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# ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING 11 October 2016

## Order Paper

### Public Question Time

Prior to the meeting of the Council and following prayers the following question will be asked by a member of the public in accordance with Standing Order 16.12.10.

### Councillor Anne Davis, Tendring District Council

'Will the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning consider building a new grammar school for the Tendring District (and elsewhere in the County) in line with Theresa May's intentions for the future of education?'

### Summary of Procedure:

- The person must be present to ask their question.
- The Chairman will invite the person to speak.
- The person may not speak for more than three minutes in order to ask their question or submit a petition.
- There shall be a reply from the Chairman or other nominated Member.
- Save for the Member replying to the question no other Member shall be permitted to respond.
- There is no opportunity for supplementary questions nor for debate.
- Thirty minutes overall is allocated for public questions.

### **Agenda Item 11**

To note a correction of a typographical error in the part of the Council Issues report which relates to the Petitions Policy (para 5.2). The proposed trigger for a Council Debate is to remain unchanged at 14,000+.

### **Agenda Item 12 (a)**

#### **1. By Councillor Pike of the Leader of the Council**

‘The Portway Footbridge in Halstead is a vital part of Halstead Footway travel. Three years ago it was discovered that there were problems with the bridge. It was also discovered that the bridge belonged to the Crown Solicitor and they were not intending to carry out any repairs.

During December of last year, the bridge inspection team from the County Council, without notifying the District and Town Councils, or myself as the sitting Member, decided to close the footbridge.

I have been trying to get the bridge reopened.

Will you please instruct somebody to carry out the necessary repairs?’

#### **2. Councillor Buckley of the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure**

‘Will the Cabinet Member confirm that the necessary works at the Nevendon Road/A127 junction are being completed on schedule and on budget?’

#### **3. Councillor Wood of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**

‘Is the Cabinet Member aware of the extent of illegal encampments by Travellers across the County, and could he advise what role the Gypsy and Traveller unit undertake in dealing with these incursions?’

**4. By Councillor Danvers of the Leader of the Council**

‘Would the Leader look again at zero hours contracts and consider a plan to give minimum hours to those who have been employed for at least two years on such terms.’

**5. By Councillor Whitehouse of the Leader of the Council**

‘According to the 2015/16 statement of accounts, at the end of March 2016 Essex County Council had £17.208m of properties held for sale, with sales expected to take place in 2016/17, and a further £35.587m of surplus assets where disposal was anticipated, but the timeframe for completion of the sales less certain.

Please will the portfolio holder list:

- Properties sold so far in 2016/17 and the capital receipt received for each property.
- Properties expected to be sold during the rest of 2016/17, and the asset value of each property
- Properties held for sale not expected to be sold during 2016/17, and the asset value of each property and anticipated year of sale

What was the revenue cost in 2015/16 of holding these properties for sale?’

**6. By Councillor Higgins of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children**

‘What is the financial cost to Essex County Council of the collapse of 4Children?’

**7. By Councillor Deakin of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

‘The continued use of Glyphosate by this council is a real concern.

More forward thinking councils around Great Britain have stopped using Glyphosate as there are growing concerns about this herbicide.

Restrictions of its use can be found not only in the UK but also across Europe, Canada, USA and in Latin America.

What provision is this council making to join those forward thinking

councils and stop the use of Glyphosates to control weeds; to promote the use of more natural ways of controlling weeds in our parks, verges and other areas owned by this council?’

**8. By Councillor Higgins of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning**

‘What are the correct procedures in place to ensure a safe and local education is provided for children with disabilities, especially when first entering the education system at Reception?’

**9. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

‘Please could you give the specific reasons why Local Highways Panel meetings are not open to the public? Does this policy have the full support of the Conservative administration running Essex County Council?’

**10. By Councillor Abbott of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

‘A parish council in the Division I represent has been reporting to ECC over a prolonged period that many of its traditional rural junction directional pointer signs are damaged, in poor repair or simply missing. I submitted a full list of these signs including details of location, type and state of repair to Member Enquiries (ME), as they requested me to do on taking up the case for the parish council. I also relayed to ME the offer that the parish council would be prepared to assist with funding the work. ME's response was to reject any work being done to rectify the situation via them and instead referred to the Local Highways Panel Officer. The Local Highways Panel Officer said it was a maintenance issue and referred me to ME. So just how do we go about reinstating these signs?’

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**11. By Councillor Abbott of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

‘Why was the Braintree District Local Highways Panel scheme to extend the 30mph limit northwards along Church Road, Rivenhall, rejected by the Cabinet Member on a single vague police objection where the apparently anonymous officer admitted that he/she did not know why the scheme had been submitted. When the Cabinet Member rejected the scheme, was he specifically made aware of the reason for the scheme, the overwhelming community backing for the scheme and was he supplied with the ECC average speed monitoring data taken from near the local Primary School.’

**12. By Councillor Mackrory of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**

‘Can the Cabinet Member confirm that the ANPR systems at Recycling Centres are active and effective during all working hours?’

**13. By Councillor Mackrory of the Leader of the Council**

‘In the light of the £2.3m fine and the severe reprimand for failing to uphold high auditing standards imposed on Price Waterhouse Coopers by the Financial Reporting Council, will PWC be excluded from bidding for any future contracts with this Council?’

**14. By Councillor Young of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children**

‘Following the shock departure of 4Children as a children's centre provider, what assurances can the Cabinet Member give Council about the 0-19 model that was advocated by 4Children? Was 4Childrens’ departure based on a lack of resources available to run services?’

**15. By Councillor Durcan of the Leader of the Council**

‘Clarity is important, especially when comes to educating our young people. With the announcement that Theresa May’s government intends to construct more grammar schools, can the Leader provide members with assurances that both he, and his Cabinet, will reject any proposals that might leave young people across Essex excluded at age 11?’

**16. By Councillor Durcan of the Leader of the Council**

'With the triggering of article 50 now set for March 2017, what steps has this authority taken to mitigate the negative impact of Brexit on Essex residents?'

**17. By Councillor Henderson of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children**

'When they took over young people's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services (EWMHS) in November 2015, NELFT declared that their aim would be to *'respond earlier to children's needs to help prevent, reduce or delay the need for more specialist interventions'*. With this in mind, can the Cabinet Member explain why waiting times for even the most severe of cases are still unacceptable, and the overall service less cohesive and collaborative than before?'

**18. By Councillor Bobbin of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

'Can the Cabinet Member tell me when the results of the Harlow Taxi consultation will be shared with members?'

**19. By Councillor Bobbin of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning**

'What assurances are we receiving from district partners that adequate safeguards are in place to ensure children who use taxi services get to and from school safely, with drivers who have been sufficiently vetted with up to date DBS checks?'

**20. By Councillor Robinson of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning**

‘Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that Tanglewood and Woodcroft are Outstanding, Local Authority nursery schools? Does he agree that these small but high quality settings are likely to be relatively expensive? Does he share my concern that Government proposals for pre-school funding could undermine these schools? Has he made or will he make representations to the Government on this?’

**21. By Councillor Robinson of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

‘Many Members received an email from the Chair of Finchingfield Parish Council about Highway proposals for a new bridge. Does the Cabinet Member feel that the images sent to us are a fair representation of the proposals? Can he please update us on what is proposed?’