



**Rochford District  
Council**

**Councillor Keith J Gordon**  
**Portfolio Holder for Environment, Leisure, Arts  
and Culture**

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Date: 21 March 2014

Dear Councillor Bass

**Funding for Highway Verge Cutting**

As you are no doubt aware, this Authority manages the contract for the cutting of highway verges on behalf of Essex County Council, but for 2012/13 we received a subsidy equivalent to only 18% of the cost. Our total expenditure for this year was £187,000 set against a contribution of only £33,300.

In these times of austerity, I am facing increasing pressure from my local Members and an increasing number of residents as to why this Council is subsidising what is clearly a County Council function. Whilst we have been able to reduce our costs to some degree for the next financial year, there is still a significant gap between what our residents see as a basic service and what the County are currently funding.

I am aware that this issue was taken up with your predecessor, Councillor Louis, and that this Council did receive a reply along the lines that "the allocation for Rochford was

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comparable with that received by other districts in terms of size and population that the funding is provided for one "safety cut" a year based on average growth rates and that many districts use their discretion and add funding to adopt higher standards in some areas".

From the enclosed information, however, you will see that this is simply incorrect. Our analysis of this data is that there is no scientific methodology for this funding distribution in terms of area, population or length of road. The only positive aspect was that there were other districts in Essex in a worse situation than Rochford.

I am advised that the current level of funding has never been reviewed nor has the methodology been fully explained.

Could I therefore ask for a review of this funding and for a detailed explanation that I can submit for consideration at a future meeting of this Council. You may also be interested that from some research undertaken nationally, Essex County Council is providing funding significantly below the average of other highway authorities.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

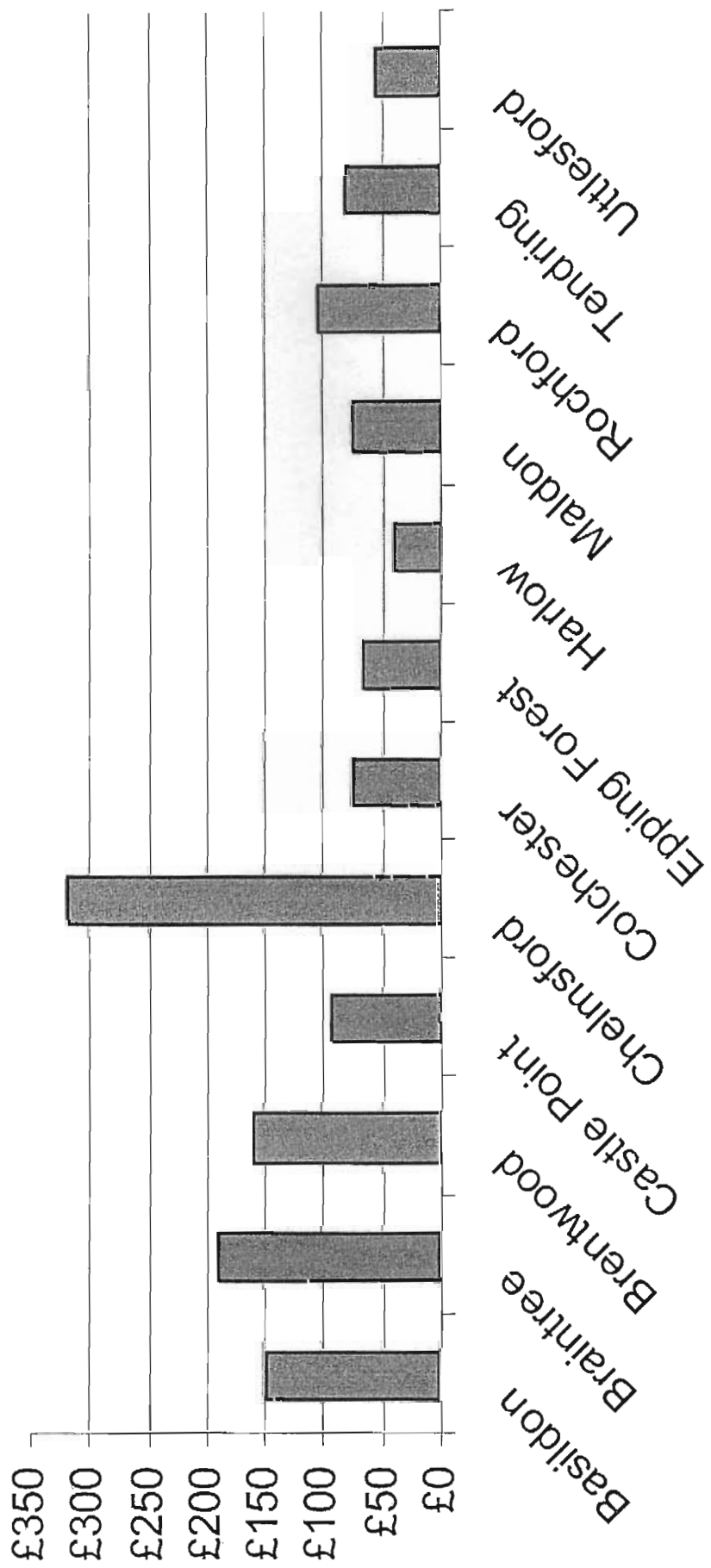


**Councillor Keith J Gordon**  
**Portfolio Holder for Environment, Leisure, Arts and Culture**

**Councillor R. L. Bass B.A., F.C.I.B.**  
**Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation**  
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# Allocation per Km



Note

This chart includes the following routes:- Main Distributors; Secondary Distributors; Link Roads; and Local Access Roads but excludes Strategic Routes such as A127.