



CHRIS SIDDALL - HALSTEAD DIVISION REPORTING BACK 25-26

MY ROLES AT ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

- Chairman of the Braintree LHP (Local Highways Panel), there are 12 panels in Essex which look at small schemes to improve road safety. These panels are now focused on completing the schemes already in the pipeline in order to complete as many as possible before LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) takes place.
- Vice Chairman of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee.
- Member of the PAB (Pension Advisory Board) which oversees the Essex Pension scheme, it is one of the largest funds in the country with over 180,000 members, and some 800 employers, including local councils, schools, academies and businesses. The membership comprises a mix of active contributors, deferred members and retirees.
- Member of the Transformation Board, looking at how the Council can change the way it delivers its services in the future.

LGR (Local Government Reorganization)

- 2026 was supposed to be the year you would be voting for the Mayor of Essex as a first step for LGR this has now been delayed until 2027.
- With the proposed LGR and Devolution, the ECC 2025 elections were postponed for one year, the decision on how many unitary councils will replace the existing councils is expected to be announced by end of March 26. But is likely to be either 3 or 5 Unitary's. This year in May 2026 you will have the opportunity to vote at the ballot box for your Essex County Councillor.

GROUPS AND PROJECTS SUPPORTED WITH ECC LOCALITY FUND

- Funding for grants is available from your Essex County Councillor and this is to continue in 2026, the idea is to support initiative from activities of the Parish council and community groups, schemes should be put forward to you Essex County Councillor for consideration.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND MORE TO COME

- Significantly more money has been invested this year in road network repairs some £80m, but clearly we need invest even more money if we are to solve our road repair issues. It's my opinion that we really need the new unitary and central Government to agree a strategy for the future. Many years ago we used to have the "Road Fund Licence" which was collected and then used in its entirety for local roads, today's "Road Tax" paid by Essex drivers is collected by central Government and is not all given back to Essex County Council and spent locally, only an amount decided upon by central Government is returned to where it was collected, I believe this is quite wrong, Last year the Road Tax raised in Essex stay was around £160m, if this was all spent in Essex it would solve our road repair issue.
- The member pothole and pavement repair scheme is to continue, I very much welcome this and have got many pot holes and pavements repaired.
- Major improvements to road repairs have already been seen, such as on Colchester Road in Halstead, both quantity and improvement in quality but there is still much to do.

COUNCIL TAX INCREASE

- 1.95% for the general ECC council tax precept.
- 2 % Increase for Adult Social Care – costs have increased significantly, the total population of Essex is around 1.5 million, Essex County Council has a main budget of around £1 billion, with around half of this, £500 million is spent on 17,000 persons who are the most vulnerable in our society.

If you need to get in touch please email me at:- cllr.chris.siddall@essex.gov.uk.