

**Conservative Amendment to Motion: The Future of Essex Libraries**

**CONSERVATIVE AMENDMENT TO MOTION:**

Proposed by Councillor David Finch, Leader of the Council and seconded by Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

**Amend the motion to read:**

Council notes:

1. The use of Essex Libraries is changing and that this change is accelerating.
2. That there is an obligation on the administration to ensure that the library service meets the current and future needs of the residents of Essex and represents good value for money for Essex taxpayers. ~~The overwhelming public and political opposition, including from MPs, to the closure or reduction in opening hours of any Essex Library.~~
3. That there has been high levels of public and political engagement, including from MPs, to the consultation on the Essex Future Library Services Strategy. This includes the total number of signatures on petitions, currently 57,000, and over 21,000 consultation responses ~~which very comfortably exceeds the threshold for debate.~~
4. The consultation has only just closed and that it will be some time before the evidence from the consultation is fully analysed and any decisions put forward to the Cabinet.

Given the level of interest in this consultation, this Council therefore: ~~calls on the Cabinet to rule out any such closures, and to commit to maintaining all 74 libraries by encouraging their better use~~  
Member for Corporate and Customer to:

Continue to explore the opportunity to use all libraries as community hubs and to maximise the use of the buildings and sites to generate income for the Library Service.

**AMENDED MOTION:**

Council notes:

1. The use of Essex Libraries is changing and that this change is accelerating.
2. That there is an obligation on the administration to ensure that the library service meets the current and future needs of the residents of Essex and represents good value for money for Essex taxpayers.
3. That there has been high levels of public and political engagement, including from MPs, to the consultation on the Essex Future Library Services Strategy. This includes the total number of signatures on petitions, approximately 57,000 and over 21,000 consultation responses.
4. The consultation has only just closed and that it will be some time before the evidence from the consultation is fully analysed and any decision put forward to the Cabinet.

Given the level of interest in this consultation, this Council calls on the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Customer to:

Continue to explore the opportunity to use all libraries as community hubs and to maximise the use of the buildings and sites to generate income for the Library Service.