

Council AGENDA

Monday, 7th October 2019 at 7.15pm

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

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

www.braintree.gov.uk

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

Membership:-

Councillor J Abbott	Councillor P Horner	Councillor Mrs J Sandum
Councillor J Baugh	Councillor D Hume	Councillor Miss V Santomauro
Councillor Mrs J Beavis	Councillor H Johnson	Councillor Mrs W Scattergood
Councillor D Bebb	Councillor Mrs A Kilmartin	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt
Councillor K Bowers	Councillor D Mann	Councillor P Schwier
Councillor G Butland	Councillor T McArdle	Councillor Mrs G Spray
Councillor J Coleridge	Councillor J McKee	Councillor P Tattersley
Councillor G Courtauld	Councillor A Munday	Councillor P Thorogood
Councillor Mrs M Cunningham	Councillor Mrs I Parker	Councillor N Unsworth
Councillor T Cunningham	Councillor Mrs J Pell	Councillor R van Dulken
Councillor Mrs C Dervish	Councillor I Pritchard	Councillor D Wallace
Councillor P Euesden	Councillor M Radley	Councillor T Walsh
Councillor T Everard	Councillor R Ramage	Councillor Mrs L Walters
Councillor Mrs D Garrod	Councillor S Rehman	Councillor Miss M Weeks
Councillor A Hensman	Councillor F Ricci	Councillor Mrs S Wilson
Councillor S Hicks	Councillor B Rose	Councillor J Wrench
		Councillor B Wright

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 governance@braintree.gov.uk by 3pm on the day of the meeting.

A WRIGHT
Chief Executive

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest

Any member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest must declare the nature of their interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Members 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.

Question Time

The Agenda allows for a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak. Members of the public wishing to speak are requested to register by contacting the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email governance@braintree.gov.uk by midday on the working day before the day of the Committee meeting. For example, if the Committee Meeting is due to be held on a Tuesday, the registration deadline is midday on Monday, (where there is a bank holiday Monday you will need to register by midday on the previous Friday).

The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register to speak if they are received after this time. Members of the public can remain to observe the public session of the meeting.

Please note that there is public Wi-Fi in the Council Chamber, users are required to register in order to access this. There is limited availability of printed agendas.

Health and Safety

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Documents

Agendas, reports and minutes for all the Council's public meetings can be accessed via www.braintree.gov.uk

We welcome comments from members of the public to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. If you have any suggestions regarding the meeting you have attended, you can send these via governance@braintree.gov.uk

PUBLIC SESSION	Page
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 1st August 2019 (copy previously circulated).	
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 Public Question Time (See paragraph above)	
5 To receive any announcements/statements from the Chairman and/or Leader of the Council.	
6 Presentation to Maycaste Nokes Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure, to present Maycaste Nokes with the East of England SME Employer of the Year 2019 Award.	
7 Statement by Councillor – Councillor James Abbott In accordance with CPR 32.1 Councillor James Abbott to make a statement to Full Council regarding: <i>“the Council’s failure to ensure that local trees, hedges and habitats are being sufficiently protected under its own adopted policies”.</i> In accordance with CPR 32.3 the Leader of the Council, the appropriate Cabinet Member or Chairman of a Committee may respond to the Councillor’s Statement. There is no right of debate by Full Council in response to the Councillor’s Statement.	
8 Motion by Councillor John McKee	6 - 6

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10	Recommendations from the Developing Democracy Group regarding updates to the Councils Constitution	9 - 14
11	Recommendation from Cabinet – 9th September 2019 – Treasury Management Annual Report 2018-19	15 - 16
12	Recommendation from Cabinet – 9th September 2019 – Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project - Manor Street Update - PUBLIC	17 - 21
13	Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members 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.	
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PRIVATE SESSION

15	Recommendation from Cabinet – 9th September 2019 - Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project - Manor Street Update - PRIVATE	
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Motion by Councillor John McKee

Agenda No: 8

Motion presented by: Councillor John McKee
Motion seconded by: Councillor T Cunningham
Motion supported by: Councillor F Ricci
Councillor D Bebb
Councillor K Bowers
Councillor P Schwier
Councillor J Wrench

Motion:

This Council reaffirms its approach to be a modern, commercially minded, entrepreneurial, local authority, with an investment strategy that not only invests in the District for the benefit of all residents but also generates revenue to sustain a high level of public services.

The Motion

This Council will continue with an integrated strategy and plans that:

- Increases the income from property held for investment,
- Increases revenue from services provided to external customers,
- Grows the portfolio of high performing pooled funds,
- Make continued investments in the residential property market,
- Grows the investment in employment sites providing more skilled jobs,
- Grows the Council Tax base of the Council through the provision of development sites for high quality residential properties of all tenures, across all areas of the District.

Appropriate Notice of the Motion has been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedural Rule 18 of Chapter 2 of the Constitution.

Formation of Appointment Committee		Agenda No: 9
Portfolio	Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services	
Report presented by:	Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council	
Report prepared by:	Emma Wisbey, Governance and Member Manager	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
Officer Employment Procedure Rules – Chapter Two - Constitution	Key Decision: No	
The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001		
Executive Summary:		
<p>The Council is required to set up an Appointment Committee as part of the recruitment process for the appointment of a permanent Corporate Director.</p> <p>The appointment of a Corporate Director is by way of a Committee of Full Council, accordingly Members are asked to approve an Appointment Committee of six Members (as set out in the resolution below) to formally manage the recruitment process.</p> <p>The Constitution (Officer Employment Procedure Rules) requires that the Appointment Committee includes the Leader of the Council, the Chairman of the Performance Management Board and at least one other Cabinet Member.</p> <p>The Appointment Committee will be supported by Officers of the Council’s HR and Governance Service.</p>		
Recommended Decision:		
<div>1. To establish an Appointment Committee of six Members to manage the recruitment process for a permanent Corporate Director.</div> <div>2. To appoint Councillors: G Butland (Chairman), N Unsworth, T Cunningham, Mrs G Spray, J McKee, Mrs J Pell and not to apply any political proportionality to the Committee.</div>		

Purpose of Decision:	
To facilitate the appointment of a permanent Corporate Director.	

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.	
Financial:	The appointment can be met from within existing budgets.
Legal:	<p>The appointment of a permanent post holder must be undertaken in accordance with the Constitution (Chapter Two – Officer Employment Procedure Rules) and the Local Authorities (Standings Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.</p> <p>Variation of the political proportionality rules requires a unanimous decision of Full Council.</p>
Safeguarding:	There are no direct implications from this report.
Equalities/Diversity:	The appointment process will consider all relevant equality and diversity matters to ensure that the Council complies with its duties.
Customer Impact:	The appointment will ensure the continued progress and growth of the organisation.
Environment and Climate Change:	There are no direct implications from this report.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	The Appointment Committee will ensure that the process is conducted in such a way as to reflect the need for the appointed person to be engaged with the community. In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, Cabinet will be consulted on the recommended candidate.
Risks:	Failure to make permanent arrangements would leave the Council exposed to not being able to make effective and timely decisions, or having the management structure in place to deliver services.
Officer Contact:	Emma Wisbey/Penny Phillips
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Recommendations from the Developing Democracy Group regarding updates to the Council’s Constitution		Agenda No: 10
Portfolio	Overall Corporate Strategy and Direction	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services	
Report presented by:	Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council	
Report prepared by:	Ian Hunt, Head of Governance	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
	Key Decision: No	
Executive Summary:		
<p>Following recent meetings of Full Council there was agreement from senior Members that there should be a discussion around the processes and procedures for the laying of Motions at Full Council and the use of Public Question Time at meetings by District Councillors.</p> <p>At it’s meeting on 12th September 2019, the Developing Democracy Group (DDG) considered the current arrangements and acknowledged that in the main they represented a fair balance between differing Political Groups and administrative proportionality.</p> <p>The following recommendations in respect of Motions require changes to the Council’s Constitution.</p> <p>With respect to Motions it is recommended that the Council introduces a limit of no more than 4 Motions for each Political Group on the Council at each meeting of Full Council. It was considered that a limit was appropriate to ensure that the business of the meeting could be attended to, but that the limit was set sufficiently high that it would not stifle legitimate debate on issues. Members acknowledged that the limit should equally not be seen as a target.</p> <p>Members considered the process relating to the amendment of Motions. Members sought the early distribution of amendments and the ability for Members to consider these carefully in advance of the meeting. Accordingly Members recommend that the deadline for submitting Amendments to Motions should be altered from noon on the day of the meeting to 9am. This would allow for Officers to consider these and circulate the details to all Members.</p>		

With respect to the use of the Council's Public Speaking time, DDG carefully considered the history of this and the fact that it was initially introduced to facilitate interaction with the public at large, rather than as an opportunity for Members to speak.

Having carefully considered options including increasing the time allowed or curtailing Members entirely, it is recommended that the existing period of 30 minutes be retained exclusively for members of the Public which include Town and Parish Councillors and County Councillors, but that this should exclude any elected Member of the District Council.

Any Member of the District Council who wishes to speak should register in the same way as the public with the Governance and Members Team. The Chairman of the meeting would then consider all requests to speak by Members and at their discretion allow Members to speak balancing the need to enable engagement with the reasonable and efficient running of the meeting.

Members recognised the specific needs of the Planning Committee and Licensing Committee and considered that their existing arrangements should not be altered.

Recommended Decision:

That Council acknowledges and agrees the following:

1. Motions continued to be scheduled on the Agenda in the strict date (and time) order of a Motion being deemed valid.
2. In the event that two or more similar valid Motions are received, the Chief Executive or the Head of Governance to discuss the approach to the Motions with Group Leaders, in the absence of an agreed approach the default position will be that they are dealt with separately.
3. That following the deadline for the submission of Motions and Amendments to Motions that these will be circulated to all Members.

That the Council approves the following Changes to the Constitution:

4. A limit of a maximum of four Motions on Notice per each recognised Political Group of Council at each meeting of Full Council.
5. The deadline for Amendments to Motions should be reduced from 12noon to 9am on the day of the meeting
6. To implement two sections to Public Question Time, providing a 30 minute session for the public and non-District Councillors and a session for District Councillors which is at the Committee Chairman's discretion, having regard to the reasonable and efficient management of the Committee. This proposal not to impact on the existing arrangements for Planning Committee or the Licensing Committee.

That the Head of Governance be authorised by Council to amend the Constitution to reflect the recommendations.

Purpose of Decision:

To support the effective administration of the Council and enable strong Member engagement.

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

Financial:	The cost of managing the public speaking process is incorporated in existing resources. Equally the arrangements for managing Motions at Council are managed within this resource, it is not anticipated that these changes should materially impact this. Should the number of public speakers increase significantly this may have an impact on resilience within the Governance and Members area.
Legal:	The proposals meet the Council's obligations within legislation and can be incorporated within the Constitution.
Safeguarding:	No matters arising out of this report.
Equalities/Diversity:	Any changes must respect the protected characteristics as required under the Equalities Act 2010, although a detailed assessment has not been undertaken it is not considered that any of the proposed changes which are principally procedural in nature have a detrimental impact on any of the protected characteristics.
Customer Impact:	The changes should have no negative impacts on the Council's customers, however with respect to Public speaking it should mitigate the risk that there are insufficient spaces for the public to speak.
Environment and Climate Change:	No matters arising out of this report.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	The Developing Democracy Group considered the issues in detail, this Group has representatives from all Groups within the Council.
Risks:	The changes are not anticipated to have any material risks.
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1. Background:

- 1.1 Following recent meetings of the Full Council there was agreement from senior Members that there should be a discussion around the processes and procedures for the laying of Motions at Full Council and the use of Public Question Time at meetings by District Councillors.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 12th September 2019, the Developing Democracy Group (DDG) considered the current arrangements and acknowledged that in the main they represented a fair balance between differing Political Groups and administrative proportionality.

2. Motions:

- 2.1 The Council sets out the formal process for dealing with Motions on Notice in the Constitution. Supporting this are a number of conventions and working practices.
- 2.2 The current Rules have been in place for a number of years and are set out in the Council Procedure Rules, the overall usage of the mechanism has been relatively limited until recent meetings.
- 2.3 Motions must be submitted 9 clear days in advance of the meeting and must be in a final form. They should contain all the material which is necessary for their publication, including full documentation or links if these are intended to be part of the Motion.
- 2.4 It was agreed by DDG, that following the deadline in future that these should be circulated to all Members to support them in preparing for the meeting. This should be done as soon as is practical, and where possible within a day of the deadline.
- 2.5 Motions are scheduled on the meeting agenda in the order that they are received as valid motions. In the event that there are two motions which are similar in topic then a discussion will be entered into by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer with Group Leaders to see if an alternative approach is agreed. The default however would be to take the motions in the order submitted.
- 2.6 Members carefully considered the Amendment to Motions process. It was considered that unless there has been a fundamental change in circumstances beyond their control a Councillor should not amend their own Motion.
- 2.7 It was considered that the deadline for amendments to be submitted should be brought forward from noon on the day of the meeting to 9 am, this would enable Officers to circulate Amendments as soon as practical and usually no later than noon to all Members. Whilst acknowledging that this required Members to bring forward their submission the limited impact had a greater benefit in enabling all Members to receive early notification of matters which would be considered at the meeting.

- 2.8 Officers agreed that they will instigate a process for alerting Members to the relevant deadlines in advance of Council meetings to support them in meeting deadlines.
- 2.9 Officers reiterated that they are able to support all Members in preparing either Motions or Amendments to Motions. Whilst political advice cannot be given Officers can ensure that the proposals are compliant with legal and financial constraints and fit within other policy or relevant frameworks. This advice can be on a confidential basis and is not shared with other Political Groups. Members were asked by DDG to ensure that they engaged with Officers early if they were taking advantage of that support.

3. Public Question Time:

- 3.1 DDG carefully considered the basis of the Public Question time process and discussed the implications of District Members using this. This included the potential for Members of the Public to be excluded from speaking due to the number of Councillors registered to speak.
- 3.2 Members considered that the 30 minutes for Public Question time was sufficient, noting that this was not routinely oversubscribed. Members reflected on the recent issues of public question time, and concluded that the public question time session is for the public and non-District Councillors. Members reflected upon former arrangements of the Council which allowed District Councillors to address a Committee without the need to register and at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 3.3 Members considered options to overcome the issues which have been experienced there needs to be two sections to speaking at a Committee which separate the public and District Councillors to ensure that the public can always address the Council. It was proposed that the system would operate with the same registration requirements and deadlines currently in place for Public Question Time. The first section would be for public and elected Members of Town/Parish Councils and Essex County Councillors only. This section would be for 30 minutes and divided into ten three minute slots. This is substantially the same as at present.
- 3.4 The second section would be for District Councillors. Requests for District Councillor slots would be made to the Governance and Members Team who would liaise with the Committee Chairman. There would be no set period for this section; the Committee Chairman using their discretion will determine on the reasonable and efficient management of the Committee as to whether to allow a Member to speak.
- 3.5 Members also considered requests by those Councillors who were also an Essex County Councillor or a Parish/Town Councillor. Members advised that in those circumstances the Councillor would be expected to register for the District Councillor Session so not to give the appearance that District Councillors could conveniently make use of the system to their advantage.
- 3.6 Members were extremely mindful that the Planning Committee had a well-established protocol for public speaking which worked extremely well for

planning applications. They considered that there was no merit in changing this ad accordingly excluded the Planning Committee from the proposal.

- 3.7 Members were also aware that the Licensing Committee in its process of considering applications or other Hearings has to have regard to the specific legal frameworks in which it operates. Accordingly no changes were proposed for those hearings or processes.

Recommendation from Cabinet – 9 th September 2019 – Treasury Management Annual Report		Agenda No: 11
Portfolio	Finance and Performance Management	
Corporate Outcome:	A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Councillor David Bebb, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	
Report prepared by:	Jessica Mann, Governance and Members Officer	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
Reports and Minutes of Cabinet – 9th September 2019	Key Decision: Yes	
Reports and Minutes of Corporate Governance Group – 25th July 2019		
DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT		
CABINET – 9 TH SEPTEMBER 2019		
19	<u>**RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE GROUP – 25TH JULY 2019 – TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19</u>	
	<div>Minutes Published: 16th September 2019 Call-in Expires: 24th September 2019</div>	
<p>INFORMATION: The Council's treasury management activities were regulated by statutory requirements and by a Code of Practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA). One of the key requirements of the Code was that, along with an annual strategy to be approved prior to the commencement of the financial year, and at least one mid-year report, the Council should also receive an annual report after the financial year-end.</p> <p>A few key areas of note were made. Members were informed that across the financial year, the Council's investment balances averaged £58.343m, with a range between £42.259m and £68.267m. The Council's long-term pooled fund investments totalled £18m as at 31st March 2019, and the total market valuation of the Council's pooled funds was £19.308m. This represented an unrealised gain of £1.308m on the amounts invested, which was £373,000 higher than the valuation as at 31st March 2018.</p>		

With regard to investment activities, it was reported that the Council's treasury management advisors, Arlingclose, benchmarked this on a quarterly basis. Total investment income was £1.158m which was £343,000 over budget, and dividends from long-term pooled funds were £866,000; a 5.24% return. The Council also held direct property investments with a market value of £36.304m as at 31st March 2019, which produced a net rental income of £2.234m and represented a return of 6.3% on the value of assets.

The Corporate Director (Finance) confirmed in the report that all treasury management activities undertaken during 2018/19 had complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's approved TMSS.

The Chairman of the Corporate Governance then commended the Council's Finance Team for their exceptional work throughout the year.

DECISION: That Cabinet accepts the Treasury Management Report and recommends that Full Council accepts the Treasury Management Report.

REASON FOR DECISION: The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services, which requires that the Council receives an annual report on the treasury management function. This report is to be considered first by the Corporate Governance Group in order to exercise its responsibility for scrutiny over treasury management activities. The report will then be considered by Cabinet before submission to Full Council with the benefit of any proposed changes and/or comments of the Corporate Governance Group.

Recommended Decision:

That Full Council accepts the Treasury Management Report.

Purpose of Decision:

The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services, which requires that the Council receives an annual report on the treasury management function. This report is considered first by the Corporate Governance Group in order to exercise its responsibility for scrutiny over treasury management activities. The report is then considered by Cabinet before submission to Full Council with the benefit of any proposed changes and/or comments of the Corporate Governance Group.

Recommendation from Cabinet – 9 th September 2019 – Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project – Manor Street Update Following Tender Exercise and Consequential Matters - PUBLIC		Agenda No: 12
Portfolio	Corporate Transformation	
Corporate Outcome:	A sustainable environment and a great place to live, work and play A well connected and growing District with high quality homes and infrastructure Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported	
Report presented by:	Councillor John McKee, Cabinet Member for Corporate Transformation	
Report prepared by:	Jessica Mann, Governance and Members Officer	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
Reports and Minutes of Cabinet – 9th September 2019	Key Decision: Yes	
DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT		
CABINET – 9 TH SEPTEMBER 2019		
26	<u>**BRAINTREE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT – MANOR STREET UPDATE FOLLOWING TENDER EXERCISE AND CONSEQUENTIAL MATTERS</u>	
	<div>Minutes Published: 16th September 2019 Call-in Expires: 24th September 2019</div>	
<p>INFORMATION: Members were reminded that this Item was linked to Item 13a in the Private Session of the Agenda, and that if any Member wished to refer to the private information contained within the report for that Item, it would be necessary for the meeting to be moved into Private Session.</p> <p>DECISION: That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting if it is necessary to discuss Item 11a of the Agenda and the Private Report, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.</p> <p>Both Agenda Items were taken together to enable consideration of all issues. It was not necessary for the debate to be moved into Private Session.</p>		

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report that provided Cabinet Members with an update as to the latest developments in respect of the Manor Street project proposals, following a recent tender exercise.

Members were informed that the proposed scheme could be considered a first phase of the Council's ambitions for the wider improvement of the Braintree Town Centre and that the intention was, when delivered, that the scheme would enhance the town's footfall. In May 2018, Cabinet accepted that the purpose of the project was the delivery of a positive regeneration and social impacts, and that the financial return would reflect these objectives and would be lower than other profitable projects, such as Horizon 120.

On 14th May 2018, Cabinet approved the implementation of the Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project in Manor Street, and a total scheme budget supported by anticipated sales receipts, prudential borrowing and a capital contribution from reserves. The project budget was predicated upon a pre-tender estimate of construction costs, of which was prepared by Potter Raper Associates, the Council's appointed employer's agent and cost consultant.

Since this time, a detailed planning application was submitted and consent was granted on 12th March 2019. An agreement to lease was entered into with Travelodge, the agreement of which required that construction works started no later than 12th November 2019. Three tenders were received and opened on 3rd June 2019. Negotiations had also continued with the CCG; firm interest had been confirmed from a health service provided, and the CCG had reportedly given a written undertaking to underwrite the obligation to pay rent.

Members were informed that of the three tenders received, the lowest was from Kier Construction Ltd; however, all three tenderers had omitted notable cost items, such as the building warranty premium, and it was later established that a number of provisional sums had been understated as well. As a result, it was likely that the tender prices given would increase at a later stage. Value Engineer (VE) negotiations had continued and the highest tenderer was invited to withdraw. Sales values had also been reviewed and the latest advice from Joscelyne Chase compared to the business case approved in May 2018.

A local Registered Provider had worked closely with the Strategic Investment Team (SIT) to assist the Council to realise the value and delivery of the town centre project. Two proposals were submitted by the Provider: to purchase the 12 units in the "East Block" as the 12 affordable homes required as a condition of the planning permission, and; to purchase all 35 residential units, accepting the sales and marketing risk and delivering the twelve smallest units as the required affordable homes. It was explained that the proposals made were based upon the upper decile of the achievable value range, with the level of discount at the lower range accepted on block residential sales in the region. The discount was mitigated by stage payments during development and there was no requirement for a marketing agent.

The initial income stream delivered by the project represented an initial yield on the Council's total financial commitment. The yield exceeded the current cost of funds but did not provide sufficiently for Minimum Revenue Provision. It was therefore recommended that the approved level of prudential borrowing remained unchanged and that the balance was met from a capital contribution from

revenue reserves. Members were then reminded that the project was a multi-purpose building which would include facilities such as a healthcare centre, pharmacy, hotel, residential units, etc.

With regard to financial impact, the current position was that the build cost was higher than originally anticipated. The estimated cost mean that it was also necessary to review the project's overall contingency, although it was noted that these additional costs were offset partially by a reduction in the budget required for professional fees and others, as well as for provisions for planning related costs. The latter was reduced on the basis that the scheme already made significant provision for items such as public transport, public realm and other town centre improvements, which would often be delivered through a S106 agreement.

The scheme included a development allowance that related to the capitalised salaries of the SIT, where activities undertaken met the strict conditions required for classification as capital expenditure. The arrangement was included as part of the overall funding mix for resourcing a permanent team structure, and would include the role of a Construction Manager. A budget for interest incurred on external borrowing was also incorporated within the scheme for use during the construction period, of which was projected to be lower than estimated; this was due primarily to the assumption that the agreement for the transfer of residential units would include a provision for phased payments during this period. This reduced the amount of temporary borrowing required.

The proposed acquisition of all units by a Registered Provider was estimated to generate capital receipts that were lower than the original scheme and the revised maximum achievable values. The original scheme assumed long-term prudential borrowing by the Council over a 40 year period, with principal and interest payments funded from the rent obtained via commercial premises. It was suggested to maintain long-term borrowing at this level, and consequently, the balance of funding required from the scheme was intended to be met from the Council's own capital reserves and balances, resulting in an increased contribution. If negotiations proved unsuccessful, the Council could choose to revert to the original proposal made regarding the sale of the East Block to a Registered Provider as affordable housing, and that the 23 homes in the main building were sold individually on the open market. The original contribution towards the scheme was from the District Investment Reserve, which was created in May 2016 from a combination of General Fund balances and New Homes Bonus. The additional contribution would be met from the Council's existing capital resources (primarily the balance of capital receipts).

In respect of risks analysis, Members were informed that since the meeting of the Cabinet on 14th May 2018, a combination of new risks and risks identified previously had been the main focus of the organisation. A notable risk centred around Kier Construction Ltd, which was known to have been the subject of recent media speculation regarding its financial stability. The Kier Group had issued a profit warning and announced a restructure plan which included 1,200 job losses and the sale of Kier Living, the Group's residential development division. To protect the Council's position, it has been agreed, subject to Cabinet approval, that the contractual arrangements, with Kier Construction Ltd, would include a number of measures, such as a Performance Bond and a Premier Warranty, to help mitigate the perceived risks as much as possible. It was

emphasised that as with any other contractor, the risk of insolvency remained which could lead to project delays and increased costs; however, the contingency measures undertaken would help to ensure that the risks were manageable.

Lastly, attention was drawn to a previously unidentified risk; the impact of a “No-deal Brexit.” Should such an event transpire, the Bank of England (BoE) had predicted increases in mortgage rates and a weakening of the housing market. To mitigate the risk of adverse impacts in this instance, a Registered Provider had submitted an offer to purchase all 35 apartments included within the project plan and as such, accept the sales risk. The acceptance of the Registered Provider’s offer would require the provision of an additional capital contribution, which was incorporated within the budget.

DECISION:

That Cabinet agreed to:

1. Confirm its continued support for the proposed regeneration project and continued approval for its implementation because it will significantly enhance the vitality, of the town centre, with 35 new homes, a hotel, over 100 new jobs and improved public transport and health facilities.
2. Approve the proposal for Braintree District Council to fund and deliver the Braintree Town Centre Regeneration Project together with the recommendation to Council to approve a capital budget for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs, including capitalised interest.
3. Waive the condition, agreed in May 2018, that the above contract would require a completed legal agreement to be in place for the Live Well Hub.
4. Grant the following delegated authority, in addition to the delegations approved in May 2018, to a Corporate Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Transformation to:
 - a. Approve the execution of a Design and Build construction contract, with Kier Construction Ltd.
 - b. Approve the terms of a sale of all thirty-five dwellings, in the scheme, to a Registered Provider, on the best available commercial terms.
 - c. Approve the terms of a sale, to a Registered Provider, of twelve dwellings as affordable housing, and twenty three dwellings on the open market, in the event that the proposed sale to a Registered Provider, is not concluded on satisfactory terms or in sufficient time.
5. Grant the following delegated authority to a Corporate Director and the Corporate Director (Finance) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Transformation, and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance Management:
 - a. To approve revised scheme costs with the ability to vary costs or revenue up to a 5% variation of the total scheme costs.

6. Grant the following delegated authority to the Corporate Director (Finance):

- a. To utilise the Council's cash balances, to minimise interest charges during development, as and when it is considered to be prudent to do so.

7. That Cabinet recommended to Council that:

- a. It notes that Cabinet confirms its continued support for the proposed regeneration project and continued approval for its implementation because it will significantly enhance the vitality, of the town centre, with 35 new homes, a hotel, over 100 new jobs and improved public transport and health facilities
- b. A capital budget be approved for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs including capitalised interest.
- c. A delegated authority be approved to accept up to a 5% increase in total scheme costs.
- d. Additional funds from capital reserves be used, if the above delegated authority is applied.

REASON FOR DECISION: To confirm financial arrangements to enable this strategically important project to proceed.

Recommended Decision:

Cabinet recommends that Council:

- a. Notes that Cabinet confirms its continued support for the proposed regeneration project and continued approval for its implementation because it will significantly enhance the vitality, of the town centre, with 35 new homes, a hotel, over 100 new jobs and improved public transport and health facilities
- b. Approves a capital budget for all professional, construction and associated scheme development costs including capitalised interest.
- c. Approves a delegated authority to accept up to a 5% increase in total scheme costs.
- d. Use additional funds from capital reserves, if the above delegated authority is applied.

Purpose of Decision:

To confirm financial arrangements to enable this strategically important project to proceed.

**LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL – OVERALL
STRATEGY AND DIRECTION**

Agenda No: 13a

Visit to Stansted Airport – Friday 26th July

Together with Cabinet Members Cllrs Cunningham and Ricci, I visited Stansted Airport to see the new developments at the airport. In addition to touring the airport Terminal and its new Arrivals area we also visited Stansted Airport College. This is a specialist college offering technical and professional courses in Aviation, Engineering, Business, Hospitality and Events.

The two-storey facility has been built on a one-acre site on land made available by the airport near the long-stay car park and Novotel Hotel. The project received two separate £3.5 million grants from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Local Growth Fund and Essex County Council.

The visit reinforced the significant contribution that this growing airport makes to the economic and educational well-being of the District.

Essex Leaders' Meeting – Thursday 5th September

I attended the above meeting held at Chelmsford City Council. On the agenda were the following items:-

Feedback on the out of London placements meeting with London Councils held on 15 July 2019;

The new Global Resettlement Scheme for the most vulnerable refugees;

Tackling the issue of empty homes collaboratively in Essex;

Delivering the shared ambition for Essex;

Planning for the UK's exit from the EU;

In addition there were two items that I raised namely, the constitution of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and District Council representation on Transport East.

The Essex Leaders appointed two members to represent second tier authorities on the Essex Health & Wellbeing Board. They are Cllr Mark Cory, Leader of Colchester BC, and myself.

NEGC Limited Board Meeting – Thursday 19th September

I attended, in my capacity as the Council's representative on the Board, the above meeting together with Cllr Mrs Spray and Officers.

The minutes of the meeting, when prepared, will be published on the Company's website at ne-gc.co.uk

On the agenda were the following items:-

2019/20 Programme & Budget Milestone Review;
Delivery Options;
Public Engagement;
Stewardship Strategy Update;
NEA Local Plan Update

In addition the Board received a presentation from Kevin McGeough, of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, on their involvement in the NHS Healthy New Towns programme as well as the progress they have made on their stewardship strategy.

Opening of the Brewster Interpretation Centre, Colne Valley Railway – Friday 20th September

Together with Cllrs Cunningham and Johnson I attended the official opening of the new centre at Castle Hedingham. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Nigel Spencer MBE, performed the opening ceremony. Paul Lemon, Chairman of Colne Valley Railway Preservation Ltd, thanked Braintree District Council for the help that it had given in enabling the project to reach fruition.

Forthcoming Matters

Between the writing of this report and the meeting of the Council I will be attending the following:-

Saturday 28th September – Opening of the new artificial football pitch at Great Notley Country Park;

Monday 30th September – Essex Business Board at Chelmsford;

Thursday 3rd October – A12 Members' Forum at County Hall;

Friday 4th October – South East Local Enterprise Partnership Board at Purfleet

Councillor Graham Butland
Leader of the Council

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

Agenda No: 13b

Council Tax and Business Rates

Tax Collection rates

- **Council Tax** the collection rate to the end of August was 49.25% compared to 49.45% for the previous year. The target for the year is 98.3%. Amount collected was £46.165million.
- **Business Rates** the collection rate to the end of August rate was 49.16% compared to 49.84% for the previous year. The target for the year is 98.6%. Amount collected was £21.343million.

499 dwellings have been added to the council tax list since October 2018 but a further 338 new dwellings are currently with the Valuation Office Agency to have a council tax band determined. Although encouraged to make payments on account only 87 of the occupiers of these un-banded dwellings have opted to pay on the basis of a provisional banding.

The number of dwellings charged 100% council tax premium (empty for two years+) is 210.

Performance against the 2019/20 Annual Plan

Projects

At the end of June two projects are complete and a further 50 projects are on track and progressing well. Two projects have an amber status.

Performance Indicators

Ten performance indicators have met or exceeded their target and four performance indicators have missed their target, three only very marginally.

Performance and Improvement

Preparatory work and evidence gathering is underway across all service areas ahead of the Customer Services Excellence Award annual assessment which is scheduled for 5th to 7th November.

Finance

2019/20 Budget

As at the end of June an overall positive variance is projected for the year of £642,000 (-4.4%). Staffing budgets are forecast to be underspent by £191,000 but after allowing for the corporate efficiency target of £200,000 this results in a projected net negative variance of £9,000. Other expenditure budgets are projected to be underspent by £72,000 but the main reason for the positive variance is income which is projected to be overachieved by £579,000.

2020/21 Budget Process

An initial high level assessment has been undertaken to determine whether any of the anticipated variances in the current year will be ongoing into the next financial year.

This has identified a potential net positive impact on the 2020/21 Budget of £178,000; consisting of £223,000 unavoidable additional cost but this is exceeded by £401,000 of cost reductions and additional income. This together with an anticipated surplus on the Council Tax Collection Fund of £126,000 results in a reduction to the funding shortfall from £539,000 (in the current Medium-Term Financial Strategy) to £235,000 for 2020/21. A positive start to the budget setting process but these will need to be validated alongside work to identify further cost reductions and/or additional income to produce a balanced budget proposal for Full Council to consider in February 2020.

The anticipated postponement of both the 75% Business Rate Retention Scheme and the outcome of the Fair Funding Review until 2021/22 was confirmed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 4th September 2019 when he announced the outcome of the 2019 Spending Review, which had been reduced from covering a multi-year period to a single year. Whilst the results of the Spending Review are seen as positive for Local Government the main beneficiaries will be upper and single tier authorities with additional funds being directed to social care and children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Although it is noted that additional monies have been allocated to help reduce homelessness and rough sleeping and also for Discretionary Housing Payments. The detail of the Financial Settlement for 2020/21 for individual local authorities is expected to be received in early December.

Statement of Accounts and External Audit

The Council's draft statement of accounts for 2018/19 were signed by Chris Fleetham, Corporate Director, on 25th May as representing a "true and fair view" of the Council's financial position at the reporting date, and of its income and expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2019. The external auditors, BDO LLP, commenced their audit on 3rd June. The external auditor's draft Audit Completion Report was presented to the Governance Committee on 25th July.

The final Auditor's Results Report was issued by BDO on 31st July and gave:

- an Unqualified Opinion that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council's financial position; and
- an unqualified conclusion that the Council has in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Investments

Following attendance of our financial advisors, Arlingclose at the Strategic Investment Group meeting on 31st August we are seeking shortly to invest a further £2million into pooled funds.

Human Resources

Employee of the Month: July winner – David Reeve in Operations.

"David worked for 15 years in the refuse collections crews and last year he became a Recycling Assistant.

Dave immediately showed a strong interest towards understanding the processes and ironing out what wasn't straightforward, especially using the information the crews send us every day. What could have been simply collecting information, analysing and sending letters to educate residents became a huge source of knowledge on what happens on our streets.

To add evidence to our letters, Dave created the "No photo, no action" initiative and explained it in the 7am crews meetings. The crews that followed his advice are now explaining to others how what they reported has been addressed, immediately and once only.

Recently, Dave noticed that the devices could not take pictures of properties on assisted collection. He didn't give up. He raised the issue, and has now received the first, clear picture of a food bin containing packaging, from a property on assisted collection. - He was so happy he was beaming.

David has made a true difference in our team by working 200% on everything. His attention to detail and passion for providing an excellent service should be recognised."

Team Award for the period of January 2019 to June 2019 – Housing Options Team

In April 2018, major new legislation was introduced that had a significant impact on the work of the team which was also going through a number of staffing changes.

"The team have had to learn the intricacies of the new Act, become familiar with a new data reporting system, develop new ways of interacting with customers to try to meet the aims of the legislation and also learn to gel as a team: all while continuing to provide a high quality service to customers who are often very challenging.

The team has worked hard to understand the intent of the legislation, to address the practicalities of the new database and thus ensure we produce meaningful data, to issue the correct documentation at the correct time (we have more than 140 template letters) and to encourage customers to work with us to achieve the legislation's objectives.

Everyone's focus and commitment means that we're now in a strong position where the total number of households we have helped avoid homelessness between 3rd April 2018 and 31st January 2019 exceeds the number of successful outcomes during the equivalent period the previous year."



The Housing Options team received their Team Award from Andy Wright at a presentation breakfast.

**Two teams were highly commended:
Transport & Operations Project Team**

"I am nominating the staff who managed the project to bring the Council's vehicle maintenance service back in-house. Following a decision from Management Board in August 2018, the team had six months to mobilise the fitting out of the workshop including preparing specifications, tendering, evaluating bids, new software and systems, to ensure a fully operational workshop from 1st April 2019. This was all in addition to negotiations with the existing contractor to withdraw from the service and the recruitment of a new transport management team including TUPE transfers etc.

The superb effort, commitment and hard work from the whole team was second to none and ensured delivery of the project on time and budget. It enabled the Council to maintain legal compliance with its fleet of vehicles, without which, it could not have continued to provide key front line services. This was against a backdrop of a Public Inquiry in which the Council had been criticised by the Traffic Commissioner and at a time of very low ebb that had severely impacted on the team's morale and motivation. However, staff rose to the challenge, pulled out all the stops within a very timeline and delivered a successful project."

Food Waste Collection Crew

"This Food Waste Collection crew (a very effective team of 2) always put themselves out to 'go the extra mile'.

Both Mark Cundy and Matt Orbell, without being prompted, and as a matter of routine, view the work of other food waste crews on their devices, immediately after they have finished their own. Together they have developed a robust, efficient and effective plan of providing additional support to others in a fair and consistent way.

When you've had a particularly physically demanding working day, it's a huge relief when you arrive on your last estate to start emptying food waste bins, that a proportion of your work has already been done for you. Matt and Mark's work ethic is second to none. They work collaboratively in a manner which achieves outstanding results, setting quality standards every time. As well as demonstrating effective team work, customer satisfaction is always in the forefront of Matt and Mark's minds and is never sacrificed.

For these reasons I would like to nominate this team for The Team Award in recognition of their contribution."

Councillor David Bebb
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF HOMES

Agenda No: 13c

HOUSING

New Affordable Housing

To the end of August 2019, there were 45 affordable housing completions in Witham and Silver End. This includes 18 homes for shared ownership sale and 27 for rent.

The Housing Assessment Team has started advertising some of the social housing at Rockways, Sible Hedingham and before Christmas, we expect to see completions at:-

- Rayne Road, Braintree;
- Oak Road, Halstead;
- Lodge Farm, Witham; *and*
- Monks Road, Earls Colne.

For the year April 2019 to March 2020, it is anticipated there will be a minimum of 200 affordable housing completions from a number of different developments. The Housing Team is expecting completion of six wheelchair specification bungalows on three sites, with two each in Halstead, Braintree and Witham.

Updates to the 'Gateway to Homechoice' IT System

We expect to complete the negotiations on the upgrade to the system we use to advertise and allocate social housing. The upgrade includes the following new features:-

- All of the system will be accessible to mobile phone users (currently some features are not designed for mobile use);
- Customers who are registered will be able to upload photographs of relevant documents and load them directly to their account, saving time for staff in scanning and attaching documents;
- The system will include a password reset system – currently people phone to reset their password;
- We will be able to advertise shared ownership homes – currently the system only advertises homes for rent.

The upgrade is affordable as the scheme benefits from payments from providers to advertise their properties and the seven Councils in the scheme share the overall procurement costs. There is no direct cost to Braintree District Council for the upgrade. We will be able to clarify the timing of the upgrade once the first implementation meeting is held.

Housing Options

The funding for the Rough Sleeper Initiative resulted in the project coming into operation in the Braintree District in mid-July 2019. Referrals can be made by anyone via Streetlink, either online or by telephone. The work is carried out by Churches Homeless Emergency Support Scheme (CHESS) providing the following outreach services:-

1. Interventions to prevent rough sleeping - e.g. people leaving prison, hospital, or those asked to leave by their family etc.
2. Interventions to relieve rough sleeping - work with rough sleepers to help them off the streets
3. Rapid assessment of client needs - through support and provision of two vacant rooms offering emergency accommodation
4. Help to move service users into private rented accommodation
5. Support to prevent people who have moved out re-entering the system

Contact has been made with three individuals currently rough sleeping in Braintree with the aim of supporting them off the streets. The funding requires a count of rough sleepers to be conducted every other month; the first will be carried out later this month.

We continue to support many of our customers to achieve good outcomes, with statistics up to the end of July suggesting that the number of households for whom homelessness was prevented or relieved over the course of the year will exceed that for 2018-19.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Residential Sites For Sale

A locally active Registered Provider has submitted a competitive offer to purchase all seven sites. Subject to due diligence, it is proposed to accept the offer as it provides the benefit of additional affordable homes. Draft Heads of Terms have been agreed.

Councillor Kevin Bowers
Cabinet Member for Homes

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Agenda No: 13d

North Essex Economic Strategy

Braintree has been working with colleagues in Colchester Borough, Uttlesford and Tendring District Councils and Essex County Council on a North Essex Economic Strategy and I am pleased to report that this work is now almost complete.

The strategy has been developed in response to the Government's Industrial Strategy and will feed into an Essex-wide and LEP-wide Local Industrial Strategy which are also in preparation. The strategies will help Essex face the challenges of matching population growth with employment growth and increasing productivity levels ensuring that both the quantity of jobs in North Essex and the quality of those jobs increases and that these jobs are accessible to all residents in the District.

The strategy will be brought before Cabinet in the coming months for consideration.

As part of this work a North Essex Economic Board has been created which I am a member of with Andy Wright being the officer lead. It is intended that the Board will continue beyond the production of the strategy to implement actions and deliver key priorities for economic growth across the region.

Business Engagement and Support

A Review of 2018/19

In May 2018, business support which was previously managed by support provider Ignite, whose key focus was to support new business start-ups in the District, was withdrawn as a service. This service was brought in-house as a cost effective solution to a changing demographic of business needs. This section looks at the successes and the value of Braintree District Council's business engagement and support interventions, with an estimated £285.55 return on investment for every £1 invested in Business Support and Engagement.

The key headlines in 2018/19 are:



Based on the level of investment made by Braintree District Council through staffing and financial support, the value of the Business Support and Engagement work within the district is valued at £285.55 for every £1 invested.

Members, Senior Management and the Economic Development Team conducted ongoing visits to a selection of district businesses to gain greater understanding into the successes and challenges of the businesses, to provide support packages for growth and to increase the awareness and reputation of the Council. Feedback from businesses on this initiative has been positive, resulting in high value referrals to partner programmes. Visits to 15 businesses took place in 2018/19, ranging by sector, size and location.

An example of the type of referrals that were made is funded mentoring. Under the LoCase initiative, Braintree District Council had a window of opportunity to offer bespoke business support (mentoring) to small businesses. This support was completely free of charge to the business and was funded with ERDF funds. Mentoring consisted of a bespoke programme of 6 x 2-hour sessions providing support on various topics including marketing, strategy, financial management, and innovation. During 2018/19 seven businesses within the District were successfully referred to this scheme receiving £33,020 worth of funded mentoring, which provided a return of investment value of £258,020, showcasing the crucial partnership work of the Economic

Development Team. This provided support to create new jobs, access new markets and new product development, to name a few.

One of these companies is Actual Group Ltd, a district business who chose to relocate to the area. Offering multiple services that range from initial builders' cleans of new facilities, moving and storing of customers'/businesses' assets, Actual Group received mentoring which led to them accessing further funding to purchase low carbon



vehicles to help them secure new national contracts outside of the District. Further case studies can be found [here](#).

To monitor return on investment and to inform service delivery, the Economic Development Team circulate quarterly dashboards to Members, monitoring changes to the local economy. In April 2019, the Business Engagement and Support Strategic Plan was also signed off, depicting the core priorities for the next three years; Business Support, Business Engagement, Infrastructure, Strategic Partnerships and Business Intelligence.



If you would like a copy of the 2018/19 Business Engagement and Support Impact Report, please contact the Economic Development Team.

Key Sectors

The table below provides a snapshot of the key sectors within the Braintree District as per Companies House. There has been an increase of independent property service-based businesses register to trade within the District, although in terms of employment, the majority of these are reporting only one employee.

SECTOR	Number of registered businesses	%
Business Services	2554	25.9%
Travel, personal and leisure	1419	14.4%
Construction	1385	14.0%
Retail/Wholesale	948	9.6%
Public Administration, education, health social services	772	7.8%
Property Services	461	4.7%
Manufacturing	418	4.4%
Computer Hardware/Software	362	3.7%
Transport, freight and storage	262	2.7%
Agriculture, Horticulture and Livestock	221	2.2%
Media and Broadcasting	165	1.8%
Banking, Insurance and Financial Services	144	1.5%
Printing and publishing	102	1%
Metals and Metal Products	67	<1%
Utilities	31	<1%
Waste Management and Treatment	26	<1%
Information Services	8	<1%
Biotechnology and Life Sciences	6	<1%
Mining	5	<1%

Business Visits

Members and the Economic Development Team have visited local businesses in the District to understand the successes and challenges that they face and to identify routes to support. One of the businesses the team visited was F.R. Shadbolt and Sons, who manufacture fire and acoustic doors, doorsets and panelling.

The family business has been up and



running for 135 years but moved its factory to Braintree in 2006. Its factory is located in Springwood Drive, Braintree and the team love showing clients round to see for themselves how they produce their high performance products.

Shadbolt and Sons employs 120 people from our community and it is good to see how busy the company is with lots of exciting and high profile projects on the go. There was a sense of real pride to learn that people from this factory crafted products that were used throughout The Shard in London, The Royal Academy of Music as well as The V&A in Dundee.



Director Alysa Shadbolt said: “Our employees are at the heart of our business, so we are proud to invest in them and their skills set. We abide by the ethos that my Grandfather worked by when he started the business 135 years ago, that as a family business we look after our staff and, in turn, trust them to look after our business. We will not compromise on safety be that of our staff, the safety of our clients or that of our end users, we are able to do this by setting high standards and combining the skills of our dedicated team

with the latest innovations in materials and technology. This ensures that every day, when we go to work in our Braintree factory, we provide our customers with the finest architectural products in the world and I think my Grandfather would approve of that.”

F.R. Shadbolt and Sons Ltd produces more than 80,000 doors/panels a year and it even has a dedicated research and innovation department to make sure it always improves its products’ quality and safety.

The Economic Development team from Braintree District Council shared funding opportunities with F.R. Shadbolt and Sons Ltd as well as providing information of how Springwood Industrial Estate could benefit from becoming a Business Improvement District by working together with all the businesses on the estate with the shared aims of improving their work environment and improving business sustainability.

New bridal wear Business Boosts Wedding Tourism

Braintree District Council has officially welcomed a new business to the district when it visited J’Adore Bridal Boutique in Coggeshall earlier this month.

The council’s economic development team and councillors were pleased to meet staff at the boutique which opened 10 weeks ago and prides itself on its bespoke and warm customer service. Their business is not just a hit with local people, the boutique is also attracting customers from as far as London.



Staff at J’Adore Bridal Boutique dedicate two hours for each scheduled client and prides itself on

offering stress-free wedding dress shopping. With goody bags on hand made from samples and discounts from local businesses, brides are then able to treat themselves to lunch and something to drink in the village, turning the occasion into memories.

J'Adore Bridal Boutique owner Linda Thomson is keen to make choosing wedding dresses into a real occasion with Coggeshall as a beautiful backdrop. Linda said: "Coggeshall is the perfect location for us. It offers a wonderful setting for brides choosing their ideal dress but it is also home to lovely venues, eateries, and a vineyard. The ladies can enjoy lunch in Coggeshall and make a special day of it. They might also like to consider holding their wedding in the area too! Coggeshall and the surrounding areas have so much to offer. We are working with other local businesses to promote all the wedding related businesses we have here."

During the visit the economic development team was able to refer Linda and co-owner Heidi to free workshops and business support diagnostics as well as introduce them to key contacts.

The visit was a great chance to see such a new and thriving business. It was very exciting to hear J'Adore Bridal Boutique's plans for the future and how it is working with neighbouring businesses to strengthen the customer experience while also boosting to tourism. More than 900 new businesses set up in our district last year, bringing with them jobs and boosting the local economy.

Business Improvement District – Witham Industrial Watch

The District's only Business Improvement District in Witham successfully renewed its support to over 350 businesses in July 2019, which will continue for the next five years. The renewal of the [Witham Industrial Watch Business Improvement District](#) has been supported by the following votes; Yes 177, No 20, 4 Void. This is a 12% increase on votes since the last ballot. BDC has supported WIW through funding and ongoing officer support. As a result of this renewed support, the Economic Development Team will be exploring the promotion of BIDs to other areas within the District.

Digital Inclusion

Members and the Digital Inclusion Group visited Anglia Ruskin University to learn more about the research, resources and partnership working that is conducted that can help to support BDC's Digital Strategy and the work of the group. Visitors had a tour of the £3m Super Lab which offers a new method of performing practical sessions and experiments. With 83 student workstations and four lecturer workstations, the lecture and experiment become one.





The Super Lab space also encompasses a physiological lab to run testing on fellow classmates and get excellent experience in a leading facility including Pharmaceutical Science, Applied Nutritional Science, Medical Science and other scientific based courses. As a result of the visit to ARU, officers are now engaging on a number of potential opportunities to work in partnership including the digitalisation of commercial services, training courses for the community regarding cyber security, and support to the Health and Well-being panel, to

name just a few. Conversations will be ongoing with officers and the experts at ARU to deliver improved advancements in digital skills and connectivity within the Braintree District.

Young Entrepreneurs Programme

The new BDC Young Entrepreneurs Programme is launching at the end of September to encourage economic growth through new business/job creation whilst reducing the number of NEETs in the District (not in employment, education or training).

Evidence collated has suggested a gap in the market to support 16-30 year olds and in particular, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, or are offenders, who may not have the means or experience to secure mainstream employment.

The Braintree District Young Entrepreneurs Programme (YEP) will be delivered through two means:

1. The Core Programme – a support and funding programme for all 16-30 year olds including NEETs or those from a disadvantaged background to start their own business
2. The College Plus Programme – a support and funding programme for a team of students to gain experience in establishing and maintaining a business in a supportive environment, to develop skills and experience.

YEP will be funded with the budget obtained through the Business Engagement and Support Strategic Plan and will be a value-added programme by working with local district businesses to provide mentoring free of charge to successful candidates as well as inviting interested schools/colleges to match fund the financial investment for the Plus programme.

The programme will be a sign-posting, mentoring/business advice and finance scheme. To maximise the skill development and creative innovation, application forms are required to be submitted in a digital video format as a three minute spoken application form. Through introducing this element the passion of the applicant should come through and nerves will not be allowed to take over.

At this stage of programme development there are several financial options that can be

explored:-

1. Grants up to £500 may be awarded following a successful application for the purpose of setting up a new business, depending on what the individual needs. Staffing costs are ineligible.
2. Loans up to £2,000 at 0% with the money being reinvested into the programme. Staffing costs are ineligible.
3. Venture capital investment up to £3,000-£5,000 with BDC agreeing a percentage ownership of the company. Staffing costs are ineligible.
4. College Plus – Up to £1,000 grant (match funded) with support.

Funding can be used for start-up costs only such as training courses, stock, and digital equipment. It will not be granted for staffing costs.

A panel of application reviewers, comprised of internal officers, will meet to review any video submissions. Successful candidates will be invited to submit a business plan with a financial forecast and then meet with the panel for a formal interview. The panel will collate any further information required and will provide a decision for the candidate at the meeting.

As a result of this pilot, it is expected that a minimum of 20 individuals will be engaged and seven businesses will be created, including one not for profit micro business within a College to provide entrepreneurial simulation. The success of this pilot will be assessed through performance indicators, economic impact data, satisfaction surveys and case study development.

Councillor Tom Cunningham
Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF
CORPORATE TRANSFORMATION**

Agenda No: 13e

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Manor Street Regeneration - Plans Progressing negotiations almost complete

At end of negotiation period, the construction contract is now finalised and is higher than the original budget. This cost has been attributed to a lack of confidence in the market, with concerns around resource and material costs post Brexit. However the original vision of a Hotel, Health Facility, Pharmacy, Residential units with two multi level car parking facilities has been maintained. Negotiations with a housing group means that some or all of the residential units planned could be made available to residents who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market. The new budget and provisions and to manage the risk of the contractor, Kier Ltd, will be reviewed by cabinet 9th September, and if approved will be before the Full Council on October 7th.

Horizon 120 Business Innovation Park

Following Cabinet approval on 8th July and Full Council approval for a revised budget on 22nd July, work is continuing at a pace to complete the local development order(LDO). A 4 week Public Consultation is planned for September. Planning consent via the Planning Committee anticipated in early November with full council on the 16th December. Infrastructure element of the project including two entrances from the A131 and the main spine road on the site will be subject of a separate detailed application heard in October. This is needed to allow Gridserve to meet their target opening date. Heads of terms have been agreed with Marshgate and solicitors are drafting options agreement.

Further discussions being held with a number of organisations interested in 200,000 of the 700,000 square feet available.

The Strategic Investment team have been showing interested members around the site during August.

GRIDSERVE

Gridserve on the Southern end of the site have ambitious plans and to expedite, have put in a Planning Application for their Electric Charging Station and are planning to start construction in October and opening the first week of April. They will make a capital contribution to the second entrance for Horizon120 site and BDC will get land for a second junction as a separate deal.

COMMERCIALISATION, INCOME GENERATION, & EFFICIENCY

Getting Maximum value from third party spend

Review undertaken of all third party spend as part of the LGA funded productivity expert programme. Consideration of shortlisted projects at management board on 13th August with agreement to take forward Resourcing and Insurance. Further discussion will be held on the proposals for Asset Management and Facilities at a workshop looking at this

area. Agreement also given to create best in class contract management processes to be rolled out across the authority.

Collaborative Procurement – Procurement approach paper shared with Essex Commercial Network including Essex County Council. This paper considers opportunities to share procurement and contract knowledge to generate additional third party savings and efficiencies

Social Value - Proposal for considering social value as part of commissioning activity considered by Essex Strategic Coordination Group. Support given. This developed in to joint approach with ECC, which will be presented to the Essex Chief Executives.

Increasing Income

All Sales Activity – Delivery of income for 2019/20, clarified following review from finance on costs, of £50k (net of sign costs and including sales up to 23rd August). Trial of shared sales resource with Basildon DC has been agreed to continue bringing additional £11,310 for 19/20. Currently exploring further opportunities to share this resource and bring additional income.

Print –Significantly exceeded income target of £10,000 in 2018/19. Looking to review as part of project 2020 to understand costs of delivery and consider opportunities to effectively compete with private sector for print jobs

Net income –Delivered/ Agreed Savings/ income from commercial programme to date - £147k

Payroll – Currently creating commercial strategy to expand the current shared payroll service from April 2020.

Contract Management

Leisure Extension process created and agreed. Review of existing contract and consideration of how the contract will be shaped going forward including options for extension or reprocurement will begin in September

ICT & DIGITAL SERVICES

Work continues on implementing the Digital Strategy projects for 2018/19 including: customer on-line booking systems, on-line payment system, Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery procedures,improved on-line services for staff including collaboration on-line and enhancements to the phone system.

The first On Line Booking service is the Pest Control Service which is currently live in CSC and will be a fully online service for customer access by end of summer 2019. This will then be rolled out to other services progressively.

Cyber Security

The ICT team continues to maintain its vigilance on all aspects of Cyber security. The ICT team continue with “metaphishing” to test the user community’s response to rogue emails with potential virus or malware. Members were communicated with the results of the June 2019 test and has led to further communication regarding how to identify and respond to Phishing attempts.

WiFi4EU - Free Wi-Fi Town Centres

The WiFi4EU initiative is progressing well. Installation company identified, discussions with Economic Development on coverage areas in Braintree, Halstead and Witham to ensure maximum access.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset Management continue to be very active disposing of surplus assets which have provided the Council with additional investment capital and letting vacant commercial and industrial units which support start-up and small businesses in the District and provide the Council with valuable revenue income.

Premdor Healthcare Land

Premdor Medical Centre: The Council is working with the NHS and Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (MECCG) to develop a modern healthcare facility which will provide new combined premises for existing surgeries in Castle Hedingham and Sible Hedingham. These surgeries have now merged to form Sible Hedingham Medical. The Council is due to receive land under a S.106 Agreement which is required to be used for healthcare purposes. The GP's have submitted a Project Initiation Document, which has been approved by the NHS Oversight Committee and Consultants are now working on the concept site plans which will form part of the Outline Business Case to be submitted to the NHS and MECCG. The GP's have agreed a letter of intent to commit to signing Heads of Terms and approval to proceed was given at Council on the 10th December 2018. The design team have met the GP's and a final scheme design has been costed. Subject to rents being agreed the financial appraisal appears to work for the Council and will generate additional revenue income.

Disposal of the Bramston Sports Centre Site, Witham

The Asset Management team has been working with two interested parties to dispose of the Bramston Sports Centre site in Witham. The first disposal contract has completed with the sale of the front part of the Bramston Site to the food retailer, Lidl. The development of the new Lidl foodstore is rapidly progressing with expected completion in October 2019.

The sale of the rear part of the Bramston Site to Churchill Retirement Living Limited completed on the 24th June 2019. The Council is in the process of delivering the required flood mitigation works required for both development schemes on its retained land beside the River Brain.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The annual **Residents magazine 'Contact'** will be delivered, door to door, mid September. The magazine has more people stories this year to resonate and engage with residents.

Corporate Strategy

Consultation on the new Corporate Strategy for 2020–2024 launched on the 14th June and closed on the 2nd August with the aim of encouraging residents to tell us what makes the district a good place to live but more importantly on how it could be better. As a council we want to make sure we are focusing on delivering the right services in the right way for everyone who lives and works in the district. We also want to ensure our work meets the needs of the district and seek to address some of the challenges our communities and businesses are facing. Responses are currently being analysed.

Local Plan Consultation Communications

The consultation notification, briefing on the progress so far and invitation to comment, has been promoted widely using social media channels, web site, library displays at Braintree, Halstead and Witham, Council page in local newspapers and a brochure delivered to every home in the District.

Councillor John McKee
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**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF
COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND TOURISM**

Agenda No: 13f

TOURISM

We were very pleased to partner with Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership to organise and promote a 'Flitch Way Ramble' on Saturday 31st August 2019. The Rail Partnership encourage and promote primarily off-peak travel for residents and business users of the communities along the six branch lines, of which Witham to Braintree is known as the Flitch Line, by stimulating a wide range of projects, enabling the communities to increase their economic, social and environmental welfare.

The walkers enjoyed the gentle ramble along the beautiful Flitch Way and were entertained en-route by a specially designed photo quiz to highlight specific sights to be found along the path between Braintree and Rayne. Once at Rayne they stopped at The Booking Hall Café for tea and cake, eaten during a very interesting talk about the history of the railway line and how the railway carriage museum came about.



Photos courtesy and used with permission of Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership.

I am delighted to have supported Witham Town Council's 20th Anniversary Puppet Festival and the production of Halstead Town Council's annual events leaflet. Both activities are an excellent way of showcasing what our diverse district has to offer.

The developer for our Tourism website, Simple View, has begun the process of design and implementation. Officers are working with the Marketing and Graphics teams to develop a concept and brand for the website and wider tourism work. Content upload will begin shortly and we will be inviting businesses to input their details to be included on the site.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social Isolation and Loneliness

Work has commenced to deliver the recommendations from the Task & Finish Group relating to Social Isolation and Loneliness.

Members will have received in their pigeon holes and via email an information leaflet and a scoping exercise which I encourage all Members to complete and return to the Community Services Team. This will assist us as a council in understanding the services and community assets available across the District to address social isolation and loneliness.

United in Kind, the countywide social movement campaign officially launched on Monday 23rd September 2019. The campaign aims to raise awareness of loneliness, make it acceptable to talk about loneliness, encourage people to reach out and support each other and give people the means to take positive action directly through their networks. The campaign will have three phases delivered between September 2019 and March 2020: Kind together, learn together and tidy together.

Essex County Council has also commissioned the Rural Community Council of Essex as the delivery agent for Social Isolation and Loneliness across Essex; they have employed United in Kind coaches for each district. Jane Laken is the Braintree coach and part of her role involves building relationships and connections including linking individuals and groups, recruiting volunteers and creating networks and initiatives that enable and encourage inclusive communities and informal volunteering.

The Council has designated a bench in Braintree Town Centre as a 'Chat a While' bench. The bench was inspired by similar schemes across the country and is located outside Natwest bank and Mack's Barbers and aims to encourage people to speak to each other in an effort to combat loneliness.



Engagement with Children and Young People

The Council was fortunate enough to encourage some young people from within the District to complete the initial Corporate Strategy consultation. From this officers are developing a plan of engagement with young people across the District to seek their views about the district they live in, what they feel are key issues, improve their understanding of the work of a local authority and encourage them to become more involved in shaping services moving forward. The team has already engaged with HAPPY (Halstead Youth Council), Notley High School, Witham Hangout and Braintree Youth Project.

Councillors Community Grant Scheme

I would like to remind Councillors that there is an annual allocation of £1,500 per Councillor which must be spent by the end of the financial year.

CULTURE

Town Hall Centre

The Town Hall Manager is working with the Council's in-house web team to develop an online booking system for the hire of the various rooms, making it much easier for customers to pre-book rooms and detail their requirements.

Preparations are well underway at the Town Hall for Halloween and Christmas Events. Escape room gaming is still proving to be a popular event at the Town Hall with the latest block of games being fully sold out.

In terms of diversifying the attraction of the Town Hall, staff are currently promoting wake, baby shower and hen party offerings and are also promoting the in-house bar facilities which staff have developed as an additional way of increasing income from weddings and other events.

Braintree Museum Trust

I will report on the quarterly meeting with the Braintree Museum Trust in my next briefing to Council.

Councillor Frankie Ricci
Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Tourism

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

Agenda Item: 13g

STREET SCENE

Anglia in Bloom – It gives me great pleasure to yet again congratulate Halstead for winning Gold and Best Town in their category. BDC again won Gold for the Public Gardens and a Silver Gilt for Halstead Cemetery, one up from last year. Also to Gosfield who won Gold and Coggeshall, Silver.

We owe a great deal to all of the dedicated volunteers who achieve these results and of course to our own BDC staff.

Protecting Open Spaces from Illegal Encampments – I am pleased to report that the work to protect an additional stretch of public open space in Bramble Road, Witham, has been completed. Further works are planned at Rickstones Recreation Ground and Gershwin Boulevard, Witham, and at Marshalls Park and Millennium Way, Braintree.

Glutton Street Cleansing Vacuum – At the end of the last financial year, the Government awarded the Council a grant of just over £26,000 from a fund designed to help improve cleanliness standards in town centres. This enabled the Council to acquire a new street vacuum cleaner – the ‘Glutton’ – which is already paying dividends by enhancing the manual work carried out by our Barrow Beat staff who are out 7 days a week, litter-picking and sweeping hard to reach areas. The Glutton can reach into the smallest gaps and recesses with its flexible nozzle and will remove the smaller pieces of litter that are often difficult to reach with a broom. It will also help reduce our carbon footprint which is always good news for the environment, as the machine is 100% electric and eco-friendly with no CO2 emissions. The grant also enabled the Council to replenish its stock of litter and dog waste bins, as well as litter-picks, high visibility vests and gloves to lend to members of the community.

A131 Roadside Beautification – The trial with Keep Britain Tidy to plant up verges to discourage littering has now concluded and the results from all organisations that participated are being evaluated. The Council received positive feedback on social media about those stretches of verge that were planted up between Marks Farm and Broad Road. Interestingly, this idea has been well received not just locally, but across the country as many other highway authorities have adopted this practice or are reviewing the frequency of verge cutting in favour of a more naturalised appearance.

Replacement Benches – as part of the Council’s capital programme, 7 benches were replaced at Halstead Public Gardens and Halstead Cemetery ahead of the Anglia in Bloom judging. Officers are now looking at other high profile locations where replacement benches may be needed as part of a planned programme of work.

Unauthorised Access onto/from Public Highway – In July, officers received a report that an unauthorised gateway had been created through a hedge on a section of the A120 slip road from London Road, Braintree, heading towards Galleys Corner. It is believed that the access was created late at night or in the early hours of the morning and there were concerns that it was to facilitate an illegal encampment on private land leading off the Public Right of Way immediately behind the gate. Officers consulted with Highways England who authorised the Council to install barriers in front of the gateway to block access. Officers also cleared a quantity of brushwood that had been fly-tipped nearby which was likely the material cut out from the hedge to create the access.

STREET SCENE PROTECTION

The information below shows the work undertaken by the Street Scene Protection Team from 1st June to 31st July 2019.

- 48 Dog barking complaints investigated
- 3 Dog fouling complaints investigated
- 17 Stray dogs detained (14 BDC / 3 UDC)
- 14 Statutory Notices served (Includes fly-tipping, failure to micro-chip, Anti-social Behaviour, accumulations of waste, Waste Duty of Care, vehicle on private land, noise/odour nuisance, excessive dog barking, dangerous dogs and S.108 Notices - Requisitions for Information)
- 16 Fixed Penalty Notices served (15 for litter and 1 for smoking in a vehicle)
- 2 Prosecutions taken (both found in the Council's favour), as follows:-

06/06/19 - Duty of Care offence. Lady paid unknown male to remove waste from property which was then fly-tipped. Fined £108, with costs of £620 plus a victim surcharge.

25/07/19 – Failure to have dog microchipped. Female didn't have correct details on microchip of dog that was straying on a regular basis. Fined £150, with costs of £474 plus a victim surcharge.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction surveys have been carried out for three of the Council's front-line services, the results of which are set out below.

Household Waste Collections (2,000 surveys sent out, of which 312 were returned, giving a response rate of 16%).

- 97%** found the crews polite and friendly
- 99%** agreed that the service was regular/reliable
- 95%** overall satisfaction with the service

Commercial Waste Collections (1,200 surveys distributed and 150 returned, representing a response rate of 13%).

- 98%** of respondents found the crews polite and friendly
- 99%** said that the service was regular and reliable
- 97%** were likely to recommend the service to others.

Grave Maintenance (112 surveys sent out, of which 34 were returned, giving a response rate of 30%).

91% felt that the service delivered value for money

91% overall satisfaction with the service

I'm sure Members will agree that these are excellent results which clearly demonstrate the commitment of our front-line staff to delivering high standards of customer service.

WASTE COLLECTIONS

The Waste Collection Team continues to drive down the number of missed bins within the District with excellent performance shown by the team in achieving a monthly average of just 3.1 bins missed per 100,000 collections since April 2019.

	Number of collections missed	Number missed per 100,000 collections
APRIL	29	4.4
MAY	26	4.0
JUNE	9	1.4
JULY	17	2.6
TOTALS	81	3.1 average

RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

	2018-19		2019-20	
	Kgs/HH (Residual waste)	Recycling Rate)	Kgs/HH (Residual Rate)	Recycling Rate
APRIL	40	51.86%	39	52.35%
MAY	41	56.20%	38	50.63%
JUNE	39	57.12%	37	55.71%
JULY	38	47.51%	40	56.12%

GREEN HEART OF ESSEX/LOVE ESSEX

Love Essex car litter campaign 2019

A pan Essex car litter campaign was launched on Monday, 9th September. The campaign, 'Can you afford to throw away £150?' and 'See-it Report-it...' aims to raise awareness around the increase in the penalty charge, as well as informing the public that people can report litter offenders to their local authority by taking the vehicle registration.

10 of the Essex authorities are taking part this year - Chelmsford, Brentwood, Braintree, Basildon, Maldon, Thurrock, Epping, Castle Point, Uttlesford and Essex County Council. We are also pleased to have on board our long-standing business partners' support from KFC (15 locations) and McDonalds (3 locations).

A press release was issued alongside a social media video. Other campaign collateral includes digital media, petrol pump nozzles at supermarket sites, banners at the drive-through restaurants, 300,000 stickers on the food packaging applied at the point of purchase, vehicle panels and banners in car parks.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Technical Officer of the Year Award – I am delighted to announce that Greg Scott, Environmental Services Technical Officer is in a shortlist of 3 for the Technical Officer of the Year Award, in the National Healthy Homes Awards run by Foundations. The final is being held in London on September 25th. Getting so far shows what exceptional staff we have.

Annual Air Quality Report – Each year we are required to undertake an assessment of our air quality within the District and submit a report to DEFRA for their approval. Below is the response from DEFRA: this and our report to them are available on the the Council's website. Thanks to the staff for such a good report.

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Report sets out the Annual Status Report, which forms part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 and subsequent Regulations.

The Braintree area enjoys good air quality with only one exceedance of the national air quality objectives. Consequently, there is currently no requirement for Braintree District Council to declare any air quality management areas (AQMA's). However, additional monitoring should be undertaken around the exceedance to assess the potential need for an AQMA to be declared in the future (which has been added in January 2019).

Automatic monitoring was not undertaken in Braintree in 2018

Non-automatic (passive) monitoring of NO₂ was conducted at 12 sites during 2018. One exceedance of the annual mean objective was recorded in the Halstead area. Data capture for 2018 was good at all monitoring locations. A review of tube locations resulted in the addition of two diffusion tubes in 2018 (along with a further 6 locations in early 2019 to assess the potential need for an AQMA in Halstead).

Some QA/QC procedures have been applied with the national bias adjustment factor used. No annualisation of monitoring sites was carried out as data capture for all monitoring locations was at least 75%. Distance correction was carried out for all relevant locations. The report provides maps of each monitoring site and a discussion of historical trend data, although a graph of these trends would be useful for visualisation.

The Council has made progress with measures to address air quality in Braintree in 2018. No Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is required as there are no AQMA's declared, however a number of measures are still ongoing. These include the Council's four-year Corporate Strategy which has a priority of delivering strong sustainable transport infrastructure links to encourage a shift from car use to public transport, walking and cycling. In addition, the Local Plan contains actions such as the provision of electric vehicle charging points and measures to offset adverse air quality impacts.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority, the conclusions reached are acceptable for all sources. Following the completion of this report, Braintree District Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2020.

Commentary

The report is well structured, detailed, and provides the information specified in the Guidance. The following comments are designed to help inform future reports.

1. Trends are discussed (with a general decrease in concentrations seen) and a robust comparison with air quality objectives is provided.
2. Graphs could be used for clearer visualisation of the historical trends.
3. The diffusion tube mapping is comprehensive and demonstrates the monitoring network.
4. Updates were provided on measures to address air quality.
5. A link to the Public Health outcomes framework website and graph of the data could be provided in addition to the description of the data included.
6. Additional diffusion tube locations have been added to the Halstead area to assess the potential need for an AQMA following an exceedance of the objective. This is supported and should be reported on in next year's report.
7. QA/QC of non-automatic network was considered to be thorough, with the national bias adjustment factor used.
8. Comments from the previous appraisal were included in the report and acted on. This is welcomed.

ESSEX POLICE FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

The EPFCC, Roger Hirst, is looking to commence work on the next 4 year plan. Three and a half years ago he asked the public what they wanted from Essex Police. Working with police officers, staff, volunteers and partners from across Essex the 2016 Police and Crime Plan was developed.

The following link will take you to the new survey; hard copies will be available on request and in local libraries and other public buildings.
www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/make-a-difference/

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Essex Police Public Perception Survey

Braintree Q1 2019/20 Public Perception Survey Results

The following dashboard summarises data collected as part of the Essex Police Public Perceptions Survey 2017/18 – 2019/20. The results represent the combined sample of interviews across each year. The annual sample size for the survey is 7,710 Essex residents – approx. 550 annually from each of the 14 Districts. Significant trends have been highlighted in the Key Insights section – changes of (+/-) 6% should be considered significant.



Braintree Key Insights

- Almost two-thirds of Braintree residents surveyed (64%) agree EP understand issues affecting their community – highest of all Districts
- Over half (55%) agree EP are dealing with crime and ASB in their area – highest of all Districts
- Over three-quarters (78%) are very/fairly confident of receiving a good service if they were to report a crime – highest of all Districts
- Around three-quarters (74%) think local police are doing a good or excellent job – highest of all Districts

On August 8th a new system DISC, was launched in Braintree town centre. Essex Police Licensing Department received Community Safety Partnership money for this. It will make it easier for venues in the District to share information between themselves and the Police, as well as allowing them to see who has been banned previously and to prevent them from coming into their premises.

This will continue to help make our towns night time economy a safer place for people to enjoy.

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF PLANNING

Agenda No: 13h

Neighbourhood Planning

I am delighted to announce that the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan has successfully passed its referendum stage, with 90% of those voting in the Parish being in favour of approving the Neighbourhood Plan. This is the first Neighbourhood Plan to reach this stage in the District and I pass my congratulations to the Parish and in particular the Neighbourhood Plan group for their hard work in bringing this Plan forward.

The Council will now be acting swiftly to ensure the plan is made and becomes an adopted part of the development plan for the District.

The other 11 Neighbourhood Plans currently underway in the District continue to make good progress with local communities working towards producing a Plan which allows them to have a greater say over how their area develops in the future. The final consultation on the Cressing Neighbourhood Plan concludes on 15th July 2019 and will be submitted to an independent examiner shortly thereafter. Hatfield Peverel Neighbourhood Plan examination is still underway with the final Inspectors report expected imminently.

Any other Parishes considering a Neighbourhood Plan are urged to contact officers in the Planning Policy team who will be able to provide bespoke advice and support to each group, including specialist advice from the Rural Community Council of Essex which is paid for by Braintree District Council.

Local Plan

The technical consultation on the further work prepared for the North Essex Local plan examination closed on 30th September 2019 following a six week consultation period. As part of the consultation period we made the decision to contact all households in the District and provide them with a leaflet explaining the proposals and how to respond and advertised the consultation widely through print and social media. The leaflet can be accessed via the following link:-
https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/download/1397/local_plan_consultation_leaflet

I will provide an update at the meeting on the number of responses we have received to that consultation.

All the responses will be sent to the Planning Inspector who will consider the additional evidence and the responses to it. It is likely that he will reopen the oral hearing sessions to consider this evidence and invite participants to attend and put forward their views.

I wish to congratulate Essex County Council on the announcement that two Housing

Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bids have been approved in Essex at the Chelmsford north east bypass and new station and the A120/A133 link road and rapid transit system at the Tendring Colchester borders Garden Community. We await the outcome of a third bid for the A12 around the Colchester Braintree borders Garden Community.

Local Development Order – Horizon 120

Consultation is currently live on a public consultation on a Local Development Order (LDO) for the Horizon 120 employment site at Great Notley. An LDO is a way of providing planning permission for specific types of development within a defined area, subject to certain conditions and limitations. This is the first time the authority has used an LDO and it is hoped will simplify the planning process and provide greater certainty for those businesses looking to move onto the site.

Conservation Area Appraisals

A workshop and public exhibition was held in Great Bardfield on 27th June 2019 to share the provisional results of the Conservation Area Appraisal with the Parish, following an earlier presentation to the Parish Council on 12th June 2019. Following the conclusion of the public consultation process on 19th July 2019, any necessary amendments will be made to the Appraisal document before it being approved by Planning Committee. There was a good level of attendance at the workshop.

Consultation on the Conservation Area Appraisals for Wethersfield and Kelvedon and Feering will follow a similar model to that for Great Bardfield and is expected to begin shortly.

Development Management

Appeals Update

1. Hatfield Peverel 'Call In' Applications and Appeals

The Council received decisions from MHCLG on 8th July 2019 in relation to the 3 'Call In' applications and appeals in relation to the Stone Path Drive (two separate applications for 80 and 140 houses) and Gleneagles Way (application for 120 houses) sites in Hatfield Peverel. The applications and appeals were considered at a public inquiry in December 2017. In all three cases the Planning Inspector recommended that planning permission be granted. The Secretary of State agreed with the Inspector's recommendations and granted planning permission for all three proposals.

2. Mount Hill, Halstead

The Council received the appeal decision from the Planning Inspectorate on 11th July 2019 for Land off Mount Hill, Halstead. The planning application sought permission for the erection of 71 dwellings with associated garages, garden curtilages, a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), public open space and hard and soft landscaping. An appeal was made following non-determination of the application. Subsequently, the Council's Planning Committee resolved that had the Committee been able to determine the application it would have refused planning permission. A public inquiry was held on 4-7th June and 11th June 2019.

The appeal was allowed and planning permission granted for the development.

Planning Permissions for New Residential Development

The Quarter 2 2019/20 position (July to September) is that planning permissions (this includes outline and full planning applications, but excludes reserved matters approvals and variation applications) have been granted for a total of 322 dwellings (as at 11th September 2019) which can be summarised as follows:-

	Market Housing	Affordable Housing	TOTAL
Granted by BDC on Allocated site and/or within Development Boundary	25	4	29
Granted by BDC on Unallocated site and/or outside Development Boundary	7	0	7
Allowed at Appeal on Allocated site / within Development Boundary	14	0	14
Allowed at Appeal on Unallocated site / outside Development Boundary	168*	104*	272*
TOTAL	214	108	322

**These figures include the Secretary of State decisions for Stone Path Drive (two separate applications for 80 and 140 houses) and Gleneagles Way (application for 120 houses) in Hatfield Peverel, which were granted planning permission on 8th July 2019. The two applications at Stone Path Drive cannot both be implemented so the larger application for 140 houses has been included in the above calculations.*

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REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Agenda No: 13i

HEALTH, LEISURE AND WELLBEING

Livewell Child

The Livewell Child project has been entered into the LGA Awards in recognition of the excellent results achieved with this pilot initiative. The three year pilot project worked with ten primary schools across the District, with the aim of halting the rise in childhood obesity levels. Working in partnership with Essex County Council we have evidence to show a halt in the rise in childhood obesity in all ten pilot schools. By bringing partners and the community together there has been a greater impact and created an environment in and around schools where good health becomes the social norm.

Health & Wellbeing Panel

On 31st July 2019, the Health & Wellbeing Panel was re-launched with representatives from across the health spectrum being invited. There was an excellent turnout and partners shared very good examples about a whole range of new initiatives to combat community health issues. Examples of some of the initiatives are:-

- Chair based exercise programme – an initiative to enable those with restricted mobility to perform aerobic exercise
- Mental Health First Aid Programme – a programme to train members of staff to recognise and help individuals experiencing mental health issues – this has resulted in 181 interventions to date
- Fit and Fed – an initiative which Greenfields Community Housing is leading designed to demonstrate healthy recipes using only food bank ingredients. Videos are being produced on YouTube to demonstrate cooking skills and recipes.
- Slipper exchange programme – 80% of falls in the elderly population are due to inappropriate footwear. This initiative aims to reduce the number of falls by enabling elderly residents to exchange their old slippers for a brand new pair of anti-slip slippers. This initiative is being co-ordinated by Community 360.
- Baby clothes bank - this has been set up to enable residents to donate baby clothing etc. in good condition for parents/carers in need in the District.

Sports Awards

The nominations for the 2019 Active Braintree Sports Awards are now open, and Members are encouraged to nominate your local sporting stars/volunteers etc. More details about the awards and the nomination forms are available at <https://www.activeessex.org/abdn-awards/>.

Whilst on the subject of sports awards, I am extremely pleased to announce that the Braintree District has a new world champion.

Freia Challis from Halstead rides with the Braintree Bullets BMX Club, and became

Junior World Champion at the recent World Championships held in Belgium. Freia now proudly sports the rainbow jersey for the next 12 months. On behalf of the Council I would like to congratulate Freia on her fantastic success and hope this encourages more female participation in sporting activities.



I am also pleased to report that Great Bradfords Football Club has celebrated a milestone anniversary in spectacular fashion by picking up the prestigious Essex FA Charter Standard Club of the Year award. The award has come as a fitting conclusion to the end of Great Bradfords' 40th anniversary season and one that has seen silverware return to them for the first time in a decade.

The club was nominated for the Essex Charter Standard Club of the Year to the Essex FA, who made the award recognising Great Bradfords' commitment to progression, development and enjoyment as well as their financial and administrative capabilities and safeguarding of players. The club has held the Charter Standard mark since 2003, but this is the first time they have been named as Club of the Year. Great Bradfords had seen years of success, with players entering academies at Ipswich Town and Colchester United, as well as claiming league titles across Essex as thousands of players had worn the club's colours over the years.



Artificial Grass Pitch at Great Notley County Park

The facility is 10 years old this year and as expected the artificial grass pitch had reached the end of its serviceable life due to normal wear and tear. A sinking fund had been created by the Council along with an annual contribution from Great Notley Football Club to provide a budget for the new surface (total £155k).

Tenders were invited and the winning bid was from ETC Sports Surfacing Ltd who installed the facility from new. The total cost to replace the surface was £83k. Work commenced on site on 5th August 2019 and was completed on 29th August 2019. As the cost was lower than expected, we are looking at the option of upgrading the CCTV and lighting.

To mark the fact that the facility is 10 years old an inclusive walking football session and display match involving a number of local youth teams (male and female) has been organised by Community Iron (Charity affiliated to Braintree Town Football Club) in partnership with the Council, together with walking football sessions involving local football clubs and girls teams.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Dementia Activities

Dementia Friendly Cinema

This operates at the Halstead Empire on a monthly basis with free entry and open to everyone. Numbers in attendance ranges from 70–100 at each screening. Initial funding was given by Councillors Community Grants. It is now funded by various other community funds and is run entirely by volunteers.

Sunday Cinema also runs in Witham and is organised by Witham Town Council. It is advertised as open to all to attract a wide range of people from across the community and is dementia friendly and people living with dementia and their carers are encouraged to attend. The cost of attendance is £1 and this includes refreshments.

Dementia Friendly Walks

“Walk and Talk” takes place once a month in Halstead, Witham and Braintree. It started in October 2018 and is led by Di Pasfield from Essex County Fire & Rescue. The walks are free to attend. Attendance figures are low in Witham and Halstead but Braintree attracts a core group of walkers who have created an informal peer support group.

Dementia Friendly Tea Dance

This monthly event takes place at the Archer Centre and is called “The Archer Centre Social and Tea Dance”. The group welcomes people living with dementia and their carers along with any other members of the community that would like to attend. The session is run by a professional dance teacher who specialises in working with adults with additional needs and it costs £2.00 which includes refreshments and raffle.

Dementia Friendly Cream Teas

This takes place on an ad hoc basis and is organised by the Community Well Being Team and the Team at the Braintree Town Hall. A traditional cream tea is served in the historic surroundings of the Town Hall and people living with dementia and their carers are invited to attend. The environment is welcoming and as it is dementia friendly carers can relax knowing that the staff and others are compassionate and aware of any additional needs and requirements. Three events have taken place so far with the most recent attracting 70 attendees.

Dementia Friendly Swimming

This is operated at Witham Leisure Centre by Sport for Confidence alongside their

many inclusive activities. Staff have received dementia friends training and are experienced in dealing with customers with additional needs. The session costs £3.00 and is available every Thursday between 1.00–2.00pm

Slow Shopping

This initiative is currently being piloted in George Yard in Braintree. It is a national scheme that provides a welcoming environment for everyone, including those living with visible and invisible disabilities. A dedicated time every Thursday 2–4pm provides those who live with anxiety, mental illness, those who have communication challenges, those living with dementia and anyone who feels they need a little more time and support. Each store provides as much support as they are able to. This could be putting more chairs in the store, ensuring the store is quieter, music and lighting can be turned down and staff have been trained that their customers may need extra support.

Other

There are many other dementia friendly activities taking place across the District which are run by other organisations such as the Alzheimer's Society, Carers First and Other Halves. Braintree District Council works in partnership with these organisations and has been instrumental in assisting them to start new groups and use local knowledge to help them to make contact with commercial premises to hold their groups.

Mental Health

Public Health England are launching the Every Mind Matters campaign on 7th October 2019 which aims to support everyone to feel more confident in taking action to look after their mental health and well-being by promoting a range of self-care actions. We are supporting this campaign and as a Health & Wellbeing priority will continue to do so moving forward.

The fourth Mental Health Workshop took place on 10th July 2019 and representatives from various different partner organisations such as Greenfields Community Housing, Mid Essex CCG, Provide, Community 360 and First Stop attended. Work is now underway on each of the themes identified. The themes are:-

- Children and Young People
- Data Mapping
- Awareness Raising
- Livewell Website
- Referral Pathway

Further details of these initiatives will be provided to Members as schemes are developed.

Councillor Peter Tattersley
Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

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List of Public Meetings Held Since Last Council Meeting		Agenda No: 14
Portfolio Not applicable Corporate Outcome: Not applicable Report presented by: Not applicable Report prepared by: Chloe Waight, Governance Business Officer		
Background Papers:		Public Report
Published Minutes of the meetings listed within the report below.		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: Since the last Council meeting held on 1 st August 2019, the following Minutes have been published for meetings held in public session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Planning Committee – 13th August 2019 (2) Partnership Development Group – 21st August 2019 (3) Performance Management Board – 3rd September 2019 (4) Local Plan Sub-Committee – 5th September 2019 (5) Cabinet – 9th September 2019 (6) *Planning Committee – 10th September 2019 (7) *Licensing Committee – 11th September 2019 (8) *Planning Committee – 18th September 2019 (9) *Planning Committee – 24th September 2019 (10) *Braintree Local Highways Panel – 25th September 2019 <p>*Those minutes identified by the prefix * were not available at the time of publishing the Agenda, but are intended to be available to view on the Council's website prior to the meeting.</p>		
Recommended Decision: Members are invited to note the Minutes published.		
Purpose of Decision: Not applicable.		