

### **County Elections.**

I am sure that you are aware that the election result means a different administration:

Reform	53 (now 52)
Conservative	13
Lib-Dem	5
Other	4
Green	1
Labour	1
Vacancy	1

The vacancy is because of the death of candidate Cllr Mike Mackrory, and the Springfield election will be on Thursday 18 June 2026.

I am pleased to say that I was successful in re-election to the Broomfield and Writtle division. The boundary has changed such that it no longer includes Gt Leighs and adds Stock and Margaretting.

I will continue to work with my PCs and in the interest of the residents. Most of what I do is about fixing issues, and one would hope that would stay unchanged. But I do not know yet whether the new administration will confirm the previously agreed budget and continue the various initiatives that are important to us locally— like the adoption of the new draft Speed Strategy, the Members Highways In initiative, etc.

### **NG Pylons Examination by Govt Planning Inspectorate - update**

We are now in the Preliminary Hearing stage - these are specifically for comments on how the application will be examined. I made a submission and also spoke at the Essex Open Hearings. I did touch upon all the usual objections and preference for undergrounding, but specifically, in line with the hearings objectives, requested re-examination of the “waltham gap” and further consideration of the impact of having a pylon right next to Chelmsford Road. It would seem that this has worked and *“the Applicant has confirmed a decision to progress with Scenario B only in this location (TB141), with standard height pylons (not low height pylons) proposed to the south of the River Chelmer. In making this change, one of the low height pylons can be removed and the pylon (TB141) proposed closest to Chelmsford Road 385 National can be moved approximately 70 m further west away from the road”*. That seems like a win, if only a minor one in the scheme of things, but does show that we can have an impact!

The NW/SW parishes group (which is a joint force of all the Parish Councils down the West side of Chelmsford) also spoke at the hearing, majoring on the alternative route to the East of Chelmsford, and have supported this with landscape studies on the damage caused by the current proposed route.

### **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

The Government has announced that Chelmsford will join Brentwood and Maldon, along with Essex County Council services, to form a new mid-Essex unitary authority from April 2028. This forms part of the wider five unitary model which has now been selected for Greater Essex.

The new Reform ECC Administration have written to Steve Reed MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and stated that ECC “will utilise all resources at our disposal to challenge and resist LGR”

They have instructed lawyers to prepare a pre-action protocol letter.

### **City Council**

#### **Community Governance Review:**

The Community Governance Review (parishing the centre of Chelmsford) has been delayed because it appears that City status (currently invested in Chelmsford City council which will be abolished with LGR), cannot be invested in Trustees if the whole area is parished. Whilst this does not make logical sense, it appears to be the law. Hence, there is delay whilst this is sorted out.

#### **Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Review**

We are reviewing our adopted Local Plan (a mandatory requirement every 5 years) which includes additional sites to address the shortfall in build rates (allocated from Central Govt). Final public consultation closed Jan 2026 and it is now ready to be submitted for Independent Examination by a government appointed Planning Inspector.

The additional sites in my County Council division are:

- 14b – Land South of Ford End Primary School – 75 dwellings
- 18a – Land North West of Chelmsford (North of Hollow Lane) – 100 dwellings
- 19 – Land West of Patching Hall Lane – 200 dwellings

The plan has been approved by the Policy Board, and then Cabinet and will go to full Council, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, for final approval and submission.

Independent examination will go on until late 2026 with the expectation that the plan will be adopted early 2027.

### **Cherry Garden Road Trees**

I managed to delay the removal of the “diseased” trees until after they had finished blooming. They were removed 18th May.

CCC have committed to replace the trees Prunus ‘Kanzan’ (flowering cherry) for each tree removed along with succession planting for the cherry tree that is remaining. These will be high-quality standard trees sourced from Barcham Trees, a well-respected UK grower holding a Royal Warrant.

I have asked if even extra trees could be planted to cater for future losses.