

Welcome and Introduction to Essex County Council

- Nicole Wood, Chief Executive
- Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)
- Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance
- Joanna Boaler, Assistant Director: Democracy and Transparency

Monday 11 May 2026

Agenda

1 Welcome and introductions

2 Organisational and budget overview

3 Decision making

4 Councillor role and expectations

5 Annual meeting

6 Induction and support

7 Reminder of what we'd like you to do today

8 Questions

24 22

25 26



Welcome

Focus of the first three weeks

01

Give all members the information and support they need.

02

Housekeeping (laptops, forms allowances etc)

03

Help the new administration to form

04

Prepare for the annual meeting
10am Thursday
28 May 2026

Our ask of you

01

Engage with us!
We want to help,
and we try to
make it as easy as
we can for you.

02

Give us feedback
as to what you
need from us.

03

Ask questions!

04

Think yourself into
your new role

Corporate Leadership Team

Nicole Wood
Chief Executive and Head of the Paid Service*

Richard Puleston
Assistant Chief
Executive

Claire Taylor
Executive Director,
Corporate Services

David Gibson
Interim Executive
Director, Place and
Customer

Helen Lincoln
Executive Director,
Children, Families and
Education

Nick Presmeg
Executive Director,
Adults, Public Health
and Community
Wellbeing

Tom Walker
Executive Director, Policy,
Economy, Investment
and Property

Stephanie Mitchener
Director, Finance

Phil Cruddace
Chief of Staff

Head of Paid Service

- **The Council must have a Head of Paid Service (HoPS), this is generally combined with the CEO**

The HoPS is a politically neutral post

It has responsibility for areas such as

- Leading and manage the council's officers (the paid workforce)
- The council's officer structure
- Appoint and manage senior officers
- Promoting effective working between councillors and officers



Statutory Service Officers

(roles relating to services which we must have)

Helen Lincoln – Director of Children’s Services

Nick Presmeg – Director of Adult Social Services

Sarah Muckle – Director, Wellbeing Public Health and Communities

Statutory Governance Officers

(roles relating to the operation of the council, which we must have)

Nicole Wood – Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Stephanie Mitchener – Director, Finance and ‘section 151 Officer’ (responsible for overseeing financial affairs)

Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer (responsible for ensuring high standards in the Council and reporting on legal breaches)

Joanna Boaler, Assistant Director: Democracy and Transparency and Statutory Scrutiny Officer (responsible for supporting scrutiny and ensuring it is resourced)

The Different roles of Councillors and Officers

Councillors:

- Elected by the public (elected members)
- Set priorities and policy directions
- Make most important decisions

Officers (employees):

- Paid professionals
- Impartial and politically neutral
- Give advice and run services
- Implement decisions and make operational decisions

Officers advise. Councillors decide.

Officers are accountable for the advice they give. Members are accountable for the decisions they make.

Essex County Council 2026 Political Composition

Party	Seats
Reform	53
Conservative	13
Liberal Democrat	5
Independent	2
Labour	1
Green	1
People's Independent Party	1
Residents for Uttlesford	1
Vacancy	1
	78



All members should join the registered ECC political group – for their party

*Chelmsford Springfield division remains vacant following the death of Cllr Mike Mackrory who was a candidate in that division. A new election is being held on **18 June 2026**.

Constitution

Leader and Cabinet system



Constitution sets out rules as to how we make decisions

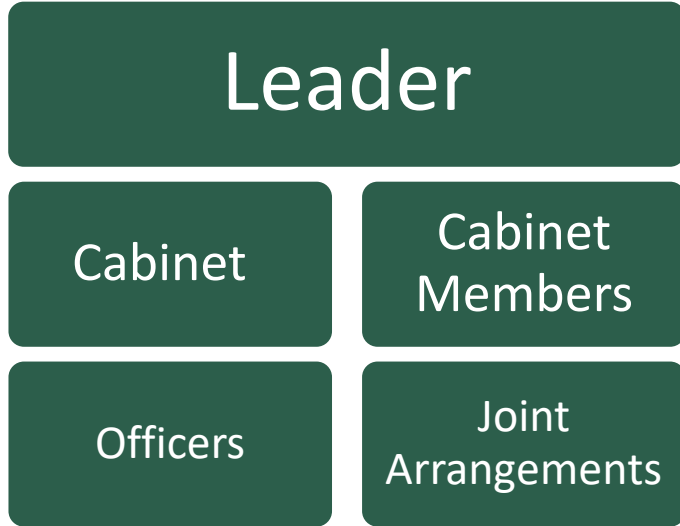


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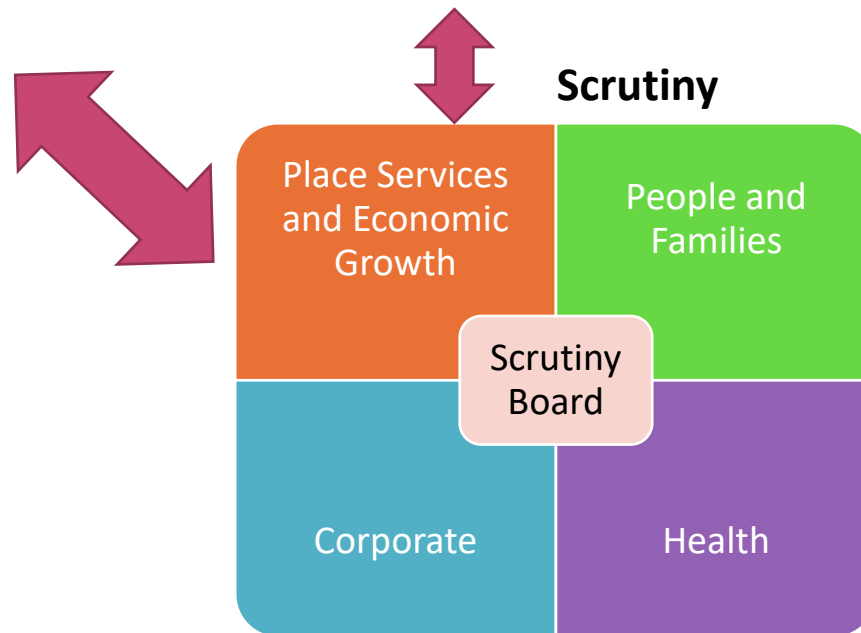
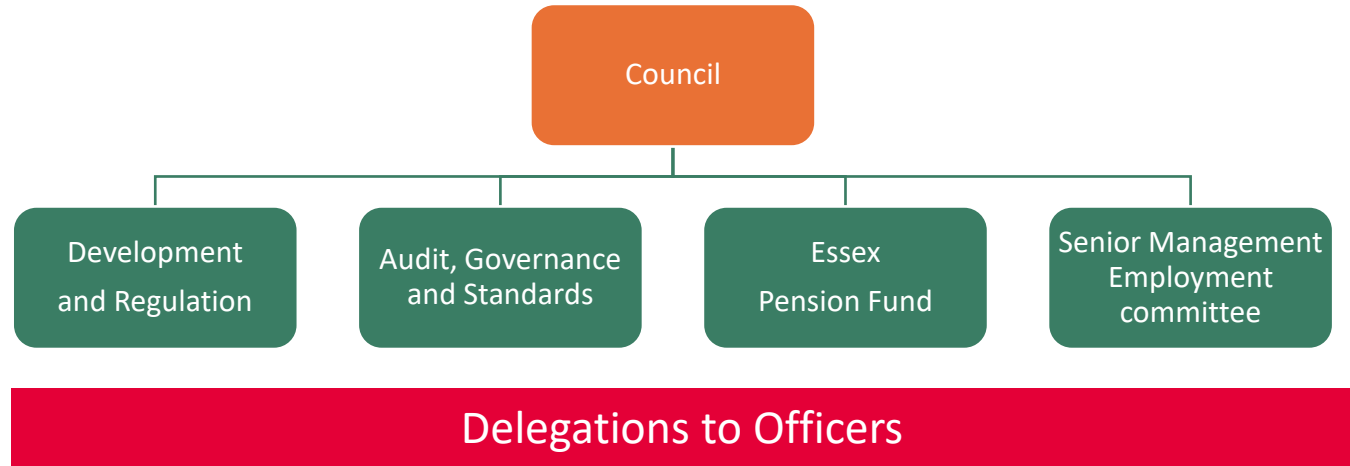
- <https://www.essex.gov.uk/our-constitution>

Political Structure

Executive Functions



Council Functions



Decision Making

Non-Executive Functions:

- Setting the budget and policy framework,
- making some orders, some planning and regulatory functions,
- Council's role as employer.
- Essex Pension fund

Council

Council Committees

Officers in accordance with delegations

Call in – applies to most decisions taken by Cabinet or Cabinet Members

3 day call in period following publication

Any member of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee/any four members/ with agreement of the Chairman of the relevant Committee by any member who represents the division that is particularly affected

Scrutiny cannot overrule decision but can ask for it to be reconsidered.

Executive Functions (Cabinet or Cabinet Members)

Leader – unlimited value

Cabinet – Unlimited value

Cabinet Member – up to £5m

Exec Director – Non-key decisions up to £2m

Other senior officers - up to £0.5m

Key decisions must be on forward plan for 28 days

Executive functions

Over £2m or

Significant impact on people living or working two or more electoral divisions.

Council meetings



- **Three types of Council meeting:**
 - Annual (May), Ordinary and Extraordinary
- **Typical Order of Business:**
 - Declarations of interest
 - Public Questions
 - Approval of minutes (from previous meeting)
 - Chairman's Announcements
 - Petitions
 - Executive Statement
 - Motions (Notice of motions): Voting, speeches, time
 - Council business
 - Cabinet business
 - Reports
 - Oral questions

Code of Conduct

High standards protect you, public trust and the council.



Part 24 of the constitution
Complies with the 'seven principles of public life'

- Registration of interests
- Declaring interests
- Rules about behaviour
- Allegations of breaches

Roles and Responsibilities

All Members of the Council

- **Attend meetings** of the Council and the Committees to which they are appointed
- **Represent** their **Division** and the people who live and work in it
- **Respond** to correspondence
- **Abide** by the **Code of Conduct**
- Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics in accordance with the **Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life**
- Observe the conventions of the Council
- **Participate** in Member Development activities

Chairman of the Council: Civic/Ceremonial Head of the Council

Leader of the Council: Political Head of the Council

Cabinet Members: Have political oversight for an allocated portfolio, including powers to make decisions

Deputy Cabinet Members: To assist and work with the designated Cabinet Member as agreed within the Cabinet Member- no executive responsibilities

Chairmen of Committees (Policy and Scrutiny, Audit, Governance and Standards Development and Regulation etc.)

Supporting you

- **Member Portal**
- **Officer Buddy**
- **Corporate Leadership Team/Director support**
- **Specific role support**
- **Member Enquiries**
- **Correspondence and complaints**
- **Induction Programme**
- **Personal Development Planning (PDP) and Member Development**
- **Democratic.services@essex.gov.uk**



**PLEASE
DISTURB
we are here
TO HELP
YOU !**

Members' Portal

Meetings calendar, papers and
Forward Plan

Email

ECC Local Funds 2026/27

Highways issues and Member
Initiative

Member Development

Guidance, resources and key
documents

My Oracle

Key contacts

Scrutiny

Annual meeting 28 May 2026, 10am Council Chamber, County Hall



Read your agenda and papers including Order Paper – and attend the familiarisation session on 21 May



Bring your laptop and charger



Bring some water and some lunch



Allow plenty of time to get to County Hall

2026 Essex County Councillor Induction Programme (first two weeks)

Introduction to ECC 🎥	Wednesday 13 May 1pm-2pm
Being a Councillor: Standards and Statutory Duties 🎥	Wednesday 13 May 2.15pm-3.30pm
Cyber Security, Data Protection and using your ECC laptop 🎥	Friday 15 May 10am – 11.30am and from 11:30am
Children and Safeguarding 🎥	Monday 18 May 10am-12noon
Local Government Finance and ECC Budget 🎥	Tuesday 19 May 10am-11.30
Full Council familiarisation meeting	Thursday 21 May, 10.30am-11.30am
Member Enquiries 🎥	Thursday 21 May 11.30am-12noon

Standards and Statutory Duties – Wednesday 13 May

bullying and abuse of position

Independent councillor sanctioned after hearing into conduct at resident's home



by John Elworthy — 2:25pm, January 25 2026 in Peterborough City Council



After hearing evidence presented in writing and orally — including representations from Cllr Kirsty Knight — the panel found that she had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct in three key areas.

Councillors have to comply with a code of conduct

This session explains how to keep the right side of the rules.

It also explains the statutory duties that ECC has to comply with and your role in that.



GDPR and cyber security – Friday 15 May

**You're responsible for managing
constituents' data**

**You're a key part of keeping ECC's
systems and information safe**

**This session will help you learn a
few simple things to help keep you,
our residents and Essex County
Council safe!**



Council familiarisation – Thursday 21 May

This will be really helpful if you've not been to council meetings before.

Familiarise yourself with:

- The microphones
- The clock
- Seating arrangements
- Rules of debate
- Council papers

Plus an opportunity to meet your colleagues



Member Funds – Friday 5 June



You will be allocated funds in the Local Community Fund and Locality Fund.

You can nominate how this money is spent.

This session explains what you can spend it on and how.

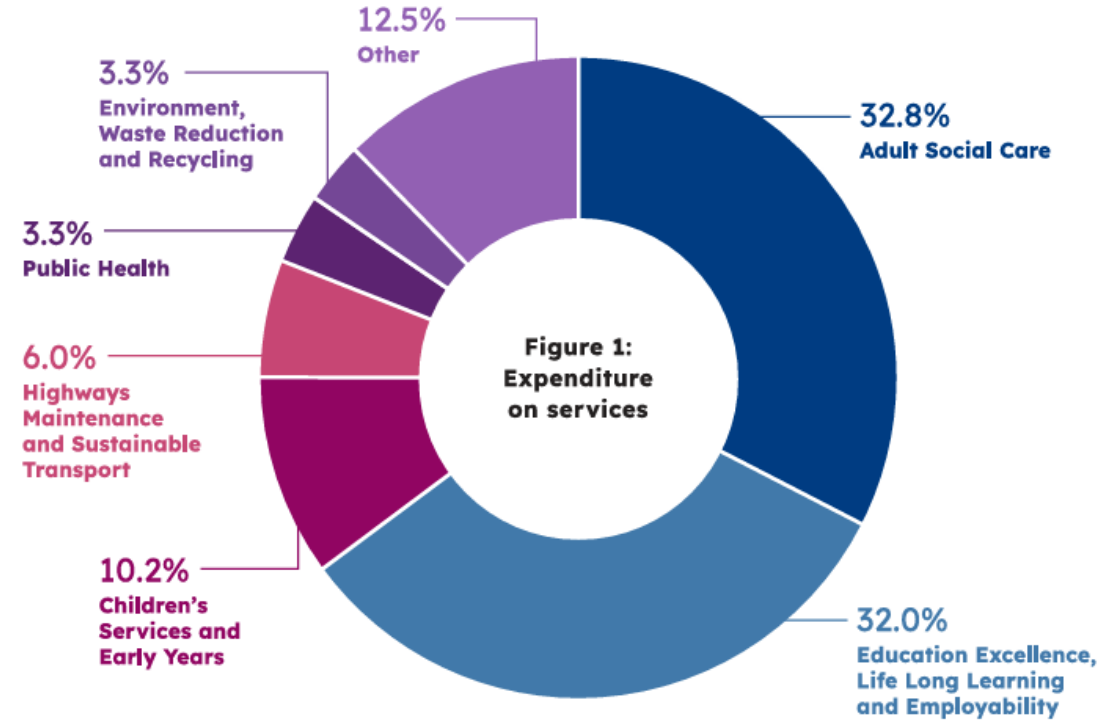
It will also explain the deadlines.

Expenditure on services

The Council has committed to spending:

- £943 million on services supporting vulnerable adults
- £920 million on Education Excellence, Life Long Learning and Employability
- £292 million on services supporting Children's Services and Early Years

Expenditure on Services	£m
Adult Social Care and Health	942.9
Education Excellence, Life Long Learning and Employability	919.6
Children's Services and Early Years	292.5
Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	174.1
Public Health	96.4
Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling	93.8
Other, which includes services such as Libraries, Coroners, Registrars and Country Parks	358.4
Total	2,877.6



THIS IS HOW MUCH WE SPEND PER DAY ON SOME OF THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

Adult Social Care



£2,583,398
per day

(2025/26 £2,456,606)

Schools



£1,636,696
per day

(2025/26 £1,564,594)

Early Years and Child Care



£775,691
per day

(2025/26 £664,499)

Children's Services



£727,651
per day

(2025/26 £668,914)

Public Health



£264,043
per day

(2025/26 £207,175)

Environment and Waste



£250,499
per day

(2025/26 £249,520)

Home to School Transport



£190,821
per day

(2025/26 £150,767)

Highways and Infrastructure



£144,185
per day

(2025/26 £135,153)

Library Services



£46,369
per day

(2025/26 £44,558)

Concessionary Fares



£44,039
per day

(2025/26 £42,431)

Street Lighting



£21,906
per day

(2025/26 £18,425)

Coroner's Services



£17,182
per day

(2025/26 £17,044)

Country Parks



£11,096
per day

(2025/26 £10,617)

Registrar Services



£10,536
per day

(2025/26 £10,543)

What we'd like you to do today (please!)

- Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- Collect your document pack and lanyard
- Attend an Induction Presentation
- Have your photo taken
- Collect your IT equipment
- Collect your ID card

Any
Questions