

Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council, held in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Chelmsford on Tuesday, 12 July 2022

Present: Chairman: Councillor E C Johnson
Vice-Chairman: Councillor J M Reeves

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| B Aspinell | I Henderson | R Playle |
| S Barker | J Henry | C Pond |
| K Bentley | P Honeywood | S Robinson |
| D Blackwell | M Hoy | P Schwier |
| M Buckley | J G Jowers | L Scordis |
| G Butland | S Kane | L Scott |
| M Cory | D King | L Shaw |
| S Crow | D Land | A Sheldon |
| T Cunningham | S Lissimore | M Skeels |
| J Deakin | L Mackenzie | K Smith |
| M Durham | M Mackrory | C Souter |
| B Egan | B Massey | J Spence |
| J Fleming | P May | M Steel |
| M Foley | A McGurran | M Steptoe |
| P Gadd | J McIvor | P Thorogood |
| M Garnett | L McKinlay | M Vance |
| A Goggin | A McQuiggan | L Wagland |
| M Goldman | Dr R Moore | C Whitbread |
| C Guglielmi | J Newport | H Whitbread |
| A M Hedley | M Platt | A Wiles |

Not present but attended the meeting online (these members did not vote on any items):

| | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------|
| L Barber | D Louis | C Siddall |
| L Bowers-Flint | J Lumley | W Stamp |
| M Hardware | | |

Chairman's Welcome and Introduction

The Chairman informed those present that the meeting would be broadcast live

over the internet by way of the ECC Democracy YouTube Channel.

The opening remarks, together with the broadcast of the entire meeting may be found on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#).

Prayers

The meeting was preceded by prayers led by Councillor Spence, a lay Canon in the Church of England.

Councillor Johnson formally opened the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Stephenson, Harris, Brown, Ball, Grundy and Gooding.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded by the Chairman of the need to declare any interests and to do so immediately or at the start of the consideration of any relevant item of business.

Councillor Thorogood declared a Non-Registrable Interest in agenda item 8, Motion 1 – Waste Strategy, due to having campaigned against waste incineration in the past.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of council meetings held on 10 May 2022

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Public Speakers

The Chairman noted that there were two members of the public registered to speak, Mr Kyle, a resident of Boreham and Mr Jeffrey.

1) Mr Kyle, having been invited to speak, said:

‘The outcome of the National Highways proposed A12 Widening Scheme is that the main roads through Boreham Village incur a significant (between 25% and 50%) increase in traffic largely due to the closure of Junction 20a. Is this a fair outcome from such a significant expenditure from the national purse on a local community and what actions are ECC taking to require National Highways to reconsider and eliminate this proposed increase which will devastate our village?’

In response Councillor Wagland said:

‘Thank you for taking the time to come today. We understand that this is an area of concern for you as well as other residents and businesses in Boreham. It is one of a number of issues on which we are engaging with National Highways who are promoting the A12 widening project.

The Council's position is that we support the widening project generally, but we have made very clear that we have concerns with various aspects of the current proposals. Indeed, in response to the statutory consultation held last year we stated that we were opposed to all of the junction arrangements, with the exception of Junction 19 on which we were neutral.

The modelling outputs National Highways have shared with us indicate that there will be an increase in traffic through Boreham, mainly in the westbound direction from traffic accessing Junction 19. Most of this traffic is expected to come from Hatfield Peverel, which would previously have accessed the A12 westbound at Junction 20A. As you will likely be aware National Highways are proposing to close Junctions 20A and J0B and consolidate these with a new all-movement Junction 21, which will have direct access to Hatfield Peverel.

The possibility of closing Junctions 20A and 20B was mooted at the first public consultation National Highways (then Highways England) undertook on the scheme in early 2017. The majority of respondents to that consultation concurred that there was no need for two junctions at Hatfield Peverel and that there were existing safety concerns with the slip roads at Junction 20B (Hatfield Peverel North).

The subsequent development of the proposals saw the relocation of Junction 21 to the west, roughly mid-way between Hatfield Peverel and Witham. Retention of Junction 20B is not feasible as a result of this location, because of the short distance to the new Junction 21. National Highways have advised that they have looked at retaining both the northbound and southbound slips that form Junction 20A, but neither are compliant with current highway standards (in the form of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, DMRB) and significant works would be required that have ruled this out.

In the case of Junction 20A northbound, to replace this with an arrangement in accordance with the DMRB would result in demolition of a number of properties to the north of the A12. In the case of Junction 20A southbound, National Highways have cited a number of issues with safety, land-take, environmental impacts and built heritage (in connection with the Grade II listed Crix House) that mean this is not feasible. It is worth bearing in mind that as the A12 is being widened a new slip road would be required which would necessitate additional land-take in the vicinity of the junction.

Whilst the Council acknowledges the challenges with retaining Junction 20A as outlined above, we are nonetheless concerned about the impacts the proposals will have on traffic on the B1137 (Main Road). Officers are in regular dialogue with National Highways about the impacts of the scheme and suitable mitigation for addressing these impacts, and National Highways are proposing a speed limit reduction on parts of the B1137 as a means of reducing traffic through Boreham. We are pushing them to go further on this and are seeking additional measures to reduce the impacts (such as the Maldon Road bypass and traffic calming).

As we understand it the design for the scheme has been fixed by National Highways ahead of their submission of a Development Consent Order application for the scheme and given the need for the scheme to accord with DMRB it is in reality, highly unlikely that National Highways will provide an additional junction (albeit in this case retention) at this stage. Please be assured however that the Council is pressing hard for improvements to the scheme and working to minimise negative impacts to communities including Boreham as far as possible. Cllr Spence has been engaged throughout and continues to represent residents and businesses affected by the proposed works both at forums with National Highways and directly to me and officers so that we benefit from his detailed local knowledge.'

2) Mr Jeffrey, having been invited to speak, said:

'Will the Cabinet Member for Highways support measures to tackle anti social behaviour by permitting the installation of cctv cameras on lampposts at hotspots in particular in Wickford and other parts of Basildon Borough?'

In response Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport stated the importance of trying to alleviate anti-social behaviour and also to ensure that everyone was safe walking on the streets. Councillor Scott confirmed that wireless CCTV cameras were allowed to be temporarily attached to street lights. This did depend on location and technical issues. Councillor Scott requested that details of the specific locations be emailed to him so that they could be considered.

5. Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen

The Chairman noted that at the Extraordinary meetings held in October 2021 and May 2022, ten former members were appointed as Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen, in recognition of their service, unfortunately two former members were unable to attend the last meeting. The Chairman welcomed these Members to the meeting, Mr John Aldridge and Mrs Elizabeth Webster, and presented them with certificates and badges.

Awards

World Commerce and Contracting Innovation and Excellence Award in the Collaboration and Cooperation category

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Whitbread, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs, informed Council that the Central Buying Consortium had been shortlisted for their collaborative work on contract management, receiving international recognition.

Award for the innovative programme to better join up health and care in Essex

The Chairman invited Councillor Spence, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health to present the award for an innovative programme led by Essex County Council and our NHS partners across Essex to improve outcomes for older residents across the county which had won national recognition at the Municipal Journal (MJ) awards.

Platinum exemplar award for street data for Essex Highways at the Geoplace Exemplar Awards 2022

The Chairman invited Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport to present the platinum exemplar award for street data for Essex Highways. Essex County Council has been recognised for reaching the highest standard of street data maintenance at the Geoplace Exemplar Awards 2022, achieving a Platinum Award for Street Data, thanks to the efforts of Essex Highways' Asset and Records team.

Gold Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme

The Chairman invited Councillor Louis, Deputy Cabinet Member and Lead Member for the Armed Forces to present the Gold Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme for our outstanding support to the Armed Forces Community in Essex.

National Holiday Activity and Food Programme at the Mott MacDonald Global Social Impact Awards

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance, informed members that the impact video produced by ECC for the Essex ActivAte programme had been included as part of the submission my Mott MacDonald for the National Holiday Activity and Food Programme at the Mott MacDonald Global Social Impact Awards and had won the European category and been a runner up in the global category.

6. Petitions

The Chairman invited Councillor Massey to present a petition relating to the future of catering at Marsh Farm Country Park, South Woodham Ferrers. Councillor Butland responded to receive the petition.

7. Executive Statement

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bentley, The Leader of the Council gave a statement entitled 'We said, we did, and we are doing!'.

The Executive Statement is published on the ECC website and the broadcast of the meeting may be found on the ECC Democracy YouTube Channel.

8. Motions

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the proposed revised wording in the Order Paper of Motion 2 on Free School Meals. This brought together some minor changes to amend to refer to 'the Government' and an amendment from the Liberal Democrat Group into a revised substantive motion to be moved by the Labour Group.

Resolved:

That the Council consented to receive and consider the revised Motion 2 on Free School Meals, as set out in the Order Paper, in place of the original motion to be moved by the Labour Group.

1. Waste Strategy

Moved by Councillor Gadd and seconded by Councillor Pond:

'Council believes that landfilling, other than of inert materials, should be reduced as much as possible, and that markedly less waste creation, plus a determined, renewed, approach to increase recycling from the current 53% in Essex to 70% by 2030 as a move towards an eventual zero-waste system, is to be aimed at.

Non-inert waste has an inherently high carbon content, and should not therefore be burned, or used as the basis for fuel, as both of these lock in reliance on carbon-emitting energy for decades to come, rather than seeking renewable alternatives.

Council considers that a new waste strategy to be agreed with the collection authorities is now urgently needed, avoiding mass-burn incineration and widespread reliance on energy from waste plants.

Council calls upon the cabinet to adopt a waste plan conforming to the above within a year.'

Having been put to the vote the motion was **lost**.

2. Free School Meals

Moved by Councillor McGurran and seconded by Councillor Scordis

'This Council notes the council's work in providing support to families in receipt of free school meals during school holidays. This council notes the benefits to children's educational achievement if they are not hungry.

This Council regrets the Government's decision not to extend free school meals. The decision not to extend the scheme - which affects around a million under-privileged children nationally - has been taken when prices are soaring in the shops, at the petrol pump and on energy bills.

This Council notes that most children in Year 3 or above are ineligible for free school meals if their household income is more than £7,400 a year. This Council does not believe this is acceptable and is not prepared to stand by and see our children go hungry when this can be avoided.

This Council notes that, since the policy was introduced seven years ago, the Conservatives have increased funding per pupil from £2.30 to just £2.34 - an increase of 1.3% compared to inflation of 7%. As a result, children in the Essex County Council area have lost the equivalent of £1,171,603 - more than any other area in the country. Had funding increased with inflation, it would currently stand at, at least £2.46 per pupil. This funding cut has left Essex schools covering the extra cost by spending less on textbooks and teachers.

This Council notes that Henry Dimbleby- the Leon founder and the Government's food Tsar - has urged the PM to extend free school meals to all children in households receiving Universal Credit. As a compromise he has suggested raising the income threshold to £20,000.

This Council recognises that an idle promise by the government "to keep free school meal eligibility under review" is not enough when children in this county are going hungry now and recognises in the present situation it is vital to re-instate plans to expand free school meals to all children in UC households.

Therefore the Council calls upon the Leader to write to the Government as a matter of urgency asking him to implement plans to

extend free school meals to all of those in families who receive Universal Credit and to increase the funding in line with inflation.'

It was moved by Councillor Cunningham and seconded by Councillor Sheldon that the motion be amended to read:

'This Council notes Essex County Council's work in providing support to families in receipt of free school meals during school holidays. This council also notes the benefits to children's educational attainment when this and other targeted support is provided, including:

- **The Essential Living Fund (ELF)** which is available to individuals and families who are in crisis and have exhausted all other options available. This provides essential items such as bedding, furniture, white goods, and general living items representing an investment of over £3.3m in 2021/22 and £2.3m in 2022/23.
- **Holiday Activity Clubs** which are supporting young people and families through Essex County Council's partnership with Active Essex in order to deliver free holiday clubs during the summer holiday, with over 20,000 individuals young people and their families supported in 2021. This summer, two hundred clubs will take place across the county.
- **Vouchers and other payments scheme** where Essex County Council has invested:
 - £4.2m in the provision of food vouchers
 - £3.2m for financially vulnerable pensioners
 - £482k to unpaid carers, vulnerable adults and targeted family support
 - £60k vouchers to vulnerable adults
 - £800k to expand the government's Holiday Activity and Food Programme which will provide more spaces to working families and a half term offer

However, this Council believes that support should be targeted at those families with the greatest need, as our approach has demonstrated that this is not only far more effective but also represents much better value for money when there are finite resources.'

The amendment moved by Councillor Cunningham and seconded by Councillor Sheldon was put to the meeting and was **carried** and became the substantive motion. The following Members requested that their vote against the amendment be recorded in the minutes:

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor Aspinell | Councillor Henderson | Councillor Pond |
| Councillor Blackwell | Councillor Hoy | Councillor Robinson |
| Councillor Cory | Councillor King | Councillor Scordis |
| Councillor Deakin | Councillor Mackrory | Councillor Smith |
| Councillor Foley | Councillor May | Councillor Thorogood |
| Councillor Gadd | Councillor McGurran | |
| Councillor Goldman | Councillor Newport | |

Having been put to the meeting the motion was **carried**.

3. National Grid's East Anglia Green Project

Moved by Councillor Bentley and seconded by Councillor Steel

'National Grid's East Anglia green Project, proposes an energy transmission route consisting of the construction of 180 km of 50m tall pylons carrying 400kv cables through the entire central length of our County (as well as through our neighbours, Norfolk and Suffolk), save for a section of undergrounding at Dedham Vale.

This Council has already expressed its ambition to be net zero by 2050 and the plans for renewable wind farms off the East Anglian coast is welcomed. However, This Council has serious concerns, about the nature and short period of consultation, the route, and how carbon heavy the proposed scheme of overhead pylons are which rely on 50 year old technology. Furthermore, this Council believes that:

- There has been insufficient consideration of alternative approaches which would allow for the required infrastructure but without the sheer scale of the damage to the environment, landscape and the difficulties of this project going ahead, all at the same time as multiple large-scale infrastructure projects which have the potential to cause major disruption across the East of England.
- New offshore generated electricity should be transmitted offshore, which is why an offshore grid is needed. This is firmly in the interests of both residents and business, offshore windfarms themselves and wider interests e.g. our Freeports. Such an alternative approach would future proof the network and could avoid all the physical constraints of an above or below-ground solution, retain ease of access for ongoing maintenance and provide a more direct point of connection for any current or future off-shore wind farms.
- This pylon infrastructure is neither wanted nor needed considering the viable option of undersea power cables. These cables could transport power to where it is needed, helping future proof energy supplies and boost energy security, without adversely impacting on residents, businesses and communities across Essex.

This Council therefore calls upon:

- Both the Government and National Grid to refocus the East Anglia Green Proposals on an offshore solution and engage in discussions with Essex and its neighbouring County Councils to achieve this.
- National Grid to:
 1. Provide this Council with all the information asked for in our response of 16 June by 30 August 2022.
 2. Make publicly available full, open and transparent information on all options, including offshore and undergrounding, to enable evaluation and comparisons to be made by Essex residents, businesses, Councils and other stakeholders. This information to be publicly available for a period of at least 6 months before any Development Control Order (DCO) application is made.'

It was moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor King that the motion be amended to read:

'National Grid's East Anglia green Project, proposes an energy transmission route consisting of the construction of 180 km of 50m tall pylons carrying 400kv cables through the entire central length of our County (as well as through our neighbours, Norfolk and Suffolk), save for a section of undergrounding at Dedham Vale.

This Council has already expressed its ambition to be net zero by 2050 and the plans for renewable wind farms off the East Anglian coast is welcomed. However, This Council has serious concerns, about the nature and short period of consultation, the route, and how carbon heavy the proposed scheme of overhead pylons are which rely on 50 year old technology. Furthermore, this Council believes that:

- There has been insufficient consideration of alternative approaches which would allow for the required infrastructure but without the sheer scale of the damage to the environment, landscape and the difficulties of this project going ahead, all at the same time as multiple large-scale infrastructure projects which have the potential to cause major disruption across the East of England. Alternatives could include restoring funding to support householder and local community generation, and initiatives to reduce demand, such as insulating every home and making all new homes low energy.
- New offshore generated electricity should be transmitted offshore, which is why an offshore grid is needed. This is firmly in the interests of both residents and business, offshore windfarms themselves and wider interests e.g. our Freeports. Such an alternative approach

would future proof the network and could avoid all the physical constraints of an above or below-ground solution, retain ease of access for ongoing maintenance and provide a more direct point of connection for any current or future off-shore wind farms.

- This pylon infrastructure is neither wanted nor needed considering the viable option of undersea power cables. These cables could transport power to where it is needed, helping future proof energy supplies and boost energy security, without adversely impacting on residents, businesses and communities across Essex.
- This Council and District and other Councils across Essex, has serious concerns about the nature and short period of consultation, the absence of alternatives, options and evidence base as well as the route, and how carbon heavy the proposed scheme of overhead pylons are.

This Council therefore calls upon:

- Both the Government and National Grid to refocus the East Anglia Green Proposals on an offshore solution and engage in discussions with Essex and its neighbouring County Councils to achieve this.
- National Grid to:
 1. Provide this Council with all the information asked for in our response of 16 June by 30 August 2022.
 2. Make publicly available full, open and transparent information on all options, including offshore and undergrounding, to enable evaluation and comparisons to be made by Essex residents, businesses, Councils and other stakeholders. This information to be publicly available for a period of at least 6 months before any Development Control Order (DCO) application is made.
- The Government to support householder and community generation schemes and energy demand reduction.'

The amendment moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor King was put to the meeting and was **lost**.

Having been put to the meeting the motion was **carried**.

9. Adjournment

With the agreement of Council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:50. The meeting reconvened at 13:30.

10. Council Issues

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bentley, the Leader of the Council, presented the report and it having been moved by Councillor Bentley and seconded by Councillor McKinlay it was

Resolved:

1. Changes to arrangements for approval of member and officer travel

1. That Council agree to remove section 8.1.4 of the Constitution as set out in the Council Issues report and renumber the Constitution accordingly and that the new process is implemented from September 2022.
2. Note that the proposed scheme for councillors allowances takes account of this proposed change.
3. Note the impact on political balance.

2. Speaking for Cabinet Members in motions

1. Delete paragraph 16.9.5 of the Constitution and renumber current paragraphs 16.9.6 to 16.9.18 and alter cross-references as necessary.
2. Amend the newly renumbered paragraph 16.9.5(1)(b) to read as follows:

(b) a speech made by a Cabinet Member where the question relates to a matter under their portfolio responsibility (such speech may be made at the time an amendment is proposed or seconded) – five minutes.

3. Dates of forthcoming Council meetings

1. That the Council amends Paragraph 16.1 (ii) to read:
(ii) in any other year, on the Tuesday following the Second Thursday in May.
2. That the Council meeting in May 2023 be held on Tuesday 16 May 2023.

4. Health and Wellbeing Board Review

1. That paragraph 8.1.8 of the constitution be amended as set out in the appendix to the Council Issues report.

11. Cabinet Issues

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bentley, the Leader of the Council, presented the report and it having been moved by Councillor Bentley and seconded by Councillor McKinlay it was

Resolved:

To receive the list of urgent decisions taken and the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 24 May and 21 June 2022.

12. Independent Remuneration Panel Report and recommendations

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bentley, the Leader of the Council, presented the report. It having been moved by Councillor Bentley and seconded by Councillor Pond it was

Resolved:

1. That the findings and recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in Appendix 1 to the Member Allowances report be noted.
2. That the recommendations of the panel be accepted except that the indexation for a period of four years should be in accordance with the public sector pay growth (excluding bonuses) as published by the Office of National Statistics.
3. That the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme be as set out in Appendix 2 to the Member Allowances report with effect from 1 September 2022.

Councillors Smith and McIvor requested that their vote against the recommendations be recorded in the minutes.

13. Essex Pension Fund Annual Report (2021-2022)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Barker, Chairman of the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board presented the report. Councillor Barker thanked the Pensions team and Members of the Boards for their work. Councillor Platt seconded the report and also put on record his thanks to the officers for their support to the Boards.

It having been moved by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Platt it was

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

14. Audit, Governance and Standards Committee Annual Report

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Hedley, Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee presented the report. Councillor Hedley put on record his thanks to the Members for their engagement and the officers for their work in support of the Committee.

Councillor King also put on record his support for the Annual Report.

It having been moved by Councillor Hedley and seconded by Councillor Platt it was

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

15. Oral Questions of the Leader, Cabinet Member, a chairman of a committee or the representative of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The oral questions and answers as part of the broadcast of the meeting may be found on the [ECC Democracy YouTube Channel](#).

The questions asked were:

| Question asked by: | Question asked to: | Subject of the question |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Cllr Pond | Deputy Leader | Sale of surplus library stock |
| Cllr Henderson | Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport | Public rights of way obstructed by overgrown vegetation. |
| Cllr Henderson | Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport | Delays in highway repairs. |
| Cllr Scordis | Leader | Encouraging staff to cycle given that cycle theft warning signs erected at County Hall |
| Cllr Scordis | Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport | Update on policy for introducing 20mph limit. |
| Cllr Mackrory | Leader | 'Thank you' payments for sponsors of Ukrainian Refugees |

| Question asked by: | Question asked to: | Subject of the question |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Cllr King | Leader | Improve awareness about re-matching of rematching for Ukrainian refugees. |
| Cllr King | Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport | Speeding issues |
| Cllr Land | Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health | Support for vulnerable Essex residents during the heatwave |
| Cllr Aspinell | Deputy Leader | Shenfield Library |
| Cllr Hoy | Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling | Rayleigh Recycling Centre |
| Cllr Goldman | Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport | Concerns about illegal use of e-scooters. |
| Cllr Sheldon | Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Infrastructure and Planning | Sadler's Farm roadworks |

16. Closure of Meeting

The meeting closed at 2.22pm

Chairman