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# Essex County Council

## 11 October 2022

### Order Paper

#### Agenda item 3

#### Public Speakers

The following question will be asked by a member of the public registered to speak in accordance with Standing Order 16.12.8.

**Question 1:** from **Mr Everett**, a resident of Frinton-on-Sea, who is to ask a question on the subject of repairs to the pavements in Frinton-on-Sea. The question is:

‘Can the portfolio-holder for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport let me know when the pavements in Frinton-on-Sea which were on the list I gave him in June will be repaired? At the time he promised these would be repaired. I have made multiple enquiries and complaints but to date only one of the pavements has actually been repaired although your system says that some of them have been repaired, when they have not.’

Cllr Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport will respond.

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#### Agenda item 7

#### Motions

##### Motion 2

Motion 2 will now be seconded by Cllr Lewis Barber and not Cllr Holly Whitbread as stated within the agenda.

##### Motion 3

Motion 3 will now be seconded by Cllr David King and not Cllr Mark Cory as stated within the agenda.

The following amendment to Motion 1 has been received:

**Motion 1     Improving the County’s Infrastructure** - Conservative amendment

An amendment to be moved by **Cllr Lesley Wagland** and seconded by **Cllr Andrew Sheldon**.

*(The words deleted are shown ~~struck through~~ and additions are shown underlined)*

'This Council considers that there is a continuous need to ~~improve~~ ensure that the county's infrastructure, which is under constant pressure from new development, keeps pace with this development in a way that balances the need to promote economic growth and provides housing for residents, whilst also recognising the vital role of the Greenbelt in protecting their quality of life and the environment.

This Council therefore:

1. Instructs officers to be diligent in seeking to secure as many infrastructure improvements as possible via the planning system and in particular via infrastructure levies and planning obligation agreements;
2. ~~and~~ Calls upon local planning authorities to assist the County Council by ensuring as much is delivered as possible.
3. Calls upon Government to support Essex County Council in enabling the county's infrastructure to keep pace with new development as set out above.'

*(The motion, if amended, would then read:)*

'This Council considers that there is a continuous need to ensure that the county's infrastructure, which is under constant pressure from new development, keeps pace with this development in a way that balances the need to promote economic growth and provides housing for residents, whilst also recognising the vital role of the Greenbelt in protecting their quality of life and the environment.

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2. Calls upon local planning authorities to assist the County Council by ensuring as much is delivered as possible.
3. Calls upon Government to support Essex County Council in enabling the county's infrastructure to keep pace with new development as set out above.'

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The following amendment to Motion 2 has been received:

## **Motion 2      Supporting Essex Residents and Businesses - Labour Group amendment**

An amendment to be moved by **Cllr Lee Scordis** and seconded by **Cllr Aidan McGurran**.

*(The words deleted are shown ~~struck through~~ and additions are shown underlined)*

'The combined effects of the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Government's failure to freeze energy bills before the price cap rise and Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine have led to rising energy prices, with Essex residents and businesses facing significant cost pressures.

This council therefore welcomes the measures taken by Essex County Council to support residents and businesses with a package of measures including the following:

### **Allocating £9.4m of the Household Support Fund, including:**

- **£4.2m** for food vouchers for children in school holidays.
- **£3.2m** for food vouchers for pensioners.
- **£1.3m** for the Essential living fund for general living expenses, furniture, household furnishings, white goods, clothing and other essential goods for people on low incomes.
- **£482,000** for support for unpaid carers, vulnerable adults and targeted family support delivered through trusted voluntary and community sector organisations and foodbanks to support children and their families.

### **Keeping families and individuals warm this winter by:**

- Investing **£17m** in helping households improve their energy efficiency.
- Distributing **£600,000** from the Warm Homes Grant to help residents with energy efficiency.
- Through the new Community Winter Warmth and Welcome Programme, working with partners, community organisations and using our services to provide local and accessible places for winter warmth over the coming months. This includes a grant scheme to enable community groups to access small grants to put on activities.

### **Ensuring people have food on their tables and are eating well by:**

- Investing an additional **£4.2m** to continue the Essex ActivAte Holiday Activity and Food Programme, providing families with a healthy meal, activity sessions and education on the importance of eating well and moving more.
- Supporting foodbanks and other food support groups through the

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Household Support Fund.

- Helping residents learn how to cook low-cost meals and giving them access to equipment to do so through 'Slow Cooker Clubs'.
- Investing up to **£500,000** to establish community supermarkets in Essex, starting with ECC's 6 priority levelling up areas.

#### **Providing help with money management for residents by:**

- Offering 14,000 residents easy access to free maths and finance training through the **£7.9m** Essex multiply initiative.
- Delivering free financial wellness sessions to Essex businesses and employers to support employees in being able to better manage their money and build financial confidence.
- Piloting financial wellbeing coaches in a number of parts of Essex, supporting 1,000 working families to manage their finances.
- Exploring the development of financial support tools and services for jobseekers and benefits claimants.

#### **Providing information and guidance for residents by:**

- Investing **£120,000** in the Citizens Advice network in Essex this year to assist them in supporting residents with information and advice.
- Investing **£50,000** to offer free legal advice thanks to a partnership with Central Law Community Interest Company.
- Working with Age Well East to help with information and advice for older people in relation to cost of living pressures.
- Through a partnership with UK Power Networks, create a Priority Service Register so vulnerable customers are supported quickly should there be any power disruption.

#### **Looking after the wellbeing of our residents by:**

- Investing £6m in the Essex Wellbeing Service to support residents across a range of wellbeing issues and day-to-day needs.
- Continuing to connect people and communities through the digital social movement 'United in Kind' which helps people connect with their community and foster neighbourly acts of kindness.

However, this Council believes that long term prosperity for the residents and businesses of Essex can only come by ~~removing the barriers to enterprise and delivering economic growth.~~ providing well paid jobs and tackling inequality across all of Essex.

~~This Council therefore welcomes the Government plans for Investment Zones and calls on Ministers to work in partnership with Essex County Council in developing Essex based Investment Zones, to drive opportunities for businesses to grow, creating new and better jobs for the residents of Essex.'~~

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This Council calls on government to reform business rates, keep the link of raising Universal Credit payments with inflation and pay carers and keyworkers a Real Living Wage.'

*(The motion, if amended, would then read:)*

'The combined effects of the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Government's failure to freeze energy bills before the price cap rise and Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine have led to rising energy prices, with Essex residents and businesses facing significant cost pressures.

This council therefore welcomes the measures taken by Essex County Council to support residents and businesses with a package of measures including the following:

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- **£1.3m** for the Essential living fund for general living expenses, furniture, household furnishings, white goods, clothing and other essential goods for people on low incomes.
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**Ensuring people have food on their tables and are eating well by:**

- Investing an additional **£4.2m** to continue the Essex ActivAte Holiday Activity and Food Programme, providing families with a healthy meal, activity sessions and education on the importance of eating well and moving more.
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#### **Looking after the wellbeing of our residents by:**

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- Continuing to connect people and communities through the digital social movement 'United in Kind' which helps people connect with their community and foster neighbourly acts of kindness.

However, this Council believes that long term prosperity for the residents and businesses of Essex can only come by providing well paid jobs and tackling inequality across all of Essex.

This Council calls on government to reform business rates, keep the link of raising Universal Credit payments with inflation and pay carers and keyworkers a Real Living Wage.'

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The following amendment to Motion 3 has been received:

**Motion 3      Afghans, Ukrainians and the Housing Crisis - Conservative amendment**

An amendment to be moved by **Cllr Louise McKinlay** and seconded by **Cllr Tom Cunningham**.

*(The words deleted are shown ~~struck through~~ and additions are shown underlined)*

'Essex County Council ~~offers~~ thanks to the generous Essex residents who offered their homes to host new residents from Ukraine and to others who have volunteered to support new residents from Afghanistan.

The Council ~~notes that we need to ensure~~ has an expectation that, if placements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme end for any reason that local authorities need to work together to ensure that refugees are rematched with new hosts wherever possible.

This Council ~~regrets~~ is disappointed that there are ~~over 300~~ a number of Afghans ~~stuck still~~ in hotels around the county, ~~some of whom have been there nearly a year, due to a lack of homes for them to rent.~~ This Council and whilst this is for numerous reasons, believes that hotels, except for a short stay, are inappropriate housing for ~~such~~ a long period, in particular for the long-term wellbeing of children.

This Council ~~notes~~ recognises the ~~ongoing~~ challenging housing ~~crisis~~ situation in Essex, where there is a ~~huge~~ lack of affordable homes to rent or buy, meaning there are ~~thousands~~ many of Essex residents who are currently homeless and being housed in emergency accommodation by the city, district, and borough councils who have the statutory duty and funding for this.

Therefore, this Council asks ~~the Leader of the Council to~~:

1. ~~Work with the~~ The Refugee Housing Taskforce to work with the ECC, Borough, City and District councils to ensure that rematching works as effectively as possible.
2. Borough, City and District councils to make timely cases to the finance sub group of the Tactical Coordination Group to ensure that funding allocated by central Government for the Homes for Ukraine scheme is made available to all local authorities who are them when incurring costs with respect to the scheme, to reduce the risk of housing authorities having to locate and fund emergency accommodation for Ukrainians.
3. The Leader to work with the other Essex Council Leaders to request the Secretary of State at DLUHC to:

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- (a) redouble discussions with other Government departments to identify Government-owned land and property where Afghan families requiring short term housing might be accommodated, and
  - (b) support councils ~~so that they can build substantial, extra numbers of genuinely affordable homes, whilst protecting the Green Belt,~~ to deliver their Local Plans so that ALL residents of Essex can afford have a decent home in a way that balances the need to promote economic growth and provide housing for residents, whilst also recognising the vital role of the Greenbelt in protecting their quality of life and the environment.'

*(The motion, if amended, would then read:)*

'Essex County Council thanks the generous Essex residents who offered their homes to host new residents from Ukraine and to others who have volunteered to support new residents from Afghanistan.

The Council has an expectation that, if placements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme end for any reason that local authorities need to work together to ensure that refugees are rematched with new hosts wherever possible.

This Council is disappointed that there are a number of Afghans still in hotels around the county and whilst this is for numerous reasons, believes that hotels, except for a short stay, are inappropriate housing for a long period, in particular for the long-term wellbeing of children.

This Council recognises the challenging housing situation in Essex, where there is a lack of affordable homes to rent or buy, meaning there are many Essex residents who are currently homeless and being housed in emergency accommodation by the city, district, and borough councils who have the statutory duty and funding for this.

Therefore, this Council asks:

1. The Refugee Housing Taskforce to work with the ECC, Borough, City and District councils to ensure that rematching works as effectively as possible.
2. Borough, City and District councils to make timely cases to the finance sub group of the Tactical Coordination Group to ensure that funding allocated by central Government for the Homes for Ukraine scheme is made available to them when incurring costs with respect to the scheme, to reduce the risk of housing authorities having to locate and fund emergency accommodation for Ukrainians.
3. The Leader to work with the other Essex Council Leaders to request the Secretary of State at DLUHC to:



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(a) redouble discussions with other Government departments to identify Government-owned land and property where families requiring short term housing might be accommodated, and

(b) support councils to deliver their Local Plans so that ALL residents can have a decent home in a way that balances the need to promote economic growth and provide housing for residents, whilst also recognising the vital role of the Greenbelt in protecting their quality of life and the environment.'

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## **Agenda Item 9      Council Issues**

When the agenda was published the Chief Officers in the recommendation contained within the report were listed as they currently appear in the Constitution. The recommendation is amended to be:

### **Recommendation:**

That Council agree to update the list of chief officers in paragraph 4.3 of the Constitution to read as below :

#### **4.3.1 Chief Executive**

#### **4.3.2 Executive Director, Children and Families**

#### **4.3.3 Executive Director, Corporate Services**

#### **4.3.4 Executive Director, Climate, Environment and Customer Services**

#### **4.4.5 Executive Director, Economy, Investment and Public Health**

#### **4.3.6 Executive Director, Adult Social Care**

#### **4.3.7 Executive Director, People and Transformation**