
Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council, held in the Council Chamber County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex on Tuesday, 06 December 2016

Present:

Chairman: Councillor J F Aldridge

Vice-Chairman: Councillor J G Jowers

Councillors:

J Abbott	D Finch	N Le Gresley
B Aspinell	M D Fisher	S Lissimore
S Barker	R Gadsby	J Lodge
R L Bass	K Gibbs	D Louis
A Bayley	A Goggin	M Mackrory
K Bentley	R J Gooding	R A Madden
D Blackwell	I Grundy	M McEwen
K Bobbin	C Guglielmi	V Metcalfe
R G Boyce	D Harris	A Naylor
A Brown	A M Hedley	C Pond
M Buckley	I Henderson	J M Reeves
G Butland	T M A Higgins	S Robinson
S Canning	R Hirst	C Seagers
J Chandler	P Honeywood	K Smith
P Channer	R C Howard	A Turrell
K Clempner	M Hoy	K Twitchen
T Cutmore	N Hume	S Walsh
M Danvers	J Huntman	R G Walters
J Deakin	A Jackson	J Whitehouse
T Durcan	E C Johnson	A Wood

A Erskine

D J Kendall

J A Young

F Ferguson

J Knapman

Prayers

The meeting was preceded by prayers led by Abbott Hugh Allan, Apostolic Administrator of the South Atlantic, Parish Priest of Our Lady Immaculate and Chaplain to the Chairman of Essex County Council.

Public Questions

The Chairman welcomed Dr David Corke, Wimbish Parish Council Bus Representative, who had registered to speak.

Dr Corke addressed Council concerning bus routes affecting Wimbish and a suggested resolution from Wimbish Parish Council that would serve the needs of local residents. He then requested that a meeting be arranged between key Council public transport staff, Stephenson's of Essex (the contractor for the bus routes involved), the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and himself, to examine the Parish Council's proposal more thoroughly.

Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, thanked Dr Corke for his question. He stated that he would always listen to proposals for improving services for local people although it should be borne in mind that such proposals are often not straightforward and require consultations. The area referred to has already undergone an extensive consultation with local people in regard to bus services and the current network takes account of those views. Officers are working on a detailed response to Dr Corke's proposals and to this end have consulted with Stephenson's of Essex. The Cabinet Member confirmed he was prepared to meet with Dr Corke and officers to discuss the proposal.

The Chairman formally opened the meeting

The Chairman reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded and broadcast live over the internet.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors M Ellis, M Leonard, M

Maddocks, Lady Newton, M J Page, C Sargeant and J Spence.

2 Declarations of Interest

- Councillor Louis declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions (Motions 1 and 2) as a Director of Provide and as his spouse worked for Southend Hospital. On the advice of the Interim Monitoring Officer he would withdraw from the Chamber.
- Councillor Wood declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions (Motions 1 and 2).
- Councillor Cutmore declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions, (Motions 1 and 2) as a representative member of West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and a Governor of Southend Hospital.
- Councillor Walters declared a Code interest in relation to item 11, Questions, as a Director of Essex Cares.
- Councillor Hirst declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions, (Motions 1 and 2) as a representative member on Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.
- Councillor Young declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions, (Motions 1 and 2) as her spouse was a Non-Executive Director of Southend Hospital NHS Trust. She had received a dispensation from the Interim Monitoring Officer to enable her to remain for the debate.
- Councillor Abbott declared a Code interest in relation to item 7, Motions, (Motions 1 and 2) because of the employment of a close family member and intended to withdraw from the Chamber.

3 Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the addition to minute 12a (Written Questions) of the following supplementary question:

‘(11) Councillor Abbott asked Councillor Johnson, The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he was aware that the police officer’s objection stated that the police did not know why the scheme had been proposed. He also asked if the Cabinet Member was aware that the speed survey data was taken outside Rivenhall Primary School and was he confident that the data conformed to the 30-mile an hour speed limit that existed there?’

The Cabinet Member replied that he was confident that the professional highways officers had looked at the proposal in detail and concluded that a reduction in the speed limit was not appropriate. He also confirmed that the police had stated that it would be unenforceable. He offered to make known to Councillor Abbott the name of the police officer who had responded and clarified that the Council had only applied the speed limit to part of the road to align with Essex Highways Policy.’

4 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Recent Death

Councillor Joe Pike

The Chairman informed Council that sadly Councillor Joe Pike had died on Sunday, 5 December at the age of 87.

He was first elected to Essex County Council in 1977 to represent the Division of Benfleet, and then subsequently Halstead. He served on numerous committees and was Chairman of the Council from 2000 to 2002 as well as being an Executive Member and Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group.

He had served on many and varied committees including the Police Authority, the Enterprise Board, the Corporate Strategy Committee and the Executive Strategy Committee. He was Chairman of the Social Services Committee, the Mid-Essex Area Forum and the Standards Committee. He was between 1968 and 1971 Chairman of Benfleet Urban District Council and from 1976 to 1977 Chairman of Castle Point District Council. He was also a member of Halstead Town Council.

The Chairman noted that his selfless commitment to the people of Essex has been both extensive and impressive and had been recognised when he was awarded an MBE in 2012 for services to Local Government.

The Chairman had sent a message of condolence to his family on behalf of the Council.

The Leader of the Council, Leaders of the Opposition and Members of the Council added their condolences to those of the Chairman.

Congratulations

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Melissa Leonard (formerly McGeorge) who since the last meeting of Council had got married.

Awards

Children and Young People Now Award

The Chairman invited Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, to present an award won by Family Operations - Essex Social Care Academy at the recent Children and Young People Now Awards, for their organising and advocacy of professional development and training for the Council's social workers, foster carers and partners such as Essex Police. The winning team were present in the Chamber and were congratulated.

The National Citizen Service Award

The Chairman invited Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, to introduce a group of young people from Uttlesford who had taken part in last autumn's National Citizen Service (NCS) programme, run by Essex County Council's Youth Service. The Uttlesford team ran a community action project to raise awareness of mental health issues. They created a powerful film which was presented to more than 1,000 young people during school assemblies across Essex. The winning team was present in the Chamber and the individuals were presented with certificates by the Chairman to commemorate their achievement.

2016 Social Worker of the Year Awards

The Chairman invited Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, to present an award in respect of Bianka Lang who had been awarded both the Team Leader of the Year – Children's Services, and overall Social Worker of the Year.

He also noted that former employee Mandy Nightingale had won Gold as Principal Social Worker of the Year while Aimee Weston won Silver for Children's Social Worker of the Year.

Society for Public Architecture, Construction, Engineering and Surveying Awards

The Chairman noted that Colchester's Park and Ride Pavilion at Cuckoo Farm had been named at the Society for Public Architecture, Construction, Engineering and Surveying Awards as the best-designed civic building in the UK.

Charter Plus for Elected Member Development

The Chairman informed Council that following a recent review it had been confirmed that Essex County Council was continuing to meet the standard of the Charter Plus for Elected Member Development. He extended his congratulations to those Members and Officers who had contributed to this achievement and have put the Council in a strong position to focus on new Councillor Induction, Political Leadership and Digital Development.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Chairman invited Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, to present a certificate marking the achievement of young people of Essex who have completed 23,034 hours of volunteering with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The certificate was in recognition of the incredible value of their contribution to the community and was also a great credit to the Essex Youth Service. The Cabinet Member congratulated them, and the young people who gave up their time for what would hopefully continue to be a lifelong habit of service.

5 Receipt of petitions

The Chairman received petitions concerning:

- Safer pedestrian crossing on Galleywood Road, Chelmsford from Councillor Deakin on behalf of local residents but presented on her behalf by Councillor Mackrory,
- Pavement and parking issues outside Trafford House in Station Way, Basildon, from Councillor Smith on behalf of local residents and
- The protection of a footpath on Canvey Island, from Councillor Howard on behalf of local residents.

The petitions were passed for the attention of Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

6 Executive Statement

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Finch, delivered an Executive Statement on 'The Spending Review and Essex' including references to:

- addressing sustainability of Social Care,
- investing in infrastructure to support the economy and
- supporting home ownership.

7 Motions

The Chairman ruled that the two Motions 'Health' and 'NHS in Essex' should be taken as one debate.

Councillors Abbott and Louis, having declared Code interests left the meeting during the consideration of the two motions.

Councillor Lodge declared a Code interest as a Governor of Cambridgeshire University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Health

It was moved by Councillor Butland and seconded by Councillor Naylor that:

'This Council re-affirms its commitment to the next phase of integration of health and social care. It recognises the role Sustainability & Transformation Plans (STPs) could play in this.

The Council believes that STPs must be a genuine joint commitment between the NHS and local government. For this reason the County Council is disappointed that the geographical integrity of the County has been ignored by NHS England in establishing its national 'footprints'. The unilateral decision of NHS England to include Essex in three STPs is regrettable and places an unreasonable burden on the authority.

Nevertheless, to protect the interests of its residents, the Council will work constructively with health partners providing that any proposals brought forward in the

emerging STPs:

1. are based on high quality care and improved clinical outcomes for patients and not merely financial expediency;
2. address the issues of accessibility for patients and their families;
3. take full account of the impact on both community and social care services;
4. give an equal importance and parity of esteem to Mental Health services; and
5. contain a genuine commitment to focus on preventive health services.

The Council will also press for there to be genuine consultation on any proposals and that patient need is put first, that decisions are taken in public and that appropriate joint governance arrangements are established.'

NHS in England

It was moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Whitehouse that:

'This Council notes with concern current pressures and challenges facing the NHS in Essex including:

- The "Success Regime" being implemented across most of Essex.
- The Care Quality Commission's assessments of hospitals serving Essex residents which identify three major hospitals serving Essex as 'Inadequate', one in 'Special Measures', six as 'Requires Improvement' and only two as 'Good'.
- The decision of some Clinical Commissioning Groups to withdraw treatments/services previously available through the NHS.
- Increasing concern from residents about access to services including waiting times for GP appointments.
- Increasing demand for social care and the impact on the NHS when timely care is not available.

The Council notes the three Sustainable Transformation Plans covering Essex. Whilst welcoming the intention for greater collaboration across the NHS and Public Health, Council expresses its concerns about:

- The lack of public debate and consultation to inform the preparation of the STPs.
- The proposed downgrading of Accident and Emergency at Broomfield Hospital despite the proposed construction of thousands of dwellings within a ten mile radius of the hospital which will create extra demand and the additional distance ambulances will have to travel to Basildon carrying patients with life threatening conditions.
- The failure of Government to adequately fund the increasing demands on the NHS and Public Health.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Cabinet Member for Health to:

- Oppose the downgrading of Broomfield Hospital Accident and Emergency.
- Continue to play a full part in discussions about the health and social care

system in Essex including through the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- Ensure local members are briefed on the implications of the STPs for residents in their areas.
- Request the Leader of the Council to express these concerns formally to the Secretary of State for Health.'

The Motion moved by Councillor Butland and seconded by Councillor Naylor was put to the meeting and declared to be carried.

Prior to the Motion moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Whitehouse being put, ten Members demanded a division by name by standing in their places.

The Motion having been put to the meeting it was declared to be lost by 24 votes for, 39 against and 1 abstention.

Those voting for the Motion were Councillors:

B Aspinell	F Ferguson	N Le Gresley
A Bayley	M Fisher	J Lodge
D Blackwell	D Harris	M Mackrory
K Bobbin	I Henderson	S Robinson
K Clempner	T Higgins	K Smith
M Danvers	M Hoy	A Turrell
J Deakin	J Huntman	J Whitehouse
T Durcan	D J Kendall	J Young

Those voting against the Motion were Councillors:

J F Aldridge	D Finch	J G Jowers
S Barker	R Gadsby	J Knapman
R L Bass	A Goggin	S Lissimore
K Bentley	R J Gooding	R A Madden
R G Boyce	I Grundy	M McEwen
A Brown	C Guglielmi	V Metcalfe
M Buckley	A M Hedley	A Naylor
G Butland	R Hirst	J M Reeves

S Canning	P Honeywood	C Seagers
J Chandler	R C Howard	K Twitchen
P Channer	N Hume	S Walsh
T Cutmore	A Jackson	R G Walters
A Erskine	E C Johnson	A Wood

Councillor C Pond abstained.

The two motions in which they had declared a Code Interest having been dealt with, Councillors Abbott and Louis re-joined the meeting.

Central Government Funding

It was moved by Councillor Danvers and seconded by Councillor Durcan that:

‘This Council is reminded of the words of the Leader, Councillor David Finch, when he remarked that local government is ‘not a reservoir that Whitehall can keep tapping’. This Council strongly supports and endorses these remarks, and further challenges the narrative that Essex County Council has been able to absorb excessive cuts without damaging the quality and reach of essential services delivered to residents across Essex.

This Council also notes with concern, evidence which suggests that it is the most vulnerable who have been the hardest hit, with those least able to cope bearing the brunt of cuts in Government funding. This continued strain on the Council’s limited finances is unsustainable, and raises questions about the scale and scope of future spending reductions. Essex County Council faces significant challenges moving forward, and will simply be left unable to provide for residents unless this authority receives reasonable support from Central Government - acknowledging the task ahead.

This Council therefore seeks cross-party endorsement, calling upon the administration to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of Essex residents, outlining concerns with the anticipated level of cuts and demand that greater financial provision be put in place to ensure that services meet the needs of residents, with the capacity to grow to meet future demand.’

It was moved by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Buckley that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

‘This Council is reminded of the words of the Leader, Councillor David Finch, when he remarked that local government is “not a reservoir that Whitehall can keep tapping”. This Council strongly supports and endorses these remarks, and further recognises that Essex County Council has been able to absorb financial challenges without damaging the quality and reach of essential services delivered to residents across Essex.

This Council therefore seeks cross-party endorsement, calling upon the Leader to write

to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of Essex residents, outlining concerns with the anticipated level of future budget reductions as an ongoing consequence of the Labour legacy, and urges that financial provision be put in place to ensure that services meet the needs of residents, with the capacity to grow to meet future demand.'

Prior to the amendment to the Motion being put, ten Members demanded a division by name by standing in their places.

The amendment to the Motion having been put to the meeting it was declared to be carried by 41 votes for, 18 against and 7 abstentions.

Those voting for the amendment to the Motion were Councillors:

J F Aldridge	R Gadsby	S Lissimore
S Barker	A Goggin	D Louis
R L Bass	R J Gooding	R A Madden
K Bentley	I Grundy	M McEwen
R G Boyce	C Guglielmi	V Metcalfe
A Brown	A M Hedley	A Naylor
M Buckley	R Hirst	J M Reeves
G Butland	P Honeywood	C Seagers
S Canning	R C Howard	K Smith
J Chandler	N Hume	K Twitchen
P Channer	A Jackson	S Walsh
T Cutmore	E C Johnson	R G Walters
A Erskine	J G Jowers	A Wood
D Finch	J Knapman	

Those voting against the amendment to the Motion were Councillors:

J Abbott	T Durcan	D J Kendall
B Aspinell	M Fisher	M Mackrory
K Bobbin	D Harris	S Robinson
K Clempner	I Henderson	A Turrell

M Danvers

T Higgins

J Whitehouse

J Deakin

M Hoy

J Young

Those abstaining were Councillors:

A Bayley

J Huntman

C Pond

D Blackwell

N Le Gresley

F Ferguson

J Lodge

The amendment was declared to be carried and became the substantive Motion.

The substantive Motion having been put to the meeting was declared to be carried.

8 Variation in the Order of Business

With the agreement of Council the Chairman varied the order of business such that the report on the new Audit Regime became the next item of business.

9 New Audit Regime

The Leader, Councillor Finch, presented the report seeking Council's approval to opt into arrangements by which the Council's external auditor is appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited, a company owned by the Local Government Association.

Resolved:

That the Council 'opt in' to having its auditor appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited and authorise the Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services to notify Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited accordingly.

10 Adjournment

With the agreement of Council the Chairman adjourned the meeting for luncheon at 12:53.

The meeting reconvened at 14:00.

11 Motions (continued)

Social Care

It was moved by Councillor Bentley and seconded by Councillor Madden that:

‘This Council welcomes that through modern science and better understood health opportunities we are all living longer but recognises that an ageing population does put considerable extra pressure on County Council budgets. We applaud the hard work of our staff in Adult Social Care and the excellent service provided to Essex residents particularly during these times of increasing demand.

This Council recognises that to continue to provide services to the residents of Essex as expected, new approaches to deliver quality services are needed, which include developing digital and assistive technologies.’

It was moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Whitehouse that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

‘This Council welcomes that through modern science and better understood health opportunities we are all living longer but recognises that an ageing population does put considerable extra pressure on County Council budgets. We applaud the hard work of our staff in Adult Social Care and the excellent service provided to Essex residents particularly during these times of increasing demand.

This Council recognises that to continue to provide services to the residents of Essex as expected, new approaches to deliver quality services are needed, which include developing digital and assistive technologies which can complement but not replace the importance of personal care.

This Council therefore endorses the Leader’s view as expressed in his letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer prior to the Autumn Statement, that the 2% Social Care Precept does not even cover the cost of the national living wage, that the Better Care Fund be brought forward and that the £160m saving to Public Health Funding be reversed.’

It was moved by Councillor Danvers and seconded by Councillor Bobbin that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

‘This Council welcomes that through modern science and better understood health opportunities we are all living longer but recognises that an ageing population does put considerable extra pressure on County Council budgets.

We applaud the hard work of our staff in Adult Social Care and the excellent service provided to Essex residents particularly during these times of increasing demand. This Council recognises that to continue to provide services to the residents of Essex as expected, new approaches to deliver quality services are needed, which include developing digital and assistive technologies. Quality of care must be a priority

however, and no change to service delivery can be allowed to come with a social cost, or be used purely as an opportunity to cut funding. With isolation and loneliness on the rise, this authority must take all steps necessary to ensure that new approaches to adult social care don't leave our elderly and most vulnerable residents left behind.'

The amendment moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Whitehouse having been put to the meeting was declared to be lost.

The amendment moved by Councillor Danvers and seconded by Councillor Bobbin having been put to the meeting was declared to be lost.

The original Motion having been put to the meeting was declared to be carried.

Recycling Centres

It was moved by Councillor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Hoy that:

'Council believes that the new rules introduced on 1st November for the 21 ECC Recycling Centres are flawed.

Council believes that the ban on householder DIY waste from 11 of the Recycling Centres will have undesirable effects for the convenience of residents through increased travelling distances and could potentially increase fly-tipping which would consequently be a cost to Borough/City/District council taxpayers.

Council notes that the banning of vans at 12 Recycling Centres will prevent many legitimate users from taking their own household materials for disposal or recycling locally.

Council further notes that the 28 day and 6 month restrictions on DIY wastes that can be taken to some Recycling Centres are far too prescriptive and effectively unenforceable.

Council believes that rules on the use of Recycling Centres should be fair and applied evenly across the County and that boosting recycling should be a top priority.

Council agrees that inappropriate entry of commercial materials to Recycling Centres needs to be tackled but notes that other authorities such as Suffolk County Council take the position of accepting this material, but for a charge.

Council recognises that the Cabinet Member, following a call in, has agreed to review the situation after three months of operation, but believes the original decision was flawed and therefore should be withdrawn.'

The Motion having been put to the meeting was declared to be lost.

12 To receive the Leader's report of Cabinet Issues

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented a report concerning matters considered by Cabinet since the last Council meeting.

There were no questions.

13 To receive a report of matters reserved to the Council and to consider any recommendations

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented the report of matters reserved to Council that itemised changes to membership of committees.

The report was received.

14 Written questions by Members of the Council

The published answers to the 20 written questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 16.12.1 were noted.

The following supplementary questions were asked as a result of having received a written reply:

(1) Councillor Danvers asked Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, what plans had he made to have the cuts restored?

The Cabinet Member replied that the matter was being examined as part of the budget process as it would be necessary to find better ways of doing things.

(3) Councillor Deakin sought clarification from Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, as to what he might define in monetary terms as a 'minimal cost to the taxpayer'?

The Cabinet Member replied that he considered £250 to be minimal.

(5) Councillor Mackrory asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, if he could confirm, in the light of his answer, that £1m dividend which had originally been included in the budget for this year (which was not paid and had to be made up from other parts of the Adult Social Care budget) that this would no longer be the case in future budgets?

The Leader of the Council replied that the dividend was planned to be delivered in 2017/2018.

(7) Councillor Kendall asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he could clarify to which Area Transportation Board he was

referring and who were the members of that Board?

The Cabinet Member replied that he did not have that information to hand but he would send to Councillor Kendall the information he required.

(9) Councillor Smith asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, concerning the village of Dry Street if he was aware that the drivers of vehicles were getting frustrated and being rude to each other. He believed that the village needed to be protected from extra traffic.

The Leader replied that he would need to undertake some research before being able to provide a reply.

(10) Councillor Higgins asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he could clarify the time lines as one of the bridges had been in disrepair for 16 years.

The Cabinet Member replied that he was unaware that it had been 16 years awaiting repair, he believed it was three. However, he was unable to provide an update to the plans at the present time, but he would provide one in the New Year.

(11) Councillor Aspinell asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he was satisfied that it had been necessary to bring the matter of the unrepaired lampposts three times to Council and report it dozens of times over the course of three years in order to get a lamp column repaired?

The Cabinet Member replied that he had been successful.

(12) Councillor Whitehouse asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, what happens next in the planning towards devolution?

The Leader replied that there would shortly be consultations with Chief Executives and Leaders of Councils in order to establish the right approach. He was mindful of the need not to fall behind other Authorities and to make the right approach to Government to obtain additional powers and funding.

(13) Councillor Goggin asked Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, if the system is to be used on all future large projects and what they might be?

The Cabinet Member replied that the Council was learning a lot as time progresses and had a significant investment in new school places which includes major investments in special schools across the County.

(17) Councillor Henderson asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if his reply meant there was a total of 1,179 schemes waiting to go through Highways Panels?

The Cabinet Member replied that he was correct. The schemes were all at different stages.

(18) Councillor Clempner asked Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for

Education and Lifelong Learning, if due to the lack of increase in funding, there had been a drop in the number of providers?

The Cabinet Member replied that he did not have that information to hand. There was clearly a challenge in that sector but he would provide to her more definite figures.

20) Councillor Young asked Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, if he could provide the actual spend for home to school transport and separate out the SEN transport expenditure.

The Cabinet Member replied that she had not asked for actual spend but for the budget and that had been provided. He did not have the actual spend to hand but he did know that in 2015/2016 there was a saving of £256,000 as a result of the policy changes and in 2016/2017 it was anticipated to be £451,000. He would provide to her directly the detail she had requested.

15 Oral questions of the Leader, Cabinet Member or the chairman of a committee

1 Councillor Kendall asked Councillor Brown, the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Communities, if she could advise when the public consultation on the proposed relocation of Brentwood Library would commence and what form it would take?

The Cabinet Member replied that there were no plans to move the library from its present site.

2 Councillor Kendall asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he could comment on the imminent cessation of the service bus No 261. He wondered if the Cabinet Member might wish to make a statement as to what action he was taking to save it?

The Cabinet Member replied that officers were working hard to save this bus which, he noted was a commercial and not a council run service. However, he was still trying to save the service. It was inevitable that the service will cease on 16 December and even if a new provider were to be found it would take 28 to 56 days to re-register the service with the Traffic Commission.

3 Councillor Higgins asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, if the planning groups, of one of which she was Chairman, and who met last week with the Chief Executive, would still be of use to the Council and be meeting on a regular basis.

The Cabinet Member replied that he would be encouraging those meetings to take place but he would find out more and reply directly.

4 Councillor Bayley asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, regarding the 20-20 initiative what measures are in place in Essex to encourage this safety issue?

The Cabinet Member replied that there was an imminent Cabinet Member Action

concerning 20-20 and schools are to be encouraged to take part.

5 Councillor Twitchen asked Councillor Brown, the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Communities, if she recalled that a couple of years ago libraries were encouraged to develop innovative community use and Billericay Community Cinema was created. This year they won the National Film Society's award for the best new society. Billericay was proud of them and it was a great example of what can be achieved. Is the Council still providing this encouragement?

The Cabinet Member replied that this was an example of how innovative libraries could become. The Council was looking at ten of the larger libraries at the moment with a view to making them into hubs and suggesting that they engage with their communities with a view to providing different services. The example at Billericay showed that the library had increased its footfall by drawing in 1,156 people to watch 27 films over the last year.

6 Councillor Le Gresley congratulated Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, for his successful pursuance of 'garden cities' for Essex. He asked if he could use his influence to suggest to the Councils in the south of Essex that their 'objectively assessed needs' could be mitigated by these new communities, reducing the need for unpopular new estates to be built encircling already over-developed communities.

The Leader thanked Councillor Le Gresley and replied that he would try to use his influence as he had suggested.

7 Councillor Pond asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he recalled that he had provided in November 2015 a dossier of footway defects in Loughton High Road North and Jackson's Avenue – which he had originally drawn attention to in November 2009. However, no repairs have been undertaken and now a constituent of Councillor Gadsby has met with an accident in Jackson's Avenue which, in Councillor Pond's opinion, was now in a dangerous state. Would the Cabinet Member meet with him on site, perhaps with Councillor Gadsby, to try and remedy this long-standing problem?

The Cabinet Member replied that he had already written to Councillor Pond to explain that the defects do not meet the criteria. He encouraged any Member with concerns of this nature to come to his surgery and express their concerns to him directly.

8 Councillor Abbott asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he recalled that at the last meeting of Council he had given a response to a written question about rural pin-posts and he had said that the Council was starting work to identify them, note defects and take action. Could he give an update on that work and if it was going to include metal pin-posts of which he had quite a number in his Division and some of which were of historical interest.

The Cabinet Member replied that the work was planned within next year's budget and he was working with officers to plan for maintenance. Most pin-posts were wooden but he would draw the matter of metal pin-posts to the attention of the relevant officers.

9 Councillor Abbott asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport if, concerning the decision to cancel the 30mph speed limit extension in

Rivenhall, the Cabinet Member recalled that he had written to him to inform him that the police officer (whose single objection had caused this scheme to be cancelled) had informed him that he did not assess the speed monitoring data taken outside the school and yet the Cabinet Member had not responded to his email request that they meet with a view to re-evaluating the decision.

The Cabinet Member replied that notwithstanding a conversation Councillor Abbott may have had with a single police officer, the police had been fully involved and consulted and were not in favour of this scheme as it was not enforceable. But it was not the only reason for the decision. As far as a response to the email was concerned, he had replied to say that he would meet Councillor Abbott at his Highways Surgery. That offer still stands.

10 Councillor Aspinell asked Councillor Brown, the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Communities, if she was aware, further to her earlier congratulations to Billericay Library that Brentwood does not have a cinema and he would welcome a similar initiative in Brentwood Library bearing in mind the available space.

The Cabinet Member replied that, for clarity, there were no discussions or negotiations that considered the moving of the library in Brentwood. There are discussions with officers about using the space. The local members will be informed as discussions continue.

11 Councillor Aspinell asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, concerning the switch to LED lighting if residents were to be consulted when decisions were being made to switch lighting back on.

The Cabinet Member replied that residents need not be consulted on this matter as part-night lighting was not being replaced with all-night LED lighting. LED lights were only being installed in lampposts on strategic roads and where they are currently left on at night. Other individual lights will only be replaced with LEDs when they require maintenance and replacement. It was anticipated that in the future all lights would be LED.

16 Oral questions of the representative of the Essex Police and Crime Panel on any matter of that Panel

Councillor Henderson asked Councillor Jowers, the Representative of the Essex Police and Crime Panel, was he aware of increasing crime in Essex, especially in Harwich, and had he discussed with the Police and Crime Commissioner increasing the number of police officers on patrol?

The Representative replied that there had been a number of discussions concerning the allocation of resources and he invited Councillor Henderson to attend a Police and Crime Panel meeting so he could be party to those discussions.

17 Oral questions of the representative of the Essex Fire Authority

There were no questions.

18 Chairman's concluding remarks

The Chairman concluded the meeting by wishing Councillor Johnson a speedy recovery from an impending operation, Councillor Deakin a speedy recovery from her accident and to invite Members of the Council to the Chairman's Christmas reception on 20 December.

He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Chairman