



<b>Committee</b>	Full Council
<b>Month</b>	July 2023
<b>Report Title</b>	Essex County Council Existing Boundaries Consultation
<b>Report Author</b>	Georgia Arnold
<b>Attachments</b>	None

**Agenda item: 9**

**Summary**

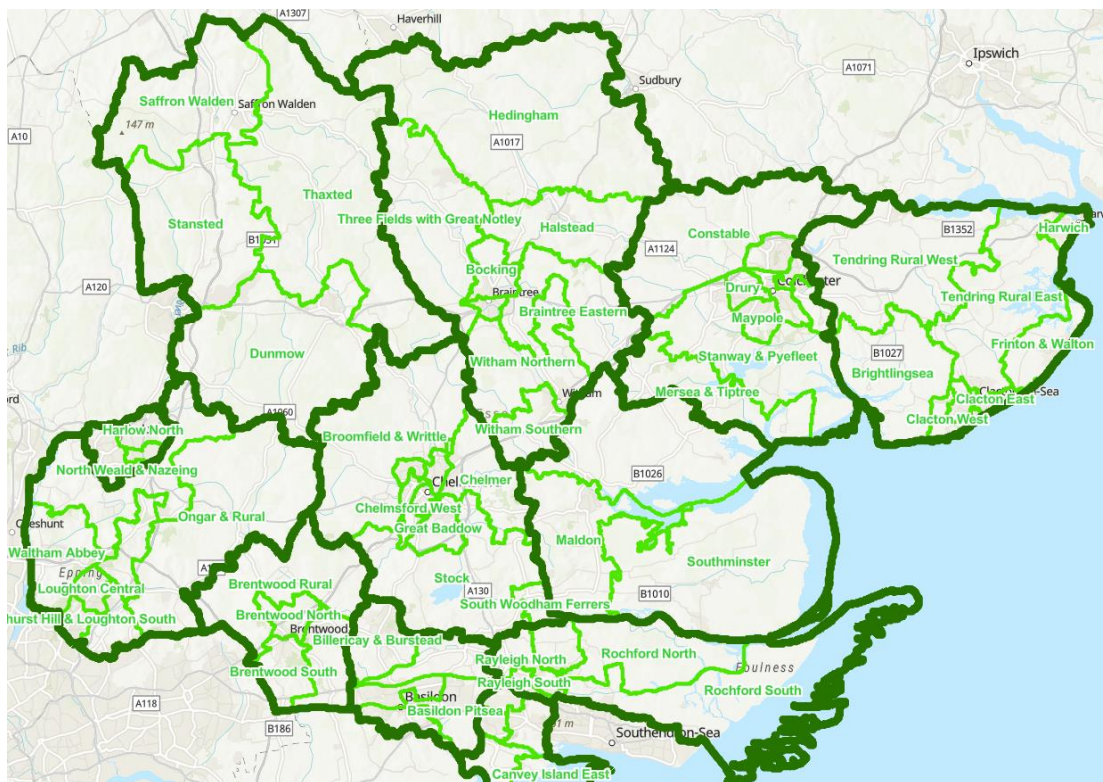
Essex County Council (ECC) is looking at reviewing its existing divisions and wards with a two-phase public consultation:

- Phase 1 – Initial consultation gathering comments and thoughts from communities.
- Phase 2 – Boundary recommendations are published and consulted on.

Phase 1 is currently being undertaken, closing on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

Below is a map from ECC illustrating the current electoral boundaries in Essex.

*To note this is only for the ECC divisions and not Uttlesford District Council, this is separate and there are currently no plans for a district review.*



## Recommendation

SWTC to respond to the consultation with one of the following options:

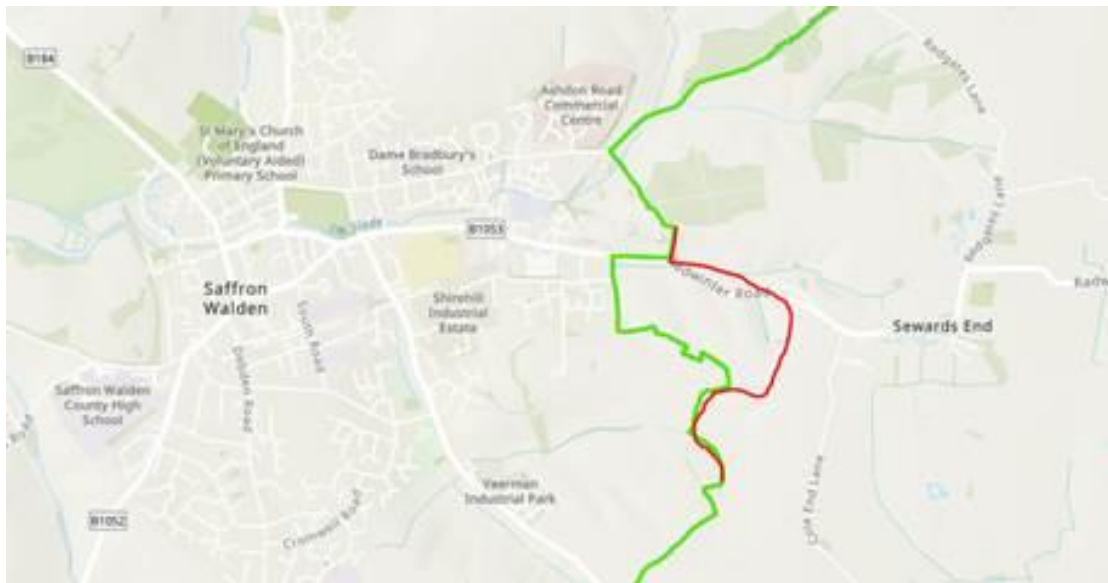
1. No comment or changes proposed.
2. To extend the Saffron Walden border to encompass the field along Radwinter Road, (commonly referred to as the Rosconn site which has been granted planning permission of 233 dwellings).

The rationale for this is because SWTC and Swards End Parish Council has previously jointly requested a parish border review, to extend the Saffron Walden border to encompass this field.

Future residents at this estate could therefore be associated with Saffron Walden Town councillors and Thaxted County Councillors.

Should the ECC border extend the Saffron Walden boundary to include this field, residents would therefore be associated with Saffron Walden Town Councillors and Saffron Walden County Councillor(s).

This border is illustrated below, red being the extension, green the existing.



3. To reduce the size of Saffron Walden's County division.

County Councillors on average should represent 14,891 electorate, Saffron Walden is significantly more with 17,175 electorate.

Neighbouring County divisions have an electorate of:

- Thaxted 14,871
- Stansted 16,961

Overall, Uttlesford has considerably more electors per county councillor than the average for Essex and it is proposed to increase the number of ECC councillors by 2. Increasing the number of Uttlesford ECC councillors from 4 to 5 would place each division about average, or just under.

It is proposed therefore that an additional Uttlesford county councillor is created, that the existing Uttlesford divisions are re-organised to make them as far as reasonably achievable the same size, and that in doing so as far as possible each comprises whole Uttlesford wards

4. Options 2 and 3 could be combined by both:

- Extending the Saffron Walden border to encompass the Rosconn site, in line with the parish border review.
- An additional county councillor is created and the existing Uttlesford divisions are re-organised to make them more equal in their representation.

To note at time of writing, it is not certain as to whether Uttlesford District Council has plans to review its borders and wards alongside ECC or at a future date. SWTC is awaiting a response from UDC to confirm.

**Officer Recommendation**

Council is asked to consider the above recommendations in its response to the ECC consultation, closing 31 July.