

Minutes of a meeting of Essex County Council held at County Hall, Chelmsford on 12 February 2013

Present

Chairman: Councillor K Twitchen

Vice-Chairman: Councillor N Hume

Councillors:

D Abrahall	R G Gooding	Mrs M A Miller
J F Aldridge	C Griffiths	G Mitchinson
B Aspinell	I Grundy	D Morris
Mrs S Barker	Mrs E M Hart	A Naylor
L Barton	A M Hedley	M J Page
R L Bass	Mrs T M A Higgins	J W Pike
J Baugh	Mrs S Hillier	C C Pond
R G Boyce	R C Howard	Mrs J M Reeves
A Brown	A J Jackson	C G Riley
G Butland	E C Johnson	J Roberts
R Callender	J G Jowers	D C F Robinson
S C Castle	D J Kendall	S Robinson
R P Chambers	J Knapman	Mrs T L Sargent
P Channer	M C M Lager	J M Schofield
Mrs T M Chapman	D Louis	M Skeels
J A Deakin	J R Lucas	Mrs A Turrell
W J C Dick	G W McEwen	R G Walters
J Dornan	M Mackrory	Mrs E A Webster
N D C Edey	R A Madden	Mrs M J Webster
D Finch	P J Martin	Mrs J H Whitehouse
M D Fisher	S Mayzes	B Wood
M Garnett	Mrs V Metcalfe	J A Young

The meeting was preceded by prayers led by Mr John Hull of the Salvation Army.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors K Bentley, T Durcan, S Candy, L Mead, Mrs I Pummell and S M Walsh.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded Members of the advice they have been given by the Monitoring Officer concerning those who may have any arrears of Council Tax outstanding for two months or more. Any such Members must make a declaration and are not entitled to vote on the Annual Budget but are not prevented from taking part in the discussion

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2012

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Recent Deaths

The Chairman informed the Council of the deaths of three former County Councillors and sent condolences to their families.

- County Councillor for Great Baddow, Mrs Joan Beard died on Friday 28 December.

Mrs Beard was first elected to Essex County Council, to represent Great Baddow, on 7 May 1981 and served until 2001 on many committees including the Education Committee, Health and Social Services Select Committee and the Social Services Committee and was elected Chairman of Essex County Council from May 1999 to May 2000.

She was a County representative on the Fire Authority and many other organisations, was a Great Baddow Parish Councillor and a school governor.

The Chairman informed the Council that there would be a memorial service in the Spring and that details would be made available when known.

- County Councillor for Harwich Mr Les Double died on 5 January.

Mr Double represented Harwich as a County Councillor from 1997 to 2009 and served on many committees including Audit and General Scrutiny Committee, Lifelong Learning & Libraries PDG and Planning & Enterprise PDG. He represented Essex County Council on the Essex Fire Authority, the University of Essex Court and the Advisory Committee for Archaeology as well as on many other outside bodies.

He also served as a Harwich Town Councillor for the last 22 years, represented Harwich West ward at Tendring District Council since 1995, a governor of the Harwich School and a director of the East of England Cooperative Society.

- County Councillor for South Woodham Ferrers and Danbury Mrs Eileen Mickelborough died on 19 January.

Mrs Mickelborough was first elected as a County Councillor for Basildon in May 1977 and represented Woodham Ferrers and Danbury as a County Councillor from May 1989 until May 2001.

She served on a wide range of committees including the Education Committee, Community Safety, Planning and the Social Services Committee. She also represented Essex County Council on the University of Essex Court and elsewhere.

She was also a Chelmsford Borough Councillor and served as a magistrate for 11 years.

Members stood in their memory.

5. Awards

The Chairman informed Members that it had been announced that Essex County Council was one of three councils to be shortlisted for Council of the Year for the improvement and efficiency Awards 2013

The Chairman congratulated Councillor S Castle as the Olympics Ambassadors Volunteering schemes have received the Queens Diamond Jubilee Award for their role in encouraging residents to get more involved in the community during the period of the Olympic Games.

The Chairman also announced individual nominations, that;

- Councillor W J C Dick had been shortlisted for an award as 'Scrutineer of the Year',
- Councillor S Castle for 'Partnership Working on the Olympics' and
- Councillor P Martin for the 'Judges Special Award' for his contribution to local government.

6. Congratulations

At the invitation of the Chairman, Members expressed their appreciation to Liz Chidgey, Executive Director for Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing for all her hard work and achievements. She was attending her last Council meeting before becoming Executive Director of Essex Cares.

7. Commemoration of the 1953 Floods

The Chairman informed Members that the Council had received a gift from a Dutch museum in thanks for the Act of Commemoration of the 1953 floods that took place recently at Chelmsford Cathedral. This service was attended by the Princess Royal.

There had also been other activities in connection with this anniversary, notably on Canvey Island and the Chairman requested that Members take time to appreciate the artwork on display in the Council foyer prepared by young people in Essex inspired by those tragic events.

8. Presentation of Petitions

The Chairman formally received petitions relating to;

- The Olympic Legacy and the construction of mountain-bike tracks on Benfleet Downs presented by Councillor Colin Riley and
- The location of a pedestrian crossing following the modernisation work on the Tarpots, Benfleet, presented by Councillor Bill Dick.

9. The Budget 2013/2014

Prior to the consideration of this item the Chairman advised the Council of the procedure to be adopted during the debate.

Councillor J Baugh declared an interest as a Director of Braintree Museum Trust, Councillor G Butland declared an interest as Leader of Braintree District Council and Councillor C Riley declared an interest as a Member of Castlepoint District Council.

The Council received the report on the Budget 2013/2014 including;

- The Medium Term Resources Strategy
- Revenue and Capital Budgets 2013/2014
- Treasury Management Strategy
- The Pay Policy Statement.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved by Councillor P J Martin, Leader of the Council, and seconded by Councillor D M Finch, Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation Programme

Prior to the motion being put to the meeting the Chairman agreed to the request of Councillor Pond that recommendation (k) The Pay Policy Statement, be put to the meeting separately.

It was moved by Councillor M Mackrory and Seconded by Councillor D Kendall that the following words be added to recommendation;

‘that subject to additional provision of;

- £36,000 to Youth Provision to fund one Benefits Advice Youth Worker,
- £3.4 m to Highways to fund additional footway and pot hole repairs and white lining,
- £200,000 to Passenger Transport to fund a smart travel card scheme for 18 – 24 year-olds in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or undertaking apprenticeships to attend interviews and for the first month following employment,
- £300,000 to Health and Wellbeing to fund swimming concessions for under 16s,
- £140,000 to Strategy and Policy to finance (i) a dedicated fund raiser serving all 12 Essex CABs, plus associated implementation costs, to reduce reliance on local authority grants and (ii) to provide funding to train four CAB Debt Advisor Trainers and
- £85,000 to Waste Management to fund the reopening of the Martins Farm, St Osyth Recycling Centre on a part-time basis,

and to the provision of;

- £199,020 being deleted from the budget for Special Responsibility Allowances,
- £96,000 being deleted from the budget for Strategy and Policy-Member Support by reducing the number of cabinet advisors by two and
- £750,000 being deleted from the budget for Communications and Customer Relations,

and to any consequential adjustment being made to the general balance recommended to the Council.’

Upon being put to the meeting the proposed amendment was declared to be lost.

Upon being put to the meeting the motion in the name of Councillor Martin was declared to be carried including recommendation (k) The Pay Policy Statement which was put to the meeting separately and accordingly it was:

Resolved:

- a) That the budget requirement be £907.2m.
- b) That the Council Tax requirement be £518.1m.
- c) That the net cost of services be £969.0m.
- d) That the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 be as set out in sections 4 and 5 of the report.

- e) That the latest Council Tax Freeze grant be accepted for 2013/14, thereby implying that there will be no increase in the Band D Council Tax for 2013/14, which will therefore remain at £1,086.75. The full detail of all bands is as follows:

Council Tax Band	2012/13 £	2013/14 £
Band A	724.50	724.50
Band B	845.25	845.25
Band C	966.00	966.00
Band D	1,086.75	1,086.75
Band E	1,328.25	1,328.25
Band F	1,569.75	1,569.75
Band G	1,811.25	1,811.25
Band H	2,173.50	2,173.50

- f) That the council tax base be 476,730.
- g) That the reserves and balances be as set out in section 4.13 of the report.
- h) That the capital programme for the period from 2013/14 – 2016/17 be approved, as set out in section 7 of the report, noting the funding sources and implications for the medium term resource strategy.
- i) That the Executive Director for Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation, be authorised to make adjustments to the phasing of payments in the capital programme between years, should that be necessary in order to address any slippage arising as the capital programme for 2012/13 is finalised and to note that any impact on the Prudential Indicators will be reported to the Cabinet at the next available quarterly review.
- j) That the 2013/14 Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision policy be as set out in section 8 of the report.
- k) That the Pay Policy statement for 2013/14 be as set out in section 9 of the report.
- l) That the Executive Director for Finance's (section 151 officer) statement on the robustness of the estimates and reserves included in this budget be noted (paragraph 4.16 of the report).
- m) That the provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) figures set out in paragraph 4.10 of the report be noted.
- n) That the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out and included at section 16 of the report be noted.

10. Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

The Leader, Councillor Peter Martin presented a report on the Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules for the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board.

Resolved:

That the draft Essex Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules as set out in the Annex to the report be approved.

11. Council issues

The report of Council Issues was received and upon being put to the meeting recommendations relating to;

Item 1: The Essex Police Authority and the Essex Police and Crime Panel and

Item 2: The Date of Council Meeting February 2014

were agreed and accordingly it was

Resolved:

Item 1: That Paragraph 16.7(xiv) of the Constitution, relating to the order of business at ordinary meetings of the Council, be amended from 'to consider reports / minutes of the Essex Police and Essex Fire Authorities' to read 'to consider reports / minutes of the Essex Police and Crime Panel and the Essex Fire Authority'.

Item 2: That the date of the meeting of the Budget Council in February 2014 be postponed from Tuesday, 4 February to Tuesday, 11 February at 10 am.

12. Cabinet Issues

The report of Cabinet Issues from the meeting of 22 January 2013 was received.

13. Questions to the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members and Committee Chairmen

Members responded to questions as follows:

- (i) Relating to a) the provision of sixth-form education in Loughton and b) the Council's response to the consultation on the National Curriculum (Councillor CC Pond of the Cabinet Member for Education, Lifelong Learning & the 2012 Games)

The Cabinet Member replied that a) he believed the Council would be able to meet the aspirations of parents in Loughton and the Epping area. This was dependent upon the use of various local assets held by schools. Councillor Metcalf as the Cabinet Member's Deputy had led on this work over the last four years and b) in his response to the consultation would note the excellent education outreach services of the Essex Records Office, Museums and Essex Libraries.

- (ii) Residents who don't have access to the internet (Councillor D J Kendall of the Leader)

The Leader responded that web-based communication enables the Council us to reach out to more people than any other means. However, by strengthening the role of local members and the use of libraries there are opportunities to reach those who either don't have access to the internet or to more vulnerable sections of our communities.

- (iii) On the 'Community Right to Challenge' and the lack of provision for public speaking at Council meetings (Councillor D J Kendall of the Leader)

The Leader responded that the two issues were not linked although the 'Right to Challenge' was a great example of localism in action.

- (iv) To enquire how much of the £35million now allocated was to re-repair the potholes from last year that now need repairing again (Councillor B Aspinell of the Leader)

The Leader responded that recurring inclement weather damaged the road network and that necessitated constant repair and investment in the maintenance of the fabric of the roads.

- (v) Regarding the possibility of using the Weald Country Park saw-mill and workshop as a means of providing bespoke bus-shelters and other assets and thereby reducing expenditure (Councillor B Aspinell of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Environment and Culture)

The Cabinet Member responded that he would investigate.

- (vi) To seek information on the effectiveness of reporting highways incidents online (Councillor M C M Lager of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation)

The Cabinet Member responded that there has been some work undertaken recently to analyse the reporting and handling of highways defects. He undertook to provide this analysis to Mr Lager when it was complete.

- (vii) Regarding the Council's response to the government's requirements to speed up the adoption process (Councillor D Morris of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services)

The Cabinet Member responded that whilst speed was important so was long-term stability and to ensure that the adoption break-down rate was low. The Cabinet Member noted that Essex had one of the best rates in the Country and needs to continue to pay attention to the needs of 'Hard to Place' children who require particularly stable placements.

- (viii) Seeking clarification of budgetary provision for highways maintenance and infrastructure and a request that budgetary provision be made for the

continuance of the work of the Highways Panels (Councillor R Bass of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation)

The Cabinet Member responded that a) the £15million and £20million mentioned in the Leader's budget speech were included in the budget shown and b) it was anticipated that Local Highways Panels would be retained in some form and that, if so, funding will be identified and moved from elsewhere within the existing budget.

- (ix) Regarding forthcoming changes in the field of Adult Social Care (Councillor Garnett of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care)

The Cabinet Member responded that a report on this matter would be brought to Full Council at a later date.

- (x) A request that the Leader accept the best wishes from the Opposition on his forthcoming retirement. Mr Mackrory noted that The Leader had assumed control at a difficult time and had given long and good service to this county and to local government. It was requested that he accept thanks for his courteous treatment of the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Democrat Group particularly during the period when the former Group Leader, Tom Smith-Hughes, was ill (Councillor M Mackrory of the Leader)

The Leader expressed his thanks to Mr Mackrory and his Liberal Democrat colleagues. He then took the opportunity to thank the Deputy Leader David Finch, Members of Cabinet and the Chairman. He also extended his thanks to the Chief Executive, Joanna Killian and the Corporate Leadership Team all of whom have provided excellent advice and support. He thanked the Conservative Group but, finally, paid particular tribute to the support he had received over the years from his wife.

14. Written Questions (Standing Order 16.11.3)

Councillor J Whitehouse declared a personal interest in respect of question 8 as she was a saver with a credit union.

1. By Councillor B Aspinell of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Environment and Culture

'There are two three bedroom semi-detached houses at Weald Country Park in Brentwood. I understand that one has been empty for six years and the other for two years. These houses are being maintained by the taxpayer, but have been allowed to get damp and devalue. Why have these properties not been let or sold, as they could have raised thousands of pounds for the County Council and provided much needed housing for Brentwood residents?'

Reply

The two properties referred to are both within the boundary of Weald Country Park.

Essex County Council does not release houses that are inside the boundary of Country Parks for private sale – as our experience has been that new occupiers can cause significant operational problems – in what are public facilities. These houses are in an extremely visible position and Essex County Council needs to ensure that they are maintained to a high standard and that there are no use or maintenance issues that detract from the park.

A project has been undertaken to see if the entrance to the park could be adjusted so that these sites could be screened from the rest of the park; unfortunately this was not feasible.

As a Local Authority we cannot enter into direct tenancy agreements, as this can infer a variety of rights, including 'right to buy'.

Essex County Council are able to 'lease' the sites to a third party under a business tenancy and we are in discussion with a charity that provides housing for ex-serviceman.

Two country park properties that have become vacant and fall outside the boundary of any country park have recently been sold and realised a capital receipt for the County Council.

2. By Councillor J Deakin of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation Programme

'Would the Cabinet Member please give me an update on the plans for the Hayward School site in Maltese Road, Chelmsford?'

Reply

The site is currently being assessed for a number of potential re-uses.

The proposals include:

- a new primary school to meet growing basic need in the area and a new hub premises for children's services, bringing these together from across Chelmsford with the new family solutions operation,
- a post 19 facility for young people transitioning from the Columbus College to adulthood. This is being worked up by the Academies Enterprise Trust,
- as a potential site for the provision of alternative education,
- The King Edward Grammar School, which adjoins the site, has expressed an interest in acquiring part of the open area of the site for playing field expansion.

The bids will be considered by Cllr Castle as part of the Education Estates Strategy and by Cllr Finch once all the necessary information is available and alternative accommodation options for some of the proposals have been explored.

3. By Councillor J Deakin of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

‘Would the Cabinet Member please advise how many zebra crossings have been installed since 2009 in the County that did not meet the policy?’

Reply

Thank you for your question.

If you could clarify which policy you are referring to in your question, I would be happy to have an answer provided to you.

4. By Councillor D Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

‘When members in Brentwood were recently discussing the dangerous Ongar Road / Sandpit Lane junction, and the possibility of constructing a small solid island roundabout, they were told that any significant improvements were likely to involve diversion of statutory undertakers’ equipment. Early indications from EDF and Transco suggested that the diversion of their equipment alone would cost in the region of £480,000. No figures had been provided at the time from other utility companies whose equipment is known to pass through the junction. Members were also told that an alternative traffic light scheme would also incur the same statutory undertaker costs.

Would the Cabinet Member please clarify the following points:

1. How does the County Council challenge or seek to validate these statutory undertaker costs at this particular junction or at any other junction scheme across the County?
2. How can the same statutory undertaker costs for a small solid island roundabout scheme be the same as for a traffic signal scheme?
3. As the statutory undertaker costs for EDF and Transco equate to £480,000, which is more than Brentwood's total Local Highways budget for the year, how are we ever going to get the much-needed safety improvements we need for our area?’

Reply

Thank you for your question.

1. High level estimates to identify potential costs are sought as

part of the detailed design stage. Every attempt is made to 'design around' the need to move utilities, and costs are challenged wherever possible, although the scope to reduce these is very often limited.

2. The feasibility study for installing traffic signals at this junction indicated extensive kerb alterations would be required to widen both main road approaches. This would incorporate dedicated right-turn lanes to prevent right turning vehicles from obstructing through traffic and the estimated costs for this were in the same order as those for the utility diversion costs for the roundabout scheme. Any schemes that require changes to the kerbs in this location are highly likely to require the relocation of utilities.
3. The answer is the same as when you asked a similar question back in October 2012 i.e. The prioritisation of local schemes by Members is an important function of Local Highways Panels (LHPs) and where a scheme is too large to deliver in a single year, LHPs have the option of spreading the cost of these over more than one year.

5. By Councillor A Turrell of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation and The Cabinet Member for Education, Lifelong Learning and the 2012 Games

'Many Primary Schools are on main routes, and roads outside their schools are gritted during cold weather. However, there are many Primary Schools that are on minor roads, and these become very dangerous because they are not gritted.

Parents in my Division who have children at Queen Boudicca are having great difficulties during icy conditions; the conditions are made even worse because the road is on a slope.

One solution would be to include all Primary Schools on the list of roads to be gritted. Would the two Cabinet Members please advise if they would work together to find a way to solve this issue?'

Reply (from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation)

Thank you for your question.

Essex County Council prioritises its resources on A and B roads and Bus routes which together constitute 80% of all traffic movement with the remainder of the network receiving treatment once the priority network is secure, and in line with available resources.

We do however recognise that other roads are important to local residents and in addition to our hugely popular scheme where we provide salt to town and parish councils, this year ECC also operated a salt scheme for Members in urban areas. This enables local Members to arrange for salt to be used in locations that are important to the local community, for example, outside schools. I have been advised that Councillor Turrell did not opt to take part in this scheme.

6. By Councillor D Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

'Would you please tell me how many claims Essex County Council has received from motorists for compensation for damage sustained to their vehicles caused by potholes on the County's roads over the last three financial years?

Would you please provide a breakdown of this figure for each year?

How many claims has the County accepted and paid compensation for each year over the same period?

How much has the County actually paid out in compensation regardless of the original claim date for each year?'

Reply

Thank you for your question.

Financial Year	Total amount paid during year, regardless of claim date	Number of claims paid	Total Claims received
2009/2010	£171,475.98	557	1830
2010/2011	£174,361.97	481	1306
2011/2012	£155,656.71	464	611
Grand Total	£501,494.66	1502	3747

Please note that the totals given above are based on the entire claim, not just the compensation paid to residents, as we do not record this separately; so it can include solicitor's costs, compensation for injuries, benefits to DWP, hospital charges, special damages, loss of earnings etc.

7. By Councillor J Whitehouse of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

'In reply to my question at the December Full Council meeting, you were unable to tell me which footways would be resurfaced in 2013 /

2014, as this would not be known until the Highways Capital Programme was finalised within the overall Council budget.

Are you now in a position to list these works, or – if not, when will details be available?

Would you please list the footways in Epping and Theydon Bois which will be resurfaced in whole or part and how each one came to be on the list – e.g. was the poor state of the footway noticed by a highways inspector, was it reported by a Councillor or member of the public, together with details of the date on which it was first reported. Are reports of falls on a footway recorded and what action follows from such a report?’

Reply

Thank you for your question.

Based on the outcome of the Council meeting on 12 February 2013 I will provide you with the information you have asked for when the detailed programme is finalised.

With reference to your request regarding reports of falls on a footway; if such falls are reported to Essex County Council, an inspection of the footway is undertaken to assess if any remedial action is required.’

8. By Councillor J Whitehouse of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation Programme

‘Which Credit Unions received financial support from ECC in the last 3 years and how much was this for each one?’

Of this financial support how much for each credit union was a direct grant, how much was retained for officer time, how much was for posters and leaflets provided by ECC and how much was for equipment?’

Did the financial support cover anything else? If so, what and for how much?’

Reply

‘Which Credit Unions received financial support from ECC in the last 3 years and how much was this for each one?’

There are five active credit unions in Essex – Basildon Credit Union; Colchester Savers; Essex Savers; HarlowSave; and Holdfast. Over the last three years, Essex County Council has funded them all. The levels of financial support are as follows:

- *Colchester Savers* – 2010: £14,000; 2011: £5,000
- *Essex Credit Unions Together* (four Essex credit unions: Basildon Credit Union; Colchester Savers; Harlow Save; Holdfast) – 2012: £70,000
- *Essex Savers* – 2010: £55,000; 2011: £15,000; 2012: £15,000

‘Of this financial support how much for each credit union was a direct grant, how much was retained for officer time, how much was for posters and leaflets provided by ECC and how much was for equipment?’

These figures are all direct grant – no element of these grants were retained for officer time, poster, leaflets or equipment. Officer time, posters, leaflets and equipment and similar has been offered and should be considered as in-kind support.

All credit unions have received elements of in-kind support, from publicity and design work, to the offer of access to libraries as credit union collection points and business planning and bid-writing support. Take-up has depended on the appetite of individual credit unions.

It is not possible to cost the officer time accurately, given the varying degrees of involvement credit unions have sought from the local authority. Essex Savers has received the greatest level of officer support, conservatively estimated at £12,000.

Essex Savers has also received additional support for publicity materials, costed at £5,000 over the period in question.

There are no additional costs for equipment.

‘Did the financial support cover anything else? If so, what and for how much?’

The figures outlined above for financial support to local credit unions were direct grants.

In addition to direct grants and officer time, posters, leaflets and equipment (categorised as in-kind support), the provision of rent-free volunteer-run collection points in libraries has also been made available to local credit unions.

Essex Savers has taken up this offer, resulting in an estimated opportunity cost (based on access to eight libraries each week for three years) to the local authority of c. £28,000.

15. Questions to the Essex Fire Authority Representative

In response to a question from Councillor J Young regarding press reports of plans to close fire-stations, Mr Hedley the Essex Fire Authority representative replied that the review underway at present was complex but he would raise the matter at the AGM of the Essex Fire Authority and he invited Councillor Young, at the forthcoming LGA meeting to do the same.

16. Questions to the Representative of the Police and Crime Panel

There were no questions.

17. Chairman's closing remarks

The Chairman concluded the meeting by remarking that this was the final Full Council meeting before the 2013 May election and there many Members who were not standing at those elections. She paid tribute to them and thanked them for all they had done for the Community of Essex and for this Council.

She also noted, further to the remarks already made by members, that this was the last meeting for the Leader, Councillor Peter Martin. She added her own appreciation of his leadership which was marked by his determination and dignity, humour and rigorous fairness.

On behalf of the Council she thanked him for all he had done.

The meeting closed at 13:06

Chairman

14 May 2013