
ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING 9 February 2016

Order Paper

Public Question Time

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

Mr Mick Stubbings resident of Loughton

We, the residents local to Alderton school, have signed this petition because, as you can see from the letters supplied, the problems we are having to endure are not decreasing-- they are instead escalating.

Alderton Hall Lane, Poundfields, Greenfields and the Lindens all get gridlocked when the parents are dropping off/collecting their children. The residents are unable to make appointments that require them to use their cars. The bus service that we are fortunate enough to have is unable to keep to its timetable, as buses' progress is restricted and even comes to a standstill. The parents have no consideration for the residents and when approached can get extremely abusive.

North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) representatives have already admitted that they are unable to police the parking restrictions because of lack of staff. Therefore the yellow/zig zag lines that exist are useless so what good would come of more of them?

If the parents adhered to the rules of the road and did not park in the restricted areas, they would only move along until there are no restrictions, causing the same problems to different residents, who'd be even more aggrieved than us. The more likely result would be that they'd totally ignore the parking restrictions, knowing that the likelihood of any come back is very slim.

The only way forward is to provide parking/drop off/pick up within the school grounds, for the teachers/workers and parents using their cars. You have been provided with the solution to this problem. There is ample room for this as you will see in the photos sent with the petition, and there is already a hard standing within the grounds with access to it by way of a dropped kerb and drive crossing the grass verge at the bottom of Alderton Hall Lane, which would allow traffic to

enter and exit the school grounds.

.My question to the Cabinet member for Education therefore is:

Will you please spend the council tax payer's money in a more effective way, by extending the existing hard standing within the school grounds, and then insist the parents use that area to drop their children off and pick them up?

Ms. Alex Robinson, resident of Finchingfield

We have submitted a petition to the Council regarding the proposed works to Finchingfield Bridge due to start in July this year. The petition asks for the Council to reassess their plans with particular regard to providing a temporary crossing for the four (or more) months of the proposed work, and to ensure that the bridge retains its current historic form as the heart of, arguably, the most picturesque village in the County.

We were led to believe from a press release in August 2015 that this was a bridge strengthening activity. Scraps of information since then have led us to believe that this is a bridge demolishing and widening activity. We can only assume that this is to ease and speed up the passage of Heavy Goods Vehicles through the village. We have made repeated requests to the Highways Department to open a dialogue with us. This has not happened.

Local feelings are now very strong. We fear a four-month closure, during harvest time, will decimate our fragile rural businesses and bring chaos to the surrounding lanes. We also fear that when the work is complete, the historic vista, that Finchingfield is so famous for, will be destroyed forever.

Therefore I speak with the voice of over 2,800 people who have signed the petition when I ask if the Council will now please consider:

Firstly, accepting that closing the bridge for four months and implementing a fifteen mile diversion from one side of the village to the other, is an unfeasible option.

Secondly, we ask you to bring clarity to the situation and fully answer the Freedom of Information request we made back in August 2015 to publish all relevant plans with costings which we hope will explain why this work is being done and how the local community will benefit.

And finally, we ask you to work with us, and to convene a special panel or Scrutiny Committee to review the current proposals and to fully take into account the voice and needs of the local community.

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 6 Revenue Budget 2016/17 and Capital Programme 2016/17

The Budget Report is attached. Also attached is the Budget Procedure Note.

Agenda item 7 The Draft Replacement Waste Local Plan

A schedule of proposed amendments to the Plan will either be circulated with this document or will be sent out to follow.

Agenda Item 10 (a)**1. By Councillor Pond of the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Waste and Recycling**

‘In respect of the months of November and December 2015,

- what weight of residual waste was received at the Basildon plant from each of the Collection authorities and from Essex RCHWs?
- What was the additional weight of each category of recyclate recovered, which would otherwise have gone to landfill?
- What was the weight of RDF produced, and what was its calorific value?’

2. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery

‘As the County Council has a responsibility to maintain and repair grass verges on the Highway would you please provide the following information:

- What was the budget for maintaining and repairing grass verges last year? How much of it was actually spent and where was it spent?
- What is the budget for maintaining and repairing grass verges

for the next financial year?’

3. By Councillor Kendall of the Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery

‘Figures from the briefing paper for the Police and Crime Panel on Part Night Lighting dated 16 November 2015 show that crime in Brentwood has gone up by 13% and anti-social behaviour has gone up by 32% in the year of switch off which will be a concern to many local residents.

Does the Cabinet Member share my concerns about these figures and can he tell me when the Borough of Brentwood will be getting LED lighting?’

4. By Councillor Danvers of the Leader of the Council

‘Is the Leader now aware of the semi-public consultation meeting held on Tuesday 26th January at the ARC Old Harlow over the issue of junction 7A to the M11? Is he now also aware that over 50 people were turned away at this meeting believing the meeting was to be open to all members of the public?’

Does he believe that matters affecting so closely a Member’s Division should be brought to that Members attention?’

5. By Councillor Le Gresley of the Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery

‘There are literally dozens of street lamps in my division of Wickford and Crouch that have been reported as non-operational and are evident on the ECC Street Lighting Website as faulty and ‘under investigation’. A considerable number have been extinguished for many months. Would the Cabinet Member look into this to ensure that these defects are rectified as quickly as possible and, where the defect lies with the electric company, to ensure that they are providing the service they are being paid for?’

6. By Councillor Smith of the Leader of the Council

‘The first year’s cost of keeping Syrian refugees in Essex will be met by the Government (via the Foreign Aid Budget). The recently passed

motion (presented by the Conservative Group) called on the Government to carry on using the Foreign Aid Budget to pay for the upkeep of the Syrian refugees, for up to five years. Has this motion been successful and if it has failed, how much will it cost the taxpayer of Essex to keep the Syrian refugees for the 2016/17 financial year?’

7. By Councillor Smith of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

‘At a recent meeting of Basildon Borough Council (Full Council), a motion was successfully passed to call for a new grammar school for Basildon. This motion was presented by Councillor Amanda Arnold (Conservative, Pitsea South East Ward) and this was supported by a majority of councillors.

Will Councillor Gooding take up the baton of helping to create a new grammar school for Basildon?’

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

‘We note with concern the lack of a school crossing Patrol in recent weeks at the Mersea Road pedestrian crossing next to The Grapes public house. This crossing serves the St Georges School, Colchester (and links the two Divisions that we represent). Could we be assured that this school crossing attendant will be restored as soon as possible in the interests of children's safety traveling across a very busy Mersea Road.’

9. By Councillor Whitehouse of the Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery

‘Please give details of the service standards relating to repair and maintenance of broken street lights and lamp columns and current performance against these standards. In particular, how soon after being reported should non-working streetlights be inspected and repaired and what is the average time taken between a non-working streetlight being reported and it working again?’

10. By Councillor Whitehouse of the Leader of the Council

‘What costs were incurred in relation to:

- the former Epping Junior School and Centrepont sites in St John’s Road Epping since the land was vacated by Epping Primary School and
- the former St Peter’s School, including:
 - (a) Security
 - (b) Non-domestic rates
 - (c) Legal and other professional fees
 - (d) Other costs?’

11. By Councillor Bayley of the Leader of the Council

‘Considering that Members Enquiries is put in place to Fast Track complaints/ grievances to County Hall, Could there be a system put in place whereby members receive an acknowledgement, and the name of the person/department/ date/time to which the problem has been passed. Members can then contact the complainant informing them that their problem is receiving the full and proper ECC attention This will save a lot of earache from disgruntled residents.’

12. By Councillor Le Gresley of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

‘Despite years of campaigns and requests for parents to behave responsibly, a small but determined minority are continuing to engage in increasingly dangerous parking practices outside of schools across our County. This puts the lives of children at risk on a daily basis, severely inconveniences local residents and obstructs other road users, including emergency services.

Given all the problems created by these inconsiderate and antisocial parents, would the Cabinet Member consider adopting the various practices being put in place by Havering Borough Council to tackle this problem under their ‘Safer Schools Transport Initiative’, including, where appropriate, the use of ‘Public Space Protection Orders’ under the Crime and Policing Act 2014?’

13. By Councillor Robinson of the Leader of the Council

‘Which ECC properties have been vacant for more than six months?’

Are there any plans to work more closely with the City, Borough and District Councils to make the best use of all publicly owned property, e.g. to facilitate more affordable housing?

14. By Councillor Danvers of the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

'Many Harlow residents were excluded from a meeting about the M11 junction 7A recently organised by the Council's consultants.. The comment from many local residents is that this project is a "done deal". What would the Portfolio Holder say to alleviate these fears before any formal public consultation has taken place?'

15. By Councillor Harris of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Healthy Living

'In light of the budget being finalised for 2016/17, can the portfolio holder reiterate his assurance from last full council that there will be no cuts to non-emergency home to hospital transport and outline any further cuts to the community transport budget?'

16. By Councillor Young of the Cabinet Member for Finance

'I'd like to note my concern that council is being asked to approve £43 million for a housing plan that has yet to be released. Can the portfolio holder inform council when the plan will be made available to members, and what arrangements are being made to ensure that it is properly scrutinised?'