

## Leader's Budget Headlines for Executive Statement

- Mr Chairman, as we now emerge from the pandemic it is good to see so many Members back in the Chamber as we come together to debate this Budget.
- A budget for Everyone's Essex
- A budget that recognises the demands on our services but ensures we invest in the lives of Essex people.
- No Council has money – it has the people's money.
- A Society is marked out by the way we care for the most vulnerable – in Essex we have a proud record of caring for our residents who need the most help. The lions share of our budget is invested in guaranteeing that people know we are there for them at the time of theirs or their family's greatest need.
- We have some of the best teams in the country working in our social services and we will ensure we continue to invest in them and the people they care for.
- It is where the greatest proportion of everyone's Council Tax is spent – and it is important that every resident knows that they are contributing to help their family members, their friends, their neighbours; secure in the knowledge that when the time comes – Essex County Council will be there.
- Everyone's Essex means no one is left behind, whoever they are and wherever they come from.
- You will hear more about our social services work, the financial pressures and how we manage them during the course of this Budget debate.
- As we come out of the other side of COVID we are setting a Budget in one of the most challenging times. As Conservatives we do not raise taxes lightly, in fact we have set zero rises over a number of years. We only ask residents to pay more when we need that money to ensure our excellent services continue to deliver.
- Every penny of the money we are asking for in this budget and the Council Tax rise we are proposing, the large part once again for Adult Social Care, is accounted for and will be invested in those front line services.
- But, Mr Chairman, we are mindful that this rise is coming at a time when many families are struggling financially with rising prices and that is why we are setting out a package to help those just about managing.

- A package of Cost of Living schemes, which you will hear more about during the Budget Speech of Cllr Whitbread, whom I describe as the Chancellor of Essex.
- Everyone's Essex means no one is left behind, whoever they are and wherever they come from.
- When we took office in May we launched our new policy of Everyone's Essex, ensuring all have equal opportunity, encouraging success, caring for people and our planet and backing our businesses to bring new jobs and working with them and educationalists to provide the skills needed by all ages.
- The Levelling Up work lead by my friend and Deputy Leader, Cllr McKinley, is a real and positive policy that sets a new agenda for people in the greatest need and ensures everyone has equal opportunities. This work is already underway and this budget backs this policy to ensure success.
- Everyone's Essex means no one is left behind, whoever they are and wherever they come from.
- In May, along with Levelling Up, we pledged that Climate Change would be one of the cornerstones of this Administration. After only seven months in office we have already started to act – and as you will hear from our Climate Change Czar, Cllr Schwier, not only are we delivering - there is plenty more to come in what is probably the great crisis facing our world; and we are being recognised as a leading authority in this area.
- We must never forget that we are also here to deliver the important day-to-day services that people rely on in order to live their lives and prosper. Our Highways crews, who like so many in public service worked tirelessly through the pandemic, are at this very moment working on our roads.
- However hard our teams work, there are new and existing potholes created, we recognise that road defects are real for everyone, and in Highways also, no one is left behind. Therefore, you will hear during this Budget Speech how we are going to invest extra resources into repairing those defects and by doing so putting you the local Councillor in charge of what needs doing first.
- Mr Chairman, as I outlined in my first speech to you as Leader, everyone should have the opportunity to reach for the stars, whether they touch them is not the most important thing but having the chance to reach for them is – providing that opportunity is our watchword and runs deep within this Administration.

- We have achieved much in seven months, but there is more to do and this Budget, Mr Chairman, puts us on that trajectory to succeed.
- As you will hear it is a budget that puts money behind our pledges,
  - puts money into front line services,
  - puts money into helping solve some of the most difficult issues within our society,
  - putting money into reducing carbon emissions,
  - putting money into Arts, Culture and Heritage to boost our economy and our communities
  - and yes, putting extra money into fixing potholes.
- Mr Chairman, This is a budget for all – a budget for Everyone's Essex!!