

Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council, held in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford on Tuesday, 11 July 2023.

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

Cllr Barry Aspinell	Cllr Anthony Hedley	Cllr Chris Pond
Cllr Tony Ball	Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cllr Pat Reid
Cllr Lewis Barber	Cllr Jeff Henry	Cllr Stephen Robinson
Cllr Susan Barker	Cllr Paul Honeywood	Cllr Peter Schwier
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Cllr Michael Hoy	Cllr Lee Scordis
Cllr Dave Blackwell	Cllr John Jowers	Cllr Lee Scott
Cllr Malcom Buckley	Cllr Sam Kane	Cllr Andrew Sheldon
Cllr Graham Butland	Cllr David King	Cllr Chris Siddall
Cllr Simon Crow	Cllr Dan Land	Cllr Mick Skeels
Cllr Tom Cunningham	Cllr Sue Lissimore	Cllr Kerry Smith
Cllr Mark Durham	Cllr Mike Mackrory	Cllr Clive Souter
Cllr Beverley Egan	Cllr Bob Massey	Cllr John Spence
Cllr Jane Fleming	Cllr Peter May	Cllr Wendy Stamp
Cllr Martin Foley	Cllr Aidan McGurran	Cllr Mike Steel
Cllr Paul Gadd	Cllr Jaymey McIvor	Cllr Mark Stephenson
Cllr Alan Goggin	Cllr Louise McKinlay	Cllr Mike Steptoe
Cllr Ian Grundy	Cllr Anthony McQuiggan	Cllr Paul Thorogood
Cllr Carlo Guglielmi	Cllr Dr Richard Moore	Cllr Marshall Vance
Cllr Michael Hardware	Cllr James Newport	Cllr Chris Whitbread
Cllr Dave Harris	Cllr Mark Platt	Cllr Holly Whitbread
	Cllr Ross Playle	

Chairman's Welcome and Introduction

The Chairman 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 Reverend Zena Smith, Minister of the Benfleet Methodist Church.

Councillor Jillian Reeves formally opened the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Laureen Shaw, Cllr Marie Goldman, Cllr Mike Garnett, Cllr Lynette Bowers-Flint, Cllr Eddie Johnson, Cllr Derrick Louis, Cllr Luke Mackenzie, Cllr Jude Deakin, Cllr Lesley Wagland, Cllr Andy Wiles, Cllr Mark Cory and Cllr June Lumley.

2. 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.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 May 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Public Speakers

There were none.

5. Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Corporate Parenting Pledge

The Chairman reminded members of their responsibilities as Corporate Parents. All elected Members had the responsibility of being corporate parents for those children and young people in the Council's care and the Chairman asked everyone to check that they had signed the pledge since being elected. Members were advised to speak to Cllr Beverley Egan if they had any issues. The pledge was available to sign on the day and Members could also contact Cllr Egan's office for a copy.

Technology Services Team

The Chairman informed members that the Technology Services Team were available on the day if they had any queries relating to their Essex County Council technology or account.

Awards

Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport, President's Awards

The Chairman announced that a retrofit programme run by Essex County Council had been recognised with one of four awards at the 2023 ADEPT - Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport, President's Awards. The Harlow and Tendring Retrofit Pipeline for Economic Renewal programme won the Delivering Clean Growth award and was hailed by judges for being "out of the ordinary" and offering "a very specific and tailored approach to a real world problem". At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Tony Ball, Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life Long Learning and Employability, spoke on the award.

Unlock Net Zero Live Awards

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Planning a Growing Economy, spoke on the same programme which had also won Collaboration of the year – knowledge building and research at the Unlock Net Zero Live Awards.

Cllr Peter Schwier, Climate Czar and Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling, was also invited by the Chairman to speak on the awards which had been won in relation to the retrofit programme.

British Data Awards

The Chairman announced that Essex County Council had won two awards at the British Data Awards; one for Innovation of the year for their work with children social care and cost of living and the other for public sector team of the year for the work on data literacy. At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up and the Economy, spoke on these awards.

The Carbon Literacy Project

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Peter Schwier, Climate Czar and Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling, spoke on The Carbon Literacy Project awarding Essex County Council with Bronze accreditation, recognising the Council as a Carbon Literate Organisation.

Gold Medal award from NHS England's Emergency Care Improvement Support Team

The Chairman announced that Essex Cares Limited, which was owned by the Council, in partnership with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) in north-east Essex, had won a Gold Medal award from NHS England's Emergency Care Improvement Support Team, for working in collaboration on a ward-led enablement project. At the invitation of the chairman, Cllr John Spence, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration, spoke on this award.

Association of Local Authority Risk Managers (ALARM) Awards

The Chairman informed members that at the Association of Local Authority Risk Managers (ALARM) Awards, the Council was awarded the Organisational Sustainability Award for its business continuity programme. At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Chris Whitbread, The Chancellor of Essex, spoke on this award.

Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) Procurement Excellence Standard Award

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Chris Whitbread, The Chancellor of Essex, also spoke about an accreditation that ECC have once again received, the CIPS Procurement Excellence Standard Award.

6. Petitions

There were none.

7. Executive Statements

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley, Leader of the Council gave a statement on 'Everyone's Essex, the first two years'.

The Executive Statement is published on the ECC website and the broadcast of the meeting may be found on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#).

8. Motions

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.'

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

'This Council is disappointed with the proposed withdrawal of the London Day Travelcard and its form of an add-on from Essex and notes that ECC submitted a response to this effect via the TfL portal

to the consultation as well as a letter from the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport.

On a wider canvas, this Council draws attention to the positive role of railways in the life and economy of Greater Essex and applauds the construction of the new station at Beaulieu Park.

This Council therefore asks the Executive to continue to work with partners to develop sustainable transport solutions, including Rail, for the County of Essex.'

The amendment moved by Cllr Ross Playle and seconded by Cllr Lee Scott was put to the meeting and was **carried** and became the substantive motion.

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

2. Youth Service in Essex

Moved by Cllr Dave Harris and seconded by Cllr Aidan 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.'

It was moved by Cllr Mark Durham and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay that the motion be amended to read:

'Since remodelling the Youth Services back in 2015, the numbers of attendances by young people has risen from just over 40,000 to nearly 80,000 which this Council warmly welcomes.

However, Essex is a diverse county and although not yet quantified, there are potentially differences in how this increase has materialised across the County.

The root causes behind any variances are likely to be complex and this Council therefore requests that the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee considers a report to be provided by the Cabinet Member for the Arts, Heritage and Culture which sets out how the current model operates and how resources are deployed across the County.

The aim being to ascertain how improvements can be made and best practice shared to ensure even more young people, across all parts of the County, can access and benefit from high quality and sustainable youth service provision.'

The amendment moved by Cllr Mark Durham and seconded by Cllr Louise McKinlay was put to the meeting and was **carried** and became the substantive motion.

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

3. 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.'

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

The following Members requested that their vote be recorded in the minutes:

Cllr Michael Hoy – voted against the motion

Cllr Kerry Smith – voted for the motion

4. 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.’

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

9. 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:

That paragraph 16.11.1 of the constitution 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.

10. Adjournment

With the agreement of Council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:52pm. The meeting reconvened at 1:45pm.

11. 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 23 May and 20 June 2023.

12. Boundary Review

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Tom Cunningham presented the report and revised recommendations set out in the Order Paper.

In order to ensure political approval for the submission the Council makes to the Commission, it was proposed to appoint a committee to sit as required for the remainder of the municipal year.

Members and officers were thanked for their work on this review to date. Cllr Andrew Sheldon also put on record his thanks for the contributions made regarding the Castle Point Divisions.

It having been moved by Cllr Tom Cunningham and seconded by Cllr Kevin Bentley it was

Resolved:

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 To constitute a committee to be called the Boundary Review Committee with 8 members whose terms of reference are to make submissions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England with respect to the review of the ECC divisions.
- 2.3 To allocate seats on this committee to political groups as follows:
 - Conservative: 5
 - Non Aligned Group: 1
 - Liberal Democrat Group: 1
 - Labour: 1
- 2.4 That the Committee shall cease to operate on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2024.
- 2.5 That Cllr Tom Cunningham is appointed Chairman of the Committee.
- 2.6 That the date of the first meeting be held in July 2023 on a date appointed by the Head of Democracy and Transparency.
- 2.7 That the Director, Legal and Assurance be authorised to make temporary amendments to the Constitution to reflect the recommendations in this report.

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

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley, Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee presented the report, which set out the reasons for the delay in the publication of certified accounts for the Council for 2022/23 due to delays with external auditing.

The officers and members of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee were thanked for their work on this.

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

Resolved:

- 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.

14. Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Annual Report

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Anthony Hedley, Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee presented the report.

It having been moved by Cllr Anthony Hedley and seconded by Cllr Chris Siddall it was

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

15. Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board Annual Report

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Susan Barker, Chairman of the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board presented the report. Cllr Barker thanked the Members of the Boards and the Pensions team for their work. Cllr Mark Platt seconded the report and also put on record his thanks to the Members and officers for their support to the Boards and noted the achievements of the Essex Pension Fund.

It having been moved by Cllr Susan Barker and seconded by Cllr Mark Platt it was

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

16. 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:

Question asked by:	Question asked to:	Subject of the question
Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Review of part night lighting.
Cllr Ivan Henderson	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Cutting back overgrown vegetation on public rights of way.
Cllr Wendy Stamp	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Bradwell to St Lawrence bus withdrawal.
Cllr Mike Mackrory	Leader of the Council	Conflict of interest between deputy Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Members.
Cllr Lee Scordis	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	20mph zones and speeding.
Cllr Dave Harris	Climate Czar and Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling	Shrub End Recycling Centre.
Cllr Dave Harris	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Overgrown vegetation covering traffic signs.
Cllr Stephen Robinson	Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	Member led pothole scheme.
Cllr Carlo Guglielmi	Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability	Mistley Primary School building issues.

17. Closure of Meeting

The meeting closed at 2:29pm.

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

Chairman