

As some of you know I am getting to as many council meetings as I can ( 5 this week) as my wife Claire improved a little and I could get away. Apologies to all that I can't get to. I would however appreciate you circulate this to your Cllrs and on your website.

**One important deadline is almost upon us and that is for any Parish Council wishing to submit a proposal to the Local Highways Panel it needs to be with me and a copy to Rissa Long before the 17th December if you haven't done so already.**

### **Libraries**

From Friday 26 November, ECC revised four-year plan for libraries in Essex will be launched and we will be inviting residents to have their say and comment on the proposals. After a vigorous campaign from our residents it looks like the 4 libraries in Uttlesford will remain open and that includes Thaxted.

The draft Everyone's Library Service 2022-2026 Plan details how the County Council intends to transform the Library offer over the next four years into a modern, vibrant and sustainable service that everyone can access and benefit from.

### **Flooding**

During any period of wet weather our flood and water management team naturally see an increase in the number of enquiries. Our priority is the internal flooding of properties which causes distress to residents and businesses to make sure that everyone is kept safe. The expectation from residents is that ECC as the Lead Flood Authority should quickly fix issues around flooding but unfortunately these are often more complex involving multiple agencies and with no immediate long-term fix. Therefore, we would ask you, to remind residents of what they can do themselves to try to mitigate the risks to their properties.

- We can offer any property that has been affected by the recent flooding a 'Property Flood Resilience' grant of up to £8k per property. Details on [www.flood.essex.gov.uk](http://www.flood.essex.gov.uk)
- Any issues of flooding on the roads should be directed to Essex Highways in the first instance, via their online portal. We will work closely with Essex Highways when property is being affected.
- Maintenance of watercourses and pipes outside the highway are ultimately a private responsibility. We do everything to avoid formal enforcement of maintenance using our permissive powers and would only do so where communities/individuals are not willing to action themselves.
- There are 36,000 properties at risk from surface water/rainfall flooding in Essex. We encourage everyone to check their flood risk at [www.flood.essex.gov.uk](http://www.flood.essex.gov.uk) and take steps to prepare where needed.
- The floods team are not a 24hr emergency response function, and cannot provide sandbags or other immediate flood protection. Essex County Council doesn't provide sandbags in preparation for flooding but residents can buy sandbags from a wide variety of suppliers.

### **Covid**

Government announces move to Plan B...

The government has announced that England will move to Plan B following the rapid spread of the Omicron variant.

Face coverings compulsory in more settings

From Friday 10 December, face masks will be compulsory in more public settings. They will not be required in hospitality settings.

Work from home if you can

From Monday 13 December, work from home if you can. You should still attend your workplace if you cannot work from home.

NHS Covid Pass for entry to nightclubs and events

From Wednesday 15 December, the NHS Covid Pass will be required for entry to:

- nightclubs
- indoor unseated venues with more than 500 people
- outdoor unseated venues with more than 4,000 people
- any event with more than 10,000 people

The NHS Covid Pass shows your vaccination status or test results.

► Get more information about the move to Plan B

Regular self-testing is vital to stop the spread

The Essex Public Health team is asking everyone to self-test twice a week, and whenever you mix with lots of people.

With a quick self-test, you can check you are safe to socialise and will not unknowingly pass the virus on.

You can order free self-test kits online or collect them from libraries or pharmacies across Essex.

Remember to record your result online, regardless of what it is, by following the instructions in the test kit.

Make sure you're reading the instructions when opening your self-test kits!

There are two types of test:

- one for throat and nose
- and one for just the nose

By regular testing we can protect ourselves and others.

**Martin**

**Cllr Martin Foley - Chair - Youth Strategy Group - Member for Thaxted Division- Essex County Council**

**Covering the Parishes of- Ashdon, Broxted, Debden, Felsted ,Flich Green, Great Easton,Sampfords, Hadstock,Hempstead, Lindsell, Little Bardfield, Little Dunmow, Little Easton,**

**Radwinter, Swards End, Stebbing, Thaxted, Wimbish [cllr.Martin.Foley@essex.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.Martin.Foley@essex.gov.uk)**