

The Leader's Report of Cabinet Issues

1. Establishment of new Schools

Smith's Farm, Great Dunmow

Cabinet was informed of the growing demand for additional primary school places in Great Dunmow and gave its approval to publish a specification inviting proposals to establish a new 210-place (1 form of entry) primary free school and a 26-place Early Years provision on the Smith's Farm development in Great Dunmow from September 2018 for the purpose of primary school education and Early Years provision in order to accommodate population growth in the area.

Beaulieu Park, Chelmsford

Cabinet was also informed of the growing demand for additional primary school places in Chelmsford and gave its approval to publish a specification inviting proposals to establish a new 420-place (2 form of entry) primary free school and a 56-place Early Years centre on Beaulieu Park from September 2018 for the purpose of primary school education and Early Years provision in order to accommodate population growth in the area.

2. Changes to funding for Housing Related Support-funded Older Peoples' Services

The Council has a number of Housing Related Support contracts in place with a range of providers (including district councils, housing associations and charitable trusts) to contribute to the costs of older peoples' services – sheltered schemes and community alarms. Cabinet agreed funding changes from April 2016 which will reduce the revenue spend by £1.445m per annum.

Linked to this, discussions will take place with providers about the future range of services and funding from April 2017.

3. Highways Asset Management Policy and Strategy

Cabinet adopted new Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy documents.

Cabinet was informed of the importance placed on Asset Management by the Department of Transport and its imminent plans to reduce highway maintenance funding for those Authorities who cannot demonstrate they are following Asset Management principles.

Cabinet was made aware of the benefits of following good asset management principles when treating or repairing highway assets and gaining maximum benefit from the limited Central Government funding received.

4. Getting Around in Essex: Procurement of New Local Bus Network

Most contracts for the provision of the County Council-supported public bus network expire on 26 March 2016. The remaining contracts expire in March 2017.

In June 2015 the Cabinet authorised the Passenger Transport team to undertake an exercise to review the supported bus network in line with the ambition to deliver a bus network that maximises the contribution buses make to the Council's seven outcomes, while offering good value to the taxpayer.

This review has been completed and a new network has been designed. This has been the subject of public consultation.

Cabinet agreed to the revised bus network that will be supported and commissioned by the County Council and to tender for this in two phases. The Cabinet Member will make the decision on the award of contracts.

Cabinet also approved the revised Local Bus Service Priority Policy 2015 to 2020, that sets out how the County Council will support local bus services in future and what priority will be given to supporting different types of service.

Councillor David Finch
Leader of the Council