

CLLr Simon Walsh: Essex County Councillor's Report: December 2016

Application period open for primary school places

Parents in Essex are being encouraged to apply for their children's primary school places.

Children are entitled to start school in the September after their fourth birthday and applications can now be made for children starting reception from September 2017.

Parents and carers of children born during the period 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 must apply between 14 November 2016 and 15 January 2017.

Late applications, submitted after the deadline on 15 January, will only be considered once all on-time applications have been determined.

Applications can be made online at essex.gov.uk/admissions.

Parents are encouraged to use all four of their preferences and use the website to search for the school information and check admissions criteria.

Essex Energy Switch 2016

A county wide collective aiming to help residents and small businesses save money on their energy bills is to be launched in the High Chelmer Shopping Centre in Chelmsford town centre on 6 December.

This year's Essex Energy Switch is set to open on the same date, running until 14 February, giving residents an easy and hassle free option to find a better deal on their energy cost. After successful switches over previous years, residents in Essex have saved over £2 million through this scheme.

Residents are given the chance to register from 6 December 2016 until 14 February 2017. Once registration has closed, energy providers will bid against one another to obtain the custom of those who have registered. The winning bidder will be whichever company offers the best prices.

This is a great opportunity for busy people who don't have time to hunt around for the best offer. It is free to register for the Energy Switch and you are under no obligation to switch providers.

The prices offered will be based on the number of residents who register. This means that the more people who register their interest, the better the deal offered.

To find out more and sign up visit: essex.gov.uk/energyswitch.

Power supplies

Clearly winter time puts the power network under greater strain, so UK Power Networks have asked the following is shared.

Do you or someone you know need extra support during a power cut?

Although power cuts don't happen very often when they do they can be worrying. UK Power Networks is the electricity network and it provides a 'Priority Services Register' for people who might need extra help in a power cut. Older people, families with very young children, and people with specific medical conditions are among the many people who are eligible to register for free support. You can find more details and register by visiting ukpowernetworks.co.uk/prioritysupport or calling 0800 169 9970.

2017-2018 County Council Budget

Budget setting is well underway, with significant savings being sought due to continued reductions in Government support grant. Clearly front line services will take priority but will remain under a great deal of strain.

The recent cold weather has tested the gritting service and numerous runs have already been made to keep the roads ice free. There are substantial stocks of salt in our depots and parishes have once again been offered salt to use locally.

Simon Walsh
December 2016

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