
Essex County Council

13 October 2020

Order Paper

Agenda Item 14

Written Questions

1. By Councillor Maddocks of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

‘During the Covid crisis what extra help has ECC given to the providers of care homes throughout Essex, and what provisions are in place during a second wave of Covid especially in the winter months ahead?’

2. By Councillor Grundy of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘I have had a number of residents complaining of vehicles short circuiting queues at the Army and Navy by using the Bus Lane – currently we do not have enforcement cameras there. In view of this current abuse and future plans for more sustainable transport in that area, could this be reviewed?’

3. By Councillor Sheldon of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘The overrunning of the latest phase of the Sadlers Farm Roadworks by Balfour Beattie has caused misery for thousands of Castle Point residents. Appreciating that the works are taking place under an existing contract and at no further cost to the taxpayer, what pressure can the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, and Essex County Council Highways, place on Balfour Beattie to ensure they stick by their final deadline for full completion of scheduled works by the end of December?’

4. By Councillor Scordis of the Leader of the Council

‘Given reports of the way that Uyghur Muslims have been treated in China, will this council terminate all relationships and interests we have with China as well as oppose the Bradwell B plans until these humanitarian issues are addressed and

resolved?’

5. By Councillor Reid of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

‘The Government has lifted the restrictions from the NHS Trusts regarding partners or a loved one being able to participate in pregnancy appointments, scans and during labour. Can we be assured that Essex NHS Trusts are complying with these guidelines as it is reported that not all Trusts are?’

6. By Councillor Reid of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

‘It has been reported that Councils are to get additional National Resources to help them reach more people with Covid-19. Can some of these resources be put towards more mobile testing units within the Essex County, maybe in schools and universities where there is a density of population. There have been some schools which have had to close year bubbles or classes due to Covid-19 cases.

To enable us to get on top of this virus we need an efficient Test, Track, Contact and Support system to be put into place now, not in six months’ time.’

7. By Councillor Harris of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘Regarding the 20mph Policy for Essex, would the Portfolio Holder and Cabinet review the current arrangements and policy, to give consideration to residents who wish to put in a zone or limit, without the need for costly and time-consuming traffic surveys?’

Residents in older, smaller estates would like 20mph on their estates, regardless of speed surveys and in many cases are frustrated in trying to influence in a positive way their communities.

Many 20mph have been put in place on newly built estates, and even planning applications seem to include for future areas being built, so it is those older estates that now need to catch up with the current design for local roads where estates have single or dual entrances.

Examples in South Colchester who have 20mph already are

- 1) Lethe Grove
- 2) Solus Estate
- 3) Marlboro Place
- 4) Quarters Estate
- 5) Oakapple Estate
- 6) Willows Estate

7) Birch Glen estate

Local highways budgets are used on surveys when overwhelming resident support a speed change, so a County Council review to policy and conditions would be a cost saving and democratic step.

With the Covid pandemic in place, now more than ever residents views on 20mph for their local estates being put in would facilitate safer walking, safer cycling, and would actually save costs of Local Highways budgets, and leave just the design and signage to be put in as budgets allow.'

8. By Councillor Henderson of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

'The Portfolio Holder will be aware of serious concerns being raised with reference to the possibility of the Government breaking its promise with UK residents to secure a BREXIT deal with the EU by the December deadline.

Concerns for this County Council include:

An increase in Heavy Goods Vehicles using Essex Highways and Harwich International Port, due to substantial delays to thousands of freight vehicles using the Port of Dover.

Information needed to provide the exact locations of the 'inland clearance sites' (lorry parks) relevant to hauliers in Essex and Harwich International Port with a progress update on their preparedness with timescales.

The provision of facilities to carry out offsite border checks on goods arriving at Harwich International port – These checks could require increased resources, including the Port Health Authority and Essex Trading Standards.

Can the Portfolio Holder please publish and supply urgently to all members, all correspondence, including advice, plans and any reports received from all Government departments with reference to the above listed concerns.'

9. By Councillor Henderson of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

'Can I ask the Portfolio Holder, given the government's announcement this week that hauliers will require Kent Access Permits to drive lorries into Kent, what will be the impact of this for the Essex-Kent border, including implications for the costs of infrastructure and additional policing as well as any possible consequences for residents and commuters?'

10. By Councillor Young of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

Essex planning authorities work hard to keep pace with existing Government House Building targets, the proposed changes the Government have consulted upon are eye watering for some of our districts.

	Avg delivery (last 3 years)	Current Standard Method	Proposed new Standard Method	Actual Change	% Change
Essex	7,302	10,683	13,242	2,559	24.0%
Southend-on-Sea	498	1,181	1,324	143	12.1%
Thurrock	623	1,147	1,483	336	29.3%
Brentwood	191	453	393	- 60	-13.2%
Maldon	250	308	623	315	102.3%
Braintree	439	857	776	- 81	-9.5%
Chelmsford	1,089	946	1,557	611	64.6%
Colchester	1,045	1,078	1,612	534	49.5%
Tendring	713	866	1,141	275	31.8%
Basildon	364	1,001	820	- 181	-18.1%
Castle Point	160	354	386	32	9.0%
Rochford	226	360	586	226	62.8%
Epping Forest	380	953	868	- 85	-8.9%
Harlow	432	473	442	- 31	-6.6%
Uttlesford	892	706	1,231	525	74.4%

Can I have an assurance that the Portfolio Holder will lobby Government to resist such an over inflation of house building in Essex which would result from these figures being endorsed?’

11. By Councillor Davies of the Cabinet Member for Finance

‘Councils in England including Essex face a huge funding gap due to the unexpected spending on the pandemic. Could the Cabinet Member update the council on what representations ECC has made to government for more funding to meet the extra cost pressures?’

12. By Councillor Davies of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

‘Public Health England have found that children’s immunisation jabs fell by 20% during the pandemic. Could the Cabinet Member advise what measures have been taken to urge families to contact health centres to ensure children’s vaccinations are up to date?’

13. By Councillor Scordis of the Cabinet Member for Children and Families

‘With a record number of young people unemployed and a recession expected as we recover from Covid-19, what are we doing as a council to support our care leavers to provide them with the tools to find employment?’

14. By Councillor Harris of the Leader of the Council

‘With the government proposals about relaxing planning laws to a free for all, and a dramatic watering down of residents’ ability to comment and influence, would the Leader of the Council represent Essex residents’ views by joining me in writing in opposition to the relevant government ministers to express concerns?’

15. By Councillor Young of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘It has been good to see the SGH (Safer, Greener, Healthier routes) coming into Colchester Town Centre. Residents in my Division want to see radical change within their neighbourhoods and want to see more space for cycling and walking.

When can my residents in Wivenhoe and Greenstead see SGH coming into these neighbourhoods?’

16. By Councillor Abbott of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘The Cabinet Member, in answer to previous questions at Council meetings, has confirmed his support for efficient ways of working when highway repairs are carried out, including ensuring that groups of defects are repaired when sufficiently close together to do so.

Can he therefore explain why it sometimes continues to be the case, as with 3 recent examples in Rivenhall, where repairs have been carried out on some defects yet within the immediate vicinity other reported defects have been left?

Whilst I welcome the work that has been done recently in the village to the road surface in Church Road at two locations and to a footway in St Marys Road, does the Cabinet Member not agree that it would have been more efficient to repair all the reported defects that were close together, thereby avoiding the need for more system reporting, more inspections and further visits by repair crews to the same locations?’

17. By Councillor Kendall of the Leader of the Council

‘If Essex County Council is keen to promote diversity, what steps can it take to improve our residents’ awareness, knowledge and understanding of the different cultures and religions that are now practiced by the population of Essex?’

18. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Children and Families

‘Will Essex County Council accept the challenge of becoming the top Council in the country for meeting the needs of Essex families whose children have Aspergers and Autism? If it will what specific steps will it take to achieve this goal and what will be the timescale?’

19. By Councillor Smith of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘From an email (Members Enquires dated 03/12/19) sent to Cllr. Kerry Smith, it was agreed to re-surface Valence Way in March 2020 and now the works have been put off until possibly the 2021/22 financial year. The reason for cancelling these promised works was that highway crews couldn’t keep two meters apart. However, in March 2020, Durham Road (Laindon Park and Fryerns Division) was re-surfaced instead of Valence Way (Westley Heights Division).

Will this commitment be kept, to finally re-surface the badly damaged highway surface of Valence Way during the spring of 2021?’

20. By Councillor Smith of the Leader of the Council

‘To date, how much has Essex County Council had to spend on combating and dealing with Covid-19? Has the Government fully paid these costs and if not how much is still owed to Essex County Council?’