
ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING 12 July 2016 Order Paper

Agenda Item 13(a)

1. By Councillor Fisher of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children

'The chief inspector of Ofsted, Sir Michel Wilshaw, warns that 320,000 children in dysfunctional families across England are "at clear and present risk of harm". He says children "whose miserable young lives are so often blighted as a result of domestic violence and the abuse of drugs or alcohol by adults in the home" are safer in foster care and in children's homes. He further says that even in the 21 council areas who are rated "inadequate" this is still the case.

I am aware that fewer than half the number of children are now in care than was the case a few years ago and I know that money is scarce, but is the Portfolio holder really confident that even with reduced funds we should not be taking more children into care?'

2. By Councillor Fisher of the Leader of the Council

'The LGA says the Government should guarantee that English councils will still receive the £5.3bn they had been allocated from the European Regional Development Fund for the period 2014-20.

Can the Leader tell us how much the County Council has received from the EU in the last 3 years and give an indication of the amount the Council anticipated receiving in the next 3-4 years?'

3. By Councillor Mackrory of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

'On 28 June and a few days thereafter, the Army & Navy flyover was closed during the daytime for maintenance works in the vicinity. There was traffic chaos over a wide area causing the travelling public to be seriously delayed, in some cases by hours.

Given that Essex Highways had stated that the Chelmsford Highways network is at 95% capacity, will the Cabinet Member ensure that the Army & Navy Flyover is only closed late at night and in the early hours for routine maintenance?’

4. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children

‘Autism is a major issue facing many families across Essex and a key concern for many of them is the consistency of diagnostic service for adults. I understand there are three different diagnostic services for different parts of the county because they are commissioned by separate CCGs and provided by different NHS Trusts. There currently seems to be an inconsistency of referral route, waiting lists, and support offered all based on where you live in the county.

What steps is the Cabinet Member going to take to ensure a high quality consistent diagnostic service is made available to all residents in Essex regardless of where they may live?’

5. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

‘Please could the Cabinet Member confirm how much Essex County Council spent on refurbishing Brentwood High Street a few years ago? Please could he also confirm how much the County Council has spent on repairs to the High Street following that refurbishment up to the end of May 2016? Has the County Council sought any compensation from the contractors who did the original refurbishment and if they have, how much money has the County Council received to date?’

6. By Councillor Deakin of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

‘With heavy rain falling during these past few months it has become apparent that many urban drains are not getting cleared and maintained to adequately clear the water. I have seen many people in Chelmsford being drenched by passing vehicles that have no alternative but to drive through the ponds of water, many extending across the whole road, particularly on our housing estates.

Could the Cabinet Member please assure that these drains will be dealt with, and Members will not be fobbed off with a standard reply of

'not meeting the criteria', before we head into winter with further rainfall worsening the situation?'

7. Councillor Bobbin of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

'I'd like to recognise the success of the Basildon Excellence Panel which, under Sir Mike Tomlinson, has consistently gotten our Ofsted ratings up to good and excellent.

Now that he is leaving, will the Cabinet Member carry on the good work to make sure that any organisation that takes over continues to make progress, and does not let Basildon families down?

Will the Cabinet Member also join me in recognising the great work of governors, who do an excellent job in light of dwindling resources?'

8. Councillor Bobbin of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

'A number of Basildon residents are deeply dissatisfied with the quality of work carried out by ECC contracted maintenance companies. Do we specify any follow up requirements when contracting work, and what sort of regulations are in place to ensure that pathway and road maintenance work is completed to an acceptable quality?'

9. Councillor Harris of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

'Given the nature and volume of concerns regarding the quality of highways repair work, should we be more firm in our quality checks, and should we check more?'

10. Councillor Young of the Leader of the Council

'It was recently announced by Essex University that all female teaching staff would receive a one-off pay hike to combat gender inequality and bring them in line with male colleagues. How pronounced is the gender gap here at Essex County Council, and what are we doing to combat it?'

11. Councillor Henderson of the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Partnerships

'Essex County Council recently announced Dr Andrew Sentance as chair of the Essex Economic Commission, a group tasked with reviewing investment and growth across the county. Given the diverse nature of the Essex economy, and Dr Sentance's very urban-centric experience base, can we have assurances that all voices, including those from rural and coastal communities, will be factored into the group's work, rather than marginalised in the interest of growing the commuter belt and urban centres?'

12. Councillor Smith of the Cabinet Member for Finance

'ECC are looking to enable the Homes and Community Agency to build a hotel on a plot of land (next to Basildon Golf Course) that has always been earmarked for such a project.

I understand that Essex County Council is to see a significant windfall from lifting the restrictive covenant on this land. If this transpires, will Essex County Council make a one off grant to Basildon Borough Council to the two nearest community centres/buildings (Kingswood Play Group Centre and the Lee Chapel South community centre) to use on either building or internal furniture upgrades?'

13. Councillor Smith of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

'I have just written to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning about the plight of one of my constituents who has sadly just lost an apprenticeship to help him to become a teacher. Will the Cabinet Member be able to find my constituent a similar apprenticeship so that one day he can become a teacher?'

14. Councillor Whitehouse of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

'Please set out the criteria which determine when Essex County Council (rather than the North or South Essex Parking Partnerships) will implement parking restrictions such as limited waiting or double yellow lines.

In particular will Essex County Council consider implementing parking restrictions outside the entrance to Epping St John's Secondary School in Epping in order to address safety and congestion concerns at this location?'

15. By Councillor Danvers of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

'Would the portfolio holder give the details of the formula for repairing roads by mileage and secondly by usage? Would he give a breakdown of expenditure on road maintenance district by district (If that is not possible then Harlow compared to Uttlesford and/or Epping Forest) for the financial year 2014/15? Will the portfolio holder consider giving more emphasis to road usage than road mileage as it is at present very unfair on urban authorities?'

16. By Councillor Danvers of the Leader of the Council

'Considering the pledge made by the Leader of the Council to examine the possibility of more feasibility studies for value for money with in house contracts at the last Council meeting, could he give examples of any progress that has been made or any projects in the pipeline that will be considered for an in house tendering bid?'
