

MINUTES OF CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL CABINET

on 11 November 2025 at 7pm

Present:

Cabinet Members

Councillor S Robinson, Leader of the Council (Chair)
Councillor L Foster, Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor C Davidson, Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor N Dudley, Cabinet Member for an Active Chelmsford
Councillor S Goldman, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property
Councillor R Moore, Cabinet Member for a Greener Chelmsford

Cabinet Deputies

Councillor J Hawkins, Cabinet Deputy for Support Services
Councillor J Lardge, Cabinet Deputy for Cultural Services
Councillor T Sherlock, Cabinet Deputy for Sustainable Transport

Opposition Spokespersons

Councillors J. Armstrong, G Bonnett, J Jeapes, M. Steel, A. Thorpe-Apps and R. Whitehead

Also present: Councillors H. Clark, R. Hyland and A. Sosin

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Eley, Potter, Raven and Wilson.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Cabinet were reminded to declare at the appropriate time any interests in any of the items of business on the meeting's agenda.

3. Minutes and Decisions Called-in

The minutes of the meeting on 14 October 2025 were confirmed as a correct record. No decisions had been called in.

4. Public Questions

No public questions had been submitted for the meeting.

5. Members' Questions

Councillor Jeapes asked a question regarding the closure of the Essex Regiment section of Chelmsford Museum. In response the Cabinet Deputy for Cultural Services stated that the Museum of Chelmsford had acted as a custodian of the extensive collections since 1973 and that some items had been on display and some in storage. It was noted that with over 50,000 objects, it was not sustainable for the Museum of Chelmsford to manage alongside its own collections and that the museum's agreement with the Essex Regiment Trust had ended in March 2024, before which a long term solution had been sought. The Cabinet heard that the decision had not been driven by admission charges or funding issues, instead about finding the best way to care for such a large and important collection and that the Royal Anglian Regiment Museum Trust were best placed to take on the responsibility. It was noted that a dedicated Committee would be set up to decide how and where the items would be stored and shown and that the Museum of Chelmsford would retain a selection of items in its main galleries. [The Cabinet heard that more information and answers to common questions could be found online.](#) In response to a follow up question, the Cabinet Deputy for Cultural Services confirmed that they would write to the member of the public who had raised their concerns with Councillors, but that they had not received the original email.

6.1 Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2025/26 (Finance)

Declarations of interest:

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet considered a report on the Treasury Management activities undertaken in the first part of 2025/26 and the extent of compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy. The Treasury Management and Investment Sub-Committee had concluded that no changes to the Strategy were required.

Options:

1. Accept the recommendations contained within the report.
2. Recommend changes to the way by which the Council's investments are to be managed.

Preferred option and reasons:

Recommend the report to Council without amendment for consideration and thereby meet statutory obligations.

Discussion:

It was noted that the CCLA investment had delivered a disappointing return and noted since the report had been produced over 60% of it had now been de-invested and that the management of the remainder of the Treasury function and the fund was an operational decision for the Council's S151 Officer.

RESOLVED that the report on the Treasury Management activities in 2025/26 be noted and the Council be requested to review the report and approve the 2025/26 Treasury Strategy without change.

(7.06pm to 7.08pm)

6.2 Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme 2026/27 (Finance)**Declarations of interest:**

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet was informed that the Council was required to approve, by 11 March 2026, a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026-27. The Cabinet heard that the report was being considered at an earlier stage than in previous years, to allow time for consultation on a revised scheme if that was selected ahead of the February Full Council meeting. It was proposed that the Scheme adopted for 2025-26 be retained in its current form.

Options:

Retain the present scheme or adopt an amended version.

Preferred option and reasons:

The existing scheme would be affordable to the Council and fair to recipients of Council Tax support.

Discussion:

The Cabinet heard that there would be a cost to make the scheme more generous and that with LGR on the horizon, it was anticipated that significant work would be required ahead of 2028-29 to harmonise schemes for other Councils into a new scheme, and that as a result it was the preferred option to stay with the current scheme for now. In response to a question, it was confirmed that those above Band D who received support, would proportionally get a lower benefit and pay higher amounts of Council Tax than those on lower bands. It was also noted that the support to higher band taxpayers was a very small proportion of the overall spend.

RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL that the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025-26 be retained as the Scheme for 2026-27.

(7.09pm to 7.12pm)

7.1 Review of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (Greener)

Declarations of interest:

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet considered a report on the feedback received to consultation on the revised draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and were asked to approve it for publication. The Cabinet heard that the Chelmsford Policy Board had considered the item on 6th November and recommended that the Cabinet approve it. It was noted that the revised document updated key information on how the Council would consult on planning matters and met Government guidance on the timing of revision of SCI documents.

Options:

To approve or not approve the revised Statement of Community Involvement for publication.

Preferred option and reasons:

To approve the revised Statement of Community Involvement for publication, as it updates key information on how the Council will consult on planning matters and meets Government guidance on the timing of revision of SCI documents.

RESOLVED that the revised Statement of Community Involvement be approved for publication

(7.13pm to 7.15pm)

7.2 Masterplan Procedure Review (Greener)

Declarations of interest:

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet considered a report which presented an updated Masterplan Procedure and their approval was sought to publish it. The Cabinet heard that the Chelmsford Policy Board had considered the item on 6th November and recommended that Cabinet approve it. It was noted that the updated procedure addressed the need to accelerate housing delivery while maintaining a focus on quality and key masterplanning principles. It was also noted that it would give flexibility proportionate to the scale and complexity of a proposed development, via three clear routes for approval. The Cabinet also noted the green sheet of amendments, which highlighted that the approval of a masterplan would be by an officer in delegation with the Cabinet Member.

Options:

1. Approve the updated Masterplan procedure for publication.
2. Approve the updated Masterplan procedure with any amendments for publication.
3. Not approve the updated Masterplan procedure for publication.

Preferred option and reasons:

To approve the updated Masterplan Procedure as it addresses the need to accelerate housing delivery while maintaining a focus on quality and key masterplanning principles. The updated procedure would give flexibility proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposed development.

Discussion:

In response to questions, it was noted that the masterplan process was an additional process in between the allocation of sites via the Local Plan and the detailed planning applications. It was also noted that many sites were not being delivered on time and it was hoped that by reviewing the process it would allow some sites to be delivered quicker, although the Council would prefer that the Government gave powers to Council's to help enforce the build out of sites.

RESOLVED that the updated Masterplan Procedure be approved for publication.

(7.16pm to 7.24pm)

8.1 Review of Statement of Licensing Policy (Safer)**Declarations of interest:**

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet considered a report from the Licensing Committee, who had reviewed the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003, which required review every five years. The policy had been subject to public consultation, reflected all legislative requirements and was appropriate for the types of premises in Chelmsford, that required licensing under the Licensing Act 2003, therefore the Licensing Committee had recommended it for approval.

Options:

Recommend that Council adopt the attached policy, not adopt it or amend the policy before recommending it.

Preferred option and reasons:

The policy as presented reflects all legislative requirements and is appropriate to the types of premises in Chelmsford required to be licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.

RESOLVED that the Council be recommended to adopt the latest version of the Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003.

(7.25pm to 7.26pm)

9. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

10. Reports to Council

Items 6.1, 6.2 and 8.1 were subject of recommendations to Council.

Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for items 11.1 and 11.2 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A to the Act (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

11.1 Sale of the Council's Freehold Interest in Property Fronting Westway

Public interest statement: It is not in the public interest to release details of this report at present, on the grounds that the report contains information that is commercially sensitive and to place the information in the public realm will be detrimental to the negotiations to be undertaken by the Council.

Declarations of interest:

None.

Summary:

The Cabinet were asked to approve the disposal of a property, for a sum consistent with an independent RCIS valuation. It was noted that the disposal would realise a significant capital receipt, which could be used to support capital projects, reduce borrowing, or enhance the Council's overall financial sustainability.

Options:

1. Retain the Freehold Interest

Retaining the freehold would allow the Council to continue receiving the annual ground rent income. However, given the long leasehold interest, the Council retains minimal strategic control over the property and its future use.

2. Dispose of the Freehold Interest (Recommended)

Disposal of the Council's freehold interest to the existing long leaseholder would generate an immediate capital receipt, consistent with an independent RICS valuation. The receipt can be used to support capital projects, reduce borrowing, or enhance the Council's overall financial sustainability.

Preferred option and reasons:

That Cabinet approve the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the property under delegation to the Director of Public Places, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property.

Discussion:

In response to a question about the planned use for the capital receipt, it was noted that a specific plan was not yet in place, but the sum would reduce the Council's annual revenue capital financing costs which in turn would protect funding of day-to-day Council services.

RESOLVED that;

1. The disposal of the property be approved and;
2. The Director of Public Places, be delegated authority to dispose of the property, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property.

(7.27pm to 7.32pm)

The meeting closed at 7.32pm

Chair