COUNCIL

25 NOVEMBER 2025

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A.4 PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATE OF THE 2026 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

(Report prepared by Ian Ford)

Full Council will be aware that, earlier this year it decided, inter alia, that the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 28 April 2026 (Minute 14 – 29.4.25 refers). Members will also be aware that Greater Essex was accepted into the Government's Devolution Priority Programme and that work has been progressing on this matter alongside the related Local Government Re-organisation affecting all Councils in Essex.

Having been accepted into the Government's Devolution Priority Programme, Parliament subsequently gave its consent that the elections of Councillors to serve on Essex County Council that had been due to take place in May 2025 would be postponed for one year.

The current position is that the postponed election of Essex County Councillors will be held on Thursday 7 May 2026 and it is almost certain that the election of the Mayor for Greater Essex will be held on that same date. This has a knock-on effect on our Annual Council date of 28 April 2026.

Council will recognise that, in the period leading up to the elections on 7 May 2026, many Officers across the Council (including the Democratic Services Team and the Leadership Support Team who have key roles to play in arranging and facilitating the Annual Meeting of the Council) will be involved in various election duties supporting colleagues in the Elections Team. Members themselves are likely to be involved in canvassing duties on behalf of their preferred candidates.

I have therefore concluded that it would be in the Council's best interests that the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Council be postponed avoiding an unneeded distraction around the time of the elections on 7 May 2026. I propose therefore that the Annual Meeting now be held on Tuesday 19 May 2026, which has been previously earmarked for the first ordinary meeting of the Council in the 2026/27 Municipal Year. Furthermore, to ensure that the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 3 (which, inter alia, states that the first ordinary Council meeting is held within 15 working days of the annual meeting) are met, I further propose that an ordinary meeting of the Council is held on Tuesday 2 June 2026.

I therefore **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that –**

(a) the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Council be postponed from 28 April 2026 to 19 May 2026; and

(b) the first ordinary meeting of the Council in the 2026/27 Municipal Year be held on 2 June 2026.

IAN DAVIDSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCIL

25 NOVEMBER 2025

BACKGROUND PAPERS LIST FOR
REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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None.