

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**Council Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Questions from Mr Majzoub Ali to the Leader of the Council**

### **SBC Councillors' involvement in the civic aspects of the local community**

Councillors appointed to outside bodies such as Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and South Essex Homes Company Limited are subject to appraisal in the same way as other board members of these bodies.

#### **Question 1**

Are all SBC 51 duly elected Councillors expected to undertake individual annual appraisal regarding their performance in the public life of the community?

#### **Answer**

No. Councillors are elected representatives of the people, not employees of the local authority. Councillors answer to their electorate for their performance at the ballot box.

#### **Question 2**

As Councillors have ready access to highly professional, well-paid and competent Council Officers to deal with complex issues, do they have any grounds to cite heavy commitments not to respond to residents' correspondence and requests for announced regular Ward Councillors' surgeries?

#### **Answer**

Undertaking case work, (through letters, surgeries, phone calls etc.) is an important role of a Councillor. How they deal with this workload is a matter for each individual councillor to determine. Access to Officer advice can often help with such casework, but the work load for a Councillor can still be very heavy and must be undertaken in conjunction with their other work and/or family commitments.