these events being held at Epping Forest District Council in June 2023.

The Fund continues to grow, both in terms of Scheme Members and Employers, delivering a full range of services to over **180,000** Scheme Members and paying **£22million** each month to over **49,000** Pensioners. In addition, Member Online uptake has increased, with over **36,500** Scheme Members now registered and using this tool regularly which allows them to update and make changes to their personal data, calculate their own estimates and even initiate retirement themselves without the need to contact the team at any stage - although the Fund continues to be on hand to support and guide whenever needed. **Employer Online** is also being used by more and more Employers, who are able to quickly and easily review and update their staff members' details with little to no interaction with the Fund allowing the team to focus on the more complicated cases. The utilisation statistics of both platforms are detailed below:

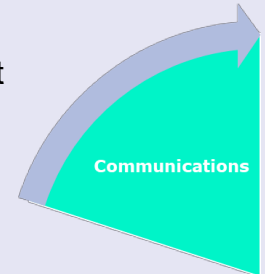
Year End	Members invited to Register for Member Online	Members utilising Member online	Employers register and utilising Employer Online
31 March 2022	87,000 (65% of Membership)	30,000 (take up rate of 34%)	330
31 March 2023	97,000 (72% of Membership)	36,500 (take up rate of 37%)	350

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### Communications

The Fund continued to survey stakeholders during 2022/23 following any contact with the Fund which links into the implementation of the Fund's Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. Following a review of the new approach to surveying Stakeholders, the outcome of the review showed that it had been **successful** and has increased the response rate and engagement.



Overall, the Fund received **96%** positive feedback from Scheme Members and **100%** from Employers.

Surveys issued during 2022/23 included:

- Scheme Member Surveys:
  - ◇ Member; Retirements; Beneficiaries; Retirements Webinar; RI Approach; Virtual Pensions Surgery; Active Annual Benefits Statements; and Deferred Annual Benefits Statements.
- Employer Surveys:
  - ◇ Employer; PN11 (Contribution Payments); and Workshop.

In addition, during 2022/23, the PSB, ISC and PAB developed **Pamphlets** to assist in any future recruitment activities including election processes. The Pamphlets outline the different roles and responsibilities of the PSB, ISC and PAB and explains their importance to Scheme Members and Employers. The Pamphlets include personal testimonials from Board and Committee Members, describing the benefits they feel they have derived (both personally and on behalf of the organisations they represent) from Membership on those Boards/Committee. These Pamphlets are now available on the Fund's website and will be used to aid in regard to Boards/Committee vacancies.

The Fund has re-positioned Communications high on the agenda by developing blogs, podcasts and a **Working for Essex microsite**.

Furthermore, the Fund is in the exploration phase for its new **website** which it is hoped will open various communication channels that are not currently accessible to the Fund.

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# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### Other Areas considered by the PSB/ISC at their meetings were:

#### Investments:

- Investment Manager Monitoring:
  - ◇ Annual Performance Review;
  - ◇ Traffic Light Rating Reports;
  - ◇ CEM Benchmarking Value for Money Review;
  - ◇ Annual Investment Scorecard; and
  - ◇ Investment Tables;
- Strategic Framework
- RI Framework
- Strategic Implementation Framework:
  - ◇ Pillar 1—Implementing and maintaining existing strategic targets within the investment strategic decision framework;
  - ◇ Pillar 2—Evolving existing allocations; and
  - ◇ Pillar 3— Exploring changes to existing or new mandates.
- Capital Markets Outlook;
- ISC Quarterly Report to the PSB;
- Institutional Consultant Review of Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Strategic Objectives; and
- ACCESS Joint Committee Pooling Updates.

#### Funding:

- Employer Updates;
- Employer Risk Review; and
- Employer cessation approach.

#### Administration & Communication:

- EPF consultations responses;
- Fund surveys; and
- Communications policy.

#### Governance:

- Terms of Reference for PSB, ISC and PAB;
- PSB Annual Report to Full Council;
- PAB Quarterly Report to PSB;
- PAB Annual Report;
- External Audit programme of Work;
- Internal Audit Report 2021/22;
- PAB Scheme Member and Employer representative Recruitment;
- EPF Three-Year Business Plan and 2023/24 Budget;
- Draft Annual Accounts;
- Updates on Pension Fund Activity including;
  - ◇ Business Plan;
  - ◇ Risk Register;
  - ◇ Budget; and
  - ◇ Scorecard; and
- Update on Training Plans.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

### Members Training

Members are **dedicated** to their training and development which enables them to continue the effective fulfilment of their roles.

The Fund continues to support the use of the CIPFA Code of Practice on LGPS Knowledge and Skills, and its associated Frameworks, and TPR's Code of Practice, as well as understanding the need for appropriate knowledge and skills to allow professional status to be awarded for MiFID II<sup>1</sup> purposes. The Fund adopts the principles and requirements of these, and will strive to achieve those through the use of a two-year rolling **Training Plan** together with regular monitoring and reporting.

The PSB also approved the utilisation of the LGPS Online Learning Academy (**LOLA**) during 2021 to assist the completion of the Two-Year Training Plan. The Training Plan is made up of **28** key areas that Board/Committee Members have agreed to undertake training in and the significant progress up to 31 March 2023 has been illustrated below:

★ 100% completed      ★ Partially completed      ★ Training to be undertaken

★ 1	★ 2	★ 3	★ 4	★ 5	★ 6	★ 7
The Fund's Governance Structure	Roles of PSB, ISC and PAB	Wider LGPS Landscape	TPR and CIPFA Codes of Practice	Accounts and Audit Regulations	The Fund's Policies and Strategies	Identification of Conflicts of Interest
★ 8	★ 9	★ 10	★ 11	★ 12	★ 13	★ 14
Management of Breaches of the Law	The Fund's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Suppliers	Actuarial Valuation and FSS	Different types of Employer	Discretions and Delegations	Communications of IAS19/FRS102	Main Asset Classes and their role
★ 15	★ 16	★ 17	★ 18	★ 19	★ 20	★ 21
Awareness of Fund's Investment Strategy	Investment Manager Performance	The Fund's Approach to RI	Fund's membership with LAPFF	Cost transparency / CEM Benchmarking	Global Custodian and TM Strategy	Fund's role within the ACCESS Pool
★ 22	★ 23	★ 24	★ 25	★ 26	★ 27	★ 28
CIPFA Pooling Principles and MiFID II	Fund's Administration Strategy	Fund vs Employer Discretions	Regulatory impacts of Wider LGPS	Ambition for Greater Digitalisation	Maintenance of accurate data	Communications Policy

**17** areas of Training have been completed (7 was reported last year) and **11** have been partially completed (8 were reported last year).

<sup>1</sup>Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II) aimed to make financial markets more efficient, resilient and transparent at strengthening the protection of investors.

# Essex Pension Fund

## Annual Report 2022/23

Furthermore, PSB, ISC and PAB Members undertake a **Training Needs Analysis** once every two years to determine the areas for further training.

This is supported by a Training Needs Analysis meeting with the Director for Essex Pension Fund and the production of an Individual Training Plan. Fund Officers ensure that training is delivered in a way that complements the activities set out in the Fund's Three-Year Business Plan.

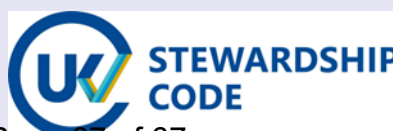


Cllr Susan Barker

Chairman of the PSB and of the ISC

Vice Chairman of ACCESS Joint Committee  
Essex County Council

Essex Pension Fund



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