

# ECC Report June 2021

## *Conservatives retain control of Essex County Council*

Following the 6<sup>th</sup> May Elections the Conservatives have retained control of Essex County Council with a 29-seat majority; they secured 52 seats after residents across the country placed their votes; this year has been the very first time that the counting took place the next morning because of the Covid situation.

The political makeup of the council is as follows:

- Conservatives  
52 seats
- Liberal Democrats  
8 seats
- Labour  
5 seats
- Independent  
3 seats
- Green  
1 seat
- Canvey Island Independent Party  
2 seats
- Residents for Uttlesford  
2 seats
- Rochford District Residents  
1 seat
- Independent Loughton Residents Association  
1 seat

The Opposition Party will comprise the 3 Independents, the 1 Green, and the remaining 6 Non-Aligned Parties, making it the second largest group led by Cllr Chris Pond, with a total membership of 10.

To see results for all divisions please visit- [www.essex.gov.uk/county-council-elections/election-results](http://www.essex.gov.uk/county-council-elections/election-results)

For ease of reference the results of our Tendring Rural West division were as follows:

Giancarlo Guglielmi - [Elected](#)  
Conservative Party 2891 votes / 55.34%

Terence Barrett  
Liberal Democrats 1289 votes / 24.67%

Maria Fowler  
Labour Party 577 votes / 11.05%

Beverley Maltby  
Green Party 373 votes / 7.14%

Ian Caruana  
Workers Party of Britain 94 votes / 1.80%

### **Roger Hirst, Conservative, has been re-elected as the Greater Essex PFCC**

Roger Hirst, Conservative, has been re-elected as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex with a promise to continue working to stop crime from happening and to keep people safe from fire and hazard.

He has also pledged to prevent drug related violence and support victims of domestic abuse with a focus on preventing it from happening in the first place. Roger said: "We are improving the culture of the fire and rescue service with a focus on prevention and protection. It is really exciting that this programme has been endorsed by the public of Essex."

Voting took place on Thursday with the votes counted on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May by the Police Area Returning Officer Adrian Pritchard, announced at Colchester's Charter Hall Chief Executive of Colchester Borough Council.

Roger received more than half of the first preference votes. The countywide turnout was 32.47 per cent, an increase from the 2016 PCC election when the turnout was 26 per cent.

Roger said: "This is a sobering level of endorsement from the people of Essex. I am grateful that they are clearly appreciating what we have been doing over the past five years. We have achieved 500 extra police officers with a commitment of further investment and with more officers to come.

HIRST Roger The Conservative Party Candidate	235,346 (Elected)
VINCE Chris Labour and Co-operative Party	99,712
WHITEHOUSE Jon Liberal Democrat	58,131
TILBROOK Robin Charles William English Democrats	42,831

## **Ambition, Renewal, Equality – new agenda for new top team at the County Council is revealed**

Essex County Council's Leader Cllr Kevin Bentley has announced appointments to the new Cabinet, with five new faces joining the top team.

Proposed appointments for the County Council's new Cabinet were revealed ahead of the annual council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> May by the Council's Leader, Cllr Kevin Bentley, who was formally nominated and voted as Leader by his political group at that meeting.

ECC's new Cabinet will have ten members, which include 5 new members not previously on the Cabinet highlighted in yellow, which are as follows:

- Cllr Kevin Bentley - Leader of the Council
- Cllr Louise McKinlay – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance
- Cllr John Spence – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health
- Cllr Chris Whitbread – Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Corporate Affairs
- Cllr Lee Scott – Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
- Cllr Lesley Wagland – Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning
- Cllr Tony Ball - Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Skills and Training
- Cllr Malcolm Buckley – Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling
- Cllr Beverly Egan – Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Early Years
- Cllr Graham Butland, Cabinet Member for Devolution, Art, Heritage and Culture

Leader of Essex County Council, Cllr Kevin Bentley said: "Our agenda will be built on the three guiding principles of Ambition, Renewal and Equality. We will have a Cabinet that reflects these themes and portfolios that encapsulate our aims.

"Our ambition is to reach for the stars – we want to be the best County Council in the country, offering the best services and value-for-money to residents. There is no better example of this than our ambition to meet our climate change targets before 2050.

As we emerge from the pandemic, renewal means we must do we all we can to help rebuild our economy, develop future skills, encourage training, and promote tourism and arts, leading to new jobs”.

“Equality of opportunity means helping people to succeed, to receive an excellent education and to feel safe to be on our streets. It means high standards in social care of adults, children, and vulnerable people. We will invest in mental health care to ensure that mental health is no barrier to a successful career or job.”

Cllr Bentley paid tribute to the excellent work done by those Cabinet Members who either retired, or stepped down from their positions, namely Cllr David Finch, who was his predecessor and in term for 8 years, as well as Cllrs, Madden, Walsh, Barker, and Gooding.

The 6 main Committees Chairmen are as follows:

Audit, Governance and Standards---Cllr Tony Hedley  
Corporate Policy and Scrutiny---Cllr Chris Pond  
Development and Regulation (D&R)---Cllr Carlo Guglielmi  
Health Overview, Policy and Scrutiny (HOSC)---Cllr Jeff Henry  
People and Family (PAF)---Cllr Ray Gooding  
Place, Service and Economic Growth (PSEG)---Cllr Alan Goggin

### **Essex County Council Appoints Councillor Eddie Johnson as New Chairman**

At the same meeting a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council were also appointed. Cllr Eddie Johnson was welcomed as the new Chairman supported by Cllr Jill Reeves as the new Vice-Chairman.

Councillor Johnson has been a County Councillor for the Harlow South East division since 2005, during which time he has served on a variety of committees and chaired the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee. He was Cabinet Member with responsibility for highways between 2015 and 2017 and has most recently served as Vice-Chairman, holding the position for the past three years. He has also represented the Great Parndon Ward on Harlow Council since 2000.

Speaking about his appointment Cllr Johnson said: “It is an honour to accept the position of Chairman and I am proud to continue serving the residents and communities of Essex as the new Chairman of Essex County Council. We have heard today of the ambitious programme set out by the County Council and I very much look forward to working alongside the Leader and Cabinet to raise the profile of the Council and the fantastic work it does.”

## **Your safety is our priority - a message to Essex Women as bars and pubs reopen for indoor service**

No one should feel unsafe on a night out in our town centres is the message from the County Council and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner ahead of the first 'indoors' weekend of the night-time economy reopening.

Essex County Council and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (PFCC) are renewing their commitment to women's safety before the first weekend of bars, pubs and restaurants being open for indoor service.

Their message is that they are listening, understanding, and committing to creating an environment where women feel safe.

The feelings experienced by many women were highlighted following the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021, exposing the fears that many women experience and sparking an important debate about women's safety.

In Essex, Essex County Council pledged £500,000 to fund a Safety Advisory Group which launched in April 2021. The group led by Council Deputy Leader Cllr Louise McKinlay aims to encourage meaningful engagement with Essex women and spark a countywide conversation about the issues and fears faced by many women on a daily basis. The group will talk to partners, residents, and council officials to ensure everyone is working together to tackle safety concerns, in particular those of female residents.

Ahead of the weekend's opening, the PFCC and county council have reassured women across the county that Essex is a safe place, with the police, local community safety partnerships, volunteers such as the street pastors, and SOS buses all working to make town centres safe environments.

Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance, said: "No woman should feel fearful on an evening out. Everyone should be able to enjoy a pub, bar or restaurant and travelling to and from them without feeling anxious about safety.

"This is the reason we set up our Safety Advisory Group, to explore the issues around women's safety, and work with partners and residents to achieve positive change.

"It is also important that consideration is given to how actions can be perceived by women who may be feeling anxious or vulnerable. Even something completely innocent might make a lone female feel frightened, so something simple like walking a few more paces behind or crossing the road will make a big difference.

"We have an excellent police service in Essex as well as volunteers and organisations that will be out and about keeping you safe.

"There are also some really simple precautions we can all take to make ourselves safer like making sure our phones are fully charged, sticking with a friend when

walking and if drinking making sure you don't leave your drink unattended, Essex Police also have some excellent advice on their website here.”

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, said: “Over the past year we have all been looking out for each other and we have been following the #StaySafeEssex message. Let's make sure we continue to do that as we enjoy meeting up with friends indoors this weekend as our night-time economy reopens.

“I know our local community safety partnerships, businesses and volunteers such as the street pastors, and SOS buses who we help to fund, will be doing everything they can to make it a safe and successful reopening but let's make sure we do everything we can to keep each other safe.

“The tragic death of Sarah Everard earlier this year and the public debate that followed brought into sharp focus the fear that many women feel when they are out at night. It is totally unacceptable for women to feel fearful in our communities and it is for all of us to change this. We need to create an environment where women aren't fearful. We need to look after each other particularly women who may be feeling concerned and vulnerable.

“If you are planning on going out this weekend make sure you look after each other, know how you are getting home, drink sensibly and continue with the incredible community spirit that everybody has shown over the last year. Let's take this next step safely together.”

### **Small businesses in Essex encouraged to set-up Covid-19 testing for employees**

As part of the ongoing testing rollout in Essex, all businesses with under 50 employees are now being encouraged to have their staff, who are not showing Covid-19 symptoms, regularly tested to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and potential workplace outbreaks.

Companies with 1-49 employees, who cannot work from home, are being offered the chance to set up testing provision at their place of work. Essex County Council (ECC) will provide support to enable them to do this, including training for staff and testing kits.

Businesses that fit this criteria and interested in setting up a testing provision at their place of work should visit [essex.gov.uk/getting-tested-for-covid-19/workplace-testing](https://essex.gov.uk/getting-tested-for-covid-19/workplace-testing) where they can fill in an online form and a member of ECC staff will get in touch with them.

Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Public Health at Essex County Council, said: “We know workplaces are doing what they can to limit the spread of Covid-19 and increased and regular testing will further support these efforts, allowing businesses to stay on top of any potential outbreaks.

“Where possible, businesses should be allowing employees to work from home, however we understand that this is not always an option. For those that can’t, we are providing support by ensuring testing is available.

“Regular testing will not only provide employees with reassurance that they do not have the virus, it will also help to increase customer confidence in businesses where employees are required to interact with members of the public on a regular basis.”

Rapid tests are quick and easy to do, and with 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 show no symptoms, it’s essential that everyone tests themselves regularly to help contain any outbreaks, particularly as we follow the government’s roadmap out of the pandemic.

Anyone who [tests positive after taking a rapid test](#) must self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test to confirm the result.

There is [financial support](#) available if an individual is required to self-isolate and is unable to go out to work during the isolation period.

Any residents who are showing Covid-19 symptoms should continue to [book a PCR Covid-19 test as normal](#).

## **14 more library collection points announced as over 150,000 Covid-19 tests already distributed**

On 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, a new total of 34 Library Collection points went live across Essex, as 14 new sites joined the existing 20 that were launched a month ago. This means that there will now be three sites in each of the 12 districts of Essex.

In the month that the 20 existing sites have been operational, over 150,000 individual Covid-19 tests (Approx. 24,000 kits of 7 tests as of 14 April 2020) have been handed out to residents.

Library collection sites were launched with the aim of making asymptomatic testing more accessible and helping to prevent individuals from unknowingly spreading the virus.

Director of Public Health at Essex County Council, Dr Mike Gogarty said: “The extra 14 library collection sites will no doubt make a real difference to testing capacity across the county.

“It is really positive and reassuring to see that so many tests have already been distributed in such a short space of time, and that is testament to the residents of Essex doing the right thing and protecting others by making sure they are doing regular testing.

“As restrictions ease and people start to meet up with others outdoors, the need for people who aren’t showing symptoms to take part in regular testing is more vital than ever.

"We know that residents are eager to take part in self-testing and by setting up even more convenient collection points within local communities, we can ensure they have regular access to testing kits to complete twice a week.

“If regular testing is not something you have considered previously and you are not already accessing self-tests in another way, I urge you to pick up test kits from your nearest community collection point, complete them regularly and help to keep your friends and family safe.”

The LFT tests are quick and easy to do, however help is available to anybody that requires assistance. A dedicated helpline has been set up for anybody who is not sure what to do, how to register the test or how to upload the results. Anyone requiring support can call 03337 726 144.

Anyone requiring additional assistance will be supported and can [book a PCR test at one of the many mobile testing units](#) operating across Essex.

Targeted groups, including the households and bubbles of school-aged children and businesses with more than 10 employees should continue to use the specific testing channels designed and already in place for them.

Any residents who are showing Covid-19 symptoms should continue to [book a PCR Covid-19 test](#) as normal.

### **Harlow pair found guilty after Essex Trading Standards investigation**

Saiwan Ali of Wellington Court Ipswich and Wahab Ali of Amherst Lodge Harlow were found guilty of the possession, with a view to supply illegal tobacco, because of an Essex Trading Standards Investigation.

Saiwan Ali pleaded guilty at Chelmsford Magistrates Court and was sentenced to 12-month community order, 150 hours of unpaid work, £1,000 costs, and a £60 victim surcharge.

Wahab Ali was found guilty and sentenced at Chelmsford Magistrates Court to a £414 fine, £30 victim surcharge and ordered to pay £1,000 costs.

The conviction comes following an Essex Trading Standards investigation during 2018 and the sentencing is in relation to a total of 9 separate charges under The Trade Marks Act 1994 and The Tobacco and Related Product (Safety) Regulations 2016.



Following a visit to the premises of Street Corner Shop, 11 The Rows, Harlow in May 2018 by Essex Trading Standards, a quantity of cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco were seized from the premises, a quantity of which were counterfeit and contravened the Trade Marks Act 1994. None of the products seized had external standardised packaging, a contravention of The Tobacco and Related Products (Safety) Regulations 2016.

Just two months later Mr Saiwan Ali was stopped on a routine patrol by Essex Police with a further quantity of illegal tobacco being loaded into a vehicle in the vicinity of Amhurst Lodge Harlow. Once again, the goods were seized and a quantity of them were counterfeit with all products breaching the requirements for standardised packaging.

In total 17,340 cigarettes and 4.45kg of hand rolling were seized over both occasions.

There had been previous Trading Standards raids on the business in 2016 and 2017 where Mr Ali had been present – he denied knowing about the previous visits and the Magistrates found that this claim to be:

“Incorrect even though he was not convicted of offences. He was present both times and knew of the counterfeit tobacco and was in possession of tobacco on 16 May 2018 to make gain for himself or another. The court did not find his account to be credible. Due to the inconsistency of the accounts given, the amount and profit, the previous raids for counterfeit tobacco and cigarettes, that he was aware of.”

Magistrates further stated that “His credibility in general and bad character were corrected by the prosecution.”

The sentencing sends a clear message to individuals that continue to break the law, and a warning to others that Essex Trading Standards has an ongoing commitment to protecting the health of our residents and supporting legitimate businesses who are undermined by the sale of illegal tobacco. Counterfeit goods have acknowledged links to organised crime and cause a significant financial detriment to the wider economy.