

Minutes

Council Meeting



18th April 2016

These Minutes principally record decisions taken and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions. A webcast of the meeting is available for six months at www.braintree.gov.uk.

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
Councillor J Abbott	Yes	Councillor D Mann	Yes
Councillor Mrs J Allen	Yes	Councillor J McKee	Yes
Councillor C Bailey	Apologies	Councillor R Mitchell	Yes
Councillor M Banthorpe	Yes	Councillor Mrs J Money	Yes
Councillor J Baugh	Apologies	Councillor Lady Newton	Yes
Councillor Mrs J Beavis	Yes	Councillor J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Apologies
Councillor D Bebb	Yes	Councillor Mrs I Parker	Yes
Councillor R Bolton	Yes	Councillor Mrs S Paul	Yes
Councillor K Bowers	Yes	Councillor Mrs J Pell	Yes
Councillor Mrs L Bowers–Flint	Yes	Councillor R Ramage	Yes (From 7.17pm)
Councillor G Butland	Yes	Councillor F Ricci (Vice-Chairman)	Yes
Councillor S Canning	Yes	Councillor B Rose	Yes
Councillor J Cunningham	Yes	Councillor Miss V Santomauro	Apologies
Councillor Mrs M Cunningham	Yes	Councillor Mrs W Scattergood	Yes
Councillor T Cunningham	Yes	Councillor Mrs W Schmitt	Yes
Councillor M Dunn	Yes	Councillor P Schwier	Yes
Councillor J Elliott	Yes	Councillor C Siddall	Yes
Councillor J Goodman	Yes	Councillor Mrs G Spray	Yes
Councillor A Hensman	Yes	Councillor P Tattersley	Yes
Councillor P Horner	Yes	Councillor Miss M Thorogood	Yes
Councillor D Hufton-Rees	Yes	Councillor R van Dulken	Yes
Councillor D Hume	Yes	Councillor Mrs L Walters (Chairman)	Yes
Councillor H Johnson	Yes	Councillor Mrs S Wilson	Yes
Councillor Mrs A Kilmartin	Yes	Vacancy	
Councillor S Kirby	Yes		

83 **CHAIRMAN'S AND/OR LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman's announcements covered the following:

The Late Andrew Overall - The Chairman advised Members that former Councillor Andrew Overall had sadly passed away in February. Mr Overall had been elected in 1986 for the Panfield Ward and had served continuously until 1999. The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, expressed the Council's condolences to Mr Overall's family and to all those who knew him.

Councillors Mrs Bowers-Flint, Mann, Lady Newton and Mrs Pell all spoke in memory of Mr Overall.

Resignation of Councillor Mrs Corinne Thompson – Members were made aware that Councillor Mrs Thompson had tendered her resignation as she is moving to France. The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, formally thanked Mrs Thompson for her service to the Council, in particular the Ward of Witham South and wished her and her family well on their new venture in France.

The Leader did not have any announcements to make.

84 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: The following interests were declared:-

Councillor J Abbott declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 8b – 'Report from Councillor Mrs J Beavis – Cabinet Member for Health and Communities' as an elected Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor G Butland declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 8 – 'Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members as an elected Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor Lady Newton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 8 – 'Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members as an elected Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor C Siddall declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Items 8b – 'Report from Councillor Mrs J Beavis – Cabinet Member for Health and Communities' and 8d – 'Report from Councillor T Cunningham – Cabinet Member for Economic Development' as a Member of the EELGA Improvement Panel, as a Director of Warner Textile Archive Trading Limited and as a Director of Ignite Business Enterprise.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and decision when the Item was considered.

85 **MINUTES**

INFORMATION: Members were advised that there was an error in the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22nd February 2016 with regards to Councillor Baugh's declaration of interest, which should read;

“Councillor J Baugh declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7 – ‘Council Budget and Council Tax 2016/17 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2019/20’ as a Director and Trustee of Braintree District Museum Trust and his involvement with the RSA Heritage Mapping Project.”

DECISION: That subject to the amendment above, the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22nd February 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86 **QUESTION TIME**

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

87 **ANNUAL TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2016/17**

INFORMATION: It was agreed that the amendments to Item 6 – ‘Annual Timetable of Meetings 2016/17’ and Item 7 – ‘Special Meetings of Full Council for the Local Plan – Procedural Steps put forward by the Leader would be taken together.

The proposed amendment was to move the Special Meeting of Full Council for the Local Plan from Monday 21st November 2016 to Monday 28th November 2016, with consequential amendments to the Timetable of Meetings. The purpose of the amendment was to enable more time for the preparation of the Local Plan documentation for the Council meeting.

Members agreed the amendment.

Members were advised by the Leader that as a result of the Council’s decision to approve the amendment, the meeting of Cabinet scheduled for Monday 28th November 2016 would subsequently be moved to Tuesday 29th November 2016.

Members considered the schedule of meetings of the Council.

DECISION:

1. That the Special Meeting of Full Council for the Local Plan scheduled for Monday 21st November 2016 be moved to Monday 28th November 2016 with consequential amendments to the Timetable of Meetings.
2. That the Meetings of the Council for the coming year 2016/17 be confirmed.

REASON FOR DECISION: To set the Council’s meetings for the civic year 2016/17.

88 **SPECIAL MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL FOR THE LOCAL PLAN - PROCEDURAL STEPS**

INFORMATION: Following the Special Meeting of Full Council on 25th January 2016, a review of pre-meeting processes had been undertaken by the Chief Executive and the Head of Governance, in response to concerns and points of

order raised by Members during and after the meeting in respect of the Council Procedural Rules.

A draft timetable for the Full Council meetings to be held on 20th June 2016 and 28th November 2016 had been produced which had incorporated procedural steps with a view to extending Member engagement and to enable greater transparency and probity in the decision making process of the Local Plan.

The draft timetable had been considered by the Developing Democracy Group on 29th March 2016 which had strongly supported the document and, following deliberation, had put forward proposals for the consideration of Council.

DECISION:

1. Subject to recommendation 2 below, Members agreed the timetable and the suspension of the Council Procedural Rules (as specified in the report) for the Special Meetings of Full Council to be held on 20th June 2016 and 28th November 2016.
2. That the Head of Governance is authorised to amend the timetable and/or the procedural steps to reflect any amendments as recommended by Full Council.

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

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REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS AND ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS - PUBLIC SESSION

INFORMATION: The Chairman invited the Leader and the Cabinet Members to introduce their reports. Following this, the Chairman invited Members to ask questions. Questions were not limited to the content of the reports and could be about matters relating to a portfolio, the powers and duties of the Council, or the District.

Consideration was given to the reports of the Leader and Cabinet Members.

Councillor Lady Newton added to her report that there had been a change of date to the meeting with the Haven Gateway Partnership scheduled for Friday 20th May 2016 at 5pm. The new time and date was yet to be confirmed and Members would be updated in due course. Councillor Lady Newton also informed Members that following her letter to the Chairman of Highways England she had since received a response from David Brewer, Director of Network Delivery and Development, advising that negotiations were still taking place with Tesco with regards to the release of funds to cover costs for completing works to the A131 Marks Farm roundabout, Braintree. However it was understood that Tesco were also in discussion with Essex County Council regarding funding for further related works and had indicated that they intended to approve an overall complete package of funding for these works. Once the funds had been provided by Tesco it would take 12 weeks to mobilise the necessary works and these would take place over a three week period.

Councillor McKee added to his report that following the launch of the new Braintree District Council website he had received very positive feedback as well as a small number of suggestions for improvements. Councillor McKee encouraged Members to put forward any proposals for further improvements. Councillor McKee also reminded Members the Annual General Meeting of the Council to be held on Monday 25th April 2016 would be the first paperless meeting of Council and Members had been advised on this by the Governance Team. Members would no longer receive hard copies of Committee documents and all correspondence would be circulated to Members electronically, excluding any documentation relating to the Planning Committee, the Local Plan Sub-Committee and Local Plan meetings of Council.

Councillor Mrs Schmitt added to her report that following the introduction of the Energy Switching Scheme by the Council last year, there had been an average saving of £352 per household. Essex County Council had also implemented a scheme in which Braintree District Council had participated and the Cabinet Member was pleased to announce that again a large number of residents had applied to the scheme which had resulted in an average saving of £334 per household. 56% of residents in the District had registered to switch against the national average of 11% and in total nearly £94,000 had been saved on energy costs for residents in the District.

Councillor Mitchell added to the Cabinet Member report for Environment and Place that the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) had achieved a gold award in the Business Blog category of the Essex Digital Awards and, as a result, it would be entered into the National Digital Awards.

Members asked several questions arising from the reports. A webcast of the questions to and responses of Cabinet Members is available on the Council's website at: <http://www.braintree.public-i.tv/core/>

The main topics covered were as follows:

- Devolution – East Anglian Devolution Deal.
- Governance arrangements following devolution.
- Closure of Children's Centres across the District.
- Councillor Abbott raised concerns about the accuracy of the content on Councillor Mrs Beavis, Cabinet Member Health and Communities report, in respect of Essex County Council Children's Centres' Consultation in particular reference to the proposals for Children's Centres to become Family Hubs from 2017. Councillor Abbott stated that in Witham there would be no Family Hubs. For clarity there were three levels of family hub referred to in the consultation these being family hub, family hub delivery site and family hub outreach service.
- Incident at Halstead Leisure Centre with regard to the use of the Leisure Centre defibrillator.

- Details of future Job Fairs in the District.
- Provision of superfast broadband for remaining areas of the District with poor coverage.
- Information on the plans for traffic flow with regard to the Braintree Town Centre regeneration scheme.
- Suitable notice for residents prior to the demolition of properties at Thorne Road, Kelvedon.
- Lack of provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the Marks Farm roundabout, Braintree.
- Action being taken to deal with the increasing number of people sleeping rough in Witham.
- Benefits of additional signage throughout the Towns.
- Number of street lights out of action at the Galleys Corner and Wyvale roundabouts, Braintree, following roadworks that had been carried out.
- Thanks were extended to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Place and members of staff for the work that had been carried out as part of Street Scene Protection.
- Details regarding the Department for Communities Local Government funded Flats & Schools Recycling Project and dog waste collection and disposal

90 **LIST OF PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 22ND FEBRUARY 2016**

INFORMATION: No matters were raised.

91 **CHAIRMEN'S STATEMENTS – PUBLIC SESSION**

INFORMATION: No statements were made.

92 **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS - PUBLIC SESSION**

INFORMATION: No statements were made.

93 **BUSINESS OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

INFORMATION: There were no reports received from Council representatives on external organisations, or issues raised.

There were no matters raised in Private Session.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.29pm.

Councillor Mrs L Walters
(Chairman)