

Extraordinary Council Meeting Agenda



Wednesday 3 September 2025 at 7pm

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre
Chelmsford**

Membership

The Mayor – Councillor Janetta Sosin
The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Smita Rajesh

and Councillors

C Adutwim, J Armstrong, H Ayres, G Bonnett, N Bugbee, V Canning
N Chambers, D Clark, H Clark, P Clark, P Davey
A Davidson, C Davidson, S Davis, J Deakin, S. Dobson, N Dudley,
D Eley, K Franks, L Foster,
J Frascona, I Fuller, S Goldman, S Hall, J Hawkins, R Hyland, J
Jeapes, A John, B Knight, J Lardge, R Lee, S Manley, L Mascot, B.
Massey, R Moore, M O'Brien, V Pappa, J Potter, J Raven, S
Robinson, E Sampson, S Scott, T Sherlock, M Sismey, A Sosin, M
Steel, S Sullivan, M Taylor, A Thompson, A Thorpe-Apps, C Tron, N
Walsh, R Whitehead, P Wilson, S Young

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EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL

3 September 2025

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

3. Minutes

Minutes of meeting on 16 July 2025.

4. Public Questions

To receive questions from members of the public in accordance with Council Rules 10.1 to 10.6 on Item 5 on the agenda.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting.

5. Community Governance Review

To consider the attached report from the Chief Executive.

CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on 16 July 2025 at 7pm

PRESENT:

The Mayor, J Sosin
The Deputy Mayor, S Rajesh

Councillors C Adutwim, H Ayres, G Bonnett, N Chambers, D Clark, H Clark, P Clark, P Davey, A Davidson, C Davidson, S Davis, J Deakin, S. Dobson, N Dudley, D Eley, K Franks, L Foster, J Frasca, I Fuller, S Goldman, S Hall, J Hawkins, J Jeapes, B Knight, J Lardge, R Lee, S Manley, L Mascot, B. Massey, R Moore, M O'Brien, V Pappa, J Potter, J Raven, S Robinson, E Sampson, S Scott, T Sherlock, M Sismey, A Sosin, M Steel, S Sullivan, M Taylor, A Thompson, , N Walsh, R Whitehead, P Wilson and S Young

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors, Armstrong, Bugbee, Canning, John, Hyland, Raven, Thorpe-Apps and Tron.

2. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reflected on the sad passing of former Councillor Tony Sach since the last meeting of the Council. The Mayor referred to Tony Sach's long service between 1999 and 2019 as a Councillor for the Writtle ward, their time on Planning Committee, as Cabinet member for Corporate Services and as Mayor of Chelmsford in 2009 - 2010. The Mayor expressed that they would be missed by everyone, and their thoughts continued to be with their families. A minute's silence was then held in their memory, before Cllr Robinson and Cllr Whitehead were invited to speak.

Cllr Robinson reflected on their time serving alongside Cllr Sach on Writtle Parish Council. It was added that Cllr Sach had supported the charity 'Kids Inspire' as their time as Mayor and concluded by extending the Council's condolences to Cllr Sach's family.

Cllr Whitehead supported Cllr Robinson's comments and added their condolences to Cllr Sach's family. It was added that Cllr Sach had attended King Edward VI Grammar School, and would later become managing governor, and served as a school governor at Lawford Mead Infants and Nursery School. Cllr Whitehead concluded by thanking members for recognising the contributions of Cllr Sach.

The Mayor informed the Council that since the start of their Mayoralty they had attended 70 engagements/meetings and has visited the twin town of Backnang for the Strassenfest which coincided with the 35th anniversary of Chelmsford being twinned with Backnang. The first Mayor's Charity event for Chelmsford CVS would be taking place on the 27th July.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded to declare at the appropriate time, any interests in the business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 19th February and 14th May 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Public Questions

Four public questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting, [all can be viewed via this link.](#)

The first question asked what actions had been taken on behalf of residents in relation to the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

In response the Cabinet Member for a Greener Chelmsford, thanked the member of the public for their question. The Cabinet Member stated that a comprehensive review of the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergency, along with its approach to meeting its biodiversity duties under the Environment Act 2021, was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 March 2025. This was the third formal review of progress since the original Climate Action Plan was adopted in January 2020, with previous reviews having taken place on 1 February 2021 and 26 September 2022.

The Cabinet member shared that progress continued across the Council's four key thematic priorities: securing sustainable housing and economic growth while promoting net-zero carbon development; lowering energy consumption and reducing greenhouse gas emissions; protecting and expanding natural habitats in line with the Council's biodiversity duty; and encouraging individuals, communities and businesses to care for their local environment and adopt more sustainable ways of living and working.

The recent report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also included an update on the Council's own operational emissions, highlighting significant progress towards the ambition of achieving net-zero carbon for Council operations by 2030. The most recent greenhouse gas emissions report, covering the 2024/25 period, was expected to be published shortly. A summary of the actions taken to date and plans for future years could be [viewed at this link.](#)

The second question was in relation to the empty property, Wickham House, Danbury, and called for a specific action to bring back Wickham House for further Cabinet consideration with a view to pursuing a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

In response the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford thanked the member of the public for their question. The Cabinet Member stated that the Council's primary focus was on fulfilling its statutory housing duties, such as improving housing conditions, investigating hazardous living situations, and meeting legal obligations related to housing safety and licensing. Bringing empty homes back into use, while desirable, was a lower priority due to limited resources. In relation to Wickham House, the Cabinet Member stated that whilst the property was known and long-vacant, the Council did not believe that there were strong enough grounds to pursue a CPO. An independent report from 2024 suggested that such action would likely be challenged and difficult to justify financially or legally. Therefore, the Council could not support Mr S request to bring this case back to Cabinet for a CPO.

The third and fourth question related to breaches of planning permission in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller site at Meadow Lane.

In response the Cabinet Member for a Greener Chelmsford thanked the members of the public for their question. The Cabinet Member stated that a Temporary Stop Notice had been issued by the Council on 1 July 2025, restricting further hardstanding and the importation or occupation of additional caravans. It was noted that the council did not have the ability to stop all activity, such as building of utility connections or fencing. Some breaches had occurred, and the site occupiers had been warned that further violations could lead to more enforcement action. Planning Contravention Notices had also been served to gather all necessary information before any next steps.

While further enforcement was being considered, details could not be shared publicly as to avoid compromising potential action. The Council did not have the legal authority to evict individuals residing on land they own or have permission to use; instead, planning breaches were addressed through enforcement notices, and failure to comply with these could lead to prosecution.

In response to concerns about whether the enforcement action taken was proportionate, the Cabinet Member explained that enforcement measures must align with national guidance and the councils Enforcement Plan. The Temporary Stop Notice was considered the most suitable immediate step to prevent further escalation, and a Planning Contravention Notice had been used to gather the necessary facts before pursuing formal enforcement. The Council stated that while an injunction was an available tool, it was not sought immediately to avoid the risk of premature rejection by the courts, injunctions were more likely to be granted when other legal avenues have first been exhausted.

The Council acknowledged that one of the main barriers to enforcement was the limited scope of powers granted under national legislation. Specifically, when individuals own the land or have permission to reside there, the Council had no authority to evict. The case remains a high priority and is being closely monitored. Additionally, it was stated that Chelmsford City Council had been working with a range

of external agencies in connection with this case, including the Environment Agency, Essex County Council, UK Power Networks, Essex & Suffolk Water, and Essex Police.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that although they were not able to respond to all of the matters raised in the full question within the meeting, a full written response was to be provided.

(7.10pm to 7.32pm)

6. Cabinet Question Time

The following questions from Councillors were put to members of the Cabinet:

Question from Councillor V Pappa to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property

Every evening, as the clock strikes six, our city centre — the heart of our community — starts to fall silent. The shutters come down, the shops close, and yet thousands of Chelmsford's residents are just finishing work. This calls for a simple first step: a city-wide consultation, a pilot, and a report. Does the Cabinet Member agree that this should be looked at and that it is appropriate for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to put this on their next agenda?

In response the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property stated that the Council could not require businesses to open in the evening; decisions were made by individual businesses based on footfall and commercial viability.

The Council are working closely with the city's Business Improvement District (BID), which are currently developing a new strategy to grow the evening and night-time economy. This includes engaging stakeholders and planning a campaign to promote events, hospitality, and cultural activity while encouraging businesses to consider extended hours where commercially viable. It was highlighted that Chelmsford had achieved the Purple Flag accreditation for the 12th consecutive year reflecting Chelmsford's status as a safe, welcoming, and diverse city centre during evening hours.

While many retailers follow national policies, the Council would continue supporting efforts to make the city centre more vibrant. The Cabinet Member suggested that conversations be held with the chair of Overview & Scrutiny to consider the issue.

Question from Councillor G Bonnett to the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford

Residents in my Ward are complaining that dog bins are not being collected and that this hot weather is making matters worse. I understand that there is a serious shortage of Street Care staff; what is the Cabinet Member doing to resolve this problem?

In response the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford stated that dog waste bins were being emptied as scheduled, and that there were enough resources to maintain the current collections, but not to add more bins. Recent staff changes meant new team members were still learning the routes.

Question from Councillor R Whitehead to the Leader of the Council

Question 1: The Mayor and Consort recently attended the Strassenfest in Backnang. There were four Mayors at the official ceremony, three wearing civic regalia but, due to the recent decision by the City Council not to allow the replica chain of office and badge to be taken to Backnang, our Mayor had no regalia. This was disappointing and does not reflect the standing of the Mayor and the City of Chelmsford. Whilst the City Council has to be aware of the value of the badge, the Mayor's chain was purchased by the Council to specifically to avoid damage to the valuable original regalia and is used extensively. Members will be aware of the need to observe the rules on their personal security and it is therefore concerning that the Mayor has to return the replica regalia to the Civic Centre – sometimes late in the evening – and no longer has the Mayor's car and Chauffeur for this purpose. It is possible to purchase a good copy chain of office and badge for under £1000 which would enable them to be taken home by the Mayor when appropriate to avoid the problem of security. Would the City Council accept a donation of £1000 to purchase a replica chain and badge so that our Mayors will have both a deserved symbol of office and ensure that their security is not compromised?

Question 2: Whilst it is accepted that the financial situation is not as healthy as we would like it to be, the City Council's Cultural Strategy encourages cultural exchanges and with the High School deciding not to send pupils to Germany next year there is a danger of Twinning declining at a time when working together in Europe has once again become very important. This is the 35th Anniversary of the Town Twinning Partnership with Backnang and this was marked by the Mayor of Backnang when our Mayor, Councillor Janetta Sosin visited the town at his invitation last month. Backnang has hosted our Mayors six times since their new Mayor was elected, whilst we have only hosted their Mayor only once. Will the City Council invite the Mayor of Backnang to come to Chelmsford in 2026?

In response the Leader stated that there was no formal policy prohibiting the wearing or taking of the mayoral regalia. Decisions regarding regalia were made individually by each Mayor, based on personal preference and insurance considerations. It was noted that some previous mayors had also chosen not to take the chains overseas and that each Mayor has the full support of The Council to take the decisions that they feel comfortable with when attending events.

In relation to question two, the Leader acknowledged the importance of maintaining strong relationships with European partners, particularly through town twinning, and supported the idea of continuing these exchanges. In relation to hosting the Mayor of Backnang, the Leader stated that whilst financial constraints may be a barrier for facilitating these visits, but discussions will be held at the Mayor's Working Group to find ways to develop the partnership.

Question from Councillor R Whitehead to the Leader of the Council

The Local Government Act 2000 provides that where authorities operate executive arrangements, for instance where there is a Leader and Cabinet, or Mayor and Cabinet, then all functions are to be exercised by the executive unless specified otherwise by the Act or enactments or regulations made under it.

The Regulations define non-executive functions. These functions, which include setting the budget and strategic policy framework are reserved for the full Council, rather than the executive. This separation ensures that decisions which significantly impact the community or require a high degree of scrutiny are handled transparently and with greater accountability.

The regulations delineate that strategic and quasi-judicial decisions should be reserved for the full Council. This ensures that decisions which have significant consequences receive the necessary scrutiny and democratic legitimacy. Despite the executive's day-to-day management role, the overarching financial strategies and significant amendments to these strategies must be considered by the full Council to align with the broader governance framework and financial health of the council.

The recent decisions on the use of a huge amount of CIL monies for developments at South Woodham Ferrers and at Cabinet last week for £66.3M at the Beaulieu sites – as detailed in the decisions published on the City Council's Website – are clearly 'Strategic Policy Decisions' and in the opinion of the Conservative Group should have been taken at Full Council.

The Council's Constitution is being updated, but will the Leader now agree that the decision to fund the viability gap and fund infrastructure should be brought to Council?

Does he further consider that ring-fencing money for Property Developers in these developments is not what CIL should be used for as other parts of the City will lose out?

In response the Leader clarified that under the Local Government Act 2000, decisions on infrastructure delivery and the allocation of CIL was an executive function and therefore legally within Cabinet's remit, not Full Council. Cabinet was acting within its powers when approving the use of CIL for developments.

In relation to the use of CIL, the Leader explained that while CIL was intended to fund infrastructure, developers were allowed to reduce affordable housing if infrastructure costs threatened their profit margins. In these cases, the Council's independent viability advice indicated that reinvesting CIL into infrastructure was necessary to retain affordable housing on the sites in question.

The Leader acknowledged that this use of CIL was not ideal and may limit spending elsewhere in the district. However, due to the housing crisis and high levels of local need, including hundreds of families in temporary or unsuitable accommodation, prioritising affordable housing was essential. Both the Leader and Chelmsford MP,

Marie Goldman, were raising concerns nationally about the impact of viability rules on housing delivery.

A question was raised in relation to the outcome of the ongoing legal proceedings. The Monitoring Officer explained that at the time of this meeting the outcome and its implications was not known.

Question from Councillor D Clark to the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford

In a judgment delivered on 16 April 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that the protected characteristic of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 refers to biological sex, not acquired gender or legal sex recognised through a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC)

What action has the Council taken to ensure that their staff feel supported as a result of this decision?

In response the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford shared that the Council remained committed to supporting all staff and upholding dignity and respect in the workplace, regardless of gender identity. A Transgender Policy was in place, including action plans to support employees through gender transition, and a confidential Employee Assistance Programme.

In response to the Supreme Court ruling on the definition of "sex" under the Equality Act, the Council was redesignating accessible toilets as unisex facilities, and this would be reviewed pending further guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The Council also monitored employee feedback and HR cases to identify areas for improvement and was supported by an Equality Champions Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, to explore proactive measures for staff support.

(7.32pm to 7.58pm)

7. Proposed changes to the Constitution

The Council were asked to approve the proposed changes to the constitution that had previously been presented at Constitution Working Group, Governance Committee and Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the constitution be approved.

(7.58pm to 8.02pm)

8. Update on Political Groups

The Council received a report setting out changes to political groups, specifically that that Cllr Jude Deakin was no longer a member of the Liberal Democrat Group and were now an Independent Councillor not in a political group.

RESOLVED that the update on Political Groups was noted.

(8.02pm to 8.03pm)

9. Treasury Outturn 2024–25

The Council was presented with the Treasury Management Outturn Report for the financial year ending 31 March 2025.

The Chair of the Treasury Management and Investment Sub-Committee introduced the Treasury Management Outturn Report for the financial year 2024/25. It was explained that the report had already been reviewed by the Treasury Management and Investment Sub-Committee and Cabinet and was now recommended for approval by Full Council. The report highlighted that treasury income had exceeded expectations by £0.8 million, primarily due to slower-than-forecast capital expenditure. Borrowing levels were also significantly lower than anticipated.

It was noted that some investments were adversely affected by American tariff proposals, which were being closely monitored. It was shared that all treasury activities remained compliant with the Treasury Management Strategy approved in February 2024.

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Treasury Management and Investment Sub-Committee and Cabinet in relation to the Treasury Management outturn report be approved.

(8.03pm to 8.05pm)

10. Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee presented the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2024/25. The report provided an overview of the committee's responsibilities, membership, and the work undertaken during the year. It was intended to demonstrate the committee's contribution to the council's governance framework.

Officers and committee members were thanked for their support over the previous year.

The Council were requested to note the content of the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee 2024/25 be approved for publication.

(8.05pm to 8.07pm)

11. Annual Report of the Governance Committee

The annual report of the Governance Committee 2024/25 was submitted for information.

The Chair of the Governance Committee shared that, of the 33 complaints received during the year, none required further investigation. Thanks were expressed to the Monitoring Officer and the council's Independent Persons for their work in handling complaints and supporting the committee's functions.

RESOLVED that the Governance Committee's Annual Report for 2024/25 be approved for publication.

(8.07pm to 8.08pm)

Urgent Business

The Council heard a motion to consider an item of urgent business.

RESOLVED that the urgent business be heard by Full Council.

The Leader of the Council brought forward an urgent item concerning Cllr Bugbee absence from council meetings due to ill health. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, a councillor who does not attend a meeting for six consecutive months is subject to automatic disqualification, unless the council were to approve a leave of absence in advance.

It was explained that Cllr Bugbee's current period of absence would reach the six-month threshold by 19 August 2025, and that due to ongoing illness, was unlikely to attend a meeting before that date. It was proposed that council approve her continued absence until the 3 December 2025 Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED that the relief from disqualification for Cllr Bugbee be extended to 3 December 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Mayor



Chelmsford City Council

3 September 2025

Community Governance Review

Report by:

Chief Executive

Officer Contact:

Nick Eveleigh, Chief Executive, nick.eveleigh@chelmsford.gov.uk, 01245 606419

Purpose

As a result of local government reorganisation, the Leader has requested that Chelmsford City Council undertakes a further community governance review to consider the community governance arrangements for the unparished area of the city. The options have been considered by the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group and those options are now set out for Council to consider including commencing a Community Governance Review (CGR) of its own volition and approving the draft Terms of Reference (TOR).

Recommendations

1. That Council authorises the commencement of a CGR of its own volition and approves the draft Terms of Reference, as recommended by the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group, to approve the Consultation Questions and to take any necessary action to progress the review. Any decision related to the approval of draft or final recommendations, or other key decisions, will be taken to Governance Committee and Full Council for approval.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group have been considering whether the Council should commence a community governance review of its own volition.
- 1.2. The Council has the legal power to do so in accordance with part four of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and associated statutory guidance.
- 1.3. The 2007 Act devolved powers to the City Council to undertake a community governance review where a wide range of issues can be considered including for example, the creation or naming of a parish, the establishment of a separate parish from an existing parish, alteration of parish boundaries, abolition or dissolution of a parish, change to parish electoral arrangements or parish grouping. The full scope of these powers is detailed in the TOR.
- 1.4. The last review in Chelmsford took place in 2021/22. Guidance recommends that such a review should be undertaken every 10-15 years. However, they can be considered more frequently than this in response to local issues e.g. significant community growth through housing developments, a request from the public and other social changes.
- 1.5. In December 2024, the Government produced a White Paper on devolution on England. This set out plans to devolve greater power and funding to local areas and to deliver Local Government Reform (LGR) in areas currently operating in a two-tier system of local government, including Essex. This is a significant change for residents in Chelmsford and will mean that residents in the city centre may no longer have local community representation as there will be no lower tier of local government, below that of the new unitary authority. Conducting a community governance review in preparation for this allows residents to have the opportunity to consider the options available to them and to have a say in how they are represented.

2. CGR process & consultation

- 2.1. A CGR evaluates any existing, and considers the introduction of new, community governance arrangements within the area under review. A CGR can take place for the whole of the council area, or specific parishes or unparished areas. The scope and requirements of a community governance review are set out in the draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1).
- 2.2. The Council will be required to undertake statutory consultation (firstly during the initial stages and secondly in relation to any draft recommendations) during the community governance review. A communication plan is being developed in relation to the initial statutory consultation which is planned to commence in September 2025. This includes additional actions to help generate increased

responses to the statutory consultation. A dedicated page on the Council's website is also being developed.

- 2.3. In Chelmsford City Council's last review, a pre-CGR consultation was used to give an initial insight on public opinion before formally entering the review process. This is not considered beneficial for this review as the feedback may not be conclusive and is likely to coincide with consultation on LGR and cause resident confusion and fatigue.
- 2.4. Throughout the review, periodic updates will continue to be provided to the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group in addition to the formal reporting set out in the draft Terms of Reference.

3. Terms of Reference

- 3.1. Draft Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1. These have been presented to and discussed with the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group. The Terms of Reference require approval from Full Council.
- 3.2. As the Council has already undertaken a city wide CGR in 2021/22, it is recommended that the scope of this CGR is undertaken only in relation to the community governance arrangements for the unparished area, and the existing parishes that share a boundary with the unparished area. This includes a total of nine parish-tier councils; Broomfield, Chelmer, Chignal, Galleywood, Great Baddow, Margaretting, Springfield, Stock and Writtle.

The neighbouring parished areas have been included in this review to accommodate for any boundary changes, should the residents in the currently unparished area identify with the community of an existing parish and indicate that they wish to be included within it. However, inclusion in the review does also allow for other arrangements within these parishes to be considered, should there be public interest in doing so.

- 3.3. Chelmsford currently has City status, which means it is entitled to have a Mayor. In the absence of any appropriate parish-tier councils within the City for this status to be transferred to, that status is considered to be at risk. In order to preserve the historic property, privileges, rights and traditions presently enjoyed by the residents of the City, it may be necessary (depending on the outcome of LGR and the CGR) to establish Charter Trustees for the unparished parts of the city with effect from 1 April 2028.

Charter Trustees would be made up of Councillors representing the electoral divisions that cover, wholly or partly, the abolished Chelmsford City Council wards in the unparished area. Their role would be to preserve the civic and ceremonial functions of Chelmsford City Council, including the City status and Mayoralty. They would not administer council services, and the role should remain ceremonial i.e. not political. Charter Trustees can remain in place until

such a time that a parish-tier council is formed to transfer the functions to, should there be desire to do so.

4. Conclusion

4.1. The draft Terms of Reference are presented to Full Council.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Terms of Reference

Background papers:

Joint Statutory Guidance on community governance reviews (2010)

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: A community governance review is a non-executive function which falls within the terms of reference for Full Council. The Council can undertake a CGR of its own volition at the time of its choosing.

In doing so the council must comply with the statutory process laid down in the 2007 Act, the published guidance and its own Terms of Reference. This sets out the criteria that must be considered in taking decisions and consulting. The Council must have regard to the responses provided in reaching a decision. There is no obligation to undertake pre CGR consultation.

Financial: Additional resources as well as some disbursement costs will arise in relation to the review. These are estimated at approximately £165,000 for a consultant advisor, consultation/print/delivery costs and some initial costs (website, clerk etc) should a new council be created.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: A risk register has been drafted for the completion of this review and implementation of any recommendations, which will be reviewed and updated periodically. The key risks that must be considered include levels of consultation engagement, financial and governance implications.

Equality and Diversity: An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken and will be monitored during the review in relation to the consultation and any decisions proposed.

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Our Chelmsford Our Plan – Bringing people together, empowering local people and working in partnership to build community capacity, stronger communities through encouraging participation in local democracy, increasing representation of community interests to help people feel better represented at a local level and more involved in deciding how best the interests of their community can be met.

Appendix 1



Chelmsford City Council

Community Governance Review 2025

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Chelmsford City Council has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act"). A CGR provides the principal authority (Chelmsford City Council) the opportunity to review community governance arrangements in the area included in the review.
- 1.2. Chelmsford currently has 29 parished areas (25 parish councils, one town council, one village council, one community council and one parish meeting). There is also currently an 'unparished' city centre area. The last full review of the arrangements across the whole of the authority area was conducted in 2021/22.
- 1.3. This review primarily seeks to consider whether the currently 'unparished' area would benefit from the introduction of a form of recognised community governance in light of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Essex. However, other matters, such as electoral arrangements, and the boundaries between the unparished area and adjacent civil parishes will also be included in the review.
- 1.4. The review will comply with the legislative and procedural requirements set out in Part 4 of the 2007 Act as well as any statutory guidance (this currently includes Joint Guidance produced in 2010 by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England). It will follow the approach set out in the Terms of Reference, including the indicative timetable.

1.5. The Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group will support the review and draft recommendations for consideration by Governance Committee and Full Council for approval.

3. Scope of Community Governance Reviews

3.1. A CGR evaluates any existing, as well as the introduction of new community governance arrangements within the area under review. A CGR can take place for the whole of the council area, or specific parishes and areas. It may consider:

- The creation, merging, altering or abolition of a parish tier council.
- The creation of area committees, community forums, neighbourhood associations and other forms of community governance.
- The boundaries of a parish tier council.
- Naming of parish tier councils, and the style of any newly created parish tier council
- The number of Councillors that may represent a parish tier council.
- The warding of a parished area.
- Amending the ordinary year of election.
- Grouping or ungrouping parish tier councils.
- The ordinary year in which elections are held

3.2. Section 93 of the 2007 Act requires principal councils to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:
a) reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
b) effective and convenient to the community in that area.

In doing so the review is required to take into account:

- a) the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- b) the size, population and boundaries of the local community or parish.

They therefore must consider the geographical and population size of the area, as well as social cohesion.

3.3. A CGR cannot consider Local Government or Parliamentary boundaries.

3. Reasons for undertaking a review

3.1. A CGR should be completed at least every 10 to 15 years. They can be considered more frequently than this in response to local issues e.g. significant community growth through housing developments, a request from the public and other social changes.

3.2. In December 2024, the Government produced a White Paper on devolution on England. This set out plans to devolve greater power and funding to local areas and to deliver LGR in areas currently operating in a two-tier system of local government, including Essex. This means that Chelmsford City Council, Essex County Council and the other thirteen

Councils in Essex are to be abolished and will be replaced by between two and five unitary authorities, delivering all services for the residents in their area. This programme is due to be delivered by April 2028.

- 3.3. This is a significant change for residents in Chelmsford and will mean that residents in the city centre may no longer have local community representation as there will be no lower tier of local government, below that of the new unitary authority. With this in mind, Chelmsford City Council want to ensure that residents have the opportunity to consider the options available to them and to have a say in how they are represented.
- 3.4. In order to preserve the historic property, privileges, rights and traditions presently enjoyed by the residents of the area, the new arrangements establish Charter Trustee areas in the unparished parts of the town with effect from 1 April 2027. The trustees have the power to carry out ceremonial functions but they are not intended to act as administrative units and will have no power in respect of general functions or services. Once elections are held to any new Parish-tier Council then the privileges, rights and traditions are transferred to the Parish-tier Council.

4. Areas under consideration

- 4.1. As a full review was conducted in 2021/22, the Council intends to limit this review to the city centre, or the 'unparished' area, and any parish tier council area that currently adjoins this. This includes: Broomfield, Chelmer, Chignal, Galleywood, Great Baddow, Margaretting, Springfield, Stock and Writtle. A map representing this can be found under section six, and a list of the areas included in the review is shown below.
- 4.2. Table one below outlines the electorate in within the area that the review is considering. Any of the other 20 parish areas within Chelmsford that are not listed in this table are not part of the review and will not be considered. The electorate of the area included in this review is 90,692, included in this figure are 51,536 electors in the currently unparished area.

	<i>Parish Area</i>	<i>Households (1 July 2025)</i>	<i>Electorate (1 July 2025)</i>
1	Broomfield	2514	4017
2	Chelmer	3940	6757
3	Chignal	293	515
4	Galleywood	2469	4271
5	Great Baddow	6762	11,032
6	Margaretting	384	660
7	Springfield	3692	6269
8	Stock	1047	1731
9	Writtle	2816	3904
10	Chelmsford City Centre (currently unparished)	32,807	51,536
	TOTAL	56,724	90,692

Table one

The unparished part of Chelmsford city centre currently comprises the following wards of Chelmsford City Council:

	<i>Ward</i>	<i>Households (1 July 2025)</i>	<i>Electorate (1 July 2025)</i>
1	Goat Hall	2590	4580
2	Marconi	4179	5906
3	Moulsham and Central	7745	10,000
4	Moulsham Lodge	2259	4307
5	Patching Hall	3969	6721
6	St. Andrews	3957	6583
7	The Lawns	2592	4174
8	Trinity	2668	4581
9	Waterhouse Farm	2848	4684
	TOTAL	32,807	51,536

Table two

- 4.3. In conducting the review Chelmsford City Council will use the current electoral statistics whilst taking into consideration any likely changes to the electorate in the next five years, through community development and growth.
- 4.4. Whilst the CGR is undertaken primarily to consider options for the unparished part of the Council area, it is emphasised that all of the parishes listed above

are included in the CGR, and any of the options listed at 4.2 above are included in the scope of this review.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. Consultation and community engagement is a vital part of this review, the Council hopes to engage local residents and special interest groups to ensure that we effectively capture the priorities of the community. We shall ensure that we comply with the statutory consultative requirements by:
- Consulting local government electors and other persons or bodies who appear to the Council to have an interest in the review
 - informing the County Council of the review, and sending them a copy of this Terms of Reference document
 - Taking into account any representations received in connection with the review
 - Notifying consultees of the outcome of the review
 - Publishing all decisions taken and the reasons for such decisions.

The Council will also be pleased to receive comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representations

- 5.2. The review will include two stages of formal consultation. The first stage will gather initial views to help the Council formulate their recommendations, which will then be taken to a second round of consultation with the public before being considered for approval. The Council will take such steps as it considers sufficient to ensure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the recommendations and the reasons behind them.
- 5.3. The Council will develop a webpage for the review, outlining the purpose of the review and the key milestones. This area will be updated as the review progresses to include maps and statistical information in relation to any recommendations. Documents related to the view can also be viewed in person at: Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1JE during opening hours.
- 5.4. Notice of the review will be sent to all affected existing parish councils as well as any local community groups in the relevant area. Residents will receive notice of the review through the post during the initial consultation and through targeted social media campaigns throughout. The main response mechanism shall be online, with paper versions available on request.
- 5.5. All relevant consultation responses, available evidence and legal considerations (including those referred to above) will be used to help inform the decisions made during this review.

6. Other forms of community governance

- 6.1 The Council is required by law to consider other forms of community governance. There may be other arrangements for community representation or community engagement in an area, including area committees, neighbourhood management programmes, tenant management organisations, area or community forums, residents' and tenants' associations or community associations, which may be more appropriate to some areas than parish-tier councils.
- 6.2 The Council will be mindful of such other forms of community governance in its consideration of whether parish governance is most appropriate. However, the Council also notes that what sets parish-tier councils apart from other kinds of governance is the fact that they are a democratically elected tier of local government with directly elected representatives, independent of other council tiers and budgets, and possessing specific powers for which they are democratically accountable.

7 Legal Framework

- 7.1 In undertaking this review the Council will be guided by:
- Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
 - the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972
 - Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010
 - Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008
 - Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008

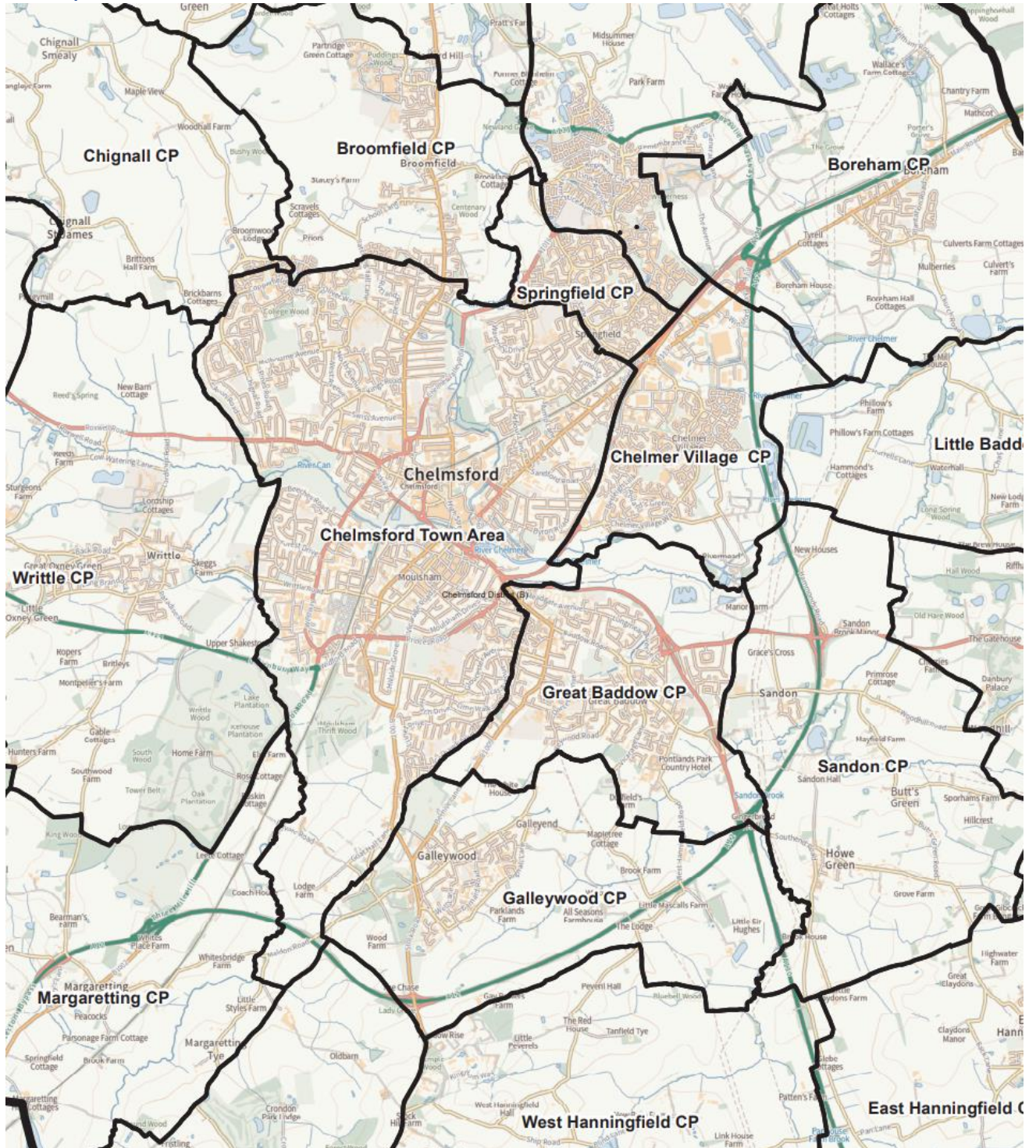
8. Consequential Matters

- 8.1 The Council notes that a Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the Order. These may include:
- The transfer and management or custody of property;
 - The setting of precepts for new parishes;
 - Provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities;

- Provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters.
- In these matters the Council will be guided by the 2007 Act and the Regulations that have been issued under it, including the Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 and the Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008

8.2 In particular the Council notes that Regulations regarding the transfer of property, rights and liabilities require that any apportionments shall use the population of the area as estimated by the Proper Officer of the Council as an appropriate proportion. Furthermore, the Council notes that the Regulations regarding the establishment of a precept for a new parish require the Council to calculate the first anticipated precept for a newly constituted parish-tier council and for the amount of that precept to be included in the Reorganisation Order.

9. Map



10. Indicative timetable

Commencement of Community Governance Review and Terms of Reference Agreed	3 rd September 2025
Initial Consultation	22 nd September 2025 – 22 nd December 2025
Consideration of initial consultation and draft recommendations prepared	January 2026 – May 2026
Draft recommendations considered by Governance Committee	Mid June 2026
Draft recommendations considered by Full Council	Mid July 2026
Second consultation (on draft recommendations)	Mid July 2026 – mid October 2026
Consideration of second consultation and drafting of final recommendations	Mid October 2026 – mid November 2026
Final Recommendations considered by Governance Committee	Mid November 2026
Final Recommendations considered by Full Council	Early December 2026
Preparation of Community Governance Order	December – February 2027
Community Governance Order considered by Full Council	Mid February 2027
Community Governance Order takes effect (new councils exist)	April 2027

Publication

This document is being published on our website. A copy of this document will be sent to the Chief Executive of Essex County Council upon publication.

How to contact us

If you would like to say how you view potential future arrangements under these Terms of Reference please respond to the online consultations on the Chelmsford City Council website: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/CGR2025