

**Those present:**

Cllr Hawes (Chair)  
Cllr Page  
Cllr Bartlett  
Cllr Bell  
Cllr Clare  
Cllr Gilbert (6.10pm)  
Cllr Goldie  
Cllr Rogers (6.05pm)  
Cllr Vigar (6.15pm)  
Michelle Curtis (Parish Clerk/Proper Officer/RFO)  
District Councillor Stephens

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Chambers and Marling.

Apologies were also received from District Councillor Thompson.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Page disclosed interests as follows:

- Personal interest with regard to agenda item 4, Local Government Reorganisation, as her husband works for Essex County Council. Cllr Page stated that she would listen to the discussion but would not participate in any decision in response to the consultation.

**3. Minutes**

**Resolved:** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Clare, seconded by Cllr Bell. Unanimously agreed by those who attended.

The Chair signed the Minutes.

**4. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

Cllrs Rogers, Gilbert and Vigar arrived during the discussion of the LGR.

Councillors responded to the LRG Consultation (Appendix A).

**5. Dates of the Next Meetings**

Full Council Meeting  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 7.30pm – Pavilion

Committee Meetings

Personnel Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 7pm – Pavilion  
Finance & Policy Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 7pm – Pavilion  
Recreation Ground Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 7.30pm – Pavilion  
Woodrolfe Hard Committee – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 - 7pm – Pavilion  
Woodup Pool Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – 7.30pm – Pavilion  
Environment & Amenity Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025 - 7pm – Pavilion

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.02pm.

Signed:..... Date:.....

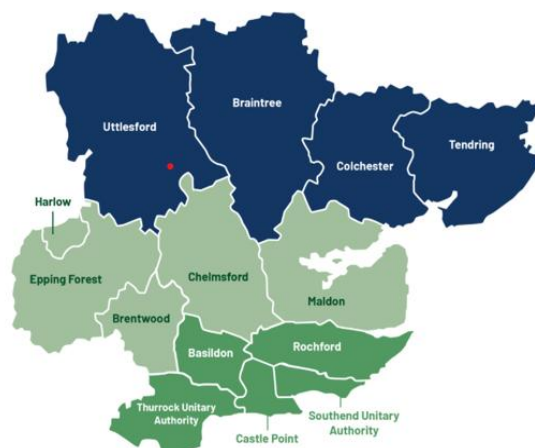
## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION - JANUARY 2026

Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Epping Forest District Council proposed 3 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:

- North: Braintree, Colchester, Tendring, Uttlesford
- Mid: Harlow, Epping Forest, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Malden
- South: Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend

**Answers:**

- Stongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know



This map shows what Greater Essex could look like under the three unitary council proposal.

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

**Answer:** Somewhat Agree

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in Best Value Intervention and in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

As of 19 November 2025, the council in the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area in Best Value intervention is Thurrock Council. The statutory intervention is scheduled to end in April 2028

As of 19 November 2025, within the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area Thurrock Council had received in-principle Exceptional Financial Support to support their 2025/26 budget. This council will not necessarily be in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support in future financial years

**Answer:** Don't know

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q9 If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Some of the questions are combined; for example, Q1 asks about both the geography and the economics of the areas. These are two very different aspects, and therefore we have

**Answer:** focused our comments on the economic aspect of this proposal.

The information presented at the events contradicts information provided by the same proposer.

Over such large geographic areas, service delivery could be put under strain.

The ratios of councillors to population would also be strained.

As a Parish Council, we are concerned that we may become further removed from decision-making powers.

Residents overwhelmingly support decisions being made at a more local level - 85% (reference research conducted by The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) - commissioned by Essex County Council - dated 13th August 2025).

As a Parish Council, we feel the consultation questions have been poorly planned and constructed, making it very difficult to respond effectively. Information events have not proved particularly helpful in providing all of the necessary information to enable us to answer every question knowledgeably and with confidence.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION - JANUARY 2026

Rochford District Council proposed 4 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:

- North: Braintree, Colchester, Tendring
- West: Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford
- Central: Brentwood, Chelmsford, Malden, Rochford
- South: Basildon, Castle Point, Southend, Thurrock

**Answers:**

- Stongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know



Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in Best Value Intervention and in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

As of 19 November 2025, the council in the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area in Best Value intervention is Thurrock Council. The statutory intervention is scheduled to end in April 2028

As of 19 November 2025, within the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area Thurrock Council had received in-principle Exceptional Financial Support to support their 2025/26 budget. This council will not necessarily be in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support in future financial years

**Answer:** Don't know

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q9 If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Some of the questions are combined; for example, Q1 asks about both the geography and the economics of the areas. These are two very different aspects, and therefore we have  
**Answer:** focused our comments on the economic aspect of this proposal.

The information presented at the events did not help us to answer all of the questions in the response document.

This proposal does not seem to have a convincing economic argument.

As a Parish Council, we feel the consultation questions have been poorly planned and constructed, making it very difficult to respond effectively. Information events have not proved particularly helpful in providing all of the necessary information to enable us to answer every question knowledgeably and with confidence.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION - JANUARY 2026

Thurrock Council proposed 4 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:

- West: Harlow, Epping Forest, Brentwood, Thurrock
- North: Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford
- East: Maldon, Colchester, Tendring
- South: Basildon, Castle Point, Southend, Rochford

**Answers:**

- Stongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- SomewhatDisagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know



This map shows what Greater Essex could look like under the four unitary council proposal led by Thurrock.

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in Best Value Intervention and in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

As of 19 November 2025, the council in the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area in Best Value intervention is Thurrock Council. The statutory intervention is scheduled to end in April 2028

As of 19 November 2025, within the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area Thurrock Council had received in-principle Exceptional Financial Support to support their 2025/26 budget. This council will not necessarily be in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support in future financial years

**Answer:** Don't know

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

**Answer:** Strongly Disagree

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q9 If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Some of the questions are combined; for example, Q1 asks about both the geography and the economics of the areas. These are two very different aspects, and therefore we have  
**Answer:** focused our comments on the economic aspect of this proposal.

The information presented at the events did not help us to answer all of the questions in the response document.

The division of the areas seems to be unbalanced, from an economic point of view.

As a Parish Council, we feel the consultation questions have been poorly planned and constructed, making it very difficult to respond effectively. Information events have not proved particularly helpful in providing all of the necessary information to enable us to answer every question knowledgeably and with confidence.

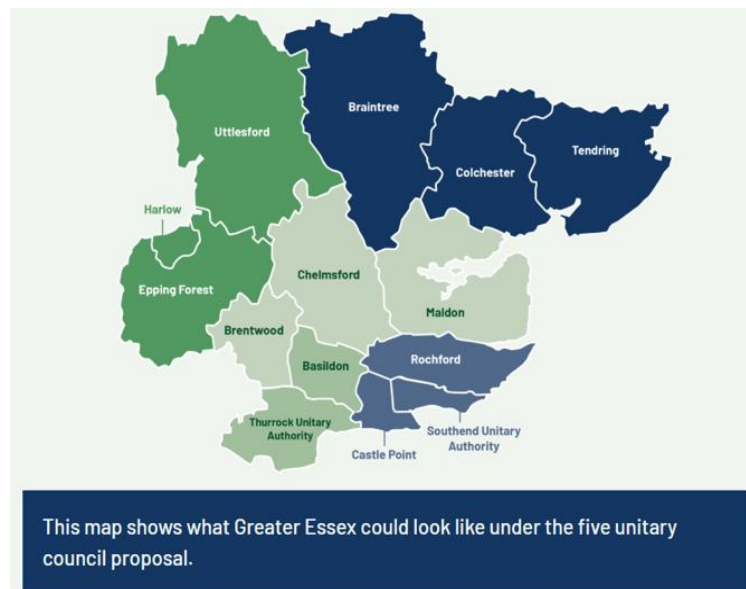
## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION CONSULTATION - JANUARY 2026

**Southend-on-Sea City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Basildon Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Colchester City Council, Harlow District Council, Maldon District Council, Tendring District Council and Uttlesford District Council proposed 5 unitary councils across the**

- West: Uttlesford, Harlow, Epping Forest
- North East: Braintree, Colchester, Tendring
- Mid: Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon
- South West: Thurrock, Basildon
- South East: Castle Point, Southend, Rochford

**Answers:**

- Stongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know



Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

**Answer:** Somewhat Agree

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

**Answer:** Somewhat Agree

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in Best Value Intervention and in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

As of 19 November 2025, the council in the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area in Best Value intervention is Thurrock Council. The statutory intervention is scheduled to end in April 2028

As of 19 November 2025, within the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock area Thurrock Council had received in-principle Exceptional Financial Support to support their 2025/26 budget. This council will not necessarily be in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support in future financial years

**Answer:** Don't know

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

**Answer:** Somewhat Agree

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

**Answer:** Somewhat Agree

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

**Answer:** Neither Agree or Disagree

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

**Answer:** Don't know

Q9 If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Some of the questions are combined; for example, Q1 asks about both the geography and the economics of the areas. These are two very different aspects, and therefore we have focused our comments on the economic aspect of this proposal.

The information presented at the events did not help us to answer all of the questions in the response document.

Of the options, this proposal offers a better population-to-councillor ratio.

As a Parish Council, we feel the consultation questions have been poorly planned and constructed, making it very difficult to respond effectively. Information events have not proved particularly helpful in providing all of the necessary information to enable us to answer every question knowledgeably and with confidence.