

Appendix B – Essex County Council

16.12 Questions at Council meetings

16.12.1 Written questions asked by Members of the Council

A Member may, if notice has been given in writing to the Chief Executive before 9:00am seven calendar days before the Council meeting, ask the Leader, Cabinet Member or Chairman of a Committee any question on any matter in respect of which the Council has powers or duties.

Where he considers the matter urgent, the Chairman may allow any member to put to the Leader, Cabinet Member or Chairman of any committee any question of which the above notice has not been given; but a copy of any such question shall, if possible, be delivered to the Chief Executive not later than 9:00am on the day of the meeting.

16.12.2 Editing of questions

Any written question may be edited both to bring it into proper form and to secure reasonable brevity.

16.12.3 Supplementary question

If after a reply is given to a written question the Member who asked the question considers that the reply requires clarification, he may ask once for clarification but otherwise no supplemental question shall be put except by leave of the Chairman.

16.12.4 Restriction on number of questions

The number of written questions which may be asked pursuant to notice given in accordance with paragraph 16.12.1 above by any one Member at any one meeting shall be limited to two.

16.12.5 Questions on reports

A Member may ask the Leader, Cabinet Member or Chairman of a committee any question on any report of the Cabinet or a committee (other than a report which is for information only) when that item is under consideration by the Council.

16.12.6 Other oral questions

A Member may ask any oral question of:

(i) the Chairman

(ii) the Leader

(iii) a Member of the Cabinet

i (iv) the Chairman of any Committee or Sub-Committee or

ii (v) the Member appointed by Essex County Council as its representative on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects Essex but which is not capable of being dealt with under paragraph 16.12.5.

The time allotted at each meeting for the putting and answering of questions under this paragraph shall not exceed 20 minutes, without the leave of the Chairman of the Council.

16.12.7 Form of answer

An answer may take the form of:

(i) a direct oral answer; or

(ii) where the desired information is contained in a publication of the Council, a reference to that publication; or

(iii) where the Chief Executive considers that the reply to the question can conveniently be so given, by a written answer circulated to the Members of the Council present at the meeting.

The person to whom a question has been put may, on reasons stated, decline to answer.