
Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council, held in the Council Chamber County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex on Tuesday, 11 February 2020

Present: Chairman: Councillor J G Jowers
Vice-Chairman: Councillor E C Johnson

J Abbott	R J Gooding	Dr R Moore
J F Aldridge	I Grundy	J Moran
B Aspinell	C Guglielmi	M Platt
J Baker	M Hardware	C Pond
T Ball	D Harris	R Pratt
S Barker	A M Hedley	J M Reeves
J Beavis	I Henderson	P Reid
K Bentley	J Henry	S Robinson
A Brown	P Honeywood	W Schmitt
M Buckley	A Jackson	L Scordis
G Butland	D J Kendall	A Sheldon
S Canning	S Lissimore	K Smith
J Chandler	D Louis	C Souter
P Channer	J Lumley	J Spence
T Cutmore	M Mackrory	M Stephenson
A Davies	R A Madden	M Steptoe
J Deakin	B Massey	A Turrell
B Egan	P May	L Wagland
A Erskine	M McEwen	S Walsh
D Finch	L McKinlay	C Weston
R Gadsby	V Metcalfe	C Whitbread
A Goggin	R Mitchell	J A Young

Prayers

The meeting was preceded by Prayers led by The Reverend Canon Ivor Moody, Vice Dean and Canon Pastor, Chelmsford Cathedral and Workplace Chaplain, Essex County Council.

The Chairman, Councillor Jowers, formally opened the meeting

The Chairman reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded and broadcast live over the internet. The Chairman also made announcements concerning microphone use and Health and Safety.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Blackwell, Durham, Garnett, Hillier, Maddocks, Mohindra and Wood.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded Members of the advice they had been given by the Monitoring Officer:

(a) concerning those who may have any arrears of Council Tax outstanding for two months or more that they must make a declaration and were not entitled to vote on the Annual Budget but were not prevented from taking part in the discussion; and

(b) on the need for declarations of interest relating to the Budget debate.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2019**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to an amendment to item 10, Motion 2, Supporting Policing in Essex, that erroneously showed Councillor Ball voting both for and against the Labour Group amendment whereas he had voted against the amendment only.

4. Public Questions

The Chairman welcomed Mr Fowler, representing the Chelmsford, Brentwood and South Woodham Ferrers Green Party to ask a question concerning the Essex Climate Change Commission. He asked:

‘At the last full council meeting, 8th October, in his surprise speech on the climate and ecological crisis, the Leader of Essex County Council emphasised the importance of actions over words. So, Councillor David Finch announced the setting up an Essex Climate Change Commission to look at what Essex County Council could do to mitigate the effects of climate and global change in Essex and a sum of £250,000 to fund initiatives to achieve this.

‘Bearing in mind the £250000 is Essex rate payers’ contribution to the running of Essex services by the county council, and the need for residents

to hold Essex CC to account for what it says and does (its actions and words): what are the terms of reference for this committee?

'The concept of 'terms of reference' is a complex one and is better answered by looking at its components, which could include:

- What precisely is its function?
- At what intervals of time should this committee meet?
- Exactly how long has the committee to procure its outcomes?
- What is and isn't included in the remit of the committee?
- What will be the outcome of the committee?
- Will the committee truly be cross-party?
- Who are the experts the committee will consult?

Councillor Walsh, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action replied:

'Thank you for the question. I want to make it very clear that this Council recognises that climate change is the greatest threat to humanity that we have ever faced. We need to take long term consistent action in order to do our part to mitigate the effects for the residents of Essex.

'Whilst the specific terms of reference will need to be approved by the Commission at their first meeting in the coming months, the purpose of the Essex Climate Action Commission is to:

- Identify ways in which ECC can mitigate the effects of climate change, improve air quality, reduce waste across Essex and increase the amount of green infrastructure and biodiversity in the county by drawing on in-house expertise, commissioning research and forming new external partnerships.
- Monitor the actions/outcomes taken by ECC and its partners following the recommendations made by the Commission

'The Commission itself will be independent and truly cross party, comprising members from the Conservatives, Lib Dems, Labour and the Non-Aligned Independent Groups.

'The meeting will be held in public.

'We would expect the commission to engage with local communities and residents – e.g. the Commission may want to commission research about the views of Essex residents or explore the creation of a Citizen's Assembly.

'The Commission will initially last for 2 years, but we see it continuing on long beyond this, as Climate Change is an issue that requires ongoing change. They are expected to meet 9 times in the first year.

'The Commission will produce a number of reports to ECC in year one, which will feature a set of recommendations.

'In the second year, the Commission will monitor the implementation of the recommendations and provide further advice and guidance.

'I want to be clear that Climate Action is taking place currently and will continue to take place. We will not be waiting for a report to be published by the Commission before changes are made and policies enacted.

'The Leader's Executive Statement, which will take place in just a moment, will provide further information of the membership and detail how we have confirmed millions of additional pounds in this budget to put towards climate action.'

5. Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Deaths

Former Councillor Tom Edward Dale, D.L.

The Chairman announced the death of former Councillor Thomas Edward Dale, who passed away on Monday 11 November 2019 at the age of 88.

He had been first elected to be an Essex County Councillor in March 1965 to represent the Division of Brightlingsea and served on many committees including those for Highways and Transportation, Fire and Public Protection as well as Estates and Archaeological, Heritage and Culture and the Enterprise Board.

He had been Chairman of the Council from 1994 to 1995 and for many years served on Tendring District Council and had also been Town Mayor of Brightlingsea. He had also been appointed as a Deputy Lieutenant of Essex.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Goggin and Robinson paid tribute to former Councillor Dale and then members stood in remembrance.

6. Receipt of petitions and deputations

The Chairman received a petition from Councillor Brown concerning the effects of recent commercial planning consents, HGV traffic and the condition of local roads.

7. Organisation Plan and Budget 2020/21

The Council received the Report on the Budget 2020/21 that was in two parts:

- Part 1 being the Section 151 Officer's report and
- Part 2 being the Organisational Plan and Budget 2020/21.

There were also appendices:

- Appendix A – Essex Organisation Plan 2020/21
- Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment (Organisation Plan and Budget) and
- Appendix C – Pay Policy Statement 2020/21.

It was noted that there had been an Addendum Report and Replacement Recommendations document circulated to all Members as the financial settlement has been received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government since the publication of the original report. It was further noted that the changes to the recommendations did not affect the recommended level of council tax.

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Finch and seconded by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Councillor Bentley that the statement by the Section 151 (S151) Officer on the adequacy of reserves, robustness of the 2020/21 revenue budget and the Capital Strategy be noted and that the recommendations on the Organisation Plan and Budget 2020/21 as set out in the list of recommendations circulated to members before the meeting be approved.

It was moved by Councillor Mackrory and seconded by Councillor Turrell that the recommended budget be amended as follows:

'That the net effect of the budget resolution be amended as set out for the reasons and purposes set out below:

1.0 Recognising the enormity of the Climate Change Emergency

1.1 The setting up of the Essex Climate Change Commission is a welcome development but the initial budget of £1.5m for 2020/21 does not recognise the urgency to tackle what is truly an emergency. An additional **£1.0m** funding is proposed to:

- Promote a sustainable approach to growth, development and a low carbon future.
- Implement measures to improve the green infrastructure of Essex and increase biodiversity.
- Improve the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of public spaces in ECC ownership.

- Implement measures to reduce waste, lower energy consumption and improve air quality in identified hot spots and introduce Clean Air Zones.

1.2 This to be funded by drawing down an additional **£1.0m** from the £5m Essex Climate Change Commission Reserve.

2.0 Maximise the use of and retain the Essex Library network

2.1 Increase the Libraries budget (Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate) by **£200,000 in 2020/21, £150,000 in 2021/22 and £100,000 in 2022/23** (for the period of the libraries strategy) subject to reducing the **Transformation Reserve** by an equivalent amount in 2020/21, specifically to come from the £3m earmarked for the Library Strategy and Modernisation.

This additional funding to be added to that described in the July 2019 Cabinet report and to be used to support Community-run Libraries in the first three years to promote reading and the love of books and literature amongst children, young people and their families to maximise the use of libraries.

3.0 Supporting the needs of children, young people and adults with mental health issues

3.1 Whilst welcoming the additional £1m funding in last year's budget the pace of improvement is too slow to meet the demand. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the Public Health budget by **£1.5m** (Health and Adult Social Care portfolio), subject to reducing the **Transformation Reserve** by an equivalent amount and thereafter added to the Medium-Term Resources Strategy for action to be identified to determine a permanent funding solution. This additional funding to enable more vital work with children, young people and adults with mental health issues. Measures to tackle suicide prevention and sexual health conditions will also reduce costly treatment to the NHS. We will promote the benefits of investing in match-funding this significant additional expenditure with the Clinical Commissioning Groups to provide more mental health counselling support in infant and primary schools to help identify and address mental health issues at an early age with the intention of reducing demand on services in the future.

4.0 Supporting Essex's young people

4.1 An increase of **£350,000** in the budget provision for Youth Services (Education and Skills portfolio) for the provision of Youth Service projects including, support, mentoring and respite for young carers, school lunchtime clubs/drop in sessions run by youth workers and outreach work, including

detached working. The increase is to be funded by a withdrawal from the **Transformation Reserve** in 2020/21 and thereafter added to the Medium-Term Resources Strategy for action to be identified to determine a permanent funding solution, subject to the evaluation of the pilot.

5.0 Investing in our infrastructure and keeping Essex safe

- 5.1 An increase in the 2020/21 capital programme provision for **Local Highways Panels** (Infrastructure portfolio) of **£4m**. This will be allocated to individual panels, to return their total funding to the 2015/16 level (i.e. to £8m).
- 5.2 The additional **£4m** referred to above will be funded by a transfer from the Capital programme provision for Road Maintenance.
- 5.3 There are three council areas where bus lane and bus gate enforcement exist that are budgeted to raise **£3.2m** in 2020/21 from penalty charges. (In 2018/19 these were Basildon £91,000, Chelmsford £878,000, Colchester £1.292m). It is proposed to reduce the Roads Maintenance capital programme by **£3.2m** and further increase the Local Highways Panels budget by **£3.2m** for Basildon, Chelmsford and Colchester, pro-rata to the revenue income collected from bus lane and bus gate enforcement fines, to help fund higher cost projects in those areas.

6.0 Reducing Fly Tipping

- 6.1 An increase of **£250,000** in the budget provision for Waste Disposal (Environment and Waste portfolio) to tackle the scourge of fly tipping which is blighting the countryside. This increase is to be funded from the **Waste Reserve** in 2020/21.'

It was moved by Councillor Henderson and seconded by Councillor Young that the recommended budget be amended as follows:

'That the net effect of the budget resolution be amended for the reasons and purposes set out below:

- 1) An increase to the Library service budget by **£500,000** on a one-off basis to invest in service improvement through new and additional physical book stock for libraries.

This would require an increase in the budget for Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate portfolio by **£500,000** and a reduction of the same sum in the Service Improvement Reserve.

- 2) An increase to the Local Highways Panels capital programme by **£2m** on a one-off basis to invest in service improvement. The additional funding allocated across the districts will support outstanding local devolved capital schemes.

This would require an increase the Infrastructure portfolio budget by **£2m** and a reduction of the same sum in the Service Improvement Reserve.

- 3) An increase to the Youth Service revenue budget by **£500,000** to enable the setup of a dedicated team to target specific areas of high deprivation and mental health in young people. This will fund one Senior Targeted Youth Advisor, ten Targeted Youth Advisors and ancillary costs.

This would require an increase the Education portfolio budget by **£500,000** and a reduction of the same sum in the Transformation Reserve.

- 4) An increase in the Cycling Infrastructure capital programme by **£750,000** to ensure cycling routes are developed, protected and safe and help encourage residents to take up more active means of transportation.

This would require an increase in the Infrastructure portfolio capital programme by **£750,000**, funded by borrowing, the revenue servicing of which will be funded through a withdrawal from the earmarked Transformation Reserve.

- 5) Increase the Environment and Climate Change Action capital programme by **£500,000** to support an air pollution reduction initiative. This will target highly polluted towns with introduction of road signs design to discourage use of cars and engine idling.

This will increase the capital programme by **£500,000**, funded by borrowing, the revenue servicing of which will be funded through a withdrawal from the earmarked Transformation Reserve.'

In accordance with Standing Order 16.10.2 (Voting on budget decisions) the Motion was put to a division by name and **carried** by 50 votes for, 8 against and 9 abstentions.

Those voting for the Motion were Councillors:

J F Aldridge

R J Gooding

R Mitchell

T Ball

I Grundy

Dr R Moore

S Barker	C Guglielmi	J Moran
J Beavis	M Hardware	M Platt
K Bentley	A M Hedley	R Pratt
A Brown	J Henry	J M Reeves
M Buckley	P Honeywood	W Schmitt
G Butland	A Jackson	A Sheldon
S Canning	S Lissimore	C Souter
J Chandler	D Louis	J Spence
P Channer	J Lumley	M Stephenson
T Cutmore	R A Madden	M Steptoe
B Egan	B Massey	L Wagland
A Erskine	P May	S Walsh
D Finch	M McEwen	C Weston
R Gadsby	L McKinlay	C Whitbread
A Goggin	V Metcalfe	

Those voting against the Motion were Councillors:

B Aspinell	D J Kendall	K Smith
J Baker	M Mackrory	A Turrell
J Deakin	S Robinson	

Those abstaining were Councillors Abbott, Davies, Harris, Henderson, Johnson, Jowers, Reid, Scordis and Young.

Resolved:

1. That the statement by the Section 151 (S151) Officer's on the adequacy of reserves, robustness of the 2020/21 revenue budget and the Capital Strategy be noted and:

Revenue and Capital Budget

2. That the Organisation Plan be approved in the form appended to the report.
3. The net cost of services to be set at **£992.7million (m)** for 2020/21 – Appendix A (page 34 of the report).

4. The net revenue budget requirement to be set at **£913.6m** (net cost of services less general government grants) for 2020/21 – Appendix A (page 34 of the report).
5. The total council tax funding requirement be set at **£707.9m** for 2020/21 – Appendix A (page 34 of the report).
6. That Essex County Council’s element of the council tax be increased by 1.99% plus a 2% social care precept, therefore the Essex County Council element of the council tax charge for a Band D property in 2020/21 will be **£1,321.11**. A full list of bands is as follows:

Council Tax Band	2019/20 £	2020/21 £
Band A	846.96	880.74
Band B	988.12	1,027.53
Band C	1,129.28	1,174.32
Band D	1,270.44	1,321.11
Band E	1,552.76	1,614.69
Band F	1,835.08	1,908.27
Band G	2,117.40	2,201.85
Band H	2,540.88	2,642.22

7. Full Council approve the Essex County Council element of the council tax for each category of dwelling and the precepts on each of the council tax billing authorities for 2020/21, together with the final tax base, as set out in the table below:

Billing Authority	2020/21 Final Tax Base Band D Equivalent	2020/21 Gross precept £000
Basildon	61,287	(80,967)
Braintree	53,373	(70,512)
Brentwood	32,968	(43,554)
Castle Point	30,969	(40,913)
Chelmsford	68,252	(90,168)
Colchester	63,933	(84,462)
Epping Forest	54,638	(72,183)
Harlow	26,943	(35,595)
Maldon	25,091	(33,148)
Rochford	31,928	(42,180)
Tendring	48,392	(63,931)
Uttlesford	38,036	(50,250)
Total for ECC	535,809	(707,863)

8. That the proposed total schools' budget be set at **£534.3m** for 2020/21 which will be funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Teachers Pay Grant, Teachers Pension Grant and the Universal Free School Meals Grant. The majority of this will be passed through to maintained schools.
9. That the underlying balance on the General Balance be set at **£56.6m** as at 1 April 2020 (Appendix A, Annex 1, page 60 of the report).
10. That the capital payments guideline be set at **£235m** for 2020/21.
11. That for the purposes of section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council formally determines that the increase in council tax is not such as to trigger a referendum.

Capital Strategy

12. That the 2020/21 to 2023/24 Prudential Indicators and limits, together with updated limits for 2019/20 as set out in Annexes 3A and 3B of the Capital Strategy (Appendix A) be approved.
13. That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 be approved, comprising:
 - a. Borrowing strategy, as set out in Annex 3 of the Capital Strategy (Appendix A, Annex 3, page 85 of the report).
 - b. Treasury management investments strategy, as set out in Annex 3 and Annex 3D of the Capital Strategy (Appendix A, Annex 3, page 94 of the report).

- c. Indicative strategy for commercial investment activities, as set out in Annex 3 of the Capital Strategy (Appendix A, Annex 3, page 97 of the report).

14. That the policy for making a prudent level of revenue provision for the repayment of debt, (the Minimum Revenue Provision policy) as set out in Annex 3C of the Capital Strategy (Appendix A, Annex 3, page 106 of the report), be approved.

Pay Policy Statement

15. The Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix C to the report be approved.

Changes

16. That the following figures be amended to the Organisation Plan which forms Appendix A to the report (which starts at page 53 of the published agenda pack) as shown on the replacement pages annexed to the addendum report.

(a) Where the net cost of service that currently shows **£992,652,808** (page 86 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£992,669,097**

(b) Where the Transformation Reserve shows **£22.743m** total net expenditure (page 108 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£22.760m**

(c) Where the Service Improvement Reserve shows **£4.000m** total net expenditure (page 108 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£2.750m**

(d) Where the Children's and Families portfolio shows **£128.541m** total net expenditure budget (page 95 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£129.041m**

(e) Where the Leader portfolio shows **£6.801m** total net expenditure budget (page 104 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£7.551m**.

(f) Where the Other Operating costs portfolio shows **£104.106m** total net expenditure budget (starts at page 107 of the agenda pack), this will be amended to **£102.872m**.

17. That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to amend other figures other figures in the Organisation Plan which need to change as a result of the mathematical changes of the above consequences.'

8. To receive a report of matters reserved to the Council

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented the report of matters reserved to Council.

It having been moved by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Bentley, it was

Resolved

That the constitution of the Health and Wellbeing Board as shown in paragraph 8.1.8 of the Constitution be amended to read:

Quorum

The quorum for the Health and Wellbeing Board will be one quarter of the voting membership and will include:

- at least one Essex County Council Elected Member
- at least one Clinical Commissioning Group Representative
- Essex County Council *either* Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Children’s Services or Director for Public Health.

Membership

Voting Members	
Statutory Members	How Nominated or Appointed
3 County Councillors*	As nominated by the Leader of the County Council
Essex County Council Director of Adult Social Care (DASS)	By appointment to post
Essex County Council Director of Children’s Services (DCS)	By appointment to post
Essex County Council Director of Public Health (DPH)	By appointment to post
Representative of Health Watch Essex	Appointed by Health Watch Essex
Representative of North East Essex CCG	Appointed by North East Essex CCG
Representative of Mid Essex CCG	Appointed by Mid Essex CCG
Representative of West Essex CCG	Appointed by West Essex CCG
Representative of Basildon & Brentwood CCG	Appointed by Basildon & Brentwood CCG
Representative of Castle Point and Rochford CCG	Appointed by Castle Point and Rochford CCG
Other Members	How Nominated or Appointed
Chief Executive of Essex County Council	By appointment to post
Independent Chair, Suffolk and North-East Essex STP/ICS	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the STP/ICS
Independent Chair, Hertfordshire and West Essex STP/ICS	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the STP/ICS

Independent Chair, Mid and South Essex STP/ICS	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the STP/ICS
4 Borough/City/District Council Representatives	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the Borough/City/District Council Leaders and Chief Executives Group
3 Voluntary Sector representatives	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of Borough/City/District Council Leaders and Chief Executives Group
Representative of NHS Commissioning Board (NHS England)	Nominated by Regional Director, NHS England
3 Representatives of Essex Acute Hospital Trusts	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the Trusts
2 Representatives from Essex mental health and non-acute providers	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of the Trusts
1 Representative from Mid and South Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups in common	Appointed by the Board on the nomination of Mid and South Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups Joint Committee in Common
Non-Voting Members	
Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	By election to post
Independent Chair of the Essex Safeguarding Children's and Adults Boards	By appointment to posts

9. To receive the Leader's report of Cabinet Issues

Councillor Finch, the Leader of the Council, presented a report concerning matters considered at the meetings of Cabinet held on 22 October, 26 November and 17 December 2019 and 21 January 2020.

It having been moved by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Bentley it was

Resolved

That the report be received.

10. Written Questions

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

Members sought points of clarification from the relevant Cabinet Members, details of which are available on the ECC website [via the online audio recording of the meeting](#). The written questions were:

1. By Councillor Beavis of the Cabinet Member for Children and Families

‘I am concerned about the waiting times of our young children seeking mental health services. There is a national growing trend of young people requiring mental health services and I fear that a backlog is/or could be building up.

Could the Cabinet Member please provide an update so that we may understand the position in Essex.’

Reply

Councillor Beavis may be aware of the recent Children’s Society report ‘Waiting in Line’ which was published last week. This paper highlights national issues in relation to wait times for mental health services. As Councillor Beavis alludes in her question, it is not acceptable for those with mental health issues needing to wait for long periods of time for help and in Essex we are doing a great deal to address these concerns.

To be clear, the national waiting time target is 18 weeks. In the financial year up to November 2019, the Essex provider, NELFT, achieved 90.29% of children and young people clinically assessed and starting treatment within 18 weeks. Whilst performance is beneath the target of 95%, this represents an improvement from a low of 85% earlier in the year. Out of the 1,112 children and young people accepted into the service, 108 waited over 18 weeks to be seen. This is less than previous months and we are not currently seeing a growth in backlogs, however we continue to explore ways to reduce this further.

In order to mitigate pressure on the service, Essex commissioners have been investing in the wider children’s mental health landscape through services such as; Kooth (online counselling service), Progressions (16-25yrs service for young people with mental health needs entering adulthood) and the Infant mental health service. Whilst these provisions achieve good individual outcomes, as is the case in other areas, statutory provision has yet to see a reduction in demand.

The Leader also announced last year £1m of investment into Mental health in Essex. As part of this funding we have develop a project on children with autism including training to ensure that skills sets are in place to work with Children and Young People with Autism, backed up with a clinician to run ‘surgeries’ in each office so staff can talk through their complex cases. We have also developed a Project to embed Trauma Perceptive Practice culture in two schools and their feeder primaries, so that we support schools to access appropriate

interventions where needed. I can further update on these later in the year.

In the longer term, local authority and health commissioners across Essex are working on re-modelling children's mental health services and a reduction in waiting times is a priority for us both locally and nationally. NHS England will begin supporting CCG's to trail 4 week waits for CYP mental health services and Essex have begun piloting this with the Progressions service. In addition, the training and roll-out of the Mental Health Support Teams for schools will support early access to lower level intervention which may positively impact the waiting times and help mitigate demand upstream.

2. By Councillor Young of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action

'What actions has the council put in place to reduce the amount of waste being sent abroad that is detrimental to the environment and how are we going to hold ourselves accountable?'

Reply

Recyclable waste placed at the kerbside is collected by local waste collection authorities (city, district and borough councils) and it is they who make the necessary arrangements for this material to be recycled. Essex County Council has no control over how this recyclable waste is disposed of. It is the duty of the waste collection authorities to conduct due diligence on any recycling companies they use to ensure waste material is disposed of in an appropriate and lawful way.

The vast majority of waste collected by local councils in Essex is managed in the UK, however, a small proportion of separated waste material is exported to reprocessing facilities outside of the UK. Waste materials for reprocessing are a globally marketed commodity and export markets are generally utilised to supplement the lack of viable reprocessing capacity in the UK. The export process is undertaken in accordance with all relevant UK and EU legislation. This requires the materials that are being exported to meet a quality specification, and for exporters, importers and those responsible for reprocessing to all be registered with the appropriate national regulator.

ECC is working hard to promote waste minimisation so that there is less of this type of waste to be disposed of in the first place.

ECC, under the Love Essex brand and working in partnership with city, district and borough councils in Essex, launched in January this

year a new campaign to reduce this type of waste. 'Love Essex, Not Plastic' encourages Essex residents, educational establishments and businesses to pledge to reduce the amount of single-use plastics they use. The campaign will continue throughout 2020.

3. By Councillor Harris of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action

'I am prompted to ask this question over the Colchester Shrub End recycling centre, after residents have raised with me plastic recycling arrangements at Shrub End. I have been told by staff on site to throw plastic recycling into household rubbish containers.'

Can the contract at Shrub End be revised to ensure plastic recycling is not thrown in "general waste" bins, but recycled instead?

A lot of plastic ends up being taken in by Colchester residents, and it is a great source of frustration to see Colchester Council doing its bit to reuse, and recycle, when the Essex County recycling centre is not geared up for climate change in this way.'

Reply

The Recycling Centres are for large household waste – recycling plastic should be done at the kerbside.

The primary role of the twenty-one Recycling Centres for Household waste (RCHW) operated by Essex County Council is to provide users with a facility to dispose of their bulky household waste.

Although the Shrub End RCHW facility is not intended to duplicate kerbside collection services, we do recognise that some residents of Colchester choose to use this the site for the disposal of general non-bulky waste, rather than use the kerbside service provided by the Borough Council. Essex County Council therefore makes every effort to provide the fullest range of recycling opportunities at the site. However, this has to be balanced against the physical constraints of the site, demand, as influenced by the composition of waste entering the site, and the general market for waste materials collected for recycling.

With respect to plastic, I can confirm that all of the RCHW operated by Essex County Council, including Shrub End, provide facilities for users to deposit plastic bottles for recycling. Users will be asked to separate any plastic waste brought into the site so the bottles can be recycled; other plastic items will be directed into the general waste containers for disposal. The recycling service currently provided via the RCHW does not extend to plastic film, pots, trays or hard plastic for two key reasons:

- The amount of plastic material coming into the sites is small compared to other materials, however, to make it viable to capture this material on site for recycling would require additional bulk containers for plastic to allow the different types to be segregated. The physical constraints of our sites would therefore require a reduction in the number of containers for core high demand materials, which are not collected from the kerbside, such as white goods, wood, hardcore, bulky items etc. This would lead to increased site closure for servicing and increased on site queuing, adversely impacting the user.
- The UK market for plastic bottles is strong, whereas other plastics are predominately exported for reprocessing. At a time of uncertainty in the market and greater awareness of the impacts of exporting waste abroad for recycling we have, together with our contractor, decided to predominately focus on the UK market for recycling at this moment in time.

Although we keep the range of materials separated for recycling at the RCHW under continual review there are no plans currently to extend the recycling offer at the sites to include other plastic types, and replicate a service already provided by the borough council.

As a Council we remain committed to providing high quality services and would strongly encourage all our residents to minimise the waste they produce and utilise the kerbside collection recycling service provided by their local council in combination with the RCHW service.'

4. By Councillor Aspinell of the Leader of the Council

'In 2019 I met with both Cllr Barker and Cllr Mohindra, with Cllr McKinlay also being in attendance, to discuss the future of the Shenfield library site. I was told by Cllr Mohindra that ECC does not need to seek planning permission from Brentwood Borough Council (BBC), as they have the right over their own property to give permission, and that they only needed to advise BBC of their intentions as statutory consultees.

I questioned this information at the time but was assured that this was the position. However, after speaking to planning officers and the Chief Executive at Brentwood they assure me that this is certainly not the case, and that ECC would have to submit a planning application to BBC in the normal fashion.

Please could you confirm what the correct position is?'

Reply

Both Essex County Council and Brentwood Borough Council are planning authorities. Because this development involves the retention of ECC uses (in this case a new library), we have been advised that regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General) Regulations 1992 as amended requires ECC to determine the application. As always, ECC and BBC planning departments will work together and we will conform with Brentwood's Local Plan.

There is a statutory requirement as part of the planning process to consult the public and we strongly value their views to help develop our plans to best meet community need.

5. By Councillor Pratt of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

'Can the Cabinet Member please explain what actions were undertaken following the recent liquidation of Dial-a-Care and what implications this has for the wider system?'

Reply

Dial-a-Care was a domiciliary provider who supported individuals with a variety of needs, predominately in mid Essex. They were supporting 76 individuals (including self-funders), many of these are based in rural areas. They have been a provider for a number of years and on the whole, we have been happy with the provider.

Adult Social Care were alerted on 20 January 2020 that Dial-a-Care had a cash flow problem and were struggling to pay staff this week. Appropriate action was taken, and a hardship payment was organised.

On 22 January Dial-a-Care contacted us to confirm that the company would go into liquidation at 4pm that day, giving us only a few hours' notice.

A joint team of Social Workers, Contracts Staff, placement team and other support staff was set up to ensure safe transfer of care for people affected. By 6pm on 22 January another provider had been identified and we worked with the new provider to secure the services of Dial-a-Carer staff and ensuring visits were being undertaken that night. All staff worked through until late in the evening calling service users and families to ensure there was a care visit in place or a contact point was available.

The outcome was that all 76 services users were supported and safe in the space of 6 hours. All those involved showed absolute

dedication and commitment to ensuring that service users were disrupted as little as possible.

Over the following days, the weekend and into the next week work continued to support the new provider and ensure care was being delivered safely.

This provider failure was purely down to quality issues which were being addressed and not related to the cost of care in the market, however the implications of losing a medium sized provider in the domiciliary market has an impact and we are taking steps to assess providers and their sustainability.

I would like to commend the staff across Adult Social Care and its supporting functions, who displayed at short notice outstanding professionalism and compassion to ensure vulnerable people continued to receive their care.

6. By Councillor Deakin of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘With this council rightly putting a lot of emphasis on health and well-being, by encouraging walking and cycling amongst other things. Could the Cabinet Member explain how residents, particularly the more elderly, are expected to participate on very poorly maintained footpaths and incomplete, unsafe cycleways across the county?’

Real improvements, would encourage more use of cycleways and footpaths, increase health and well-being and in turn save significant sums of money for the NHS, social care and other services.

When will he ensure real investment and real improvements in these areas?’

Reply

I thank the member for Chelmsford West for her question on the link between health, well-being, and active travel.

Essex Highways has very nearly completed a whole programme of additional footway improvements, the Footway Member-led Programme, where Essex Highways has repaired footway defects at over 300 locations right across the County, with some of these sites having multiple defects at one location. This programme is additional investment that ECC has made in footways in order to encourage cycling and walking right across the County.

In addition, we have decided to make additional £750k capital money available specifically for cycling facilities from 20/21, increasing in future financial years. This demonstrates the support for the wellbeing of our residents and highway users.

Furthermore, ECC has been part of a Department for Transport programme to develop Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), initially with Braintree, Chelmsford and Colchester, the plans consider how best to develop walking and routes and infrastructure to encourage active travel. A consultation on a proposed network of routes is being prepared and will commence shortly. LCWIPs will enable ECC to plan for the longer term and develop a pipeline of improvements which can be funded through a mixture of local contributions and developer and government funding.

A draft Walking Strategy was consulted upon in Autumn 2019, in response to which over 800 responses were received. Officers are currently preparing a report to me to enable the adoption of the strategy. It aims to get more people in Essex walking, in particular for shorter trips. If more people were to walk to their local shops, schools or parks, they would not only get the health and wellbeing benefits of being active, it would also help to keep the traffic moving, as approximately 40% of car journeys are around a mile. Officers are working with communities and partners on an Action Plan to deliver the Strategy.

We already have a Cycling Strategy and delivery programme which is encouraging more people to cycle which includes Bike Training for adults and led rides. Officers are currently exploring bike share opportunities with the next generation of Bike Share operators and social enterprises. In Chelmsford we are delivering the Chelmsford Growth Package, the next stage of which will include new cycle infrastructure on Broomfield Road and will provide more choice for how people move around the city.

7. By Councillor Mackrory of the Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate, Culture and Communities

‘What is the current position regarding the proposed Community-run Libraries scheme? In particular, how many libraries subject to this proposal are involved in detailed discussions? Are there any other Libraries where there has been no or few genuine expressions of interest? What progress has been made with the investment programme as referred to in the July 2019 Cabinet report and when is the further report to cabinet also referred to expected?’

Reply

In November 2019 the Community Run Libraries Team published an information pack to those groups/community organisations that have expressed interest in running a community library. This was followed up by telephone calls and face to face meetings.

In December four engagement events were offered to groups, to come and talk through the content of the pack and discuss their ideas further with the team. Many of these events were also attended by other local voluntary organisations (including Community Volunteering Service and Citizens Advice) and existing library volunteers, who gave really helpful input based on their own experiences.

The team have stayed in regular contact with all of those organisations who wish to take the lead on a community library and those who are still deciding, and have now met with the majority of these groups in person now to hear their ideas and talk more about how the library service would support them if they chose to proceed with a proposal. It is early days in this work and it is too early to say how many of these early EOIs will turn into detailed proposals. I can say though that most of these discussions relate to smaller libraries in villages, small towns or suburbs

Investment in libraries, promised in the future library services strategy, has already started. We have upgraded the public computers in all 74 libraries to improve customers' experience and ensure the computers are secure and compatible with new software. We are also in the process of upgrading the self-service facilities in libraries.

Energy-saving LED lighting has recently been installed at Billericay, Braintree, Clacton, Chelmsford and Rayleigh libraries to improve the library environment for customers and help tackle climate change. We plan to install LED lighting in over 20 more libraries in the coming year.

We are investing £1.9m in library refurbishments. Refurbishment will include clear signage, modern and flexible furniture, meeting rooms/pods, and other improvements that will make libraries more accessible and inclusive.

The report on refurbishments is currently being drafted by the Libraries Team and will be published in the near future. We expect this programme of work will begin later this year.'

8. By Councillor Mackrory of the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care

'Will the Cabinet Member give the background as to why Essex County Council is owed £11.9m in deferred payments, the second highest in the country, and what safeguards are in place for the future of the scheme given the Prime Minister's pledge that no one should have to sell their home to pay for their care?'

Reply

The council is statutorily obliged to offer Deferred Payment Agreements (DPAs) under conditions which are set out in chapter nine of the statutory Care and Support Guidance (CSG) issued by the Department of Health and Social Care. The CSG applies to all councils with social care responsibilities across England.

DPAs are designed to prevent people from being forced to sell their home in their lifetime to meet the cost of their care in a residential care home.

A condition of the scheme is that adequate security must be provided by the person requesting the DPA. In most cases this takes the form of a legal charge on the adult's house. This is our default position in Essex, thus ensuring the debt is secured. The level of debt and the value of the asset is monitored to ensure the person concerned can repay their debt when the DPA comes to an end.

The DPA scheme is intended to be run on a cost-neutral basis, with local authorities able to recoup the costs associated with deferring fees by charging interest on them. Local authorities can also recoup the administrative costs associated with DPAs.

It is ultimately the choice of an individual whether or not to enter into a DPA. Councils have an obligation to offer them to those who fulfil the conditions. The size of the DPA position in Essex is proportional to the size of the local authority, relative to others, and the history of offering DPAs before it became a statutory obligation. ECC remain committed to the most appropriate outcome, wherever able supporting people to remain at home. Because of our historical position in offering DPAs before it became a statutory requirement, we are well versed in mechanisms and financial planning and do not believe there is a long-term sustainability issue following the Prime Minister's pledge.

9. By Councillor Davies of the Leader of the Council

‘Now that the UK has left the European Union, we will no longer receive billions in EU structural funding which was used to support businesses, employment and agriculture.

The Conservative Government has pledged to set up a Shared Prosperity Fund, in order to replace this funding.

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on the Prosperity Fund and how Essex will benefit?’

Reply

EU funding has been important for developing Essex Infrastructure. Under the current EU 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, The South East LEP which covers Essex, Kent and East Sussex has been able to fund £74m from the European Regional Development fund to support business growth, £71m from the European Social Fund to promote inclusion and skills and £14m from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. At ECC we have also directly participated in EU funded projects including skills for young people, promotion of tourism and climate adaptation for urban areas.

Although the UK has left the EU, EU funding does not immediately stop. The current EU Multiannual Framework has not yet completed and under the terms of the EU Withdrawal Agreement, the UK will continue to participate in programmes until their closure. UK organisations can continue to bid for new grant funding under the current MFF until the end of 2020 and programmes will continue to receive EU funding across the programme’s lifetime. In many cases, funding for programmes will continue after the end of 2020. The EU itself has not announced its plans for its own replacement Multiannual Framework to begin in 2021. However, the Political Declaration does identify that the EU and UK will negotiate principles for the UK’s future participation in EU programmes. Within the UK, central government proposed the Shared Prosperity Fund in place of EU funding. Cllr Bentley in his role as Chair of the LGA’s Brexit taskforce has continued to represent Local Government in discussions on the Shared Prosperity Fund covering the important issues of size of the fund, its distribution by region and vitally local control and decisions on how funds are invested. Central Government has not yet published proposals and we will continue to work with partners through the LGA to identify and consult on how the Fund can best be designed.

10. By Councillor Kendall of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘When was the last time the County Council’s criteria for repairing potholes was formally reviewed with input from members? Will the Cabinet Member for Highways support a full review into the criteria for repairing potholes being undertaken by the relevant scrutiny committee?’

Reply

I thank the member for Brentwood South for his question on potholes.

As part of the considerations for contract extension with Ringway Jacobs, the relevant Scrutiny Committee, of which you are a member, undertook a full review and had detailed discussions on the County’s criteria for repairing potholes, and the criteria used to assess defects by the Essex Highways safety Inspectors. This review was undertaken very recently, completed in 2019, so is current.

11. By Councillor Kendall of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘What action is the Council taking to secure Government funding to ensure that research is undertaken into re-opening railway lines and stations across Essex that were closed under the Beeching review?’

Reply

I thank the member for Brentwood South for his question on railways.

I have already asked our officers at Essex County Council (ECC) to contact the Department for Transport (DfT). They have indeed written to the dedicated DfT email contact address and ECC contacts within the DfT rail team seeking additional information and guidance with respect to the fund.

Officers have also undertaken a review of projects thought to be seeking funding and an initial review of closed lines in Essex to consider scope for re-opening.

12. By Councillor Robinson of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘What is the Essex Highways policy for cutting back vegetation overhanging the highway (in particular, blocking footways) from adjacent, non-highway land?’

Reply

I thank the member for Chelmsford North for his question on vegetation overhanging the highway from privately owned land.

Landowners are responsible for trees and hedges on their land and should ensure that their trees and hedges are not overhanging or causing a problem on the highway. Where overhanging vegetation is a problem Essex Highways would encourage local Parish, City, District, and Borough Councils to inform the landowner, as they will know who that is.

Where a problem is long-standing then Essex Highways is able to write to the landowner if they are known but it is better that it is dealt with at the local level.

13. By Councillor Smith of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘Over the last 12 months how many press releases have been issued by Essex County Council about the Army and Navy roundabout in Chelmsford and also of the threat of a congestion charge/clean air charging zone on the A127 in Basildon?’

Reply

I thank the member for Basildon Westley Heights for his question on communications regarding the Army and Navy Roundabout in Chelmsford and the A127 in Basildon.

Given the obvious difference in terms of the immediate impact of the two issues – one an emergency closure of a key junction, followed by a permanent closure and the forming of a task force to decide future options, the other a consultation on the introduction of a speed limited on a congested road to improve air quality over a much longer timescale, the level of communication relating to each has been entirely appropriate and proportionate.

During 2019 and to date in 2020, 24 press releases or statements concerning the Army and Navy roundabout have been issued. This included all communication relating to the emergency closure of the

flyover during the summer of 2019, it's permanent closure later in the year, and the formation of the Army and Navy taskforce and its subsequent work, as well as associated issues including public transport options.

A further 18 media enquiries have been responded to by Essex County Council over the same time period.

In the past year Essex County Council has issued two press releases/statements, one of them with Basildon Council on the introduction of a 50mph speed limit on the A127 over to improve air quality and the accompanying consultation. We have responded to seven media enquiries to date on the issue.

Basildon Council, over the same time period, has itself published two reports on the press release section of its website, both reporting on committee meetings at the Council which have discussed the A127 and air quality. The latest of these was published on Friday 28 June 2019.

14. By Councillor Smith of the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

'Has the Council got any plans to create a new secondary school between now and 2035 within the Divisions of either Westley Heights or the Laindon Park and Fryerns?

If not, where will be the nearest secondary schools that can take the extra pupils that will come as a result of the new Local Plan once approved by the Government for Basildon Borough Council?'

Reply

For secondary pupil planning purposes, the Borough of Basildon is split into three areas: Basildon, Billericay and Wickford.

Westley Heights and the Laindon Park and Fryerns Divisions make up the Basildon area along with Pitsea.

Overall, there is currently an appropriate number of unfilled places at secondary schools in this area with the forecasts, set out in the Essex School Organisation Service's Ten Year Plan, suggesting there will be sufficient places until the 2023/24 academic year. Essex County Council have been working closely with Basildon Council on their emerging Local Development Plan.

The long-term housing scenario that has been tested suggests that there may be a need for a new school by 2035. Under policy H11 of the emerging Plan, land for a new school has been earmarked for

the East of Basildon. Limited expansion of other schools may also be required to establish a suitable balance between more local need and overall capacity. These decisions will need to be made as detail regarding the dwelling mix and timing of particular developments become known.

As always, as well as looking at the closest school to new homes, other factors including parental preference and school performance will be considered.

15. By Councillor Reid of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘With budgets being squeezed, do we as a County Council need to re-evaluate how and what materials we use to repair our road surfaces and our potholes? We have had a mild winter with hardly any hard frost and yet potholes which were repaired last year have reappeared and are as deep as they were previously.

It cannot be cost-effective to continue to use the current method that is not fixing problems but just covering the surface for a short period of time.’

Reply

I thank the member for Pitsea for her question on materials used in highways.

Essex Highways delivers carriageway repairs using techniques and materials that are widely used across the country by local authorities and utility companies. The service also has a technical working group where new materials, techniques and innovation can be tested and evaluated to ensure that they are appropriate for wider use. As the cabinet member, I continue to encourage our highways team to look for new sustainable materials to use on the county’s roads.

Potholes are created by water seeping through the road surface via cracks caused by traffic. As temperatures plummet, the water freezes and expands as ice, which pushes the road surface upwards like a bubble and ruptures the surface.

When the ice melts, it then leaves a void below the surface, which yields in under the stress of vehicles and gradually forms a pothole. Snow and ice are the worst conditions for exacerbating existing road defects, due to the repetition of this freeze-thaw process.

Rainfall and water on our roads also cause potholes to form as cracks in the road allow water to seep into the asphalt and the roadbed layer underneath. Traffic makes this problem worse, as the weight from vehicles forces water downward into the road and this has a similar effect in the formation of a pothole.

Formation of potholes in our roads can also be used to indicate that the overall surface condition is nearing end of design life. In these circumstances we can find that new potholes can appear near or immediately adjacent the older repairs.

While the overall impression is that we have had a mild winter, the 2019/20 winter service season is in fact looking like it will be an average season. So far, 33 countywide equivalent actions have been delivered. The average is around 58 and we are about two thirds of the way through the season.

16. By Councillor Reid of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

‘What plans are the County Council putting in place to provide the infrastructure for more electric charging points in view of the news today (4 February) that the government has announced the phasing out of petrol and diesel cars by 2035.’

Reply

I thank the member for Pitsea for her question on electric charging points.

It should be noted that Government policy is for new petrol and diesel cars to be phased out by 2035 (not that all petrol and diesel vehicles would be removed by this date). This is to enable a largely electric (or other alternative fuel) fleet by 2050 to reflect vehicle lifespans. Essex County Council does not currently have an electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure strategy or plan, as we are developing a strategic approach to low carbon in Essex and are working with industry and other key stakeholders to understand how best to enable new infrastructure. An example of this, is that we are working with Gridserve to develop the first EV Charging Forecourt near Braintree, this will open in Summer 2020 and will provide rapid charging infrastructure which is ready for the anticipated launch of a significant number of new EV models available from manufacturers in 2020/21. In addition, we are running a small pilot to install on street charging points in Chelmsford and Colchester which will be completed by May 2020.

Enabling EV charging infrastructure can be complex and at this stage we need further insight into future demand and consumption

patterns, including optimising the use of existing capacity and creating additional capacity for energy generation. This of course needs to be fully evidence based in line with industry and public expectations. This will require knowledge resources and will take time to develop. That said, we are committed to progressing a comprehensive strategy and action plan in a timely fashion, that will support decarbonisation of transport across the county. We have already engaged with initiatives that will help us refine our thinking and ensure that any charging infrastructure we put in place is fit for purpose and responds to future demand.

We would expect the new Essex climate action commission to also consider Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

11. Oral Questions of the Leader, Cabinet Member, chairman of a committee or the council's representative on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

Members asked questions of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, chairmen of committees or the council's representative on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

A recording of the questions is available [on the ECC website via the online audio recording of the meeting.](#)

The questions asked were:

From:	To the:	Concerning:
Cllr Deakin	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Replacement of shrubs and trees removed from highway
Cllr Wagland	Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care	Preparations for possibility of coronavirus outbreak
Cllr Abbott	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Availability of match funding for Local Highways Panel schemes
Cllr Abbott	Cabinet Member for Planning	Proposed incinerator at Rivenhall.
Cllr Aspinell	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Crossrail
Cllr Aspinell	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Measures to prevent speeding on Farnbridge bends in Brentwood
Cllr Pond	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Scrutiny of reopening of railway lines

From:	To the:	Concerning:
Cllr Pond	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Bus route 87
Cllr Turrell	Leader	Tree planting
Cllr Beavis	Leader	Strategic road freight routes. Halstead to Sudbury.
Cllr Scordis	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Pavements in Colchester town centre
Cllr Scordis	Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate, Culture and Communities	Maps in Colchester libraries
Cllr Young	Cabinet Member for Planning	What control the Council maintains over approval of infrastructure projects
Cllr Young	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	Works to roundabout at Ipswich Road and Harwich Road Colchester.

Chairman
14 July 2020