

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING



Date: Wednesday 30th January 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 28th November 2012 (copy previously circulated).

5. **Scrutiny of the Council Budget and Council Tax 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 to 2015/16.** To consider the report to Cabinet and Council (report to follow).

Note: The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has invited all members to attend the Committee's meeting. The full report is therefore being circulated to all members who are requested to retain the report for further use at the meeting of Council on 20th February 2013.

6. **Task and Finish Groups.**

- a. **Affordable Housing.** To receive a brief update report. (Report attached, page 4).
 - b. **Citizen's Braintree, Halstead and Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency.** To receive a brief update report. (Report attached, page 6).
7. **Decision Planner.** To consider the Decision Planner for the period 1st February 2013 to 31st May 2013 (copy previously circulated).
8. **Chairman's Update.** To receive a verbal update from the Chairman on Overview and Scrutiny Committee issues.
9. **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.
10. 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.

11. **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 7.

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 at least 2 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 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:

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>Since the last update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of the November, the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group has held two further meetings.</p> <p>The meeting held in December included a presentation to the Group detailing how the Council has enabled new development in the past through use of planning gain, controlled land and the open market.</p> <p>The presentation also included details of the Council’s planned delivery programme over the coming few years as well as overview of the Council’s role in dealing with empty homes.</p> <p>At this meeting the group considered the content for meetings to be held in the new year and agreed for arrangements to be made to have the following guest speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A member of staff from the HomeBuy Agent for Essex, Moat Housing Association; and➤ Head of Finance at the council, Trevor Wilson <p>The Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group met again on 10th January where New Business Executive Director, Steve Nunn and Head of HomeBuy, Tamsin Seward, both of Moat Housing Association delivered a presentation covering:</p>		

- An outline of Moats role as a HomeBuy agent;
- An overview of HomeBuy products;
- Information about Braintree applicants; and
- General information about marketing for shared ownership

The Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group are keen to explore how the council could support local households into home ownership. It is hoped that the Head of Finance will be a guest speaker at the next meeting in February and will provide information regarding the council's financial position and capacity regarding this.

The group are planning to invite guest speakers from a selection of mortgage providers to speak at a meeting in March about how they can work with the council to facilitate the above.

The Group is aiming to submit its report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting in May or July 2013.

Decision: Members are invited to note progress of the Task and Finish Group on Affordable Housing.

Purpose of Decision: To monitor progress of the work being undertaken by the Affordable and Social Housing Task and Finish Group.

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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Task and Finish Group – Braintree, Halstead & Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency		Agenda No: 6b
Corporate Priority: People		
Report presented by: Councillor Sue Wilson, Chairman of the Group. Report prepared by: Angela Verghese		
Background Papers:		Public Report
Options: For members to note that the final Report on CAB and BDVSA by the Task & Finish Group will be submitted to the May 2013 Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting		Key Decision: No
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group is 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:</p> <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 next meeting on 17th January, members will review their findings, following which the first draft of the Report will be produced for discussion at the end of February. The final Report will, therefore, be available for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting to be held in May 2013.</p>		
<p>Decision: Members are invited to note progress of the Task and Finish Group on Affordable Housing. Braintree, Halstead & Witham Citizens Advice Bureau and Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency.</p>		

Purpose of Decision: To monitor progress of the work being undertaken by 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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