



ROCHFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Full Council Meeting

Held on Wednesday, 30th September 2026

At The Parish Rooms, Rochford at 6.30 pm

Members Present: Cllr Leona Bryceland
Cllr Derek Brown
Cllr James Cottis
Cllr Denise Crosbie
Cllr James Edmunds
Cllr Erroll Houston-Bailey
Cllr Rodd Hubbard
Cllr Paul Nash
Cllr Linda Thomas
Cllr Laureen Shaw
Cllr Mike Steptoe
Cllr Graham Whitehead
Cllr Arthur Williams

In Attendance: Mrs Emma Terris – Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

There were no members of the public present

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| 88/26 | To receive apologies for absence
There were no apologies for absent. Cllr Callaghan was absent. |
| 89/26 | To receive any declarations of interests
Cllr Edmunds declared an interest in agenda item 97/26 and 110/26 and the The planning application regarding The King Edmund School where his interest was identified in his role as a Governor.
Cllr Thomas declared an interest in agenda item 102/26.1 and 102/26.2 |
| 90/26 | Minutes of the Previous Meeting
The minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday, 29 th July, Wednesday, 19 th August and Thursday, 17 th September 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meetings and signed by the Chair. |
| 91/26 | Public Participation
There were no members of the public present. |

92/26

To receive reports from County/District Councillors (maximum of 10 minutes, Chairman only to reply)

County Councillor Report

Cllr Cottis reported that he had met the Cabinet Member for Highways to discuss issues affecting Rochford. He advised that a point arising from this discussion was the role of the District Council as the planning authority to address highways concerns through the planning application process. Cllr Cottis added that he has also met with colleagues to explore options to address highways issues.

Cllr Cottis advised that he had attended a meeting concerning local planning matters and reported that highways issues associated with proposed Rochford development sites would need to be addressed with the highways authority.

Cllr Cottis reported that pothole repairs were continuing, with additional funding allocated. Cllr Cottis advised that he would follow up with highways any outstanding repairs. The winter highways task force was due to commence shortly. It is concerned that this winter may be colder than normal which could cause further deterioration of the roads.

Cllr Cottis reported that the local government reorganisation had been stopped and that Rochford would remain as it was for the time being. Cllr Cottis referred to possible mayoral elections in due course. Cllr Cottis added that locality funding remained available.

District Councillor Report

Cllr Williams reported on upgrading works at Rayleigh and Mill Hall leisure centres and referred to the £4 million investment initiated under the previous administration. Cllr Williams advised that The Freight House had been offered to East Essex Hackspace and secure cycle racks had been installed in District Council car parks, with some carparking spaces being taken for the installation.

Cllr Williams reported that the District Council had voted at its Full Council meeting the previous week to submit a Regulation 19 Local Plan providing for approximately 5,000 homes. It was noted that the Government had wanted 15,000 homes to be provided for but this was reduced to 12,500. Concern was expressed during the process and it is likely that the Government will now intervene.

Cllr Williams advised that free parking was reported to be planned in all District Council car parks during December and the possibility of holding Rochford and Rayleigh markets twice weekly was being explored. Cllr Williams reported that a final decision on local government reorganisation was expected on 15th October 2026.

93/26

Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received and noted.

94/26

To receive a verbal update from Members of Rochford Parish Council on activities undertaken since the last meeting

The Chair reported that he attended a cultural event in Rochford and that he participated in a flag procession through the town. The Chair also advised that he had attended Cllr Crosbie's Macmillan event and Cllr Williams' games afternoon.

Cllr Crosbie reported that the Macmillan Coffee morning had been organised in two weeks and had raised £205. Cllr Crosbie asked whether the Council would be willing to match-fund the amount raised. Cllr Crosbie advised that she would like to hold a further event at the end of November. It was agreed that this would be discussed under agenda item 101/26.

95/26

Strategic and Action Plan

Members received an update on the recent Strategy Day, which had considered community matters, assets, finance and governance. The discussion had identified work to be developed into a draft strategy and action plan for future Council consideration.

It was **resolved** that authority is to be delegated to Cllrs Edmunds, Edwards, Hubbard and Shaw and the Clerk to prepare a draft strategy to be presented at a future Full Council meeting.

96/26

Finance

96/26.1

To receive the bank reconciliations for August 2026

The bank reconciliations for August 2026 were received, agreed and signed by the Chair of Finance.

96/96.2

To receive payments for authorisation

The following payments were approved for payment:

Supplier	Total £
Lloyds Bank	1,045.15
Bright Gas Plumbing	280.00
Parabar Developments	2,500.00
CouncilWise	288.00
J&P Prior	318.10
Starboard Systems	288.00
Cloudy IT	438.02
Y Trivedi	22.50
Sky Broadband	34.14
EDF Energy	165.43
C Barber	50.00
P.F. Ahern (London) Ltd	201.60
Motia Fuel Card	3.60
The Design Cabin CIC	200.00
Eileens Florist	960.00
Kent Procurement Service	266.78
TBS Hygiene Ltd	378.00
Around Rochford	362.00
Neatwork Services	1350.00
NPower	426.72
PKF Littlejohn LLP	1008.00
Unity Bank	7.00
SSE Energy Solutions	228.97

E Terris	248.18
J Faulkner	51.70
Reliable Fire Protection	54.00

- 96/26.3 To receive the summary of Receipts and Payments compared to Budget for the year to date.**
The year-to-date summary of receipts and payments against budget was received.
- 96/26.4 To receive the report on the outcome of the external audit and any actions arising**
The external audit outcome was received. Members were informed that the actions arising from the audit had been addressed.
- 96/26.5 To note the NJC scale salary increases for employees**
The NJC salary increase of 3.3% was noted.
- 96/26.6 To consider and approve the application for Unity Trust charge cards for designated members of staff, subject to appropriate standing limits and financial controls**
It was resolved that applications for Unity Trust Charge cards be approved for officers and the maintenance officer with a spending limit of £500 and a transaction limit of £100.

97/26 St Mark's Hall
The Clerk provided members with an update on the works at St Mark's Hall. It was noted that the fire shutter works were due to commence and Turner Bros was expected to start work towards the end of October or during November.

98/26 Policy Approval
Members considered the Social Media Policy. It was agreed to remove the requirement in section 3 for accounts to be checked regularly. The Chair proposed adoption of the policy as amended.

Resolved: The Social Media Policy was adopted with the amendment to section 3. The motion was carried by a majority with Cllr Crosbie abstaining.

99/26 Committee Structure
The Clerk's report on committee responsibilities, delegated authority and future meeting arrangements was received. Members discussed which committees should be authorised to make decisions. Cllr Whitehead expressed reservations about delegating decision-making to committees.

Options discussed included incorporating General Purposes Committee and Community Projects Committee business into Full Council or retaining separate committee meetings. Cllr Crosbie asked whether committee decisions could be circulated to other members, with a period during which a matter could be 'called in' to Full Council.

Members discussed the meeting frequency including Full Council on the last Wednesday of the month, General Purposes and Community Projects meetings bi-monthly or as required and Staffing Committee meetings at least three times each year.

Resolved: That further work was to be undertaken on the proposed structure and meeting schedule with draft committee terms of reference to be brought back to a future meeting.

100/26

Council Branding

Members discussed the Town Council's logo and noted that the Council does not have high resolution logo produced. The Chair proposed that a designer is commissioned to design the high resolution logo.

Resolved: Quotes to be obtained for preparation of the Council's logo artwork and be brought back to a future meeting for consideration.

101/26

Community Projects

101/26.1 To receive the draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 9th September 2026.

The draft minutes of the Community Projects meeting held on Wednesday, 9th September 2026 were received.

101/26.2 To receive an update on the Christmas Festival and Tractor Run

Members received an update from the Clerk on the Christmas Festival and Tractor Run. Members agreed that the Tractor Run would start at 5.15 pm.

Members discussed the Christmas Market that will be held in Rochford Square on Saturday, 5th December with the focus being on the positioning of the stalls.

Cllr Crosbie expressed concern about the arrangements and advised that she would like to arrange an event at the Parish Rooms in November. A detailed debate took place regarding this.

Cllr Edmunds proposed that the market proceed on Saturday, 5th December. Cllr Whitehead seconded the proposal.

Resolved: The market would proceed on 5th December 2026. The motion was carried by six votes in favour and four against.

Resolved: A further event of Cllr Crosbie's choice to raise money for charity was supported. It was agreed that if Cllr Crosbie wished to have stalls at the Christmas market, she would be given first refusal. This was unanimously agreed.

101/26.3 To receive an update on the Town Team Assets and to consider a request from East Essex Hackspace.

The Clerk advised that a request had been received from East Essex Hackspace involving the Town Team assets being displayed at The Freight House. It was suggested that Mr Neobald is invited to submit a proposal to the Town Council setting out the intended work and use of the assets.

The Clerk advised that East Essex Hackspace are in possession of the Town Team assets that were located at

Rochford Library. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to East Essex Hackspace to request their return.

Resolved: East Essex Hackspace to be invited to submit a proposal and attend a future Council meeting to explain the proposed work and use of the assets.

102/26

General Purposes

102/26.1 To receive the draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 9th September 2026.

This agenda item was deferred.

102/26.2 To agree the wording to the terms and conditions in respect of banning fires at the allotments

Members discussed proposed wording to the terms and conditions in respect of banning fires at the allotments. Concern was raised that plot holders would need an alternative means of disposing of material, particularly at the end of the growing season. Members agreed that there is a need for further information to be provided before agreeing any changes to the terms and conditions.

102/26.3 To agree the wording to the terms and conditions to confirm allotment plots have relevant insurance

Cllr Williams proposed that all plot holders be required to hold RALGA membership and associated insurance, with the charge incorporated into renewal fees. Cllr Brown seconded the proposal. The motion was not voted upon.

Cllr Houston-Bailey suggested that the legal position be investigated before imposing this charge onto plot holders.

Resolved: Further information regarding the need for further information to be obtained in respect of banning fires at the allotments and the legal position to be investigated before requesting that all plot holders are required to hold insurance.

At 8.30 pm the meeting adjourned for a five-minute comfort break. In accordance with Standing Order 3w, it was resolved to continue with the meeting until all business had been conducted.

.103/26

To receive reports from representatives to outside bodies

103/26.1 Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils

It was noted that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, 15th October 2026 at The Parish Rooms.

103/26.2 Old Peoples Welfare Committee

No update

104/26

Councillor/Clerk/Employee Training

104/26.1 To receive details of training undertaken since the last meeting

Cllr Steptoe reported that he had attended two EALC training courses and had further courses booked. Members discussed sharing training costs where a councillor serviced on more than one Parish or Town Council.

The Clerk reported that she had recently attended the EALC HR Conference.

Resolved: Training costs could be shared between the relevant parish and town councils where a councillor served on multiple councils.

104/26.2 To consider any future training needs
No additional training was identified.

105/26

Planning Applications

Cllr Williams declared an interest and did not participate in the discussion. Cllr Edmunds declared an interest as a Governor of The King Edmund School when its application is considered.

The following planning applications were considered.

Planning Reference	26/00632/FUL
Applicant:	Avioncare Limited – Mr Peter Harland
Location:	Warehouse Adjacent Hangar 4, Aviation Way, Rochford
Description:	Demolish existing single storey office building and construct two storey extension to hanger to provide new offices, new car parking layout.
Comment:	No comment

Planning Reference	26/00647/LBC
Applicant:	Notting Hill Genesis
Location:	Johnson Court, Pollards Close, Rochford, Essex
Description:	Installation of internal secondary glazing to habitable room windows at Flats 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 19
Comment:	No comment

Planning Reference	26/00558/OUT
Applicant:	M Scott Properties Ltd – Mr R Martin
Location:	Land North of 1 to 55 Doggetts Close, Rochford
Description:	Outline planning application for up to 94 residential dwellings, surface water drainage basin, swales, new vehicular and pedestrian access, public open space, landscaping enhancement and associated infrastructure works; all matters reserved expect for means of access.
Comment:	Members raised concern about the environmental and infrastructure impacts of the proposed development.

Planning Reference	26/00593/FUL
Applicant:	The King Edmund School

Location:	Vaughan Close Rochford
Description:	Construction of a modular building. .
Comment:	No comment.

106/26 **Date and time of next meeting**
Wednesday, 28th October 2026 at 6.30 pm at The Parish Rooms, Rochford

107/26 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved: *That, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

108/26 **Staffing Matters**

The Clerk reported that the member of staff who opened and unlocked the Parish Rooms has resigned. Interim arrangements regarding the opening and closing of the Parish Rooms was discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk investigate automated door entry systems.

109/26 **The Freight House**

The Clerk provided members with an update on The Freight. Members were advised that a meeting has recently been held with Rochford District Council. As an operator has now been appointed it was agreed to temporarily put on hold progressing the Community Asset Transfer to the Town Council.

110/26 **St Mark's Hall**

There was no update.

With no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.59 pm.