

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING



Date: Wednesday 13th March 2013

Time: 7.15pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Causeway House, Braintree CM7 9HB

Membership:

Councillor P R Barlow	Councillor F Ricci
Councillor C A Cadman	Councillor W J Rose
Councillor Dr R L Evans (Chairman)	Councillor A F Shelton
Councillor P Horner	Councillor J S Sutton
Councillor S A Howell	Councillor J R Swift
Councillor R P Ramage	

Members are requested to attend this meeting, to transact the following business:-

1. Apologies for Absence.

2. Member Declarations.

- (i). To declare the existence and nature of any interests 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.
- (ii). To declare the existence and nature of any instruction given by or on behalf of a political group to any Councillor who is a member of that group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Committee or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the group in respect of that Councillor should he/she speak or vote on any particular matter.

3. Question Time. (See paragraph below).

- 4. Minutes.** To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30th January 2013 (copy previously circulated).

5. **Committee's Scrutiny Review of Transport and Access to Health Services across the District - Update on the Committee's Recommendations on the Hospital Hopper Service and Village Agent Service** Report attached (page 5)
6. **Task and Finish Groups.**
 - a. **Affordable Housing.** To receive a brief update. (Report attached, page 14).
 - b. **Braintree, Halstead and Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency.** To receive a brief update. (Report attached, page 16).
7. **Decision Planner.** To consider the Decision Planner for the period 1st March 2013 to 30th June 2013 (copy previously circulated).
8. **Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Annual Work Programme 2012-13 – Scrutiny of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership.** Report attached page 18.

Following a brief introductory session, scrutiny will be through 3 breakout groups of Committee members in the following CSP areas:

Theme	Project	Officers
Education	Fire Break Mark II	James Taylor, Essex Fire and Rescue Service
Prevention	Integrated Offender Management	Adam Colby, Essex Probation
Domestic Abuse	'Responding to Domestic Abuse' Workshop	To be confirmed.

Members are requested to briefly feedback their findings from their breakout to the rest of the Committee.

9. **Police and Crime Commissioner.** To receive a verbal update on the development of arrangements for working with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex.
10. **Urgent Business.** To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.
11. To agree the exclusion of the public and press for the consideration of any items for the reasons set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

At the time of compiling the agenda there were none.

12. Urgent Business. To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in private by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

A PEACE
Member Services Manager

The last page of this Agenda is numbered 21.

Contact Details

If you require any further information please contact Alastair Peace on 01376 551414 extension 2602 or e-mail alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk

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 Council's Member Services on (01376) 552525 or email alastair.peace@braintree.gov.uk 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 at Causeway House 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 a Council 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.

Mobile Phones

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

Comments

Braintree District Council welcomes comments from members of the public in order to make its 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.....
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Contact Details:

Committee's Scrutiny Review of Transport and Access to Health Services across the District Update on the Committee's recommendations on the Hospital Hopper Service and Village Agent Service		Agenda No: 5
Corporate Priority: People Portfolio Area: People and Participation Report presented by: Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager/ Tracey Corcoran , Community Transport Coordinator Report prepared by: Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager/ Tracey Corcoran , Community Transport Coordinator		
Background Papers: Cabinet 16 th July 2012 Council 16 th April 2012 Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22 nd March 2012		Public Report
Options:		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: Committee's Recommendations The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Scrutiny Review of Transport and Access to Health Services across the District (March 2012) included the following recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Essex County Council (ECC) explores the expansion of the Hospital Hopper Service to include more areas in the North of the district to include transport to Colchester General Hospital and also considers, together with Suffolk County Council the expansion of Hopper Routes to West Suffolk General Hospital and to Broomfield Hospital for Witham and the immediate catchment area. • The Committee recognises the value of Village Agents in identifying and supporting those vulnerable people in their communities and therefore recommends that Essex County Council be encouraged to continue the Village Agent service. 		

Cabinet's Response

At its meeting on 16th July 2012, Cabinet agreed the following response to those recommendations:

That ECC be encouraged to explore the extension of the Hospital Hopper Service in more areas in the North of the District, although acknowledged that this would require additional funds.

That ECC be to review the impact of the Village Agents scheme and if value is demonstrated, Cabinet encourages ECC to continue its support for this scheme.

Update to Committee

Hospital Hopper

Committee members are invited to note that the provision of the Hospital Hopper service will change from April 2013. The service will now be provided by volunteer drivers using their own cars. The service has been enhanced and will now offer the following:

- Pick up and return journeys to Halstead Community Hospital and Braintree Community Hospital ;
- one way only drop offs at Broomfield, Springfield, Colchester General and Essex County Hospitals (or the hospital nearest to the home address if living on the borders).

Village Agents

Committee members are invited to note that ECC has committed to funding Village Agent Service for 2013-14. Correspondence with ECC on the Village Agent Service is at Appendix A.

Decision:

Committee members are invited to note:

1. The changed provision of the Hospital Hopper service from April 2013.
2. That ECC has committed to funding Village Agent Service for 2013-14.

Purpose of Decision:

To update on a recommendation contained in the Committee Scrutiny Review of Transport and Access to Health Services across the District related to the Hospital Hopper service and Village Agents.

Corporate implications	
Financial:	None
Legal:	None
Equalities/Diversity	None
Customer Impact:	Hospital Hopper – Changes provision of the service for April 2013. Village Agents- Confirmed continuation of the service for 2013-14.
Environment and Climate Change:	None
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Hospital Hopper - ECC, Service Users
Risks:	None
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HOSPITAL HOPPER REVIEW

Background

The hospital hopper was set up as a one year pilot in February 2012 to assist residents who had no or little public transport enabling access to their local hospital – those living in Castle Hedingham, Sible Hedingham, Gosfield, Halstead, Greenstead Green, Earls Colne, White Colne, Colne Engaine and Braintree.

Although residents in Halstead and Braintree do have a public transport service the logical route for the minibus was to come through Halstead and Braintree so residents in those areas were also able to access the service to increase usage.

Home pick ups were offered for those with mobility difficulties or from a nearby bus stop for those more able – destinations offered were Broomfield Hospital, Halstead Hospital, Braintree Community Hospital, St Michaels Hospital and Blandford House Doctors surgery (which is on the Community Hospital/St Michaels site). With one twelve seater minibus covering this large area it was not possible to access the two hospitals in Colchester as well.

Bus passes or cash were accepted as payment and revenue foregone reimbursement was claimed through the Department for Transport.

Funding was secured from the Rural Sustainable Community Transport Initiative which was funding made available to Rural Community Transport schemes by the Department for Transport to enable the development of sustainable rural community transport services. The aims of the initiative were to:

- Fund services that are as financially self sustaining as possible and will continue beyond the granting of these funds.
- To help build capacity in rural community transport which, due to an ageing population and potential reductions in local bus services, will be called on more and more by local residents
- To fund environmental sustainability by helping to reduce vehicle emissions

Funding came to and was administered by Essex County Council. This funding is separate from the annual grant received for Community Transport and there was not a service level agreement attached to the Hospital Hopper Service.

Problems experienced with Service Delivery

1. When the business case was presented to ECC it was anticipated that the most isolated members of the public with no or little public transport to hospital would benefit the most from this service. This did not prove to be the case and the majority of people requesting the service lived in Braintree. During the year pilot 2943 passenger journeys (a passenger journey is classed as a one way trip) were made and of these 2506 were Braintree town residents and 443 were residents of all the other pilot areas combined.

2. It was expected that the bus would run to a timed, planned route. In reality we were unable to operate in this way as many of the people who requested this service were unable to get to their nearest bus stop and requested a home pick up/return.
3. 95% of passengers required door-to-door transport which takes longer so the result was that we were not able to carry as many passengers as projected therefore the reimbursement received was less than predicted.
4. To carry the maximum number of passengers we often have to collect people much earlier than their appointment time, many do not want to arrive early so then cancel. The scheduler's time has therefore been wasted planning routes which then need to be re-planned
5. When the call is made to confirm the booking two days before travel it is not unusual to be told the passenger has made other arrangements or their appointment has been cancelled but they have not advised us of this.
6. Although booked for a return journey it is not unusual for a passenger to make their own way home rather than wait for the bus – this results in a loss of income.
7. It is not unusual for the bus to arrive to collect a passenger to find out that their GP has also booked an ambulance car but we have not been advised us of this.
8. Passengers are not always ready when the bus arrives to collect them from their home.
9. The Driver's working day finishes at 5.30pm so last pick up must be no later than 5.00pm. Passengers are not always back from their appointments by 5.00 pm, delaying the driver.

Although the bus is as well utilised as possible we are unable to carry the volume of passengers required to sustain the service because the geographical area we are funded to cover is too vast and not enough people from these areas need/are prepared to travel at similar times which results in too few people travelling on the bus at the same time.

Unlike the existing services offered by Community Transport, which are subsidised by ECC and BDC and tied to a SLA, the Hospital Hopper is stand alone, must be self sustaining and the pilot was to trial its sustainability.

Lessons Learnt

- The majority of people would rather contribute towards the cost of their transport and be offered times for their exact needs
- People are happy to book a one way trip to the larger hospitals because it is affordable which then enables a taxi fare to be paid for the home journey
- Many people are able to secure their own return transport with friends, family or public transport as once at the hospital they can better gauge how long they will be there

The pilot has proved the current operation is not and can not be sustainable, BDC Management Board has agreed to alter service operation from April 2013. Volunteer drivers using their own cars will provide the transport. ECC are in support of this arrangement.

What we will offer as an alternative:

- Pick up and return journeys to Halstead Community Hospital and Braintree Community Hospital
- One way only drop offs at Broomfield, Springfield, Colchester General and Essex County Hospitals (or the hospital nearest to the home address if living on the borders). Fares will be subsidised and approximately a third of the price of a taxi.

This will result in an expansion of the service as hospital transport will be available across the whole of the district, to all nearby hospitals and to every resident who has a need, not just members of Community Transport Social Car Scheme.

Advantages

- We can offer a bespoke service for each individual
- We are able to control the schedule and plan the routes more efficiently as only one individual's requirements need to be met at a time.
- Passengers will not have lengthy waits at the hospital
- It will not be necessary to pay for expensive car parking charges if the only alternative is to rely on someone to drive

Disadvantages

- Passengers will be required to make a contribution towards the cost of their journey
- Passengers will be required to make alternative return travel arrangements from out of district hospitals
- Bus passes can not be used as fare payment

Promotion of Community Transport

Information leaflets are regularly sent to:

- Every GP surgery in the district
- Hospitals
- Health related venues i.e. chiropodists, dentists, opticians
- Hairdressers
- Parish Clerks/Village Halls
- Supermarkets
- Residential/care homes
- Non profit-making groups – health related, sports related and social

The above establishments actively promote CT to their patients/residents/visitors.

What other transport is available to those in need?

The East of England Ambulance service provides free door-to-door hospital transport for anybody who meets their criteria. This is available via GP referral to every resident who has no other means of accessing their appointment.



Our Ref: NB/JPDB
Your Ref:
From: Nicola Beach
Tel. No.:
Ext.:
E-Mail:
Date: 3rd December 2012

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Ms. Joanna Killian,
Chief Executive,
Essex County Council,
County Hall,
CHELMSFORD,
CM1 1LX

Dear Joanna,

Braintree District Council Overview and Scrutiny Report on Transport and Access to Health Services across the District – Village Agents scheme

Over the summer, BCD's Overview and Scrutiny Committee completed its review on transport and access to health services across the district. Cabinet produced a response to the report's recommendations (July 2012) and one of these relates to the village agent scheme. The recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was *"The Committee recognises the value of Village Agents in identifying and supporting those vulnerable people in their communities and therefore recommends that Essex County Council be encouraged to continue the Village Agent service."*

The Cabinet approved response to this issue was **"Cabinet encourages Essex CC to review the impact of the Village Agents scheme and if value is demonstrated, Cabinet encourages Essex CC to continue its support for this scheme."**

I'd be grateful if you could update me on the County Council's position regarding future support for the village agent scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Beach
Chief Executive designate

Essex County Council
Chief Executives Office
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 1LX



Nicola Beach, Chief Executive Designate
Braintree District Council
Causeway House
Braintree
Essex
CM7 9HB

Date: 13th December 2012

Ref:

Dear Nicola

Braintree District Council Overview and Scrutiny Report on Transport and Access to Health Services across the District – Village Agents Scheme

Thank you for your letter dated 3rd December 2012.

Essex County Council monitors the value and impact of all its services and we are pleased to confirm that the Village Agents service has demonstrated that it does identify vulnerable adults and through delivering information, advice and signposting, contributes to reducing social isolation and maintaining or improving independence. With this in mind, Essex County Council has already committed to continue funding the service for next financial year (April 2013 – March 2014).

Furthermore, the outcomes which the Village Agents scheme delivers are also being considered as part of a longer term piece of work to improve the provision of Information, Advice and Advocacy (IAA) across Essex from April 2014. We anticipate that a mediated face-to-face service (on a similar basis to the Village Agents) will be one element of a more holistic model for IAA services in future.

Our approach ensures continuity of provision in the immediate term and enables the Council to continue developing our understanding of how the needs of potentially isolated, vulnerable people can be better met in future.

To achieve a holistic IAA model by April 2014, we need to work with partners to design and deliver jointly commissioned solutions. Essex County Council is beginning the engagement process now and welcomes your input into this work.

Meeting Essex citizens' outcomes is something we all want to achieve and the Council looks forward to working with you in the future.

Yours sincerely



EssexWorks.
For a better quality of life

Task and Finish Group – Affordable Housing		Agenda No: 6a
Corporate Priority:	Prosperity: securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth.	
Report presented by:	Councillor P Barlow, Chairman of the Group	
Report prepared by:	Affordable and Social Housing Task and Finish Group officer support	
Background Papers: Affordable and Social Housing Task and Finish Group		Public Report
Options: For members to note progress of the Affordable and Social Housing Task and Finish Group.		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary:		
<p>Following the last meeting in January, the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group met on 21st February with Chris Fleetham (CF) to discuss how the Council deals with investments and whether there is scope for supporting affordable housing as an investment function.</p> <p>CF provided an outline of the money the council has available for investment and the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS). CF explained Essex County Council would match fund the £1 million if pledged by BDC to provide a £2 million fund for the scheme which is hoped to help approximately 50 to 60 first time buyers to purchase a property in the district.</p> <p>The group are keen to see how this scheme unfolds with a view to maybe repeating the scheme where possible in the future.</p> <p>The group also discussed the councils role as a mortgage provider with the aim of providing affordable mortgages and gaining a financial return through interest generated. CF explained there are only a small number of council mortgages remaining and these are administered elsewhere. Currently the council does not have the required capacity to take on a greater role as a mortgage provider yet a business case could be made and be considered.</p> <p>There were also brief discussions about the role of Community Right to Bid in supporting further affordable and social housing.</p>		

<p>In summary, the group are keen to explore the following points over the next few months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite speakers from Saffron Building Society to explore their role as a mortgage provider; • Invite a key speaker to a group meeting to give detailed presentation on the Localism Act and what opportunities under the Act could support the council in its role to enable further affordable housing development. <p>The next meeting of the group is planned for March 20th 2013 subject to availability of key speakers etc.</p>
<p>Decision:</p> <p>Members are invited to note progress of the Task and Finish Group on Affordable and Social Housing.</p>
<p>Purpose of Decision: to monitor progress of the work being undertaken by the Affordable and Social Housing Task and Finish Group.</p>

Corporate implications	
Financial:	None at this stage
Legal:	None at this stage
Equalities/Diversity	None at this stage
Customer Impact:	None at this stage
Environment and Climate Change:	None at this stage
Consultation/Community Engagement:	None at this stage
Risks:	None at this stage
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Ext. No.	2118
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Task and Finish Group – Braintree, Halstead & Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency		Agenda No: 6b
Corporate Priority: People and Participation Report presented by: Cllr Sue Wilson Report prepared by: Angela Verghese		
Background Papers:		Public Report
Options: For members to note that the progress on the Report on CAB and BDVSA by the Task & Finish Group that will be submitted to the May 2013 Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: The Task & Finish Group are continuing to review information on the Braintree, Halstead & Witham Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency (BDVSA) to inform the final Report as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of written information, eg Annual Reports, Business Plans, etc 2. Presentations by both organisations, with opportunities for Group members to raise questions. 3. Task & Finish Group members have also visited BDVSA and the CAB offices to view the premises and speak to staff/volunteers <p>At the Task & Finish Group meeting on 18th February 2013 Members reviewed their findings and the first draft of the Report is now being drafted. This will be discussed and reviewed at the Group's next meeting on 26th March 2013 The final Report will, therefore, be available for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting to be held in May 2013.</p>		

Decision:	
Decision: Members are invited to note progress of the Task and Finish Group on Braintree, Halstead and Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency.	
Purpose of Decision:	
To update members on the work of the CAB and BDVSA Task and Finish Group.	

Corporate implications	
Financial:	None
Legal:	None
Equalities/Diversity	None
Customer Impact:	None
Environment and Climate Change:	n/a
Consultation/Community Engagement:	n/a
Risks:	none
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Overview and Scrutiny Committee
13th March 2013



Committee's Annual Work Programme 2012-13 – Scrutiny of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership.		Agenda No: 8
Corporate Priority: People Portfolio Area: People and Participation Report presented by: Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager/ Helena Goodwin, Community Services Manager Report prepared by: Alastair Peace, Member Services Manager/ Helena Goodwin, Community Services Manager		
Background Papers: Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 th September 2012		Public Report
Options:		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: At its meeting on Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 th September 2012 agreed that there should be a further scrutiny session with the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) at the Committee's meeting in March. At the Committee's meeting on 13 th March, scrutiny will be through 3 breakout groups of Committee members in the following CSP areas:		
Theme	Project	Officers
Education	Fire Break Mark II	James Taylor, Essex Fire and Rescue Service
Prevention	Integrated Offender Management	Adam Colby, Essex Probation
Domestic Abuse	'Responding to Domestic Abuse' Workshop	To be confirmed

A summary of each project is as follows:

Firebreak

- The Firebreak programme targets children at Key Stage 4 (between the ages of 13 - 17 years);
- The programme aims to promote a culture of safety and citizenship by providing a range of vital life skills whilst undertaking the various disciplines of the Fire Service;
- This course provides a learning environment that combines practical skills and scenario based training, with classroom centred theory/discussion workshops;
- During the course, Firebreak students will take part in activities aimed at improving self-esteem, self-discipline and responsibility. This is achieved by employing fundamental Fire Service principals of leadership, teamwork and motivation;
- On successfully completing the Firebreak course, each student will receive a certificate of achievement and potentially a portfolio, containing certificates of their achievements as well as the possibility of gaining an award from the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance;
- A passing out parade at the end of the course provides the team with an opportunity to demonstrate to proud parents, teachers and friends the skills and confidence gained, and just how much can be achieved in a relatively short space of time;

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

- IOM aims to provide a fully integrated and sustainable multi-agency approach to offender management, involving statutory, voluntary and business sectors and the community;
- It will reduce crime and reoffending through joint ownership, thereby making Essex safer for the benefit of local communities;
- Police and Probation officers are co-located across each Local Policing Area in probation offices;
- A cohort of offenders are identified for the eight Essex, Southend and Thurrock IOM schemes following analysis of Police, Probation, Prison, YOT and DIP data. These offenders are approached to engage them in the IOM programme. The IOM overall cohort of offenders will be dynamically managed through a joint agency process, including managing referrals made into the IOM programme;

- Offenders will be engaged in a process entailing multi-agency support focused around the seven pathways out of offending and will be intrusively supervised in accordance with the agreed action plan;
- Offenders not engaging and continuing to offend will be subject to intensive Police disruption and enforcement;

Responding to Domestic Abuse - Workshop

- A dedicated Workshop was designed and delivered by partners who specialise in Domestic Abuse;
- The Workshop was titled “Responding to Domestic Abuse” as it was identified by Domestic Abuse professionals and Schools Consultant that there was a need for staff in these organisations to understand how to cope with disclosures from children and young people and the issues that they face;
- 32,000 incidents of Domestic Abuse Reported to Essex Police last year, approx 17,000 individual victims (Whole Essex Community Budget Business Case, 2012);
- Where children live in the home where Domestic Abuse takes place, a high proportion are exposed to the abuse ((witness, hear, involved (NSPCC, Nov 2012);
- The outcomes of the event included increased networking, finding new partners, and, improving a school based workshop, and further influence the work on Domestic Abuse going forward;

CSP Annual Partnership Plan

A copy of the CSP Annual Partnership Plan is enclosed for background information on the work of the CSP.

Decision:

Members are requested to briefly feedback their findings from their breakout to the rest of the Committee.

Purpose of Decision:

To continue with the Committee’s scrutiny of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership.

Corporate implications	
Financial:	None arising out of this report.
Legal:	None arising out of this report.
Equalities/Diversity	None.
Customer Impact:	To be considered as part of the scrutiny review.
Environment and Climate Change:	None.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	To be considered as part of the scrutiny review.
Risks:	None.
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