

CABINET AGENDA

Monday, 27th November 2023 at 7:15pm

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

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Members of the public will be able to view and listen to this meeting via YouTube.
To access the meeting please use the link below:

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

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

Leader of the Council

Deputy Cabinet Member to the Leader
Deputy Cabinet Member to the Leader

Councillor G Butland
Councillor B Taylor
Councillor R van Dulken

**Transformation, Performance and
Delivery**

Resources and Performance
Transformation, the Environment and
Customer Services
Deputy Cabinet Member

Councillor K Bowers
Councillor T Cunningham (Deputy Leader)

Councillor P Schwier

Connecting People, Places and Prosperity

Economic Growth and Inward Investment
Planning and Infrastructure
Deputy Cabinet Member

Councillor F Ricci
Councillor G Spray
Councillor J Coleridge

Supporting Communities

Housing, Health and Wellbeing
Stronger Communities
Deputy Cabinet Member

Councillor L Bowers-Flint
Councillor M Cunningham
Councillor C Dervish

Invitees: Councillors J Beavis, L Jefferis and J Pell are invited to attend as Group Leaders

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.

D GASCOYNE
Chief Executive

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS – DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other Pecuniary Interests (OPI), or Non-Pecuniary Interests (NPI).

Any Member with a DPI, OPI or NPI 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 DPI or OPI 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.

Public Question Time - Registration and Speaking

The Agenda allows for a period of up to 30 minutes for Public Question Time. Members of the public may ask questions or make a statement to the Cabinet on matters listed on the Agenda for this meeting.

All questions or statements should be concise and should be able to be heard within the 3 minutes allotted to each speaker.

Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement is requested to register their interest by completing the Public Question Time registration [online form](#) by **midday on the second working day** before the day of the meeting.

For example, if the meeting is on a Tuesday, the registration deadline is midday on Friday, (where there is a Bank Holiday Monday you will need to register by midday on the previous Thursday). The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register to speak if they are received after this time.

When registering for Public Question Time please indicate whether you wish to attend the meeting 'in person', or to participate remotely. People who choose to join the meeting remotely will be provided with the relevant link and joining instructions for the meeting.

Please note that completion of the on-line form does not guarantee you a place to speak during Public Question Time. You will receive email notification from the Governance Service confirming whether your request is successful.

The Leader has discretion to extend the time allocated to registered speakers and to amend the order in which they may speak.

In the event that a registered speaker is unable to connect to the meeting, or if there are any technical issues, their question/statement may be read by a Council Officer.

Further information on Public Question Time is available on the [Council's website](#).

Health and Safety

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Documents

Agendas, Reports and Minutes may be accessed via www.braintree.gov.uk

Data Processing

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https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200136/access_to_information/376/privacy_policy

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Webcast and Audio Recording

Please note that this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded. You may view webcasts for up to 6 months after the meeting using this link: <http://braintree.public-tv/core/portal/home> The meeting will also be broadcast via the Council's YouTube Channel.

Comments and Suggestions

We welcome comments to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. If you have any suggestions regarding the meeting you have attended you may send these to governance@braintree.gov.uk

PUBLIC SESSION		Page
1	Apologies for Absence	
2	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.	
3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 25th September 2023 (copy previously circulated).	
4	Public Question Time	
	Only Registered Speakers will be invited by the Chairman to speak during public question time. Please see the agenda notes for guidance.	
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Report Title: Home Upgrade Grant 2 Funding for Domestic Properties in Off Gas Areas	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: Decision
Key Decision: Yes	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/27
Report Presented by: Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment and Customer Services	
Enquiries to: Josie Falco, Head of Environment josie.falco@braintree.gov.uk Mark Wilson, Sustainability Manager mark.wilson@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the new Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG 2) scheme that Braintree District Council (the Council) successfully bid for as part of a wider Local Authority Consortia.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet to note the award of £2.466m in 2023/24 with the opportunity to increase to up to £3.6m in 2024/2025 of new Home Upgrade Grant 2(HUG2) Scheme funding to the Council.
- 2.2 To note that the funding will be allocated in accordance with the provisions set out in section 4 of this report.
- 2.3 To Agree that the Council will enter into the Home Upgrade Grant 2 Agreement.

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2022 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) invited bids from local authorities to fund improvements to energy performance and heating systems in off gas grid homes in England via the Home Upgrade Grant (Phase 2) - (HUG 2). DESNZ stated that up to a total of £630million of grant funding would be made available nationally and allocated to the local authorities that were successful in bidding against this fund.
- 3.2 HUG 2 aims to deliver against two main government objectives:
- To deliver progress towards the statutory fuel poverty target for England, by improving as many fuel-poor homes (of energy efficiency rating Band D, E, F and G) as reasonably practicable, to Band C by 2030.

- To progress the UK's target to reach Net Zero by 2050, by supporting the phase out of off-gas grid fossil fuels and transition to low-carbon heating systems.
- 3.3 In November 2022 Essex local authorities became part of a wider 48 local authority consortium who submitted a joint bid to DESNZ for a proportion of the grant funding.
- 3.4 In February 2023 DESNZ confirmed that the consortia bid was successful and in April 2023 the Council was advised that they had been allocated up to £3.66m of HUG2 funding aimed at supporting over 200 local households. The Council's allocation was the second highest of the 48 Authorities in the Consortia (see Appendix B)
- 3.5 The funding of £3.66m was initially to be distributed within the financial year 2023/2024. DESNZ recognised that their delays in clarifying the specification for HUG2 combined with complexity of the scheme when translated into supplier specifications and contract documents had impacted on the deliverability of the scheme for all local authority partners in the remainder of financial year. Accordingly, DESNZ have reduced the delivery target in 2023/2024 for the Council to £2.466m with the opportunity for the Council to increase year 2 delivery numbers and seek the remainder of the £3.66m funding.
- 3.6 The scheme will commence in November 2023 once the grant funding agreement has been signed. The Scheme ends in March 2025.

4 Delivering HUG2

- 4.1 The HUG 2 scheme is open to households within Braintree District that meet the fuel poverty criteria and have an income of less than £31,000.
- 4.2 The scheme is targeting fuel-poor homes with energy efficiency rating Bands D, E, F and G and installing energy saving measures to bring them up, where reasonably practicable, to bands B and C. The scheme is supporting the phase out of off-gas grid fossil fuels and the transition to low-carbon heating systems in particular the installation of air source heat pumps.
- 4.3 In Braintree district the majority of off-gas properties are situated in the north and rural areas of the district. (See Appendix A – Indicative map of suitable off gas properties).
- 4.4 The HUG 2 scheme has finite funding and is unable to be over-subscribed. If promotion of the scheme generates a greater level of interest than the available funding, the Council will redirect residents to the other schemes that the Council manage, primarily ECO4 and ECOFLEX. The Council will also pursue the remainder funding that will be available if the Council are successful in allocating the £2.466m grant. Allocation of funds will be on a first come first serve basis.

- 4.5 The HUG1 lead partner, the Greater South East Net Zero (GSEnz) Hub offered to act as lead authority again through the consortia on behalf of the local authorities for HUG2. The key requirement was to cover large geographic areas or large populations. The Hub and all the Essex LA partners when preparing the successful bid utilised the delivery model developed for the successful delivery of previous grant funded schemes including Local Authority Delivery (LAD2, LAD3) and Sustainable Warmth (which included HUG1). In previous schemes a Managing Agent had been secured as a delivery partner. Once it is established by the relevant Local Authority that an applying resident conforms to the selection criteria, they are referred onto the Management Agent who then supports the resident through the installation via a local partner installer.
- 4.6 As part of the preparation for the bid the Consortia therefore also carried out a procurement exercises to secure a Managing Agent and installers. The successful bidder for Management Agent was Warmworks. Warmworks are already known to the Council as they were the managing delivery partner that successfully delivered HUG1 on behalf of Braintree residents.
- 4.7 Continuing with the previously developed model has also allowed for continuity in a local approach. The services provided by the management agent (Warmworks) to each Local Authority partner area includes: project manager resource, data licensing, data analytics, framework management, PAS2035 compliance, capacity and capability building. The Management Agent uses a chain of SME local installers. The development of this local supply chain of installers has already been supported by Essex's fully funded retrofit training qualification scheme that via Essex's Retrofit Academy. (<https://retrofitacademy.org/crf-essex/>)
- 4.8 Within that timeframe to comply with the funding allocation the Council will require home upgrade installations in c.200 properties. The dropout rate from initial resident interest through to installation is approx. 60%, therefore the Council through its targeted resident engagement will be tasked with generating c.600 referrals. The Council has already identified from comparison of various available datasets 3398 households shown to meet the qualifying criteria. These households will be targeted with HUG2 promotional material.
- 4.9 Delivery of HUG2 funding will:
- Reduce carbon emissions and improved air quality with clean heating systems
 - Ensure older housing stock is thermally comfortable, efficient and well-adapted to climate change.
 - Tackle fuel poverty during this cost of living crisis, particularly in a time when fuel prices have increased due to global factors, by increasing low-income homes' energy efficiency rating and reducing their energy bills
 - Support clean, local growth, while investing in quality living standards and job creation

- Deliver cost effective carbon savings contributing to the zero carbon target
- Support economic resilience and a green recovery by focussing on low-income households in deprived communities and making upgrades to the housing stock
- Support the green economy by utilising the services of local installers.

4.10 Delivery of the HUG 2 funding will help the Council to deliver the following Corporate Objectives:

- 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;
- A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services;
- Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers.

5. Options

5.1 While the Council does not have a legal obligation to apply for and support national grant funding streams for residents there is an expectation that the Council will take part to support residents locally.

5.2 To not take part in delivery of the HUG2 scheme. This could bring national and local political and reputational risk if the Council were not to take the opportunity to seek funding for residents particularly when all other Essex Local Authorities are taking part.

5.3 To take part in the scheme. This contributes to our climate change and cost of living commitments. There is always a risk of scheme delays or funding streams being removed, this has been mitigated against by being part of a larger consortia with resources to deliver.

6. Next Steps

6.1 To sign the funding agreement and begin promotion of the scheme.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The Council will not receive the £2.466m HUG2 scheme monies as a direct award. The GSEnz Hub will hold and administer the grant on behalf of the 46 local authorities taking part by paying installers to deliver energy saving measures in residents homes.

7.2 The Council is not providing any match funding. Officer time was required in putting the bid together, and for the promotion of the scheme and facilitating referrals to the delivery partner. This work has been and will continue to be enacted by the existing Sustainability Team and Communications Team.

7.3 If the monies are not allocated for installing measures there are no penalties on the Council, the funding will simply not be allocated and remain with DESNZ.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 In order to participate in the Scheme, the Council will be required to sign a grant funding agreement to confirm its part in delivery of the scheme.

9. Other Implications

9.1 None identified

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

10.1 No issues that require addressing have been identified. The scheme is restricted by central governments selection criteria to focus on fuel poor households in off-gas locations around the district.

11. List of Appendices

11.1 Appendix A – HUG2 Indicative Properties

11.2 Appendix B – HUG2 – Confirmation of Bid Success and allocation of funding to bid partners



Home Upgrade Grant – Phase 2 (HUG2)

For further information contact: hug2@gsetzerohub.org.uk

Your Local Authority signed-up to participate in our consortia bid for Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) scheme. This is designed to deliver energy efficiency retrofit upgrades to off-gas homes where the household is eligible. Eligibility is usually, but not exclusively, through low income and fuel-poverty criteria.

The bid was successful and represents 48 Local Authorities with a target of 3,845 off-gas properties to be upgraded by March 2025.

The Grant Authority providing funding and an oversight for the scheme nationally is the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). DESNZ is focused on the energy portfolio from the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Aims and Objectives

We have committed to deliver on behalf of Local Authority consortia members, using centrally procured and managed delivery partners and a project team managed by the Greater South East Net Zero Hub.

HUG 2 aims to deliver two main objectives:

- To deliver progress towards the statutory fuel poverty target for England, by improving as many fuel-poor homes (of energy efficiency rating Band D, E, F and G) as reasonably practicable, to Band C by 2030.
- To progress the UK's target to reach Net Zero by 2050, by supporting the phase out of off-gas grid fossil fuels and transition to low-carbon heating systems.

Funding has been made available to achieve the following benefits:

- Tackle fuel poverty, particularly in a time when fuel prices have increased due to global factors, by increasing low-income homes' energy efficiency rating and reducing their energy bills – a key principle of the [Fuel Poverty Strategy](#) (2021).
- Deliver cost effective carbon savings to carbon budgets and make progress towards the UK's target for Net Zero by 2050.
- Ensure homes are thermally comfortable, efficient and well-adapted to climate change.
- Progress the ambition to install 600,000 heat pumps per year by 2028, as part of the [10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution](#).
- Support clean, local growth, while investing in quality living standards and job creation – specified in the [Net Zero Strategy](#) (2021).
- Support economic resilience and a green recovery in response to the economic impacts of COVID-19, by supporting thousands of jobs. By focussing on low-income households and areas of high economic deprivation, upgrades made to the housing stock will support deprived communities throughout England, ensuring that they are not left behind in the transition towards Net Zero.

Our vision is to support local strategy and plans through this delivery. The changes to eligibility criteria in HUG2 include using deprivation as a criteria. All off-gas households in EPC Band D, E, F & G in Index of Multiple Deprivation 1-3 (IMD1-3) are eligible and will not require additional income eligibility checks. The longer scheme duration also allows some previously excluded households to participate e.g. those in conservation areas, or where other funding streams may be required to bring a property into a state where energy efficiency retrofit can be carried out.

As with other recent energy efficiency retrofit schemes there is a complexity within the detail and for a fuller picture you can find the guidance here –

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1114867/hug-phase-2-guidance-local-authorities.pdf

HUG2 aims to be an area-based scheme, targeting specific areas where it is believed there will be the highest density of eligible residents that could benefit from the scheme. This is the most cost-effective and efficient way to work, allowing installers to work in a specific cluster of homes or specific streets, such as a row of terraced houses, reducing the transport of staff and materials required. To enable this approach, DESNZ introduced the pre-qualification of IMD 1-3 areas, in addition to the existing financial criteria, allowing clusters of properties to become easier to identify and qualify as eligible. There is also the ability to infill otherwise non-eligible properties (e.g. social housing or not financially eligible) if the cluster of homes meets the conditions of the scheme.

To support all participating authorities to develop an area-based approach, GSENH have provided Parity data, briefing notes and workshops to explain how to use this data to develop their own area-based approaches to ensure the greatest benefit is provided to their residents. Your local authority will be able to provide further information on any areas they have identified to target for the scheme.

We need to engage with you to further develop plans and mobilise the scheme, ensuring that we target the households in your area that are the highest priority for you.

Your organisation will need to liaise with this project team, community organisations and your residents to ensure you maximise the value of this scheme in your Local Authority. Past projects have demonstrated that successful delivery requires local knowledge and representation to build trust and engage households.

The aim of this application is to also ensure we help your Authority to improve on capacity to deliver the scheme and future Government strategic aims.

HUG2 Delivery Team

- The GSENGH will act as Lead Authority, being the responsible body for contracting, delivery, performance and reporting, The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (Accountable Body) will manage the Framework and Installer Dynamic Purchasing System.
- The GSENGH team will work with you on the successful delivery of the project in your area, acting as the point of contact between the delivery partners and local delivery, supporting with data, marketing, capacity building and providing regular performance reporting.
- The supply chain team will continue to outreach to installers and support them to become delivery partners on the project. The GSENGH are procuring a supply chain capacity and skills needs study to inform Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and other stakeholder skills strategies.
- We will onboard Managing Agents, who will be responsible for processing the customer journey.
- A Framework Manager with responsibility for works contract management and supporting Delivery Partner with mini competitions on the installer DPS.

Stakeholder Partnership Working

We will have agreements between each local authority and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) as Accountable Body. The Agreement between CPCA (Lead Authority) and your LA will include the terms of what we do on your behalf and the activities that we are funding you do undertake to support project delivery.

To enable your local authority to access capacity and capability funding for your role in the delivery of the HUG2 scheme to your residents, you will be required to sign the Grant Funding Agreement.

Whilst each local authority will sign their own Agreement, the main context of the Agreement **will not** be tailored to each local authority. However, this Proposal form will outline the delivery method that is best suited to your authority/residents.

This HUG2 GFA Proposal, forms the basis for the main Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). It is designed to be quick and outline what activities you propose to undertake, and the funding requested. The activities must conform to HUG2 Guidance and deliver the aims and objectives stated above. You should include project milestones and how you will measure outputs.

Grant funding will be provided to each local authority to support the delivery of your project. You will find the capital allocation in **Appendix 1** and the capacity and capability allocation will be approved once the Proposal has been submitted into the GSENGH.

We require that this funding will be used for supporting the uptake of the scheme by eligible residents in your LA, through activities such as supported marketing and engagement activities. This funding may be used for staff resource, marketing/mail outs, events, stakeholder engagement, supply chain events and other activities that will support delivery and/or capacity/capability building.

By signing this form, you are proposing in principle to agree to the terms and conditions which will be outlined in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Please complete and email a copy of this Application form, Proposal Data sheet, along with Appendix 2, **no later than 5th May 2023** to: HUG2@gsetzerohub.org.uk so that your Hub Project Manager can ensure that you have the tailored support you need.

Please provide the main contact in your authority that we will need to engage with.

Organisation Details

Organisation name	Braintree District Council
Main Contact Name	Mark Wilson
Job Title	Sustainability Manager
Contact Telephone Number	01376 552525
Email Address	mark.wilson@braintree.gov.uk

The Proposal – Capability and Capacity funding

Your proposal must outline the number of eligible households/properties identified to target for the delivery of HUG2 scheme. This can be through the following criteria;

- The household must be a private domestic dwelling with an EPC rating of D, E, F or G. (10% social housing will be allowed where area-based targeting has been undertaken).
- The household must either be situated in a pre-qualified postcode area (Indices of Multiple Deprivation Income Deciles 1-3, residents will be informed if this applies to their home) OR a household income of no more than £31,000 (before tax or any other deductions). Some households may be eligible through different routes, e.g. if they have an equivalised income where cost of living is below £20,000 (e.g. after rent or mortgage costs).
- The home **must be** off gas grid for heating purposes, for example electricity, oil, liquid propane gas, and solid fuels.

Once LAs have identified a group of suitable homes, they will need to outline the communication plan for resident sign up.

All referrals will need to be assessed to form the batch application. This will need to be based upon the strategic fit and value for money, and will outline details of the housing stock, measures, and costs involved. This work will be undertaken by the delivery partner and checked by the GSENGH ahead of submission to DESNZ for approval.

As the Lead Authority will be able to submit batches for approval into DESNZ, we will monitor the spend across each local authority area regularly to ensure installation rates are met.

The batch process will be repeated throughout the delivery window until all the homes proposed by the LA have been treated in batches. If a project shows strong delivery performance, there may be opportunity to draw down more funding by the Lead Authority, but only if there is funding available, such as where forecasted funding has been diverted from weaker projects. We encourage LAs to be ambitious but once targets are met LAs should liaise with the GSENGH to discuss opportunities for additional funding prior to undertaking additional work. The GSENGH will then investigate whether additional support is available.

Steps to creating your proposal.



The GSENGH have now provided a number of Data workshops to enable you to better understand targeting of properties in your area. We have provided you with the resource of local authority level data, the training and guidance. Please analyse the Data and focus on the criteria outlined below.

- Fuel Type
- EPC Bands
- Housing type
- Tenure
- Household Income

A step-by-step guide has been provided to assist you further and all information in our LA Resource Page: <https://www.gsenetzerohub.org.uk/login/>

Further support and resources will be available as required for your area if required.

Data and Marketing Proposal

Carry out Data analytics for targeting. Provide list of properties in accordance with your LA referral target	Please use the HUG2 GFA Proposal Data and Claim sheet below
Produce comms plan in accordance with the Data analytics carried out. This could include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter mailout • direct community engagement • internal service department leads (eg Housing officers, repairs, environmental/public health) Please consult the Hub Communication Insights document for more ideas for successful retrofit communication plans.	 Braintree HUG2 dataset owner occupi  HUG2 Communications Plan
Economic development/business support teams.	Please advise if you wish to explore this area and provide key contact in your authority whom we can liaise with.

We want to ensure that we work closely with all our partners to provide equal opportunities through the Government's Levelling Up White Paper

"It is vital that we preserve and enhance the economic, academic, and cultural success stories of the UK's most productive counties, towns, and cities. But it is equally critical that we improve productivity, boost economic growth, encourage innovation, create good jobs, enhance educational attainment, and renovate the social and cultural fabric of those parts of the UK that have stalled and not – so far – shared equally in our nation's success"

[Levelling Up the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Hub support available

1 to 1 support with LA	Hub Energy Efficiency Project Managers, Data officers, supply chain officers and senior management
HUG2 Project Board	Governance and Project Board meetings
Events, training, and online seminar briefings	Various, including Data, legal, scheme eligibility, stakeholder engagement, resident engagement etc
Communications Pack	Social Media, Briefing, flyer, letter template, logos, FAQs, customer journey etc
Data resources	Link to resource page: https://www.gsenetzerohub.org.uk/login/

Declaration – to be approved and signed by senior manager.

I believe the information provided in this form and supporting documentation is a commitment to delivering the HUG2 scheme for my area.	
Name	
Signature	
Date	00/00/2023
Position	
Telephone	
Email	

APPENDIX 1 – Capital allocation and target number of properties

Local Authority	Capital Allocation (Works and Surveys)	Target installs	Target referrals (x3 target installs)
Bedford Borough	£2,789,640.00	155	465
Milton Keynes	£1,080,000.00	60	180
Bracknell Forest	£576,000.00	32	96
Reading	£1,800,000.00	100	300
Slough	£900,000.00	50	150
West Berkshire	£576,000.00	32	96
Windsor & Maidenhead	£576,000.00	32	96
Wokingham	£576,000.00	32	96
Buckinghamshire Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Basildon	£1,800,000.00	100	300
Braintree	£3,600,000.00	200	600
Brentwood Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Castle Point	£576,000.00	32	96
Chelmsford	£1,260,000.00	70	210
Colchester	£3,060,000.00	170	510
Epping Forest	£1,260,000.00	70	210
Harlow	£576,000.00	32	96
Maldon	£3,060,000.00	170	510
Rochford	£576,000.00	32	96
Southend on Sea	£1,800,000.00	100	300
Tendring	£4,500,000.00	250	750
Thurrock	£1,584,000.00	88	264
Uttlesford District	£576,000.00	32	96
Hart District Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Broxbourne Borough	£576,000.00	32	96
Dacorum Borough	£576,000.00	32	96
East Herts District Council	£1,350,000.00	75	225
Hertsmere Borough	£576,000.00	32	96
North Hertfordshire District	£1,620,000.00	90	270
St Albans City & District	£576,000.00	32	96
Stevenage Borough	£576,000.00	32	96
Welwyn Hatfield Borough	£576,000.00	32	96
Ashford Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96

Canterbury City Council	£1,260,000.00	70	210
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	£2,790,000.00	155	465
Gravesham Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Maidstone Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Medway Council	£2,070,000.00	115	345
Sevenoaks District Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Swale Borough Council	£1,882,440.00	105	315
Thanet District Council	£2,430,000.00	135	405
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	£576,000.00	32	96
Havering	£576,000.00	32	96
Sutton	£576,000.00	32	96
North Northamptonshire (Borough Council Of Wellingborough, Corby Borough, East Northamptonshire District, Kettering Borough)	£3,504,060.00	195	585
West Northamptonshire (Daventry District, Northampton Borough, South Northants)	£2,162,160.00	120	360
Oxford City Council	£1,080,000.00	60	180

APPENDIX 2 – Vendor Registration Form

Please can you complete the attached Vendor BACs information form so that we can set up your authority on the CPCA (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority) finance system.



Vendor Registration
Form - Energy.xlsx

Report Title: Courtauld Sports Ground, Halstead	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: Decision
Key Decision: Yes	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/55
Report Presented by: Councillor Gabrielle Spray, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure	
Enquiries to: Julia Watts, Senior Landscape Architect julia.watts@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve the allocation of Section 106 in the sum of £210,216.46, for the construction of a tennis court and associated facilities at the Courtauld Sports Ground, Halstead.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to the allocation of £210,216.46 of Section 106 funding from the P.0649 Land East of Sudbury Road, Halstead for the provision of a tennis court and associated facilities at Courtauld Sports Ground, Halstead.
- 2.2 To approve the procurement of a suitable contractor to design and install the tennis court, with associated facilities including floodlighting.
- 2.3 To authorise the Corporate Director (Growth) to award a contract to the winning bidder following the conclusion of the procurement exercise, and provided it is with budget.

3. Summary of Issues

- 3.1 Braintree District Council (the Council) is in receipt of £211,111,46 secured through a Section 106 agreement, arising from the housing development on Land East of Sudbury Road, Halstead. The S106 Agreement sets out that the funding is for the 'Provision of a new tennis court and associated facilities at Courtauld Sports Ground, Colchester Road, Halstead'. It is a requirement of the Section 106 Agreement, that these funds are spent by August 2024.
- 3.2 The installation of tennis courts and associated facilities will diversify the sporting offer at the Courtauld Sports Ground, which is owned and operated by Halstead Town Council. The sports currently provided at the ground are football, rugby, bowls and an outdoor gym, all with grass surfacing. The tennis courts will be constructed from porous tarmac thereby being accessible to those in wheelchairs and the intention is for the courts to be floodlit, subject to

planning permission, which would allow for them to be used for extended periods of time over the autumn and winter seasons.

- 3.3 Consultation has been undertaken with members of Halstead Town Council and there will be follow up engagement on receipt of the detailed proposals and maintenance obligations. Details of this consultation is set out in section 4 below.
- 3.4 The Council will seek a contract for the design and construction of the tennis court and associated facilities, which will be tendered through an open process via Delta e-sourcing. The award criteria have been set on a 60/40 quality/price split. Whilst this project is on land owned by Halstead Town Council, Braintree District Council is delivering this project as Halstead Town Council have advised that they do not have the resources or experience to deliver a project of this type.
- 3.5 The recommendations set out in this report will help the Council to deliver the following Corporate Objectives:
- A sustainable environment and a great place to live, work and play;
 - Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported;
- 3.6 Installation of the courts will provide more inclusive sport and will help to achieve the corporate strategy of 'Supporting Our Communities' and helping residents to make 'positive lifestyle choices, increasing their physical and emotional wellbeing'.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Discussions with Halstead Town Council commenced in 2022 regarding the development of the proposals for the tennis courts and associated facilities at the Courtauld Sports Ground. A meeting was held on site at the end of September 2023 with Councillors from Halstead Town Council to review the proposed location of the tennis courts and to discuss the implications for construction and maintenance.
- 4.2 Currently there will be further consultation with Halstead Town Council. The finalised scheme will be shared prior to the issue of the tender for the construction works and then the submitted tenders will be reviewed during the assessment process. Halstead Town Council will be part of the evaluation panel as they will take on the facility on construction as well as the ongoing maintenance liabilities. The floodlight scheme is to be designed by the contractor and the overall concept will be submitted as part of the tender process.

5. Options

- 5.1 Option 1: to install the tennis court and associated facilities to increase sporting provision at the Courtauld Sports Ground in Halstead. Once

completed the tennis court and associated facilities will be handed over the Halstead Town Council who will be responsible for its ongoing maintenance.

Opportunities		
Diversify sporting offer	New tennis court that can be used by all ages and abilities.	
Risk/Vulnerability	Impact	Mitigation
Not spending the money in accordance with the agreement	The s.106 funding has a spending deadline of August 2024, and if not spent by the agreed date the money will be refunded to the developer	The programme has been calculated to ensure the construction work will be completed by end of August 2024.
Planning permission for floodlighting not secured	Full scheme will not be able to be delivered in timescale	Deliver scheme without floodlighting

5.2 Option 2: Do nothing. This would cause the Council to risk losing the Section 106 money assigned to the Courtauld Sports Ground.

Risk/Vulnerability	Impact	Mitigation
Not spending the S106 money in accordance with the agreement	The money will be at risk of being refunded to the developer with the potential of loss of reputation	N/A

5.3 Option 1 is the preferred option, as this will enable the project to progress and enable the development to be delivered by the deadline of August 2024.

6. Next Steps

6.1 The Council will complete the procurement exercise and seek to award a contract for the design and build of the tennis court and associated facilities, as set out in this report.

6.2 The proposals will also be considered by the Councils Planning Committee before any installation of the tennis court can take place.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The total budget for the project is £211,111.46 from the Section 106 funding, P.0649.
- 7.2 A topographic survey has already been undertaken, at a cost of £895.00 so the remaining balance of the S106 is available for the provision of a new tennis court and associated facilities at Courtauld Sports Ground, Colchester Road, Halstead.
- 7.3 The installation of the tennis court and associated facilities will not incur future maintenance costs for the Council. The tennis court will be transferred to Halstead Town Council who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the facility.
- 7.4 A specialist contractor provided a quotation in July 2020 for the construction of two tennis courts with floodlighting. Allowing for inflation and increased costs of materials the estimated cost of the project is £145,000. It is estimated that the additional footpath construction to provide access, and associated earthworks will take the costs up to £210,000.00

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications from the implementation of the tennis court and associated facilities at the Courtauld Sports Ground, Halstead. In conducting the procurement exercise the Council will comply with all relevant statutory requirements and will act in accordance with its own Procurement Procedure Rules. At the conclusion, the Council will enter into an agreement with the successful contractor which will clearly set out the project and all key milestones and performance indicators.
- 8.2 The works include floodlighting which does require planning permission. The successful contractor will be responsible for the submission of the relevant planning application as they will be the designer and will be able to provide full information on the lighting including the type of luminaires and lighting levels. The planning permission is separate to this decision and will be subject to further consideration by the Planning Committee, exercising the Planning Authority functions.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1 Environmental implications. The tennis courts will be constructed from porous tarmac which will reduce surface water runoff. The floodlighting scheme will have a light impact assessment submitted alongside the planning application. The lighting will be designed with lux levels appropriate for a local facility, and with minimal light spillage. The planning permission may place conditions on times of usage.
- 9.2 Braintree is delivering the scheme for Halstead TC as they do not have the capacity or experience to deliver this project. Braintree DC is taking on

additional risks through undertaking the procurement exercise and managing both the contractor and capital expenditure. Braintree DC is also covering officer time and expenses associated with the delivery of the project. The provision of new tennis courts will be of great benefit to the residents of Halstead. If the Council did not deliver the project it is unlikely that the S106 monies would be able to be spent within the timescales set out in the agreement.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

10.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

10.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

10.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

The improved recreational facility increases the sporting opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities. The tarmac surfacing is fully accessible, rather than the grass for the current sports activities.

11. List of Appendices

11.1 None

12. Background Papers

12.1 None

Report Title: Framework Agreement for Cleaning and Hygiene Supplies	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: Decision
Key Decision: Yes	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/57
Report Presented by: Councillor Kevin Bowers, Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance	
Enquiries to: Lili Roqueta, Procurement Support Officer lili.roqueta@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To obtain delegated authority to award the Cleaning Hygiene Supplies national framework agreement for a period of 4 years from 1st February 2024 until 31st January 2028.
- 1.2 Once let, this framework can be used by public sector bodies around the UK to call off for hygiene and cleaning supplies. The expected (though not guaranteed) total framework value is up to £10 million. Based on this level of usage, Braintree District Council (the Council) would receive rebates from suppliers of approximately £150,000 over the lifetime of the framework.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 For delegated authority to be given to the Corporate Director (Support Services) to award the framework agreement once the tender process has concluded and enter into associated contracts.

3. Summary of Issues

- 3.1 The Council, as lead authority of the Essex Procurement Hub (EPH) (which includes the Council, Epping Forest District Council and Castle Point Borough Council), procures framework agreements for a range of goods and services. This will both meet the Council's own supply needs and generate income for the hub members to offset the cost of the procurement function. This will continue as the Council joins the Essex Procurement Partnership, with rebates reserved from this contract for the original three members of the EPH.
- 3.2 The current framework agreement for Janitorial Supplies, which was a Sole Supplier framework, expired in August 2023. The income from this framework has increased over the last two frameworks with £50,709.30 rebate from 2015 to 2019 and £108,583.33 from 2019 to 2023.
- 3.3 The Council has published a notice in Find a Tender Service (FTS) inviting companies to tender for a place in a National Framework Agreement

available to all UK public Sector Bodies for the supply of a range of Cleaning and Hygiene products. The Framework will be for a period of 4 years from 1st February 2024 until 31st January 2028; the detailed timeline is below:

Issue Tender	10 October 2023
Deadline to submit clarification questions	Tuesday 31 October 2023
Deadline for BDC to respond to clarification questions	Tuesday 7 November 2023
Tender deadline date/time	Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 10:00 hours
Evaluation period	15 November to 1 December 2023
Anticipated Provisional Award	8 December 2023
Anticipated Standstill period	9 to 18 December 2023
Anticipated Final Award	19 December 2023
Execution of agreements	January 2023
Framework start	1 February 2024

- 3.4 The total value of the framework will be advertised as £10 million. This has been calculated based on the spend of £2.2 million per year based on the average spend through the framework over the last 2 years. This has seen consistent growth over the last 8 years, therefore, to allow for growth and an increase in usage anticipated through making the new framework a multi suppliers framework, the value has been set at £10 million.
- 3.5 Suppliers under the framework must be able to provide cleaning and hygiene products, including but not limited to air care products, floor care/kitchen/washroom cleaning chemicals, emergency care, brooms and brushes, cleaning textiles and floor pads, hygiene paper, soaps and dispensers, gloves, sanitiser, detergents, chemicals, window cleaners, cleaning/janitorial equipment such as vacuums and pressure washers, PPE, pest control products and safety signs.
- 3.6 The framework agreement will consist of 2 Lots/Sub-lots as follows:
- Lot 1 – National (including Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)
 - Lot 2 – Regional (England only)
 - Sub-lot 2a – London and East of England
 - Sub-lot 2b – Southeast and Southwest
 - Sub-lot 2c – East Midlands and West Midlands
 - Sub-lot 2d – Northeast, Northwest, and Yorkshire
- 3.7 It is envisaged that the framework agreement will be awarded to up to three (3) suppliers on Lot 1 and up to two (2) suppliers in each Sub-lot, able to deliver all aspects of Cleaning and Hygiene Supplies. Limiting the number of suppliers will make the framework responses more manageable to evaluate, it will be less time consuming to update the pricing schedules yearly and simplify the procurement process that other public sector bodies need to undertake when using this framework agreement.

- 3.8 Customers will be permitted to Direct Award or conduct a mini competition under this framework to call off for their individual requirements. The award of contracts is not exclusive. Customers are permitted to award to more than one supplier.
- 3.9 From the expenditure under the Framework, the Council could receive up to £150,000 (1.5% of the £10m value) of income over the life of the framework in the form of rebates paid by suppliers every time a public sector body calls-off from the framework. Whilst coming to the Council, this income would be shared between the original members of EPH.
- 3.10 The recommendations set out in this report will help the Council to deliver the following Corporate Objectives:
- A high performing organisation that delivers excellent and value for money services;
 - Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers.
- 3.11 These corporate objectives are supported through the rebate income generated by the framework helping to offset the cost of procurement to the Council and other EPH members and so support the Council to deliver value for money and reducing cost to taxpayers. By creating a national procurement, the Council will be able to achieve better pricing, so delivering savings for its own purchase of cleaning and hygiene supplies.
- 3.12 Frameworks of this nature usually consist of 1 National Lot, so the Councils approach to create a framework which includes Regional Lots is innovative. The expectation is for this approach to lead to increased competition from suppliers, for the framework to be more accessible to SME's and local companies, hence delivering better value for money, a focus in sustainability, and more Social Value. As a result, the usage by public sector bodies around the UK should grow further adding to the rebate income and increasing our reputation as a framework provider.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A number of Framework users were consulted ahead of completing the procurement documents, as well as other similar frameworks currently in place let by reputable framework providers. This suggested that a new framework should include multiple suppliers.
- 4.2 The Council's Health and Safety officer was consulted regarding any health and safety requirements in relation to the agreement. The specification document was amended to reflect the points discussed.
- 4.3 The Council's Head of Environment was consulted to ensure the specification reflected the Council's sustainability goals and the award criteria supported the selection process in this respect.

5. Options

5.1 **Option 1 - Recommended** - To provide the Corporate Director (Support Services) with delegated authority to approve the award of the framework to the successful suppliers once a robust procurement process has taken place. This will ensure that the Framework can be established quickly. This will enable service users to start calling off contracts promptly and allow for the Council to receive any rebates payable

5.2 **Option 2** - To not award the framework agreement, would result in the Council, and others, to source cleaning and hygiene supplies from an alternate source and losing potential rebate income of up to £150,000. This option would, however, free procurement time to focus on procuring other contracts.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Below are the figures in relation to the usage of the last 2 editions of this framework and its projected value for the next edition from 2024 until 2028, as well as the Council's spend and projected spend for the same periods:

Cleaning and Hygiene Supplies Framework Agreement (previously known as Janitorial Supplies)	July 2015- July 2019 Edition (Actual)	Aug 2019- Aug 2023 Edition (Actual)	2024-2028 Edition (Projected)
Usage by Customers including the Council	£ 3,380,619.97	£ 7,238,888.71	£ 10,000,000.00
Rebates at 1.5%	£ 50,709.30	£ 108,583.33	£ 150,000.00
the Councils specific spend	£40,748.71	£38,355.37	£40,000

7. Legal Implications

7.1 The procurement process to be followed is Open Tender in accordance with Regulation 27 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and in accordance with the Councils own Procedure Rules.

7.2 At the conclusion of the procurement exercise, the Council will enter into a Framework Agreement, which will establish the framework for the four year period. The Council will be required to keep the framework under review and will monitor its usage going forward. The Framework will include a call off contract for use by others where their direct award under the framework for services to meet their individual specifications.

7.3 The Council will be entitled to call off from this framework, and any requirement to do so will be subject to the Council's usual governance processes and approval.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 The Council is committed to environmental improvement through integrating environmental protection and sustainable development into its decision-making processes in respect of both the execution of its core functions and responsibilities, and the management of day-to-day operations. As part of this framework, suppliers are expected to cooperate with the Council's policies and strategies as far as is reasonable and practical.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

- 9.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

- 9.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

10. List of Appendices

- 10.1 Not applicable

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 EIA

Report Title: Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: Decision
Key Decision: No	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/39
Report Presented by: Councillor Kevin Bowers, Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance	
Enquiries to: Phil Myers, Head of Finance, phil.myers@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides detail of the progress in updating of the General Fund Financial Profile and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-25 to 2027-28; unavoidable cost pressures and proposed budget growth; and options for revenue cost reductions/additional income to contribute towards the budget gap in 2024-25; and outlines the strategy for achieving a balanced budget and addressing the longer-term MTFS financial gap.
- 1.2 An update is provided on the Capital Programme including capital bids received for 2024-25.
- 1.3 The report has been written ahead of the Autumn Statement that is due to be announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 22nd November 2023; and prior to receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement which is not expected to be announced until late December/ early January.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet to agree that:

- 2.1 The General Fund Revenue and Capital Programme items as presented in this report, constitute the initial proposals on the 2024-25 Budget and updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy for the period 2024-25 to 2027-28, for the purposes of consultation.

3. Budget Context and Strategy

- 3.1 Braintree District Council's (the Council) Budget Strategy has been focused on:
 - Being a low council tax authority
 - Having plans to deliver a balanced budget over the medium-term; and

- To maintain a minimum level of General Fund unallocated balances – currently set at £3m.
- 3.2 The approach to achieving a balanced budget has been to deliver cost reductions and additional income whilst minimising the impact on customers and service delivery and using prudent levels of reserves and balances.
- 3.3 For several years an ambitious capital investment strategy has been delivered resulting in significant projects that have brought economic benefits to the district, increased housing and improved public realm. Capital investment has typically been funded through a combination of reserves, including allocations of New Homes Bonus; external grant funding; and prudential borrowing.
- 3.4 The current economic outlook continues to create significant financial challenges, with persistent high inflation and interest rates, a continuing cost-of-living crisis, and a backdrop of great uncertainty over the impact of geopolitical events.
- 3.5 At the same time as preparing for the 2024-25 budget and updated MTFS, a review of the Corporate Strategy is being undertaken, which will shape the key priorities and objectives for the Council over the next four-years and set the key actions and investment needs. Budgets will need to evolve and be reprioritised so that finite resources are properly aligned. At the same time, there is a pressing need to undertake significant transformational change across the authority to maintain financial resilience whilst also continuing to deliver the essential services for residents and businesses.
- 3.6 Longer-term financial planning is made difficult by the absence of any real certainty beyond single year Local Government Finance Settlements (LGFS). One-off funding streams have been introduced and long-awaited reforms to the finance system have been deferred. Whilst limited information was provided in a Policy Paper issued by the Government during last year's LGFS, this still left significant elements of detail to be confirmed. The prospect of a delayed LGFS for 2024-25 is further unwelcome leaving key information unknown until late in the budget process timetable.
- 3.7 It is in this context that plans for the next year's budget is being made and the MTFS updated, and this report sets out the scale of the overall financial challenge facing the Council over the MTFS and the emerging strategy to ensure a sustainable position can be achieved.

4. Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 4.1 In February 2023, the MTFS identified an ongoing budget gap across the four-year period totalling over £2m, profiled £1.477m in 2024-25, £0.406m in 2025-26, and £0.151m in 2026-27.
- 4.2 The assumptions and estimates underpinning the MTFS have been reviewed considering the latest information available and by applying best

estimates. Services have also reviewed their budgets identifying where there are cost pressures, areas of proposed budget growth, and opportunities for savings and additional income.

- 4.3 Changes to the position since February 2023 are summarised in the following table and which shows the updated position for 2024-25 and the remaining period of the MTFS:

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	MTFS
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Budget Gap - Feb 2023	1477	406	151	-	2034
Cumulative	1477	1883	2034		
Prov items adj. & extend MTFS	-82	-240	-	209	-113
Net additional pay & cost inflation	935	82	36	-	1053
Vehicle Replacement Financing	-	-	195	215	410
Changes on 23/24 savings	106	-	-	-	106
Unavoidable pressures (net)	195	98	-	-	293
Growth (excl one-off investment)	359	354	132	-	845
Fee & Charges inflation provision	-100	-50	-50	-50	-250
Green Waste Subscription (re-profiled)	-250	-335	-98	-	-683
New Savings & additional income	-296	9	-	-	-287
Investment income	-840	580	90	-	-170
Business Rate Growth & uplift	-650	-150	-50	-50	-900
Council Tax referendum limit	-	-56	-53	-48	-157
Net Changes	-623	292	202	276	147
Budget Gap - Oct 2023	854	698	353	276	2181
Cumulative	854	1552	1905	2181	

- 4.4 **The above table shows that the projected MTFS structural gap has increased since last February by a net £147k to a total ongoing shortfall of £2.181m. Without any action being taken it would require around £6m of General Fund balances to be used to legally balance the budget for each year of the MTFS, which would leave the Council facing serious financial risk.**

- 4.5 The following provides commentary to the main assumptions and updates reflected in the updated MTFS and related risks. A complete MTFS General Fund Profile is provided in Appendix A.

4.6 Staff Pay Costs & Members Allowances

- 4.6.1 The annual staff pay award, with effect from April 2023, covering National Joint Council (NJC) staff has now been confirmed which results in an uplift of £1,925 or 3.88%, whichever is the higher, on all pay points. Chief Officers on Joint National Council terms have agreed 3.5%, an offer which has also been accepted by Chief Executives. The combined increase to the Council's pay bill is around 6%, which is an extra 3% or £605k more than was originally allowed in the 2023-24 budget. The additional in-year cost is being

covered through one-off income; however, this means an increase in the pay provision required to the base budget for 2024-25 onwards.

- 4.6.2 The MTFs allows for a 3% increase in staff pay for 2024-25 (an extra 1% on what was previously allowed or £230k), and 2% per annum is assumed for subsequent years.
- 4.6.3 Annual incremental progression is provided for all staff that are not at the top of their grade, although advancement is subject to satisfactory performance. The cost allowance included in the MTFs is based on the current staffing profile and means a total of £164k is provided in 2024-25, with the adjustment in subsequent years reducing as maximum scale points are reached and by 2027-28 the annual uplift is £69k.
- 4.6.4 Holiday pay entitlement is required to be paid based on average earnings taking into account overtime and other temporary pay, a change which was implemented during 2022-23. An unavoidable cost of £40k has been added to the base budget.
- 4.6.5 Like many local authorities, there are staff recruitment and retention issues across many service areas and professions which in some cases is having to be managed through the use of more expensive agency and interim staff. The changes in flexible working arrangements whereby staff can work hybrid and remote means that some of the previous advantages and benefits that could be offered to prospective employees to offset pay differentials are now diminished. As an employer, the Council continues to apply national pay conditions with some limited local flexibility. There are several service areas where market supplements are paid and there are pressures from other areas to consider introducing same. Each case requires a thorough business case, supported by HR advice. A central provision of £150k is proposed to be added to the base budget as a growth item which can be applied on a case/case basis with any arrangements subject to regular review in line with the Council's Pay Policy.
- 4.6.6 The base budget has for some time included an allowance of £300k for underspends on staffing related budgets. Staffing budgets are compiled on the basis of the current staffing establishment assuming all posts are occupied. Changes in staffing will occur in-year resulting in vacancies for periods, and appointments are typically made at the lower end of grades unless there are exceptional circumstances. Historically, this allowance has been achieved; however, this is not guaranteed and therefore requires close monitoring.
- 4.6.7 Contributions by the Council to the Essex Pension Fund were established at the last actuarial review which set the employer rate at 22.1% for the three-year period April 2023 to March 2026. The next review of the Pension Fund will be undertaken as at 31 March 2025, with any changes to employer contributions coming into effect from April 2026. No provision has been in the MTFs at this time for a change to the employer rate. A reserve continues to be maintained should a one-off deficit payment be required.

4.6.8 At the meeting of Full Council on 3rd January 2023, it was agreed that Members' Allowances would not be increased in line with the Local Government Staff Annual Pay Award for 2022-23 and would remain at the rates previously agreed on 19th April 2021. It was also noted that the Council must have regard to the views of the Independent Remuneration Panel and that a new Panel would be recruited following the District Council Election in May 2023, which would review the Members' Allowance Scheme and make recommendations for agreement by the Full Council.

4.7 Gas & Electricity

4.7.1 At the time of setting the 2023-24 budget, energy costs had risen significantly for which additional provision was made. By remaining on short-term contracts, the Council has been able to secure its gas and electricity at lower cost as wholesale energy prices have since fallen. The MTFS had originally assumed that the extra costs allowed in 2023-24 would begin to reduce in 2025-26; however, this has now been re-profiled with a third of the increase or £80k being reversed in 2024-25, with a further one third in each of the subsequent two years.

4.7.2 Notwithstanding the current drop in prices, there still remains a high level of risk over future energy costs impacted from geopolitical tensions, which have recently been exacerbated by the events in the Middle East.

4.8 Fuel and Other Inflationary Costs

4.8.1 Whilst fuel prices for the operational fleet have fallen since the budget for 2023-24, prices continue to fluctuate given the current volatility in global oil prices.

4.8.2 Since its peak at 11.1% in October 2022, inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been on a downward trend, although the rate remains significantly above the government's target of 2%. The year-on-year change for September was 6.7%, the same as in August. Whilst inflation has moderated from its peak, it is still expected to remain above target for longer. An upward revision of £100k has therefore been made to the 2024-25 inflation provision across a range of budget heads.

4.9 Vehicle Replacement Programme

4.9.1 To maintain an effective operational fleet, a Vehicle Replacement Programme (or VRP) is in place which is largely based on a seven-year renewal life cycle. The cost of vehicles is provided in base budgets, including an annual financing charge for each vehicle, which allows for continuation of essential service delivery. Fluctuations to the annual financing is managed through a specific VRP reserve.

4.9.2 Tenders have recently been obtained for the replacement of 42 vehicles comprising a mix of light commercial through to HGV refuse freighters. In

planning for the procurement, and now confirmed through the tenders received, the cost of replacement vehicles has increased significantly over previous acquisition costs. Coupled with the higher interest rate environment, the longer-term financing cost of the fleet is expected to be greater than the current base budget and the VRP reserve fully utilised, which will need to be addressed by increasing the budget in 2026-27 by £195k followed by an additional £215k in the following year. This forecast is based on the current fleet profile, the expected timing of new vehicle delivery at which point financing would be arranged, and subject to any changes in vehicle requirements, acquisition costs, and interest rates.

4.10 Changes to savings agreed for 2023/24

- 4.10.1 The majority of savings identified as part of the 2023-24 budget have been implemented. There are, however, several proposals that were agreed but have not been achieved. This includes changes to arrangements for community facilities where options continue to be explored, and a staffing related saving which has subsequently been withdrawn as the service is not able to subsume workload across other services and now has additional project related activity to be completed.
- 4.10.2 A saving from reducing the Street Scene Partnership payment to parish councils (deferred from 2023-24 budget) has been reversed retaining the funding at the level provided in the current year (£89k).
- 4.10.3 The MTFs has therefore been adjusted by a reduction in savings of £106k.

4.11 Unavoidable Cost Pressures

- 4.11.1 As part of the Service Budget Review, unavoidable costs required to maintain current service levels or meet demand led pressures have been identified and are set out in Appendix B. The total amount in 2024-25 is £195k (including £40k for statutory holiday pay) with a further £98k in 2025-26.
- 4.11.2 Demand led cost pressures include Housing Benefit costs after government subsidy (+£150k), which reflects an increase in the use of temporary/ B&B style accommodation to deal with higher levels of homelessness. A significant contributory factor is the discrepancy between the Local Housing Allowance, frozen since 2021, and the level of actual private sector rents, along with the charges levied by operators of supported housing schemes.
- 4.11.3 Several cost pressures reflect historical funding arrangements where services have used reserves to top-up base budget funding – this is particularly relevant to planning resources for urban design and heritage & archaeological support; and grounds maintenance where currently activity is part funded through commuted maintenance sums which will be fully used by end March 2025.

4.11.4 Across the Operational Services, cost pressures have been identified for a number of budget heads; however, similarly there are activities where previous increased cost have now reduced (e.g., fuel), or increased income is being achieved through contractual arrangements. These currently net to a positive adjustment of £122k; however, elements within this are subject to external factors and risks and therefore are not fixed or certain.

4.12 Growth Bids

4.12.1 The structural budget gap set out in the MTF5 means that it is essential that growth added to the budget is in line with the Council's priorities or business needs in ensuring an effective running organisation.

4.12.2 Growth bids totalling £359k for 2024-25 are set out in Appendix B.

4.12.3 Reference is made to the growth bid of £150k for staffing related cost in paragraph 4.6.5 above.

4.12.4 Several new staffing posts are being proposed to address corporate and service requirements, including to support improvements in organisational performance management to meet new Best Value guidance; to engage expert resource and in-source the management of a growing property planned maintenance programme which will also give extra capacity to support the wider Asset Management team.

4.12.5 A new post is required to manage the Great Notley Artificial Grass Pitch and Multi-use Games Area following withdrawal by Essex County Council (ECC) from undertaking this role. The Council already benefits from the income generated from the site even though ECC had managed the facility. Options continue to be explored with other partners over potential alternative management arrangements.

4.12.6 Bids are proposed to fund extra staffing capacity required in other services, e.g., the Customer Service Centre, initially proposed for two-years, subject to further review; and also, funding for an increase in staffing resource to develop the Council's corporate HR system which will contribute towards collaborative work with other local authorities on creating a shared Human Resource Information System (HRIS).

4.12.7 A growth bid is included following the agreement in principle by the Cabinet on 25th September 2023, for a contribution of £20k towards the cost of a team to support the developing North Essex Councils agenda, and £20k for continuation of funding towards the North Essex Economic Board.

4.12.8 Future provisional growth bids have been included in the MTF5 for financial planning purposes, recognising that existing funding for the Economic Development and Strategic Investment teams is currently through a mixture of base budget, reserves, and allocated New Homes Bonus, which is not sustainable over the long-term. Furthermore, Landscape Services is an area that has experienced staffing changes and recruitment issues which

management are currently working to address. However, a requirement for extra resource has also been provisionally identified to manage an increasing workload and support a proactive approach to risk management of the Council's tree stock. For all these provisional growth items, final decisions will be taken as part of the future budget process for the relevant financial year.

4.13 One-off Investment and allocation of General Fund Balances

- 4.13.1 It is proposed to allocate £200k from general balances to the Climate Change Reserve to provide extra funding to deliver against the Climate Change Action Plan. Details of the spend and commitments to date from funds previously allocated are set out in the separate Climate Change Update report included on this Cabinet's agenda. This shows that of the £624k of funds previously made available, £151k has been spent and £423k committed or allocated to specific actions, leaving a balance of £50k to continue to deliver against the Action Plan. With the addition, this would give £250k in the reserve to progress further actions.
- 4.13.2 A revised Asset Management Strategy is required to help inform the Council on its future management of its property portfolio and so a one-off funding requirement of £20k is proposed to be met from general balances to fund this piece of work.

4.14 Discretionary Fees & Charges

- 4.14.1 The general principle applied to the Council's discretionary fees and charges is that service users should make a direct contribution towards the cost of providing services at their point of use.
- 4.14.2 The majority of discretionary fees and charges are reviewed annually, and this process is currently in progress.
- 4.14.3 Services have been requested to consider increases in charges by at least the current rate of inflation and for which a provisional amount of £100k has been included in the MTFs for 2024-25. As inflation is forecast to reduce over time, a provisional £50k per annum has been included in later years.
- 4.14.4 The level of provision made will need to be further reviewed taking into consideration the actual fee changes being proposed by service as other factors need to be taken into account, including market competitiveness; contractual provisions; justification for any concessionary rates; and other statutory cost recovery limitations.
- 4.14.5 Several service areas are currently seeing reductions in income which is linked to the slowdown in the housing market. This position will be kept under review as further work is undertaken on detailed budgets and, if necessary, assumptions may need to be reassessed.

- 4.14.6 Car parking charges are normally reviewed every three years, with the last review undertaken as part of the 2023-24 budget process with formal approval to the schedule of changes agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 13th March 2023. Subsequently, the statutory consultation process and delegated decision on a revised Off Street Parking Places Order was completed with new tariffs becoming effective from 4th September 2023. It is too early to determine whether the increase has adversely impacted use of car parks and if the expected financial outcomes of the fee changes is achieved.
- 4.14.7 A schedule detailing the proposed levels of discretionary fees and charges for 2024-25 will be presented in the Finance report to Cabinet at the meeting to be held on 5th February 2024.

4.15 Planning Statutory Fees

- 4.15.1 The Government published its response to its technical consultation 'Stronger performance of local planning authorities supported through an increase in planning fees' in July 2023. In its response the Government proposed to increase statutory fees by 35% and 25% for major applications and all other applications respectively, laying draft regulations. Fees would be subject to indexation using the preceding September annual change in CPI or 10% whichever is the lowest, with a floor of zero percent change, and with the first such uplift being on/ after 1st April 2025. It is currently not definite when the new regulations will come into effect.
- 4.15.2 The Government is not proposing to ringfence the additional fee income but instead leaving it local authorities to make decisions about funding of local services, including planning departments. However, reference is made to protecting at least the income from the planning fee increase for direct investment in planning services. Notwithstanding this, the Council has previously made significant investment into this service area which should not be overlooked.
- 4.15.3 For the purposes of the 2024-25 budget and MTFs it is assumed that the uplift in statutory fees will at least cover a current budget shortfall of c£300k projected in income from planning applications. However, this assumption needs to be kept under review as recent information suggests that the shortfall in the current economic climate may be higher. The reduction in income is mainly due to receipt of a lower number of major planning applications. The position is being monitored with the service and an assessment of any provision that may be required in the budget is to be considered ahead of next revision of the MTFs for the February Cabinet meeting.
- 4.15.4 The Government also announced a 'Planning Skills Delivery Fund' to help local planning authorities (LPAs) with funding of up to £100k to clear backlogs of planning applications and address skills gaps. An application was submitted by the Council, the outcome of which is still awaited.

4.16 Green Waste Subscription Service

- 4.16.1 At the meeting held on 10th July 2023, the Cabinet approved the introduction of a subscription-based Garden Waste Collection Service from 4th March 2024. An initial charge of £55 was to be made, subject to an early bird discount of 50% for those that signed up to the service by 30th November 2023.
- 4.16.2 At the time of updating the MTFS the take-up of customers under the early bird scheme had exceeded the original business case assumption of 10% for the first year. A review of the financial model and the impact from a revised assumption of 30% has now been reflected, bringing forward the profile of savings expected to be achieved into 2024-25 by an additional £131k (total £250k). As the early bird discount only applied to the first year, it has been assumed that take-up in subsequent years will reduce and a break-even position is still projected at Year 3, achieving a net saving to the MTFS of £683k.
- 4.16.3 The level of take-up continues to be monitored and if necessary further updates to the financial modelling will be made ahead of the next revision to the MTFS.

4.17 New Savings and Additional Income

- 4.17.1 Senior Managers have been reviewing their service budgets for savings and areas where income is expected to be higher than currently budgeted. Where items identified do not have a direct impact on customers or services these have been agreed by Management Board and total £271k as detailed in Appendix C.
- 4.17.2 Management savings include additional income from the Council Tax Sharing Agreement, through which the major precepting bodies share with billing authorities the benefit of better-than-expected Council Tax income. This arrangement has been in place for many years and currently provides around £600k of income to the Council. The agreement was revised for 2023-24 reducing the percentage gainshare billing authorities could receive but with some increase in a fixed contribution towards collection, compliance, and fraud prevention costs.
- 4.17.3 New income streams include a new charge of £100 plus VAT being levied for applicants to be included in the Self Build and Custom Build Register which includes individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the district. It is also proposed to levy an administrative charge on any new (renewed) business improvement districts where the Council undertakes billing, collection, and recovery of bid levies. The charge proposed is three percent of the annual income collectable, plus VAT.
- 4.17.4 It is proposed to reduce the grant to Braintree Witham and Halstead Citizens Advice by £10,664 from £106,639 to £95,975 for 2024-25 with a view to

considering further reductions in coming years. This review will take into account the impact of the recent merger with the South Essex Citizens Advice.

- 4.17.5 The MTFS already includes a projected improvement in the financial performance of the Plaza for 2024-25, estimating a £52k net operating surplus. The original business case forecasted a net operating cost in the first 18 months of operation as office occupation and other income streams needed to develop. The in-year position for 2023-24, is projected to be better than was originally anticipated and therefore it is not proposed to change the MTFS assumption.

4.18 Treasury Management Investment Income

- 4.18.1 Following several years of ultra-low interest rates, UK interest rates were first increased on 16th December 2021 to 0.25% from 0.1%. Subsequently, there has been thirteen increases in the UK Base Rate with the last increase on 3rd August 2023, taking the Base Rate to 5.25%. This has been reflected in market rates and increased the interest earned on short-dated investments held for treasury management purposes.

- 4.18.2 Treasury management investments are dependent on the balances and reserves (capital & revenue) held by the Council, along with fluctuating in-year cash flows and working capital (debtors/ creditors).

- 4.18.3 In the current year, treasury management income at Q1 was projected to be £1.4m higher than budget with further upside potential subject to the peak level of interest rates. Whilst it is expected that interest rates will remain at or around current levels in the short-term, as inflation falls, rates are similarly expected to reduce. Reserves and balances are also expected to reduce over the medium-term leading to less cash available to be managed. The updated MTFS reflects this trajectory by including additional income gains in 2024-25 of £840k (total budget £1.9m) but then annual reductions from this level over subsequent years.

- 4.18.4 As the budget and MTFS evolves, along with a revised capital investment strategy, the assumptions for treasury management will similarly need to be updated which could change this outlook for investment income.

4.19 Business Rates Income

- 4.19.1 An assessment of the level of business rates collectable in the current year including the impact of growth means that the Council's share of income is expected to be higher. As further growth is anticipated, including completion and occupation of H120, this is expected to drive further growth in taxbase in the short-term.

- 4.19.2 For 2023-24, the rating multiplier applied to calculate the amount payable by businesses was frozen at the 2022-23 rate, with compensation provided to local authorities for the loss of income. This compensation is based on an

inflationary index but also needed to discount any change in income arising purely from the business rate revaluation that came into effect from April 2023. The compensation mechanism was finalised as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement and whilst provision had been made in the 2023-24 budget based on best estimate, the actual level of compensation is higher.

- 4.19.3 The combined effect of growth and compensation are reflected in the updated MTFs with an extra £650k in 2024-25, a further £150k in 2025-26 followed by £50k per annum for the remaining period of the MTFs.
- 4.19.4 Whilst the Council currently benefits from higher business rate income this does increase the risk from any reset of the business rate retention scheme and review of local authority funding needs and resources by a future government.

4.20 Councillor Community Grant Scheme

- 4.20.1 The Councillor Community Grant Scheme currently allocates £1,250 per Member to be used to support community projects and initiatives, at a total cost of £61,250. Since 2022-23, the cost of the scheme has been met from the Council's share of Collection Fund balances and consequently the availability of funding is subject to annual review. As indicated in Section 6, there is sufficient funding from the Collection Fund to continue the scheme for 2024-25.

4.21 Community Initiative Schemes

- 4.21.1 The Council supports community-based spending through both the Street Scene Partnership (£89k) and by the funding made available to local organisations and groups through the Councillor Community Grant Scheme (£61k). It is proposed that a review of these and other community initiatives is undertaken to consider the most effective basis for offering future financial support, whilst also enabling a reduction to overall spend given the substantial financial challenge faced by the Council.

5. Government Funding

- 5.1 The Government uses a measure of Core Spending Power (CSP) to illustrate the resources available to councils to fund services. CSP includes Revenue Support Grant, Retained Business Rates, New Homes Bonus, various other government grants, and an assumed amount of Council Tax income based on the maximum increase in Council Tax rate under the relevant referendum principles.
- 5.2 The Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) for 2023-24 provided a single-year financial settlement for councils, reflecting a roll-forward of the previous year. A Funding Guarantee was provided which ensured that all councils received at least a 3% increase in their CSP, excluding any

decisions over Council Tax and use of reserves. For Braintree, the funding guarantee in 2023-24 resulted in extra grant of £449k.

- 5.3 A Policy Paper issued on 12th December 2022, provided some indications of government intent for the 2024-25 LGFS:
- 5.4 The Council Tax referendum principle applicable to shire districts would be based on an increase of less than 3% or £5, whichever was higher.
- 5.5 A commitment was made to set out the future of New Homes Bonus before the LGFS. Government has previously consulted on proposed changes to the scheme but has not provided their official response, instead the allocation basis has remained the same for several years. To date there has been no further information on the NHB scheme for 2024-25.
- 5.6 Previous allocations of NHB have been used for investment for longer-term gains or, as more recently, to support communities through the cost-of-living crisis. The principle of using NHB for investment or other one-off or short-term priorities is to be maintained, avoiding as far as possible having to use NHB to fund ongoing budget requirements or to defer savings that are necessary to address the longer-term structural budget gap.
- 5.7 Revenue Support Grant will continue and increase by inflation; however, along with NHB, there is no certainty over other grants previously received such as Rural Services Delivery, and the Services Grant, and no commitment to provide a funding guarantee. Given previous experience, the MTFs assumes continuation of the first two items only.
- 5.8 Business rate pooling, which allows local authorities collectively to retain a larger share of business rate growth, has been confirmed for 2024-25, and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance agreed under delegation on 9th October 2023 to the Council's continued participation in the Essex Pool. As the financial benefit from pooling is uncertain and dependent on the outturn business rate position of all participating authorities, the potential financial gain has not been included in the MTFs. Previous gains from participation have been held in reserve and used towards capital financing e.g., on the Plaza and the I-Construct Innovation Centre.
- 5.9 On 23rd December 2022, the Government provided detail of the Council's allocation of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) for 2023-24 and 2024-25. HPG is ringfenced grant to ensure that local authorities are fully resourced to take action on homelessness and to continue to embed the changes required through implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- 5.10 The core HPG is currently being used to cover the cost of a number of posts within the housing services team and other related service costs that support HPG interventions. A condition of HPG is that the Council provides certain performance data and confirms actual spending against the allocated grant.

- 5.11 Additional 'top-up' HPG of £194,470 has been received in 2023-24 which in part is being used to implement a pilot scheme to assist households access private sector rented housing.
- 5.12 Housing Benefit Administrative Subsidy is also provided by the DWP or Department for Works and Pensions (for 2023-24 £330k). This subsidy is being adjusted annually to reflect the switch of new working age claimants (or those with changes) to Universal Credit (UC). Notification of this grant is not expected until after the LGFS 2024-25 is announced.
- 5.13 The DWP is gradually restarting the managed migration process of existing claimants from legacy benefits, including Housing Benefit, over to Universal Credit. Exact timing and numbers for Braintree is still to be clarified. This change will have an impact in terms of both future grant but also the resources necessary within the Housing Benefit service with an expected reduction in workload which will require further review.

6. Collection Fund

- 6.1 The Collection Fund is a statutory account for the collection and disbursement of Council Tax and Business Rates. Income from taxpayers is credited to the account, and payments or transfers made to the Council and major preceptors (including government for business rates).
- 6.2 The Council is required to estimate the year-end balance on the Fund and to either pay (if a credit) or collect (if a debit) the relevant proportion to/ from the Council and major preceptors in the forthcoming budget year. Credit or debit balances occur due to many factors, including variations in taxbase from new dwellings or business premises; changes in discounts and exemptions granted; collection performance; and, in the case of business rates, changes from valuation appeals.
- 6.3 A provisional estimate of the balance has been made for both Council Tax and Business Rates, which in both cases show an estimated credit balance which will need to be taken into account by the relevant authority when determining its budget and Council Tax for 2024-25.

	Council Tax £000s	Business Rates £000s
Estimated balance at 31.3.24	2,297	698
Apportioned:		
Braintree District Council	282	279
Essex County Council	1,656	63
Police & Crime Commissioner	267	-
Essex County Fire & Rescue	92	7
Government	-	349

6.4 The total amount to the benefit of the Council is a one-off amount of £561k in 2024-25, which will fund part of the budget gap for that year.

7. Council Taxbase & Council Tax Discretionary Policies

7.1 The Council Taxbase for 2024-25 is required to be calculated as at 30th November 2023, and will be agreed under delegated authority by the Section 151 Officer. However, prior to this determination and for financial planning purposes the taxbase for 2024-25 is estimated to be 56,359 (an increase of 1% over the current year).

7.2 For 2024-25 the collection rate assumed is proposed to remain at 98.5% (i.e., 1.5% allowance for non-collection) given the continuing cost-of-living crisis.

7.3 The Council currently exercises its discretionary powers to set discounts where it is allowed for empty properties (both properties undergoing extensive repairs and properties unfurnished) and second homes. Currently no discount is provided, and it is proposed to keep this policy in place for 2024-25.

7.4 The Council also exercises its discretionary powers to set a premium on long-term empty properties (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) over two years, in addition to a full charge. The premiums are based on the length of time a property has been empty:

- +100% for a period of less than five years
- +200% for at least five years but less than ten years
- +300% for at least ten years.

7.5 As an incentive, when a property is brought back into use and occupied a refund of the premium charged above the previous level set by government (50%) is given for the previous twelve months.

7.6 It is not proposed to change the premium levels for 2024-25.

7.7 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, introduced further provisions for councils to levy premiums on empty homes reducing the qualifying period from two years to one-year, and discretionary powers to charge up to 100% premium on second homes. Certain exemptions will apply and on which the government has recently consulted. To apply the new powers one-year's notice is required be given at annual billing and therefore the earliest date of implementation is from 1st April 2025. Further consideration is to be given as to whether these extended powers would support the Council's empty homes strategy and if recommendations need to be included as part of the final budget and Council Tax for 2024-25.

7.8 A review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS) for working age claimants is currently being undertaken on introducing a simpler income banded scheme from April 2024. The LCTS scheme for working age

claimants currently supports around 4800 households allocating c£3.5m of council tax discounts. Any revised scheme needs to be approved by full Council. There will be no change to the scheme applicable to claimants of retirement age as that scheme is determined under statute.

8. Council Tax Rate

8.1 For financial planning purposes the maximum increase in Council Tax rate under the extant referendum principles is to be applied in line with the government's Core Spending Power assumption. For 2024-25 the limit on the Council's increase in Council Tax is therefore 'less than 3%', which has been assumed in the updated MTFS and initial proposal for the 2024-25 budget.

8.2 The Council Tax rate for the Council's share of the overall bill would be £200.07 an increase of £5.76 on a Band D property, or 11p per week.

8.3 The following table sets out the implication on the MTFS budget gap of varying the Council Tax rate from this initial assumption:

	Band D Rate	Change Per Week	Increase in ongoing budget gap
Freeze	£194.31	-	£325k
0.50%	£195.21	2p	£274k
1.00%	£196.20	4p	£218k
1.50%	£197.19	6p	£162k
2.00%	£198.18	7p	£107k
2.50%	£199.17	9p	£51k
3.00%	£200.07	11p	-

8.4 The MTFS for 2025-26 onwards currently assumes that the referendum principle reverts to 'less than 2% (in line with the government's inflation target) or £5, whichever is the higher', as was previously applied to district councils before increased flexibility was allowed for 2023-24 and 2024-25, recognising higher inflation pressures.

8.5 For 2025-26 onwards, the £5 limit (or £4.95 for a rounded Band D rate), would be the maximum permissible before a referendum would be required and which has been factored into the updated MTFS Profile.

8.6 The MTFS therefore assumes for financial planning purposes the following Council Tax rates for the Council's share of the overall bill:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Council Tax Requirement	£11,275,745	£11,670,353	£12,071,595	£12,479,760
Council Taxbase (Band D Equiv)	56359	56923	57492	58067
Band D Council Tax Rate	£200.07	£205.02	£209.97	£214.92
Y-on-Y increase	£5.76	£4.95	£4.95	£4.95
Per week (rounded)	11p	10p	10p	10p

Note: Rates assumed in the MTFS: 24/25 subject to final decision and later years will depend on the MTFS & future LGFS provisions

9. Balancing the Budget for 2024-25 and MTFS Structural Gap

- 9.1 The updated MTFS financial profile shows a current budget shortfall for 2024-25 of £854k and a structural MTFS ongoing gap of £2.181m. Maintaining the Council's financial resilience is a key long-term aim of the financial strategy.
- 9.2 The final budget position for 2024-25 is still subject to further changes as work continues on refining the detailed service budgets, and assumptions are revised as updated information becomes available. As outlined in this report there are still some areas of risk within the budget that have yet to be clarified before a final position can be reached.
- 9.3 The estimated Collection Fund balance provides one-off funding that can be used to partially meet the 2024-25 shortfall, leaving a residual balance which, in the absence of other savings, would need to be met from General Fund unallocated balances.
- 9.4 Opportunities to reduce the reliance on using balances is still under consideration with Management Board reviewing current staffing vacancies and assessing with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder whether budget allocations can be re-prioritised. There is also an upside potential that the garden waste subscription service further outperforms the original business case; whilst further information is also awaited on the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- 9.5 Whilst balances (including the Collection Fund) can be used to meet the budget shortfall for 2024-25, this would then mean the gap in 2025-26 would be higher at £1.5m.
- 9.6 The Council has been successful in previous years of delivering efficiency savings & additional income. The MTFS highlights that significant further savings are required. Continuing to find further savings year on year is becoming ever more difficult for services without seriously impacting services and, therefore, this increases the risk of not having a sustainable MTFS. The use of reserves and balances does not address the ongoing structural gap which requires a more fundamental shift and transformational change in how the Council works; in the way services are designed and delivered; and whilst also seeking to focus finite resources on key priorities

agreed for the Corporate Strategy that are important to residents and businesses.

9.7 There is already work underway which fits within this wider transformation agenda and supports this approach:

- Agile and Flexible working
- Shared Services and Partnerships
- Asset Management Review
- Service Reviews
- Organisational Design

9.8 Further work is being done to shape the transformation programme, which will draw on key lines of enquiry that is data driven from benchmarking, and by linking with partners across the Essex system to identify where there are clear opportunities to work together, align services, and share capacity and capabilities.

9.9 The budget for 2023-24 allocated £850k for a Transformation Reserve against which commitments of £287k have already been identified. To meet the investment needs and drive the necessary pace of change that has been recognised as required by the recent Corporate Peer Challenge, it is likely that more funding will be needed over the next few years to support the programme, including funding to invest into major corporate and financial ICT systems, and to procure external expertise to work alongside in-house resources.

9.10 The longer-term aim of the transformation programme is to address the structural gap by the start of 2028-29, subject to any adverse impact from future changes to the local government finance system.

10. General Fund Unallocated Balances

10.1 The General Fund unallocated balances on 1st April 2023 was £8.09m. The latest in-year position forecasts that the level of balances will decrease by £1.13m to £6.96m by the end of the current year. This includes funding allocated for legal costs associated with the Wethersfield asylum centre and for set-up costs of the green waste subscription service. Based on the proposals set out in this report a withdrawal of balances of £220k is required for one-off investment as set out in Section 4.13 with a further £354k estimated to be required to balance the 2024-25 budget.

10.2 The minimum level of balances agreed for the Budget Strategy is £3m. There is no recommended level of balances that councils should hold, and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) recommends a risk-based approach considering a broad range of factors. The latest CIPFA Financial Resilience Index and the Office for Local Government (Oflog) data metrics indicates that unallocated balances are currently above the median albeit within a close cluster of similar authorities.

11. Earmarked Reserves

- 11.1 Earmarked reserves are General Fund balances that have been set aside for a specific purpose. Reserves are categorised as follows: Capital and Investment, Risk Management, Service Reserves, and Change Management & Transformation.
- 11.2 On 1st April 2023, the balance of earmarked reserves was £27.7m; however, significant amounts of reserves are committed to funding the existing capital programme, cost-of-living support and the New Homes & Growth Dividend paid to council taxpayers in April 2023, and other specific service requirements.
- 11.3 The Section 151 Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves will be included in the final budget report and which must be considered by Full Council when agreeing the budget and Council Tax.

12. Capital

- 12.1 After several years of significant capital investment, a period of consolidation is now proposed, albeit there are still some important projects that the Council wish to deliver.
- 12.2 The current capital programme totals £13.1m, and includes projects such as Maltings Lane Community Centre, Halstead and Witham Town Centre improvements, the Disabled Facilities Grants programme, Halstead Community grants, replacement skate parks, and lifecycle investment in ICT and property related assets. Funding for the programme is shown in the following Table:

	23/24	24/25	Later Yrs	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Existing Capital Programme	6.7	6.3	0.2	13.1
Financing assumed				
Government & other grants	-1.8	-0.2	0.0	-2.0
S106 and other partnership contributions	-2.1	0.0	0.0	-2.1
New Homes Bonus/ Business Pool Res./ Other reserves	-2.4	0.0	0.0	-2.4
Capital receipts & general capital reserve	-0.1	-6.1	-0.2	-6.4
Borrowing	-0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.3
Total Financing	-6.7	-6.3	-0.2	-13.1

- 12.3 High inflation, particularly in the construction industry, continuing supply chain issues, and higher interest rates means that new capital investment is less affordable. There is risk on delivery of existing projects as tendered prices reflect current economic conditions. There is also increased external scrutiny and tighter regulation on the capital investment activities of local authorities, particularly where borrowing is being used.

- 12.4 Capital bids proposed for inclusion in the capital programme for 2024-25 are set out in Appendix D and total £630k (£604k net of anticipated external funding).
- 12.5 In response to an invitation from the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance to all councillors to submit a capital bid, one councillor bid was received. Further information is being sought from the Silver End Bowls Club before a final recommendation is proposed on this item.
- 12.6 Recognising the pricing risk to existing projects in the capital programme and to ensure delivery where projects continue to demonstrate value for money, a central provision of £500k is proposed to be set aside from capital resources so that virements can be approved in -year where appropriate, subject to the normal Financial Procedure Rules.
- 12.7 The following Table shows that the available capital reserves over the MTF5 after taking into account of existing commitments and provisions is £1.3m:

	23/24	24/25	Later yrs	Prov.	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Capital Resources available	16.8				16.8
Applied to current approved programme	-0.1	-6.1	-0.2	0.0	-6.4
Capital bids 24/25		-0.6			-0.6
Provisional capital requirements future years			-2.5		-2.5
Witham Capital provision				-3.5	-3.5
H120 financing		-2.0			-2.0
Tender price risk (new contingency)		-0.5			-0.5
Balance of General Capital resources	16.7	-9.2	-2.7	-3.5	1.3
Net Capital cumulative	16.7	7.5	4.8	1.3	

- 12.8 Provisional items for future years have been included which relate primarily to recurring investment that is normally expected, for example, property planned maintenance, and ICT refresh. Future planned maintenance requirements are subject to detailed condition survey information which will be used to prioritise expenditure.
- 12.9 At the Cabinet meeting held on 25th September 2023, it was agreed to allocate various S106 funds to be used in conjunction with bids to the Football Foundation to develop four 3G Artificial Training Pitches in Braintree and Witham. One facility is to be developed on Council-owned land at the Witham Sports Ground, Spinks Lane. There is currently no requirement for general capital resources to be used to fund these projects.
- 12.10 The 2024-25 capital allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and the Rural England Prosperity Fund which can only be spent on capital, both are intended to fund targeted capital grants to third party organisations who will be expected to contribute towards achieving the agreed interventions, objectives, outcomes and outputs set out in the Investment Plan and which is a condition of the government funding.

- 12.11 Through the Better Care Fund distributed via Essex County Council, a Disabled Facilities Programme has been maintained and it is expected that the Council will continue to receive funding. The amount receivable for 2024-25 has yet to be confirmed.
- 12.12 A Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) and Plant Replacement Programme (PRP) of the Council's operational fleet and plant involves recurring capital investment based on an agreed replacement cycle and taking into account changing service requirements. Financing of the capital expenditure is contained within the revenue base budget through an annual financing provision which is managed in conjunction with earmarked reserves.
- 12.13 A procurement for 42 replacement vehicles is underway with capital costs estimated at £3.65m. Financial modelling of the future annual financing cost indicates that the existing budget and balance of reserve for the VRP should be sufficient to meet the increased financing costs anticipated in 2024 through to 2025; however, beyond that period an increase in base budget has been included in the updated MTFS.
- 12.14 Balances at 1st April 2023 on other reserves that have previously been used to supplement capital resources include an unallocated balance of New Homes Bonus (£1m); and the Business Rate Pool Reserve (£1.8m); giving a total of value of unrestricted capital resources of £4.1m.
- 12.15 There are a number of capital investment requirements that have been identified as 'pipeline' projects. These are at varying stages of business case development but indicate a substantial level of potential future capital expenditure that will require financing, or where appropriate, an increase in borrowing:
- Witham enterprise units – planning advice/ business case pending and an estimated capital requirement of £4.5m in addition to the £3.5m already earmarked in the capital programme for Witham investments.
 - Accommodation review (options appraisal in progress)
 - Agile & flexible working (design options and costings pending)
 - Transformation agenda including shared services/ corporate and finance systems (business cases to be developed as required)
 - Potential investment in a solar canopy (subject to business case/ site options)
 - H120 business park access road/ removal of excess soil (options/ costings currently being confirmed)
 - Braintree athletics track replacement (£500k subject to business case and potential for third party contribution)
- 12.16 An important source of capital resources has been capital receipts. The Council has a number of sources of potential receipts in the future; however,

all are subject to risk and therefore at this stage cannot be considered usable resources.

- 12.17 Following the Housing Stock transfer in 2007, the Council has received annually capital income from right-to-buy sales from Eastlight Community Homes (previously Greenfields). Receipts are demand-led and influenced by economic conditions. The number of sales in the current year has significantly reduced as interest rates have risen and mortgage lenders have varied product offerings. It is expected that this downturn will continue into 2024-25 with an estimated £0.5m of income projected but with some uplift in future year receipts as interest rates are predicted to reduce and experience shows there could be some latent demand. On this basis an aggregate forecast of £2.5m is made for the following two years.
- 12.18 Other potential capital receipts in the near term include an estimated £2.7m from the disposal of council-owned prospective residential development sites on which offers have been accepted; however, these are subject to receipt of satisfactory planning consents and therefore have risk over completion and final values realised.
- 12.19 Further capital receipts are anticipated in relation to the H120 site and Springwood Drive where the Council has assigned access rights and options that will facilitate third-party development. Again, the timing and final value of receipts are yet to be confirmed, but in total could be around £7m to £8m.
- 12.20 Prudential borrowing can be used for supporting further capital investment; however, this needs to be affordable in revenue terms due to the debt interest and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) this would incur. The level of borrowing requirement for capital purposes is measured through the Capital Financing Requirement or CFR. This has increased for the Council over recent years due to the borrowing used on scheme such as Victoria Square and the Plaza. The borrowing CFR was £21.5m at 31st March 2023, and actual external debt was £5.8m. The difference of £15.7m is referred to as 'internal borrowing' which defrays increases in debt by temporarily using the Council's own cash balances. This approach minimises interest cost (but does not avoid MRP) and reduces risk exposure through investments. This approach does mean there is a potential future refinancing risk. Advice on the optimum treasury management position to be held by the Council is provided by Arlingclose Ltd.

13. Options

- 13.1 The report sets out the initial budget proposals and assumptions on which views are being sought to help inform final proposals which will then be considered by Cabinet and Full Council at their meetings in February 2024.
- 13.2 Cabinet could propose variations to the proposals set out in this report.

14. Next Steps and Budget Consultation

14.1 The current budget timetable is set out below:

2023		
22 nd November	Announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer	Autumn Statement
22 nd November	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	Initial budget proposals - All Members invited
27 th November	Cabinet	Initial budget proposals
11 th December	Council	Local Council Tax Support Scheme (Working Age)
Late December (or early Jan)	Announcement by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities	Prov. Local Government Finance Settlement
2023		
January	Business Community	Consultation via article in Business Bulletin
Early January (tbc)	Joint Executive Team	Budget Strategy Workshop
17 th January	Governance & Audit Committee	Draft Treasury Management Strategy
31 st January	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	Final budget proposals - All Members invited
Early February	Announcement by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities	Final Local Government Finance Settlement
5 th February	Cabinet	Final budget proposals
19 th February	Council	Budget and Council Tax approved

14.2 The Corporate Scrutiny Committee will examine and consider the budget proposals at their meeting on 22nd November 2023. The Chairman of the Committee extends an open invitation to all Members to attend this meeting.

14.3 As further information becomes known and detailed work progresses on the budget and updating of the MTFS, it may be necessary to modify the process and timetable set out above.

15. Financial Implications

15.1 The report sets out the financial implications from the budget proposals and updated MTFS.

16. Legal Implications

16.1 There are no new legal implications arising from this report at this stage. Legal implications will, however, be considered, as necessary, for all budget

saving proposals as they are prepared as part the final budget setting process, and as those specific projects are brought forward.

17. Risk Implications

- 17.1 There are many risks inherent within the position set out in the report. The assumptions made may prove to be incorrect resulting in savings not being achieved as planned, and inflationary and other cost pressures could rise by more/ less than projected. Income assumed may not being achieved. Government funding remains uncertain until such time detail of the Local Government Finance Settlement is released.
- 17.2 The proposed financing of the capital programme is dependent upon scheme costs being in line with estimates, and planned resources. Future expenditure is dependent on the realisation of capital receipts, or schemes being self-funding in terms of meeting any increase in the cost of prudential borrowing. Revenue budget provision may be required to support additional borrowing costs where this cannot be funded by a relevant project.

18. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 18.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 18.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 18.3 Equality Impact Assessments will be considered, as necessary, for all budget saving proposals as they are further developed as part of the budget setting process.

19. List of Appendices

Appendix A – General Fund Revenue Profile 2024-25 to 2027-28
Appendix B – Unavoidable Cost Pressures & Growth Bids
Appendix C – New Savings and Additional Income
Appendix D- Capital Bids

20. Background Papers

- 20.1 Council Budget and Council Tax 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27 report to Cabinet 6th February 2023 and Full Council 20th February 2023; and
- 20.2 Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27 Update report to Cabinet 25th September 2023.

Appendix A

General Fund MTFS Financial Profile

	MTFS			
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Base Budget b/f	18023	18720	18526	19095
Base Budget Changes				
Extend MTFS to 27/28				
Pay award, increments, & other staff related	1415	575	570	581
Energy, fuel, and other inflation	257	107	83	85
Vehicle Replacement Programme financing	25	25	195	215
Fee & Charges inflation provision	-100	-50	-50	-50
Treasury Management income	-870	580	90	
Budget demand & growth - previously agreed (net)	-2	0		
Unavoidable pressures (net)	195	98		
Growth (excl one-off investment)	359	354	132	
Savings/Additional Income previously profiled	-142	-5		
New Management Savings/Additional Income	-271			
Options for Savings/Additional Income	-25	9		
Changes on 23/24 savings	106			
Green Waste Charging (re-profiled)	-250	-335	-98	-
Ongoing savings required		-1552	-353	-276
Cumulative savings required		-1552	-1905	-2181
Base Budget c/f	18720	18526	19095	19650
Non-Base Budget Items				
Councillor Community Grant Scheme	61			
One-off Investment funded from balances	220			
General Fund unallocated balances				
Addition/(-withdrawal)	-574			
Budget Requirement before Govt. & Local Tax	18427	18526	19095	19650
Revenue Support Grant	-1	-1	-1	-1
Retained Business Rates	-6431	-6697	-6864	-7011
Rural Services Grant	-23	-23	-23	-23
Services Grant	-135	-135	-135	-135
Funding Guarantee	-	-	-	-
Collection Fund Balance - Business Rates	-279	-	-	-
Collection Fund Balance - Council Tax	-282	-	-	-
Council Tax Income	-11276	-11670	-12072	-12480

2024-25 is shown as 'balanced budget' position after using one-off Collection Fund and General Fund Balances

2025-26 ongoing savings shown includes £854k rolled over from 2024-25

Unavoidable Cost Pressures & Growth

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	MTFS
	£	£	£	£	£
Unavoidable Cost Pressures (-reductions/ income)					
Housing Benefit net cost after subsidy	150000				150000
Dry mixed recycling lower income - tonnage/ market price	80000				80000
Urban design advice for planning service	55000				55000
Heritage & Archaeological SLA for planning service	51600				51600
Holiday pay accrual (all services)	40000				40000
Legionella testing & repairs for operational services	23000				23000
Increased fleet maintenance cost	20000				20000
Markets - reduced income	20000				20000
Parks & Open Spaces - repairs & maintenance	20000				20000
Cordons Farm - Increased cost of emptying interceptor tanks	12000				12000
Cemeteries maintenance	10000				10000
Green Heart Champions equipment	8000				8000
Gt. Notley Country Park AGP floodlighting	5000				5000
Commuted maintenance reserve fully used		98000			98000
Fuel cost reduction for operational fleet	-50000				-50000
Waste Management Inter-Authority Agreement income	-65000				-65000
Recycling/ Compost/ Disposal Credit income	-43000				-43000
Commercial Waste increased income	-32000				-32000
Cordons Farm - reduced waste due to diversion to landfill	-20000				-20000
Sale of glass recyclate income (market price)	-90000				-90000
Total	194600	98000	0	0	292600

	Provisional*				MTFS
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	£
	£	£	£	£	£
Growth (excl one-off investment)					
Market factor provision (incl in staff related)	150000				150000
Corporate Performance Co-ordinator	50000				50000
North Essex Councils / North Essex Economic Board	40000				40000
Management & Operation post - Gt. Notley AGP & MUGA	35000				35000
Asset Management - surveyor resources	33750				33750
Customer Services Centre resourcing	21000	7000	-28000		0
New Post - Building Surveyor (25% non-capitalised)	20500				20500
HR Support Officer increased hours for ITrent system develop.	9000				9000
Economic Development Team*		190750			190750
Strategic Investment Team*			160000		160000
New Principal Tree & Landscape officer*		66240			66240
Increase to tree management budget*		90000			90000
Total	359250	353990	132000	0	845240

Appendix C

New Savings & Additional Income

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	MTFS
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>New Management Savings/Additional Income</i>					
Commercial rent income from rent reviews	46000				46000
Planning Performance Agreements	60000				60000
Reduce Multi-functional print devices	4000				4000
Environment staff saving on part-time administrator role	14500				14500
Additional solar panel income (existing)	5000				5000
Bulky Waste Collections higher demand	30000				30000
Clinical Waste - demand for service higher than budget	6000				6000
Operations external income - higher than budget	5000				5000
Council Tax Sharing Agreement gainshare	75000				75000
Reduction in ICT maintenance / system costs	23500				23500
Remove Causeway House Vending Machine	2000				2000
Total	271000	0	0	0	271000

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	MTFS
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Options for Savings/Additional Income</i>					
New charge for Self-build & Custom Build Register	12000	-10800			1200
Reduced funding to Citizens Advice	10664				10664
Administrative charge for Business Improvement Districts	2150	2150			4300
Total	24814	-8650	0	0	16164

CAPITAL BIDS FOR ADDTION TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

APPENDIX D

Service	Description	2024/25 Bid £	External Funding
	Lifecycle Maintenance		
All Services	Technology Replacement Programme - IT desktop equipment annual lifecycle provision	40,000	
ICT	Arcserve Backup System Hardware Renewal - Existing hardware will be under warranty until Dec 2024. At this point we would need to renew the device or risk running it without any support.	50,000	
	Grants		
Public Health and Housing	Major Housing Grant scheme top-up. Grants are provided for installation/ repaid of hot water and/ or heating systems to owner occupiers/ leaseholders. Major housing grants are means-tested and repayable in full if a property is sold or transferred.	15,000	
	Community Facilities		
Parks & Open Spaces	Play Areas - refurbishment. The routine audit carried out this year has identified the following sites for partial refurbishment/equipment upgrades: - Meadowside, Braintree; Brook Meadow and Oxford Meadow, Sible Hedingham; Rickstones, Witham; and Spa Road, Witham. The plan is to concentrate on providing more extensive refurbishment and to focus on two play areas a year for the next two years at a budget of £70k for each play area. The budget for each site has been increased as there has been significant increases in the cost of new play equipment over the past couple of years.	280,000	-25,650
Parks & Open Spaces	Play Areas - replacement of safety surfacing at various play areas. Both the routine inspections and safety audit carried has identified that some of the play areas require the full or partial replacement of the Impact Absorbing Safety Surface, in order to ensure the optimal safety of all users and to maintain compliance with the with the British Standards for Playgrounds. Nine sites: Gt Notley, Community Centre. King George, Braintree, Toddler & Junior (x2); Bramble Road; Bridport Way; Kings Road, Halstead; Bocking Mill; Fisher Field; and Gershwin Boulevard.	80,000	
	Operational Facilities & Equipment		
Waste Management	Wheelie Bins - New bins required to meet additional properties through district growth. The service continues to experience additional budget pressures due to the increase in bins required to supply new developments, along with increased cost of bins. From 25/26 different arrangements may apply for collecting waste as part of the Governments consistency in waste collections.	50,000	
Depot Accommodation	Refurbishment of welfare and mess facilities for front-line service teams at the Retained Area. The existing welfare facilities for staff are in a poor condition with very little work having been undertaken in the 21 years the Council has occupied the building. There is a need to carry out some refurbishment works to provide front line staff and their management teams with modern welfare facilities to meet their needs, improve the working environment and meet current Health and Safety legislation.	75,000	
	Councillor Capital Bid		
Cllr Bid	Silver End Bowls Club - Off Road Parking - To provide sustainable parking at Silver End Bowls Club. The parking would use a sustainable and permeable design such as grasscrete or similar, so that it would retain a green appearance. The draft design includes landscape planting along the frontage with sections of privet hedging in keeping with the village and extant Conservation Area rules. Total estimated project cost £45k less £5k agreed contribution from BDC towards the installation of a dropped kerb.	40,000	
	Total	630,000	-25,650
	Net of External Funding	604,350	

Report Title: Climate Change Strategy update 2023	
Report to: Cabinet	
Date: 27 th November 2023	For: To note
Key Decision: No	Decision Planner Ref No: DP/2023/58
Report Presented by: Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment and Customer Services	
Enquiries to: Josie Falco, Head of Environment josie.falco@braintree.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress of the Climate Change Strategy (the Strategy) and associated Climate Action Plan (CAP)

2. Recommendations

For Cabinet to note:

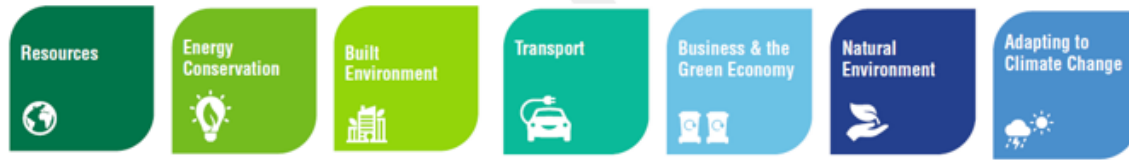
- 2.1 The Annual Climate Action Plan Year End report 2022/23, as set out in Appendix A and;
- 2.2 The Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23 Annual Communication and Engagement Report, as set out in Appendix B.

3. Background

- 3.1 In July 2019, Braintree District Council (the Council) declared a Climate Emergency with the aim to make the Council activities, as far as practical, carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.2 In September 2021 at full council the Climate Change Strategy and its associated initial Climate Action Plan was adopted. This was followed up in July 2022, where the Council considered the KPI's and a monitoring and reporting plan and approved.
- 3.4 In September 2022, the Council established an internal Officer Climate Change Delivery Board to oversee and support the delivery of the Council's commitment to climate change both within the Council and across the district.
- 3.5 In March 2023 an update on the Climate Actions undertaken and progress made was presented at full council.

4 Update on Climate Action Plan Progress

4.1 The Council's initial Climate Action Plan had 73 actions identified to progress across 7 key themes. The key themes being -



- 4.2 The Strategy and associated CAP did not only target organisational carbon emissions. The Strategy also recognised the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. Similarly, the Strategy also acknowledged the adaptations that would be required in the future to mitigate the effects of climate change on the Council's local environment. Timescales of individual actions varied, and were classified as follows: ongoing, short, medium and long term.
- 4.3 Of the 73 original actions, 10 actions targeted increasing biodiversity, 26 at reducing carbon emissions, 16 changing behaviours towards climate change, 13 mitigating the effects of climate change and 8 developing the local green economy.
- 4.4 The forecast reduction in organisational carbon will not be a linear decline. Key projects have been identified in the CAP that will result in a marked stepped reduction. The projects that will have the greatest impact on organisational carbon emissions are 1) the Renewable Fuel Vehicle Replacement programme and 2) the switching of the organisation's energy supply to a green/renewable energy source. (Fleet accounts for 48.54% and Natural Gas 35.70% of the organisation's carbon emissions)
- 4.5 Appendix A contains the CAP Report Year End 2022-23. This includes the Council's progress made against the Organisational Climate Performance indicators, a detailed end of year status of all the 73 climate actions and includes new actions that will be reported on as part of the future CAP 2023/2024 report.
- 4.6 In 2022/2023, 37 climate actions were completed.
- 4.7 Some highlights of the progress made on the Strategy via the actions undertaken to date include: -
- A reduction in the organisational carbon emissions by 354 metric tonnes against the Strategy's baseline year of 2019/2020
 - 6% of the Council's energy is now derived from renewable/green sources
 - 86% of the Council managed lighting is now LED
 - All Council managed car parks now have a minimum of 4 EV charging stations installed
 - An additional 4,500 trees, 18,700 whips, 73,000 bulbs planted in the district
 - A district wide tree canopy survey has been commissioned
 - The Council's Planning department have now published a new Local Plan and an accompanying Sustainable Statement/checklist and a Sustainable Supplementary Planning Document

- 4.8 39 new climate change related actions were identified as part of the development of Annual Service Business Plans. These actions have been added to the Council's CAP resulting in 2023/24 the Council progressing 75 climate related actions/projects.
- 4.9 The 2023/2024 CAP performance reporting will include updates on all these new additional actions.

5. Options

- 5.1 The Council could choose not to add additional actions to the CAP – there is a risk that without additional actions added each year the Council will not achieve its ambition of becoming carbon neutral as far as practicable possible by 2030.
- 5.2 The Council continues to consider the CAP as a live document that is updated annually. This reduces the risk of not achieving the required reduction of organisational carbon emissions.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 In 2021/22 budget, the Council agreed to create an initial reserve of £500,000 to support the delivery of the emerging Strategy. During the 2022/23 Budget a review of the reserves resulted in the following being added into the Climate Change Reserve:
- £48k being the Carbon Management reserve balance
 - £46k being the Green Heart reserve balance
 - £22k being the Flooding relief reserve balance
- 6.2 The total amount reserved for Climate Change is therefore £616k. Allocations from the initial £500k had already been agreed in the capital programme:
- 6.3 The 2021/2022 & 2022/23 Budgets included agreement to use the (consolidated) Climate Change Reserve for the following
- Programme officer for Climate Change 2 years @ £50k p.a. total £100k
 - Funding for Cycling Strategy 2 years @ £25k p.a. total £50k
 - Substation and electric chargers at Lakes Road £80K
 - Air Quality Monitoring equipment £30k
 - First year costs of air quality monitoring equipment £3k (funding beyond 22/23 to be unavoidable growth in MTFS)
 - First year funding of the Tetrapak collections £8k (funding beyond 22/23 to be unavoidable growth in MTFS)
 - Bulb and Trees £34K
 - Air Quality Monitoring Methodology Review £7,365
 - Housing Condition Survey – Environmental & Energy Efficiency information (£9,345)
 - Climate Change Communications resource £37,500
 - Tree Survey £10K

Total allocated £369,210 (£151K spent to date)

Leaving an unallocated balance of £246,790 at year end 2022/23 in the Climate Change Reserve Account.

- 6.4 £77K has been allocated for an extension of the Climate Change Project Manager post (£50K) and other small projects underway in 2023/24.
- 6.5 Further allocations from the reserve are anticipated as follows:
The cost of substation and electric charger installation at Lakes Road is likely to increase due to inflation and UK Power Networks is providing an updated quote. This installation could not be undertaken in 2022/23 as the extent of the installation was dependant on the review of the vehicle replacement programme and likely shift towards acquiring electric vehicles. It is currently estimated that there will be an increase in cost of circa £50K.
- 6.6 A tender exercise is due to commence imminently for the phased replacement of lamppost bulbs with LED bulbs for those managed by the Council. Estimated cost is £77K.
- 6.7 With the 2023/24 forecasted additional costs deducted from the Climate Change Reserve Account the balance at the end of 2023/24 will be circa £50K.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no identified legal implications arising from the items to note in this report. Legal implications for individual Climate Change Actions will be identified through the business case process of individual actions and projects.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 There will be a number of implications to the Council, residents and businesses of actions identified in the CAP. These will be detailed in each business case as it is developed for additional CAP Actions.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 9.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 9.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the items to note in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

10. List of Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A - Annual Climate Action Plan Year End report 2022/23
- 10.2 Appendix B - Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23 Annual Communication and Engagement Report

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030
- 11.2 EIA

Climate Change Action Plan



Annual Action Report Year End 2022-23



Climate Change Action Plan: September 2021 – March 2023






The Action Plan will be a living document and we will revise our plans as the climate and environmental emergency develops, targets are met, funding becomes available and new technologies emerge. Timescales for the actions in the original Climate Action Plan were based on the following:-




Timescale
Short Term – 2021 to 2023
Medium Term – 2021 to 2026
Long Term – 2021 to 2030
Ongoing – Actions that will continue through the life of the strategy





The Council is directly responsible for reducing its own organisational climate impact – Table 1 below details the actions and targets that BDC directly controls.




Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Target/Measurements	2022 /2023	Trend	Comments
The Council will be Carbon Neutral as far as practical by 2030	Annual update on progress made towards target - reported one year in arrears 21/22 3066 tonnes, 22/23 2927 tonnes	2,927	↓	A reduction of 354 tonnes on the Strategy's 2019/2020s baseline figure 3,281 (2020/2021 annual carbon figures was distorted by the pandemic)
Percentage of council energy derived from renewable/green sources	100% by 2030 – Annual update on progress made towards target	6%	↑	6% of the Council's energy is now from non fossil fuel energy sources an increase of 1% in 2022/2023
Reduction in the use of water	Annual update on water usage by BDC – Baseline 2022 and target set for 2023/24	10,759	↔	BDC has baselined its annual water consumption from its entire estate during 2022/2023 which equates to 10,759 cubic meters
Percentage of staff trained on Climate Change	Target 100% by 2024 – Measured and reported annually	0.50%	↑	2 members of staff have undertaken full accreditation via the "Caron Literacy Project" these staff have been supported by ODL to tailor ODL online Training Course due to go live in September 2023 for all staff with target for all staff to complete by 31st March 2024
Percentage of BDC managed public lighting switched to LED	Target 100% - Measured and reported annually	86%	↑	A procurement exercise will be undertaken in 2023/2024 for LED Lamppost replacements for BDC managed lampposts. All other lighting is now LED
No of EV Charging Points in Council Car Parks	Target – all Car Parks to have EV charging facilities – Measured and reported annually	64	↑	All public BDC car parks now have between 4 and 8 EV charging points. Investigations are underway to install rapid charging points.
Percentage of low emissions vehicle in the BDC Fleet	Target 100% by 2030 – Measured and reported annually	0	↔	An external review of options in relation of vehicle replacements has been completed. A procurement for 12 electric vehicles is due to begin in 2023/24
Reduction in cuts to rural verges	(Target – one cut per year *) (*safety cuts will be performed if requested)	1	↓	Project (Trial) completed in Oct 2021. Single cut agreed by JET in April 2022 and will be implemented for the next 3 years whilst ECC complete a long term eco monitor/evaluation.





The Council also aims to support the District to achieve carbon neutrality. Table 2 includes the activity indicators that BDC will use to monitor the impact of the actions in the District category



Overarching Activity Indicators	Activity Indicator Measurements	22/23	Trend	Comments
District Carbon Tonnage	Reported 2 years in arrears Strategy Baseline 576Kt 2021/22 679 Kilo Tonnes	679 Kt		Figures release by DESNZ
Percentage of household waste recycled per annum	Target: 60%* (Reported Annually) (Target is subject to review pending the Secondary legislation from Environment Act)	47.54%		20/21 46.8%, 21/22 49.7% Residual waste was down by approx. 213 tonnes compared to 21/22. We also saw a reduction in the tonnage of Recyclable waste collected which was down by approx 4,000 tonnes. Of this 3,311 tonnes related to the garden waste in the first two quarters of the year due to the weather especially the hot dry spell we encountered over the summer period (second quarter - July to September). There was a further reduction of green waste (298 tonnes) in October and November, again attributable to the season.
KG/HH Residual waste collected per year	Target: 468* (kg/hh/yr) Reported Annually (Target is subject to review pending the Secondary legislation from Environment Act)	431kg/HH		Recycling Rate = 44% Residual Waste collected = 434kg/HH (433.78kg/HH)
No of electric taxis (recommendation for this activity indicator to change to <i>Number of taxis and private hire vehicles that are fuelled by electric or alternative fuels</i>)	Target 100% by 2030	16%		Percentage of Licensed Taxis and Private Hire vehicle fleet currently fuelled by petrol/diesel alternatives). There are currently very limited number of wheelchair accessible vehicles models on the market.
Number of Parish Council owned/managed Street lights switched to LED	Annual update report (Grant funding dependent)	-	-	2022/23 Baseline figure being compiled - pending information from Parish Council's
Number of Household Energy Grants issued	Annual update report (Grant funding dependent)	635		368 ECO, 115 Sustainable Warmth, 124 Groundworks/Green Doctor, and 48 via Handyman Service



No of new Neighbourhood Plans with Climate included	Annual update report (Grant funding dependent)	2		Kelvedon and Feering Neighbourhood Plans were adopted in 2022/3
No of planning permissions granted for new homes in accordance with the new Local Plan	Annual update of number	1088	-	New Local plan adopted in 2022/23
No of contacts made with and advice given to Listed Buildings owners on energy saving measures	Annual update of number	Figure no longer reportable	Figure no longer reportable	Essex Design Guide for listed buildings now hosted on a ECC design guide website. Braintree's website now links directly to ECC's website. ECC website hits cannot provide Braintree Specific figures
No of energy saving measures installed in Social Housing Stock	Annual update of number	300	No baseline figure available	Funded by Social Housing Decarbonisation fund
No of On Street EV chargers installed for electric vehicles (ECC lead project)	Annual update of number	0	-	Essex County Council have successfully secured bids from bid OZEV & LEVI for developing a programme of installations across the county. Public Consultation held 2022/23
Percentage of district with access to superfast broadband	Progress report from the Transport East – Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Tactical Group (Lead Highways Authority is Essex County Council)	97.60%		Braintree district is currently at 97% of premises able to access superfast broadband. Countywide service take-up is 76%. District is currently at 30%.
No of campaigns run to support improved air quality (such as Anti idling, do not burn green wood etc)	Annual progress report	0	-	Funding bid for Lot 1 failed on the basis that BDC had not declared an AQMA. A campaign is scheduled for 23-24
Percentage increase in the use of Public transport	Total number of campaigns	28%		Braintree specific figures unavailable -ECC report Public Transport usage has increased but still remains lower than pre-pandemic percentages. 40,7 m 2019, 12.6 m, 2021 21.8 m, 2022 23.42 m, 23 29.9 million

Number of Water Butts purchased	Progress report from ECC (Primary lead Essex County Council)	89		86 water butts or water butt kits were bought through the subsidised water butt scheme funded by ECC. Three water butts were purchased and installed for BDC cemeteries (one was already in place). Public Consultation anticipated in 2023/24 on non-viable bus routes.
No of SMEs supported by ECC Green Skills/ECC Centre of Excellence/ECC Green Accreditation Scheme	Annual Figures provided by ECC (Primary lead organisation is ECC)	-	-	Accreditation Scheme Launched in 2022/23 - first accreditations will be in 2023/24
No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030	Total number of projects (This will be a combined number from ECC, BDC and other partner organisations.)	18		18 x wilding projects in total stated (excluding the district wide single verge cut in autumn 2022). i. 1 x Hatfield Peverel PC ii. 1 x Castle Hedingham PC iii. 1 x Rivenhall PC (wild seeding to selected rural verges in Rivenhall parish) iv. 15 x wilding areas of POS in the district which includes sites where we have planted bulbs and tree whips.
No of businesses signed up to ECO heating or LoCase	Target: number of Braintree business that have received LOCASE funding (or its successor). (Grant funding dependent)	15		LoCase stats: 91 Braintree district businesses engaged (top 3 in Essex for performance) • 15 grants allocated (top 2) • 81.39 tonnes of CO2 saved (top 4) • 11.5 jobs created (top 3) • £89,911.11 grant funding allocated to businesses (top 3)
No of Business that have supported to develop Green Travel Plans	Target: 10 Business signed up each year	4		promotion of green travel plans at Springwood Drive event with businesses

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
Resources						
Conserve our Natural Resources						
CC/001 Continue with campaigns to raise the profile of local food producers by promoting shop local and seasonal foods including plant based substitutes	Developing the Green Economy Increased awareness of produce that can be sourced locally and the benefits of buying seasonal produce and swapping to plant based produce Increased support for local businesses	Environment	District	Ongoing	<p>The promotion of shop local has been ongoing.</p> <p>Media releases and case studies have promoted specific businesses selling local produce, street market businesses and local growers selling environmentally conscious products.</p> <p>The BDC "Shop Local in Braintree District" Facebook page now has 695 subscribers.</p> <p>A shop local Christmas campaign was run throughout December 2022.</p> <p>Stronger links are being made with local farmers with a view to promoting agricultural food production in the year ahead.</p>	 Action Ongoing/on target
CC/002 Work with partners to offer a subsidised water butt scheme to encourage residents to use rainfall rather than tap water to sustain their plants.	Climate effect mitigation Reduction in the use of water	Environment	BDC	Short Term	<p>A subsidized water butt scheme is now operational in partnership with ECC and Get composting. Several promotions of the scheme have taken place.</p> <p>A total of 92 water butts and water butt kits were purchased through the scheme over the year.</p> <p>Now established, this project will continue into 2023-24.</p>	 Action Completed
CC/003 Create a learning and development programme for staff and members to increase their awareness on climate change and how they can reduce their own carbon emissions and contribute to those that can be achieved corporately	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase awareness of climate change issues Improved consideration of climate change issues across all services, projects and policies	Environment	BDC	Short Term (target of March 2024)	<p>Two members of staff have undertaken full accreditation via the 'Carbon Literacy Project' and these staff are now developing an in house staff training course which will be differentiated across The Council.</p> <p>A suitable online learning course has been identified for all office based staff to complete and a learning video shall be created for frontline staff. This training will go live in 2023.</p>	 Action Ongoing/on target




Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
CC/004 Install water butts in our cemeteries to capture rainfall run off from cemetery chapels and other buildings for use by visitors bringing floral tributes	Carbon Reduction Reduction in the use of water	Operations	BDC	Short Term	All four BDC Cemeteries now have water butts installed capturing rainwater fun off. A press release promoted this and used the opportunity to encourage residents to install water butts at home.	 Action Completed
CC/005 Review the Councils sustainable Procurement Policy to strengthen the procurement process ensuring environmental considerations are made when procuring goods and services	Carbon Reduction Procurement specifications developed that supports carbon reduction and sustainability. Council is more aware of the environmental credentials of the contractors it works with Encourage more businesses to consider climate change credentials	Finance	BDC	Medium Term	The BDC joint Procurement Team is working alongside ECC to develop an approach to Sustainable Procurement which includes Climate impact as part of the social value standards. The Carbon Trust is assisting with this project. Work is ongoing including developing guidance on including Sustainability into specifications and how to evaluate submissions once received. Evaluation of the environmental and climate credibility of suppliers will begin in financial year 2023/2024.	 Action Ongoing/on target
CC/006 Explore the feasibility of re-using waste water from the depot to fill the water tanks on the street sweepers	Carbon Reduction Reduction in the use of water	Operations	BDC	Medium Term	A feasibility project was undertaken regarding harvesting rainwater from Lakes Road for use in road sweepers. Technical issues identified made the project unviable. An alternative project is being investigated regarding harvesting and re-using water at Cordon's Farm. A feasibility study is being commissioned via an external consultant.	 Action Ongoing/on target
Reduce Waste, Increase Recycling						
CC/007 Work with the Essex Recycling Forum and the Essex Waste Partnership on Countywide campaigns and initiatives to encourage people to reduce their waste and to maximise recycling	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduction of total waste collected Reduction in tonnage of residual waste and increase in percentage of waste recycled	Operations	District	Ongoing	This work is ongoing. Multiple recycling focused web updates and social media campaigns have been run. A joint campaign between ECC, 11 Essex Local Authorities, KFC and MacDonaldis targeting reduced waste/littering which involves two outlets at Galleys Corner is underway.	 Action Ongoing/on target



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
					<p>BDC is currently supporting the ERF with a food waste reducing campaign. Of the 722 residents that have signed the Essex Food Waste Pledge, 161 (22%) are from the Braintree District.</p> <p>School visits, evening talks and multiple events have been attended promoting recycling and waste minimalization. (Further information on the campaigns run in 2022/2023 are documented in the Comms Annual Activity Report 2022/2023)</p>	
OP/21/004 Review the waste management service to identify future working models and respond to the outcomes of the Environment Bill, including impacts on kerbside collections.	<p>New 10 year waste strategy developed. Improved service delivery model implemented providing more sustainable ways of working.</p> <p>Reduce residual waste and increase recycling</p> <p>Ensure outcomes of the Environment Bill are understood and fed into the service review of the waste management service</p>	Operations	BDC	Short Term	<p>The Council commissioned an external consultant (Ricardo AEA) to review its waste collection service including modeling various service delivery options to identify the most cost effective and efficient model in line with the Government's proposed Consistency in Household Waste Collections.</p> <p>Secondary legislation relating to the above under the Environment Act 2021 is still pending and further work cannot progress on this aspect of the review until a formal announcement is made by Defra.</p> <p>Due to the delays in the publication of the secondary legislation and current lack of clarity around the anticipated consistency of collection guidance from central government this project's timescale has been adjusted to Medium Term.</p>	<p> Action delayed (adjusted to Medium Term Action)</p>
Reduce use of non-renewable resources						
CC/009 Develop a District wide campaign to encourage residents to reduce the use of plastics	<p>Climate behaviour change influencer</p> <p>Reduction in waste collected</p>	Operations / Marketing & Comms	District	Short Term	<p>Promotion of plastic recycling has run via social media, The Council's website attended events and BDC Facebook posts.</p> <p>A social media post and e-newsletter campaign is underway to inform residents and businesses about the single use plastic ban for takeaway cutlery/plates/cups, to be introduced nationwide in October 2023 .</p>	<p> Action Completed</p>




Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
CC/010 Consider options to increase public access to drinking water to reduce single use plastics	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduction in the use of single use plastics	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the installation of water fountains has become a less popular option for drinking water. A business case cost and benefit evaluations is being undertaken of working in partnership with City to Sea and Refill.org on a "Refill" campaign in 2023/24.	 Action Ongoing/on target
CC/011 Research opportunities around using waste collected from dog waste bins and other sources as either a fertiliser or fuel source	Carbon Reduction Reduce energy use from non-renewable sources	Operations	BDC	Short Term	Research was undertaken with other Councils in Essex and it was established there are none who recycle dog waste due to the operational impracticalities and costs involved of separating the waste from plastic bags. It was concluded this project was not viable.	 Action Completed





Energy Conservation





Reduce energy use an improve energy efficient infrastructure





CC/012 Switch the Councils energy use to non-fossil fuel green energy tariffs	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions	Finance / Operations	BDC	Short Term	6% of the Council's energy is now from non-fossil fuel energy sources. The Council is currently in a fixed term contract for energy supply. Cost evaluation is underway regarding switching to a green energy tariff when the contract term expires. (Green Tariffs are currently more expensive than standard tariffs and the cost of switching may be cost prohibitive).	 Action delayed (adjusted to medium term action)
CC/013 Explore opportunities to purchase batteries to store electricity/ energy to supply back to our buildings or sell back to the National Grid	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Currently BDC does not generate enough overspill energy from alternative sources or off-peak tariffs to make the project financially feasible. It is likely that battery storage will be re-explored in the future. This action has been closed.	 Action Completed
CC/014 Switch all BDC public lighting to well-designed and well directed LED lights on a like for like replacement basis and work with parish councils to replace any	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions	Finance / Environment	BDC	Short Term	BDC's Car Park lighting was changed to LED in 2018. ECC's street light LED replacement program is ongoing in Braintree.	 Action Completed





Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
parish council owned street lights when they need replacing	Reduced cost of energy consumption				<p>All BDC managed properties now have LED lighting installed. LED lighting is being installed in Fusion managed buildings in 23/24. 3% of BDC managed lampposts have now been exchanged to LED lighting. This project is ongoing with bulbs being exchanged when lampposts fail. A specification for lamppost repair is being written for tender in 23/24 which will include replacing LED Lighting.</p> <p>ECC has offered Parish Councils second hand working LED lanterns on a first come first serve basis. Parish Councils were also signposted to apply for ECC climate change grants of up to £20,000 to support their LED replacement programs and the case study of Feering Parish Council was promoted. (This grant stream has now closed.)</p> <p>The current LED lighting data demonstrates that 76% of public lighting is now LED.</p> <p>This project is closed and a new action has been opened for 2023/2024 relating to the commissioning of the final LED Lamppost replacement program.</p>	
CC/016 Increase energy efficiency and renewable technologies across Council equipment, assets and estates	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Finance / Environment	BDC	Long Term	The Council are securing costings from suppliers to improve the energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities of The Plaza building.	 Action ongoing/on target
Increase the proportion of energy derived from renewable sources						
OP/20/005 Continue to research and evaluate ultra-low emission alternatives for the Council's fleet of vehicles	Carbon Reduction Identify opportunities to reduce the impact of the Council's impact on emissions	Operations	BDC	Short Term (medium term implementation)	<p>An internal Vehicle Replacement Project Board has been established.</p> <p>An external review of the Council's fleet and opportunities to look at alternative fuels and alternative low emissions vehicles has been commissioned and a draft report has been received.</p> <p>This project is linked to the Review of the Waste Management Service and as a result has also been setback by the delay in</p>	 Action ongoing/on target







Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
					publication of the secondary legislation expected from the Environment Act 2021.	
CC/018 Consider use of robust certified carbon credit schemes to offset any residual organisation emissions	Carbon Reduction Reduce Carbon Impact of organisation	Environment	BDC	Long Term	A tree canopy survey has been commissioned which will provide a baseline of data for the district. The report, when finalized, will highlight tree planting opportunities across the district and which will inform future carbon offsetting opportunities.	 Action ongoing/on target
Improve energy efficiency of existing housing stock						
CC/019 Continue to work with partners to address the complex challenge of fuel poverty through targeted campaigns and signposting to grant funding and areas of support	Carbon Reduction People in fuel poverty have access to affordable, low carbon warmth. Improved energy efficiency in homes and reduced costs for residents Reduction in CO2 emissions	Environment	District	Ongoing	BDC was awarded £1.6 million of energy efficiency grant funding in 2022. 1934 residents have been referred to access grant funding and/or solar panel schemes. 62 BDC residents accessed Sustainable Warmth grants for retrofitted energy efficiency measures to a value of £329K BDC also supported Eastlight Community Homes in securing funding under phase1 & 2 of the Home Upgrade Grant – these HUG grants have resulted in 450 low-income households accessing energy efficiency upgrades. A Cost of Living partnership group has been established in 2022/2023 which shares and promotes information on grant funding schemes available. BDC is part of a consortia that will bid for grant funding announced by BEIS in Sept 22 for Homes Upgrade Grant 2 targeting homes in off grid	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/020 Continue with campaigns providing information to residents on saving energy measures to help reduce emissions, including promotion of retrofit schemes for homeowners	Carbon Reduction District emissions reduced. Campaigns successfully delivered. Increase in residents sign posted to grants	Environment	District	Ongoing	This work has been ongoing and has become part of a working stream for the multi-agency Cost of Living Partnership. A “Don’t wait for Winter” and “Winter Warmth” campaign was run, and residents are being directed to the Green Doctor Referral scheme for home energy efficiency audits. ‘Ease the Squeeze’ - information on home insulation and a range of energy saving tips has been promoted and articles on these schemes have been included in BDC’s Contact Magazine	 Action ongoing/on target

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
Built Environment						
Reduce the carbon impact and improve biodiversity of new developments						
CC/2021 Continue to emphasise climate change and the requirements around carbon reduction and renewables in Neighbourhood Plans.	Climate effect mitigation Increase awareness and consideration of Climate Change issues for those developing Neighbourhood Plans	Planning	BDC	Short Term	BDC is encouraging community groups putting together Neighbourhood Plans to consider whether they wish to add policies on managing the impact of climate change. Both recent plans adopted at Kelvedon and Feering include responding to Climate Change as part of the vision for their villages and include policies encouraging energy efficiency, and renewable energy generation'. This work is now considered standard practice.	 Action Completed
CC/022 Promote sustainable materials for new constructions based on the BREEAM* tool	Developing the Green Economy Reduced environmental impact of new builds Reduced CO2 emissions from new developments	Planning	BDC	Short Term	The Plaza development is an example of BREEAM construction and is being used as a promotional BREEAM case study. Presentations to Essex wide groups on the success of this building has been undertaken. (The Plaza is 42% more efficient than building regulations and derives 54% of its energy from renewable sources) This work is now considered standard practice	 Action Completed
CC/023 Review changes in national planning policies that may help shape and enforce energy efficiency improvements in buildings	Carbon Reduction Policies implemented and considered for new planning applications Reduced CO2 emissions from new developments	Planning	BDC	Short Term	The Local Plan has been adopted and applying the policies within it is now standard practice.	 Action Completed
CC/024 Create and adopt new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) on sustainability and carbon reduction, including waste management, biodiversity gain, encouraging developers to exceed targets and build sustainable, resilient and efficient new homes	Climate behaviour change influencer Supplementary Planning Document adopted and used as a material planning consideration Positive impact on biodiversity from new developments	Planning	BDC	Short Term	The Planning policy team is in the commissioning stage of documents. Consultation on draft SPDs is expected to be undertaken in 2023.	 Action Completed

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
	Reduced CO2 emissions from new developments					
CC/025 Develop a Planning Sustainability check list for use by officers, members and town/parish councils when reviewing planning applications to ensure climate change is taken into consideration by decision makers of all new planning applications	Climate behaviour change influencer Improve framework, ensuring that climate change issues are effectively considered at planning stage	Planning	BDC	Short Term	The Planning Sustainability Checklist is now approved and published.	 Action Completed
CC/026 Develop an environmental assets map to understand the potential locations of positive environmental assets moving forward	Carbon Reduction Increase knowledge of environmental assets to better understand opportunities Market the District to build the green economy	Planning	BDC	Short Term	BDC are working in close partnership with ECC through the Local Nature Partnership. Mapping will be needed as part of the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy introduced via the Environment Act 2021 and expected to be rolled out by DEFRA by the end of 2024. A tree canopy study has also been commissioned which should help inform future mapping.	 Action Completed
CC/027 Support the transition to sustainable heating sources in new developments	Carbon Reduction Reduced CO2 emissions from new developments	Planning	District	Medium Term	The adopted Local Plan includes policy support for renewable energy on new developments. ECC guidance on how to install renewable on listed buildings has now been completed as part of the Essex Design Guide and a viability study to confirm the costs of net zero for new homes has been completed and published. A major site in the District is developing no gas homes on its affordable and build for rent elements. When these begin to complete over the next year it will provide a useful case study. Building Regulations are due to be updated in 2023/24 setting tighter standards of sustainable heating.	 Action Completed
CC/028 Review and evaluate the potential of an offset fund (106 agreements) or allowable solutions mechanism for developers to pay into when a certain high level of energy efficiency of buildings is not able to be met in the development and use this money for carbon saving projects	Carbon Reduction Reduced CO2 impact from new developments	Environment	BDC	Long Term	We continue to investigate the opportunities for this as part of wider networking.	 Action ongoing/on target

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
Reduce household water consumption and maximise installation of sustainable drainage systems, water reuse and grey water harvesting technologies						
CC/029 Work with ECC to ensure that all new development sites have sufficient "green/blue" infrastructure to mitigate flooding through the Sustainable Urban Drainage System Strategies submitted at Planning	Climate effect mitigation Reduced risk of flooding in new developments	Planning	District	Medium Term	Local Plan policies were considered sufficient by Inspectors to ensure the required amounts of green and blue infrastructure. These are being applied in new developments. This work is now considered as standard practice	 Action ongoing/on target
Reduce energy use in existing households by retrofitting energy efficiency measures						
CC/030 Continue to signpost owners of traditional or listed buildings to advice and assistance on energy saving measures and improved sustainability that will avoid causing harm to the building and surroundings	Carbon Reduction Reduces CO2 emissions from homes Reduced cost of energy for residents	Planning	District	Ongoing	ECC has completed guidance for those with listed buildings regarding how they might adapt their buildings or their habits to climate change. This is published online in the Essex Design Guide. Proposed changes to the NPPF provide greater weight to the need for things like insulation and double glazing in listed homes but that does not outweigh any historic impact.	 Action Completed
CC/031 Work with registered housing providers and registered landlords to progressively increase the energy efficiency of social housing stock	Carbon Reduction Reduces CO2 emissions from homes Reduced cost of energy for residents	Environment	District	Ongoing	BDC has supported ECH with preparation of funding bids to the Homes Upgrade Grant (Phase 1 & 2). This has resulted in 450 low-income Households accessing energy efficiency upgrades. A joint BDC and registered social landlord forum is being launched as part of the Healthy Housing Strategy and the BDC support offered to ECH will be extended to all RSL with housing stock in BDC in 2023.	 Action ongoing/on target
Transport						
Grow electric vehicle network and infrastructure areas						
CC/032 Continue with the installation of electric charging points in the Council's car parks	Carbon Reduction All Council owned car parks fitted with EV charging points. Improved infrastructure and accessibility for customers with EV's using our car parks.	Environment	BDC	Short Term	All BDC car parks now have between 4 and 8 EV chargers installed. 12 of the chargers installed have now been upgraded to fast (22Kwh) chargers.	 Action Completed



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
CC/033 Support ECC to continue to build up the on-street charging infrastructure across our District for electric vehicles	Carbon Reduction Improved infrastructure and accessibility for electric vehicle charging	Environment	District	Medium Term	ECC has submitted a bid (LEVI) to central government for funding to improve the on-street EV charger infrastructure. BDC is supporting ECC by promoting their EV Charger webpage which includes a link for residents to submit suggested locations for on street EV chargers to be installed.	 Action ongoing/on target
Improve digital connectivity to reduce travel demand						
DC/21/003/C Work with partners to improve the digital connectivity across the District enabling people to work from home more and travel less	Increase coverage across the District and work with digital suppliers to achieve digital connectivity in any gaps.	Economic Growth	District	Short Term	98 % of the district now has access to superfast broadband.	 Action complete
Increase cycling and walking in the District						
CC/035 Continue to work with LiveWell partners to encourage people to get active and walk more	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase active travel Reduce car journeys Reduce CO2 emissions from travel	Housing & Communities	District	Ongoing	“Walk More” promoting has been ongoing. There are now 38 regular monthly walks being held as well as ‘pop up walks’ around the district. A volunteering network is being created to arrange and support these walks in the future. Residents are being signposted from the Provide Weight matters sessions to their local community walking groups.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/036 In partnership with Essex County Council, consider pilot school street schemes to reduce the number of vehicles travelling into school streets during school drop off and pick up times	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduce congestion around schools Reduce car journeys to and from school Reduce CO2 emissions from travel Increase cycling and walking opportunities	Planning	BDC	Short Term	A pilot healthy school street scheme has been installed in Braintree along Lancaster Way and Gilcrest Road. The pavement has been resurfaced to make active travel easier. In addition, 20mph signs and thermoplastic road signs (Children Crossing Warning) have been erected, road markings refreshed, and temporary street art painted on the road to change the look and feel of the street. Any further school street schemes will be reported under a new project reference.	 Action Complete




Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
ED/21/005/C Working in partnership, deliver the actions of our cycling strategy and promote walking and cycling throughout the District	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase cycling across the District	Economic Growth	BDC	Short Term	The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Braintree town and Witham and environs have commenced. BDC are working closely with ECC to implement the ATF cycle scheme in Braintree town. Staged implementation has started with 20mph zones and school streets. Cycling promotional videos have been produced. Cycle Videos promoted via Facebook reached 18,125 residents.	 Action ongoing/on target
Encourage greener transport choices						
CC/038 Continue with campaigns to reduce engine idling targeting specific high traffic areas	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduction in CO2 emissions Improvement in air quality	Marketing & Communications	District	Ongoing	A funding bid to DEFRA for Lot 1 failed in its eligibility on the basis that BDC does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). A targeted anti-idling campaign is included in the comms plan for 2023/24.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/039 Review the Councils Travel Plan to ensure it continues to promote sustainable travel to staff	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduction in fuel costs Reduction in journeys	Environment	BDC	Short Term	BDC has reviewed the Council's Green Travel Plan. As a result of this review ECC has accredited BDC with a Green Travel Accreditation Award.	 Action Completed
CC/040 Consider introducing differential parking charges in council owned car parks for low emission vehicles	Climate behaviour change influencer Encourage use of low emission vehicles	Operations	BDC	Short Term	As part of a recent parking charge review differential parking charges were considered for low emission vehicles however standard tariffs were applied for consistency across all users and car parks.	 Action Complete
CC/041 Work with Essex County Council to improve the quality and availability of low carbon public transport	Carbon Reduction Increase in use of more sustainable travel options Reduces CO2 emissions from public transport	Environment	District	Medium Term	ECC has launched DigiGo. BDC Comms have been supporting the use of the DigiGo bus service by actively responding to queries regarding this on both direct and indirect social media channels.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/042 Review the Council's Driver and Vehicle Standards and Policies to create a greener fleet of taxis in the District	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions from taxi fleet and pollution Reduction in fuel costs from taxi fleet.	Environment	District	Medium Term	Data has been collated in relation to baselining the current vehicle types across the Taxi and private hire fleet. Discussions have been held with the industry forum to understand the industry constraints such as the current market limitations on the availability and supply of electric or hybrid wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVS).	 Action delayed (recommend er review of the KPI and





Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
					<p>A review of the current Taxi Licensing Policy is in progress. <i>A recommendation is made that the associated KPI for this action is reviewed to take into account the licensed private hire fleet and to ensure that WAVS are not discouraged – the suggested amended activity indicator is : Number of taxis and private hire vehicles that are fuelled by electric or alternative fuels</i></p> <p>(Should BDC currently pursue an 100% electric taxi fleet it will reduce the WAVS available in the fleet due to the current lack of electric vehicles capable of accepting wheelchairs available to the industry.)</p>	associated timescale)

Business and the Green Economy

Developing the Green Economy

ED/21/009/C Work with Essex County Council and other service providers to identify opportunities to develop low carbon skills, education, training and employment opportunities and support ECC Centre of Excellence.	Increase employability of our residents in the green economy and advanced manufacturing to help improve the productivity in the production of goods and services that support the sustainable agenda Attract new business in the green economy and encourage green sector companies to cluster in the North Essex local economy Increase overall awareness of climate change issues and how to tackle them	Economic Growth	BDC	Short Term	<p>A business consultation has been completed to identify the skills gaps in businesses and the current provisions local business are already using to fill these gaps. This will inform what courses and skills are required to provide the greatest impact on local businesses.</p> <p>Promotion of the Essex Retrofit Academy in ongoing. Currently the business uptake of the fully funded courses from within Essex is not as strong as the uptake from business from other areas of the Country.</p>	 Action ongoing (Adjusted to a medium term project.
ED/21/009C Work with partners to maximise the impact that that I-Construct brings to the construction sector and its	Reduced carbon from construction process and new developments	Planning / Economic Growth	BDC	Long Term	This project has not yet started	



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
supply chain, championing modern design and construction methods	Increased sustainability in design of new buildings Develop our green economy					Action ongoing/on target (deadline for completion if 2030)
CC/045 Work with landowners, DEFRA and ECC to encourage sustainable land stewardship practices on land across the District, including rewilding and tree planting.	Biodiversity increaser Increase awareness and consideration of Climate Change issues for those developing Neighbourhood Plans	Environment	District	Long Term	BDC is working with ECC and the newly formed North Essex Farming Cluster to pilot sustainable land stewardship schemes such as Agroforestry in ECC's Climate Focus Area which covers 68% of the district. A trial of rewilding verges has been completed. Several parish councils have expressed an interest to extend rewilding of verges in their parishes in 23/24.	 Action ongoing/on target
Encourage businesses to reduce waste						
CC/046 Improve engagement and communication with businesses within the District to improve their participation in recycling and waste minimisation, including working with manufacturers to support the reduction of packaging and make products more re-usable and recyclable	Carbon Reduction	Economic Growth	BDC	Short Term	A "green" business feature is now included in the business newsletter. This provides information on business that have successfully adopted environmental and sustainable business practices. These articles also promote LoCASE funding. In January 2023 Government updated the legislation on "Producer Responsibility" for packaging waste. This is new legislation aimed at reducing packaging waste by making those that package goods more accountable for the amount of packaging waste used in their products. BDC will be promoting guidance to local businesses to ensure those that are involved understand and comply with the new legislation. This legislates a reduction in packaging and re-usable/recyclable products.	 Action Complete
Encourage businesses to reduce energy use						
CC/048 Continue to encourage businesses to switch to ECO heating and reduce energy use	Carbon Reduction Increase in the number of referrals to support and take up of funding.	Economic Growth / Environment	District	Ongoing	BDC is working with the Federation of Small Businesses to provide information on eco heating to businesses. Green Business features have been published promoting light saving measures as well as switching to LED	

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
	Reduction in energy use				lighting. Information on solar energy for businesses has also been issued. The LoCase grant funding was promoted and 91 Braintree district businesses engaged (this was in the top 3 in Essex for performance). 15 grants were allocated which resulted in 81.39 tonnes of CO2 saved; 11.5 jobs created and £89,911.11 grant funding allocated.	Action ongoing/on target
CC/049 Continue to promote carbon footprint tools to businesses	Climate behaviour change influencer Improvements identified and implemented by businesses to reduce carbon impact	Economic Growth / Environment	District	Ongoing	The Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) have now received funding via Braintree (through the Shared Prosperity Fund) to provide fully funded Sustainability and Carbon Foot Printing courses to Braintree district businesses. Promotion of these courses began in January 2023.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/050 Provide support to businesses across the District on the development and implementation of green travel plans	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase in number of businesses implementing a green travel plan Reduction in CO2 emissions from travel	Economic Growth	District	Ongoing	A presentation was given by the green travel plan team at ECC to businesses on Springwood Drive at an event in February with follow up email sent to all businesses, making them fully aware of all the services on offer and encouraging them to get in touch to get support.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/051 Introduce a Climate Change/Green Environmental Accreditation Scheme or Business Award scheme to recognise and showcase initiatives that can be adopted as best practice and to encourage businesses to become carbon neutral.	Developing the Green Economy Increase awareness of opportunities to become carbon neutral Increased sharing and recognition of best practice across businesses	Economic Growth / Environment	BDC	Medium Term	ECC is introducing an Environmental Accreditation Scheme. (Good Start Levels 1-3). Due to the established Business Network and interest of some environmental advanced businesses already case studied in Braintree district ECC working with BDC will be piloting the accreditation scheme in the district.	 Action ongoing/on target
Encourage businesses to build resilience						
CC/052 Collaborate with the voluntary sector and business sector across Essex to share learning, data, best practice and, to look at joint initiatives to tackle climate change	Developing the Green Economy Successfully sharing knowledge and resources to increase our opportunities to collaborate for grant funding	Economic Growth	BDC	Ongoing	Information on the Essex Climate Commission £20k Climate Action fund has been shared with several parties. (This fund has now closed.) A grants list for Climate Change community projects has been created and shared locally. Information on joint initiatives, best practice examples. presentations and best practice visits have been	 Action ongoing/on target




Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
	Reduction in carbon impact of businesses and voluntary organisations				presented to the cross party working group to inform future initiatives and actions.	

Natural Environment

Improve biodiversity and green spaces

CC/053 Continue to deliver campaigns to support a reduction in littering and fly-tipping	Reduction in fly-tips Reduction in littering Cleaner District	Operations / Marketing & Communications	District	Ongoing	<p>BDC is one of 11 Essex Authorities that form the "Cleaner Essex Group". This year's Love Essex campaign will be targeting road littering with the slogan, <i>"It's for driving on, not littering on"</i>, and highlights the consequences offenders who are caught throwing litter from a vehicle will face (Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £150 and up to £2,500, plus costs upon Court conviction.) Local business partners will be supporting the campaign, by displaying banners at 23 KFC and 25 McDonald's drive-through restaurants in Essex with the message "It's a takeaway not a throwaway", as well as distributing stickers on packaging and posters in the restaurants.</p> <p>BDC has an on-going social media messages campaign to tackle litter – <i>"bin it or take it home."</i></p> <p>There are now over 500 Green Heart Champions and their work is celebrated through a dedicated social media channel.</p> <p>Increased social media coverage begins in July onwards for the duration of the school holiday period encouraging school holiday litter picks</p> <p>(Please see Comms Annual Update Report)</p>	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/054 Complete our trial of alternative weed control methods other than the use of chemicals in Council operations that are more sustainable and environmentally friendly	Biodiversity increaser Trial completed evaluating relevant alternative methods of weed control introduced.	Operations	BDC	Short Term	<p>BDC will continue to use Glyphosate as being the most cost efficient and effective method of weed control however, reliance has significantly reduced in favour of more sustainable methods as part of the Council's Integrated Weed Control Management Programme that includes, mulching, weed scrubber etc.</p>	 Action Complete

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
	Reduce environmental impact of weed control					
CC/055 Develop a Local Nature Recovery Plan to identify actions needed to restore declining species and habitats	Biodiversity increaser Plan established to address the practical actions needed to restore declining species and habitats and a healthy natural environment where our plants and animals can thrive	Planning	BDC	Short Term	Essex County Council are the responsible authority for delivering a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. A local nature partnership has been set up to undertake the work and stakeholders from across Essex are engaged. The strategy has been delayed due to a delay in government guidance but the working group stands ready to produce the plan as quickly as possible	✔ Action Complete
CC/056 Plant wildflower areas across the District, including mixture of ornamental and native wildflowers and areas which are left with minimal maintenance to increase bio-diversity.	Biodiversity increaser Increase biodiversity Improve attractiveness of District	Operations	District	Short Term	<p>Scheme 1 – Naturalisation/whip & Bulb planting/drought resistant planting – areas identified by BDC Staff.</p> <p>In Halstead BDC have removed 2 bedding areas (Mount Hill and Halstead Cemetery) and the areas have been naturalised.</p> <p>In Halstead Public Gardens BDC have removed bedding in the bed next to the Pond and replaced with a sustainable planting scheme.</p> <p>The next areas for Sustainable Planting are programmed for Autumn 23 and included :</p> <p>Braintree Cemetary removal of the front bedding area, Braintree Leahurst (opposite St Michael's Fountain) the removal of front bedding from 6 beds and replace with Sustainable Planting schemes.</p> <p>Scheme 2 – Rewilding of BDC open space as suggested by Town/Parish Councils</p> <p>Rivenhall Parish Council have made contact with Essex Wildlife Trust for guidance on rewilding in their area. Castle Hedingham Parish Council are working with Essex Wildlife Trust from January 23. Rivenhall PC, Castle Hedingham PC and Hatfield Peveral PC have all formed working groups to further this action.</p> <p>Scheme 3 Wild seeding of ECC rural verges as</p>	✔ Action Complete



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
					<p>suggested by Town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>BDC have received the license application from Rivenhall Parish Council which will be forwarded to ECC for approval.</p> <p>Scheme 4 – Tree Planting/Soil Bunds in BDC owned areas</p> <p>A soil bund on Mary Ruch Way/Hadfield Drive Black Notley has been started. BDC are currently awaiting confirmation of approval and funding for tree planting on behalf of Braintree Civic Society.</p>	
CC/057 Reduce the number of cuts to rural verges across the District (Subject to outcome of recent trials)	Biodiversity increaser Increase biodiversity Improve attractiveness of District	Operations	BDC	Short Term	A single cut to rural verges was agreed by JET in April 2022 and will be implemented for the next 3 years whilst ECC complete a long term eco monitor/evaluation.	 Action Complete
CC/058 Work with ECC and Housing Associations to increase biodiversity by reviewing maintenance regimes, refine grass cutting, consider more sustainable planting schemes consistent with the highest biodiversity standards and promote rewilding/naturalisation of areas.	Biodiversity increaser Increase biodiversity Improve attractiveness of District	Environment	District	Short Term	<p>BDC is in discussion with Eastlight regarding funding community gardens and community orchards on Eastlight managed land.</p> <p>Eastlight have published their Sustainability Strategy 2022-27 which provides for reduced energy and Carbon emissions, improved water efficiency, enhanced biodiversity diversity in their housing stock, and improved waste and recycling from their housing stocks. BDC is working with Eastlight to support their delivery plan for example working in partnership to receive grant funding for energy efficiency measures. A Registered Social Landlord forum is being established in 23/24 to foster better communication with all RSLs working in the district and BDC's support will be extended to all RSLs once the forum is established.</p>	 Action ongoing (Recommendation is to adjust this project to a medium term project as further collaboration work is ongoing)
CC/059 Explore opportunities to use council owned land to develop community orchards and community gardens (to grow veg or fruit)	Biodiversity increaser Increase biodiversity Improve attractiveness of District	Environment	BDC	Medium Term	Under the Shared Prosperity Fund Year 1, £15k has been allocated between Bures, Castle Hedingham and Steeple Bumpstead equally for community garden projects. Further community garden projects shall be supported in 2023-24.	 Action ongoing/on target

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
	Increase opportunities for communities to grow fruit and veg Increase community engagement in enhancement of local areas					
Improve air quality						
CC/060 Review our current air quality monitoring to ensure that it continues to monitor high risk pollutants and locations and take appropriate action	Climate effect mitigation Ensure continued effectiveness of air quality monitoring	Environment	BDC	Short Term	An external review of the districts Air Quality monitoring Methodology has been commissioned and is in progress. The Annual Air Quality monitoring readings have been submitted to DEFRA – no declaration of an air quality management area is required. (Recommendations made in the review will be opened as a new Action)	✔ Action Complete
Increase tree and shrub planting						
CC/061 Develop a community tree and bulb planting scheme to support community groups, town and parish councils to increase tree and bulb planting across the District	Biodiversity increaser Increase the number of trees and shrubs planted across the district Increase engagement from communities in the local area Increase publicly accessible woodland	Environment	District	Short Term	A community whip and bulb planting project was undertaken in 2021-22. Tree whips (18,700) and bulbs (73,000) were offered to residents from October 2021 and were planted over the following six months. Further partnership opportunities for community tree planting are being investigated.	✔ Action Complete
CC/062 Identify opportunities to plant trees on Council owned land	Carbon Reduction Increase the number of trees and shrubs planted across the District on Council land Increase publicly accessible woodland	Environment	BDC	Short Term	The tree canopy survey which is underway with consultants Treeconomics shall support BDC with identifying opportunities for further tree planting. 4,500 trees have been planted.	✔ Action Complete
Improve water quality, flood resilience and habitat						
CC/063 Work with the Environment Agency/Anglia/Essex Suffolk on the	Biodiversity increaser Improve water quality	Environment	District	Medium Term	Partnership links have been strengthened with Anglian Water, Essex & Suffolk Water, Environment Agency, Natural England,	▶


Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
management of watercourses to enhance their flow and storage capacity and deliver wider biodiversity benefits	Improve biodiversity Reduce flooding				Essex Rivers Hub, NFU and local landowners and there is strong appetite to work in collaboration on projects including the engagement of residents with citizen science projects to support these organisations in water quality improvement project work.	Action ongoing/on target




Adapting to Climate Change





Support communities to improve resilience

CC/064 Continue to provide advice for residents on how to reduce health risks during severe weather events such as heatwaves/extreme cold	Climate effect mitigation Increased accessible information available to residents on health risks from climate change Increased resilience of communities to climate change	Environment	District	Ongoing	Advice for residents was provided for Storm Eunice and also the summer heatwave via our 'Beat the Heat' campaign. In preparation for winter "Don't Wait for Winter" and "Dampness in your home" leaflets have been promoted. BDC's "Warm Spaces" map is also available for residents.	 Action ongoing/on target
CC/065 Work with Town and Parish Councils to develop their emergency plans, ensuring the plans reflect the changing risks of their communities	Climate effect mitigation Increase in number of Parish and Town Council with Emergency plans developed. Successful collaboration on climate emergency related areas of work Increased resilience to climate change impacts in our communities	Environment	District	Ongoing	BDC commenced engaging and supporting Town and Parish Council's with updating and developing their emergency plans October 22. This is enacted annually. This engagement concluded at the end of February 23 and final plans are in the process of being received by BDC's Corporate Resilience Officer. The information within the plans will be used to update BDC's own emergency response plans with local resilience measures.	 Action ongoing/on target

Improve flood alleviation for communities that flood

CC/066 Work with Essex County Council and other partners to manage climate change-related flood risks and mitigate the number of homes and businesses across	Climate effect mitigation Reduction in flood risk	Environment	District	Ongoing	BDC is an active member of the Essex Flood Board and the Essex Resilience Forum. A commitment was received in 22/23 for surface water drainage improvements to be made to	
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Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
the District that are exposed to the risk of flooding	Increased resilience in communities to impacts of climate change				Halstead Town Centre. Initial improvement work was undertaken in Autumn 2022.	Action ongoing/on target
CC/07 Lobby Government to increase the funding available for flood risk management to meet the growing need for action especially around surface water flooding	Climate effect mitigation Reduction in flood risk Increased resilience in communities to impacts of climate change	Environment	District	Short Term	BDC are an active member of the Essex Flood Partnership Board which lobbies for funding from government and through Utility Company Funding Grants. BDC has lobbied central government and the insurance industry to extend Floodre to include insurance support for business who are at higher risk of flooding. BDC has promoted the Property Level Flood Grant for those properties that suffer from repeated flooding. It is recommended that this become a long term action.	 Action ongoing (Recommendation is to adjust the timescale from short term to ongoing)
CC/068 Work with partners to open up main rivers and create wetlands, natural flood defences and urban drainage, as supported by the Local Plan and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document	Biodiversity increaser Improve water quality Improve biodiversity Reduce flooding	Planning	District	Short Term	The Hoppit Mead back-channel clearance project on the Brain has been completed to create a nature-based flood management solution. There is ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this flood system. It is recommended that this become a long term action.	 Action ongoing (Recommendation is to adjust the timescale from short term to ongoing)
Increase drought mitigation for the district						
CC/069 Ensure that planting in open space owned or managed by the council is drought resistant and requires less watering	Climate effect mitigation Increase sustainability of planting schemes and resilience to climate change impacts Reduce use of water	Operations	BDC	Short Term	Planting that is drought resistant is now considered for all new planting projects. Drought resistant planting schemes have been installed as part of the cc/056	 Action completed



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
Maintain emergency plans for the district						
CC/070 Update the Councils Climate impact risk assessment and integrate risk mitigation into service business plans	Climate effect mitigation Effective emergency plan to respond to risks	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Climate Risk is included in the Council's strategic risk register. Emergency plans are constantly under review with the Essex Resilience Forum. Emerging climate risks are monitored as part of the work undertaken by the "Risk and Intelligence Group" within the Forum. The Met Office and Environment Agency are part of the ERF and the Risk and Intelligence Group.	 Action completed
CC/071 A Regularly review and test the Council's emergency plans	Climate effect mitigation Effective emergency plan to respond to risks	Environment	BDC	Short Term	The review of The Council's emergency plan has been completed for 2022-23. The next review is due in 2025-26.	 Action Completed
CC/071 Work with Essex Resilience Forum (ERF) and other partners to review and test plans and respond to emergencies	Climate effect mitigation Effective emergency plan to respond to risks	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Work with ERF is standard practice for The Council and Climate Change risks are now part of standard practice with regards to emergency response. Regular meetings are attended with the ERF.	 Action Completed
Prevent the impacts of climate change disproportionately harming the most vulnerable						
CC/073 Monitor and seek to mitigate emerging risks and their impact on vulnerable people in the community with ERF partners	Climate effect mitigation Increased resilience of communities to climate change impacts	Environment	District	Ongoing	The ERF has a "Risk and Intelligence Group" that meets regularly to review emerging risks and their possible impact on Essex communities. The ERF members have invested in an electronic "Vulnerable Intelligent Person Emergency Response" (VIPER) system that can be accessed in an emergency event to identify vulnerable residents that may need assistance. As part of the annual review of Town and Parish Council emergency plans BDC requests that Town and Parish Council's identify vulnerable locations that may need support in the event of an emergency.	 Action ongoing/on target


Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status

Delivery and Monitoring

Support communities to improve resilience

Validate our action plan in respect of current actions and look to strengthen the medium term and longer term actions	Action plan receives external validation on the actions it is taking to achieve net zero and the support it is providing across the District to residents, communities and businesses.	Environment	BDC	Short Term	The actions within this first Climate Action Plan have been investigated for viability and impact. Some actions were closed after investigation as deemed not viable. Other actions have been found to need a longer timescale for completion and recommendations have been made in the action plan progress highlights within this document for this.	 Action Completed
Create a communication plan to promote and raise awareness of the Climate Change strategy and action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan developed. • Monitoring and reporting plan developed and timetable for reporting on progress established. 	Environment	BDC	Short Term	<p>A communication plan was completed and quarterly communication and engagement reports have been completed.</p> <p>The Climate Communication Plan will be updated as part of the Annual Business Plan process for 23/24</p>	 Action Completed
Develop a monitoring and reporting plan to track the progress of the action plan	Providing regular updates on progress against our actions	Environment	BDC	Short Term	<p>The Climate Change Action Plan is monitored by The Council's Pentana performance reporting system. Lead services update their reporting on a monthly or quarterly basis dependent on the timescale allocated to their project. Monthly Progress Highlight Reports are generated for every action and a Climate Change Quarterly Report is included for Management Board.</p> <p>(This process was approved by full council)</p>	 Action Completed
Collaborate with other Authorities across Essex to share learning, data, best practice and, increase access to	Successfully sharing knowledge and resources to increase	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Strong links have been developed further with Essex County Council to allow The Council to deliver projects in partnership. Links and working meetings have been	

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
grant funding bids for environmental projects	our opportunities to collaborate • Increase access and opportunities for grant funding				held with other local authorities in Essex as well as nationally (for example through LGA Climate Change events) to share best practice. BDC is an active member of CORE – the Officer Climate forum for Essex Local Authorities.	Action Completed (recommended that the timescale is adjusted to Ongoing)
Develop a sustainability and carbon reduction tool to assess the environmental impact on projects undertaken by the Council	Due consideration given of the environmental impacts and/or carbon emissions from projects and how they can be reduced. • Overall Council emissions reduced	Environment	BDC	Short Term	BDC worked with the Carbon Trust to develop an organisation carbon calculation tool. As part of the launch of the LGA Climate Change Hub additional tools are now available for BDC to use.	 Action Completed
Support national campaigns and use these to promote our campaigns and take action where we can to increase engagement	Align to national days of action to reinforce the message of collective action	Environment	BDC	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean 2022 • Love Your Park • National Recycle Week (October 22) comms supporting Recycle Now. • Food Waste Reduction Week (Wrap) • Love Food Hate Waste campaigns including Christmas food planning (Wrap) • Love Food Hate Waste - eating seasonally (May 22) • May 22 - The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday (tree planting (march 22) and sustainable street parties, party waste etc) • Compost Awareness Week • COP • The Fields in Trust UK's Favourite Parks 2022 • Comms of the Government announcement on single use plastic. (Jan 2023) • Project Blueprint (Five Ways to Use Up Scraps and Leftovers) • National Earth Day • World Environment Day 	 Action Completed

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Progress Made	Status
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Kitche app. Promotion of Freegle <p>This work is considered ongoing as part of the Climate Actions Plan's Annual Communication Plan</p>	
Ensure relevant internal strategies and policy documents are reviewed and amended to embed the work of the Council in its commitment to tackling climate change	• All strategies and policies are reviewed and updated to take climate change impacts into account	Environment	BDC	Medium Term	<p>BDC is in the process of developing an internal Sharepoint site that will provide information to Service Unit Managers that are reviewing or writing strategies/policies on how to take climate impact into account.</p> <p>This will be launched in 2023/24</p>	 <p>Action ongoing/on target</p>

Actions Added to the Climate Action plan in year 2023/2024

Revised Timescale definition

Short Term – 2023 to 2025

Medium Term – 2023 to 2027

Long Term – 2023 to 2030

Ongoing – Actions that will continue through the life of the strategy

New actions will be categorised by the existing 7 themes



Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
Develop an internal Climate Change SharePoint communication site	Climate Change Behaviour Change Influencer Improved consideration of and collaboration with climate change issues across all services, projects and policies Improved access to partnership opportunities, funding streams and data collection	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Percentage of staff trained on Climate Change Increased traffic to communication site over period to March 2024
Create and launch revised Climate Change pages to The Council's website	Climate Change Behaviour Change Influencer Increase awareness of climate change issues Improved access to partnership support	ICT	District	Short Term	Activity Indicator: Reduction in carbon emissions for district Climate Change Website pages launched by March 2024 Number of visits to site / pages Number of newsfeeds
Identify opportunities across the Council's assets for water reduction	Carbon Reducer Reduction in the use of water	Environment	BDC	Medium Term	Reduction in the use of water Reported annually
Investigate opportunities to reduce paper and printing use across internal and external communications	Carbon Reduction Reduction in the use of carbon used by printing resources	Marketing & Communications	BDC	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon Reduction in the number of MFDs across BDC Offices

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
	Biodiversity increaser				
Complete a baseline audit of all meters (water, electric and gas) across the entire BDC property portfolio to investigate opportunities of resource efficiency	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment / Assets	BDC	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Meters audited and information logged Target: 100% (All meters audited)
Deliver the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 Scheme in off gas areas to improve energy efficiency	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment/ Comms	District	Short Term	Number of Household Energy Grants issued Target: 200
Promote The Energy Company Obligation Scheme (ECO4) and ECO Flex scheme offering energy efficiency measures	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	District	Ongoing	Number of energy efficiency referrals Target: 60
Work in partnership with iChoosr to deliver the Essex Energy Switching Scheme by holding auctions	Climate Change Behaviour Change Influencer (supports Cost of Living Crisis)	Environment	District	Ongoing	Number of Registrations made for each auction Target: 500
In partnership with Groundworks, deliver the extended Green Doctor Service, advising residents on energy efficiency	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment/ Comms	District	Short Term	
Commission street lighting repair contract to included LED replacement (including Halstead Public Gardens)	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Percentage of BDC managed public lighting switched to LED Target 100% Currently at 76%

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
Investigate the use of Carbon Neutral laptops, and alternative equipment disposal / recycling schemes	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	ICT	BDC	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Feasibility study conducted The % Increase in the use of carbon neutral equipment at BDC The % Increase in the recycling of ICT equipment
Conduct an energy efficiency audit of all BDC buildings and investigate additional opportunities for renewable energy installations	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment / Assets	BDC	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Number of BDC buildings audited for energy efficiency Target: 100%
Deliver Solar Together scheme to support the installation of solar energy in residential and business premises	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment/ Comms	District	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Number of registrations Target: 500 per auction Target 20% installation rate
Increase renewable energy and fuel security for the Council and across the district by developing opportunities for renewable energy schemes with public/private sector partners	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	BDC	Long Term	Percentage of council energy derived from renewable/green sources Target: 100% Currently at 6%
Offer advice to parish councils and community groups wishing to invest in solar	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	District	Ongoing	Reduction in carbon emissions Number of town and parish councils contacted Target: 100% Number of town and parish councils supported Target: 3 per year
Investigate introducing solar canopies across the car park at The Plaza	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	BDC	Short Term	Percentage of council energy derived from renewable/green sources Target: 100% Currently at 6%

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
Support registered social landlords in developing a Climate Strategy and delivering Climate Action Plans	Carbon Reduction Reduction in CO2 emissions Reduced cost of energy consumption	Environment	District	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Number of registered social landlords approached by March 2024 Target: 24
Work with partners to encourage residents and businesses to reduce their water use	Carbon Reducer	Environment & Ec Growth	District	Ongoing	Reduction in the use of water Reported annually No of campaigns, No of enquiries, water consumption audit
Support the Community with grants from community infrastructure projects to reduce carbon emissions funded by the UK SPF	Carbon Reduction Reduces CO2 emissions from community buildings Reduced cost of energy for community groups	Environment	District	Medium Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Number of community groups supported with carbon reduction installations Delivered in 2024-25 Target: 10 projects supported at £10k each
Install electric rapid charging points in the Council's car parks and continue to install additional chargers in BDC assets	Carbon Reduction Improved infrastructure and accessibility for electric vehicle charging	Environment	BDC	Medium Term	Number of EV charging points in Council owned car parks Target: all BDC public car parks have rapid EV infrastructure
Complete a feasibility study for installing rapid EV charging points in all of the taxi ranks in the district	Carbon Reduction Improved infrastructure and accessibility for electric vehicle charging	Environment	District	Short Term	Feasibility study completed <i>Potential future project for 24-25 with the KPI:</i> <i>(Number of taxi ranks with on-street EV chargers</i> <i>Annual Update on Number</i> <i>Currently at 0)</i>
Explore the opportunities around a EV salary sacrifice leasing scheme for staff.	Carbon Reduction Improved infrastructure and accessibility for electric vehicles	Human Resources	BDC	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Feasibility study completed <i>Potential future project for 24-25 with the KPI:</i>

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
					<i>Number of staff BDC have supported via the scheme Currently at 0)</i>
Investigate working in partnership with DigiGo to improve EV charging infrastructure for the electric bus network	Carbon Reduction Improved infrastructure and accessibility for electric vehicle charging	Environment	District	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emission Feasibility study to be completed
Produce an LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) for Witham and environs	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase active travel Reduce car journeys Reduce CO2 emissions from travel	Economic Growth	District	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Produce and adopt LCWIP
Engage with ECC on Braintree LCWIPs (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan)	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase active travel Reduce car journeys Reduce CO2 emissions from travel	Economic Growth	District	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Produce and adopt LCWIP
Partner with ECC on the proposal for a County wide LCWIPs (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan)	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase active travel Reduce car journeys Reduce CO2 emissions from travel	Economic Growth	District	Short Term	Data collected on Braintree district's physical involvement with the county-wide LCWIP
Engage with staff to support the Staff Green Travel Plan	Climate behaviour change influencer Increase active travel Reduce car journeys	Environment	BDC		1. Number of staff awareness and engagement sessions Target: 3 2. Publication of results from Staff Green Travel Survey 3. Green Travel Plan Accreditation Award

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
	Reduce CO2 emissions from travel				
Investigate an e-scooter scheme	Climate behaviour change influencer Reduction in CO2 emissions Improvement in air quality	Economic Growth	District	Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions Feasibility study to be completed
Introduce the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain Legislation (<i>for major applications Nov 23 for minor applications by Apr 24</i>) newly added as reword suggested from Planning	Biodiversity Increaser Increase biodiversity Decrease the impact of construction on local nature sites	Planning	District	Short Term	No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030 No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030
Use the findings of the tree canopy survey to inform the future Tree Strategy	Biodiversity Increaser	Planning	District	Medium term	Tree Canopy Cover Increase Target: Revised Tree Strategy published and adopted
Use the findings of the tree canopy survey to 1) inform tree planting projects 2) assist ECC with their sustainable stewardship in the Climate Focus Area 3) protect existing tree canopy 4) use the baseline data to support partnership groups such as water companies and the North Essex Farm Cluster with their environmental stewardship projects	Biodiversity Increaser	Planning	District	Medium term	No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030 Total number of projects (This will be a combined number from ECC, BDC and other partner organisations.)
With the support of ECC, produce soil carbon and biodiversity potential maps for the district	Biodiversity Increaser	Planning & Environment	District	Medium Term	No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030 Total number of projects (This will be a combined number from ECC, BDC and other partner organisations.) Soil carbon GIS data sets

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
					Biodiversity GIS data sets
As a supporting authority, support Essex County Council with the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Biodiversity Increaser	Planning	District	Medium Term	No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030 Total number of projects (This will be a combined number from ECC, BDC and other partner organisations.) LNRS published
Work with Partners to support raising the profile of maintenance / caring for waterways bisecting the district with residents	Biodiversity Increaser Species protection Access to baseline data to develop improved water quality Improved public engagement for waterway	Environment Marketing & Comms	District	Ongoing	No of Projects implemented that will improve biodiversity in the District by 2030 Total number of projects (This will be a combined number from ECC, BDC and other partner organisations.)
Promote and celebrate actions taken by residents, organisations and businesses in addressing Climate Change	Behaviour change influencer	Marketing & Communications	District	Ongoing	Reduction in carbon emissions No of projects to increase biodiversity Identify best practice through case studies Target: 6 annually
Work with the members of the new Youth Panel to give a platform for young people in the district on Climate Change matters	Behaviour Change influencer	Housing & Communities		Short Term	Reduction in carbon emissions No of projects to increase biodiversity Target: 1) Youth Panel established : 2) Priorities for young people recorded 3) Number of young people engaged

Action	Outcome	Lead Service	BDC or District	Timescales	Targets and Performance Indicators / Activity Indicators and how this will be achieved
Work with town and parish councils to advise and support with advising on adapting to Climate Change; declaring a Climate Emergency and writing a Climate Change Action Plan		Environment	BDC	Ongoing	Reduction in carbon emissions No of projects to increase biodiversity Number of town and parish councils contacted Target: 100% Number of parish and town councils supported: 5 annually

Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23

Annual Communication & Engagement Report

APR 2022 – MAR 2023



Climate Change Messaging



Working with the next generation



Gt Bradfords JS invited Braintree District Council to a presentation by pupils about climate change



We are excited to build a fantastic friendship with you! Never in the whole universe was this so vital to save our planet. Mrs Schmit be part of the solution not the pollution. Without you, our planet will be DOOMED. Make the right choice! Our world is being eaten by litter. We deserve a good future. You are the only one that could help us make our bins better. We are looking forward to seeing you.



Climate Change : National Campaigns



- Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean 2022
- Love Your Park
- National Recycle Week (Recycle Now; October 22)
- Food Waste Reduction Week (Wrap)
- Love Food Hate Waste campaigns including Christmas food planning (Wrap)
- Love Food Hate Waste - eating seasonally (May 22)
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday : tree planting; sustainable street parties
- Compost Awareness Week
- COP
- The Fields in Trust UK's Favourite Parks 2022
- Government announcement on single use plastic (Jan 2023)
- Project Blueprint (Five Ways to Use Up Scraps and Leftovers)
- National Earth Day
- World Environment Day
- Promotion of Kitche app
- Promotion of Freegle
- 6211 residents registered to receive the Planning e-newsletter



Contact Magazine (printed edition)

ENVIRONMENT | 7

GO GREEN to make ends meet

1 **Meal Plan**
One of the best ways to prevent food waste and save money is to plan your meals for the week. This means you can go to the shops with a clear list of what you need and not be tempted by special offers and can shop just once or twice a week and resist other items you don't need - helping you save money, save food waste and save fuel!

TOP TIP
If you're short on time, why not batch cook? You can portion up and freeze meals and have something ready when you need it. Batch cooking often results in less energy used.

2 **One person's food waste, is another person's treasure**
There are multiple community fridges throughout the district where shops, restaurants and individuals can leave surplus food that somebody else can take for free. You can swap your items for something else, or simply take or leave something.

Useful apps
Too Good To Go
Business sign up and offer 'magic bags' that usually range from £2.25 of food that is too good to waste such as sandwiches, pastries, salads and meals that would otherwise be thrown away.
OLIO
Neighbours can give away food they won't use such as leftovers, surplus fruit and veg or even items from Too Good To Go bags they don't like.
Nishu
Add your shopping list and scan receipts to track what food you have at home, providing reminders and recommended recipes so that nothing goes to waste! You could save up to £60 a month by preventing food waste.
Did you know?
If you want to get the most out of your fridge, the temperature in your fridge needs to be between 0°C and 8°C.

3 **Leave the car at home for short journeys**
The cost of petrol and diesel is expensive. Active travel such as walking and cycling can help save you money and is great for your health. A brisk 10 minute walk a day can help cut towards your NHS recommended 150 minutes of exercise a week.
Did you know?
Cycling for 20 minutes a day can help you reach your weekly exercise target easily and is a great way to build up your cardiovascular and muscular endurance.
www.essexhighways.org.uk/ safer-green-travel/

4 **Insulate your Home**
There are some simple changes you can make to help insulate your home and prevent heat loss in winter.
• Draught proofing
• Radiator panels
• LED light bulbs
• Water saving shower heads
• Double or triple glazing
• Solar panels
• Hot water systems and lighting.
The Sustainable Warmth Scheme funded by Essex County Council can help towards the cost of these improvements.
www.essex.gov.uk/out-energy-council/sustainable-warmth-scheme
www.braintree.gov.uk/energy

5 **Make do and mend**
Repair Centres are run by volunteers who see fit anything from electricals, computers to bicycles that are no longer working. They are free and usually only ask for a small donation in return.
A Repair Cafe is available at Cornerstone Church in Black Notley, Braintree. If you want to set up a Repair Cafe in your area, you could get funding to help set one up with a Councillor Community Grant. Contact your local councillor for details.
Join the refill revolution
Use a refill shop to simply refill food and household supplies into your own containers to help cut down on plastic and waste. You pay by weight for your supplies which means cheaper prices and only paying for what you need.
Naturally Clean appeal
Essex Council, Essex County Council, Braintree, Braintree CM7 6JH
Essex Refillery
75 High St, Essex CM7 6JH
The Natural Way
82 High St, Braintree CM7 6JH

Useful contacts
Braintree Area Foodbank
01376 330699
www.braintreefoodbank.org.uk
Writton Community Hub
01376 617950
www.writtonhub.co.uk
Essex Essential Living Fund
0202 790 0124
www.essentiallivingfund.org.uk
Essex Wellbeing Service
0202 203 9388
www.essexwellbeing.org.uk
DWP's Debt Management
0800 916 0647
Community support and employment service
01376 332025
www.braintree.gov.uk/community
Citizens Advice
0344 499 4798
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
www.localauthorityadvice-writton.org.uk
Shropshire debt charity
0800 126 1111
www.shropshire.org
National Debtline
0800 800 4000
www.nationaldebtline.org
Samaritans
116 123
www.samaritans.org
Community360
01376 959507
www.community360.org.uk

ENVIRONMENT | 7

Inspiring Climate Action

Jenny Jemison is a local resident whose awareness about the dangers of climate change started 30 years ago. As a technology teacher, Jenny remembers talking to a class of teenagers and showing them a poster produced by Friends of the Earth. The poster showed a globe representing known historical time, with a 24-hour circle. In that 24-hour period, mankind had been on the planet less than 2 minutes, and during that time had 'turned a paradise into a wasteland'.
When Jenny reflects, she believes the image had an immense effect on her and her class, she has very aware of how time is ticking away.
TOAST
The business sources high quality ingredients locally from independent suppliers to cut down on food miles. Any waste is either recycled or turned into 'refuse derived fuel' and is never sent to landfill. The used coffee grounds get another lease of life too, as fertilizer for plants.
TOAST strives to use 100% recycled materials for its packaging and has recently introduced boxes made from recycled cardboard for its delicious baskets.
Together with a range of keep cups and traditional porcelain mugs for sipping and savoring coffee in store, TOAST is on target to reach a goal of only using reusable or recyclable items in their cafes. The next big milestone will be in 2022 when all the coffee lids used will be made from plants.
Did you know?
"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. When I hear someone say, 'Oh well, I can't make a difference', my answer is always, 'Well, believe me you can. No one person can do everything, but we can all do something.'"
Jenny's TIPS
Household cleaning: Use bicarbonate of soda, white vinegar and lemon juice to clean virtually everything. I make a solution or just sprinkle the bicarb over and use water to wipe over with a reusable cloth made from cut up old t-shirts.
Personal: I've changed to shampoo bars and soap as they tend to last longer. From small producers I buy condiments and toppings that do not contain harmful ingredients. For things like shower gel and hair cream, one family member makes our own deodorant.
Saving fuel: I've cut down on car journeys and turn my heating down. These small steps have helped me save money too.
Robert Ely, one of the partners of TOAST said:
"Sustainability is close to my heart and we are always striving to reduce our impact on the planet. We are continuously looking for ways to reduce our carbon footprint - even if it means taking 'tough decisions.'"

ENVIRONMENT | 7

Our green fingered champions

A big thank you to our 450+ Green Heart Champion volunteers for their unwavering support in helping to keep our district clean and tidy.

Michelle Mayes and her children Logan and Sumner are keen litter pickers in Braintree and after seeing others wearing Green Heart Champion high-vis jackets, they enquired about joining the scheme. They regularly share their efforts to inspire others via our dedicated Facebook group.
Michelle said:
"I'm always surprised how much litter is about, you can come out for an hour and easily collect two bags full."
She said they often receive compliments from the public and added: "Recently a lady came out and thanked us for what we were doing and offered us cold drinks. It's lovely to know it is appreciated."
For Michelle, the benefits of being a Green Heart Champion are far reaching. "It helps the community, gets the children out and away from the screens, and gives us something to do together, especially in the holidays."
Mena Barnard and her children Grace and Jamie have been litter picking the Riverhall Park estate in Writton for the past few years.
Mena said: "We try and go out once a week and now we are finding there's very little litter for the children to pick. They have done so well."
Grace and Jamie said they like to litter pick to help the animals and the environment, and used to hate seeing so much litter wherever they went.

ENVIRONMENT | 7

Find out more about becoming a Green Heart Champion:

www.braintree.gov.uk/greenheart 01376 552525 greenunder3@braintree.gov.uk

HOUSING | 15

A new chapter for the future of housing

Section 106
Developers are often required to put new community facilities on their development and also contribute funds, under Section 106 (S106) agreements, to put towards the costs of providing extra community and social infrastructure as a result of the impact of a new development not on their site. These contributions are the responsibility of the relevant authority to spend (for example, highways is Essex County Council and health is the NHS). Whilst Braintree District Council can encourage these authorities to spend their financial contributions, we do not control precisely how or when these other authorities spend them.

Climate change and sustainability are considered for all developments to safeguard our environment, including policies to protect trees and biodiversity, managing flood risk and making homes and buildings more energy and resource efficient.

It also considers issues such as sustainable travel, community facilities, retail, leisure, access to green spaces and play spaces, all of which are critical to creating well designed and functional places for residents. We also include planning policies we use to decide planning applications, and settlement boundaries for our towns and villages to protect green spaces.
Through our planning policies, we require at least 30% of all new built homes to be affordable homes to meet the needs of local people - a good mix of sizes, types and tenures.
Having a Local Plan in place means we have more control over what development is delivered and supports with protecting the district against inappropriate, unsustainable and poorly designed developments.

Earlier this year we adopted our Local Plan which sets out the number of new homes needed, where they should be located and the supporting infrastructure that they need between now and 2033.


www.braintree.gov.uk/localplan2033
Sign up to our free planning email newsletter for the latest news and information: www.braintree.gov.uk/tellmemo


We always welcome feedback on how we can improve our planning services to you. Please do share your feedback via our customer satisfaction survey at the end of the magazine.

Find out more about becoming a Green Heart Champion:
www.braintree.gov.uk/greenheart 01376 552525 greenunder3@braintree.gov.uk

Delivered to all households across the district in mid September 2022 to over 68k

Resources: Reduce Reuse Recycle


 **Give your car a rest and leave the keys at home**
Walking or cycling brings benefits to health and wellbeing, as well as saving you money too. Using public transport is also a good way to reduce your carbon footprint.

 **Save energy and money**
Small changes to your behaviour at home will help you use less energy, cutting your carbon footprint and your energy bills.

- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use
- Replace bulbs with LEDs or low-energy lights
- Turn your heating down a degree or two
- Make simple changes to how you use hot water, like buying a water-efficient shower head

The Energy Saving Trust has lots of great quick tips and a quiz on [How much do you know about saving energy at home?](#)

Energy Saving Trust quick tips

 **Reduce your waste and recycle more**
Wasting food feeds climate change and Love Food Hate Waste has lots of advice on how to be more savvy [with food](#) and [save you money on shopping](#).

Tips on how to make the most of your recycling can be found on the [Recycle Now website](#).

Environment News

Bin and recycling collections will be starting earlier



From tomorrow (Thursday 11 August 2022) our collection crews will be starting earlier than usual, due to the heatwave.

In the interest of health and safety, the early start will help our crews to complete their rounds before the temperature peaks during the day.


Please place your items out for collection the night before your collection date.

For further updates, please keep an eye on our social media and our website.

Thank you for your support.

Service updates




 **Reuse and repair**

There are lots of ways to avoid the just bin it habit. Many things can be repaired and will more likely be cheaper than buying a replacement.


You can also offer the things you don't need, or find something you'd like locally.

Braintree Freecycle, is 'Boldly Battling for more reuse in Braintree!' and has 2,988 current freegiers. Now that's a lot of stuff!

ilovefreecycle

 **Say no to meat and dairy**

Saying 'No' to meat and dairy products is one of the biggest ways you can reduce your environmental impact on the planet. Try replacing it with a substitute one or two extra days a week. Studies suggest that a [high-fibre, plant-based diet is also better for your health](#) - so it's win-win all round.

 **Help to inspire others**

Tell everyone you know what you are doing to save the planet. Don't be shy, share with others about your actions and inspire them to do the same.

Subscribers : 6490 for the Environment, Refuse, Recycling, Street Cleaning and Horticulture News, 61 for Parish News and 8572 for Residents' News
Number of residents registered to receive the Planning e-newsletter is 6211 to date.



FREE home composting online course

Get the skills you need to successfully compost at home provided by the experts at Garden Organic. It's perfect for both newcomers and old hands at composting.

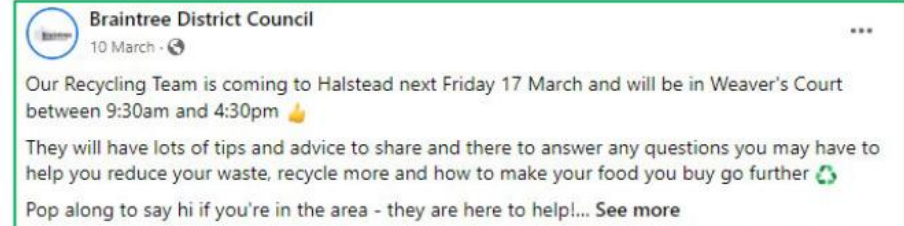
Discover the benefits, techniques and types of home composting, with the help of informative videos and quizzes. Find out the best solution for you to deal with your food and garden waste at home, in the most environmentally friendly way - composting!

You can also purchase a compost bin at a discounted rate.

To find out more



Resources: Reduce Reuse Recycle



Resources: Reduce Reuse Recycle



Promoted via BDC's digital media channels, e-newsletters and vehicle panels for 'Let's recycle right' images



Resources: Reducing Food Waste



New app to help fight against food waste

Kitche it, don't ditch it!
Reduce home food waste and save money!

Kitche is a free app designed to help you save food and money at home. You could save up to £70 per month by preventing food waste. The free and easy app is designed to support you in keeping track of the food you have at home. You can upload your shopping list or scan a recent receipt for starters. Kitche will provide reminders and recipes adapted to you, so you can keep on top of your food - even on the go! Kitche is available for download via the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Let's fight food waste together and help tackle climate change today!

[Download your Kitche app today](#)

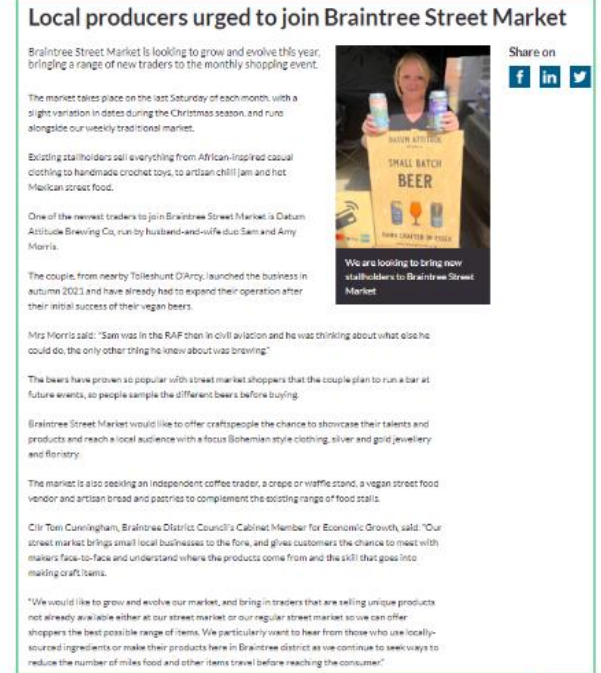


Food Waste Action Week 7 – 13 March 2022

BDC supported WRAP's Love Food Hate Waste national campaign for 2nd year running. Over the campaign week, x9 social media posts with videos posted.




Resources: Shop Local



Energy Conservation

Braintree District Council
18 October 2022

Do you want to manage your energy bills and shrink your carbon footprint?
Government-funded grants through Sustainable Warmth are available to both homeowners and tenants with a household income of less than £30,000 or who are unemployed and receive an income, health, or disability benefit.
Check if you are eligible <https://surveys.est.org.uk/s/SustainableWarmth/>
#... See more



The clock is ticking on FREE home energy efficiency grants.

Check if you're eligible for an energy-efficiency grant. Don't delay, click here and APPLY NOW
Deadline for applications is 31st December 2022

#STAYWARM&SAVE

Braintree District Council
29 October 2022

We could support you manage your energy-efficiency upgrades!
Government-funded Sustainable Warmth grants are designed to support those households most impacted by rising energy bills check if you are eligible <https://surveys.est.org.uk/s/SustainableWarmth/>
#manageyouenergybills #manageyourbills #energywise #energyefficient #energysmart



Don't miss out on your FREE home energy efficiency grant.

Check if you're eligible for an energy-efficiency grant. Don't delay, click here and APPLY NOW
Deadline for applications is 31st December 2022

#STAYWARM&SAVE

Braintree District Council
7 October 2022

Are you a tenant worried about rising energy costs? We could support you manage your energy-efficiency upgrades!
Government-funded Sustainable Warmth grants are designed to support those households most impacted by rising energy bills check if you are eligible <https://surveys.est.org.uk/s/SustainableWarmth/>
#manageyouenergybills #manageyourbills #energywise #energyefficient #energysmart



Are you a tenant worried about rising energy costs?

Check if you're eligible for an energy-efficiency grant. Don't delay, click here and APPLY NOW
Deadline for applications is 31st December 2022

#STAYWARM&SAVE

Supported by Sustainable Warmth





STOP FOOD WASTE
SAVE MONEY
AND WIN AN AIR FRYER!




Kitchen it, don't ditch it!



In partnership with

Braintree District Council
Published by Natalie Sadler · 8 February at 14:46

Are you interested in finding out more about solar panels for your home or business? 
Save money on solar panels through group buying with Solar Together.  
See the link below for further information ... See more



Buying solar panels made easy
Register here today

Essex County Council
7 February at 11:14

Would you like to have solar panels – but don't know where to start?
Registering with Solar Together is easy and uses the power of group buying to get you a c...
See more



Energy Conservation:

Linking into the cost of living crisis and vice versa

Braintree District Council Search Sign up

Your opportunity to shape the future of your district
[Take part in our corporate strategy 2024-28 consultation >](#)

Home > Advice and environment > Energy efficient homes

Energy efficient homes

In this section:

- 1 Grants and funding
- 2 Energy saving measures

Grants and funding

Help with Energy Bills

With rising energy bills, many people are concerned about how they will be able to afford the increase and continue to heat their home.

Braintree District Council
 30 November 2022

Want to get out somewhere warm and welcoming this winter? We have compiled a list and map of all the free or low-cost activities taking place in the district this winter so you can find something near you. <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/.../debt-management-cost.../8>
 #WarmSpacesBraintreeDistrict

octopusenergy

Electric blankets

Doing all we can to keep you warm

EASE THE SQUEEZE

Food waste apps
 such as Too Good to Go and Olio are a good way to get cheap or free food from local businesses to save it going to waste

Slow cookers
 use up to **90% less** energy than an oven

Draught proofing
 letterboxes, gaps under doors and windows helps keep heat in

Take the weight out your car
 Clear the boot, remove roof racks, check tyre pressures

Turn appliances **off standby** and remove chargers when not in use

Community Fridges
 are a great place to pick up or drop off surplus food for others to use

Does your village have a **community oil buying scheme?**
 Buying in bulk is cheaper

Council Services

Struggling to pay council tax?
 Council tax support is available if you're on low income, claim benefits and/or rent from a private landlord or housing association

A major housing grant
 can help with the cost of repairing or installing hot water or heating systems

Food vouchers
 can be obtained from our housing and benefits team, Citizens Advice or other organisations supporting you.

Over 65? Our free Handyman Service
 can help with repairs

A discretionary housing payment
 can help with your housing costs if you receive housing benefits

Sustainable Warmth Grant
 can help towards energy efficient house updates

For more information about the cost of living:
www.braintree.gov.uk/costofliving

To find out more about energy bills:
www.braintree.gov.uk/helpwithenergybills

Braintree District Council

Main display at Causeway House reception

Energy Conservation Don't Wait for Winter campaign



Don't wait for winter

As energy costs are rising, you might be concerned about being able to afford bills over the next few months.

We have put together a comprehensive guide on how to get help with energy bills and how to cope with the high cost of living.

There are simple changes you can make to help your home become more energy efficient, for example switching to LED lightbulbs and switching items off standby.

Slow cookers can use up to 90% less energy and air fryers about 50% less energy than a conventional oven. This could be a great option to save on energy bills.

[Find out more](#)

Braintree District Council
Published by Stacey Cosens · 27 July at 09:00 · 🌐

Our handyman scheme is a free service for residents aged over 65, vulnerable owner/occupiers and private tenants to help keep you safe and well.

They can help with things like radiator bleeding, draught insulation and foil backing.

Contact the Sustainability Team on 01376 552525 for information on criteria and eligibility.

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/advic.../energy-efficient-homes>

#DontWaitForWinter



Built Environment

Braintree's new centre for enterprise and innovation opens in support of small businesses and jobs

"This is a great asset and we're thrilled that it's open for business."

Braintree District Council has invested £2.5 million in enterprise and innovation centre to help support start-ups and small businesses. The official opening was held on 26 May 2022.

The Plaza which is situated on the Horizon 120 business, innovation and agriculture park just off the A131 in Great Notley, was officially opened by Councillor Cllr Helen Parkinson in front of a large gathering.

The new centre will consist of:

- 42 private offices for small businesses
- A co-working space with dedicated desks and hot desks
- Brand meeting and conferencing rooms with refreshments
- Conferences and event space
- Cafe Plaza

During the opening ceremony, Councillors gave an tour of the workspace and event space.

The centre has been designed to help small businesses thrive and grow and will be a place where businesses can get advice and access support and advice to help up knowledge and skills.

The facilities and space and meeting rooms will be best spaces for hosting partners, conferences and networking.

The new Cafe Plaza is a success of the Building for Life in Braintree.

The modern building has been built to address high energy consumption concerns using renewable energy and low carbon materials. The design ensures that the building will be one of the most energy efficient in its class.

Along with Braintree District Council's investment of £2.5 million, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership has invested £1 million in the centre from the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. The centre received the largest funding allocation from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership of any project in Essex.

This investment is expected to create up to 130 new jobs a year.

Businesses interested in the workspace can visit <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/IF>

The Plaza is part of Horizon 120 a 65-acre business, innovation and agriculture park which will create 1000 jobs over the next 10 years.

Braintree District Council

Published by Gwen Balch · 26 May 2022 · 4h

I-Construct, our centre of excellence for construction innovation, held its first major event last week.

Businesses with links to construction joined councillors and organisers for a series of talks, panel discussions and demonstrations at the centre on the Springwood Industrial Estate in Braintree.

The main speakers talked about the impact and success of the I-Construct business support programmes and its plans for the future.

There were several stands showcasing technologies from site monitoring and measurement tools to special cameras which create 3D models and images.

Guests were given a tour of the workspaces within the eco-friendly building and were shown its environmental credentials.

On a day-to-day basis, the team at I-Construct offer one-on-one mentoring, grant schemes and advice to small and medium sized construction companies and their supply chains.

The project is expected to create up to 130 jobs over its 3 year operation.

Read the full story <https://bit.ly/3LNZe3U>

👏 Courtesy of Jonathan Hall at SMARTBrief and Beardwell Construction.

Braintree District Council

25 September 2022 · 4h

We are at The Plaza today for the official opening of the new enterprise centre at Horizon120 which offers co-working space, innovation area, meeting rooms and function suite complete with balcony.

Cafe Plaza is providing delicious refreshments including hand laid biscuits.

We look forward to welcoming representatives from the business community today - and teams, independent workers and entrepreneurs in the weeks and months ahead.

Braintree District Council

9 March · 6h

Councillors recently paid a visit to Horizon 120 – a new employment site which is attracting investment, businesses and jobs.

Horizon 120, a 65-acre employment site just off the A131 in Great Notley, is well on its way to becoming an exemplar business park offering modern, flexible business accommodation, energy efficient buildings and amenities.

Councillors walked the length of the site and were impressed by the level of construction work taking place and the scale of the ... See more



Braintree District Council

27 October 2022 · 4h

A £1m gym redevelopment project at our four leisure centres in Braintree, Hatfield & Witham has begun 🏊

Work will include brand new gyms installed at each site with new, energy efficient equipment. Installed a new layout, lighting, decor and flooring.

We can't wait for you to see! ... See more

Braintree District Council

9 August 2022 · 4h

Last week the Neighbourhood Plan for Kelvedon was adopted 🎉

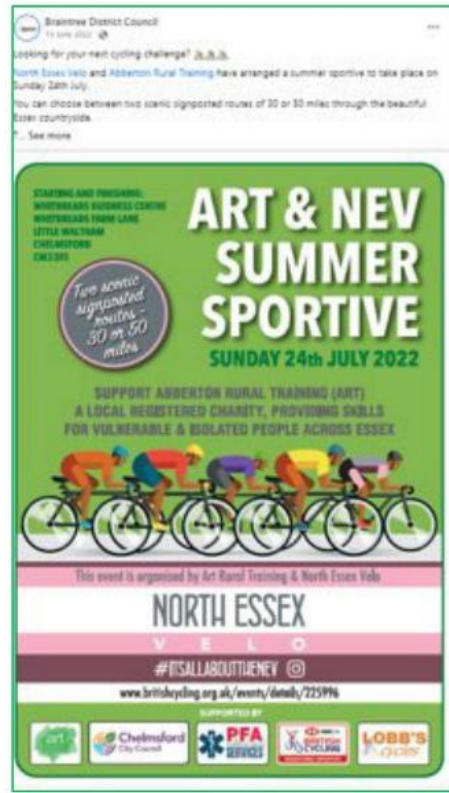
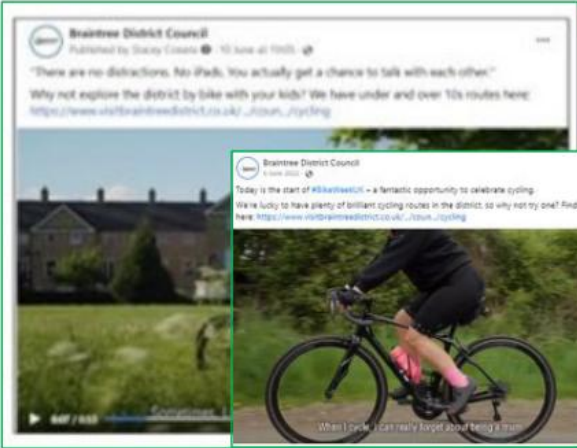
It will now be used when considering planning applications & shaping the future of the village 🏡

Join over 6,000 residents who have signed up to our FREE e-newsletter to get updates on the latest planning & housing news in the Braintree district 📧 bit.ly/3GDtU44

Our next one will be going out this week with a focus on neighbourhood plans, what they mean & how they impact on communities.



Transport: Cycling Strategy



Transport

Schools' Climate Change Challenge

Working in partnership with The Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership (BDCEP), an event was held at Gridserve to recognise and celebrate the children's and schools' achievements with certificates and presentations given, as well as introduction to 'electric cars are the future'.



Creative Climate Challenge

We worked with Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership to launch the 'Creative Climate Challenge'. Schools across the District have been creating art showing how they feel about Climate Change.

Their art will form part of local exhibition. We will publish details on this page.

Beckers Green Primary

Early Years Foundation Stage, Y1 and 2 from Beckers Green Primary in Braintree worked together to create this fantastic Earth mural using old newspapers and magazines. Each child made a handprint which they then decorated and old magazines were used to produce this powerful message.



Watch this space for a video coming soon...
<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/4>

Braintree District Council
 5 January

DigiGo travel now just £2 one-way! 🎉
 All our single fares are now capped at £2 from today until 31 March! 🎉
 Operational area is south and west of Braintree 📍
 F... See more

DigiGo
 Public and government service

Learn more

Braintree District Council
 2 February

All single fares for DigiGo are now capped at £2 until 31 March 🎉 Why not give the service a try? 🎉
 DigiGo covers the area south and west of Braintree, including Great Notley, Black Notley and Rayne. 📍
 For more on the operational area and to download the Travel Essex App 📱 www.digigo.uk

DigiGo - Follow
 27 January

DigiGo travel at just £2!
 No matter how far your journey within our operational zone, all our one-way fares are capped at £2 until 31 March 🎉
 Visit www.digigo.uk See more

Braintree District Council
 13 February

It's the last week to have your say on number of Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Licences Issued. 🗳️
 Braintree District Council is seeking your view as to whether the Council should continue to restrict the number of Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Licences it issues within the Braintree District.
 Currently we restrict the number to 84 licences and this year we are consulting on the possibility of taking away the limit totally.... See more

NEWS
 Home | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture | Tech
 England | Local News | Regions | Essex

Braintree: Free bus could return to help Covid-hit market

16 March

The route would link Braintree Village with the town centre

Braintree District Council
 28 November 2022

Are you joining the new pop-up walk tomorrow at 10am at Bulmer Village Hall (CO10 7EH)?
 @Community360 are organising more local pop-up walks in new areas! 📍
 E... See more

We are looking at setting up new walks in your neighbourhood.



Business & The Green Economy

New video celebrates nursery owner's fight against climate change

A new video has been created to showcase the sustainable measures introduced by the owner of a plant nursery in Earls Colne who is determined to protect the planet for generations to come.

Oliver Wass, of Oliver's Plants in Coggeshall Road, puts climate change at the forefront of his business plan and is constantly looking to reduce, reuse and recycle from rainwater harvesting to using computer-controlled coloured lighting to boost his seedlings.



Oliver Wass at the nursery in Earls Colne

Share on
[f](#) [in](#) [t](#)

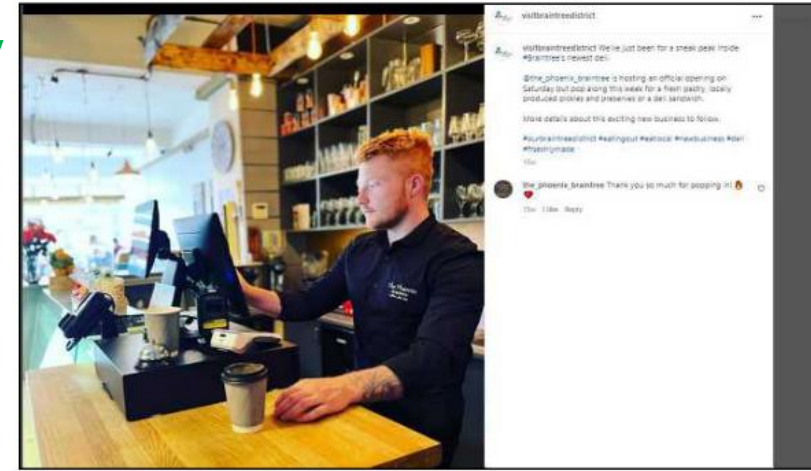
In the video, commissioned by Braintree District Council as part of our climate change strategy, Mr Wass shares some of his innovative methods and explains how they use LED lights in their propagation room to bring on seedlings, with technology used to calculate the perfect spectrum of light needed based on the height and type of plant to reduce wasted energy.

Around 90% of the products sold at the plant centre are grown at the company's nursery based a few miles down the road.

“
 Mr Wass said: "That rises to 90% in spring when people are purchasing bedding plants and planting up their hanging baskets. We grow all of those ourselves."



Braintree District Council
 24 January
 Did you hear the news that **TOAST** in Braintree High St are expanding to Witham town centre this Spring? 🍞
 Great to see a local business venturing out into another one of our town centres 📍
 Visit Braintree District



Business & The Green Economy

Free low carbon sustainability training available



Your commitment to help in reducing carbon emissions could make a real difference, regardless of what size your business is, or what industry you're in. The benefits are widespread to the environment, to your customers and to your running costs.

Training company Colbea is offering a FREE 'Low Carbon' training course which covers why creating carbon reduction plans can benefit your business and reduce costs at the same time.

The course is available for anyone that is a resident of or has a business within Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester, Tendring, Maldon, Uttlesford, Epping Forest, or Rochford.

[Find out more and register](#)



Yesterday saw the launch of #digigo - a fully electric shared public transport service which offers on-demand or pre-bookable travel in Central Essex and South Braintree. There is no fixed route or timetable, which puts you in control of your journey.

- DigiGo improves access to health, education, employment, and social opportunities. Some example journeys could be:
 - Travelling to education at Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form
 - Commuting to Skyline 120.
 - Travel to local train or bus stations for onward travel to Stansted Airport, Chelmsford City Centre, Witham, Colchester and more!
 - Reaching your appointment at Broomfield Hospital or Braintree Community Hospital
 - A family day out at Great Notley Country Park

DigiGo is a shared service, which means you may pick up other passengers on the way to your destination. This helps reduce emissions and congestion in the operating area. Our vehicles are fully electric, powered by GRIDSERVE, with wheelchair accessible vehicles available too.

This service is made for everyone... so, whether you're a commuter, a student, a weekend tripper or a key worker, DigiGo can get you to where you're going.

Book now through the #TravelEssex app. Find out more at [DigiGo.uk](#)

Braintree District Council
17 January · 🌐

Spains Hall Estate were able to purchase this vehicle thanks to Low Carbon South East (LoCase) and Braintree District Council, as part of its commitment to adapt to climate change and a more environmentally sustainable future.

If your business is looking to invest in new technology to help decrease your impact on the environment, or if you would like to access advice and support on a whole range of business issues please contact the Economic Development Team at Braintree Dis... See more



LoCASE 2 Funding



LoCase (Low Carbon Across the South East) 2, offers SME's 40% match-funded grants of up to £10,000 to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint.

Grants are also available for organisations operating in the Low Carbon, Environmental Goods and Services sector (LCEGS), and further funding is available to help you purchase an electric vehicle for your business. [Check your eligibility on LoCASE website](#)

[Check your eligibility](#)

Over £500,000 investment set for rural businesses and community groups

Braintree District Council's Cabinet has agreed to plan to help secure their £200,000 allocation from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REF) to boost productivity and create rural job opportunities.



The Cabinet meeting was held on Monday, 28 November 2023.

In September 2022, the Government announced that Rural England Prosperity Funding (REF) would be an additional fund which was available to some rural local authorities under their existing or specific arrangements amounting to £1.25 billion for funding to Business District Councils.

It is one of the £1.25 billion of Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) allocated to the Braintree district which the council will use to support sectors through the rest of this year, support rural businesses to start, grow or expand, help improve the way that they work, as well as encourage and support the work carried out by local communities.

In order to meet the funding requirements set out by government and to assist businesses and rural communities in the town, the REF funding has been agreed to be offered to grant funding of between £20,000 and £25,000 to rural businesses and community groups.

The purpose of the grant funding, it will be open to retail and medium sized businesses to grow and develop to increase innovation, adopt new technology or processes, enhance local services for visitors and residents and create or safeguard jobs. The funding will also be available to support community groups and initiatives to refurbish local venues, culture or heritage assets, or to help improve the rural estate or rural economy. Applications will be invited to demonstrate how they contribute to growing, create, create and supporting the rural economy.

“

Councillor Graham Bullard, Leader of Braintree District Council, said: "This is another fantastic opportunity to offer to support and develop communities and businesses in rural areas like ours. Supporting the local economy is a priority for us and we will continue to work with our local partners, businesses and community groups to ensure they get the maximum benefit from this funding. This is complemented by the Shared Prosperity Fund programmes and the work we are already carrying out with Essex County Council on the Rural Business Revolving approach."



Business & The Green Economy

Going forward in our business newsletters we would like to support your business with useful tools, tips and links of how you can be environmentally conscious as well as working towards tackling Climate Change.

We will address subjects such as sustainable procurement, sustainable energy electric vehicle charging, green travel plans, waste minimisation and carbon foot printing.

We are also on the lookout for businesses within the district who are already making great efforts towards environmental practice.

We would love to hear what you are already doing, as well as how we can best support you - so please get in touch by emailing climatechange@braintree.gov.uk.

Green business in Braintree: Solar Together launch



The Solar Together initiative has launched to support residents, small businesses and small community buildings with group buying power of solar panels including an option for battery storage.

All residents, small and medium sized businesses living in one of the participating council areas and who own their own house or premises can register for the Solar Together group-buying scheme. Registering with Solar Together will ensure you receive a high quality product and it takes the hassle out of finding a good qualified installer.

Do you have solar panels within your business which you would be happy to share with other businesses? Please get in touch with us at climatechange@braintree.gov.uk.

[Find out more](#)

Green Businesses in Braintree



During the darker winter months lighting is more important than ever.

There are many ways to reduce the carbon emissions from lighting within your premises. The first step is to consider what lighting you have in your work spaces, whether lights are being used when they are not needed and if your the lighting is energy efficient.

Another option may be converting all lighting to LED bulbs which are cheaper to run, offer a brighter light and are also safer than non-LED light bulbs as they do not produce heat.

The Carbon Trust have an excellent carbon calculation tool specifically for lighting which may be suitable for your business: <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/lighting-business-case-tool>.

If you have a sustainability record within your business which you would be happy to share with other businesses then please get in touch with us at climatechange@braintree.gov.uk.

Green Businesses in Braintree



Sub metering your energy usage

Businesses are feeling the squeeze of rising energy costs and we are all considering ways to reduce our bills as well as our carbon footprint.

Smart meters can help with making staff aware of how energy may be cut within a business, but sub-meters can really highlight 'hotspots' for change. A simple plug-in sub meter can be purchased at around £20 per unit to attach to and monitor specific individual items such as a photocopier or a PC.

If you have any Climate Change measures in place within your business which you would be happy to share with other businesses, please get in touch with us at climatechange@braintree.gov.uk.

Business & The Green Economy

BDC Council Tax & Economic Growth booklets – RM distribution March

Our district's local businesses are tackling climate change

The UK's commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 will increase demand for low carbon environmental goods and services, both within the district and beyond, requiring businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

We are already working with businesses to access grant schemes that help them to become more efficient and carbon neutral. New schemes to help support the green economy will be coming soon as part of our Plan for Growth Strategy refresh for 2022-2027.

For further help or advice, contact csc@braintree.gov.uk

Is your business helping to save the planet?

Tell us what steps you have been taking or would like to take to be kinder to the environment to help tackle climate change.
www.braintree.gov.uk/climatechange

View our climate change action videos

www.braintree.gov.uk/climatechange

Milbank Concrete Products

is a family run business based in Earls Colne and is one of the UK's leading manufacturers of precast and prestressed concrete products, including structural floor beams, decorative spiral stairs and bespoke elements.

As cement and concrete production produces about 7% of global CO2 emissions, Milbank is proactive in adapting its processes to work towards carbon neutrality and currently leading the way in the concrete industry. Chris Fygaill, Managing Director, understands that working towards a more sustainable future will never be complete, which is why Milbank is committed to continual research and development to ensure the company is always progressing and heading in the right direction.



Spains Hall Estate

Archie Ruggles-Brise has managed the Spains Hall Estate in Finchingfield for over a decade, following a career in the charity sector with the Rivers Trust movement.

He brought an understanding of river catchments and the ecosystem approach back to the family business. With this in mind, he seeks to work with nature to address local and wider issues, such as flooding, drought and climate resilience. The release of beavers for flood risk management was just the first step on a transformative future vision he has for the Estate.



SAILSetc based in Kelvedon, has been a market leader in equipment for radio control model racing yachts since 1978.

Business owner Graham Bantock is always looking for ways his business can protect natural resources and reduce its carbon footprint. From packaging, saving energy, reducing plastic and improving manufacturing methods, SAILSetc is making positive manoeuvres to tackle climate change.

Invite our Chairman to your business

Visit our website to submit an invitation:
www.braintree.gov.uk/invitethechairman
 01376 552525

John Wynn, Alan Cherry, Cllr Sue Wilson, Michael Jones and Bernard Dwyer at Essex Golfing Club.



During her civic year for 2021-2022, **Cllr Sue Wilson** visited local businesses as part of her business tour including Essex Gliding Club and Bumble & Yard in Halstead, to learn more about their business and to identify ways in which we can offer support to help businesses grow.

ENVIRONMENT

Climate change

We must act now to tackle climate change and it's down to every individual to do their bit. Lots of small changes can create a big impact.

Braintree District Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and announced a target to be carbon neutral as a Council as far as practical by 2030, as well as supporting local communities to reduce the impacts of climate change across the Braintree District.

EV electric charging points

To grow our district's local electric vehicle charging network and infrastructure is one of the key priorities for Transport in the council's Climate Change Strategy 2021-30.

The council has installed **48 charging points** across a number of council owned car parks, leisure centres and council buildings.

Future plans are in progress to introduce more locations where drivers can recharge their batteries.



Through our planning process, we are supporting the government's commitment to install EV charging points in residential and commercial new build projects.



Community Tree and Bulb Planting Scheme

Last year we offered free tree whips and bulbs for people to plant in our district. With over 124 applications from Parish and Town Councils, schools, nurseries, individual and community groups, they have requested over 41,600 bulbs and 4,850 native tree whips. We have also planted more on council owned land bringing the total of new plantings to **18,700 native trees and 73,000 bulbs** to encourage biodiversity and pollinators.



Green Heart Champion's



Many agree the £1.54m spent every year keeping our district clean and tidy could be better spent elsewhere.

The accumulation of litter can start with a single wrapper, a takeaway cup, or even a cigarette butt.

As well as council staff, did you know across our district there are over 350 Green Heart Champion local volunteers of all ages, who work tirelessly to help keep our district's streets, parks and open spaces free of litter that other people have thoughtlessly dropped?

If you are passionate about where you live, why not volunteer? You can give as much or as little time as you like and we can supply you with litter-picking kits. Tackling climate change starts with lots of small steps and, by doing it together, will make a big difference to help protect our planet.



Daniel Walker, Junior Green Heart Champion

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Green Heart Champion, please visit www.braintree.gov.uk/greenheartchampions or greenheartchampions@braintree.gov.uk. The Green Heart Team on 01376 552525

LITTER IN MY HOME? THAT'S QUACKERS!

Bin it or take it home!

Love it here? Don't leave it here... It only takes a few pieces of litter to ruin a habitat and put wildlife at risk. **LOVESSEX**

Natural Environment: Litter

BBC | becky | Home | News | Sport | Weather | iPlayer

NEWS

Home | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture | Tech

England | Local News | Regions | **Essex**

Witham Cemetery fly tippers will be 'hunted down' and prosecuted

10 January



IAN PUCKEY/BBC

The fly-tipped rubbish was cleared on Monday

ONE BAG BIG DIFFERENCE



25 March - 10 April 2022

Braintree District Council
Published by Heidi Taylor | 25 March at 06:45

Today marks the start of Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean 2022. And it is the perfect weather for getting out and spring cleaning your neighbourhood. The Great British Spring Clean runs from today until April 10 and if you already have litter picking equipment we urge you to get out and start collecting... See more



Queen's Jubilee sustainable party, after party waste and litter

Let's be sustainable with our party planning

Various messages in the lead up, during and post bank holiday weekend



Braintree District Council gives a facelift to its Green Heart of Essex litter bininfrastructure

Braintree District Council is currently installing new brightly coloured litter bins along the strategic network within its district, at various lay-bys located on the A12, A120 and A131.

Their bright colour makes them stand out and they are more noticeable to the eye. Research undertaken by the registered charity WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) found that bins in bright colours are more welcoming than bins in dark colours, which in turn encourages people to use them more.

In 2010, as part of the council's The Green Heart of Essex Campaign, roadside litter bins were installed in the laybys and over the years, drivers-by have put them to good use to dispose of their litter correctly, when stopping to take a break from their journeys. Weathering and usage had taken their toll, so the original bins were due for replacement.



Share on   

Love Essex puts car litter louts on the radar



We are working in partnership with local authorities and fast-food restaurants across Essex to remind vehicle users that our roads are for driving on, not littering on.

Local businesses, KFC and McDonald's are supporting the campaign by displaying banners at 45 drive-through restaurants with the message 'It's a take-away not a throw-away', as well as distributing stickers on packaging and inside restaurants.

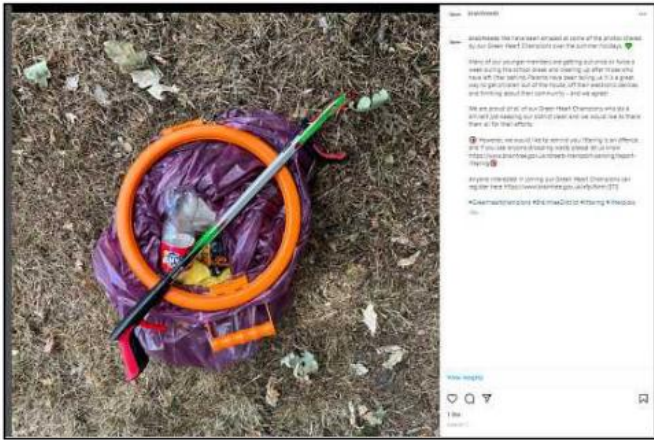
Anyone can report a vehicle litter offender by using our [See It, Report It, Essex](#) or call us on 01376 552525.

We also welcome dashcam footage of littering offences that includes the vehicle registration plate. This can be used as evidence by our Streetscene Protection Team to follow up on any reports received.

Information can be sent to seeitreportit@braintree.gov.uk or prc@braintree.gov.uk

[Read the full story](#)

Natural Environment volunteers looking after local areas



Braintree District Council
Admin · September 30 at 5:53 PM

We now have more than 450 Green Heart Champions in Braintree District and we want to say a special thank you to each and every one of you. Whether you are out once a year for an annual spring clean or litter picking weekly, we are grateful to you all for creating a cleaner Braintree District. Maria Barnard and her children Grace and Jamie have been litter picking the Rivenhall Park estate in Witham for the past few years. Maria said: "We try and go out once a week and now we are finding there's very little litter for the children to pick. They have done so well." Grace and Jamie said they like to litter pick to help the animals and the environment, and used to hate seeing so much litter wherever they went. Thank you Grace and Jamie - and Maria for encouraging your children to be such thoughtful young members of our community. 🙌 Grace and Jamie are the cover stars of our current edition of Contact magazine - have you seen them? 📰



New Facebook group unites Green Heart Champion volunteers

Each year an army of Green Heart Champions walk miles around Braintree district, collecting sacks full of discarded drinks cans, fly away crisp packets and stubbed out cigarette butts.

There are more than 400 Green Heart Champions registered with us either as individuals, families or community groups. They work together to keep their neighbourhoods clean and instill pride within their communities.

We have recently launched a new Facebook group exclusively for the Green Heart Champions and since formed the volunteers have been further inspired to help clean up streets, playgrounds and beauty spots.

One member said: "Like most people, I hate to see litter when out walking, so I decided to combine the two. In Witham, we are lucky to have several people who think the same."

Two of our young Green Heart Champion volunteers in Witham

Share on   

Braintree District Council
Published by Natalie Sadler · 12 February

Could you be a Green Heart Champion? 🌱

We are looking for volunteers from around the Braintree District to help care for their communities. Our Green Heart Champions take pride in cleansing their neighbourhoods of rubbish, picking up the waste left behind by others. 🗑️ You can give as much or as little time as you can, picking litter on your walk to school once a week or clearing rubbish from a nature area once a month. 🌿 See more



Green Heart Champions go from strength to strength

More and more residents across the district are stepping up to volunteer as a Green Heart Champion to help tackle the purge of litter that other people leave behind

In 2010 as part of the Green Heart of Essex campaign the council appealed to local people to become volunteers to help make the district one of the cleanest and greenest in the country.

Over the years, the number of Green Heart Champions has been growing as residents of all ages walk miles within the district collecting sacks full of discarded litter. They work together to keep their neighbourhoods clean, take pride in their communities and aim to keep the district litter free.

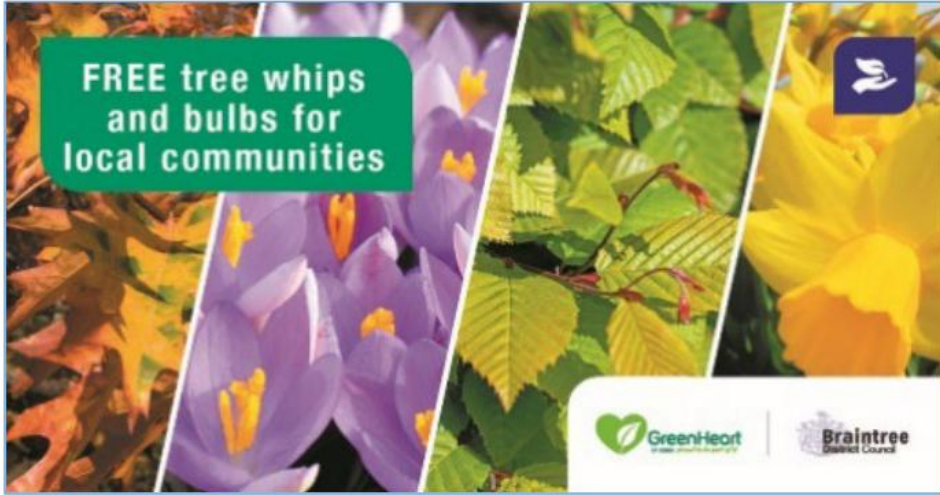
There are currently 524 Green Heart Champions registered with the council, either as individuals, families or community groups. Some of the volunteers who joined in 2010 are still out litter-picking today.

Share on   



Natural Environment

Community tree whips and bulbs



Community Tree and Bulb Planting Scheme

We offered native tree whips and bulbs to Parish and Town Councils, local community/voluntary groups, schools, colleges and charities.

The scheme had a total of 115 applicants from

- 26 Parish and Town Councils
- 32 Schools and Nurseries
- 57 Community Groups

Together they planted 4,850 trees and 41,600 bulbs within their local areas by March 2022, to encourage biodiversity and pollinators.

We have planted more on council owned land, bringing the overall number of trees and bulbs planted to 18,700 native trees and 73,000 bulbs across the district.

We are encouraging everyone who has planted trees to plot their locations on [The Queen's Green Canopy map](#).

Braintree residents plant bulbs to help tackle climate change

Bulbs and tree whips were provided by the council to increase biodiversity in Braintree and beyond.

22 February 2022

Sign the petition

Community tree whip and bulb planting 2022 2

4,850 trees and 41,600 bulbs were planted by volunteers across the District

Watch on YouTube

Queen's Green Canopy

Braintree District Council | Schema, St John the Baptist Primary School pupils and s planted 100 #JubileeTrees on grounds owned by the No... See more

2 shares

Natural Environment

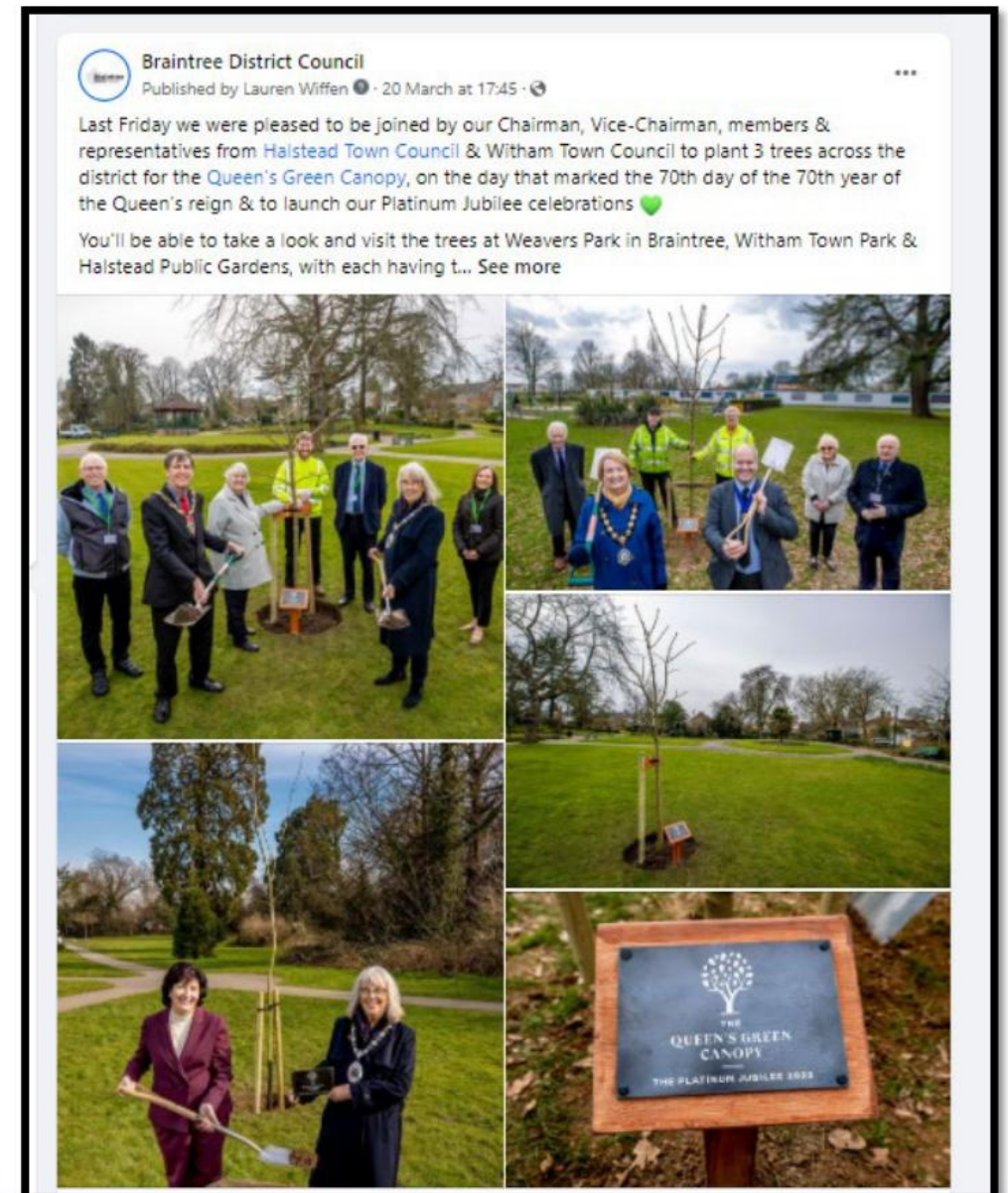
Plant a tree for the Queen's Jubilee

The Queen's Green Canopy

As part of our commitment to help the environment and make local areas greener, we have provided 18,700 native trees and 73,000 bulbs to individuals and community groups to plant in their communities as part of their recent [community tree and bulb planting project](#).

We have also recently planted trees in Braintree, Witham and Halstead for the Queen in her Platinum Jubilee year, creating a legacy in honour of the Queen's leadership of the nation for future generations.

Summer bedding will be planted in the public gardens in each town in the district in red, white and blue in late May. Hanging baskets in Braintree town centre and outside Causeway House will also be brightened up with a mix of purple and platinum during the Jubilee weekend.




Natural Environment

Community

Love your local park? Braintree District Council calls on residents to enjoy them more

Locals are being asked to help maintain local open spaces as part of the Keep Britain Tidy 'Love Parks Week'

3 August 2022



Daily Email Updates

Sign the petition

Grow your business with us

By InYourArea Community

Braintree District Council

Things to do, What's on, Where to stay, Food & Drink, Explore, Inspire Us, Plan your visit, Blog

Great Notley Country Park



NEWS

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Braintree: New sensory garden opens to the public

22 July 2022



STEVE BRADING / BRAintree DISTRICT COUNCIL

A new plaza and sensory garden has opened in Braintree as part of a £30m regeneration

Braintree District Council updated their profile picture.

14 November 2022




Visit Braintree District - Follow

19 July 2022

We are proud to be supporting this year's Keep Britain Tidy's Love Parks campaign which will be running from 22 July to 5 August. The campaign will focus on celebrating our amazing green spaces and sharing the joys of parks. Braintree District is rich with green spaces - some offer a tranquil haven for walkers, some provide the perfect picnic spot and some buzz with excitement as children hang from colourful play equipment. But... See more



Braintree District Council

11 December 2022

Look at these stunning photos in Rayne this morning. We'd love to see any wintry pictures you have from across the district.



Braintree District Council announced as shortlisted finalist in Keep Britain Tidy Network Awards

By Essex Mag · February 8, 2023 · 0

Share on Facebook Tweet on Twitter G+ P



Braintree District Council has been shortlisted as a finalist in the Keep Britain Tidy Network Awards 2023 for their work on the 2022 Love Parks campaign.



Adapting to Climate Change

Braintree District Council
30 July

We can look forward to another warm weekend! ☀️☀️☀️

Whilst we are all enjoying the warm weather, please keep an eye out for vulnerable friends, family and neighbours. The hot weather may cause some health problems for some people.

Here is how you can help:

- 👉 Check on neighbours, friends or family members to make sure they are ok.
- 🛒 Perhaps offer to do some shopping for them or get medication so they don't have to go out in the warm weather.

📄 For more hints and tips on how to keep fit and well during a heatwave, check out: <https://www.livewellcampaign.co.uk/livewel.../beat-the-heat/>



2

Braintree District Council
13 August

More hot weather forecasted for this weekend as the heatwave continues. ☀️

We know you are aware of how to keep yourself safe during in the heat, but just a little reminder for the weekend:

- 💧 Keep hydrated and avoid excess alcohol
- ☀️ Stay safe in the sun- wear sunglasses, sunscreen and a hat
- ❤️ Check on others who might need extra help

📄 For more tips and advice on how to cope during a heatwave, check out: <https://bit.ly/3Szz8Gz>




1


tell me more
about topics that matter to us

Braintree District Council

Environment News



Is it so hot because of climate change?



Most climate scientists say the answer is 'Yes' and the Met Office estimates that the extreme heat we are currently seeing is been made 10 times more likely because of it.

According to the United Nations climate science body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we're living in the hottest period for 125,000 years.

Greenhouse gas emissions caused by burning fossil fuels trap heat in our atmosphere and they have helped increase the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to the highest levels seen for 2 million years, according to the IPCC.


Our Climate Change Strategy has set a target to become carbon neutral as far as practically possible by 2030. It's a big ask, but little things go a long way and if we all do our bit, together we can have a bigger impact.



Adapting to Climate Change


Braintree District Council
18 February · 🌐

Storm Eunice warning upgraded to red in our district between 10am-3pm. 🌧️
Please look after yourselves and others ❤️
Keep updated on our services & useful links 📌 braintree.gov.uk/stormeunice



Storm Eunice

**Updated information
for residents**



Braintree District Council
17 February · 🌐

⚠️ UPDATE - There is a RED warning in place between 10am-3pm today covering the district.

Preparing and dealing with flooding

Braintree District has been affected by flooding in the past so to prepare as much as possible if your home or business is likely to flood. It is up to you to protect your property and there is a lot you can do in advance of any bad weather. We do not provide sandbags for homes or businesses.

If you know you live in a flood area you can prepare for flooding by:

- Finding out if you are [at risk of flooding](#) 📄
- Registering for the Environment Agency's Flood Warning scheme 📄
- Registering for the [Met Office's Severe Weather Warning updates](#) 📄
- Preparing a [personal flood plan](#) 📄 for your home
- Preparing a [grab bag](#) 📄

Take a look at the [National Flood Forum website](#) 📄 and their [Blue Pages](#) 📄 which has advice on flood protection products and suppliers.

[Previous](#) You are on the first page [Next](#) [Where to report flooding](#)

Braintree District Council
17 August 2022 · 🌐

We are starting to see lots of rain this afternoon and this is expected to continue tonight. 🌧️
Please take care when driving, as there could be a chance of surface water on our roads.
❌ Avoid walking or driving through flood water- it may be deeper than you think
✅ Plan your journey and be prepared to make last minute changes... See more


Weather Warning



👍❤️ 32 22 comments 14 shares

Braintree District Council
3 November 2022 · 🌐

There are some flood warnings in force across the district due to the wet weather. We will update this post as the warnings come in.
You can find advice and assistance at <https://flood.essex.gov.uk/> - Essex County Council are the local flood authority.
NO LONGER IN FORCE... See more



Visits to Climate Change pages on BDC website

1.4.22 - 31.3.23

- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/climatechange> - 261 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1> - 26 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/2> - 57 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/3> - 24 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/4> - 42 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/5> - 27 visits
- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/braintree-district/climate-change-1/6> - 17 visits

