

Councillor Danielle Belton
Leader
Rochford District Council
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Rayleigh
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Westway
 Chelmsford
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 CMI 3AR
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17th April 2026 sent via email

Dear Councillor Belton,

RE: First Bus Service Changes from 31st May 2026

It was good to have the opportunity to meet you and discuss our proposed bus service changes in the area on our call on Tuesday morning. I was grateful to you and Mark Francois MP, who was also on the call, for passing on the feedback you have been receiving.

I am pleased to be able to confirm, in the table below, our proposals to you and I hope that this will help allay some of the concerns that your residents may have, as well as clarifying our plans. These are still proposals but are likely to be confirmed in the next week.

Service	Proposed Change
3	<p>Southend to Chelmsford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes proposed
20	<p>Hullbridge to Southend via Rayleigh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 20 during the day is replaced by changes to our services 25 and 27. Late evening journeys on the 20 will continue to run between Hullbridge, Rayleigh and Southend. Between Rayleigh and Southend, the 20 is replaced by service 25, which will follow the same route as the 20 and run at an increased frequency on all days of the week. Service X30 will also provide additional journey opportunities as it will be calling at all stops between Rayleigh and Southend Hospital. The amended service 27, will run between Hullbridge, Rayleigh, Rayleigh Weir, Thundersley (Woodmans Arms), Hadleigh (Victoria House Corner), Kiln Road, Kents Hill Road, Benfleet Station and Canvey Leigh Beck. Service 27 buses serving Hullbridge will run every 20 minutes on weekdays, and every 30 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays We recognise the importance of travel for those attending schools in the area. A schoolday only service 20S journey will continue to run a return journey between Hullbridge and Southend via Westcliff schools. This will depart Hullbridge at 07.20 and Southend at 15.30.

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Basildon to Southend via Rayleigh & Wickford

- This will be rerouted between Rayleigh and Southend to run via the existing service 20 route. This will be via Bridgwater Drive instead of Southbourne Grove / Prince Avenue, and via Clarence Road / Grove Road / Bull lane instead of Eastwood Road.
- The frequency is increased to every 15 minutes on Monday to Friday, every 15 minutes on Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sundays
- Service X30 will be amended to call at intermediate stops between Rayleigh and Southend Hospital, providing a service over the previous service 25 route and a 24-hour service along the Southend - Eastwood - Rayleigh corridor.
- School service 825 route is unchanged

We have looked very carefully at our services in the area and across South Essex. We have considered recent data about how our passengers use our services and looked to ensure we match most of the journeys made with our new service patterns. As an example, around 90% of our current passengers on service 20 either use it between Hullbridge and Rayleigh or between Rayleigh and Southend. These journeys will be unaffected by these changes and will still be able to be made on the proposed 25 and 27 services. Journeys to and from Southend can be made by changing between the 27 and the 25 or X30.

The table below shows the places at which buses will stop and changes can be made. We believe the easiest place to change will be at Rayleigh Station where the 25, 27 and X30 will all stop in each direction.

Towards Southend / Canvey	
Bus Stop	Route
Rayleigh Station (opposite)	25, 27, X30
Rayleigh High St	25
Rayleigh Eastwood Road	X30
Rayleigh outside Police Station	27
Towards Basildon / Hullbridge / Chelmsford	
Bus Stop	Route
Rayleigh Library (opp Police Stn)	27
Rayleigh Eastwood Road	25, X30
Rayleigh Station (just past station)	25, 27, X30

I am aware, from your feedback, that there is concern about any additional cost for those people who do want to travel from Hullbridge onwards to Southend or in the opposite direction. I am pleased to say that we are planning to introduce a through ticket that will allow someone to only pay once to make those journeys. It is also our intention to accept our period products on the X30 and we will be asking that the Octopus ticket is also made valid on the X30 between Southend and Wolsey Park.

I know that changes to bus services do concern people. We are planning a full marketing campaign to ensure as many people as possible are aware of the changes and how they might be affected.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Mathieson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long horizontal line that extends to the right.

Simon Mathieson

Regional Director · First Bus · East of England & Midlands

cc – Mark Francois, MP