

MINUTES
of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held on 9 February 2026 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor J. Jeapes (Chair)
Councillor A. Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors, C. Adutwim, D. Clark, H. Clark, S. Davis, S. Dobson, L. Mascot, M. Steel, S. Sullivan and P. Wilson.

Also in attendance –

Councillor Donna Eley

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors Bugbee and Davey.

2. Chairs Announcements

No announcements were made for this meeting.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Decision and Action Sheet

A verbal update was provided. It was noted that the Customer Services Review had been added to the Work Programme and that the Housing Delivery Monitoring follow-up report would be brought to the Committee.

5. Declaration of Interests

All Members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or other registerable interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

6. Public Question Time

No public questions had been submitted for the meeting.

7. Decisions Called-In

The Committee noted that Cabinet decision relating to Community Infrastructure Levy – Governance Update had been called in and would be considered on 16 February 2026.

Members had received the relevant papers. It was confirmed that this related to Community Infrastructure Levy governance arrangements. The Chair also referenced forthcoming inform and debate items, including Customer Service Centre and Bow Bridge.

8. Cabinet Portfolio Update for a Safer Chelmsford

The Committee received a presentation from Councillor Donna Eley, Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford.

Key points noted were the scope of the portfolio, including responsibility for Public Places, Public Health and Protection, Recycling and Waste Collection, and Street Care; the structure and key officers within community safety, licensing, housing standards and public protection functions; licensing activity levels; public health and protection complaint volumes and the Council's education-first approach to enforcement; recycling and residual waste tonnages and overall recycling performance; street care activity including litter and dog waste bin provision, fly-tipping volumes and graffiti removal standards; Love Your Chelmsford engagement activity and social media reach; Chelmsford Market occupancy and awards; and the successful Purple Flag reaccreditation together with positive assessor feedback.

During discussion, Members shared that it would be useful to have comparative data and year-on-year trend information when considering statistics.

In response to questions, it was explained that:

- Chelmsford's recycling rate fluctuated around 52 to 53 percent, above the Essex average and above the national average, and that simple weight comparisons between authorities could be misleading due to differences in services and demographics.
- Staffing pressures within street care team were present due to recent departures and were advised that recruitment was underway.
- Regarding the effectiveness on the taxi permitting scheme, permit renewals were due shortly and that more data would be available once renewals had been processed.
- In relation to garden waste charging uptake levels and the rationale for an inflationary increase in fees, members were advised that uptake had exceeded expectations and that the increase reflected rising operational costs. Clarification was provided that the charge was annual, not pro-rated, and could be taken up at any time during the year. There had not been any comparable data between the increase in fly-tipping attributable to the introduction of garden waste charging. Clarification was provided that residents wishing to have unused brown bins removed should contact the Council and that collection would usually take place within a few weeks.
- Residual waste composition, particularly food waste, made up a significant proportion of residual waste and that further education work was underway.
- Love Your Chelmsford food waste pilot details would be circulated to the Members who wished to know more.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Portfolio Update for a Safer Chelmsford be noted.

(7.06pm to 7.59pm)

9. Annual Presentation by Safer Chelmsford Partnership and Essex Police

The Committee received a presentation from Spencer Clark, Public Protection Manager, on behalf of the Safer Chelmsford Partnership.

Key points noted were the statutory composition of the Community Safety Partnership and its current priorities; partnership hub arrangements; use of antisocial behaviour powers; CCTV activity; Operation Guardian hotspot funding; work under the Serious Violence Duty; Prevent duty governance; work relating to the evening and night-time economy including Purple Flag; safeguarding and early intervention activity; and progress on the Make Space for Girls programme.

The Committee then received a presentation from Temporary Chief Inspector Grant Fryatt, Essex Police.

Key points noted were the local policing structure; headline performance data indicating reductions in overall recorded crime, antisocial behaviour, burglary and vehicle crime; an increase in the solve rate; activity targeting shoplifting and drugs offences; speeding enforcement work; community engagement activity; and public perception survey results which indicated a reduction in confidence measures despite improved performance statistics.

In response to questions, Members were informed that:

- in relation to the difference between crime statistics and public perception, Essex Police did not consider there to have been a significant reduction in reporting levels and believed the reduction in crime to be genuine, with demand on call handling remaining high.
- in relation to illegal e-scooters, targeted operations were undertaken including both uniformed and plain clothes activity, however enforcement presented practical challenges due to ease of purchase, lack of registration and rapid replacement.
- in relation to TruCam speed enforcement in Maldon, this was a paid-for service delivered by Maldon District Council in partnership with the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and reflected Maldon's particular prioritisation of road safety, and while not currently operated by Chelmsford, road safety had been identified as a wider strategic priority across Essex;
- in relation to the significant reduction in vehicle crime, this was attributed to proactive targeting of offenders, preventative work, improved vehicle security technology and public awareness measures such as Faraday pouches to prevent keyless theft;
- in relation to school engagement and the ATF programme, schools were selected based on existing relationships, need and available funding, and previous participating schools had chosen to continue the programme using their own resources;
- in relation to parish council concerns regarding engagement and a reported instance involving doorbell footage, Essex Police would follow up the specific matters outside the meeting;
- in relation to the stalking solve rate, this was acknowledged as a complex area often linked to domestic abuse cases, with specialist units and partnership support in place to assist victims and progress cases where possible.

It was further agreed that Essex Police would provide the number of illegal e-scooters seized in the past year outside the meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(8:00pm to 9.03pm)

10. Work Programme

The Committee considered the updated work programme and noted that future items.

It was explained that a meeting date of 1st June 2026 had been included due to the likelihood that the pre-election period would affect the scheduled May meeting, with confirmation to follow once dates were finalised.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted and updated accordingly.

12. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Chair