

# Full Council – 27 March 2025

## Questions from the Public

### **1 Nicholas Taylor to Councillor Dan Swords (Leader of the Council):**

Everyone agrees that the change to governance in Essex is the biggest since 1974. Clearly the present government want to see changes being made before the next General Election.

In the summary section of Grant Thornton, Institute for Governance report dated March 2025 it states “Local leaders must ensure the public can share and inform decisions on their future governance. This should involve consultation with a wide range of communities and stakeholders through mechanisms such as focus groups and citizen assemblies”.

I am not aware that any such consultation has taken place in the county, but councils are forging ahead, with a final submission just a few weeks away.

Would you agree with me that there are far more urgent matters which need to be addressed by councils, many of which are close to bankruptcy and social care and homelessness services are in crisis and that none of these issues will be resolved by trying to make changes based solely on geographical boundaries and arbitrary population figures?

### **Reply from Councillor Dan Swords (Leader of the Council):**

Thank you for your question. Unfortunately, this is a question for the Government as I have explained previously. This council is focused on ensuring the best outcome for Harlow through such a process. However, we are not allowing such conversations to distract from the delivery of our missions and the things that residents care most about.