



**MINUTES of
COUNCIL (EXTRAORDINARY)
25 SEPTEMBER 2025**

PRESENT

Chairperson Councillor K M H Lagan

Vice-Chairperson Councillor R G Pratt

Councillors M G Bassenger, J R Burrell-Cook, S Dodsley, J Driver,
A Fittock, A S Fluker, L J Haywood, J C Hughes, K Jennings,
A M Lay, W J Laybourn, M G Neall, R H Siddall,
U G C Siddall-Norman, N D Spenceley, P L Spenceley,
W Stamp, CC, E L Stephens, J C Stilts, N J Swindle,
M E Thompson and L L Wiffen

263. CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through some general housekeeping arrangements for the meeting.

264. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V J Bell, D O Bown, S J Burwood, S J N Morgan and S White.

265. MINUTES - 10 JULY 2025

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 July 2025 be approved and confirmed.

266. MINUTES - 7 AUGUST 2025

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 7 August 2025 be approved and confirmed.

267. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were none.

268. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

269. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In accordance with Part 4 Rule 8(3) of the Constitution, the Chairperson advised that he would be suspending the need to stand.

The Chairperson referred to a meeting he had attended with Diane Gilson from Epping Forest District Council regarding youth parliaments and youth councils across Essex. He described her advice as inspiring and how it would be wonderful to have the voice of the youth heard within the District.

The Chairperson had also recently attended a Royal British Legion service at All Saints Church for the dedication of a standard.

Having recently undertaken a tour of the Maldon Fields Crematorium the Chairperson extended his thanks to David Loudfoot, Manager for the time and care he had shown him. The Chairperson suggested that other Members may wish to consider a visit.

270. STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 24 JULY 2025

Councillor J Driver, Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee presented the following recommendations coming forward from the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration by the Council.

Minute No. 180 – Building Control Policy 2025 / 2028

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Building Control Policy and Procedures 2025 - 2028 attached at Appendix 1 to the Council agenda, be approved.
- (ii) That the Assistant Director – Planning and Implementation be granted delegated powers to amend the Building Control Policy and Procedures 2025 - 2028, in consultation with the Building Control Team Manager, as and when required, to ensure they remain up to date and functional and any changes are reported to the Strategy and Resources Committee for noting.

Minute No. 181 – Revised Health and Safety Policy and Statement of Intent (Resubmission)

Councillor J R Burrell-Cook highlighted the following typographical errors:

- Page 2 – The first paragraph should state “We shall do everything so far as *is* reasonably...”.
- Page 8 – Under the Council’s Corporate Health and Safety Manager the second bullet from the bottom should include reference in brackets to RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) as this was the reporting mechanism.
- Page 13 – The first paragraph under the Section Unacceptable Behaviour should read “...a negative impact on s-mental health...”.
- Page 15 – The word ‘n electdi’ at the end of the first paragraph under the Mobile and Home Working Section.

The recommendations coming forward from the Strategy and Resources Committee were duly agreed subject to the amendments detailed above.

RESOLVED

- (i) That subject to the amendments detailed in the Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee and those detailed above, the revised Health and Safety Policy, attached as Appendix 2 to the Council agenda, and Statement of Intent be adopted;
- (ii) that the roles and responsibilities of the Leader of the Council, Committee Members and key staff be noted;
- (iii) that the annual review period be noted.

271. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council noted the list of Committees that had met before and since the last meeting of the Council, up until Wednesday 17 September 2025 for which Minutes had been published.

272. QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 6(3) OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

There were none.

273. MAKING THE MAYLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Director – Planning and Implementation reporting that the Mayland Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), including the Mayland Design Guidance and Codes (Appendix 2) had successfully passed its referendum.

The report provided background information regarding the Referendum that had taken place where the question ‘Do you want Maldon District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Mayland to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’ had been asked. The voting results were detailed, and it was noted that 93% of those that had voted were in favour of the MNP.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer took Members through the report and explained how following the referendum the MNP now automatically became part of the statutory Development Plan for the District. However, by law, the Council was required to formally ‘make’ the MNP part of the Development Plan. Upon ‘making’ the MNP a decision statement would be issued (a draft of which was attached at Appendix 3).

The Chairperson moved the recommendation set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

In response to comments from other Members, the Chairperson referred to the Principal Planning Policy Officer and the Graduate Planner and thanked the entire team for the brilliant and high quality of work they did for the Council.

He then put the recommendation to the Council, which was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that the Council ‘makes’ the Mayland Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

274. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: CREATING A GREATER FUTURE FOR ESSEX FIVE UNITARY AUTHORITY BUSINESS CASE

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive (CE) setting out the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Five Unitary Authority (5UA) Business Case for Greater Essex, entitled “Creating a Local Future for Greater Essex”.

The report provided detailed background information following receipt of a letter from the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution to formally invite proposals for LGR.

The CE presented the report and reminded the Council of its in-principal decision in February 2025 to support the development of a 5UA business case (as set out at section 5.2 of the report). It was hoped through the business case the clear benefits of the 5UA model would be highlighted and he outlined the detailed work that Officers had undertaken to establish if this model could be financially viable and sustainable. A task force consisting of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Harlow, Southend, Tendring, Uttlesford and Maldon Councils had worked collaboratively to produce the 5UA business case (attached at Appendix 1 to the report). Senior Officers and Members had worked alongside consultants Grant Thornton, Peopletoo and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to identify and analyse the benefits and challenges of Greater Essex and the 5UA. The CE reported that the 5UA model and its related options worked best for Maldon residents and overall would provide the right scale, continuity of services, lower transition risk (when compared to other proposals), and a clear identity centered around communities and pride of place. Members were reminded that although their support for the 5UA business model was being sought, the Government would decide which option would be taken forward.

Section 5 of the report set out the 5UA business case proposal, including how it met all the criteria set by government, had emerged as the best option outperforming alternatives on significant areas along with the comparison work that had taken place and proposed related political governance. Details of the proposed areas under the 5UA were set out in the report and appendix along with the financial analysis that had taken place. It was noted that the proposal would result in each of the five new unitary Councils hosting a primary town or city. Members were reminded of the detailed public consultation that had taken place.

The report also provided further detail in respect of the other four modes being submitted in the Greater Essex LGR proposal to government. These models included a three unitary authority model led by Essex County Council (ECC), a four unitary authority model led by Rochford District Council and a further four unitary authority model led by Thurrock Council. Details of these proposals were set out in Appendixes 2, 3 and 4 to the report along with the indicative LGR for Greater Essex timeline through to 2028.

The Leader of the Council advised that he felt the 5UA model was the best fit for Maldon and Greater Essex and hoped Members would support the business case. He thanked Councillor W Stamp for chairing the Devolution and LGR Working Group and those Members that had attended, along with all Officers who had worked hard and contributed to the business case, working with colleagues across all of Essex and collaborating on all business cases whilst carrying out business as usual.

The Chairperson moved the recommendation set out in the report. This was duly seconded.

In accordance with Procedure Rule No. 13 (3) Councillor N D Spenceley requested a recorded vote. This was duly seconded.

During the lengthy and robust debate that ensued, several Members spoke in support of the 5UA model commenting on the importance of ensuring that the model represented Maldon residents, how decisions were to be taken, and funding allocated. Along with another Member, Councillor W Stamp spoke against the 5UA model highlighting her concerns and supporting the three Unitary Authority model.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their debate and moved the recommendation to support the 5UA business case and its submission. The voting was as follows:

For the recommendation:

Councillors M G Bassenger, J R Burrell-Cooke, S Dodsley, J Driver, A Fittock, L J Haywood, J C Hughes, K Jennings, A M Lay, W J Laybourn, R G Pratt, R H Siddall, N D Spenceley, P L Spenceley, E L Stephens, J C Stilts, N J Swindle, M E Thompson and L L Wiffen.

Against the recommendation:

Councillors A S Fluker, K M H Lagan, M G Neall, U G C Siddall-Norman and W Stamp.

Abstention:

There were none.

The Chairperson declared that this was therefore agreed.

RESOLVED that Members support the Five Unitary Authority business case and its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as part of the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation across Greater Essex.

275. QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 1 (3)(M)

Councillor W Stamp asked the Leader of the Council based on her concerns regarding ICT and referring to some research she had carried out, what concerns he had or had raised regarding anecdotal evidence that authorities going through Local Government Reorganisation had seen an increase in cyber activity? She also asked the Leader what measures he was suggesting be put in place to protect our residents. In response the Leader of the Council advised that he was not an ICT or cyber expert and would have thought whatever the model the threats would be the same. He agreed to provide a written response to Councillor Stamp outside of the meeting.

276. BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED BY THE CHAIRPERSON TO BE URGENT

The Chairperson referred to the recent passing of former Councillor Brian Beale MBE, with whom he had served with on the Council as an independent Member, referring to the advice, guidance and kindness Councillor Beale offered. The Chairperson asked everyone present to stand for a moment of quiet reflection on the life and service of former Councillor Beale.

A number of other Members spoke in tribute of Brian Beale and the work he had done both as a Councillor and in support of his Ward of Southminster. Councillor R G Pratt spoke about the life that Brian had led, how the village of Southminster centred around this, and as an independent Councillor how he had always strongly made his views known. Councillor A S Fluker had been joint Ward Member with Brian Beale and spoke of him leading the Council's opposition for many years.

It was noted that former Councillor Beale's funeral would take place on Wednesday 15 October 2025 at 2pm in St Leonard's Church, Southminster.

Everyone then stood in silent tribute of Brian Beale.

The Chairperson then announced that Mr Paul Dodson was leaving the Council and thanked him for his dedicated service, both as a Director and more recently Deputy Chief Executive. On behalf of all Members the Chairperson extended Members best wishes to Mr Dodson and wished him every success in the future. Some Members then spoke about their time working with Mr Dodson. In response, Mr Dodson thanked Members for their kind words and highlighted a number of his achievements since being at Maldon and how he would leave with many fond memories.

There being no other items of business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 8.36 pm.

K M H LAGAN
CHAIRPERSON