

# Minutes

## Cabinet



3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012

These minutes principally record decisions taken and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions. A webcast of the meeting is available at [www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk).

Present:

Portfolio	Cabinet Member	Present
Leader of the Council	Councillor G Butland (Chairman)	Yes
People and Participation	Councillor Mrs J Beavis	Yes
	Councillor P Tattersley	Yes
Performance and Efficiency	Councillor D L Bebb	Yes
	Councillor J T McKee	Yes
Place	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt	Yes
	Councillor R G S Mitchell	Yes
Planning and Property	Councillor Lady Newton	Yes
	Councillor J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Yes
Prosperity and Growth	Councillor C Siddall (Deputy Leader of the Council)	Yes

Councillor Barlow, Leader of the Labour Group, and Councillor Dr Evans, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, were also present as invitees of the Leader.

Apologies were received from Councillor Abbott, Leader of the Green Group, also an invitee of the Leader.

The following Councillors were also in attendance: Councillors Everard, Mann and Ramage.

### 69. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** The following interests were declared:

- Councillor Beavis declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 11a, Recommendations from the Local Development Framework Sub-committee – 7th November 2012 – Draft Master Plan for the Premdor/Rockways Site at Sible Hedingham – Amendments, as a member of Sible Hedingham Parish Council which had made representations.
- Council Butland declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 8a, Transfer of Land at Great Notley Country Park to 1<sup>st</sup> Great Notley Scout Association, as a Ward Member for Great Notley and Braintree West, and Chairman of Great Notley Parish Council.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct all Members remained in the meeting for all items, unless stated otherwise, and took part in the debate and decision thereon.

70. **QUESTION TIME**

**INFORMATION:** There were no statements made or questions asked.

71. **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72. **LEADER'S UPDATE**

The Leader announced that following an extensive recruitment process, Andrew Wright, currently with Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils has been appointed as the new Corporate Director.

73. **SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2012/13**

**INFORMATION:** In response to a question from Councillor Barlow, Councillor Bebb agreed to provide clarification on the consideration of 10 properties under the Empty Home Rescue Scheme and to forward the information to members of the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group.

**DECISION:** That the report be noted and endorsed.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform the Cabinet of the performance of the Council.

74. **WELFARE REFORM – LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

**INFORMATION:** In response to a question, Councillor Bebb agreed that a simplified guide to the Localised Council Tax Support scheme would be made available.

**DECISION:** That it be recommend to Council that:

1. The Braintree District Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2013/14 as detailed in Appendix A to the report is adopted;
2. The Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund policy as detailed in Appendix B to the report is adopted; and
3. An amendment to the Council's Scheme of Delegation be agreed to enable the introduction of the Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme and the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund from 1st April 2013 as set out in the report.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To recommend to Council the Local Council Tax Support scheme for the Braintree district to be implemented from 1st April 2013.

75. **LEASEHOLD TRANSFER OF PLAYING FIELD AND ALLOTMENTS IN QUEENS GARDENS, PANFIELD**

Minutes Published: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012  
Call-in Expires: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2012

**DECISION:** That a new 50 year lease with Panfield Parish Council, for the playing field and allotments at Queen Gardens Panfield be approved.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To approve the transfer Community Assets to Panfield Parish Council on a 50 year lease.

76. **TRANSFER OF LAND AT GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK TO 1ST GREAT NOTLEY SCOUT ASSOCIATION**

**DECISION:**

1. That the transfer of a piece of land at Great Notley Country Park to the Scout Association (Trust Corporation) on a leasehold basis for new accommodation for the 1<sup>st</sup> Great Notley Scout Group be approved in principle.
2. That the negotiation of the detailed lease terms with the Scout Association should they wish to proceed with the land transfer be agreed.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To support the transferring of an area of land at Great Notley Country Park to the Scout Association (Trust Corporation).

77. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM RESTRUCTURE**

**DECISION:**

1. That the establishment of the post of Head of Economic Development be agreed.
2. That the allocation of £46,000 of New Homes Bonus to establish the post of Economic Development graduate trainee for a fixed term of two years be approved.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To increase resource in the Economic Development team to deliver the Prosperity priorities as set out in the 2012-16 Corporate Strategy.

78. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SUB-COMMITTEE – 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012 – DRAFT MASTER PLAN FOR THE PREMDOR/ROCKWAYS SITE AT SIBLE HEDINGHAM - AMENDMENTS**

**DECISION:** That it be recommended to Council:

1. That the area of land to be safeguarded for the health facility in the Premdor/Rockways, Sible Hedingham Master Plan be increased to 0.25 ha.
2. That the Planning Officers be requested to work with the site agents to amend the Master Plan to take account of the proposed enlargement to the health facility site and the requested financial contribution to health provision, subject to the Officers using their best endeavours to retain the area identified for the

work hub.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To recommend the Council's position on the Premdor/Rockways site Masterplan, on the area to be safeguarded in respect of a health facility.

79. **CABINET MEMBER UPDATES**

**INFORMATION:** Councillor Lady Newton, Cabinet Member, Planning and Property, drew members attention to the Government's public consultation proposals to increase the length of extensions under permitted development rights and sought guidance in relation to her to response to the consultation for Council.

Cabinet Members agreed that the Council's response should make clear to Government Ministers that localism means decisions being taken locally by people who are answerable locally. Members expressed concern about the balance between local decision making and top-down decisions. Local members are in the best position to make decisions on these developments and not politicians in Westminster.

Councillor Bebb, Cabinet Member, Performance and Efficiency, reported that technical reforms to council tax allow the Council to remove council tax discounts, for example those discounts that apply to empty and second homes in the district and to charge a premium on those that have been empty for some time. The sum total of discounts given by the Council on properties reduces the council tax income by £877,000. He acknowledged that under current arrangements, much of any increase in revenue from the removal of council tax discounts would be passed to Essex County Council. However, he reported that the District Council is seeking to negotiate a better arrangement from the County Council in any changes to council tax discounts.

Councillor Bebb pointed to the difficult financial position the Council is facing with reducing Government grants and that the Council will be collecting council tax from those who have not previously been required to pay the tax as a result of the welfare reforms.. He added that removing the discount might also bring some empty homes in the district back into use.

Councillor Bebb advised that in the light of this situation he would be producing a report for consideration by Council on 10<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Butland clarified that this report was deemed to be urgent and needed to go to the next Council meeting because it affected the tax base that the Council had to report on in December.

89. **MINUTES TO BE NOTED**

**DECISION:** That the minutes of the Local Development Framework Sub-committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012 be noted.

90. **CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS MADE UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

**DECISION:** That the delegated decisions set out in the report be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** The reasons for each decision can be found in the individual Delegated Decisions

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.14pm.

G BUTLAND  
(Leader)