

**ANNUAL COUNCIL held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,  
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY  
2026 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor C Criscione (Chairman)  
Councillors M Ahmed, G Bagnall, S Barker, N Church,  
M Coletta, A Coote, J Davey, B Donald (elected Chair),  
G Driscoll (elected Vice-Chair), J Emanuel, J Evans, C Fiddy,  
M Foley, R Freeman, R Gooding, N Hargreaves, P Lees,  
M Lemon, D McBirnie, J Moran, E Oliver, R Pavitt, A Reeve,  
N Reeve, B Regan, G Sell, R Silcock, M Sutton and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: P Holt (Chief Executive), B Ferguson (Democratic Services  
Manager) and C Forster (Monitoring Officer)

Also in attendance: Z Kiberd (Chairman's Cadet)

C80

**MINUTE'S SILENCE**

The Chairman opened the meeting and said he was very sad to announce the passing of Councillor Alex Armstrong. He said Councillor Armstrong was a much liked and respected councillor, who was first elected to the Council in 2019 as member for Dunmow North ward. He had held a number of senior positions at the Council, including the sitting Vice-Chairman, Portfolio Holder for Sports and Leisure 2019-2023, and Chair of Licensing and Environmental Health Committee. He said Councillor Armstrong would be missed and the Council's thoughts were with his family and friends.

The Leader was invited to speak. She said Councillor Armstrong was a founding member of Residents for Uttlesford and had worked extremely hard on behalf of the group and for the community of Great Dunmow. She recalled his personal warmth, humour and bright smile. He would be missed greatly by those who knew him.

Councillor Bagnall said Councillor Armstrong was well liked by all members and paid his respects.

*Council stood for a minute's silence.*

C81

**COUNCILLOR LOUGHLIN RESIGNATION**

The Chairman announced that Councillor Janice Loughlin had resigned as a UDC councillor for Stort Valley ward.

He said Councillor Loughlin was first elected in April 2000 and had successfully held her seat until her resignation 26 years later. She held senior roles in her time as councillor, including the Vice-Chair and Chair of the Licensing

Committee, Vice-Chair of Planning Committee and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. He said she would be missed by her colleagues and wished her all the best for the future.

Councillor Sell commended Councillor Loughlin as a dedicated ward councillor who advocated tirelessly for her community.

Councillor Gooding said that despite their political differences he would very much call Councillor Loughlin a friend and would miss their rapport at parish meetings.

Councillor Sutton said she had very fond memories of working with Councillor Loughlin on the Planning Committee and she loved her being part of the team.

The Chairman thanked members and announced he had nominated Councillor Loughlin for Alderwoman prior to the annual meeting. He hoped the nomination could be considered at the next meeting in July.

## **C82 REMARKS OF THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman said he had greatly enjoyed his year in the chair and recounted the various civic events he had attended. He said during the year he had met the most wonderful people and discovered parts of the district he had never visited before. He said his priority had been to promote organisations dedicated to young people and civic society, such as the Jack Petchey Achievement Award and the Air Cadets. He was very proud of introducing the Chairman's Cadet to Uttlesford and could not have found a better inaugural cadet than Zack Kiberd. He thanked his wife, Lilly, officers and members for their support.

He presented Zach Kiberd with a shield to commemorate his role as the first Chairman's Cadet and thanked his parents for all their assistance.

## **C83 ELECTION OF A CHAIR**

The Chairman called on nominations for the role of Chair 2026-27.

The Leader nominated Councillor Donald; this was duly seconded by Councillor Alex Reeve.

There were no further nominations and Councillor Donald was elected to the Chair for 2026-27.

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Donald as the Chair of Uttlesford District Council 2026-27.

## **C84 CHAIR'S STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Donald made the Chair's statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

**C85 ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR**

The Chair called on nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

The Leader nominated Councillor Driscoll for Vice-Chair.

Councillor Alex Reeve seconded the nomination.

There were no further nominations.

Councillor Driscoll was duly elected Vice-Chair of Uttlesford District Council.

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Driscoll as Vice-Chair of Uttlesford District Council 2026-27.

**C86 VICE-CHAIR'S STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The Vice-Chair made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

**C87 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair said she was honoured to have been elected to the chair of Uttlesford District Council and thanked Councillor Criscione for his exceptional service in the previous year. She said Uttlesford was a special place and councillors had a duty to protect the district's heritage but to also ensure there was sustainable growth. She looked forward to a year of respectful, cross party debate and said all members' voices would be heard in the chamber. She said public service was a privilege and her chosen charity of the year was Uttlesford Citizen's Advice.

**C88 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Asker, Luck, Gregory, Dean, Loveday, Haynes and Martin.

Councillor Bagnall declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Essex County Council.

**C89 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 24 February and 25 March 2026 were approved as correct records.

C90 **POLITICAL BALANCE 2026-27**

The Chair called for a proposer in regards to the Political Balance 2026-27 as set out in the report.

Councillor Coote proposed approval of the recommendation set-out in the report.

Councillor Foley seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED to approve the political balance and the allocation of seats on its committees as detailed in the report.

C91 **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL**

The Chair invited comment on the appointment to Council Committees for 2026/27.

Councillor Fiddy proposed approval of the committee appointments set-out in the agenda.

This was duly seconded by Councillor Evans.

RESOLVED to appoint the Council's committees for 2026-27 and agree the nominations from the Group Leaders for Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs, members and substitutes

C92 **APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING GROUPS OF COUNCIL**

The Chair invited comment on the appointments to Council Working Groups for 2026-27.

Councillor Freeman proposed approval of the appointments set out in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor McBirnie.

RESOLVED to approve the appointments to Council Working Groups for 2026-27 as set out in the report.

C93 **APPOINTMENTS TO JOINT COMMITTEES: THE ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL**

The Chair invited comment on the appointment of the Council's representatives on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The Leader proposed the appointment of Councillor Sutton, as the substantive member, and Councillor Gregory as the substitute member.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Hargreaves.

RESOLVED to approve the appointments of Councillor Sutton, as the substantive member, and Councillor Gregory, as the substitute member, to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel 2026-27.

C94 **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026/27**

The Calendar of Meetings for 2026-27 was noted.

C95 **MATTERS RECEIVED ABOUT JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

There were no matters received about joint arrangements and external organisations.

C96 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

No matters were received from the Cabinet or the Council's committees.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.30pm.