

Minutes of a meeting of Essex County Council held at County Hall, Chelmsford on 12 July 2016

Present

Chairman: Councillor J F Aldridge

Vice-Chairman: Councillor J G Jowers

Councillors:

J Abbott	D Finch	J Lodge
B Aspinell	M D Fisher	D Louis
S Barker	R Gadsby	M Mackrory
R L Bass	K Gibbs	R A Madden
A Bayley	A Goggin	M Maddocks
K Bentley	R J Gooding	M McGeorge
D Blackwell	I Grundy	V Metcalfe
K Bobbin	D Harris	A Naylor
R G Boyce	A M Hedley	Lady Newton
A Brown	I Henderson	M J Page
M Buckley	T M A Higgins	J W Pike
G Butland	R Hirst	C Pond
S Canning	P Honeywood	S Robinson
J Chandler	C Guglielmi	C Seagers
K Clempner	R C Howard	C Sargeant
T Cutmore	M Hoy	K Smith
M Danvers	N Hume	J Spence
J Deakin	J Huntman	K Twitchen
T Durcan	A Jackson	S Walsh
M Ellis	E C Johnson	R G Walters
A Erskine	D J Kendall	J Whitehouse
F Ferguson	N Le Gresley	A Wood
		J A Young

Prayers

The meeting was preceded by prayers led by The Right Reverend Hugh Allan, O.Praem. BA; Prior of Chelmsford and Parish Priest of Our Lady Immaculate. and Chaplain to the Chairman of Essex County Council.

The Chairman reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded and broadcast live over the internet.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors P Channer, J Knapman, S Lissimore, M McEwen, J M Reeves and A Turrell.

2. Declarations of Interest

- Councillor Young declared a Code interest in relation to Cabinet Issues, Children's Centres as she was a trustee of Greenstead Community Association.
- Councillor Higgins declared a Code interest in relation to Cabinet Issues, Housing Related Support as in the previous year Colchester YMCA was one of her nominated charities when she was Mayor.

3. The Chief Executive's Report on return of Members Elected and Political Proportionality

The Chief Executive informed Council that Councillor Frank Ferguson had been returned as the Member for the Laindon Park and Fryerns Division at the By-Election held on 9 June 2016 which was triggered by the death of the previous Councillor.

Councillor Nigel Le Gresley, the Leader of the UKIP Group, had given notice that Councillor Ferguson had joined the UKIP Group on the Council. This triggered a review of the political balance of the Council's committees and other bodies.

Resolved:

- (1) That the revised political balance of the Council be noted.
- (2) That the seat allocations to political groups be changed as follows:
 - (a) seat allocations on the County Council's nominations to the Essex Fire Authority shall be:

Conservative 12	Liberal Democrat 2	Labour 2
UKIP 2	Non-aligned 1	Green 1
 - (b) seat allocations on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be:

Conservative 7	Liberal Democrat 2	Labour 1
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UKIP 1

Non-aligned 1

(c) seat allocations on the Audit Committee shall be:

Conservative 4

Liberal Democrat 1

UKIP 1

Non-aligned 1

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2016

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Chairman's Announcements

Recent Death - former Councillor Tony Clover

The Chairman informed Members that former Councillor Tony Clover had died on 3 May. He had been elected to represent the Constable Division from 2 May 1985 and served on many committees including as Vice-Chairman of the Library, Museum and Records and Environment Committee, as Chairman of the Development and Regulation Committee and the East Essex Area Forum. He retired in 2009.

Members stood in remembrance.

Illness - former Councillor Gerard McEwen

The Chairman informed Members that former Councillor Gerard McEwen had been ill and in hospital and he was pleased to have been advised that he had recently been discharged and was at home. He noted that his wife, Councillor Maggie McEwen had sent her apologies for the meeting of Council as she was required to be with him. On behalf of Council he wished him a full and speedy recovery.

Awards

Infrastructure Category at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards

The Chairman advised Council that on 11 May the Council's Waste Transfer Station Programme of Works had been adjudged to be the Winner of the Infrastructure Category at the RICS Awards and was to be entered into the National RICS Awards to take place in October.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

The Chairman advised Council that he had attended Buckingham Palace on 16 May with a great number of young people who were there to collect their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards in the presence of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and TRH the Earl and Countess of Wessex, on the occasion of the scheme's diamond

anniversary. He had also received on behalf of the Council a commemorative plaque from Levison Wood (the TV presenter and explorer) acknowledging the Council's involvement with the scheme for the last 60 years.

6. Petitions

The Chairman received petitions concerning:

- the provision of a 'Changing Places toilet' from Councillor Higgins for the attention of Councillor Madden, Cabinet Member for Adults and Children,
- Road safety for Albion Road, Waltham Abbey from Councillor Gadsby for Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and
- Highways and road repairs from Councillor Bobbin for Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

7. Executive Statement

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Finch, delivered an Executive Statement on 'Changing Times' including references to:

- Essex supporting business,
- Welcoming people who wish to live and work in Essex, regardless of their background,
- Financial savings that the Council will need to make for the next four years,
- New ways of working including Digital Innovation,
- Business Rates, and
- Partnership working.

8. Motions

1. EU Referendum

It was moved by Councillor David Finch and seconded by Councillor Kevin Bentley that:

'This Council congratulates the Conservative Government for delivering its promise to hold a referendum on membership of the EU.

This Council further notes the clear decision of the United Kingdom, and especially Essex to leave the EU, while recognising the concerns of those residents who voted to remain.

It is important that there is now a clear plan of action and leadership for Essex and therefore this Council pledges:

1. To help ensure that Essex businesses and residents are able to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise
2. To provide support and advice to those who may be adversely affected by the changes.

3. To work with the Government and new Prime Minister to deliver the best outcomes for Essex during negotiations.'

It was moved by Councillor Michael Danvers and seconded by Councillor Ivan Henderson that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

'This Council notes the decision of the United Kingdom, and especially Essex to leave the EU, while recognising the concerns of those residents who voted to remain.

This Council further notes, with great admiration, the efforts of MP's in Parliament to pass legislation guaranteeing the rights of EU citizens currently living in the United Kingdom to remain.

It is important that there is now a clear plan of action and leadership for Essex and therefore this Council pledges:

1. To help ensure that Essex businesses and residents are able to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise.
2. To provide support and advice to those who may be adversely affected by the changes.
3. To work with the Government and new Prime Minister to deliver the best outcomes for Essex during negotiations.
4. To put practical measures in place, working with law enforcement and other organisations, to ensure that EU citizens living in Essex feel safe, and free from harm or abuse.
5. To work to ensure that safeguards are put in place to protect the rights of workers across the County, who might otherwise be negatively impacted by withdrawal from the EU.'

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

Upon being put to the meeting the original Motion was declared to be carried.

2. Highways Defects

It was moved by Councillor Colin Sargeant and seconded by Councillor Chris Pond that:

'Council notes that highway defects have now been reduced to acceptable levels on PR1 and PR2 carriageways, and congratulates Essex Highways staff accordingly. However, this success has been achieved at the expense of defects worsening and becoming more numerous on footways of all categories, and on the carriageways of local roads, especially in towns. It has become more difficult to secure repairs even to significant defects in such locations. Council calls upon the Cabinet Members to build upon the welcome start made on heavily used footways in 2015, by redoubling efforts, and to amend intervention criteria to ensure the worst defects on footways and local roads are rectified in a more timely manner.'

It was moved by Councillor Eddie Johnson and seconded by Councillor Rodney Bass that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

‘Council notes that highway defects have now been reduced to acceptable levels on PR1 and PR2 carriageways, and congratulates the Cabinet Members and the Administration accordingly. It is acknowledged that this success may have been achieved partly at the expense of defects worsening and becoming more numerous on footways of all categories, and on the carriageways of local roads.

Council calls upon the Cabinet Members to build upon the welcome start made on heavily used footways in 2015, by redoubling efforts to ensure the worst defects on footways and local roads are rectified in as timely a manner as possible.’

Upon being put to the meeting the amendment was declared to be carried and so became the substantive Motion.

Upon being put to the meeting the substantive Motion was declared to be carried.

3. Council Tax Fraud Campaign

It was moved by Councillor John Spence and seconded by Councillor Susan Barker that:

‘Essex County Council recognises that Council Tax affects the household budgets for our honest, hardworking residents. Accordingly, we are dedicated to achieving best value for money and to minimise increases.

Therefore, this Council welcomes that all partner local authorities have agreed to collaborate in a campaign to attack Council Tax fraud. With estimates on the scale of fraud or incorrect claims on Council Tax at between 3-11% of discounts, it is appropriate that we work with those who are over claiming erroneously, while identifying and addressing deliberate fraudsters.

By so doing we enhance funding for our own and partner authorities, while respecting the vast majority who pay their taxes honestly despite their own financial pressures.’

Upon being put to the meeting the Motion was declared to be carried.

4. Greater Essex Devolution

It was moved by Councillor Mike Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Jon Whitehouse that:

‘This Council notes that discussions with the Leaders of the 15 Essex Authorities to determine a devolution deal have been ongoing for well over 12 months and that a letter has been sent to the Secretary of State seeking a meeting with a delegation of Council Leaders to discuss and clarify the options.

Council further notes that a Briefing Note was circulated to County Members on 14 June, which gave background information, together with a copy of the letter to the Secretary of State. The Briefing Note made clear that there must be agreement to seriously consider new governance including a Mayor (elected) for any deal to be acceptable to the Government. The note also listed seven organisations which have been engaged with the process and that Essex MPs had also been involved.

It is therefore regretted that Members of this Council have had no opportunity to debate what could be the most fundamental change to local government in this County since Southend and Thurrock became unitary authorities. We believe Members should express their view before any further decisions are made, in particular the principle of an elected Mayor. It is also regretted that the people of Essex are unaware of the implications of what is being proposed on their behalf.

This Council therefore resolves that a special Council meeting be convened to determine whether or not the Council supports the principle of an elected mayor for Essex before any such proposal is put to the Secretary of State.'

It was moved by Councillor David Finch and second by Councillor Kevin Bentley, that the Motion be amended to read as follows:

'This Council notes that discussions with the Leaders of the 15 Essex Authorities to determine a devolution deal have been ongoing for well over 12 months and that a letter has been sent to the Secretary of State seeking a meeting with a delegation of Council Leaders to discuss and clarify the options.

Council further notes that a Briefing Note was circulated to County Members on 14 June, which gave background information, together with a copy of the letter to the Secretary of State. The Briefing Note made clear that there must be agreement to seriously consider new governance including a Mayor (elected) for any deal to be acceptable to the Government. The note also listed seven organisations which have been engaged with the process and that Essex MPs had also been involved.

Members of this Council have (to date) had no opportunity to debate what could be the most fundamental change to local government in this County since Southend and Thurrock became unitary authorities. We believe Members should express their view before any further decisions are made, in particular the principle of an elected Mayor. It will also be important that the people of Essex will have the opportunity to comment on the implications of what is being proposed on their behalf.

This Council therefore resolves that a special Council meeting be convened to determine whether or not the Council supports the principle of an elected Mayor for Essex after such clarifications on the mayoral powers have been established by discussion with Senior Civil Servants, and County Council Members have been properly briefed both on the options for Governance and the benefits arising from a Combined Authority Model of Governance; the public of Essex have been made aware of the opportunities and issues arising from a change in the structure of local Government in Essex; and other local government bodies have agree to go forward with a new model of Governance.'

Upon being put to the meeting the amendment was declared to be carried and so became the substantive Motion.

Upon being put to the meeting the substantive Motion was declared to be carried.

9. Adjournment

With the agreement of Council the Chairman adjourned the meeting for luncheon at 13:10.

The meeting reconvened at 14:00.

10. Motions continued

5. Consultation and Engagement

It was moved by Councillor Ivan Henderson and seconded by Councillor Michael Danvers that:

‘The Labour Group calls upon Essex County Council to recognise that it has an engagement deficit; too often speaking on behalf of Essex residents, rather than reaching out and empowering them to speak for themselves. Policy should be collaborative by default, jointly designing solutions with communities, and working with Essex residents to break down the public disconnect with County Hall and strengthen the scope and vision of our outcomes.

Consultation should be at the heart of policy, integrated from inception to outcome. The process can always benefit from a diverse range of voices and in order to claim a mandate for change, the Council must prove that it is able to engage beyond its usual sphere of input. This means talking to our communities, service users, frontline providers and those most marginalised by our current methods of engagement: young people, those from poorer households, the elderly and the disengaged.

The Council also needs to be asking the right questions. It does the policy process no good if the questions are vague, over complex, or simply meaningless value statements. Council needs to tailor-make consultations to maximise effect, and to increase the potential for meaningful input.

The Council is facing significant challenges moving forward, with demand on services becoming increasingly complex, whilst resources continue to diminish. Council has no choice but to work collaboratively with partners, communities and residents, anticipating demand and collectively shaping the outcomes to be achieved.

With this in mind, Council resolves

- to call for a review of the policy timeline, ensuring that engagement features as an integral part of the ‘golden thread’ process

- this authority should utilise new forms of media, hone existing consultation strategies and do more to directly engage, qualitatively, with communities
- consultations should be crafted in partnership with the teams carrying out the engagement, who have a huge amount of untapped expertise that will enable insight to become truly indispensable when forming outcomes. More substantial consultations should go before relevant scrutiny committees, where members can constructively work with Cabinet to ensure that engagement is most effective, and asking the right questions, of the right people.'

It was moved by Councillor Bass and seconded by Councillor Madden that, in accordance with Standing Order 16.11.5(ii), the question be now put.

On being put to the meeting the motion that the question be now put was carried.

Councillor Danvers having spoken as the seconder of the original Motion, the Motion was put to the meeting and declared to be lost.

11. Council Issues

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented the report of matters reserved to Council and the additional paper concerning changes to Committee membership arising out of item 3 (Declaration of the Result of the Laindon Park and Fryerns By-Election and Political Proportionality) circulated to Members prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Resolved:

1. Confirmation of Membership Changes

The following membership changes have been confirmed by notice given by the Conservative Group Leader:

- Councillors Susan Barker and Stephen Canning have been appointed as the Conservative Substitutes on the Essex Fire Authority.
- Councillor Kay Twitchen has replaced Councillor Ricki Gadsby as a Member of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

As a result of the change in the political balance of the Council (item 3 of the Agenda) a number of changes to committee membership are required:

(a) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- It has been agreed between the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat Group and Labour Groups and with the Leader of the Council that the Labour Group will continue to have 2 seats on HOSC and that the Labour Group will instead give up a seat on the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee.

(b) Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee:

- Councillor Tony Durcan will cease to be a member.
- The Liberal Democrat nomination in place of Councillor Durcan is Councillor Anne Turrell.

- (c) Audit Committee:
 - Councillor Karen Clempner will cease to be a member.
 - The UKIP nomination in place of Councillor Clempner is Councillor Frank Ferguson.
- (d) Essex Fire Authority:
 - The Liberal Democrat member being removed is Councillor Jude Deakin.
 - The UKIP nomination in place of Councillor Deakin is Councillor Jamie Huntman.

12. Cabinet Issues

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented a report concerning seven matters considered by Cabinet since the last Council meeting.

Cabinet Members responded to questions as follows:

- (4) Children and Young People's Plan 2016 (and)**
- (7) Procurement of a New Model to Deliver Integrated Pre-birth to 19, Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Services**

Councillor Young asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, concerning appropriate levels of consultation and how the questions were framed. As there had been only 10 responses from young people to the consultation in relation to item 4 did he consider that it had been dealt with properly?

She also asked, in relation to both items 4 and 7, if he did not think that it would be helpful for Scrutiny Committees to be involved in helping to frame the questions and direct consultations in advance of them being undertaken?

The Cabinet Member replied that there was no longer a statutory requirement on the Council to have a Children's and Young Peoples' Plan but the Council had decided to carry on with it. The consultation that took place was an opportunity to engage with local delivery groups. The ten young people were on a Working Group to represent many others.

There had been scrutiny on the matter of Procurement of a New Model to Deliver Integrated Pre-birth to 19, Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Services and the consultation determined that 81% of the 2,100 people who responded did not agree with the proposals. The Cabinet Member has listened and amended the proposals and will continue to consult. He saw this as a good example of the consultation process at work.

(5) Adoption of Cycling Strategy

- (a) Councillor Abbott asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if the Council is to achieve a radical shift of behaviour, an improvement in health and wellbeing, fair access for children to schools and much safer provision for cyclists in general does the Administration recognise

that there will have to be a step-change in the level of investment in cycling including Dutch-style segregation from motorised traffic for cyclists.

The Cabinet Member replied that it was a good initiative and the Council was now spending £3 per head and by 2020 it would be spending £10 per head. The extra funding will help achieve many of the outcomes mentioned by Councillor Abbott.

- (b) Councillor Harris noted that the school numbers were increasing in the Colchester area and he hoped the Cabinet Member might try to ensure that schools as they were developed incorporated cycling to school as a strategy to make roads safer and that this was imbedded in their plans and the Council's policy.

The Cabinet Member replied that he encouraged the initiative but could not make decisions on behalf of schools. However, he would speak to Councillor Gooding, the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, on the matter.

(6) Housing Related Support: Post 16 Services

Councillor Higgins asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, if the young people who no longer fitted the criteria for assistance might not cost the Council more in the longer term?

The Cabinet Member replied that the intention was to target the most vulnerable and recognising the concerns about the consequence and impact the procurement was being delayed for three months to enable further engagement with housing authorities.

(7) Procurement of a New Model to Deliver Integrated Pre-birth to 19, Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Services

Councillor Danvers asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, if the premises now being used for children's centres will be used for childcare?

The Cabinet Member replied that in considering the future use of the premises he would explore every opportunity.

The report of Cabinet Issues was received and adopted.

13. The Essex Pension Fund Board Annual Report 2015/16

Councillor Bass, the Chairman of the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board, presented the report.

It was noted that it was intended that proposals relating to Asset Pooling arrangements relating to the Essex Pension Fund would most likely be brought to the Council in December for approval.

The report was received.

14 Dates of Future Meetings.

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented a report concerning the dates of future meetings of Council.

Resolved:

That meetings of the Council be held on Tuesdays at 10am on:

11 July, 10 October and 12 December 2017;
13 February (Budget), 8 May (Annual), 10 July, 9 October and 11 December 2018;
12 February (Budget), 14 May (Annual), 9 July, 8 October and 10 December 2019;
and
11 February (Budget), 12 May (Annual), 14 July, 13 October and 8 December 2020.

15. Written questions to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members

The published answers to the 16 written questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 16.12.1 were noted.

The following supplementary questions were asked as a result of having received a written reply:

- (4) Councillor Kendall asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, if (noting that the current wait for diagnosis of autism varied across the three CCGs from between two days and two years) he would welcome a review by the relevant Scrutiny Committee?

The Cabinet Member replied that he too was concerned about this matter and had asked the Adult Autism Commissioning Group to engage with the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to investigate a new approach which he intended to present to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the end of the year.

- (5) Councillor Kendall asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if it were possible to say how much had been spent in 2009 to determine value for money and what guarantee was there on the quality of the work?

The Cabinet Member replied that between £10m to £11m had been spent on the scheme as materials were expensive for the heritage site. There would be ongoing costs incurred for ongoing maintenance.

- (6) Councillor Deakin asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, how frequently were drains cleared during the year?

The Cabinet Member replied that drains were ideally cleared once a year but there was a provision for this to be more frequent where there was flooding. He noted that it was not always a blocked drain that contributed to flooding but could also be the ditch or sump where further work is required. There is an attempt to improve that using Surface Water Alleviation Programmes.

- (9) Councillor Harris asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he was aware that in other parts of the country there were 10% checks made on the quality of contractors work. How frequently were quality checks being undertaken in Essex?

The Cabinet Member replied that he understood the frustrations of many people with the quality of work but it was not economical to check every piece of work. Local residents, Parish Councils and Members were very helpful in reporting problems and if the contractor was required to undertake remedial work on a repair then they did so at their own expense.

- (10) Councillor Young asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, if he could assist her as she could not find the papers to which he had referred in his answer.

The Leader replied that he would do so.

- (11) Councillor Henderson asked Councillor Bentley, the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Partnerships, if he would agree that it was important that Dr Sentence should visit as much of Essex as possible so he could come to understand local issues and problems.

The Cabinet Member agreed that a thorough and independent investigation was welcome.

- (14) Councillor Whitehouse asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if it were true that if parking restriction schemes were to be implemented they needed to be 'cost neutral'. Would the Cabinet Member not agree that some parking restrictions were in place as a public service and therefore it was not just a matter of finance.

The Cabinet Member replied that Councillor Whitehouse needed to go to the North Essex Parking Partnership for an answer as these schemes were run by them.

- (16) Councillor Danvers asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, if he could make a note of the benefits of in-house procurement as to do so might save a lot of money.

The Leader replied that he was happy to so note.

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

1. Councillor Le Gresley asked Councillor Bentley, the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Partnerships, if he would add to the four main categories on the front page of the Council's website a fifth category for public consultations.

The Cabinet Member replied that he would look into it, but he also believed that a link to public consultations was already available on the front page of the website.

2. Councillor Abbott asked Councillor Bentley, the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Partnerships, concerning a recent event when contractors sent digging equipment into a wildlife site owned by the Council, if any ecological studies had taken place, why there had been no notice to local authorities or residents and if it were true that there had been soil surveys for asbestos that may then have been disturbed?

The Cabinet Member replied that, although this was not his portfolio, he would ensure that a response to these questions would be sent.

3. Councillor Higgins asked Councillor Bass, the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, if he would consider undertaking another informal consultation on the new plans concerning Lexden Road in Colchester?

The Cabinet Member replied that such a consultation might be considered if it were judged to be necessary by the local member, Councillor Lissimore. He also explained that at no time had there been a decision made on a bus lane on Lexden Road or a cycleway.

4. Councillor Durcan asked a question of Councillor Bass, the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, concerning the proposals for junction 7A on the M11. He paid tribute to the work of officers who had undertaken the consultation but wondered what the Cabinet Member thought about stopping the upgrade of junction 7 to concentrate on junction 7A and what assurances could he give that junction 7 would be upgraded at some time?

The Cabinet Member replied that junction 7A was a very important enhancement to improve access to the M11. The work was essential and vital for the future of Harlow. The Council was in consultation not on whether or not junction 7A would proceed but on how the work could be undertaken. He also noted that the Council had discussed with the Department for Transport whether or not it was possible to advance the work on junction 7A as well as junction 7. What was not in doubt was the need for junction 7 but he believed it was desirable to accelerate work on junction 7A.

5. Councillor Barker asked a question of Councillor Walsh, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, concerning telephone calls she and he had been

receiving about the transfer waste station at Great Dunmow. Could he confirm that the issues the residents were raising would be dealt with urgently?

The Cabinet Member replied that he was reassured that officers had reacted very quickly to reports of noxious odours. Officers had met on site this morning with the Environment Health Officer. Two waste streams have been diverted away from that site, bulk and trade waste and work was ongoing. He understood that officers were meeting residents on Thursday.

6. Councillor Aspinell asked Councillor Bass, the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, and Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if they agreed that the Local Highways Panels in Brentwood had been an example of efficient and amicable co-operative working. The meetings had been webcast and the public had been allowed to address the Panel. However, webcasting had been stopped and members of the public excluded. He paid tribute to the officers involved in working for the Panel and wondered if the Cabinet Member would care to comment on the fact that money made available from SELEP was not now to be made available for schemes being suggested by LHPs. He questioned the Panel's ability to access SELEP monies as it did not have the resources to prepare feasibility studies for large schemes.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure responded that Brentwood was represented on Central, Mid and North Essex Local Transport Board. The intention was to consult with all Districts on schemes valued at £500,000 or more.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport added that the initial Local Highways Panels' terms of reference were to hold the meetings without the public being present. A review of the terms of reference is currently being undertaken.

7. Councillor Young asked a question of Councillor Brown, the Cabinet Member for Corporate, Communities and Customers, concerning the delays in appointments being offered by Colchester Registration Service. She asked if this matter would be looked into.

The Cabinet Member replied that she sympathised with Councillor Young and all users of the service who had been affected by staffing shortages. She hoped that this matter would be quickly resolved but asked Councillor Young to provide dates specifically of what she had described and she would investigate what had happened on those specific dates.

8. Councillor Deakin asked Councillor Madden, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, when might those in receipt of the Meals on Wheels service receive details of the new suppliers in their area.

The Cabinet Member replied that he did not know the specific answer to her question but he would investigate.

9. Councillor Naylor asked Councillor Butland, the Cabinet Member for Health, if he could explain how the NHS 'footprints' would serve the people of Essex. It would appear that the NHS had divided the County into three administrative areas.

The Cabinet Member replied that he regretted that the NHS Success Regime had indeed indicated that the County be so divided. A further 44 'NHS footprints' were rolled out for the whole of the country. Each NHS footprint was required to produce a Sustainability Transformation Programme (STP). Although there is some discernible logic to it, there are inherent problems for the County. The objective is to achieve Health and Social Care Integration and ensure that community services and social care are linked.

The Cabinet Member informed Council that he had met the previous week with the Chairman of the Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). The next day he was to meet with colleagues from the Suffolk HWB and also there have been meetings with representatives from Southend and Thurrock HWBs. The objective of the meetings was to develop a method for Local Authorities to deal with the NHS Footprints.

All had expressed concerns to the NHS about organising it in this way. He undertook to keep Members informed as matters developed.

10. Councillor Bayley asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he would comment on the practice whereby bus companies, once they secured a route, were then allowed to cease operating on that route.

The Cabinet Member replied that bus companies were legally permitted to do so as long as they gave sufficient notice.

11. Councillor Robinson asked a question of Councillor Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, concerning progress regarding a particular scheme in his Division involving Section 106 monies. The original agreement stated that the work would be completed by 1 June 2016 but this has now been delayed. It is now two and a half years since the work should have commenced. He asked what the Highways Service do to ensure that developers stick to their agreements?

The Cabinet Member replied that he would be pleased to speak to Councillor Robinson outside of the meeting.

12. Councillor Ferguson asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, how much longer residents would have to wait for the completion of roadworks in the vicinity of Laindon Station in Basildon. There were four-way traffic lights causing considerable delays and congestion.

The Cabinet Member stated that he would investigate the matter and respond directly to Councillor Ferguson after the meeting.

13. Councillor Pond asked Councillor Johnson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, if he could comment on the delayed repairs to lampposts. He asked if a schedule could be sent to all Members of all lampposts in their Divisions that had not been repaired within a year and why?

The Cabinet Member replied that he would investigate and see what could be done to provide the information.

14. Councillor Pond asked Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, for an explanation of the term 'quadrant' which appears in the Leader's Report of Cabinet Issues (Agenda item 10)?

The Leader replied that he was unable to provide an answer immediately but he would do so within the next 24 hours.

17. Questions of the representative of the Essex Police and Crime Panel

1. Councillor Howard asked Councillor Jowers, the Representative of the Essex Police and Crime Panel if he was aware of the frequency with which cars were being driven at speed and dangerously on Canvey Island and if he would look into the matter.

The Representative replied that this was an operational matter but he encouraged Councillor Howard and others to raise such matters at the Panel's meetings.

2. Councillor Whitehouse asked Councillor Jowers, the Representative of the Essex Police and Crime Panel if he had on his work-plan to consider the contact that members of the public have through the 101 service and the impact on Local Authorities of the mixed messages we have had from the police concerning their involvement in anti-social behaviour.

The Representative replied that this was an operational matter but he encouraged Councillor Whitehouse and others to raise these matters at the Panel's meetings.

18. To note the reports of the Essex Fire Authority's meetings of 8 and 22 June 2016 and to ask questions of the Authority's representative

The reports of the meetings of 8 and 22 June 2016 were received.

1. Councillor Young asked Councillor Hedley, the Representative of the Essex Fire Authority, with more fire preventative work being undertaken were the Fire Service now more engaged in road accidents or had there been a recent increase in the number of fires.

The Representative replied that over the past 10 years the trend for the number of call-outs was reducing although there had been a recent minor increase in the number of call-outs due to changes to the ways of working with the other blue light services.

2. Councillor Smith asked Councillor Hedley, the Representative of the Essex Fire Authority, if he was aware that the Essex Seax flag that was flown over Basildon Fire Station was in need of replacement.

The Representative replied that he agreed the flag was in need of replacement but he was reluctant to spend money on a flag when there were other priorities for the Fire Service.

3. Councillor Aspinell asked Councillor Hedley, the Representative of the Essex Fire Authority, if, in the light of proposals for the integration of the Fire Service with other 'blue light' services he would resist any move for the disposal of fire station premises and other assets.

The Representative replied that there are on-going discussions. The timetable for any full-scale merger was 24-36 months and there was sensitivity around this and the consultations already being undertaken on the future of the Fire Service to which there had been 17,000 responses to the two-stage consultation. He asked that Members re-read that consultation in order to inform them of the plans. Councillor Henderson commented that the Council could learn from the example of the Fire Service on undertaking public consultations.

The meeting closed at 15:32

Chairman
11 October 2016