

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. Waste and Recycling

Moved by Cllr Kerry Smith and seconded by Cllr Paul Gadd.

'Council notes, along with its predecessor some thirty years ago that incineration of waste can be deleterious to human health and that it, plus widespread employment of "energy from waste" installations, can also be bad for the environment, and should be avoided.

Council should seek to work with second tier councils radically to improve recycling rates through making the process as intuitive and easy as possible for residents.

Scrutiny should urgently investigate means of removing methane emissions from landfill sites.

Council calls on the Leader to make representations to the Government to end over-packaging of products and to introduce a bottle deposit scheme.

Council declares that any planning application made relating to waste will be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

2. Tackling the Concrete Crisis in Schools and Hospitals

Moved by Cllr Mike Mackrory and seconded by Cllr James Newport.

'Council notes that:

- i) At the end of August 2023, just days before the new school term was due to begin, the Government announced that more than 150 schools in England, including 60 schools in Essex, needed to address urgently the presence of unstable concrete known as RAAC in their buildings.
- ii) Affected schools, colleges and nurseries were told that they cannot use affected buildings unless safety measures are in place.
- iii) That dealing with the Concrete Crisis will put local authorities and other public sector bodies – already facing severe budgetary pressures – under even more pressure.
- iv) Since a school roof collapsed in 2018 the Government have failed to heed the warnings of organisations such as the Local Government Association that this is a serious problem which needed addressing.
- v) Successive years of Government underfunding in schools has resulted in 24,000 school buildings beyond their estimated initial design life and 700,000 pupils learning in schools which require major rebuilding or refurbishment.

Council believes that:

- vi) It is a national scandal that some children were being taught in crumbling classrooms and some patients are being treated in hospitals with roofs at risk of collapse.
- vii) This Government's commitment to eradicate RAAC from the NHS estate by 2035 is not soon enough.

Council further notes with concern that:

- viii) It has been reported that when Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he rejected requests from Department of Education officials for an extra £900 million a year for school funding in the 2021 Spending Review.
- ix) In the same spending review, he slashed taxes for the banks, choosing big finance over children's safety. The cost of the NHS repairs backlog is more than £10bn, up by a tenth on the previous year.

Council therefore calls on the Government to:

1. Provide urgent clarity over where RAAC has been found in schools, hospitals and other public buildings like courts, police stations, leisure centres, libraries, and public housing in Essex.
2. Urgently set up a national risk register of all public buildings.
3. Publish all advice presented to Rishi Sunak when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer on RAAC in schools and hospitals. Set out additional funding from the Treasury to replace RAAC in affected public buildings without having to sacrifice other essential repairs,

and to mitigate the disruption caused to pupils, patients, and other public service users.

4. Launch a Ministerial Taskforce to draw up a road map to ensure replacement work is carried out urgently.'

3. The Positive Impact of Growing the Essex Economy

Moved by Cllr Alan Goggin and seconded by Cllr Carlo Guglielmi

'There is a strong evidence base that shows employment is good for physical and mental health and well-being.

This Council therefore welcomes:

- The news that the UK's economy has grown faster than both France and Germany since the pre-covid period and this is also reflected in positive economic indicators for Essex.
- The growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Essex economy by £2.3 billion since 2010 and acknowledges the potential for further opportunity via our targeted Levelling Up programme and a Greater Essex devolution deal.

Building on this positive success to date, the Council is committed to targeting support for economic growth, recognising that there will always be more that can be done to deliver the tools and opportunities for people to move into well-paid employment, which is the best pathway to a good life. This Council therefore calls upon the Government to:

- Be bold and forward looking in discussions regarding the levers for sustainable economic growth across Essex.
- Work with ECC to develop and promote the recently announced, Advanced British Standard, which will bring together A-levels and T-levels.'