

# Council AGENDA



**THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

*(Please note this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded)*

<http://www.braintree.gov.uk>

**Date: Monday, 18th April 2016**

**Time: 7.15pm**

**Venue: Council Chamber , Braintree District Council, Causeway House,  
Bocking End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9HB**

## **Membership:**

Councillor J Abbott	Councillor J Goodman	Councillor R Ramage
Councillor Mrs J Allen	Councillor A Hensman	Councillor F Ricci
Councillor C Bailey	Councillor P Horner	Councillor B Rose
Councillor M Banthorpe	Councillor D Hufton-Rees	Councillor Miss V Santomauro
Councillor J Baugh	Councillor D Hume	Councillor Mrs W Scattergood
Councillor Mrs J Beavis	Councillor H Johnson	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt
Councillor D Bebb	Councillor Mrs A Kilmartin	Councillor P Schwier
Councillor R Bolton	Councillor S Kirby	Councillor C Siddall
Councillor K Bowers	Councillor D Mann	Councillor Mrs G Spray
Councillor Mrs L Bowers–Flint	Councillor J McKee	Councillor P Tattersley
Councillor G Butland	Councillor R Mitchell	Councillor Miss M Thorogood
Councillor S Canning	Councillor Mrs J Money	Councillor R van Dulken
Councillor J Cunningham	Councillor Lady Newton	Councillor Mrs L Walters
Councillor Mrs M Cunningham	Councillor J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Councillor Mrs S Wilson
Councillor T Cunningham	Councillor Mrs I Parker	Vacancy
Councillor M Dunn	Councillor Mrs S Paul	
Councillor J Elliott	Councillor Mrs J Pell	

**Members of the Council are requested to attend this meeting to transact the business set out in the Agenda.**

N BEACH  
Chief Executive

## QUESTION TIME

Immediately after the Minutes of the previous meeting have been approved there will be a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak.

Members of the public wishing to speak should contact the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email [demse@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk) at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.

Members of the public can remain to observe the whole of the public part of the meeting.

**Health and Safety.** Any persons attending meetings in the Council offices are requested to take a few moments to familiarise themselves with the nearest available fire exit, indicated by the fire evacuation signs. In the event of a continuous alarm sounding during the meeting, you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by the fire evacuation officer who will identify him/herself should the alarm sound. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building. Any persons unable to use the stairs will be assisted to the nearest safe refuge.

**Mobile Phones.** Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent or is switched off during the meeting.

**Documents.** Agendas, reports and minutes for all the Council's public meetings can be accessed via the internet at <http://www.braintree.gov.uk>

We welcome comments from members of the public to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. We would appreciate any suggestions regarding the usefulness of the paperwork for this meeting, or the conduct of the meeting you have attended.

Please let us have your comments setting out the following information:

Meeting Attended .....Date of Meeting.....

Comments.....

.....

.....

.....

Contact details.....

Members unable to attend the meeting are requested to forward their apologies for absence to the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email [demse@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk)

## **INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

### **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest:-**

Any member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest to indicate in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Such Member must not participate in any discussion of the matter in which they have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting. In addition, the Member must withdraw from the chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 To receive any announcements/statements from the Chairman and/or Leader of the Council.**

**3 Declarations of Interest**

To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda having regard to the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.

**4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 22nd February 2016 (copy previously circulated).

**5 Public Question Time**  
(See paragraph below)

**6 Annual Timetable of Meetings 2016/17**

To confirm the following dates of Council meetings (as set out in the Annual Timetable):

Ordinary meetings of the Council start at 7.15pm on:-

27th June 2016

5th September 2016

17th October 2016

12th December 2016

22nd February 2017

27th March 2017

Special Meetings of Council for the Local Plan start at 7.15pm on:-

20th June 2016

21st November 2016

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 24th April 2017.

<b>7</b>	<b>Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan - Procedural Steps</b>	<b>7 - 16</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members</b> To receive the following reports from each Portfolio Holder.  Oral Questions to the Cabinet: Members are reminded that following the presentation of each Cabinet Member's report, Members may put questions to the Cabinet Member on matters relating to their portfolio, the powers and duties of the Council or the District. Questions are not restricted to the contents of the Cabinet Member's report.  Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all Members. (Council Procedure Rules 29.1 to 29.4 apply).  A period of up to 1 hour is allowed for this item.	
<b>8a</b>	<b>Councillor G Butland - Leaders Report to Council</b>	<b>17 - 18</b>
<b>8b</b>	<b>Councillor Mrs J Beavis - Health and Communities</b>	<b>19 - 22</b>
<b>8c</b>	<b>Councillor D Bebb - Finance And Performance</b>	<b>23 - 24</b>
<b>8d</b>	<b>Councillor T Cunningham - Economic Development</b>	<b>25 - 26</b>
<b>8e</b>	<b>Councillor Lady Newton - Planning and Housing</b>	<b>27 - 29</b>
<b>8f</b>	<b>Councillor J McKee - Corporate Services and Asset Management</b>	<b>30 - 31</b>

- 8g Councillor Mrs W Schmitt - Environment and Place 32 - 36
- 9 List of Public Meetings held since last Council Meeting 37 - 38
- 10 **Chairmen's Statements**  
To receive statements from those Chairmen who have given prior notification in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 33.1 and to respond to questions on such statements.  
***None have been received.***
- 11 **Statements by Members**  
To receive any statements by Members of which the appropriate written notice has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 32.1. ***None have been received.***
- 12 **External Organisations**  
To receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of external organisations.  
***None have been recieved.***
- 13 **Exclusion of Public and Press: - To give consideration to adopting the following Resolution: -**  
That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.

## **PRIVATE SESSION**

- 14 **Leader's or Cabinet Member Statements - Private Session**  
Leader's Statments or statements by Cabinet Members containing exempt information on a key issue.  
***None have been recieved.***
- 15 **Policy Recommendations and References - Private Session**  
***None have been recieved.***
- 16 **Reports from the Leader or Cabinet Members - Private Session**  
To receive any reports from the Leader of the Council and each Portfolio Holder containing exempt information and to ask questions

on matters contained in the reports.

Where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response will be issued to all Members. (Council Procedure Rules 29.1 to 29.4 apply).

***None have been received.***

**17 Private Meetings Held Since the Last Council Meeting**

To raise any matters arising from the Minutes of meetings that have been held in Private Session since the Council meeting of 22nd February 2016.

***None have been received.***

**18 Chairmen's Statements - Private Session.**

To receive statements from those Chairmen who have given prior notification in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 33.1 and to respond to questions on such statements.

***None have been received.***

**19 Statements by Members - Private Session**

To receive any statements by Members of which the appropriate written notice has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 32.1. ***None have been received.***

<b>Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan – Procedural Steps</b>		<b>Agenda No: 7</b>
<b>Portfolio:</b> Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction <b>Corporate Outcome:</b> Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers <b>Report presented by:</b> Councillor Graham Butland. Leader of the Council <b>Report prepared by:</b> Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager		
<b>Background Papers:</b>  <a href="#">Council Procedural Rules – Chapter 2 of the Constitution</a> Report and Minutes of the Developing Democracy Group – 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2016.		<b>Public Report</b>  <b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  <p>The Local Plan is due to be considered by Full Council at two Special Meetings on 20th June 2016 and 21st November 2016.</p> <p>Following the Special Meeting of Full Council on 25th January 2016, a review of pre-meeting processes was undertaken by the Chief Executive and the Head of Governance following the concerns and points of order raised by Members during and after the meeting in respect of the Council Procedural Rules.</p> <p>With a view to extending Member engagement and to enable greater transparency and probity on the decision making process of the Local Plan, this report sets out a draft timetable for the meetings on 20th June and 21st November 2016 incorporating procedural steps that are recommended to achieve this.</p> <p>The draft timetable was considered by the Developing Democracy Group who gave it strong support whilst recommending that a procedural step be included which made it clear that a single Member may request for a proposed amendment that is indicated as being minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub-Committee to go forward for debate. This recommendation has been incorporated in the timetable.</p> <p>Procedural steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing forward the publication date for the Agenda and reports to 3rd June 2016 and 4th November 2016 - 10 clear days before the meetings.</li> <li>• To suspend Council Procedural Rule 23.4, bringing forward the deadline for Members to submit proposed amendments to the Chief Executive to 12 noon on 10th June and 11th November 2016 respectively - 5 clear working days before the meeting.</li> <li>• Meeting of Officers to discuss the legal implications of amendments.</li> </ul>		

- Meeting with the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub-Committee and Cabinet Members on the amendments.
- Publishing of the proposed amendments to all Members prior to the meeting.
- The proposed amendments which the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub - Committee is minded to accept (without the need for debate) will be indicated.
- Additional period for amendments on the proposed amendments.
- Any one Member can request in writing to the Chief Executive for an amendment that has been indicated as an amendment minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub-Committee to go forward for debate.

As the draft timetable recommends suspension of Council Procedural Rules which relate to the submission and adoption of Amendments, it is necessary for the timetable and the procedural steps to be agreed by Full Council. In order to implement the timetable for the Special Meeting of Full Council on 20th June 2016, the timetable needs to be agreed by Full Council on 18th April 2016.

If agreed, the timetable will be supported with relevant guidance from the Head of Governance/Monitoring Officer to all Members.

Members are requested to consider the timetable and its procedural steps and to agree the timetable for the Special Meetings of Council on 20<sup>th</sup> June and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016.

#### **Recommended Decision:**

- 1) Subject to recommendation 2 below, Members agree the timetable and the suspension of the Council Procedural Rules (as specified in the report) for the Special Meetings of Full Council on 20th June and 21st November 2016.
- 2) That the Head of Governance is authorised to amend the timetable and/or the procedural steps to reflect any amendments as recommended by Full Council.

#### **Purpose of Decision:**

To promote probity and Member engagement on the processes and timetable for the Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan.



**Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.**

<b>Financial:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>The Local Government Act 1972 sets out the periods for publishing the Agenda for Full Council, i.e. 5 clear working days before the meeting. This period may be extended to enable greater Member engagement.</p> <p>The Constitution's Council Procedural Rules (CPR) for Amendments (Rule 23 to 23.9) are not prescribed by law. The Council is not prevented from suspending the specified Council Procedural Rules as set out in this report and the timetable by law or by provisions of the Constitution.</p> <p>CPR 23.4 states that where practical any Councillor who intends to move an amendment to any motion or recommendation included on the agenda shall give written notice to the Chief Executive by 12 noon on the day of the meeting. Details of the proposed amendment will be disclosed to the statutory officers for the purposes of assessing the potential budgetary or legal impact and consequences for the Council.</p> <p>CPR 23.5 states that If the proposer and seconder of the original motion consents to the amendment it can be adopted without the need for further debate or vote; the amended motion then becomes the original motion upon which any further amendment can be moved.</p> <p>CPR 7 states that any of the rules of the Constitution may be suspended by the way of a motion carried by a simple majority at any meeting of the Council.</p>
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	The timetable is to provide a greater opportunity for Member engagement and transparency and probity on the Council's decision making in respect of the Local Plan.
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	None arising out of this report.
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Consultation with representatives of all political parties has been undertaken via the meeting of the Developing Democracy Group held on 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2016.

<b>Risks:</b>	The timetable needs to be agreed by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2016 to give effect to the provision contained therein.
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Wisbey
<b>Designation:</b>	Governance and Member Manager
<b>Ext. No:</b>	2610
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk">emma.wisbey@braintree.gov.uk</a>

Timetable for the Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan on 20<sup>th</sup> June and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016.

Note: Items in grey italics are for Member and Officer information and guidance and may need to be revised to meet the business needs of the Council; they are not formal procedural steps for the Council.

<b>Special Meeting of Full Council - 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Notes</b>
26.05.2016 (Thursday)	7.15pm	Meeting of the Local Plan-Sub-Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included for information only - Last meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee before Full Council on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016.</li> <li>• Agenda published – 18.05.2016.</li> </ul>
<i>27.05.2016 (Friday)</i>	<i>5.30pm</i>	<i>Report Deadline for Council Agenda – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reports to Governance and Members Team for early publication of Agenda on 3.6.2016.</i></li> </ul>
03.06.2016 (Friday)	5.30pm	1) Publication of Agenda and Reports for Full Council  2) Guidance note to Councillors re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declaration of Interests</li> <li>• Amendment Deadlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda published - 10 day before meeting.</li> </ul>
10.06.2016 (Friday)	12 noon	Proposed amendments from Councillors to Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed deadline – Suspension of CPR 23.4</li> <li>• Proposed amendments to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>

Date	Time	Event	Notes
13.06.2016 (Monday)	TBC	1) Meeting of Officers to review proposed amendments.  2) Preparation of proposed amendment pack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</li> <li>Officers to meet – Chief Executive, Corporate Director, Planning Policy, Head of Governance.</li> <li>Governance to prepare Amendment Pack.</li> </ul>
14.06.2016 (Tuesday)	TBC	1) Meeting with Chair of Local Plan Sub-Committee and Cabinet Members (Cllr Lady Newton and Cllr Butland) regarding proposed amendments.  2) Chairman and Vice-Chairman's briefing for Full Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</li> <li>Chairman's briefing to be confirmed.</li> </ul>
15.06.2016 (Wednesday)	By: 5.30pm	1) Deadline for registration for Public Question Time for Council on 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2016.  2) Circulation of proposed amendments to Members and those minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub-Committee indicated.  3) Publication of proposed amendments on the website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance and Member Team maintain PQT Register.</li> <li>Agreed process – Suspension of CPR23.4.</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Event	Notes
20.06.2016 (Monday)	9am	1) Deadline for amendments on the proposed amendments to the Chief Executive.  2) Deadline for requests to the Chief Executive for an amendment minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub - Committee to go forward for debate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed process – suspension of CPRs 23.4 and 23.5.</li> <li>Proposed Amendments to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> <li>Requests for Amendments to go forward for debate to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>
	11am	1) <i>Final proposed Amendments Pack to Chief Executive.</i>  2) <i>Meeting of Officers to review proposed amendments.</i>	
	2pm	Meeting with the Chair of Local Plan Sub-Committee and Cabinet Members (Cllr Lady Newton and Cllr Butland) regarding proposed amendments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</li> </ul>
	5pm	<i>Final briefing with Chairman and Vice-Chairman.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</i></li> </ul>
	6pm	1) Papers on Members' desks in Council Chamber.  2) Proposed amendments published on website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full set of Amendments; both those recommended for acceptance and those for debate.</li> </ul>
	7.15pm	Meeting of Full Council	

Special Meeting of Full Council – 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2016			
Date	Time	Event	Notes
21.10.2016 (Friday)	By: 5.30pm	Reminder email to all Councillors confirming the procedure and timetable for the Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reiteration of agreed timetable.</li> </ul>
28.10.2016 (Friday)	5.30pm	Report deadline for Council Agenda – 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports to Governance and Members Team for early publication of Agenda on 4.11.2016.</li> </ul>
31.10.16 (Monday)	7.15pm	Meeting of the Local Plan-Sub-Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included for information only - Last meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee before Full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016.</li> <li>Agenda published – 21.10.16.</li> </ul>
04.11.2016 (Friday)	By: 5.30pm	1) Publication of Agenda and Reports for Full Council.  2) Guidance note to Councillors re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declaration of Interests</li> <li>Amendment deadlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agenda published - 10 day before meeting (agreed procedure).</li> </ul>
11.11.2016 (Friday)	12 noon	Proposed Amendments from Councillors to Chief Executive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed deadline – Suspension of CPR 23.4 (agreed procedure).</li> <li>Proposed amendments to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>

Date	Time	Event	Notes
14.11.2016 (Monday)	TBC	1) <i>Meeting of Officers to review proposed amendments.</i>  2) <i>Preparation of proposed Amendment Pack.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</i></li> <li><i>Officers to meet – Chief Executive, Corporate Director, Planning Policy, Head of Governance.</i></li> <li><i>Governance to prepare Amendment Pack.</i></li> </ul>
15.11.2016 (Tuesday)	TBC	1) Meeting with the Chair of Local Plan Sub-Committee and Cabinet Members (Cllr Lady Newton and Cllr Butland) regarding proposed amendments.  2) <i>Chairman and Vice-Chairman's briefing for Full Council.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</li> <li><i>Chairman's briefing to be confirmed.</i></li> </ul>
16.11.2016 (Wednesday)	5.30pm	1) Deadline for registration for Public Question Time for Council on 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2016.  2) Circulation of proposed amendments to Members and those minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub-Committee indicated.  3) Publication of proposed amendments on the website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance and Member Team maintain PQT Register.</li> <li>Agreed process – Suspension of CPR23.4.</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Event	Notes
21.11.2016 (Monday)	9am	1) Deadline for amendments on the proposed amendments to the Chief Executive.  2) Deadline for requests to the Chief Executive for an amendment minded to be accepted by the Chairman of the Local Plan Sub - Committee to go forward for debate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed process – suspension of CPRs 23.4 and 23.5.</li> <li>Proposed Amendments to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> <li>Requests for Amendments to go forward for debate to be emailed to <a href="mailto:demse@braintree.gov.uk">demse@braintree.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>
	11am	1) <i>Final proposed Amendments Pack to Chief Executive.</i>  2) <i>Meeting of Officers to review proposed amendments.</i>	
	2pm	Meeting with the Chair of Local Plan Sub-Committee and Cabinet Members (Cllr Lady Newton and Cllr Butland) regarding proposed amendments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</li> </ul>
	5pm	<i>Final briefing with Chairman and Vice-Chairman.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>To be confirmed - Meeting date and time to be arranged.</i></li> </ul>
	6pm	1) Papers on Members' desks in Council Chamber.  2) Proposed amendments published on website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full set of Amendments; both those recommended for acceptance and those for debate.</li> </ul>
	7.15pm	Meeting of Full Council	



**LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**Agenda No: 8a**

**OVERALL CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DIRECTION**

**Meeting with representatives of Campaign Against Urban Sprawl in Essex (CAUSE) – 3rd March 2016**

Together with Lady Newton and officers I met with representatives of CAUSE led by its Chairman Mr Tom Foster. The meeting produced a good exchange of views and a fair amount of common ground. The Secretary of CAUSE presented me with a copy of a petition that CAUSE had presented to Colchester Borough Council. This bears some 6,000 signatures opposed to the possible development around Marks Tey.

**Meeting of SELEP Board – 11th March 2016**

There were two main items of business at this meeting.

**New Chairman**

The first was to appoint a new Chairman for the LEP. Two candidates were presented to the Board by the short listing group. Each addressed members and answered questions. Following this it was the unanimous decision of the Board that Mr Christian Brodie be appointed.

Christian Brodie has high level experience in business, international finance, higher education and working closely with Government departments.

He is the Chair of the Student Loans Company and the Chair of the Council of the University of Sussex. He is also Co-Chair of the Regulatory Partnership for Higher Education and Co-Chair of the Partnership Organisations Chairs' Forum of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

**New Lower Thames Crossing**

The second issue was to receive a presentation from Highways England on the detail of the consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing. This informed the response of SELEP which was published on 25th March.

After listening to the views of businesses and the local authorities across its area, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has given its backing to Route 3 for a new Lower Thames Crossing, creating a new junction on the M25 and linking with Kent, east of Gravesend.

The LEP as a business-focused organisation, championing economic growth in Kent, East Sussex, Essex, Medway, Southend and Thurrock, actively canvassed its partners, stakeholders and businesses to help it reach its conclusion.

The primary concern for businesses and local partners in the area is that a decision to go ahead is made as quickly as possible and that following a decision, steps are taken

to proceed to the construction stage as quickly as possible and the new crossing is open by 2025 or earlier.

SELEP Chairman, Christian Brodie, said: "The Lower Thames Crossing is an infrastructure of local, national and international importance. It is clear that we need to add resilience to the road network in this area in a way which works for our businesses and for the long term growth of the national economy.

"Businesses in the SELEP area strongly support Highway England's proposal for a bored tunnel at Location C, adopting Route 3. Their priority is to ensure a decision to proceed is taken as soon as possible and that this is accompanied by complementary investment in the area's road network."

### **Essex Devolution Proposals**

Work has continued on the Essex Devolution deal. In the budget the Chancellor announced devolution deals with East Anglia, Lincolnshire and West of England. The Government is keen to announce a couple of other County deals before the summer, and in time for Mayoral elections in 2017.

A copy of the E. Anglia deal document can be found at;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/508115/The\\_East\\_Anglia\\_Devolution\\_Agreement\\_FINAL\\_with\\_signatures\\_and\\_logos.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508115/The_East_Anglia_Devolution_Agreement_FINAL_with_signatures_and_logos.pdf)

In terms of funding, an area like Essex should expect a £25 - £30m a year infrastructure fund for 30 years. This would be supplemented by money for skills and multi-year transport settlements put into a single flexible pot. The Combined Authority and Mayor would make prioritisation decisions of the single pot and would be able to use this to leverage other funding.

The government's recent experience shows that they are willing to strike deals in areas where there isn't a unanimous view amongst all the relevant LA's. They are willing to work with areas where a significant majority of councils want to do a deal. In those circumstances they are currently not intending to force the remaining councils to join.

A further briefing is planned for Members on Thursday 28th April 2016.

Councillor Graham Butland  
Leader of the Council

<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Councillor Graham Butland</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>
<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>cllr.gbutland@braintree.gov.uk</b>

**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**Agenda No: 8b**

**Health Improvement**

**Body Science Exhibition**

The exhibition runs from 9<sup>th</sup> February – 30<sup>th</sup> April and has been a huge success with over 1000 local Key Stage 1 and 2 children from the District visiting the exhibition. In addition an exciting Easter Holiday activity programme has been developed which adds to the appeal of the Museum and Body Science Exhibition.

**Livewell Bulletin**

The first Livewell Bulletin will be circulated to all members by the end of April. My intention is to send out the bulletin on a bi-monthly basis to help keep Members informed and updated of projects taking place across the District to address resident's health improvement.

**Dementia Friends**

We have recently set up a Braintree District Dementia Action Alliance which aims to bring organisations from across the District together with the aim of improving the lives of people living with Dementia and their carers. In May, I will support an event in George Yard as part of Dementia Awareness Week. The work we have done on this has been recognised as good practice in the Eastern region, and staff are presenting at an East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) event in late April with the Alzheimer's Society.

**Essex Obesity Report**

As a Member of the Essex County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee I have taken a leading role in the Obesity Report - representing the Braintree District. 68% of adults in the Braintree District are classified as over-weight or obese. Health prevention and community wellbeing is an area that national government see local government leading. The Braintree District with its health partners has pilots in the following areas (all part of an Essex County Council wider obesity awareness):-

- Braintree District School Readiness Pilot (further details under Active Communities)
- Braintree District Childhood Obesity Pilot

**Active Communities**

**Active Essex**

I attended, along with the Public Health Team from Braintree District Council (BDC),

the Active Essex Physical Activity Conference. I had the pleasure to address the conference and share with delegates the priorities of BDC to help improve the health and wellbeing for the people of the Braintree District through increased access to all forms of activity.

### **Active Braintree District Network**

I am a Member of the Active Braintree District Network which means I regularly meet and visit local sport and wellbeing groups. Recently I have visited the Braintree District Martial Arts Club, the Halstead Boxing Club, Braintree Community Iron – supporting children with physical and mental health issues and Braintree Athletics Club.

All of these groups have tremendous volunteering cultures which support hundreds of young people around the District. I will continue to take up as many of the invites as possible.

### **The Council's Leisure Contract**

Councillor Tattersley and I recently carried out the latest quarterly review. The report by Fusion Lifestyle (the Council's Leisure Provider) was impressive. The headlines:-

- Customer visits continue to grow across all our leisure centres – up 10,000 visits compared to last year
- Increase in club membership, including new children's club membership, across all centres – 400 new members
- Customer Satisfaction levels is at 95%
- Sport and community development (outside of our centres) continues to grow – over 20 new activities provided
- Increase in women's participation by 20% compared to last year
- Increase in ethnicity participation by 15% compared to last year
- Increase in disability participation by 10% compared to last year
- Children's swim school (3,500 per week) 100% increase in participation since new contract

Especially good news for the residents of Witham as Fusion and the Maltings Academy have agreed the extended community use of the academy's sports hall and tennis courts for public use outside school hours.

### **Local Government Association (LGA) – Sport and Culture Conference**

I recently attended the LGA Sport and Culture Conference in Leicester with Councillor Peter Schweir (who substituted for Councillor Tom Cunningham – Portfolio Holder: Economic Development).

It was pleasing to hear that, in terms of our approach to health and wellbeing, Braintree District Council is ahead of the curve. I was also impressed by work elsewhere on the use of culture and heritage to attract business development. I will be discussing this further with Councillor Tom Cunningham.

## **Heritage Services**

I was delighted, along with Board Members of the Braintree District Museum Trust, to attend the launch of the Braintree and London Warner Textile Archive Fabric Collection. It has been a fascinating experience to try and understand the desire and depth of expertise designers have for the Warner Collection in a commercial world. The collection later launched in New York and in Los Angeles in April. Early indications are positive from the number of samples issued and the excellent two page feature in the March edition of House & Garden. Further information can be found on the relaunched Archive website at [www.warnertextilearchive.co.uk](http://www.warnertextilearchive.co.uk).

From 1<sup>st</sup> April, Braintree Town Hall (following changes in the Essex County Council Registration Services) will be a new venue for Community Wedding Ceremonies in the Braintree District. The Town Hall continues to grow in events and bookings and I will wish to support the new opportunities arising from these changes.

## **Community Transport**

The Task and Finish Group looking at Community Transport is concluding its piece of work. I look forward to receiving the findings.

From 11<sup>th</sup> April Essex County Council (ECC) launches its Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT). The service is an alternative more flexible way of providing access to services in the rural areas instead of using fixed routes with fixed stops. Specific routes have been defined for the rural areas of the Braintree District. All Parish Council Clerks have been notified of the routes.

ECC previously funded BDC's Community Transport Service to provide a shopper bus service in some of these rural areas and this will come to an end in April as the new DaRT service begins to operate. Our Community Transport Service will continue to operate as usual with all other transport services it offers which are supported financially by ECC and this Council.

## **Safeguarding Training**

Our internal safeguarding training has been updated to include the Hidden Harm Agenda (Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse, etc). To date this has been delivered to 92 staff across the council particularly concentrating on staff who are out and about in the community.

## **Essex County Council Children's Centre Consultation**

ECC is currently seeking views on proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex. I recently attended a consultation event on the proposed changes. They are proposing to provide a more integrated health, wellbeing and family support service for families and children from pre-birth until the age of 19. This includes looking at the future of Sure Start Children's Centres. Under the proposals, Children's Centres would become Family Hubs from 2017. The consultation closes on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and at the time of writing this report the Council's response was still being written. I will verbally update Members on this at the Full Council meeting.

## School Readiness

The Mid Essex Children's Partnership Board has identified Life Readiness as a priority for 2016/17 with the initial focus being School Readiness in the Braintree District. Latest data indicates the District is doing less well than the Essex average and bottom of the District table for overall Good Levels of Development. A steering group has been established and a workshop took place setting out the current picture for the District and to identify current service delivery and gaps in provision.

The key messages from this event were:-

- Isolation of families in rural areas and access to transport
- Engagement of parents
- Poverty
- Mental and Physical Well-being
- Greater co-ordination of services

The steering group has submitted a bid to the Braintree District Health & Well Being Board.

Councillor Mrs Joanne Beavis  
Cabinet Member for Health and Communities

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

**Agenda No: 8c**

**Council Tax and Business collection rates**

The Council Tax collection rate up to the end of February is just short of target, with 97.1% collected, compared to 97.4% for the previous year and the target for the year is 98.0%. The amount collected was £73.89million.

The Business Rates collection rate was well on target, with 96.7% for the year to end of February compared to 95.7% for the previous year and the target for the year is 98.5%. The amount collected was £42.0million.

**Financial Performance**

An overall positive variance is anticipated for the year of £938,000 (-6%), against the budget of £15.624million, with income projected to be overachieved by £911,000, predominantly due to extra income from planning fees of £578,000, and other fee income, plus an increased amount expected from the council tax sharing arrangement with major preceptors.

**Job Fair**

The Council's Housing Benefits service, in conjunction with Braintree Job Centre Plus, arranged and hosted a Jobs Fair at Causeway House on 12th February. The fair was attended by 27 exhibitors, predominately local employers with current vacancies supplemented by advisory bodies including agencies specialising in CV writing, employment law and job searching. Over 500 residents of the district attended. Feedback has been extremely positive and a further event is being planned for September 2016.

**Human Resources and Payroll System**

The Council has teamed up with Colchester Borough Council and Epping Forest District Council in a procurement exercise that will see the HR & Payroll system transfer to a new provider, MidlandHR. The move is expected to deliver significant savings on current arrangements across the three councils.

The changeover to the new system is being undertaken in two phases: the first phase is establishing an interim payroll bureau with MidlandHR which will be used to pay all staff and Members from April 2016, and will operate for a period of up to 6 months. This arrangement will allow staff resources to be focused on setting up the new system which will be the second phase. This phase will deliver an integrated one-stop shop for the HR and Payroll System which will allow the Council to manage all of the elements of employee data while, at the same time, giving staff and Members access to manage their own personal information.

## **Business Rates issue**

As with many billing authorities across England, this Council has received a request for 80% mandatory rate relief, to be backdated for 6 years, from a Rating Agent on behalf of Hospital Trusts in the district. Advice is currently awaited from the Local Government Association; which has requested counsel opinion on the charitable status claimed by the Hospital Trusts. The amount of business rates charged to hospital trusts in 2015/16 was £265,000: if 80% mandatory relief were to be granted this would be £212,000 of which the Council's share would be £84,800. If this was then to be backdated for six years the cost to the Council would be £500,000 approximately.

Councillor David Bebb  
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Agenda No: 8d**

**Economic Development**

Braintree Enterprise Centre extension on Springwood Drive in Braintree was completed on time at the end of January 2016, and we are finalising lease and grant agreements to enable the building to become operational. We are in the process of organising an official launch of the facility with Essex County Council as our funding partners. We have completed a design specification and operational business plan for an Enterprise Centre in Witham, with £500,000 of the Council's New Homes Bonus committed towards the Centre and an outline approval for a contribution towards design fees and build costs, from Essex County Council.

Our Industrial Estate Improvement Programme aims to improve the attractiveness of the District's key estates, for the benefit of existing businesses and to attract new investment, through improved signage, environmental works, parking improvements and enhanced security. Following last year's work with Witham Industrial Watch, the first phase of improvement works to Springwood Drive Industrial Estate in Braintree is underway. This phase has been funded by Essex County Council at a cost of £125,000. Further work on the programme will be undertaken in the current financial year with £75,000 funding from the District Council and a £125,000 contribution from Essex County Council, involving further works on Springwood Drive Estate and the Witham Industrial Estates, and work to Halstead's industrial areas.

**Business Engagement**

Following the Open Business Forums in Braintree and Witham, we will be delivering a programme of events for 2016/17 with Essex Chambers of Commerce, to ensure regular engagement with a wide range of businesses. We are circulating a regular economic development update to all businesses on our database to complement the quarterly Economic Development Newsletter.

**Skills**

We worked closely with Colchester Institute on a campaign to promote the use of apprenticeships to local employers as part of Apprenticeship Week during March 2016. I attended the launch of the campaign at the College at Braintree on 16<sup>th</sup> March, and we are holding an employer focussed event 28<sup>th</sup> April at the Essex Hotel at Earls Colne. I am delighted that Tamdown Construction are helping us with the campaign, Tamdown are one of our top employers and have an admirable record in investing in staff training and running an in-house apprenticeship programme.

**Regeneration**

Following public consultation, last year, town centre improvement masterplans for Halstead and Witham Town Centre are nearing completion which will enable us consult the Town Teams and Town Councils early this summer, and secure their agreement to deliver these improvements later in the year. We have also

commissioned advice on improved pedestrian signage in Braintree, Witham and Halstead.

With town centre improvement masterplans well underway in Halstead and Witham, our focus in the coming year will be on developing a masterplan for Braintree Town Centre, building upon our successful improvements to date at St. Michael's fountain and the South Street/ Fairfield Road enhancement, and our ongoing work to improve Sandpit Lane and pedestrian signage. We will be consulting widely on that masterplan working closely with stakeholders including Braintree Town Team and Essex County Council, and will be looking at further improvements to the public realm; options for pedestrianisation; and traffic flows into and around the Town Centre.

Councillor Tom Cunningham  
Cabinet Member for Economic Development

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PLANNING AND HOUSING**

**Agenda No: 8e**

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Highways England completed public consultation on options for a new Lower Thames Crossing on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The current Thames crossing at Dartford is a critical part of the strategic road network serving Essex and the East of England which is currently running at capacity. A new crossing would open up the region, improving access to the Thames Estuary and Channel ports, opening up new markets, attracting inward investment, and improving access to the skilled labour that our businesses need to remain competitive and grow. I submitted a response expressing District Council support for Route 3, location C (the Government's preferred option) which involves a crossing the west of East Tilbury. The route would cross the A13 where an upgraded junction would be provided before connecting with the M25 north of South Ockendon. Of the three options, this would provide the shortest route, the greatest improvement to journey time, deliver a modern high quality road maximising the economic benefit of a new crossing, and would also have the lowest environmental impact of the three options. I also supported a bored tunnel crossing rather than a bridge or immersed tunnel - the current bridge and tunnels are frequently closed so an additional bridge or substandard tunnel crossing would not deliver the vision of an always open 70mph route. I have also written to our two MP's to encourage them to respond supporting the District Council's views, and our response will be incorporated in an Essex-wide response from the County Council, and a Haven Gateway Partnership response.

Essex County Council is continuing to work on the options for a new or improved route for the A120 from Braintree to the A12. I am attending the Members' Forum for this work with officers attending environmental and economic development forums as part of stakeholder consultation. This work will be completed and full public consultation undertaken, by April 2017 with a preferred option put to the Secretary of State by August or September 2017. Haven Gateway Partnership will be holding an event to encourage businesses to sign up to the A120 campaign on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016, at the Essex Hotel at Earls Colne. We are working with the Partnership to ensure a good turnout of District businesses at that event.

I have provided Council with an update on planned works by Highways England to the Marks Farm roundabout on the A120 at previous meetings. I am disappointed that these works have not yet been undertaken, and at the lack of information provided by Highways England. I have therefore written to the Chairman of Highways England asking for an update on their planned works to the roundabout, and to be kept informed in the future.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

I attended the meeting of the Garden Communities Shadow Delivery Board on the 24<sup>th</sup> March and noted the reports which were presented to the meeting. Work on the suitability and availability of the garden communities options has been commissioned by specialist consultants and will help us to consider the opportunities and constraints for stand-alone garden communities.

We have responded to two consultations from the government on changes to new homes bonus and national planning policy. Three further consultations are currently underway by the government in relation to technical changes to planning as a result of the Housing and Planning Bill, consultation on the recommendations of the Local Plans expert groups to change the local plan production process and a just released consultation on starter homes. This consultation is proposing that 1 in 5 or 20% of new homes on sites 10 or more would be a starter home, available at a 20% discount to first time buyers under 40. This would of course have implications for the delivery of traditional affordable housing.

A memorandum of understanding with the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley project has been signed for this year, with the agreed budget contribution now at £12,000.

## **HOUSING**

### **Homelessness & Temporary Accommodation**

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016 the Council has accepted 67 households as being eligible, homeless and in priority need, out of a total of 125 applications initiated. The Housing Options Team continues to focus on preventing homelessness occurring and this year has seen a reduction in the number of homelessness applications/decisions, accompanied by an increase in prevention/relief. During the same period the team helped 60 households to remain in their existing accommodation and assisted 199 households to secure alternative accommodation. The team also relieved homelessness for a further 75 households (mainly single people) by helping them to find somewhere to live.

On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 the number of households in temporary accommodation is 44. The number has been between 43 and 53 households at the end of each month throughout 2015/16.

### **Affordable Housing Development**

For 2015/16 we are now forecasting that there will be 76 affordable housing completions. Our previous prediction was that there would be 84 new affordable homes but only 16 of the 24 homes scheduled for completion Maltings Lane, Witham will now be completed in this financial year. The balance of 8 units will be completed during April.

During the year there have been new affordable homes completed in Witham, Braintree, Panfield and Kelvedon. 74 of the homes are affordable rented homes; the remaining 2 are for shared ownership. The Council is working closely with Greenfields, Flagship, CHP, Family Mosaic and Colne Housing on a programme of new affordable

homes and developments are now on site in Sible Hedingham, Braintree, Witham and Kelvedon.

Crossman House, a former office block near the station in Braintree, is being demolished and a planning application has been submitted for 20 new affordable homes on the site and the Council's new scheme for homeless households on Rayne Road is on course for completion in the summer.

### **The Housing Register**

As at 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 there were 2,287 applicants on the Housing Register with active applications. The number of applicants has been between 2,241 and 2,456 at the end of each month in 2015/16.

At 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 the number of applicants in each band was as follows:-

95 – Band A (Includes 72 applicants seeking to downsize from 3 bed+ accommodation)

234 – Band B (Includes 36 applicants downsizing from 2 bed accommodation)

637 – Band C

125 – Band D

1178 – Band E

18 – Band F (Non bidding band used for applicants who require supported schemes that are not advertised on the Gateway to Homechoice Website such as Helen Court in Witham or Abbeyfields in Braintree)

During this financial year so far, 584 households have been housed through the Housing Register.

Councillor Lady Newton  
Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
CORPORATE SERVICES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

**Agenda No: 8f**

**HR/OD&L**

A Member Development Survey has been completed and will be used to design the Member Development Programme for 2016/17. Thank you to all the Members that contributed.

We currently employ 20 apprentices. We also host 2 additional apprentices who are employed by external organisations. In addition to this we have recently launched our level 4 qualification with 3 existing staff participating in the scheme. Completion dates vary depending on the level of the qualification and the type of apprenticeship being undertaken.

There have been considerable changes in the approach to apprenticeships in the last year with one of the major elements being an increase to pay levels. This has influenced our planning for the 2016/17 intake but I am happy to report that we intend to recruit a further 8 apprentices to begin working with us in September. This also means that we will meet the new national requirement in respect of apprenticeship numbers.

**Elections**

We are in the final stages of preparation for the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections for the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2016 along with District and Town By-Elections on the same day.

Since my last report to Council the EU Referendum has been set for the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 and officers are ensuring that appropriate preparations are underway to ensure its local delivery.

**Business Solutions**

The generator that provides emergency electricity back up for Causeway House has been replaced and the project completed at the end of March after minor delays due to unplanned problem resolutions. This will increase the services that are backed up and improve the business continuity for the authority.

The organisation has been experiencing slowness on the data network during the first quarter and we also have experienced email problems which are being investigated with Capita. The issue is being managed and a permanent solution is being implemented. An update will be issued to Members in April to confirm full resolution.

The new responsive website went live March 2016. This new site is easier to use from mobile devices, supporting the increased number of our customers that access our services from their tablets and mobile phones. Some teething problems with ease of use for members is being addressed with the web team and Governance and Members team.

**Procurement**

The rebate income received for the use of the Procurement Hub's framework agreements is £64,000 more than budgeted for the year. This was due to greater than expected use of the refuse vehicles framework agreement. The income is shared between all six member authorities of the Procurement Hub.

**Audit, Insurance and Risk**

The Council's Strategic Risk Register was updated and agreed by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

**Asset Management**

Work is underway on the access to the Twin Oaks site, and a final scheme has been agreed by Highways England and Braintree District Council. Highways England have now advised that the removal of the earth bund and the fencing works will be completed by 25<sup>th</sup> April. The access works into the site will then follow.

Two purchasers have been identified for the Bramston site and we are currently negotiating heads of terms. Once terms have been agreed these will be reported to Cabinet.

**Communications and Marketing**

We have just completed a Customer Satisfaction survey across the District. So far we have received over 1,000 responses and there are still more coming in. We will be working to analyse the results ready to report in May.

Councillor John McKee  
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Asset Management

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE**

**Agenda No: 8g**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**Food check failings**

The Food Standards Agency claims that councils are failing to carry out the required number of inspections at restaurants, takeaways and food processing plants. The Agency's report states: "At a local level, there are a good number of authorities which are struggling to undertake interventions of food businesses at the required frequencies. More generally, the number of food businesses and customer complaints continue to rise, while local authority staff resources, intervention and sampling levels continue to fall." There is good news for us: not only have we met our inspection targets, but the number of 'Broadly Compliant' food establishments in the District has increased to 94%.

**Flooding**

The final highways flood alleviation hotspot schemes will get under way in early Spring. These schemes are part of the joint approach by ECC Highways and the Council to tackle the worst highway flooding hotspots in the District (ECC and the Council both put in £50K to a joint fund).

The last three schemes are:

- Aletha Farm Place, Juxta Clare - Flooding of the highway which hampers access to 5 domestic properties.
- Guithavon Valley, Witham - Significant flooding near the junction with Guithavon Road.
- Oak Road, Rivenhall - Land drainage issue; water from the golf course drains into a highways ditch and this, in turn, floods the road as far as the railway bridge.

**LICENSING**

**Hackney Carriage unmet Demand Survey**

The Council is due to start a survey to determine whether there is an unmet demand for Hackney Carriage Services within the Braintree District. The survey is required to justify the Council's position of regulating the number of taxis in the District. It is aimed to present the findings to the Licensing Committee in the Summer of 2016.

**Taxi Driver - Knowledge Test Guidance**

The Council has published new guidance notes for prospective drivers wishing to become a Licensed Driver in the Braintree District. The guidance has been improved and includes new sections on Safeguarding, Disability and Equality as well improving the existing information provided.



### **Proposed changes to the Licensing Act 2003**

The Policing and Crime Bill was introduced to Parliament. The Bill proposes to make the following amendments to the Licensing Act 2003:-

- Amending the definition of alcohol to include powdered alcohol and vaporised alcohol.
- Amending the Summary Review process to allow licensing authorities to keep interim steps in place between the new hearing and the outcome of any appeal. Also amending S.53B to limit the number of times a licensee can make representations against the interim steps before the review hearing.
- Giving licensing authorities the power to revoke or suspend a personal licence when someone is convicted of a relevant offence.
- Adding to the list of relevant offences.
- Removing the requirement to lay the 182 Guidance before parliament when it is revised. (the guidance will retain its statutory status).

### **OPERATIONS**

#### **Dog Chipping Campaign**

On 6th April 2016 new legislation came into force around requirements to microchip dogs. Every dog owner in England will have to microchip their dog under plans intended to cut a rise in strays. The microchips will be coded with owners' details; owners who do not comply could face fines of up to £500.

Government figures reveal that more than 100,000 dogs are dumped or lost each year, at a cost of £57m to the taxpayer and welfare charities.

Over the last 6 months the Marketing and Comms team have been working with the Dog Wardens to ensure dog owners are aware of the new legislation. Posters have been distributed to vets and the campaign has been promoted through our channels including council page, social media, website and press.

#### **DCLG funded Flats & Schools Recycling Project**

Good progress has been made in relation to this scheme with 477 blocks of flats (6,918 dwellings) surveyed and, of those, 277 agreeing/able to participate. (Not all flats are suitable for recycling facilities and there are also privately owned properties that have chosen not to participate.) Each flat will receive explanatory leaflets and re-usable bags at the same time as the bins are installed and all residents and managing agents will receive introductory letters 3 weeks prior to delivery of the bins. A further 41 blocks of flats received their recycling bins in Q3 bringing the total to 100 flat blocks (out of 277 in total). We aim to complete the roll-out by the end of June 2016.

In terms of schools, 36 have been surveyed and we estimate the total tonnage of food waste that can be diverted from landfill to be around 250-300 tonnes per school year. 26 schools are already receiving collections and of the 10 visited for feedback, all were happy and had zero waste going into their residual bins. Staff are continuing their efforts to encourage other schools to sign up.

### **Trade Waste Charges**

The Controlled Waste Regulations sets out the legal charging regime under which Waste Collection and Disposal Authorities operate. These were amended in 2012 giving Waste Disposal Authorities (WDA) additional powers to charge for the disposal of waste from certain commercial premises that previously had been exempt. At the time, Essex County Council (a WDA) took a decision to continue to subsidise this element of the service, but with dwindling resources, they can no longer afford to do so and have taken a decision to impose a levy from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. This will affect premises such as care homes, hospital/nursing homes and premises forming part of educational establishments. The only exception will be state schools that were receiving a commercial waste service before 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (any schools built after this date will automatically incur a collection *and* disposal charge).

Insofar as the Council's customers are concerned, this will affect 24 Care Homes and several private schools within the Braintree District who will be required to pay an increased amount for their trade waste collections.

### **Clean for the Queen**

As part of the Clean for the Queen campaign, Council staff undertook a litter pick of the verges on both sides of the A120 and the central reservation, as well as a sweep of the road kerbs. They collected 84 tonnes of detritus/sweepings (approximately 7 dustcart loads) and 2.5 tonnes of waste including litter, shredded tyres, vehicle parts and road-kill.

In addition, local residents, Green Heart Champions, Parish and Town Councils, community groups, and local schools and businesses were busy with their own litter picks.

During March, our Council's enforcement team carried out patrols and took action against those seen littering.

### **New Allotments at Bocking (Partnership with Greenfields CH)**

Infrastructure works at the new allotment site at Bocking have been completed including perimeter fencing and gates, parking bays and the installation of mains water with standpipes. A total of 32 plots have been created, with pathways running between the main rows to allow easy access for tenants.

Work has already started on allocating plots to members of the Braintree Allotment Club and other residents on the Council's main waiting list for Braintree. We are also seeking to recruit two plot holders to act as Stewards/Wardens who will have free use of their plots in return. Their role will be to help shape and facilitate the new Allotment Club in becoming a constituted body with the aim of leasing or taking ownership of the land and the site becoming self-managed and operated by the end of 2016.

### **Play Areas**

This year, 3 play areas were programmed for refurbishment and the last site - Rosebay Close, Witham, has recently been completed. The other two sites are John Ray Park and Tabor Field, Braintree. The new play equipment is designed to encourage use by varying ages and will greatly enhance the play value at these sites. All 3 projects were completed on time and within budget.

### **Newlands Drive Car Park**

Over the past 12 months, essential health and safety works have been carried out to rebuild a large retaining wall declared 'unsafe' by the Council's Building Control Inspectors. The works cost in the region of £25k and were completed with the minimum of disruption and loss of income. All bays will be available from 14 March.

### **Street Scene Protection**

The Council has had two successful prosecutions for offences contrary to Sections 43 and 48 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice). The summary conviction for this offence is to a level 4 fine, which is currently £2,500.

The first defendant was fined £100 with a victim surcharge order of £20 and costs of £250 for failing to remove all waste and redundant items from gardens.

The second defendant was fined £440, plus a victim surcharge of £44 and costs of £604 for failing to remove vegetation overgrowth from the front garden and all waste and redundant items from the rear garden and parking area.

The Magistrates commented on how impressed they were by the Council's presentation of both prosecutions and how concise and relevant the evidence presented was in both matters.

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

As taxi drivers are 'out and about' in the community, Safeguarding Awareness training has been delivered to them. 38 drivers attended in Witham and 31 in Braintree.

The 2016/17 priorities for the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have been set and they are: Reduce the risk and impact of hidden harm; Reduce re-offending; and Effective partnership working to meet emerging local threats and issues. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has confirmed funding of £20,158 for the CSP for 2016/17.

Letters have been distributed to 8 licensed premises across the Braintree District offering them the opportunity to have body worn video cameras for their door staff.

A Child Sexual Exploitation Guide for parents and carers has been distributed to schools across the District. In addition, awareness material for hotels, B&B's and 24-hour garages has also been distributed. This will be followed up by Essex Police carrying out visits to see if they received the posters and encourage them to be put on display.

### **LANDSCAPE AND COUNTRYSIDE**

#### **Halstead River Walk**

Members of the Landscape Services Team and Rob Martyr from *RiverCare* were supported by approximately 25 volunteers on the morning of Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March in planting 40 trees and shrubs and clearing rubbish and other debris from a section of the riverside path and banking. Specialist tools and grabs were made available by RiverCare to allow rubbish to be collected from the lower parts of the river banking.

Approximately 19 bags of rubbish were collected and the activities were recorded by a film crew from Braintree TV; the report is available on the link <http://www.braintree-tv.com/player.php?v=14-03-16&s=27>.

### **Tree Strategy**

The Draft Tree Strategy has been approved as a planning guidance document at meetings of the Local Plan Sub-Committee and Planning Committee on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March respectively.

### **Hoppit Mead**

A contractor will be starting the new boardwalk installation along the riverside at the eastern approach to Marshalls Park from the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April.

### **Bocking Blackwater**

The public consultation on the proposal to extend the boundary to the local nature reserve closes on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March. It is planned to submit a report for consideration by Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

### **Tree Planting**

Replacement tree planting will take place in Braiding Crescent from Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March. 10 Lime trees will be planted in two rows on either side of the roadway to replace trees that have been lost through vandalism over the last few years. Each tree will be protected by the square timber and mesh guards that have proved successful in Witham and elsewhere. 3 Serbian spruces will also be planted in the wooded margin of Weaver's Park to replace recent losses from disease and to maintain the theme of coniferous plantings that are a feature of this part of the conservation area.

Councillor Wendy Schmitt  
Cabinet Member Environment and Place

<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Councillor Wendy Schmitt</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Environment and Place</b>
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<b>LIST OF PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD SINCE LAST COUNCIL MEETING</b>		<b>Agenda No: 9</b>
<b>Portfolio:</b> Not applicable <b>Corporate Outcome:</b> Not applicable <b>Report presented by:</b> Not applicable <b>Report prepared by:</b> Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager		
<b>Background Papers:</b>		<b>Public Report</b>
Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.		<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>  Since the last Council meeting held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016, the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 24th February 2016</li> <li>(2) Planning Committee – 1st March 2016</li> <li>(3) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 9th March 2016</li> <li>(4) Local Plan Sub-Committee – 14th March 2016</li> <li>(5) Planning Committee – 15th March 2016</li> <li>(6) Local Plan Sub-Committee – 16th March 2016</li> <li>(7) Cabinet – 21st March 2016 (copy to follow)</li> <li>(8) Governance Committee – 23rd March 2016 (copy to follow)</li> <li>(9) Braintree District Local Highways Panel – 24th March 2016 (copy to follow)</li> </ul>		
<b>Recommended Decision:</b>  Members are invited to note the Minutes published.		
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b>  Not applicable.		

**Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.**

<b>Financial:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Legal:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Equalities/Diversity:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Risks:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Emma Wisbey
<b>Designation:</b>	Governance and Member Manager
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