

District Councillor's Report to Parish Councils October 2025

Cllr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward

Scheduled Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders & Roadworks

Multi-way traffic signal at New England, Sturmer Road. Commencing 1st May to 24th October 2025 for Utility Asset Works. Anglian Water. Project: SEW-12079 - Stambourne Pump Away Scheme. Installing underground storm water storage pipes. E: onealliancecustomers@anglianwater.co.uk T: 03457 145 145.

Intended closure of Old Hall Road, Steeple Bumpstead 29th September to 10th October 2025 (Mon-Fri) whilst ECC undertakes culvert strengthening. The road should be open at the weekends.

ECC says: To make the culvert stronger and more durable, we will be fitting a special liner which is designed to support highway loads and carries a minimum design life of 100 years. We will also be carrying out brickwork repairs to the existing headwalls. <https://one.network/?tm=143580722>

Intended closure of The Endway, Steeple Bumpstead on 21st October 2025 for 1 day. While Anglian Water undertakes meter maintenance. <https://one.network/?tm=144432424>

Intended closure of Blois Road, Steeple Bumpstead 28th to 30th October 2025. The closure is required while ECC undertakes pavement patching to defects. Permit ref: EP201EH2363061-05

Local Government Reorganisation – Greater Essex microsite launched

Greater Essex's local authorities have worked collaboratively to explore potential new unitary structures and the working arrangements required to enable the development of full reorganisation. An Interim Plan was submitted by all 15 councils on 21st March, with feedback later received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). BDC held a Full Council meeting on 15th September 2025 which was dedicated to a debate on proposals. The majority of Members expressed a preference for the proposal of a three unitary authority model. The reasons for this included: alignment with the criteria established by the MHCLG; a simpler local government structure with accountable decision-making; less cost and resource implications with a lower number of authorities; enhanced financial resilience, cost savings and security; logical geographical configuration; opportunities to enhance an already effective working relationship between Braintree, Tendring, Colchester and Uttlesford; minimal disruption to key services such as Adult and Children's Social Care; increased tourism (e.g. the Dedham Vale and coastal areas) and employment opportunities. Other opportunities mentioned included: capacity to manage Council Tax, debts, housing requirements and economic growth; improved connection between Braintree and Uttlesford, Stansted Airport and the A120 corridor; less risk of duplication or disaggregation of services; showcasing a community-based approach whilst addressing regional issues; attraction of future investment with the A120 and M11 corridor, allowing for strategic planning; enhanced partnership working across organisations (e.g. partners in health, police and the community and voluntary sector); the fact that there would be a city in each proposed unitary area, capacity for the delivery of social services; capacity for more balanced and sustainable housing growth; improved support for local businesses and increased capacity for investment in technology and future service transformation.

Councillors were invited to indicate their preferred option, the results of which were as follows. This was not a recorded vote but an indication of Members' preferences at the time of the meeting:

	Number	Percentage
Three Unitary proposal	28	65%
Five Unitary proposal	11	26%
Four Unitary proposal (Thurrock)	3	7%
Four Unitary proposal (Rochford)	0	0%
Abstained*	1	2%
Total	43	100%

Following the result to support the three unitary council proposal, this is the formal decision the Leader has taken and was submitted to the Government for the deadline of 26th September 2025. However, the decision on unitaries rests with the Government. In terms of what happens next, once all proposals are submitted, the Government is expected to launch a public consultation in the autumn when the Council, alongside residents, businesses and other stakeholders, will be able to have their say on the proposals before a final decision is made by the Secretary of State, which is anticipated in Spring 2026. We are then expecting a decision from government on the unitaries around March next year. Between now and then, it's essential for BDC to be using this time to work with partners across Essex focusing on the work that is essential for the transition planning.

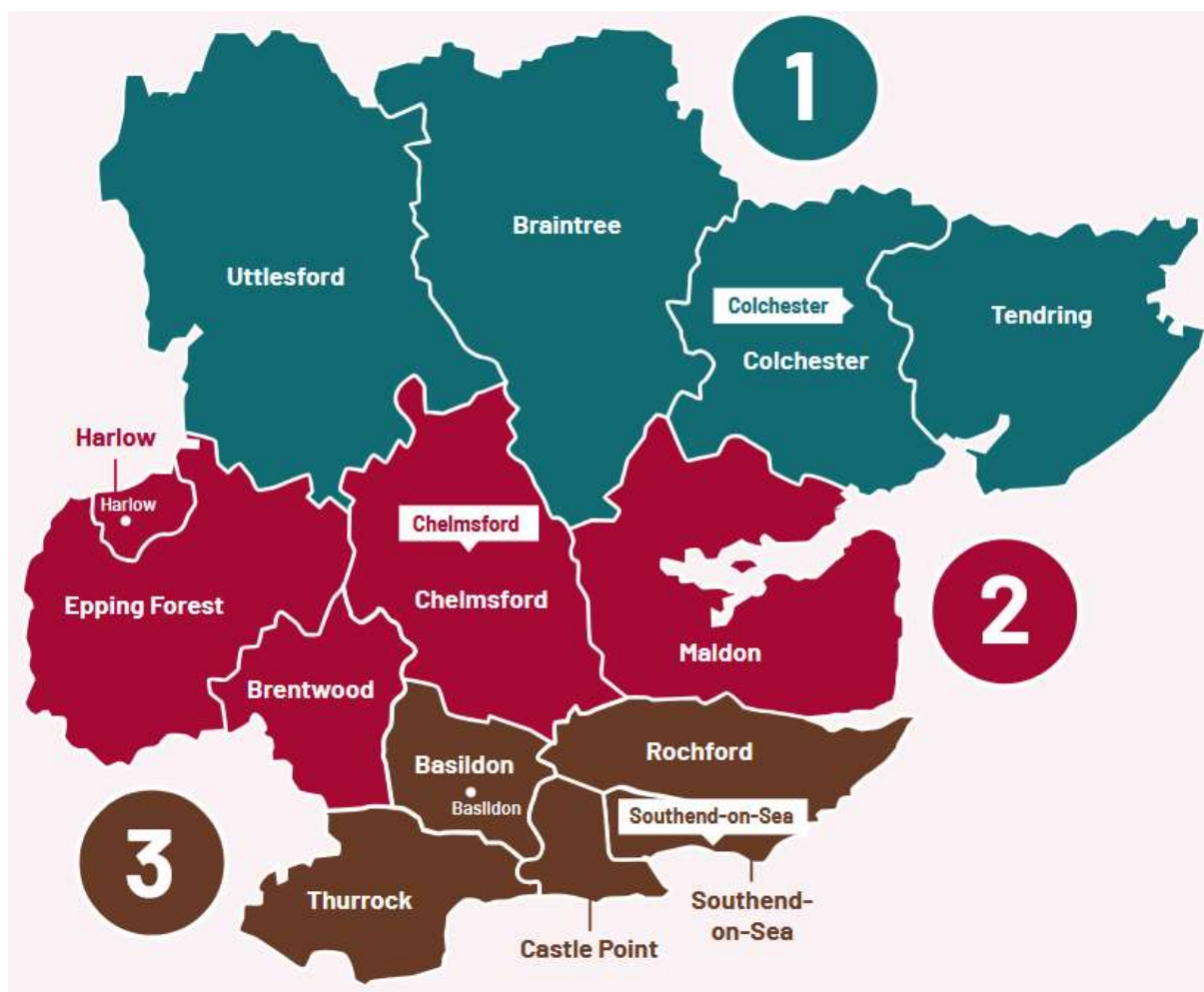
Southend-on-Sea City Council, along with nine district, borough and city councils, has put forward a plan for five unitary councils.

Thurrock Council's proposals focus on dividing Greater Essex into four new unitary councils.

Separately, Rochford Council has put forward a different proposal for a four unitary model.

Essex County Council, along with two district councils (inc. BDC), is proposing a configuration of three new unitary councils:

1: North Essex Unitary. 2: Mid Essex Unitary. 3: South Essex Unitary



A new microsite dedicated to Greater Essex Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) holds up-to-date information. Visit: www.essexlgrhub.org

Local Plan Review to 2041 – Update

The Local Plan Sub-Committee held a meeting 24th September 2024. 26 smaller sites were reviewed for a second time at this meeting. It was agreed that site STEB2285 land west of North Road, Steeple Bumpstead which has a capacity of up to 12 dwellings would be accepted into the local plan for residential development. Site HELI2206 land east of Haverhill Rd, Pale Green, Helions Bumpstead put forward for 15 dwellings, would not be accepted into the local plan for residential development, primarily for its isolated location.

Site STUR2293 – Land south of Haverhill (69ha - 2,200-3000 homes). Is not allocated into the local plan for development. The West Suffolk Local Plan was adopted in July 2025, and it identifies Haverhill as a Town in its settlement hierarchy. The agenda states: Currently no Duty to Co-operate meetings have occurred with West Suffolk. And: Duty to Co-operate with West Suffolk would be essential if the Council wanted to pursue an allocation in this location.

Cllr. Spray wanted to stress that this is still a very early stage in the Local Plan process and this is a draft process, there are two consultations; one towards the end of this year and one early next year before it is sent to the inspectorate.

I would draw your attention to the Braintree District Settlement Fringe Study – Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2025 (see P50+ agenda 24/09/25) as it was clear to me that BDC currently have no intention of providing a green buffer between the villages in the Bumpstead Ward and Haverhill. **I would strongly recommend that all Parish Councils in the Bumpstead Ward put forward a specific request to BDC's planning team that a 'green buffer' is put in place by Braintree District Council and that this is included in their evidence base going forward.**

Currently BDC needs to find sites for around 8,300 dwellings to the year 2041. There will be an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council scheduled Monday 24th November for the Local Plan and there will be no other business considered at this meeting.

Vaccinations

For the first time, parents across the East of England will be able to get their two and three year olds vaccinated against flu at local pharmacies – alongside the usual offer at GP surgeries.

Around 400 pharmacies in the East of England have signed up to deliver the vaccine to the more than 100,000 eligible two and three year olds in the region.

It has been announced that from January 2026, the NHS will offer children protection from chickenpox in a new combined MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and varicella) vaccine. Whilst chickenpox is usually resolved within two weeks, in some severe cases it can cause lung inflammation, brain swelling, and can even be fatal, and a protective jab currently costs approximately £150 at pharmacies and private clinics. The vaccine rollout is expected to save the NHS £15m a year in costs of treatment, in addition to reducing the need for parents to take leave from work to care for their infected children, with chickenpox currently causing approximately £24m in lost income and productivity in the UK. This marks the most significant change to the national immunisation schedule since 2015, and has been welcomed by many following the trend of national vaccine hesitancy that has increased since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cllr. Diana Garrod
Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward