

# Minutes

## Council Meeting



19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

These Minutes principally record decisions taken and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions. A recording of the meeting is available on the Council's YouTube Channel at <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/youtube>

Present:

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Present</b>
Councillor J Abbott	Yes	Councillor L Jefferis	Yes
Councillor D Abram	Yes	Councillor J Martin	Yes
Councillor M Ault	Apologies	Councillor S Mason	Yes
Councillor J Ayten	Yes	Councillor A Munday	Yes
Councillor J Baugh	Yes	Councillor I Parker	Yes
Councillor J Beavis	Yes	Councillor J Pell	Yes
Councillor J Bond	Yes	Councillor G Prime	Yes
Councillor K Bowers	Yes	Councillor S Rajeev	Apologies
Councillor L Bowers-Flint	Yes	Councillor R Ramage	Yes
Councillor G Butland	Yes	Councillor F Ricci	Yes
Councillor J Coleridge	Yes	Councillor P Schwier	Yes
Councillor G Courtauld	Apologies	Councillor G Spray	Yes
Councillor M Cunningham	Yes	Councillor M Staines	Yes
Councillor T Cunningham	Yes	Councillor B Taylor	Yes
Councillor C Dervish	Yes	Councillor W Taylor	Yes
Councillor T Diamond	Yes	Councillor M Thorogood	Yes
Councillor J Edwards	Yes	Councillor P Thorogood	Apologies
Councillor C Finch	Apologies	Councillor R van Dulken	Yes
Councillor M Fincken	Yes	Councillor T Walsh	Apologies
Councillor D Garrod	Yes	Councillor L Walters	Yes
Councillor M Green	Yes	Councillor E Williams	Yes
Councillor J Hayes	Yes	Councillor T Williams	Yes
Councillor P Heath	Yes	Councillor J Wrench	Apologies
Councillor D Holland	Yes	Councillor B Wright	Apologies
Councillor A Hooks	Yes		

#### 43 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** The following interests were declared:

Councill Bowers-Flint declared an non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 6 – ‘Questions to the Leader and Cabinet’, as a member of the Development and Regulation Committee at Essex County Council.

Councillor Butland declared an non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 6 – ‘Questions to the Leader and Cabinet’, as a representative of the North Essex Parking Partnership.

#### 44 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 45 **QUESTION TIME**

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

#### 46 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**INFORMATION:** The following announcements/statements were made: -

##### **Chairman of the Council - Announcements**

Since the last meeting of Council in December the Chairman had attended a number of engagements including a visit to two sites of Braintree area food bank; Sible Hedingham and Braintree. Staff and volunteers had been working exceptionally hard to provide this important service which had seen a rise in the number of users during the cost-of-living crisis. The Chairman also had the pleasure of attending the annual Jack Petchey Awards ceremony and their 25th Birthday Celebration together with Councillor Walters.

The Chairman also hosted a Christmas reception and service at Causeway House and St Peter’s church. The Chairman was delighted to have the opportunity to reconnect with the people from the various organisations she had visited and enjoy a festive sausage roll from the Plaza Café.

A full list of the engagements I have attended since the last meeting of Full Council will be published on the Council’s website.

##### **Leader of the Council – Announcements**

Before commencing with his announcements, the Leader shared a short video with Members on a Community Garden initiative that has been underway in Witham. The video can be viewed here <https://vimeo.com/892574543>

The Leader advised Members that he was intending to make an update on two issues relating to the Wethersfield Airfield. One related to the proposed use of the site by the Ministry of Justice, for two prisons, and the second was in respect of the Home Office funding received by the Council relating to the current use of the site as an asylum accommodation centre.

Members would be aware of recent media stories surrounding proposals to use the site for two prisons following decisions on other prison sites. The Leader confirmed that the Ministry of Justice had engaged in pre-application discussions with Braintree District Council in the past but that they had not had any substantive pre-application meetings with the Ministry of Justice for over a year.

The Leader added that it was important to acknowledge that given the prison proposals for the site, it was anticipated that planning permission would be needed and therefore the Ministry of Justice would need to submit a planning application to the Council as the local planning authority if they wanted to pursue these plans on the site. This was very different to the use of Wethersfield for asylum accommodation, where the Council had not been the determining planning authority for that use.

The Leader advised Members that he would continue to keep members updated if and when we learn more about the next stage of the proposals from the MoJ.

In respect of finance, the Council had received funding from the Home Office to support the operation of Wethersfield Airfield as a Large Site to accommodate Asylum Seekers. The funding instruction was clear that this funding was to address pressures on Braintree District Council and Essex County Council services, specifically in fulfilment of its statutory duties in relation to the site. Whilst the Home Office had said that the Council could determine how best to use the funding within the parameters of the instruction, the Council must demonstrate that it had fulfilled the conditions of the grant.

The funding was paid in arrears and calculated as £3,500 for each newly occupied bed space. To date, the Council had received funding based on 523 beds: £1,848,000. The Council could not commit to spending money that they were not yet in receipt of. The Council have also not been provided with any funding commitment for bed spaces occupied after March 2024. This funding was a one-off but intended to cover the lifetime of the site. It did not need to be spent within the financial year but must be spent within the duration the site is in use.

The Leader added that as this was a pathfinder site, the final number of occupied bed spaces, and the associated costs of council statutory responsibilities were unknown at this stage. Statutory responsibilities included Environmental and regulatory responsibilities, safeguarding and social care. As a district council, it was felt that it was necessary to recognise the importance of discretionary areas of activity in relation to the site, including how community and voluntary sector organisations could support service users, as well as working with communities to mitigate any direct impacts of the site. The Council had therefore asked for approval from the Home Office to allocate some of the funding provided for this purpose. This was summarised in December

2023 with a Cabinet paper in which the Leader committed to establishing grant schemes to deliver support to those located at the site and the communities impacted.

It was announced that as of today the Council had launched an initial grant scheme of £50,000 to support the immediate need for discretionary activities for those at the site. The Council were currently engaging to understand how wider communities were being impacted and planned to launch a community grant scheme in Spring 2024 and would continue to keep members updated with the progress on this.

#### 47 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND CABINET**

**INFORMATION:** The Chairman reminded Members that they may only ask one question of the Leader and the Cabinet on matters which relate to the functions of the Leader, the Cabinet, the powers and duties of the Council or matters pertaining to the District which have taken place since the last meeting of Full Council held on 11th December 2023.

Questions must be succinct and could not be asked in parts and supplementary questions were not permitted. It was added that Members may not make statements before asking their questions.

Members were then given the opportunity to put their questions to the Cabinet. A webcast of the questions and the responses from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members is available on the Council's website and its YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ59vb3eKDE>

The main topics were as follows:-

Councillor Beavis raised a query on the take up and delivery of projects through the Rural Prosperity Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Councillor Abbott requested an update from Members on the expansion of the Silver End GP Surgery.

Councillor Williams shared concerns on the potential introduction of new car parking charges being brought in by the North Essex Parking Partnership on Newland Street, Witham.

Councillor Staines raised a question with regards to what proposals were in place to replace S106 with a Community Infrastructure Levy.

Councillor Edwards asked the Cabinet Member for an update as to what enforcement action was being taken to ensure developers delivered on the Springwood Drive Link road to Panfield Lane.

Councillor Jefferis sought further details on the recent requirement for the Council to produce a Productivity Plan, and requested further information on the cost implications and funding of this.

Councillor van Dulken requested an update on the garden waste subscription service.

Councillor Hooks asked whether Braintree District Council would be submitting a response to the Local Mineral Review consultation and what steps were being taken to ensure Local Ward Members for the implicated areas were involved in producing a response.

Councillor Schwier sought confirmation that the Councils recent curb side collection service offered to Uttlesford District Council did not in any way impact the service for residents in the Braintree District.

Councillor Heath raised several concerns with the recent report of the North Essex Parking Partnership, and in light of this, asked the Cabinet Member whether the Council should reconsider its membership to the partnership.

Councillor Prime raised a question in relation to the use of the newly installed cycle lane between Coggeshall Road and Rayne Road.

Councillor Green sought clarification on whether there would be any car parking machines in Braintree that accepted cash going forward.

Councillor Abram requested further details on the amount of Council Tax that was being collected in the Braintree District.

Councillor Martin raised a query in respect of what the District Council was doing to support Domestic and Sexual Violence against women in the District.

#### 48 **COUNCIL BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2024/25 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/25 TO 2027/28**

**INFORMATION:** The Leader introduced the report and formally moved the recommendations set out in the report.

The Leader advised Members that for local authorities the continuing demands upon the national Exchequer had continued some of the uncertainties had been spoke of in last year's budget debate and although the 2021 Autumn Budget and Spending Review Statement outlined a three-year funding envelope for local government the Treasury had continued to give only single-year finance settlements for the last three years. This made financial planning for local authorities difficult and was the one of the main reasons that the Council needed to adopt a cautious approach when setting the budget.

The Leader added that the Council faced its own cost pressures due to higher pay costs, inflation and demand for services. Decisions on capital investment needed to be

weighed against the backdrop of higher borrowing costs. Sound financial management and a prudent approach had meant that the Council was in a better position than many others, nevertheless, whilst the budget for 2024-25 had been balanced, a budget gap remained over the medium term which would only be addressed by continuing to look at better ways of delivering services and ensuring that finite resources were focused on the priorities which were seen as important to residents and businesses.

It was added that in 2023-24, the Council committed to a two-year programme of support, investing £1million to work with partners in supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis. 2024-25 would also see further investment of over £1m into communities and businesses through plans for spending the Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity allocated funding. The proposed budget included over £700k of additional investment in services to meet unavoidable cost pressures, service demands, and generally to improve the way the Council works. A further £600k was being set aside from New Homes Bonus to help drive forward the Fit for the Future programme that was critical to the long-term financial resilience of the authority and to ensure the Council was best placed and resourced to deliver its Corporate Strategy over the next four years.

It was reported that there was extra funding to ensure that the District Council fully engaged with the Essex wide agenda, supporting involvement and leadership in the work of the North Essex Councils, and North Essex Economic Board. There were plans for £200k to be allocated for Climate Change initiatives adding to the £600k previously made available which was already delivering results against the agreed Climate Change Action Plan.

The Leader advised Members that the budget proposed the continuation of the Councillor Community Grant Scheme with £1,250 allocated to each Member to use in 2024-25 to support community projects. Funding for the Street Scene Partnership was being retained at the current level of £89k which was paid to Parish Council, and plans for new capital expenditure included £280k for four play area refurbishments, with an extra £70k being made available to replace safety surfacing across various other play areas. Grant funding would continue through the Disabled Facilities Grant programme, along with Major Housing Grants where means-tested funding was provided for installation or repair of hot water and heating systems.

It was reported that Management would continue to look for savings and opportunities to increase income with new proposals totalling £296k included in the budget. Take-up of the new garden waste subscription service had exceeded expectations with income for the first year contributing significantly towards the cost of this discretionary service. Fees and charges had also been reviewed, taking account the high level of pay and other inflation impacting on the Council's costs, but also mindful that increases created additional financial pressures for service users. The proposed level of discretionary fees and charges were set out in the Appendices to the report.

The Leader added that support for low income households would continue through the Local Council Tax Support Scheme which had recently been changed so that it targeted support to the lowest income households and simplified the process for claiming. There was also additional financial help available through an Exceptional

Hardship Fund and the Discretionary Housing Payments Fund. Advice was available through the Money Advice Service provided in partnership with the Citizens Advice, and from welfare officers employed in the Council's Revenues and Benefits Team.

In respect of Council Tax, it was reported that the current Band D council tax rate for 2023/24 at £194.31 was the fourth lowest of the 12 District and Borough Councils in Essex and was significantly below the national shire district average. The budget proposed an increase in the Council's share of the Council Tax bill of £5.76 for the whole year; which equated to 11p a week. This set a proposed Band D tax rate for Braintree District Council's share of the overall bill of £200.07.

The full breakdown of the Council Tax Resolution schedule can be seen below;

**SCHEDULE A**

Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5	COUNCIL TAX FOR THE DISTRICT COUNCIL INCLUDING PARISH TAX £							
PARISH/AREA	TAX BASE (BAND D EQUIV)	PARISH PRECEPT	PARISH TAX (BAND D)	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£								
ALPHAMSTONE & LAMARSH	201.81	5,092	25.23	225.30	150.20	175.23	200.27	225.30	275.37	325.43	375.50	450.60
ASHEN	150.52	6,335	42.09	242.16	161.44	188.35	215.25	242.16	295.97	349.79	403.60	484.32
BELCHAMP OTTEN	75.65	1,250	16.52	216.59	144.39	168.46	192.52	216.59	264.72	312.85	360.98	433.18
BELCHAMP ST PAUL	165.01	3,750	22.73	222.80	148.53	173.29	198.04	222.80	272.31	321.82	371.33	445.60
BELCHAMP WALTER	106.31	5,927	55.75	255.82	170.55	198.97	227.40	255.82	312.67	369.52	426.37	511.64
BIRDBROOK	159.26	14,276	89.64	289.71	193.14	225.33	257.52	289.71	354.09	418.47	482.85	579.42
BLACK NOTLEY	995.56	51,000	51.23	251.30	167.53	195.46	223.38	251.30	307.14	362.99	418.83	502.60
BORLEY	56.69	1,457	25.70	225.77	150.51	175.60	200.68	225.77	275.94	326.11	376.28	451.54
BRADWELL	226.56	11,920	52.61	252.68	168.45	196.53	224.60	252.68	308.83	364.98	421.13	505.36
BRAINTREE	15086.33	-	0.00	200.07	133.38	155.61	177.84	200.07	244.53	288.99	333.45	400.14
BULMER	271.17	11,140	41.08	241.15	160.77	187.56	214.36	241.15	294.74	348.33	401.92	482.30
BURES HAMLET	334.15	32,817	98.21	298.28	198.85	232.00	265.14	298.28	364.56	430.85	497.13	596.56
CASTLE HEDINGHAM	476.22	34,047	71.49	271.56	181.04	211.21	241.39	271.56	331.91	392.25	452.60	543.12
COGGESHALL	1875.77	209,397	111.63	311.70	207.80	242.43	277.07	311.70	380.97	450.23	519.50	623.40
COLNE ENGAINE	413.45	24,999	60.46	260.53	173.69	202.63	231.58	260.53	318.43	376.32	434.22	521.06
CRESSING	978.24	51,500	52.65	252.72	168.48	196.56	224.64	252.72	308.88	365.04	421.20	505.44
EARLS COLNE	1509.18	160,000	106.02	306.09	204.06	238.07	272.08	306.09	374.11	442.13	510.15	612.18
FEERING	970.38	118,271	121.88	321.95	214.63	250.41	286.18	321.95	393.49	465.04	536.58	643.90
FINCHINGFIELD	727.13	68,448	94.13	294.20	196.13	228.82	261.51	294.20	359.58	424.96	490.33	588.40
FOXEARH & LISTON	157.96	11,355	71.89	271.96	181.31	211.52	241.74	271.96	332.40	392.83	453.27	543.92
GESTINGTHORPE	175.47	10,882	62.02	262.09	174.73	203.85	232.97	262.09	320.33	378.57	436.82	524.18
GOSFIELD	637.68	44,499	69.78	269.85	179.90	209.88	239.87	269.85	329.82	389.78	449.75	539.70
GREAT BARDFIELD	604.19	51,000	84.41	284.48	189.65	221.26	252.87	284.48	347.70	410.92	474.13	568.96
GREAT MAPLESTEAD	177.11	12,500	70.58	270.65	180.43	210.51	240.58	270.65	330.79	390.94	451.08	541.30
GREAT NOTLEY	2589.57	115,754	44.70	244.77	163.18	190.38	217.57	244.77	299.16	353.56	407.95	489.54
GREAT YELDHAM	672.58	59,799	88.91	288.98	192.65	224.76	256.87	288.98	353.20	417.42	481.63	577.96
GREENSTEAD GREEN	278.80	13,540	48.57	248.64	165.76	193.39	221.01	248.64	303.89	359.15	414.40	497.28
HALSTEAD	4452.22	230,180	51.70	251.77	167.85	195.82	223.80	251.77	307.72	363.67	419.62	503.54
HATFIELD PEVEREL	2195.33	170,010	77.44	277.51	185.01	215.84	246.68	277.51	339.18	400.85	462.52	555.02
HELIONS BUMPSTEAD	176.56	12,000	67.97	268.04	178.69	208.48	238.26	268.04	327.60	387.17	446.73	536.08
HENNY'S, MIDDLETON & TWINSTEAD	245.37	11,840	48.25	248.32	165.55	193.14	220.73	248.32	303.50	358.68	413.87	496.64
KELVEDON	1414.73	145,881	103.12	303.19	202.13	235.81	269.50	303.19	370.57	437.94	505.32	606.38
LITTLE MAPLESTEAD	117.70	8,500	72.22	272.29	181.53	211.78	242.04	272.29	332.80	393.31	453.82	544.58

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	£	£	£	£								
LITTLE YELDHAM, TILBURY JUXTA CLARE, & OVINGTON	245.38	8,975	36.58	236.65	157.77	184.06	210.36	236.65	289.24	341.83	394.42	473.30
PANFIELD	338.37	30,040	88.78	288.85	192.57	224.66	256.76	288.85	353.04	417.23	481.42	577.70
PEBMARSH	242.87	16,402	67.53	267.60	178.40	208.13	237.87	267.60	327.07	386.53	446.00	535.20
PENTLOW	109.05	7,000	64.19	264.26	176.17	205.54	234.90	264.26	322.98	381.71	440.43	528.52
RAYNE	877.15	58,820	67.06	267.13	178.09	207.77	237.45	267.13	326.49	385.85	445.22	534.26
RIDGEWELL	230.99	21,810	94.42	294.49	196.33	229.05	261.77	294.49	359.93	425.37	490.82	588.98
RIVENHALL	315.56	15,220	48.23	248.30	165.53	193.12	220.71	248.30	303.48	358.66	413.83	496.60
SHALFORD	365.31	27,000	73.91	273.98	182.65	213.10	243.54	273.98	334.86	395.75	456.63	547.96
SIBLE HEDINGHAM	1670.16	109,000	65.26	265.33	176.89	206.37	235.85	265.33	324.29	383.25	442.22	530.66
SILVER END	1392.03	91,457	65.70	265.77	177.18	206.71	236.24	265.77	324.83	383.89	442.95	531.54
STAMBOURNE	169.48	9,010	53.16	253.23	168.82	196.96	225.09	253.23	309.50	365.78	422.05	506.46
STEEPLE BUMPSTEAD	648.68	49,650	76.54	276.61	184.41	215.14	245.88	276.61	338.08	399.55	461.02	553.22
STISTED	285.12	19,007	66.66	266.73	177.82	207.46	237.09	266.73	326.00	385.28	444.55	533.46
STURMER	201.41	13,788	68.46	268.53	179.02	208.86	238.69	268.53	328.20	387.88	447.55	537.06
TERLING & FAIRSTEAD	420.78	34,100	81.04	281.11	187.41	218.64	249.88	281.11	343.58	406.05	468.52	562.22
THE SALINGS	227.55	18,808	82.65	292.72	188.48	219.89	251.31	282.72	345.55	408.37	471.20	565.44
TOPPESFIELD	220.14	17,750	80.63	280.70	187.13	218.32	249.51	280.70	343.08	405.46	467.83	561.40
WETHERSFIELD	548.63	46,865	85.42	285.49	190.33	222.05	253.77	285.49	348.93	412.37	475.82	570.98
WHITE COLNE	214.67	12,243	57.03	257.10	171.40	199.97	228.53	257.10	314.23	371.37	428.50	514.20
WHITE NOTLEY & FAULKBOURNE	244.81	18,000	73.53	273.60	182.40	212.80	243.20	273.60	334.40	395.20	456.00	547.20
WICKHAM ST PAUL	142.35	16,800	118.02	318.09	212.06	247.40	282.75	318.09	388.78	459.46	530.15	636.18
WITHAM	9128.85	942,474	103.24	303.31	202.21	235.91	269.61	303.31	370.71	438.11	505.52	606.62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56914.00</b>	<b>3,293,585</b>										

**SCHEDULE B**

PARISH/AREA	TOTAL COUNCIL TAX £							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
ALPHAMSTONE & LAMARSH	1384.58	1615.34	1846.11	2076.87	2538.40	2999.92	3461.45	4153.74
ASHEN	1395.82	1628.46	1861.09	2093.73	2559.00	3024.28	3489.55	4187.46
BELCHAMP OTTEN	1378.77	1608.57	1838.36	2068.16	2527.75	2987.34	3446.93	4136.32
BELCHAMP ST PAUL	1382.91	1613.40	1843.88	2074.37	2535.34	2996.31	3457.28	4148.74
BELCHAMP WALTER	1404.93	1639.08	1873.24	2107.39	2575.70	3044.01	3512.32	4214.78
BIRDBROOK	1427.52	1665.44	1903.36	2141.28	2617.12	3092.96	3568.80	4282.56
BLACK NOTLEY	1401.91	1635.57	1869.22	2102.87	2570.17	3037.48	3504.78	4205.74
BORLEY	1384.89	1615.71	1846.52	2077.34	2538.97	3000.60	3462.23	4154.68
BRADWELL	1402.83	1636.64	1870.44	2104.25	2571.86	3039.47	3507.08	4208.50
BRAINTREE	1367.76	1595.72	1823.68	2051.64	2507.56	2963.48	3419.40	4103.28
BULMER	1395.15	1627.67	1860.20	2092.72	2557.77	3022.82	3487.87	4185.44
BURES HAMLET	1433.23	1672.11	1910.98	2149.85	2627.59	3105.34	3583.08	4299.70
CASTLE HEDINGHAM	1415.42	1651.32	1887.23	2123.13	2594.94	3066.74	3538.55	4246.26
COGGESHALL	1442.18	1682.54	1922.91	2163.27	2644.00	3124.72	3605.45	4326.54
COLNE ENGAINE	1408.07	1642.74	1877.42	2112.10	2581.46	3050.81	3520.17	4224.20
CRESSING	1402.86	1636.67	1870.48	2104.29	2571.91	3039.53	3507.15	4208.58
EARLS COLNE	1438.44	1678.18	1917.92	2157.66	2637.14	3116.62	3596.10	4315.32
FEERING	1449.01	1690.52	1932.02	2173.52	2656.52	3139.53	3622.53	4347.04
FINCHINGFIELD	1430.51	1668.93	1907.35	2145.77	2622.61	3099.45	3576.28	4291.54
FOXEARH & LISTON	1415.69	1651.63	1887.58	2123.53	2595.43	3067.32	3539.22	4247.06
GESTINGTHORPE	1409.11	1643.96	1878.81	2113.66	2583.36	3053.06	3522.77	4227.32
GOSFIELD	1414.28	1649.99	1885.71	2121.42	2592.85	3064.27	3535.70	4242.84
GREAT BARDFIELD	1424.03	1661.37	1898.71	2136.05	2610.73	3085.41	3560.08	4272.10
GREAT MAPLESTEAD	1414.81	1650.62	1886.42	2122.22	2593.82	3065.43	3537.03	4244.44
GREAT NOTLEY	1397.56	1630.49	1863.41	2096.34	2562.19	3028.05	3493.90	4192.68
GREAT YELDHAM	1427.03	1664.87	1902.71	2140.55	2616.23	3091.91	3567.58	4281.10
GREENSTEAD GREEN	1400.14	1633.50	1866.85	2100.21	2566.92	3033.64	3500.35	4200.42
HALSTEAD	1402.23	1635.93	1869.64	2103.34	2570.75	3038.16	3505.57	4206.68
HATFIELD PEVEREL	1419.39	1655.95	1892.52	2129.08	2602.21	3075.34	3548.47	4258.16

PARISH/AREA	TOTAL COUNCIL TAX £							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
HELIONS BUMPSTEAD	1413.07	1648.59	1884.10	2119.61	2590.63	3061.66	3532.68	4239.22
HENNYS,MIDDLETON & TWINSTEAD	1399.93	1633.25	1866.57	2099.89	2566.53	3033.17	3499.82	4199.78
KELVEDON	1436.51	1675.92	1915.34	2154.76	2633.60	3112.43	3591.27	4309.52
LITTLE MAPLESTEAD	1415.91	1651.89	1887.88	2123.86	2595.83	3067.80	3539.77	4247.72
LITTLE YELDHAM, TILBURY JUXTA CLARE, & OVINGTON	1392.15	1624.17	1856.20	2088.22	2552.27	3016.32	3480.37	4176.44
PANFIELD	1426.95	1664.77	1902.60	2140.42	2616.07	3091.72	3567.37	4280.84
PEBMARSH	1412.78	1648.24	1883.71	2119.17	2590.10	3061.02	3531.95	4238.34
PENTLOW	1410.55	1645.65	1880.74	2115.83	2586.01	3056.20	3526.38	4231.66
RAYNE	1412.47	1647.88	1883.29	2118.70	2589.52	3060.34	3531.17	4237.40
RIDGEWELL	1430.71	1669.16	1907.61	2146.06	2622.96	3099.86	3576.77	4292.12
RIVENHALL	1399.91	1633.23	1866.55	2099.87	2566.51	3033.15	3499.78	4199.74
SHALFORD	1417.03	1653.21	1889.38	2125.55	2597.89	3070.24	3542.58	4251.10
SIBLE HEDINGHAM	1411.27	1646.48	1881.69	2116.90	2587.32	3057.74	3528.17	4233.80
SILVER END	1411.56	1646.82	1882.08	2117.34	2587.86	3058.38	3528.90	4234.68
STAMBOURNE	1403.20	1637.07	1870.93	2104.80	2572.53	3040.27	3508.00	4209.60
STEEPLE BUMPSTEAD	1418.79	1655.25	1891.72	2128.18	2601.11	3074.04	3546.97	4256.36
STISTED	1412.20	1647.57	1882.93	2118.30	2589.03	3059.77	3530.50	4236.60
STURMER	1413.40	1648.97	1884.53	2120.10	2591.23	3062.37	3533.50	4240.20
TERLING & FAIRSTEAD	1421.79	1658.75	1895.72	2132.68	2606.61	3080.54	3554.47	4265.36
THE SALINGS	1422.86	1660.00	1897.15	2134.29	2608.58	3082.86	3557.15	4268.58
TOPPESFIELD	1421.51	1658.43	1895.35	2132.27	2606.11	3079.95	3553.78	4264.54
WETHERSFIELD	1424.71	1662.16	1899.61	2137.06	2611.96	3086.86	3561.77	4274.12
WHITE COLNE	1405.78	1640.08	1874.37	2108.67	2577.26	3045.86	3514.45	4217.34
WHITE NOTLEY & FAULKBOURNE	1416.78	1652.91	1889.04	2125.17	2597.43	3069.69	3541.95	4250.34
WICKHAM ST PAUL	1446.44	1687.51	1928.59	2169.66	2651.81	3133.95	3616.10	4339.32
WITHAM	1436.59	1676.02	1915.45	2154.88	2633.74	3112.60	3591.47	4309.76



Councillor Bowers, Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance also provided Members with some further information on the report. He added that the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 was published on 18th December 2023 and that the provisional settlement was the sixth consecutive single year settlement. The Government published a Core Spending Power statement to illustrate the resources which it calculated were available to an authority to deliver services. For District Councils the Core Spending Power consisted of business rate income and Revenue Support Grant assumed income from council tax, New Homes Bonus, and other grants. Part of the Core Spending Power was provided as cash grants, whereas other elements such as council tax and business rates were provided as notional sums which the government anticipated each authority to be able to generate.

It was added that communication of the Final Settlement were received on 5th February and the detail of the final settlement confirmed that the Council had been allocated additional funding of £172,834 over and above that provided in the provisional settlement. The additional grant of £172,834 receivable from the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 was combined with half of the allocation of New Homes Bonus receivable for 2024-25 and used to fund expenditure incurred on the Fit for the Future transformation programme, with the balance of the New Homes Bonus held as a risk management reserve.

The Cabinet Member expressed his thanks to Phil Myers, Head of Finance, along with Mark Jarvis, Financial Services Manager and Suzanne Bennett, Corporate Director and their wider teams for their dedication and diligence in setting out the detail contained within the report.

Following the presentation of the report, as amendments to the budget had been received, the Chairman then invited Councillor Beavis to set out and move her two amendments in respect of the Budget, which were as follows:-

Amendment 1: “The creation of a new Rural Investment Fund of £500,000, funded from New Homes Bonus, to assist rural/village areas in progressing identified capital projects to community owned assets; which fit Braintree District Council's corporate priorities and could be delivered through the establishment of a new Community Delivery Plan.”

Amendment 2: “To add those residents who currently have assisted bin collections (approx. 1,240) to the new green bin service, but without charging them, funded from the £173,000 of additional Government funding, allocated to Braintree District Council, for delivering services.”

The amendments were seconded by Councillor Abbott.

Members were advised that before commencing with the debate on the Budget, they would first need to respond to the proposed amendments and that there would be a single debate on all proposed amendments. Once the debate had concluded, a vote was taken on each of the amendments, the results of which were as follows:

## **Amendment 1**

The Amendment was declared LOST.

## **Amendment 2**

The Amendment was declared LOST.

Following the vote on the two proposed amendments, the Chairman commenced the general budget debate. Details of the full budget debate can be found on the Council's YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ59vb3eKDE>

Once the debate had concluded, a single recorded vote was taken on the Council Budget and Council Tax Resolution. The results of the vote were as follows:

### **For the Vote:**

Councillors: Baugh, Beavis, Bond, Bowers, Bowers-Flint, Butland, Coleridge, M Cunningham, T Cunningham, Dervish, Edwards, Garrod, Hayes, Holland, Hooks, Munday, Parker, Pell, Prime, Rammage, Ricci, Schwier, Spray, Taylor, Taylor, van Dulken, Walters, Williams, Williams (29)

### **Against the Vote:**

Councillors: (0).

### **Abstained:**

Councillors: Abbott, Abram, Ayten, Diamond, Fincken, Green, Heath, Jefferis, Martin, Mason, Staines, M Thorogood (12).

## **DECISION:**

1. That Council approved the following:
  - 1.1 The revenue budget for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix A to the Addendum Report, having considered the report of the S151 Officer on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves as set out in Appendix F.
  - 1.2 The Council's discretionary fees and charges for 2024-25 as detailed in Appendix B to the report.
  - 1.3 Delegated authority is given to the appropriate Cabinet Members to determine the level of charges where these are subject to third party information or agreed with external partners; or where in-year changes are required for commercial or concessionary reasons.
  - 1.4 The Council's policy for discretionary business rate relief (under section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988), as detailed in Section 9 of the report.

- 1.5 The discretionary policy for council tax discounts and exemptions, and premiums as detailed in Section 12 of the report, including reducing the qualifying period from two years to one year for certain empty properties from which a 100% premium will become chargeable; and to provide notice that it was intended to introduce a 100% premium on second homes, subject to certain exemptions, with effect from 1st April 2025.
- 1.6 To delegate to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to determine the exemption categories for Council Tax premiums on empty homes and second homes, taking into account government guidance.
- 1.7 The Council's Pay Policy as detailed in Appendix C to the main, report, subject to the amounts of pay included being updated in line with the final agreed pay settlement for the cost-of-living award due to be implemented with effect from 1st April 2024.
- 1.8 The estimated movements on earmarked reserves as detailed in Appendix D to the main report.
- 1.9 The additional grant of £172,834 receivable from the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 is combined with half of the allocation of New Homes Bonus receivable for 2024-25 and used to fund expenditure incurred on the Fit for the Future transformation programme, with the balance of New Home Bonus held as a risk management reserve.

## **Capital**

- 1.10 The Capital bids for 2024-25 listed in Appendix E to the main report.
- 1.11 A Disabled Facilities Grants programme which matches the resources allocated to the Council from the Better Care Fund.

## **Capital and Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy**

- 1.12 The Capital and Investment Strategy as detailed in Appendix G to the main report including the Authorised Borrowing Limit of £50million for the 2024-25 financial year, the related Prudential Indicators, and the policy for Minimum Revenue Policy.
- 1.13 The Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix H to the main report including related Prudential Indicators.

## **Council Tax**

- 1.14 A council tax requirement of £11,386,784, resulting in the Council's element of council tax being £200.07 for a Band D property in 2024-25.

2. That Council approved the Council Tax rates for 2024-25, calculated in accordance with the resolution as set out in the report.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 21.12pm.

Councillor D Garrod  
(Chairman)