

County Councillor's Report, March 2019

Full Council meeting- Tuesday 12 March 2019

On Tuesday 12 March at 10am there will be a Full Council meeting held at County Hall which will focus on the Future of Libraries Strategy.

We know that interest in the libraries consultation is high and that many people will want to attend or listen to the meeting. There is very limited space within the Council Chamber, so would like to remind people that the meeting will be broadcast live and can be listened to by visiting the Essex County Council [website](#).

For those coming along to the meeting, should there not be enough space to accommodate you in the council chamber we will be making available space in the Atrium of County Hall on Market Road.

More details about the meeting can be found [here](#). You can listen online [here](#) once the meeting has started. This can be accessed via the 'On air now!' box in the centre of the page, or the links immediately below it.

Two weeks left to have your say on bus services

There are two weeks left to take part in two consultations on bus services in the county, both of which close on Friday 22 March 2019.

Sunday and Evening services

We want to know how important evening and Sunday local bus services are to you and we want your views on some proposed changes to how those services are delivered. With low passenger numbers on some services, the County Council is looking again at the way it supports local bus services on evenings and Sundays.

More details on the consultation and full release can be found [here](#). To take part, visit the consultation [here](#).

Chelmsford Park & Ride Services

We want to hear from Chelmsford Park and Ride users on ticket options, fares and opening days. We need to ensure the current service is fit for purpose and best meets the needs of those that use it, while also ensuring value for money for Essex taxpayers.

More details on the consultation and full release can be found [here](#). To take part, visit the consultation [here](#).

Parents receive their child's secondary school offer

More than 13,500 pupils who are due to start secondary school in Essex in September 2019 have been offered their parents' top preference of school.

Families across the county will discover the outcome of their secondary school applications, with those who applied online getting confirmation by email or via the Essex County Council website.

Thanks to investment in new school places, with three new secondary schools due to admit into Year 7 for the first time this September, 84 per cent of pupils have been offered their first preference of school.

A further 9 per cent have been offered their second preference, meaning 93 per cent have been offered either their first or second preference.

The latest statistics come after the council set out its plans to invest in a further 2,198 new secondary school places in its 2019 /20 budget.

Cllr Ray Gooding, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Education, said: "I am delighted that, once again, we have been able to offer so many pupils their preferred secondary school place. This is testimony to our strong track record of investing in new school places, as well as the hard work of admissions staff, schools and those involved in planning expansions."

Finchingfield Bridge replacement planning

Essex Highways engineers have been carrying out investigative trial holes and extracting cores from the material below the bridge this week. The cores and other findings will now be reviewed to inform plans to replace the bridge.

This work was delayed from October 2018 due to reasons beyond the control of Essex County Council. The delay means that the major work to demolish the existing bridge and re-build a similar-looking bridge in keeping with the historic look of the village is now likely to start in 2020. Further information on the programme will be released as the replacement design progresses.

Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said: "This is absolutely necessary work, which must be done as soon as it can be practically arranged. We very much understand there are concerns regarding the work and the proposed closure, which is why we are continually talking to the relevant councils and with them to various local individuals."

