

Marie Goldman

MP for Chelmsford



Who could not smile at the joy brought by Takeover to the city?

It was a fabulous atmosphere in Chelmsford city centre last Saturday as the Chelmsford Takeover... well, how do I put this?... took over the High Street. I have to admit that I'm not the world's biggest fan of fancy dress, but this is dress-up on a whole different level and the fun and entertainment that was being had by people of all ages was so plain to see. Who could fail to smile at the joy that it brought?

The cheerful cosplay (short for 'costume play') bonanza saw aficionados from far and wide descend on Chelmsford High Street in colourful and realistic costumes from stage and screen across the ages. From Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi out of Star Wars, to Kitt, the talking car from Knight Rider that I remember being slightly obsessed by in my youth, as well as Ecto-1, the original Ghostbusters' car, complete with the ghostbusting team themselves.

There was so much fun for the whole family. A huge congratulations to the team from the Business Improvement District, aka Chelmsford For You, for bringing it together so successfully.

I know from talking to some of the team members on Saturday afternoon that it was a long day that started in the early hours of the morning, but that it was worth it to see the huge increase in footfall it brought to Chelmsford city centre, the extra trade it brought to local businesses, and the general lovely, positive vibe it created in the High Street and beyond.

It was so lovely to wander through the crowds and see the smiles on everyone's faces as they soaked it all up. With so much negativity in the world right now, this felt like just the sort of wonderful escapism that's



There was even a dinosaur in the city centre for the Chelmsford Takeover

needed, even if just for a few hours. Parliament returned after the Easter recess on Monday, but just for a short while. We are currently expecting it to be 'prorogued' (meaning the end of the parliamentary session) at the end of April, with a new King's Speech and the State Opening of Parliament on May 13.

It's a bit of a strange concept, but at prorogation any draft legislation that hasn't made it all the way through all of the stages of Parliament falls, meaning it has no chance of progressing any further unless it is reintroduced in the next session of

Parliament and goes through all the required stages again.

This is what is very likely to happen to the Assisted Dying Bill (officially called the 'Terminally Adults (End of Life) Bill'), which is likely not to make it out of the House of Lords before prorogation. I think that's a huge session - so much effort and debate went into this draft law that for it to fall because of the rather arbitrary deadline of the end of a parliamentary session feels like such a waste, not to mention the false hope it gave to all those who have campaigned for such a long time to bring it forward.

It remains to be seen whether anything similar will be brought forward in the next session.

The King's Speech, given at the State Opening of Parliament, does what its title implies: it's a speech given by the King in Parliament. Traditionally, it lists many of the aims of the Government, giving everyone hints about what is likely to come forward as draft legislation in the new parliamentary session. It sets the direction of the new session and is scrutinised closely by politicians



Marie Goldman MP meets one of the many characters who appeared at this year's Chelmsford Takeover
PHOTOS: MARIE GOLDMAN MP

and political commentators looking for clues about what the Government will be prioritising in the coming year or so. I'm looking forward to the traditional pageantry and spectacle that accompanies the King's Speech, where the King officially summons MPs to the House of Lords to hear the speech being delivered. It is only the second King's speech since the 2024 General Election.

Locally in Chelmsford, I've continued to work closely with the NHS to push for the meaningful and positive change that's needed to rebuild trust and the high standards that we expect and know are possible from our local services.

I am incredibly grateful to the NHS staff who have taken the time to contact me to give me their perspectives on what's going wrong, what's going right, and what needs to change. They have given me a much deeper understanding of what's happening within the Mid & South Essex NHS Trust, and made it easier for me to challenge, constructively, the leadership of the trust as well as flag issues to the leadership of the new Essex-wide Integrated Care

Board (ICB). Going forward, I am having regular meetings with the trust, raising the concerns that are raised with me, and working on solutions to the issues that are raised with me time and time again.

I'm also very grateful to all of my constituents who have been in touch to tell me their own personal experiences of our local healthcare services. While there is obviously much room for improvement, it has also been lovely to hear when constituents have told me about the wonderful care they have received.

It's clear that there is some excellent work happening and the NHS is still the very best place to go if you have a healthcare concern - we just need to work hard to make sure the standard of care is consistently high and that we support staff to achieve the very best.

If you have personal experience of our local NHS services - either as a staff member or a patient - that you would like to share with me, please send an email to my office: marie.goldman.mp@parliament.uk.

Keep well and thanks for reading.

Marie



The Chelmsford Takeover brought a huge increase in footfall to the city centre