

MINUTES
of the
CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD
held on 25 September 2025 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor C. Adutwim (Chair)

Councillors, H. Ayres, G. Bonnett, P. Davey, I. Fuller, S. Manley, B. Massey, S. Scott, A. Sosin and S. Young

Also in attendance:

Cllr R. Moore

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jeapes, O'Brien, Thorpe- Apps and Whitehead.

Cllrs Bonnett and Scott substituted for Cllrs Jeapes and Whitehead.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had 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 became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 4th September 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Public Questions

None were received.

5. Publication of revisions to the Chelmsford Local Development Scheme (LDS)

The Board were asked to consider a report detailing the revised Local Development Scheme and to recommend it to Cabinet for approval and publication. The Board noted that the LDS set out the programme of work for the preparation of statutory and non-statutory development plan documents for 2025-2028.

The Board were informed that following the conclusion of the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation in March 2025, several significant events had taken place, leading to the need for a revised LDS. These included the adopted Local Plan becoming more than five years old and a significant increase in the housing need figure in the National Planning Policy Framework,

meaning that the Council could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. It was also noted that two strategic planning applications had been withdrawn, further impacting the five-year housing land supply and the Government had announced the cancellation of the A12 Development Consent Order (DCO) widening scheme. It was noted that as a result, there was a significant risk in submitting the Local Plan, as it could be considered unsound due to the lack of a five-year housing land supply on adoption.

The Board noted that as a result, it was being proposed that additional sites for development should be included in the current review of the Local Plan, with a target to maintain at least a five-year deliverable housing land supply, to ensure the soundness of the Local Plan is maintained. The Board were asked to recommend the revised LDS to Cabinet and it was noted that the decision to include additional sites within the review and to carry out a further Regulation 19 consultation, would be considered by the Board on 6th November 2025.

In response to questions from the Board, officers noted that;

- Works to Junction 19 of the A12, would be phased in line with the nearby developments commencing, with interim works required for the Chelmsford Garden Community planning applications and as a result of the A12 widening scheme cancellation. Further capacity works for Junction 19 are being assessed in more detail with partners, to see how a scheme could be funded and how it could mitigate the impacts of new Local Plan developments. It was noted that the additional consultation set out in the LDS would allow time for a funding and delivery strategy for further Junction 19 works to be advanced before the examination stage.
- The Board were not being asked to approve consultation on new sites, but to recommend the revised LDS to Cabinet, in turn then leading to new sites being considered at their November meeting.
- There were too many risks to continue without considering adding new sites, as without a demonstrable five-year housing land supply, the Council would be at risk of the Local Plan Review not passing the examination stage and also to speculative housing applications that were not on planned sites.
- As a result of Local Government Reorganisation, it was currently understood that Local Plan's would stay in place until they became more than five years old, at which point they would then be reviewed over the larger geographical area of the new unitary authority.

RESOLVED that the Board recommended to Cabinet, the approval and publication of the LDS set out in Appendix 1.

(7.02pm to 7.23pm)

6. Work Programme

The Board considered a report updating them on their future work programme. It was noted that this had been updated in line with changes to the Local Plan timetable.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

(7.24pm to 7.26pm)

7. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.26pm

Chair