
ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING 9 July 2013

Answers to Written Questions (Standing Order 16.11.3)

13(b)

1. **By Councillor J Reeves of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning**

‘The Deanes School - Castle Point

Intake numbers – Can other schools accommodate the numbers being suggested; but first and foremost, what are the true figures? There is no mention of mid-term admissions (54 average over the last two years) and what about expulsions as there were 5 from King John this year?’

Reply

In January 2013 when the annual school count took place there were 793 pupils on the school roll. At the end of this school year 217 pupils will leave the Year 11. School preferences for next September are showing that only 74 pupils have been offered places in Year 7. The impact of this is that the school roll in September will be 650.

The predicted numbers as we move forwards are:

Number on roll at The Deanes School							
Year	7	8	9	10	11	Total	Potential Total (inc housing)
2013/14	74	119	117	165	175	650	650
2014/15	94	74	119	117	165	569	569
2015/16	105	94	74	119	117	509	509
2016/17	71	105	94	74	119	463	464
2017/18	126	71	105	94	74	470	474
2018/19	73	126	71	105	94	469	476
2019/20	148	73	126	71	105	523	534
2020/21	32	148	73	126	71	450	466
2021/22	78	49	148	73	126	457	477
2022/23	117	96	49	148	73	448	473
2023/24	89	135	96	49	148	464	489

Most children in Benfleet already attend neighbouring schools such as Appleton and King John, both of which are oversubscribed with applications from a wide area. Indeed a significant number of the pupils currently at The Deanes have previously expressed a preference to attend these schools but were unable to at that time. A large percentage of pupils at The Deanes are from outside of its immediate catchment area including a number from Southend. Both Appleton and King John are highly successful schools. It is intended that if The Deanes closes investment would be made at these schools to provide an extra one form of entry of 30 pupils at each school which (based on pupil forecasting) would be sufficient to accommodate those local children needing a school place in the future and provide more places for pupils at two of the County's more popular and oversubscribed schools.

Mid-year admissions have been taken into consideration. Although the main annual count on which most statistics are based in schools occurs in January, in Essex a pupil count is taken early in each term of the school year. This enables term by term comparisons to be made. Looking at this information for The Deanes School it is evident that the numbers who join the school mid-year are broadly matched by the numbers who leave. In the last five years there have been two years where there was either no change or only marginal change through the year. In the other three years the increase through the year amounted to an average of no more than 2 or 3 pupils per year group. It is clear that the school manages successfully a potentially difficult mid-year admissions position, of pupils arriving and others leaving, but it is not something which significantly affects the overall calculations in terms of viability of the school.

With regards to exclusions, during 2012/13 there has been one permanent exclusion from Appleton and one from King Johns (NB. This is still within the time frame within which parents can ask for the decision to be reviewed). Looking back over recent years, in 2011/12 there were no permanent exclusions across Appleton, The Deanes or King John; whilst 2010/11 saw two permanent exclusions from Appleton.

2. By Councillor J Reeves of the Cabinet Member for Education and

Lifelong Learning

'The Deanes School - Castle Point

Glenwood Rebuild – It is being suggested that school governors are looking at Academy or Free School Status. If they take this option, what impact will this have on the urgent need to build the New Glenwood Special School?'

Reply

The Deanes School can apply for Academy status at any stage. The decision on whether a school becomes an academy rests with the Secretary of State for Education.

The Governors of the Deanes School are the proprietors of the freehold of the land and the building of premises for the Glenwood School therefore requires their agreement. It is hoped that regardless of the outcome of the consultation that the Deanes School Governors would provide this authority so that the Glenwood rebuild project could continue to timescale. If the current consultation was to result in a decision to proceed to close and the governors of The Deanes School were not to provide agreement to use the land for the rebuild of Glenwood, the rebuild of the Glenwood School would likely be postponed until 2016 when the land would revert to Essex County Council ownership.

3. By Councillor R Howard of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

'The Deanes School - Castle Point

Is the land on which Deanes is built, freehold or leasehold and if it is leasehold, when does the lease expire?'

Reply

The site is freehold and this was transferred to the governing body when the school gained Grant Maintained status on the 1st January 1993.

ECC also acquired an adjoining property, 96 Daws Heath Road to assist with access when we were proposing a BSF project at the school, and we hold that property vacant, and not part of the current school.

4. By Councillor I Henderson of the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

'The news that the funding is no longer to be provided to allow Harwich and Clacton's Behaviour Education Support Team (BEST) to continue its valuable and excellent work has caused much concern and will leave many families without the vital support that BEST has provided.

Will the Portfolio Holder please advise these families how this support is to be provided when BEST closes in August and can he please give an assurance that the necessary action is being taken to ensure that this support will be available immediately?'

Reply

The Behaviour Education Support Team (BEST) was originally funded, via the Local Authority, from the National Behaviour Improvement Programme Grant provided by Excellence in Cities (EiC). It was for each local authority to agree how it allocated this funding. In the case of Harwich BEST evolved with other funding mechanisms also contributing to the delivery of the service. In total this programme supported eleven schools in Harwich, Holland on Sea and Walton.

This three year funding ended in March 2011. Following Department for Education funding reforms, funding for schools is now directly allocated and devolved to individual schools. All of the funding from EiC has been devolved to the schools as part of their budget minus the annual minimum funding guarantee. For 2011/12 the service continued as funding arrangements allowed previous distribution methodology to continue. For 2012/13 the funding forms part of the basic pupil entitlement meaning that it is up to the individual schools to determine how this money is spent. The total funding that has been devolved to the 11 schools is £1,996,837.

Therefore if the schools concerned wish for BEST, or any local service provided by them to continue, it would be for them to negotiate an agreeable pooled budget solution. I hope that schools would continue to cooperate with pooled funding arrangements to deliver those services they value most.

Alongside this Essex County Council has invested in our Family Solutions Team which work with our most vulnerable and troubled families. They are evolving from four to eight multi-agency teams. Family Solutions work to help families with a range of issues for up to 12 months by helping them identify their own solutions to their problems. Harwich will be covered by the Tendring Team.

5. By David Kendall of the Leader of the Council

‘Financial Inclusion

Following many months of work by the Financial Inclusion Task and Finish Group, the members of the former Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee put forward a number of recommendations to the Cabinet regarding "Financial Inclusion" earlier this year. Would the Leader of the Council please clarify the following points in relation to each of those recommendations:

- (1) Which specific recommendations have already become the policy of this Council and how are they being taken forward?
- (2) Which specific recommendations are in the pipeline and what is their timeline for implementation?
- (3) Which specific recommendations will not be taken forward by this Council; what are the reasons for the decision to take no action on each one?
- (4) What other action has your administration taken to show that you are taking the issue of "Financial Inclusion" seriously?

Reply

I have consulted Councillor Walsh, as Chairman of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny (PSEGS) Committee, who has confirmed to me that the Cabinet’s response to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Report on Financial Inclusion will be considered by that Committee at its meeting in September. A response is being drawn up by the Cabinet to coincide with that meeting, which is in line with the timeline set out in recommendation 17 as proposed by the Task and Finish Group that undertook the original review.

As an important scrutiny initiative based upon in depth investigation, it is for the PSEGS Committee to lead in the monitoring of the Cabinet response. Councillor Walsh concurs with Councillor Kendall, with whom he has worked on this scrutiny project, that answers to the issues he has raised will automatically be pursued for the Committee’s detailed consideration in the Autumn. At its meeting there will also be an opportunity for Members to cross examine what progress has been achieved in the promotion of financial inclusion across Essex over the previous six months.

- 6. By David Kendall of the Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Infrastructure**

"Live Local, Love Local" Voucher Booklet

Would you please answer the following questions regarding the "Live Local, Love Local" voucher booklets:

- (1) How many of these booklets have been produced?
- (2) How much does each book cost to produce?
- (3) How much have these books cost Essex County Council?
- (4) Have these books been distributed to every Borough / District / City Council in Essex?
- (5) If one of my residents wanted to pick up one of these books in Brentwood where could they get one from?

Reply

Thank you for your question.

Please find the answers you have requested regarding the "Live Local, Love Local" voucher booklets below:

1. How many of these booklets have been produced?

33,700 booklets have been produced. Booklets are also available online to download at www.visitessex.com/livelocal

2. How much does each book cost to produce?

56 pence

3. How much have these books cost Essex County Council?

The cost to Visit Essex was £18,939, although ECC also received £2,250 of EU funding. Visit Essex is a membership organisation and receives financial contributions from the tourism industry. The campaign to engage local people to discover their local attractions was agreed by the Visit Essex board and welcomed by the Visit Essex Members (a steering group formed to agree on the best way to deliver the campaign.) and campaign costs are largely covered by the member subscriptions. The vouchers provide £450 of support in kind from attractions/restaurants/hotels supplying the offers. We have received excellent feedback from both residents and businesses taking part in the campaign and the businesses have seen an increase in custom.

4. Have these books been distributed to every Borough / District / City Council in Essex?

The booklets have been sent to all borough/district/city councils and

unitary authorities, along with other promotional material.

5. If one of my residents wanted to pick up one of these books in Brentwood where could they get one from?

The booklets are available from all libraries, most hotels and attractions and nearby tourist information centres. They can also be downloaded from www.visitessex.com/livelocal

7. By Councillor J Whitehouse of the Leader of the Council

Telephone Numbers;

1. What [a] 0345 and other 03xx numbers and [b] 0845 and other 08xx numbers are used by Essex County Council to receive calls from residents and other callers?

2. For which of these numbers is a geographic number [e.g. starting with a geographic code such as 01245 / 01206 / 01992] also advertised with similar prominence?

3. How much service charge income is received for each number? If no income is received directly, how is the service fee taken into account in the contract with the telephone services provider?

Reply

1. What [a] 0345 and other 03xx numbers and [b] 0845 and other 08xx numbers are used by Essex County Council to receive calls from residents and other callers?

School Enquiry Line	0845 603 2200
General Enquiries	0845 743 0430
Adult Social Care & Blue Badge	0845 603 7630
Children & Young People	0845 603 7627
Social Care Protection Line	0845 603 7634 & 0845 603 1212
Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	0845 603 7639
Family Information Service	0800 055 6874
Libraries	0845 603 7628
Adult Community Learning	0845 603 7635
Finance	0845 603 7637
Planning & Environment	0845 603 7624
Registrations	0845 603 7632
Highways	0845 603 7631

	0845 603 7620 0845 603 7621 0845 603 7622 0845 603 7623
CRB / Disclosure	0845 603 7633
Waste	0845 603 7625
Trading Standards	0845 603 7626

2. For which of these numbers is a geographic number [e.g. starting with a geographic code such as 01245 / 01206 / 01992] also advertised with similar prominence?

On the council website, the front page has a 'contact us' signpost taking people to the contact us page, where contact numbers are featured.

The general enquiries information gives a 'landline' alternative number (01245 430 430) for those wishing to dial a geographically routed number.

3. How much service charge income is received for each number? If no income is received directly, how is the service fee taken into account in the contract with the telephone services provider?

The contract we have does not include any payment to Essex County Council. We do not earn any income from these calls.

8. By Councillor S Robinson of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

'What processes are involved when carrying out "robust risk assessments" when reports of Highway defects are made?'

Reply

Full details of the risk assessments undertaken by Highways Inspectors can be found on page 50 of the 'Essex Highway Maintenance Strategy', which is publically available on our website at the following address: <http://www.essexhighways.org/roads-highways-and-pavements.aspx>

9. By Councillor M Ellis of the Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling

Could the Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling provide the purchase cost of the land upon which the Waste Treatment Plant in Courtauld Road, Basildon stands, as the Land Registry figures, whilst being a legal obligation to provide, seem lacking?

Reply

Thank you for your question.

The County Council has not purchased the freehold of the waste plant land at Courtauld Rd but has entered into a long term lease for the site. The current annual rental under the lease is £1,390,430 per annum

10. By Councillor N Le Gresley of the Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling

Could the Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling provide the registered address and names of the Directors of Integra Developments Limited who were the beneficial owners and joint applicants along with Essex County Council and Basildon Borough Council, for the £100m Waste Treatment plant in Courtauld Road, Basildon?

Reply

Thank you for your question.

Integra Development Ltd are no longer the freehold owners of the waste treatment plant site at Courtauld Road. The title has passed to The Lime Property Fund Limited Partnership (owned by Aviva). At the time the County Council took a long term leasehold interest in the site, the directors of Integra were registered as Pegasus Ltd and Perseus Ltd. The names of the Directors for Pegasus Ltd and Perseus Ltd were not disclosed to ECC, and there was no legal requirement for disclosure of this information. Basildon Borough Council have never been party to any (land use planning) application for any waste treatment plant at Courtauld Road.